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MANAGING SERVICE DELIVERY ON THE INTERNET: FACILITATING
CUSTOMERS' COPRODUCTION AND CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS IN SERVICE
ORGANIZATIONS

by

Markus Groth

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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For the Degree of

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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have

read the dissertation prepared by Markus Groth

entitled Managing Service Delivery on the Internet: Facilitating
Customers' Coproduction and Citizenship Behaviors in
Service Organizations

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation
requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

<u><i>Dr. Dawn Iacobucci</i></u>	<u>10/24/01</u>
Dr. Dawn Iacobucci	Date
<u><i>Dr. Stephen W. Gilliland</i></u>	<u>10/19/01</u>
Dr. Stephen W. Gilliland	Date
<u><i>Dr. Lee R. Beach</i></u>	<u>10/19/01</u>
Dr. Lee R. Beach	Date
<u><i>Barbara A. Gutek</i></u>	<u>10/19/01</u>
Dr. Barbara A. Gutek	Date
<u><i>Sidney J. Levy</i></u>	<u>10/24/01</u>
Dr. Sidney Levy	Date

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dr. Stephen W. Gilliland
Dissertation Director Dr. Stephen W. Gilliland

10/19/01
Date

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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SIGNED: 

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Dietrich and Gerda Groth. I am forever grateful to them for giving me the gift of life and for providing me with a loving and nurturing environment all throughout my life. Their continuous support has been a source of strength, especially in times when great distances have kept us physically apart.

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of customer behavior in Internet service deliveries. A nomological network of customer behaviors and its antecedents is developed and tested in two studies.

In the first study, two hundred individuals were surveyed about their customer satisfaction, socialization, coproduction, and citizenship behaviors in their most recent online service experience. Results show that customers distinguish between two types of behavior: required customer coproduction behaviors and voluntary customer citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, these two behaviors were predicted by differential antecedents. Customer coproduction was more strongly predicted by customer socialization than by customer satisfaction. Customer citizenship behaviors, on the other hand, were more strongly predicted by customer satisfaction than by customer socialization.

In the second study, three hundred twenty-eight participants acted as customers in a simulated Internet service delivery. In a 2 X 2 factorial design, perceptions about customer satisfaction and perceptions about organizational citizenship behavior were manipulated prior to the service experience. Subsequently, measures of self-reported customer citizenship intentions as well as actual citizenship behaviors towards the organization were assessed. Results showed an effect on customer citizenship behaviors and intentions for customer satisfaction but not for organizational citizenship behavior. Participants in the condition with perceptions of high-customer-satisfaction engaged in more citizenship behaviors and reported greater intentions to do so in the future than those in the condition with perceptions of low-customer-satisfaction.

Theoretical and practical implications are discussed from the perspective of organizational citizenship behavior and social exchange theory.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Our economy is dominated by services, with over two-thirds of the labor force now working in the service sector (Applebaum & Batt, 1994). Consequently, the management of service organizations has become a topic of increasing interest to researchers from various disciplines. Whereas, in its earlier stages, the service literature mainly focused on the differences between goods and services (Shostack, 1977) and the classification of services (Lovelock, 1980, 1984; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1985), current research is taking an interdisciplinary approach (e.g., Swartz & Iacobucci, 2000). Particularly, the application of human resource management and organizational behavior principles to service organizations has been the focus of empirical attention.

In recent years, the growth of the service sector has been greatly influenced by the emergence of e-commerce (buying, selling, and trading on the Internet). As more and more people have access to a computer and spend time online, everything from trading stock to buying vacation packages or books becomes an everyday occurrence on the Internet. The uniqueness of this new medium poses challenges and opportunities that are new to service organizations as well as management in general. With changing consumer behavior due to escalating Internet use and increased competition between companies on the Internet, e-service is becoming an important topic (Stepanek, 1999). Not surprisingly, there is a growing interest of academicians to understand the processes by which customers and employees experience service delivery on the Internet (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). Nevertheless, empirical research is sparse and has only recently emerged in the

marketing and management literature (e.g., Escalas, Jain, & Strebel, 2001; Groth, Gutek, & Douma, in press). It remains largely unexplored how customers and organizations define online customer service and how the role of each is conceptualized before, during, and after the online service delivery process.

My dissertation will investigate service delivery over the Internet as well as through traditional delivery mechanisms. I particularly focus on the role that customer behaviors play in the delivery process. Because of their active role during the service delivery and their physical and mental input, customers of service organizations should be regarded as a part of and a resource to service organizations. Drawing on existing literature, particularly the organizational citizenship behavior literature as well as the services literature in management and marketing, my dissertation focuses on customer coproduction, the expected in-role customer behaviors required for successful service delivery (e.g., using one's credit card and pumping gas at a gas station), and a construct that I call customer citizenship behavior. Customer citizenship behavior is defined as voluntary and discretionary behavior of individual customers that is not directly or explicitly expected or rewarded but that, in the aggregate, leads to higher service quality and promotes the effective functioning of service organizations (e.g., helping another customer or providing suggestions online to improve the service organization). Although empirical evidence is rare, the importance of such a construct has recently been suggested by Bettencourt (1997).

The Internet is particularly relevant to the study of customer coproduction and citizenship behaviors in services because online service delivery usually requires a great

need for customer participation in the delivery process (Groth et al., in press). For example, many organizations operating on the Internet require customers to search for relevant information, to specify desired options and customization, and to enter credit card numbers or other payment options. Because Internet customers play an active role in the delivery process, their expected and voluntary behaviors can play a crucial role in the success of online service organizations. With an increasing growth of consumers and businesses on the Internet, customer behavior in service deliveries is likely to increase in importance as a topic for researchers and managers alike.

Customers as Partial Employees

One central premise of my dissertation is that, to some extent, customers should be viewed as part of, rather than as external to, the organization because of the central role that they play in the service delivery process. The call to view customers as “partial customers” can be traced back to the early beginnings of the management literature (Barnard, 1938, 1940, 1948; Parsons, 1956, 1970), although it has become more refined in recent years (Bowen & Jones, 1986; Mills, 1986; Mills, Chase, & Margulies, 1983; Mills & Morris, 1986). As discussed earlier, one unique feature of services, as opposed to products, is customer involvement in the production of services. To view customers as partial employees therefore acknowledges the importance of their role as “co-producers” and participants. Customer participation has been defined as resources and actions supplied by customers for the production and/or delivery of services (Rodie & Kleine, 2000). Mills and Morris (1986) argue that customer co-production can decrease production costs for organizations and, at the same time, increase customers’

involvement and sense of obligation and responsibility as their role expands. Rodie and Kleine (2000) suggest that customer participation can fill market niches, reach underserved markets, enhance customer loyalty and retention, and allow for offering value-added services that would be too expensive to provide otherwise. Furthermore, customers can be a valuable source of new ideas for business strategies (Juttner & Wehrh, 1994) and can even act as organizational consultants (Wolstenholme, 1988). Especially online service businesses, whose reputation is often largely built on customer recommendations, can benefit from customer participation by means of word-of-mouth and referrals to friends and family. Empirical evidence has generally supported the benefits of customer participation and has successfully linked it to service quality and customer satisfaction (Cermak, File, & Prince, 1994; Kelley, Skinner, & Donnelly, 1992; Kellogg, Youngdahl, & Bowen, 1997) as well as purchase intentions (Cermak et al., 1994).

Despite the obvious advantages of customer participation, it can also have negative effects on organizations and customers. For example, customers' behavior has been identified as a major source of their own dissatisfaction and negative perceptions of the service delivery process (Bitner, Booms, & Mohr, 1994; Mohr & Bitner, 1995). Verbal abuse, uncooperative behavior, or breaking company policies can result in employee frustration and experience of stress. Furthermore, customers can be the source of their own dissatisfaction by behaving in ways inconsistent with the expected role of customers in the particular service organization. Customers who do not perform at the desired level can become angry and frustrated and may require additional organizational

resources, therefore increasing the cost to the organization. For example, an airline passenger who did not prepare for a long flight by bringing reading materials and wearing warm cloth may become restless and start complaining to the crew. Especially in e-businesses, customers who do not perform adequately often make use of online or telephone help lines, therefore increasing the costs to online service organizations. Even though these behaviors are the exception rather than the norm, in most service industries isolated incidents can nevertheless be frustrating to employees and expensive to organizations.

Because of the positive as well as negative consequences of customer behavior discussed above, its management becomes important for organizations. Additionally, these positive and negative consequences may even be accentuated in e-businesses. Successful customer participation depends on customers' ability to perform the desired behavior and their motivation to engage in that behavior. However, in managing customer behavior, traditional management practices that are used to manage employees are often not applicable to customers. This is especially true for service organizations on the Internet. For example, "firing" customers who do not perform can sometimes be impractical or even illegal and can often lead to negative publicity or potential lawsuits.

Researchers have identified some ways to effectively manage customers. Past research has mostly focused on the process of socialization as one possible way to manage customers' ability (Goodwin, 1988; Kelley, 1992; Kelley et al., 1992; Rodie, & Kleine, 2000). Customer socialization can take place by means of organizational literature, environmental cues, reinforcement, realistic service previews, observation of

other customers, and setting expectations for service delivery (Kelley, 1992; Rodie & Kleine, 2000). These strategies can be used to manage customers' ability to perform the desired behavior by providing them with necessary behavioral tools as well as realistic expectations. On the other hand, customers' motivation to participate in the service delivery process can be managed by creating incentives, making the process more efficient, and providing more perceived control for customers (Rodie & Kleine, 2000). The introduction of teller fees in most banks can be seen as a disincentive for using tellers and, consequently, as incentive for using automated teller machines.

Several other theoretical approaches to managing customer behavior have been proposed, even though no empirical data is available yet to support their claims. For example, Bowen and Jones (1986) used transaction cost analysis to create guidelines on how firms should manage exchanges with customers. According to their model, the level of customer involvement should depend on performance ambiguity and goal congruency. Performance ambiguity refers to the difficulty for one party to evaluate the performance of the other (e.g., lawyers, auto mechanics). Goal congruency refers to the difficulty in establishing equitable agreements between customers and service providers due to different and incompatible goals. According to Bowen and Jones' (1986) framework, service organizations should seek the highest customer participation when performance ambiguity is high and goals are congruent, whereas customer involvement should be minimized when performance ambiguity is low.

Goodwin (1988), on the other hand, provides a conceptual framework that classifies services by the number of customers in the service setting and the level of

commitment of the provider and customer. According to her framework, customers' motivation to learn new behavior is highest when multiple customers are present in the service setting (because other customers can serve as role models) and when commitment is high. On the other hand, customer socialization is most difficult when commitment is low and the service is delivered on a one-to-one basis.

The various approaches to managing customer behavior discussed here support the usefulness of the conceptualization of customers as partial employees and co-producers of service organizations. However, the construct of customer behavior remains unclear, as no attempt has been made to identify different facets of customer behavior and their influence on service organizations. Most importantly, current conceptualizations of customer participation and co-production usually include behaviors that are expected and necessary for the successful completion of the service delivery (e.g., filling out a deposit slip for a bank transaction) and, at the same time, behaviors that are neither required nor expected (e.g., helping other employees or customers, recommending a business to a friend). A distinction between required in-role behavior of employees (i.e., performance) and voluntary extra-role behavior of employees (i.e., organizational citizenship behavior) has long been made for employee behavior. However, it has yet to be applied to the domain of customer behavior in the service literature. Therefore, one major aim of this dissertation is to empirically test the usefulness of a typology of customer behavior that distinguishes between in-role and extra-role behaviors.

Dissertation Outline

This remainder of this dissertation is divided into three chapters. In Chapters 2 and 3, I present two empirical studies with the purposes of testing the proposed typology of customer behavior and developing a nomological network of related constructs. In particular, Chapter 2 presents a study in which individuals were surveyed about their customer satisfaction, socialization, coproduction, and citizenship behaviors of a recent Internet service delivery experience. Chapter 3 presents a laboratory experiment in which individuals participated in a simulated shopping experience with a fictitious Internet organization. The latter study design allowed for tight experimental control, wherein the degree of customer satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior were manipulated for different experimental conditions. Participants' citizenship behaviors were monitored throughout the study and participants provided self-report measures of customer coproduction behaviors and behavioral intentions of citizenship behavior upon completion of their service experience. Chapter 4 briefly summarizes the main results presented in this dissertation, presents a discussion the theoretical and managerial implications, and provides directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

VIRTUAL CUSTOMERS AS HUMAN RESOURCES: THE IMPACT OF CUSTOMER SOCIALIZATION AND SATISFACTION ON COPRODUCTION AND CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS

Service organizations have increasingly involved their customers in the production and delivery of their services (Bowen & Schneider, 1985; Bowen, Schneider, & Kim, 2000; Mills & Morris, 1986). Modern technologies allow customers to make deposits at ATM machines, make airline reservations online, or place orders using an automated telephone system. As a result, customers frequently perform tasks that traditionally have been performed by service employees. Consequently, organizations increasingly conceptualize customers as human resources of the organization (Schneider & Bowen, 1995) and view effective management of customers as a strategic advantage (Lengnick-Hall, 1996).

A recent line of research has focused on customer coproduction behaviors, i.e., those behaviors that customers need to perform in order to complete the service delivery (e.g., Bowen & Waldman, 1999; Lengnick-Hall, 1996). For example, unless customers describe their symptoms to a doctor or enter their account information at an ATM machine, the service cannot be delivered successfully. Understanding and managing such behavior allows organizations to reduce costs and to improve the service experience from the customers' point of view, which ultimately increases an organization's bottom line. Unfortunately, most research on managing customer behavior has been theoretical, and little empirical evidence is available on how to engage customers in the service process.

In addition, in the few empirical studies available, customer coproduction behaviors have been conceptualized fairly broadly and measures have included both, required behaviors that customers are expected to perform and voluntary behaviors that are not essential to the service delivery itself (e.g., Bettencourt, 1997; Cermak et al., 1994).

The purpose of this research is to examine two different types of customer behaviors, customer coproduction and citizenship behaviors, and to identify their antecedents. Building on research in organizational citizenship behavior and employee socialization, I examine whether required customer coproduction and voluntary citizenship behaviors are separate constructs that can be predicted by different sets of antecedents. Doing so will allow managers to more clearly identify and predict those behaviors that they do or do not want their customers to engage in.

I further extend the literature by applying social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to the customer domain. Findings from the social exchange literature have shown that employees and organizations generally view their relationship as a social exchange that is based on trust and reciprocity. Given that customers are increasingly viewed as “partial employees” of organizations (Mills et al., 1983; Mills & Morris, 1986), the relationship between customers and employees has similarly been conceptualized as a social exchange relationship (Bowen, 1990; Vaughan & Renn, 1999). The present study aims at providing much needed empirical support for this claim.

Finally, this study examines the Internet as a mode of service delivery. In recent years, the Internet has increased dramatically in size and importance as a way of selling and purchasing products and services. According to survey data by Nielsen/Net Ratings,

about 167 million people in the U.S., roughly 60% of the U.S. population, had home access to the Internet in 2001 (Nielsen, 2001). Furthermore, recent statistics by the U.S. Bureau of Census show that retail e-commerce (buying, selling, and trading on the Internet) amounted to 7.0 billion dollars in the first quarter of 2001, an increase of over 33% from the first quarter of 2000 (Bureau of Census, 2001). Not surprisingly, the emergence of e-commerce has greatly impacted the service sector, and managers have struggled to understand how to most effectively offer services to their virtual customers.

Unfortunately, empirical research on behavioral aspects of customers and employees on the Internet is rare, even though emerging evidence suggests that service delivery via the Internet differs from traditional modes of service delivery such as face-to-face or telephone deliveries (Groth, Gutek, & Douma, in press). The very nature of the Internet often requires customers to engage in more coproduction behaviors than in other service delivery modes. For example when purchasing an airline ticket, online customers must search for relevant flights, book their reservations, and provide personal information for ticket delivery and payment; all behaviors that, in traditional face-to-face deliveries, are normally performed by service employees. Therefore, in serving virtual customers, it becomes especially important for organizations to understand how to manage customer behavior effectively.

In sum, the goals of this research are threefold: (1) to empirically test whether customer coproduction and citizenship behaviors can be conceptualized as two distinct types of customer behavior; (2) to identify antecedents for customer coproduction and

citizenship behaviors; and (3) to extend current management research to the domain of the Internet.

Theory and Hypotheses

Customers are increasingly viewed as important human resources (Bowen & Jones, 1986; Schneider & Bowen, 1995) and “partial employees” of service organizations (Mills, 1986; Mills et al., 1983; Mills & Morris, 1986) because they are often physically present and actively participate in the delivery process. Consequently, their behavior often contributes to the overall success of the service organization. For example, it has been suggested that customers can provide crucial mental and physical inputs that increase organizational productivity, can be a valuable source of new ideas for business strategies, can help train other customers, and can serve as organizational consultants by sharing their frontline experiences with management (Juttner & Wehrh, 1994; Rodie & Kleine, 2000; Wolstenholme, 1988).

On the other hand, if not managed effectively, customers’ behavior can have negative consequences for service organizations (Bitner et al., 1994; Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). Customer misconduct such as verbal abuse, uncooperative behavior, or breaking company policies can result in employee frustration and experience of stress. Furthermore, customers can be the source of their own dissatisfaction by behaving in ways inconsistent with the expected role of customers in the organization. Those who do not perform at the desired level can become angry and frustrated and may require additional organizational resources, therefore increasing the cost to the organization (Bitner et al., 1994).

Given the importance of effectively managing customer behavior, surprisingly few studies have empirically examined the topic of customer coproduction. Customer coproduction, also referred to as customer participation, has been defined as resources and actions supplied by customers for the production and/or delivery of services (Rodie & Kleine, 2000). For the most part, evidence has produced mixed results. Some studies have shown positive relationships between coproduction and service quality, customer satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions towards the organization (Cermak et al., 1994; Kelley et al., 1992; Kellogg et al., 1997). Other studies, however, have found coproduction to be unrelated to customer satisfaction or perceived quality of service (Claycomb, Lengnick-Hall, & Inks, 2001).

Unfortunately, the conceptualization and definition of customer coproduction in these studies was not consistent. For example, Bettencourt's (1997) measure of participation included voluntary behaviors (e.g., "I make constructive suggestions to this store on how to improve its service") and is therefore inconsistent with Rodie and Kleine's (2000) definition. Such behavior is clearly not a necessary requirement for a successful service delivery. Cermak et al. (1994), on the other hand, only used one global item to assess customer participation ("What has been your actual level of involvement – that is, how much time and effort have you invested?"). It is unclear whether this measure assessed only required coproduction behaviors or also included voluntary behaviors. As discussed by the authors themselves, their measure actually may have, at least to some extent, tapped the construct of customer involvement, which traditionally refers to the personal relevance or importance a product has for a customer (Cermak et al., 1994).

Given these limitations, the present study expands research on customer behavior by using the framework of organizational citizenship behavior in order to distinguish between two types of customer behavior: required coproduction behaviors (i.e., in-role behaviors) as well as voluntary citizenship behaviors (i.e., extra-role behaviors). Most previous research has used measures of customer coproduction that tapped into both required and voluntary behaviors (e.g., Bettencourt, 1997; Claycomb et al., 2001). It is possible that the mixed findings of that research may be the result of confounding these two types of behaviors.

Distinguishing In-Role and Extra-Role Behaviors

One useful framework in the organizational literature that can help to better understand customer behavior is employee extra-role behavior, particularly organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Interest in the topic of OCB has been substantial (e.g., Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997) and applying the framework of citizenship behaviors to the customer domain will allow researchers and managers to draw on existing theory to better understand why customers do or do not perform various types of behaviors during service deliveries.

OCB has been defined as behavior of individual employees that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that, in the aggregate, promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988a, 1990, 1997). Interest in the topic of OCB has been spurred by empirical evidence of a weak link between employees' job performance and job satisfaction (e.g., Iaffaldano, & Muchinsky, 1985; Vroom, 1964). Organ (1977, 1988b) argues that this relationship is

weak because many tasks in organizations are constrained in the variability of task performance. On the other hand, extra-role behaviors such as OCB can be dispensed at the free will of employees and are therefore more strongly related to job satisfaction than required in-role behaviors. The satisfaction-OCB relationship has received ample empirical support in the literature (see Organ & Ryan, 1995). Furthermore, it has been shown that employees and managers clearly distinguish between required in-role and voluntary extra-role behaviors in their assessment of employee performance (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1991; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Williams & Anderson, 1991).

Given that customers are increasingly viewed as partial employees of organizations, it is possible to apply theories of OCB and task performance to the customer domain. Similar to employees, customers of service organizations engage in some behaviors that are typically viewed by both employees and customers as in-role behaviors, such as providing one's credit card information during an online purchase. At the same time, other behaviors are voluntary extra-role behaviors that go beyond the expectations of customers in a normal service delivery, for example, recommending a service business to one's family and friends. Distinguishing between these behaviors is important from a managerial point of view because it allows an organization to identify those behaviors that customers perceive as required and others that they perceive as discretionary. In other words, by understanding the different antecedents and consequences of these two types of behavior, managers can more effectively train and

motivate customers to increase desired behaviors (from an organizational perspective) and to decrease undesired behaviors.

As discussed earlier, current definitions of customer coproduction are limited to customer behaviors that are a required part of the service delivery (Bowen et al., 2000) and are therefore theoretically based on, and closely resemble, definitions of employee task performance. However, customers often engage in additional, discretionary behaviors that are not expected or rewarded. Consequently, as shown in Figure 2.1, I expect two distinct types of customer behaviors to emerge that parallel those of employee behavior: (1) Customer coproduction behaviors, which I define as expected and required behaviors necessary for the successful production and/or delivery of the service and (2) customer citizenship behaviors (hereafter, referred to as CCB), which I define as voluntary and discretionary behaviors that are not required for the successful production and/or delivery of the service but that, in the aggregate, help the service organization overall. Therefore, I propose:

Hypothesis 1: Customer coproduction and CCB will emerge as separate factors of customer behavior.

Antecedents of Customer Behavior

Beyond demonstrating separate factors of customer behavior, another way of differentiating and validating the constructs of customer coproduction and CCB is to identify different antecedents for each behavior. In the following section, I examine customer socialization and customer satisfaction as antecedents of customer coproduction and CCB, based on theoretical support from the organizational literature.

Figure 2.1. Comparison of Employee Behavior and Proposed Types of Customer Behavior.

	Employee behavior	Customer behavior
Required, expected in-role behavior	Task performance	Customer coproduction
Voluntary, discretionary extra-role behavior	Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	Customer citizenship behavior (CCB)

Customer Socialization

Management often faces the challenge of turning customers into useful organizational members. An emerging literature suggests that customers need to be properly “socialized” to a company, the service delivery process, and their expected role during that process, in order to be high performers, i.e., effective coproducers (Bowen, 1986; Bowen & Schneider, 1988; Kelley, 1992). Most importantly, customers need (1) the ability to perform expected behaviors and (2) role clarity, e.g., they must understand what they are expected to do (Bowen, 1986; Bowen & Waldman, 1999; Goodwin, 1988). For example, if patients in a doctor’s office lack the reading skills to understand and fill out complex inpatient forms, they are likely to be ineffective coproducers of that service.

As discussed by Bowen (1986) and Goodwin (1988), the process of customer socialization is essentially the same as that of employee socialization. Organizational

socialization describes the “process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role” (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 211). As such, socialization focuses on how individuals learn the values, beliefs, behaviors, and skills necessary to fulfill their new organizational roles. The ultimate purpose of the process is to ensure that newcomers perform their expected duties effectively. Organizational socialization has attracted much attention in the organizational literature, especially since recent research on training has been integrated (for recent reviews see Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

As predicted by models of organizational socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), empirical evidence has established a link between employee socialization and subsequent job performance (Adkins, 1995; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998; Morrison 1993; Saks, 1995). These findings are somewhat intuitive, as one would expect employees who have acquired more necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be more effective on the job.

The similarities between employee and customer socialization are apparent. However, in the customer domain, empirical evidence of the socialization process is rare (for an exception, see Kelley, 1992; Kelley et al., 1992). Initial findings confirm similarities to the process of employee socialization. For example, several ways of enhancing customer ability through socialization have been suggested, most importantly, training and incentives (Lengnick-Hall, 1996), organizational literature and environmental cues (Kelley, 1992), and realistic service previews (Rodie & Kleine, 2000). Furthermore, Kelley et al. (1992) demonstrated that customers who have been

socialized more effectively hold more favorable perceptions of the organization and are more efficient coproducers. In other words, those customers who are clear about the behaviors expected of them and who have been trained to perform them effectively are more successful coproducers.

There is no theoretical reason to suggest a strong relationship between customer socialization and CCB, as familiarity with required coproduction tasks is unlikely to increase one's propensity for citizenship behaviors. Similarly, a link between employee socialization and OCB has not been tested directly in the organizational literature. However, related research findings suggest that such a relationship, if it exists, may be negative rather than positive. For example, Ashford and Black (1996) found that newcomers' perceived lack of control resulted in increased proactive behaviors. That is, those employees new in the organization were more likely to engage in proactive behaviors than more tenured employees.

This theoretical evidence suggests that customer socialization should be more strongly related to coproduction than to CCB. Consequently, I propose:

Hypothesis 2: Customer socialization will more strongly predict customer coproduction than CCB.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is proposed as an antecedent of CCB but not of customer coproduction. Support for a link between customer satisfaction and CCB is provided in the OCB literature. As discussed earlier, a link between employee satisfaction and OCB has been clearly established (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988a). Because

evidence increasingly supports the role of customers as organizational members (Bowen & Schneider, 1985), the satisfaction-citizenship link can be theoretically extended to them. In other words, as partial employees of an organization, content and satisfied customers will be more likely to reciprocate with voluntary, beneficial behaviors than less satisfied customers (Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997).

The proposed relationship between customer satisfaction and CCB is theoretically grounded in social exchange theory. Research on social exchange has identified conditions under which people feel obligated to reciprocate behavior or actions when they benefit from others. Blau (1964) was the first to distinguish between economic exchanges and social exchanges. Economic exchanges are transactions that occur in a short-term, quid pro quo fashion. Social exchanges generate a similar expectation for some future return. However, the exact nature and time frame for that return is unspecified. Therefore, social exchanges are based on trust and reciprocity (Blau, 1964).

Existing research in the management literature has drawn on social exchange theory as a theoretical framework to explain the employee-organization relationship. It has been shown that employees generally view the relationship with their organization as a social exchange, rather than an economic exchange (Konovsky, & Pugh, 1994; Settoon, Bennet, Liden, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). For example, as discussed earlier, satisfied employees are more likely to engage in citizenship behaviors directed towards their organization or coworkers than less satisfied employees (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988a).

In the present study, I extend the social exchange framework to the customer domain. That is, when a customer and an organization interact during the service delivery process, their exchange can similarly be considered a social exchange. The social exchange nature of service encounters has been suggested theoretically (e.g., Bowen, 1990; Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 1985; Vaughan & Renn, 1999). However, I am not aware of any research that provides empirically support. Therefore, this study extends the literature by providing much needed empirical evidence. The implications of such a social exchange relationship between customers and organizations are straightforward. That is, when customers are satisfied with the service or feel that they have received exceptional treatment that goes beyond their level of expectation, they ought to be more likely to reciprocate by engaging in voluntary behaviors that may benefit the organization.

Whereas customer satisfaction is expected to be a significant predictor of CCB, evidence suggests that the relationship between satisfaction and coproduction is less strong. Even though a link between customer satisfaction and customer coproduction has been theoretically proposed (e.g., Bowers & Martin, 1990; Mills & Morris, 1986), empirical support for this relationship has been mixed (e.g., Claycomb et al., 2001). Similarly, although employee satisfaction is significantly related to task performance (Podsakoff & Williams, 1986; Vroom, 1964), this relationship has been shown to be relatively weak (Iaffaldano, & Muchinsky, 1985; Vroom, 1964).

I expect the relationship between customer satisfaction and CCB to be stronger than the relationship between customer satisfaction and coproduction. In order to

successfully complete a service delivery, customers are often constrained in their variability of coproduction behaviors. For example, to successfully complete a transaction at a bank, a customer must still fill out the necessary forms, regardless of his or her satisfaction during the service encounter. A reduction in one's level of coproduction behaviors (e.g., failing to provide one's account information) might likely lead to an unsatisfactory service outcome or will at least delay the successful completion of the transaction. However, customers are free to withhold any voluntary citizenship behaviors (e.g., helping other customers in the bank) without a subsequent reduction in the quality of the service outcome. This reasoning is consistent with OCB theories where the link between employee satisfaction and task performance has been shown to be weaker than the link between employee satisfaction and OCB because many tasks in organizations are constrained in the variability of task performance and employees who wish to reciprocate must therefore choose other types of work behavior, i.e., citizenship behaviors (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Therefore, I propose:

Hypothesis 3: Customer satisfaction will more strongly predict CCB than customer coproduction.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A total of 400 adults were surveyed at a Southwestern U.S. county Superior Court jury pool. The jury pool provided a close approximation of the county's population of U.S. citizens because individuals were randomly chosen based on the county's drivers'

license and voter registration records. Procedures at the Superior Court required individuals to check in and then await panel selection, a process that generally took 30 minutes or longer. All of the participants completed the survey while awaiting their panel assignment. Participants were not paid for completing the survey, however, most were willing to participate since the study offered a means of alleviating boredom commonly experienced by prospective jurors awaiting panel selection.

Of the 400 participants, 46% were male and 54% female. Respondents' mean age was 47.1 years, ranging from 18 to 79 years. The ethnic composition was as follows: 81.2% White, 13.4% Hispanic, 1.6% African-American, 1.5% Asian, 0.5% Native American, and 1.6% Other. The average respondent had 15.2 years ($SD = 3.0$ years) of formal education. Most respondents (78.5%) were employed at the time of the survey.

One question asked participants how many times they had purchased products or services over the Internet. Those who indicated that they had never made a purchase over the Internet did not fill out the study variables, except for demographic information, and were excluded from further analysis. Out of 400 individuals, 200 (50%) indicated that they had never used the Internet for purchases, leaving a final sample of 200 respondents.

Because demographic information was collected for all participants, it was possible to compare Internet users with non-users. Analysis indicated that Internet users were slightly younger ($M_{\text{user}} = 44.7$ years, $M_{\text{nonuser}} = 49.6$ years, $t(1, 388) = 3.42$, $p < .01$), more educated ($M_{\text{user}} = 15.8$ years, $M_{\text{nonuser}} = 14.5$ years, $t(1, 382) = -4.09$, $p < .01$), more likely to be white ($M_{\text{user}} = 87.5\%$, $M_{\text{nonuser}} = 74.7\%$, $\chi^2 = 15.58$, $p < .05$), and more likely to be employed ($M_{\text{user}} = 83.7\%$, $M_{\text{nonuser}} = 73.2\%$, $\chi^2 = 6.32$, $p < .01$).

Measures

In answering all survey questions, respondents were asked to refer to the last time they had purchased a service or product on the Internet. The surveys included measures of customer socialization, customer coproduction customer satisfaction, CCB, and a number of demographic and control variables. The items of all study measures are shown in Appendix A.

Customer Socialization

Customer socialization was assessed with a measure developed by Kelley et al. (1992). One of Kelley et al.'s original items ("I get along with the employees of this organization") was dropped because it was not relevant to the context of Internet service delivery where a customer rarely gets to know employees, leaving a total of three items (e.g., "I understand the policies of this business"). All items were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (7) = *strongly agree*. The scale demonstrated an internal consistency estimate of $\alpha = .81$.

Customer Coproduction

Customer coproduction was assessed with a modified measure developed by Bettencourt and Brown (1997). Because Bettencourt and Brown's measure assesses required in-role behavior of service employees, some items were slightly reworded in order to refer to customers instead of employees. The scale consists of 5 items (e.g., I adequately completed all expected behaviors), which were assessed on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (7) = *strongly agree*. This measure showed an internal consistency estimate of $\alpha = .94$.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction was measured with the following three-item scale developed for this study: (1) Overall, how satisfied are you with the service provided by the business? (1 = *not at all satisfied* to 7 = *very satisfied*); (2) How do you rate the customer service provided by the business? (1 = *not at all satisfying* to 7 = *very satisfying*); and (3) The company did an excellent job in providing customer satisfaction (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Responses to all three items were averaged. This measure showed an internal consistency estimate of $\alpha = .94$.

Customer Citizenship Behavior

Because CCB is a new construct, a scale was developed in a multistage process using the Q-Sort technique (Stephenson, 1953), which has been successfully used to develop scales for organizational behavior constructs in the past (e.g., Greenberg, 1986).

A total of 209 undergraduate students participated in the scale development. In the first phase, the response generation phase, 119 participants were provided with a definition of CCB and were asked to think of a recent incident when they or others had engaged in such behavior on the Internet¹. Specifically, participants were told the following: "Please think of a recent incident when you [someone you observed] engaged in customer behavior on the Internet that was voluntary and discretionary and was not part of the expected role of a customer in that particular business." Participants were then asked to write down a short description of the incident. These responses were paraphrased and abstracted into simple statements and typed on separate index cards. The second phase, the categorization phase, was conducted with a separate sample of 40

participants. Each participant was presented with all 119 items in random order and was asked to sort them into similar groupings, following the procedures as outlined in the unstructured Q-Sort technique (Stephenson, 1953). That is, the number of categories was not predetermined. Participants identified between 3 and 11 clusters with a mean of 5.4 clusters. Consistent with Greenberg (1986), all clusters that did not show at least 75% overlap were dropped from the analysis. In other words, a cluster of two or more statements had to be grouped together by at least 75% of participants in the second phase in order to be retained. Using this procedure, 3 clusters were retained.

In the third phase, the cross-validation phase, a separate group of 50 participants was each presented with all 119 original items in random order and each participant was asked to categorize them into the 3 categories identified in the second phase. All items that were not placed into the same category by at least 75% of participants were dropped from further analysis. This procedure identified 23 items in the following three categories: (1) recommendations, (2) providing feedback to the organization, and (3) helping other customers. Because some of the items were nearly identical in wording, any redundancies were eliminated, therefore reducing the scale of 15 items.

The final version of the CCB scale consisted of 15 items, 5 items for each of the three dimensions of CCB (see Appendix A): making recommendations, providing feedback to the organization, and helping other customers. All items were assessed on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1) = *not at all likely* to (7) = *extremely likely*. These measures demonstrated the following reliability estimates: recommendations: $\alpha = .93$, providing feedback to the organization: $\alpha = .82$, and helping other customers: $\alpha = .93$.

Control Variables

Four control variables were used in the analyses: Computer familiarity, previous purchases on the Internet, previous purchases from the same company, and successful completion of service delivery. Computer familiarity was measured with a three-item measure adopted from Groth, Gutek, and Douma (2000) (e.g., How do you rate your familiarity with the Internet?). Responses were assessed on a 7-point scale from (1) = *not at all familiar* to (7) = *very familiar*. The scale demonstrated an internal consistency estimate of $\alpha = .91$. Previous purchases on the Internet were assessed with the following open-ended question: In the past, how many times have you purchased products or services over the Internet? Previous purchases from the company were assessed with a similar open-ended question: How many times have you purchased products/services from this business before? Finally, successful service completion assessed whether products or services were actually purchased as intended. One dichotomous item asked, "Did the company accurately provide your requested products or services?"

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients of all variables are shown in Table 2.1. As shown, the three dimensions of CCB were highly intercorrelated (coefficients ranging from .61 - .75, $ps < .01$) but were not significantly correlated with customer coproduction (coefficients ranging from .10 - .12, ns). These findings provide preliminary evidence of the discriminant validity of the two constructs.

Hypothesis 1 suggested that customer socialization and customer coproduction are two separate constructs and will therefore emerge as separate factors. To test this

hypothesis, a principal component analysis (Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization) was performed on all CCB and customer coproduction items. Results are shown in Table 2.2 and clearly support Hypothesis 1. Four separate factors, each consisting of five items, emerged in the analysis. Almost all items loaded .75 or higher on the hypothesized factor (one item loaded .62) while almost all crossloadings were below .30 (one item had a crossloading of .42). The four factors explained 78.62% of the total variance.

TABLE 2.1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of all Measures (N = 200)

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Customer Socialization	5.64	1.17	(.81)									
2. Customer Coproduction	6.20	1.31	.63*	(.94)								
3. Customer Satisfaction	5.55	1.31	.40*	.27*	(.94)							
4. CCB: Recommendations	5.15	1.55	.44*	.12	.68*	(.93)						
5. CCB: Providing Feedback	4.34	1.40	.29*	.12	.42*	.62*	(.82)					
6. CCB: Helping Customers	4.49	1.63	.37*	.10	.46*	.75*	.61*	(.93)				
7. Computer familiarity	4.02	1.89	.12	.08	.07	.15*	.07	.20*	(.91)			
8. Previous Internet Purchases	5.76	18.92	.04	.11	.01	.08	-.04	.05	.31*	--		
9. Previous Purchases from Business	6.29	23.61	.03	.06	-.04	.02	-.05	.02	.14	.92*	--	
10. Successful Service Completion ^a	.05	.22	-.05	.07	-.28*	-.26*	-.13	-.27	-.08	-.06	-.03	--

Note: Values along diagonal represent internal consistency estimates. ^aDichotomous measure: 0 = yes, 1 = no.

* = $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)

TABLE 2.2

Factor Loadings, Eigenvalues, and Percentage of Variance from Principal-Component Analysis of Customer Behavior Items

Item	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
Based on the last experience with the business, how likely are you to ...?				
...recommend the business to your friends	.90	.26	.13	.14
...refer fellow coworkers to the business	.90	.26	.09	.16
...recommend the business to your family	.86	.24	.16	.16
...recommend the business to your peers	.88	.24	.10	.17
...recommend the business to people interested in the business' products/services	.75	.28	.10	.12
...fill out a customer satisfaction survey	.29	.82	.10	.19
...provide helpful feedback to customer service	.24	.87	.08	.15
...provide information when surveyed by the business	.24	.89	.11	.15
...inform business about the great service received by an individual employee	.27	.85	.11	.16
...provide suggestions on how the business could improve	.24	.88	.08	.19
....assist other customers in finding products	.27	.17	.01	.76
...help others with their shopping	.17	.20	.08	.82
...teach a friend how to use the service correctly	.12	.16	.13	.81
...explain to other customers how to use the service correctly	-.06	.07	.17	.75
...show someone how to look for certain products	.42	.17	.02	.62
I performed all the tasks that are required.	.08	.10	.88	.03

I helped the organization with those things that are required.	.14	.06	.83	.09
I adequately completed all expected behaviors.	.06	.10	.87	.09
I met formal performance requirements.	.12	.07	.90	.09
I fulfilled responsibilities to the organization.	.07	.08	.90	.13
Eigenvalue	8.36	3.40	2.09	1.88
Variance explained (%)	41.79	16.98	10.45	9.41

Note: N = 200. Numbers in boldface indicates highest factor loadings.

To test Hypotheses 2 and 3, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4). Hypothesis 2 suggested that customer socialization would predict customer coproduction more strongly than CCB. In order to test this hypothesis, four hierarchical regression analyses were conducted with customer socialization as the independent variable and customer coproduction, CCB (Recommendations), CCB (Providing Feedback), and CCB (Helping Customers) as dependent variables, respectively. In each analysis, the four control variables were entered in the first step and customer socialization was entered in the second step. As shown in Table 2.3, customer socialization explained 41% of incremental variance in customer coproduction (beyond the variance explained by the control variables), but only 9-17% incremental variance in the three CCB dimensions. To test these values for significant differences, I conducted separate two-tailed t-tests on the correlation coefficients, following steps outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983) and Steiger (1980) for dependent correlation coefficients. Results show that the coefficient for coproduction is significantly larger than the coefficients for all three dimensions of CCB: recommendations: $t(197) = 2.67, p < .01$; providing feedback: $t(197) = 4.54, p < .01$; and helping customers: $t(197) = 3.51, p < .01$. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3 suggested that customer satisfaction would predict CCB more strongly than customer coproduction. Again, four hierarchical regression analyses were conducted on customer coproduction and each of the three CCB dimensions. The control variables were entered in the first step and customer satisfaction was entered in the second step. As shown in Table 2.4, the three CCB dimensions accounted for an

TABLE 2.3

Regression Summary for Customer Socialization as Predictor Variable

	Customer Behavior									
	Coproduction					CCB: Recommendations				
	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β
<u>Step 1: Control Variables</u>	.04					.11*				
Computer Familiarity			.08	.06	.11			.08	.08	.08
Previous Internet Purchases			.01	.01	.29			.01	.01	.26
Previous Purchases from Business			-.01	.01	-.22			-.01	.01	-.24
Successful Service Completion			.39	.33	.09			-1.81	.47	-.28*
<u>Step 2: Customer Socialization</u>	.45*	.41*	.57	.05	.65*	.28*	.17*	.53	.08	.42*

Note: . p < .05.

TABLE 2.3

Regression Summary for Customer Socialization as Predictor Variable (continued)

	Customer Behavior									
	CCB: Providing Feedback					CCB: Helping Customers				
	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β
<u>Step 1: Control Variables</u>	.03					.12*				
Computer Familiarity			.05	.08	.05			.20	.08	.18*
Previous Internet Purchases			.00	.01	.00			.01	.01	.09
Previous Purchases from Business			.00	.01	-.08			-.01	.01	-.10
Successful Service Completion			-.90	.45	-.15*			-1.88	.50	-.27*
<u>Step 2: Customer Socialization</u>	.12*	.09*	.35	.08	.30*	.24*	.12*	.48	.09	.35*

TABLE 2.4

Regression Summary for Customer Citizenship Behaviors as Predictor Variable

	Customer Behavior									
	Coproduct					CCB: Recommendations				
	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β
<u>Step 1: Control Variables</u>	.04					.10*				
Computer Familiarity			.08	.06	.11			.08	.08	.07
Previous Internet Purchases			.01	.01	.28			.02	.01	.28
Previous Purchases from Business			.01	.01	-.21			-.02	.01	-.26
Successful Service Completion			.39	.33	.09			-1.78	.47	-.27*
<u>Step 2: Customer Satisfaction</u>	.13*	.10*	.26	.06	.32*	.48*	.38*	.75	.07	.64*

*Note: $p < .05$.

TABLE 2.4

Regression Summary for Customer Satisfaction as Predictor Variable (continued)

	Customer Behavior									
	CCB: Providing Feedback					CCB: Helping Customers				
	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²	B	SE B	β
<u>Step 1: Control Variables</u>	.03					.11*				
Computer Familiarity			.05	.08	.06			.19	.09	.17*
Previous Internet Purchases			.00	.01	.03			.01	.01	.12
Previous Purchases from Business			-.01	.01	-.10			-.01	.01	-.12
Successful Service Completion			-.86	.46	-.14			-1.85	.50	-.26*
<u>Step 2: Customer Satisfaction</u>	.20*	.17*	.47	.08	.43*	.26*	.15*	.51	.08	.41*

additional 15-38% of the variance, whereas coproduction accounted for 10% of incremental variance. Again, separate two-tailed t-tests were conducted on the correlation coefficients. Results indicate that the coefficients for all three CCB dimensions are larger than the coefficient for coproduction, although one comparison fell slightly short of the conventional significance level: recommendations ($t(197) = 5.70, p < .05$), providing feedback ($t(197) = 1.76, p = .08$), and helping customers ($t(197) = 2.24, p < .05$). Overall, these results support Hypothesis 3.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of customer behavior in Internet service deliveries. The research was based on theories of social exchange and employee socialization and used an OCB framework (Organ, 1988a) to examine customer behavior. Despite a growing body of work in the area of customer behavior, existing research has provided a limited view of behaviors that go above and beyond those tasks required during coproduction. This study takes a first step toward addressing that gap and therefore broadens current conceptualizations of customer behavior. Overall, results indicate that, similarly to employee behavior, customer behavior can be conceptualized as two distinct types of behaviors: (1) coproduction, which are required in-role behaviors and (2) customer citizenship, which are discretionary extra-role behaviors. Although previous studies have linked customer behaviors to perceptions of satisfaction and service quality (e.g., Cermak et al., 1994), results of this study demonstrate that much can be gained by developing a framework of different types of customer behavior for service deliveries.

This study also contributes to existing research on customer behavior by developing and validating a measure that can be used in subsequent studies. Three factors of CCB, recommendations, providing feedback, and helping other customers, emerged in the Q-Sort and factor analysis. As indicated, although this study focused on service delivery on the Internet, results of the scale development were independent of the service delivery mode as they were replicated for face-to-face deliveries. These findings indicate that customers differentiate between a number of different voluntary behaviors in service deliveries. But even though the three factors seem to capture the most frequent extra-role behaviors that customers engage in, future research should aim at replicating these results and, if applicable, identify additional dimensions of CCB.

The most interesting finding of this study shows that two types of customer behavior can be predicted by differential antecedents. Whereas customer socialization, the extent to which customers “learn the ropes” of the organization and its service delivery process, is more predictive of customer coproduction, customer satisfaction is more predictive of the extent to which individuals will engage in citizenship behaviors. This study therefore provides empirical support that theories of organizational socialization and social exchange can be extended to the domains of customers and e-commerce service deliveries. The more customers are trained to perform their duties as organizational members, the better their performance and the ultimate service outcome will be. Socialization is likely to play a particularly important role on the Internet, where many new customers are unfamiliar with the required procedures of service deliveries

and need to be trained to complete all required tasks in a similar way employees are trained upon organizational entry.

The results are also consistent with findings in the OCB literature that show that employee satisfaction manifests itself to a greater extent in extra-role behaviors than in task performance (Ryan & Organ, 1995). The results from this study suggest that social exchange theory can be applied to the domain of customers in that customers view their relationship with an organization as a social exchange. The present study is a particularly interesting extension of social exchange theory because of the "social ambiguity" of the interaction between a customer and an organization. Customers generally have no social contact with employees in e-commerce Internet purchases and have few opportunities to witness behavior of individual employees first-hand. Therefore, they have limited exposure to employee behavior that may be perceived as a social exchange and call for a reciprocal response. Nevertheless, my results suggests that customers still perceive their relationship with the organization as a social exchange, despite the social ambiguity of a "faceless" interaction between a customer and an organization.

An examination of Tables 2.3 and 2.4 reveals that customer satisfaction explains 15-38% of variance in CCB, whereas socialization accounted for 41% of variance in coproduction. These results are encouraging, given that I only investigated two antecedents of customer behavior in this study. The OCB literature offers a theoretical basis for a number of additional potential antecedents and future research should examine their influence on customer behavior.

Practical Implications

The results of this study have several practical implications for service organizations. First, in services where customer coproduction plays an important role, managers might be well advised to focus on properly socializing customers to perform expected coproduction behaviors. Results imply that merely pursuing a goal of "complete customer satisfaction," as is often emphasized in many organizations, may affect some customer behaviors, such as recommendations, but may not affect core coproduction behaviors. As pointed out by Goodwin (1988), organizations frequently offer no socialization help other than signs, and customers often need to rely on observing others in order to acquire knowledge about the service delivery process. The disadvantages of such a process are apparent, as customers might easily imitate undesired behaviors they observed from others or shy away from the business altogether. As pointed out by Kelley et al. (1992), whereas the socialization of employees has received ample attention in the organizational literature (see Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997), the importance of socializing customers has rarely been investigated. This is surprising, given that the investment in customer socialization is likely to pay off for organizations because properly trained customers will require fewer organizational resources and therefore increase profit margins for organizations. Customer socialization plays an even more critical role in Internet purchases where customers often have no one to turn to for help. Because many people are unfamiliar with computers and the Internet as a medium to purchase products or services, management should make every effort to make the socialization process for these individuals as flawless as possible. Otherwise, confused

frustrated customers may desert their virtual shopping carts simply because they are unclear about what tasks they need to perform to complete a transaction.

Second, organizations may benefit from actively managing customers' perceptions of which behaviors are required and which are voluntary. Organizations cannot assume that behaviors they consider coproduction behaviors are actually perceived as such by customers. For example, companies may rely on customer feedback to develop their website and service delivery process. Also taken for granted by the organization, customers may not perceive these behaviors as a required part of their purchase and individuals who provide input may consider doing so as citizenship behavior. In other words, management and customers might not be congruent in their perception of which behaviors are part of the service production and delivery. As a consequence, managers may benefit from assessing their customers' perceptions regarding their role during the service delivery process. Doing so would allow them to actively manage those perceptions. In the case of the e-commerce business example, management could communicate to its customers that giving input into the website development process is an expected parts of the service. Changing expectations, so that behaviors initially perceived by customers as voluntary are subsequently perceived as expected, provides management with great opportunities to effectively design their service delivery process more efficiently and cost-effectively.

Third, the finding that customer satisfaction is positively related to providing feedback to an organization is contrary to conventional wisdom that people tend to provide only negative feedback, e.g., in form of complaints (Berry, 1995). To the

contrary, it has been assumed that many customers often do not even express their dissatisfaction because they feel it requires too much effort and has too little potential payoff (Heskett et al., 1997). The results of this study imply that many customers may indeed be willing to provide positive feedback. The fact that this contradicts anecdotal evidence suggests that management may not use the most effective tools for seeking out customer feedback and may benefit from scrutinizing their current practices.

Finally, although perceptions about exchange relationships were not directly assessed in this study, the evidence suggests that customers view their relationship with an organization as a social exchange. The finding that customer satisfaction leads to greater propensity to engage in citizenship behaviors has important implications for service managers. This is particularly interesting with e-commerce in that technology completely mediates all social exchanges. After all, customers and employees generally never interact in Internet service deliveries, yet my results imply that customers still view such interactions as social exchanges. In industries where voluntary behavior is important, the social exchange nature of the relationship with customers should be emphasized in service deliveries. For example, Internet companies often heavily rely on word-of-mouth recommendations to attract new customers. By treating customers in a fashion that goes above and beyond the call of duty, customers might be more likely to reciprocate with recommendation behavior or other citizenship behaviors.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study need to be addressed. Most importantly, although the underlying assumption of this research that satisfaction causes citizenship behaviors

is consistent with the OCB literature, it is plausible that the direction of causality points in the opposite direction or that the relationship is reciprocal. The notion that satisfaction causes OCB seems intuitive and has been an underlying assumption in OCB research. Nevertheless, as discussed by Podsakoff & MacKenzie (1997) and Van Dyne, Cummings, and McLean Park (1995), the investigation of causality remains a critical task for future research in OCB as it has not been established yet. The present research is constrained by the same limitation in that customer satisfaction was assumed to be an antecedent, not consequence of CCB, even though this assumption was not directly tested. In addition, even though social exchange theory provides a theoretical basis for my findings and suggests that customers view their relationship with organizations as a social exchange, I did not directly assess customer's attitudes about the exchange relationship. Because this study is one of the first to apply social exchange theory to the domain of both customers and Internet commerce, future research needs to further explore the customer-organization exchange relationship.

In spite of these limitations, this research demonstrates the importance of understanding and managing customer behavior in Internet service deliveries. With an ever-growing service sector and the rapid expansion of the Internet as a means of purchasing products and services, reliance on participation of customers to produce and delivery services is likely to increase in the future. A better understanding of how to manage customers can serve organizations as a valuable competitive advantage.

Footnotes

¹A separate sample (n = 124) was asked to think of a recent incident when they or others had engaged in CCB during a face-to-face service delivery. Using the same procedure as described in the text, these items were categorized (n = 81) and cross-validated (n = 50) by separate groups of participants. Because the final dimensions of CCB were identical to those of the Internet sample, only results of the latter are reported here.

CHAPTER 3

CUSTOMER CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN INTERNET SERVICE DELIVERIES: A SOCIAL EXCHANGE PERSPECTIVE

As the United States continue to move towards a service economy, the boundaries between organizational employees and customers are blurring. Customers often participate actively in the service delivery process (e.g., getting their food in a buffet line or using an automated phone system to transfer money) and are therefore increasingly viewed as human resources and partial employees of organizations (Bowen & Schneider, 1988; Mills et al., 1983; Mills & Morris, 1986). In addition, service employees often need to supervise and train customers during service deliveries (Bowen & Waldman, 1999; Goodwin, 1988; Kelley, 1992). As a result, research has increasingly applied human resource management principles and frameworks to the customer domain (e.g., Bowen, 1986; Heskett et al., 1997).

Considering that customers' active role in service deliveries can serve as a competitive advantage to organizations (e.g., by reducing labor costs, increasing service quality, and enhancing backward information flow), the question of how service organizations can manage customer behavior effectively remains unanswered. One theory that may provide an answer is social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). The role of exchange processes in organizations has been of increasing interest to organizational researchers (e.g., Rousseau & Park, 1993), and social exchange theory has been an underlying framework for much this research. However, social exchange research has predominantly focused on employees, most notably on perceived organizational support (Eisenberger,

Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) and leader-member exchange (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Given that customers are increasingly viewed as partial employees of organizations, it is not surprising that their exchanges with organizations and its employees have similarly been conceptualized as social exchange relationships (Bowen, 1990; Vaughan & Renn, 1999). Unfortunately, little empirical evidence is available to support this claim. It is the purpose of this study to provide much needed empirical evidence that the social exchange framework can be applied to exchanges between customers and organizations.

The present study further advances the current literature by extending social exchange theory to the domain of the Internet. Although the Internet as a market place has received a great amount of attention, little empirical evidence is available about employee and customer behavior in a virtual environment. But with the emergence of the Internet and e-commerce, the central role of the customer in service deliveries has become even more prevalent than before. The U.S. Bureau of Census estimates that retail e-commerce amounted to 7.0 billion dollars in the first quarter of 2001 (Bureau of Census, 2001), and an estimated 167 million people in the U.S. had home access to the Internet in 2001 (Nielsen, 2001). Not surprisingly, many services offered via the Internet require customers to actively participate in the production and delivery of services (e.g., by searching for desired products and services, reading available product information, entering payment and shipping information, etc.). However, during this process, customers and employees rarely interact directly with each other. Therefore, the opportunities to build social exchange relationships based on trust and reciprocity are

more limited on the Internet than in other service delivery modes (e.g., face-to-face interactions). Given the limited amount of human interaction, the question of whether Internet service deliveries allow for social exchange relationships to take place between customers and organizations has not received empirical attention. Hence, the present study examines whether social exchange theory can be applied to a virtual environment.

To date, research on customers as coproducers of service deliveries has been mainly conceptual, and empirical research has been rare (for an exception, see Bettencourt, 1997; Claycomb et al., 2001). Unfortunately, the definition of what entails customer coproduction behaviors has been inconsistent in previous studies and has often included discretionary behaviors that are not part of the actual service delivery (e.g., Bettencourt, 1997; Cermak et al., 1994). The present study extends existing research on customer behavior by studying antecedents of a new dependent variable, customer citizenship behavior (CCB), a construct that has received little attention in the research literature. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, CCB refers to voluntary and discretionary behaviors of customers during service deliveries (e.g., making recommendations, providing constructive feedback to management) and therefore goes beyond the assessment of required customer coproduction behaviors. In addition, I further extend the current service management literature, which generally relies on customers' self-reported behavioral intentions, by assessing customers' actual behaviors during the delivery process and by providing evidence for a causal link between proposed antecedents and CCB.

In sum, the present study aims at furthering our understanding of customers as active participants in service deliveries by (1) applying and extending social exchange theory to the domains of customers and the Internet, (2) by extending the investigation of customer behavior to a new dependent variable, CCB, and (3) by identifying causal links between proposed antecedents and CCB.

Theory and Hypotheses

The service delivery process is much more than a passive exchange of money for a particular service. Customers are often partial producers, sometimes even sole producers of services (e.g., pumping gas at a gas station and paying at the pump with a credit card), and they provide mental, physical, and emotional input during the process (Bowen, 1990; Rodie & Kleine, 2000). Technological advances suggest that customer participation is likely to increase in future years. For example, some grocery stores are now installing self-service checkouts for customers and most purchases on the Internet require customers to perform many tasks that traditionally have been performed by employees.

Existing research in the organizational literature has approached customer coproduction mainly from a strategic perspective. For example, Lengnick-Hall (1996) uses a total quality and strategic management framework to examine effective customer production. She identifies four roles of customers (resource, coproducer, buyer, and user) and argues for designing systems that involve and empower customers rather than merely assess their preferences. Bowen and Jones (1986) use transaction costs analysis to identify boundary conditions under which organizations should or should not engage

customers in the production of services. They argue that the level of performance ambiguity (i.e., the degree to which customers struggle to assess the quality of a service, even after its completion) and goal-congruence between customers and organizations are deciding factors in designing systems that involve customers in the delivery process.

Despite the great interest in the topic, empirical studies on customer coproduction are rare and have produced mixed results. For example, a positive link between customer satisfaction and customer coproduction was found by Cermak et al. (1994) but could not be replicated by Claycomb et al. (2001) or Bettencourt (1997). One possible explanation for these contradictory findings is an inconsistent conceptualization of customer coproduction. Rodie and Kleine (2000) define it as “actions and resources supplied by customers for service production and/or delivery” (p. 111). However, this definition is inconsistent with Bettencourt’s (1997) measure which included voluntary behaviors that are not a necessary part of service production/delivery (e.g., “If I have a useful idea on how to improve service, I give it to someone at this store”). Similarly, Cermak et al.’s (1994) measure of coproduction was a single item measure (“What has been your actual level of involvement – that is, how much time and effort have you invested?) that may not have tapped the construct of customer coproduction as defined by Rodie and Kleine (2000).

In light of these limitations, I argued in Chapter 2 of this dissertation to more clearly distinguish between customer coproduction behaviors, those behaviors that are required and expected for a successful service production and/or delivery, and customer citizenship behavior (CCB), voluntary and discretionary behaviors that are not required

for the successful production and/or delivery of the service but that, in the aggregate, help the service organization overall. This typology is consistent with research on employee behavior where a distinction between traditional employee task performance and extra-role behaviors (e.g., OCB, Organ, 1988a) has proven to be useful for both researchers and practitioners because both types of behaviors have differential antecedents and consequences (Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 1997; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Van Dyne et al., 1995). A focus on CCB is helpful for managers in that it allows them to better understand under what circumstances customers are likely to go above and beyond their prescribed role. The present study adopts a social exchange framework to identify two antecedents of CCB.

Customer-Organization Links as Social Exchanges

According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employee behavior consists of both economic and social exchanges. Economic exchanges refer to formal, transactional exchanges in which the exact nature of what is exchanged is based on a quid pro quo basis (Rousseau & Parks, 1993). Social exchanges, on the other hand, refer to relationships based on trust and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and entail benefits and future obligations that are rarely specified or explicitly negotiated. Thus, providing benefits is a voluntary action. As pointed out by Konovsky and Pugh (1994), parties in social exchanges allow for reciprocation through discretionary extra-role behaviors.

Social exchange theory has been used as a conceptual foundation for a large body of research on perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange.

Eisenberger et al. (1986) suggest that high levels of perceived organizational support, that is, beliefs concerning the extent to which one's organization values and cares for its employees, create feelings of future obligations. On a more dyadic level, leader-member exchange theory suggests that interpersonal relationships, based on norms of reciprocity, evolve between supervisors and subordinates where each party offers something the other party sees as valuable (Graen & Scandura, 1987). In addition, Organ (1988a, 1990) used social exchange theory to explain why individuals engage in behaviors that are neither formally rewarded or contractually enforceable. Organ (1988a) suggests that employees define their relationship with organizations as social rather than economic exchanges, and that perceived obligations towards the organization manifest themselves in discretionary behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

Some have argued that, similar to employees, customers view their relationship with an organization as a social exchange (e.g., Bowen, 1990; Solomon et al. 1985; Vaughan & Renn, 1999). This view is consistent with growing evidence that customers can be conceptualized as organizational members (e.g., appraising performance of service employees, Bowen and Schneider, 1985, or as source of new ideas for business strategies, Juttner and Wehrh, 1994). Applying social exchange theory to the domain of customers may help service organizations to identify antecedents of CCB that allow them to better understand how to manage their customers effectively. In the following section, I identify two potential antecedents of CCB, based on prior social exchange research.

Antecedents of Customer Citizenship Behavior

As noted earlier, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) suggest that parties in social exchanges form relationships based on mutual trust and the fulfillment of perceived obligations. If individuals are satisfied with the degree to which the other party is “living up to its promises,” they are themselves more likely to respond with reciprocal behavior. As noted by Konovsky and Pugh (1994), one common way for employees to reciprocate in an organizational setting is to engage in extra-role behavior. Evidence for this link is provided in the OCB literature, where a relationship between job satisfaction and OCB has been demonstrated (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff & Williams, 1986). Those employees satisfied with their job are more likely to engage in discretionary behaviors that benefit their organization as a whole. Organ (1977, 1988) suggests that employees use OCB behaviors to reciprocate because they are free to vary those behaviors, but are more constrained in varying other work-related behaviors (e.g., task performance) because deviating from such behaviors may lead to negative consequences (e.g., low performance reviews, termination).

Similar to employees, customers develop similar social exchange relationships with their organization. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) have shown that customers have clear expectations prior to engaging in service deliveries and that their satisfaction will be a function of whether or not those expectations were met. Satisfied customers are then more likely to return to the business and develop long-lasting relationships with the organization or with individual employees (Berry, 1995; Heskett et al., 1997). And, similar to employees, customers are also constrained in many coproduction behaviors as doing so would negatively impact the service outcome (e.g., providing one's

payment information during Internet transactions). On the other hand, they can freely vary discretionary behaviors, such as CCB, because doing so does not negatively affect the service outcome (e.g., helping other customers).

Consequently, findings from the OCB literature can be applied to customers in that a relationship between satisfaction and behaviors can be expected during service deliveries. In other words, satisfied customers will be more likely to reciprocate behavior by engaging in extra-role behavior.

Previous studies on customer behavior have relied almost exclusively on self-report measures of attitudes and behavioral intentions (e.g., Bettencourt, 1997; Cermak et al. 1994; Kellogg et al., 1997). Although this approach has some merit and can predict actual behavior accurately on some occasions (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1974), doing so limits the conclusions that can be drawn from results and often contributes to common method bias. Furthermore, these methods do not allow to establish a causal link between specific antecedents and customer behaviors. Therefore, this study extends existing research in two important ways: By assessing future CCB intentions as well as actual behavior and by experimentally manipulating the proposed antecedents, allowing for causal inferences. Hence, I propose:

Hypothesis 1: Participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of high-customer-satisfaction will report higher intentions to engage in CCB than participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of low-customer-satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of high-customer-satisfaction will engage in more CCB than participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of low-customer-satisfaction.

Linking Employee and Customer Citizenship Behaviors

Empirical evidence has established a link between employee perceptions and customer perceptions. For example, in a series of studies, Schneider and colleagues surveyed bank employees and customers and found a relationship between employee perceptions of branch practices and procedures and customer perceptions of service practices and qualities (Schneider & Bowen, 1985; Schneider, Parkington, & Buxton, 1980). Although most of these studies did not allow for any causal inferences, one study provided support for the causal arrow pointing from employees to customers (Schneider, Ashworth, Higgs, & Carr, 1996). Overall, these results imply that service employees may treat customers in much the same way that they feel their organization is treating them. Based on this evidence, some have argued for the existence of a “spillover effect” in service organizations, i.e., the notion that an organization’s internal HR policies and practices “spill over” to external customers in that management’s treatment of employees will affect employees’ subsequent treatment of customers which will ultimately lead to higher customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and higher profits for the organization (Bowen, Gilliland, & Folger, 1999; Bowen et al., 2000; Masterson, 2001). Given that the amount of personal interaction between employees and customers is very limited in Internet service deliveries, it is unclear whether social exchange and spillover theories

can be applied to virtual service deliveries. Therefore, the present study investigates the applicability of these theories to the domain of the Internet.

Theoretical support for the link between employee behavior and customer behavior is further provided by Heskett et al.'s (1997) theoretical framework of the service profit chain. The framework suggests direct and strong relationships between internal service quality, employee satisfaction, employee productivity, external service quality, customer satisfaction, and profitability. Heskett and colleagues (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1994; Heskett et al., 1997) argue that in order to provide high-quality service to customers, quality needs to be provided to employees as well (e.g., a high-quality work environment) because satisfied employees will be more likely to behave in ways that prompt customers to reciprocate with similar behaviors. It is interesting to note that the framework implies that the customer, the central figure in the service profit chain, views his or her relationship with an organization as a social rather than an economic exchange.

Although not explicitly addressed in these frameworks, the role of customers as partial employees of organizations suggests that the relationship between perceptions of quality and subsequent behaviors can be extended to them. That is, the social exchange nature of the relationship between employees and customers suggests that, similarly to employees who are more likely to treat customers well if treated well by their organization (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992), customers who are treated well by employees will be more likely to reciprocate such behavior.

Although social exchange theory has not been directly applied to customers, a first step in that direction has been taken by Vaughan and Renn (1999). These authors apply social exchange theory in the context of service employees. Vaughan and Renn (1999) proposed “voluntary behaviors service providers direct towards customers” (p. 159) as a new form of OCB and labeled it customer service citizenship behavior. They further present a model of customer-employee relationships that uses customer service citizenship behavior to explain how service employees’ perceptions of service quality influence customers’ perceptions (Vaughan & Renn, 1999). Similarly, Morrison (1996) argues that many service-oriented behaviors of employees are forms of OCB and directly impact customers’ perceptions of service quality. In other words, OCB of service employees often directly impacts customers.

This theoretical evidence suggests that customers who are recipients or observers of OCB performed by service employees will perceive an obligation to reciprocate such behavior. Because service employees are often viewed by customers as functionally interchangeable representatives of the organization (Gutek, 1995, Gutek, Bhappu, Liao-Troth, & Cherry, 1999), such reciprocal behavior can be directed at the individual employee or the organization overall. If customers receive extraordinary treatment by service employees or observe employees to go above and beyond their call of duty, they ought to be more likely to reciprocate by engaging in voluntary behaviors that benefit the organization. Thus, social exchange theory suggests a link between employees’ propensity to engage in extra-role behaviors and customers’ propensity to do likewise. Therefore, I propose:

Hypothesis 3: Participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of high-OCB will report higher intentions to engage in CCB than participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of low-OCB.

Hypothesis 4: Participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of high-OCB will engage in more CCB than participants (acting as customers) in the condition with perceptions of low-OCB.

Although the proposed main effects for customer satisfaction and OCB are both well-grounded in organizational theories, there is reason to believe that their effects will not be of equal size. As pointed out, customer satisfaction is related to a number of service-related outcomes, such as attitudes, commitment, and future intentions (e.g., Berry, 1995). Research indicates that customers use a wide variety of cues in their assessment of satisfaction, such as tangibles (e.g., physical equipment, appearance of store/website) and reliability (i.e., the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately) (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Because many of such cues are readily available on the Internet, the effects of customer satisfaction on service-related outcomes, such as CCB, is expected to be strong in Internet service deliveries.

On the other hand, as pointed out earlier, OCB is far less prevalent in Internet service deliveries where employees and customers never see each other face-to-face and have very limited communication, if any. Whereas customers in face-to-face deliveries have ample opportunity to observe OCB first-hand, Internet customers generally lack the opportunity to do so. Although social exchanges can take place on the Internet, the impact of OCB on CCB is expected to be less strong than the impact of customer

satisfaction on CCB due to the unique features of virtual service processes. Hence, I propose:

Hypothesis 5: Customer satisfaction will more strongly predict intentions to engage in CCB than will OCB.

Hypothesis 6: Customer satisfaction will more strongly predict CCB than will OCB.

Method

Participants

Participants were 328 undergraduate business students of a large Southwestern university who received class credit for their participation. Gender was divided roughly equal with 56.2% males and 43.8% females. Age ranged from 19 to 44 years with a mean age of 22.1 years ($SD = 3.4$). The ethnic composition of the sample was as follows: 63.1% White, 19.1% Asian, 9.1% Hispanic, 2.2% African-American, and 6.6% others. A great majority (82.4%) of participants indicated that they had purchased products or services over the Internet in the past with a reported mean of 10.4 ($SD = 17.8$) previous Internet purchases.

Procedure

A 2 X 2 between-subjects factorial design was employed in this study. Customer satisfaction (high satisfaction versus low satisfaction) was crossed with OCB (high OCB versus low OCB). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. The study took place in computer laboratory facilities designed for behavioral research. Between 16 and 35 subjects participated at a time.

Website Development

With the help of a professional programmer, a website of a fictitious company called Ceplex was created specifically for this research project. Ceplex was portrayed as a growing company specializing in online sales of gourmet foods and wines. These products were chosen because university students do not frequently buy them online and their unfamiliarity with the fictitious company would therefore not cause them to question its real existence. The Ceplex storefront was programmed to resemble websites of major online retailers. Customers could browse through dozens of products, view the products' pictures, descriptions, and prices, and place them in their shopping basket. Once customers proceeded to check out, they had to work through several screens that asked them for personal information, payment and shipping options, etc. The Ceplex homepage contained numerous links commonly found on websites of Internet retailers, e.g., frequently asked questions, contact information, background information about the company, and many others. During the development of the Ceplex website, several pretests were conducted to test the realism of the shopping experience on the website. At the end of the process, pretest participants predominantly affirmed that the shopping experience at the store was very realistic and comparable to actual Internet stores in every aspect.

Study Design

Participants were informed that the study consisted of three distinct phases: (1) an introduction with background information about Ceplex, (2) a simulated e-commerce experience, and (3) a questionnaire assessing their shopping experience.

Introduction and experimental manipulation. Participants were seated at computer terminals in separate rooms, so that no interaction among them could take place throughout the study. Standardized instructions were given to students on the screen, informing them that the purpose of the study was to examine customer satisfaction in an e-commerce environment. They were informed that Ceplex was interested in testing several website features and wanted to assess customers' reactions to those features.

As part of the introduction, some background information about Ceplex was provided, along with pictures of the company and some of its employees. Depending on the experimental condition, the information provided differed slightly for participants. Subjects in the high-customer-satisfaction condition were informed that, in the past, customers have been consistently satisfied with the service provided by Ceplex. Results of a fictitious customer satisfaction survey were shown and demonstrated high ratings. Furthermore, once on the Ceplex website, participants in the high-customer-satisfaction condition were able to view fictitious e-mails sent by other customers that generally praised quality of service and devotion to customer satisfaction. Participants in the low-customer-satisfaction condition were informed that, in the past, customers have often been dissatisfied by the service provided by Ceplex. They also viewed results of a fictitious survey that demonstrated low ratings. Furthermore, the customer e-mails they viewed included complaints about low quality of service and expressed dissatisfaction.

The background information further included a short fictitious article about Ceplex from a local newspaper. The article was drawn from an actual business magazine but was reworded to focus on Ceplex and to match the manipulation of each experimental

condition. Participants in the high-OCB condition read a newspaper clip that praised Ceplex employees for exemplary work place behaviors that go above and beyond their call of duty. Several examples of actual behaviors were quoted (e.g., helping other coworkers who have a heavy workload). Those examples were taken directly from Bateman and Organ's (1983) OCB scale. Participants in the low-OCB condition read a similar newspaper clip, but it described Ceplex employees' as lacking willingness to engage in voluntary citizenship behaviors towards their organization or coworkers.

Simulated shopping experience. After reading the introductory background information that contained the manipulations, participants were directed to the Ceplex homepage. They were instructed to spend a minimum of 20 minutes on the website, to browse through the different product offerings, and to buy a minimum of three products. Participants were issued fake credit card numbers and were assured that they did not actually have to pay for any purchases. Besides descriptions and pictures of all the products offered, the Ceplex homepage contained three elements that allowed participants to engage in CCB, if they chose to do so. First, a link named "Contact Us" encouraged customers to send an e-mail to Ceplex and provide feedback to the company. Unbeknownst to participants, any e-mails sent through this link were rerouted to the author of this study. Second, another link allowed customers to recommend the business to their friends and family. Customers were encouraged to enter names and/or e-mail addresses of those who might be interested in the products offered by Ceplex. Third, a chat room on the homepage allowed participants to communicate with other customers. The link encouraged participants to enter the chat room in order to help other customers

who had little experience with Internet shopping. All behaviors of individual participants were recorded throughout the study and were later matched to their experimental condition and survey responses.

Questionnaire. Once participants had completed the purchasing process, they were thanked for their order and asked to fill out a survey regarding their shopping experience at the Ceplex website. The survey contained the measures described below.

Upon completion of the survey, subjects were debriefed and thanked for their participation. On average, participants took 35-40 minutes to complete the entire study. The debriefing sessions indicated that the study design was very realistic. Virtually all participants stated that they had, at no time, doubted that Ceplex was an actual company, and they further asserted that the background information and the shopping experience on the website seemed very real.

Measures

Customer Citizenship Behavior

CCB was measured in two different ways: (1) a 15-item scale that assessed behavioral intentions and (2) actual citizenship behaviors of participants that were recorded on the Ceplex website.

Citizenship intentions. To measure CCB intentions, the 15-item scale developed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation was used. Some items were slightly reworded to refer specifically to Ceplex instead of “the business.” The scale, shown in Appendix B, assesses the three dimensions of CCB identified in Chapter 2 with five items each: (1) recommendation, (2) providing feedback to the organization, and (3) helping other

customers. All items were assessed on a 7-point scale, ranging from (1) = *not at all likely* to (7) *extremely likely*. The three dimensions demonstrated the following internal consistency estimates: recommendations, $\alpha = .95$; providing feedback to the organization, $\alpha = .85$; and helping other customers, $\alpha = .95$.

Citizenship behaviors. The three dimensions of customer citizenship behaviors were measured by the following three dichotomous measures: recommendations (0 = did not enter any e-mail addresses/names of friends or family; 1 = did enter one or more e-mail address/name); feedback (0 = did not send an e-mail to the company, 1 = did send an e-mail); and helping (0 = did not enter chat room to help other customers, 1 = did enter chat room).

Control Variables

Participants' familiarity with using computers and the Internet as well as past experiences with e-commerce were used as control variables in this study. Computer confidence was assessed with the Computer Confidence Subscale of the Computer Attitude Scale (Loyd & Gressard, 1984; Loyd & Loyd, 1985). The scale consists of 10 items (e.g., "Generally I would feel OK about trying a new problem on the computer"). All items were assessed on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Negatively worded items were reverse coded. The measure showed an internal consistency estimate of $\alpha = .86$.

Previous online purchases were assessed with the following open-ended question: "In the past, how many times have you purchased products or services over the Internet?"

Results

Manipulation Checks

Two items were included in the questionnaire to check whether the manipulation of customer satisfaction was successful: (1) To what extent have customers been satisfied with the service provided by Ceplex in the past? (1 = *not at all satisfied* to 7 = *extremely satisfied*) and (2) How would you rate the quality of service provided by Ceplex in the past? (1 = *very low quality* to 7 = *very high quality*). Separate t-tests indicated that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the high-customer-satisfaction condition were more likely to indicate that customers had been satisfied in the past ($M_{\text{high-customer-satisfaction}} = 5.90$, $M_{\text{low-customer-satisfaction}} = 2.99$, $t(1, 318) = -17.34$, $p < .001$) and rated the quality of service provided in the past higher ($M_{\text{high-customer-satisfaction}} = 5.67$, $M_{\text{low-customer-satisfaction}} = 2.92$, $t(1, 318) = -15.89$, $p < .001$).

The effectiveness of the OCB manipulation was also assessed with two items: (1) How frequently do Ceplex employees engage in tasks that are not formally required of them as part of the job? (1 = *not at all frequently* to 7 = *very frequently*) and (2) To what extent are Ceplex employees willing to go above and beyond their call of duty? (1 = *not at all willing* to 7 = *very willing*). Results show that the OCB manipulation was effective. Participants in the high-OCB condition were more likely to indicate that Ceplex employees engage in OCB ($M_{\text{high-OCB}} = 5.15$, $M_{\text{low-OCB}} = 3.96$, $t(1, 316) = -6.80$, $p < .001$) and go above and beyond their call of duty ($M_{\text{high-OCB}} = 5.35$, $M_{\text{low-OCB}} = 3.95$, $t(1, 318) = -7.59$, $p < .001$).

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all study variables are displayed in Table 3.1. As shown, participants reported a moderate amount of intentions to engage in CCB with means ranging from 4.59 to 4.71 on a 7-point scale. This result is encouraging for future research examining the CCB construct, given that many self-report measures in the customer domain (e.g., customer satisfaction, service quality) are uniformly negatively skewed with a positive bias, resulting in ceiling effects and restricted range in many studies (Peterson, & Wilson, 1992). Consistent with results from Chapter 2 of this dissertation, the three dimensions of CCB were strongly intercorrelated (coefficients ranging from .45 - .57).

Base rates of actual behaviors were relatively low. Only 22% and 25% of individuals provided feedback and helped customers, respectively, and only 5% recommended Ceplex to their friends or family. In total, 39% of participants engaged in at least one type of CCB. It is interesting to note that the relationship between participants' actual behaviors and future behavioral intentions is relatively weak (only 2 out of 9 correlations are significant), a result that is consistent with findings in the social-psychological literature (see Ajzen, 1980, and Fishbein and Ajzen, 1987, for a discussion) and that highlights the importance of studying actual customer behavior instead of attitudes or behavioral intentions as surrogates for behavior.

Effects of Experimental Manipulations

Initially, MANCOVA was conducted to determine the effects of customer satisfaction and OCB on the three dimensions of CCB intentions. Computer familiarity and previous Internet purchases were used as covariates. A significant effect was found

Table 3.1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of all Measures (N = 328)

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Customer Satisfaction Manipulation	.51	.50	--									
2. OCB Manipulation	.49	.50	.01	--								
3. Recommendations (Intentions)	4.71	1.56	.39**	.05	(.95)							
4. Providing Feedback (Intentions)	4.63	1.35	.20**	-.05	.46**	(.85)						
5. Helping Customers (Intentions)	4.59	1.55	.23**	-.01	.57**	.45**	(.95)					
6. Recommendation (Behavior)	.05	.22	.15**	.02	.05	-.08	.06	--				
7. Providing Feedback (Behavior)	.25	.44	.12*	.01	-.05	.18**	.07	.28**	--			
8. Helping Customers (Behavior)	.22	.41	.00	.00	-.14*	-.02	-.04	.14**	.19**	--		
9. Computer familiarity	5.60	1.03	-.02	.04	-.01	.09	.06	-.02	.20**	.06	(.86)	
10. Previous Internet Purchases	10.39	17.77	-.01	.03	-.10	-.07	-.04	-.03	-.03	.07	.03	--

Note: Values along diagonal represent internal consistency estimates. * = $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed). ** = $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

for customer satisfaction (Wilks' $\lambda = .84$, $F(3, 303) = 19.59$, $\eta^2 = .16$, $p < .001$), but not for OCB (Wilks' $\lambda = .99$, $F(3, 303) = 1.12$, ns). No significant interaction between customer satisfaction and OCB was found.

Follow-up ANCOVAs were conducted for each dependent variable. Results are shown in Table 3.2 and support Hypothesis 1, which suggested that participants in the high-customer-satisfaction condition would report higher intentions to engage in CCB than those in the low-customer-satisfaction condition. Results show that participants in the high-customer-satisfaction condition indicated to be more likely to recommend the business to friends or family ($M_{\text{high-customer-satisfaction}} = 5.31$, $M_{\text{low-customer-satisfaction}} = 4.08$, $p < .001$), to provide feedback to the organization ($M_{\text{high-customer-satisfaction}} = 4.91$, $M_{\text{low-customer-satisfaction}} = 4.35$, $p < .001$), and to help other customers ($M_{\text{high-customer-satisfaction}} = 5.17$, $M_{\text{low-customer-satisfaction}} = 4.45$, $p < .001$) than those participants in the low-customer-satisfaction condition.

As shown in Table 3.2, OCB did not have a main effect on any of the three CCB dimensions. Therefore, Hypothesis 3, which suggested that customers in the high-OCB condition would report higher intentions to engage in CCB than those in the low-OCB condition, was not supported.

Because participants' citizenship behaviors were measured as dichotomous variables, separate chi-square analyses were run to test Hypotheses 2 and 4. Results are shown in Table 3.3. Hypothesis 2 suggested that participants in the high-customer-satisfaction condition would engage in more CCB on the Ceplex website than those in the low-customer-satisfaction condition. This hypothesis was supported for two of the three

Table 3.2

Analysis of Variance for Customer Satisfaction and Organizational Citizenship Behavior Intentions

Independent Variable	Recommendations		Providing Feedback		Helping Customers	
	df	F	df	F	df	F
Computer Confidence	1	.16	1	3.76	1	2.04
Previous Purchases	1	3.33	1	1.87	1	.47
Customer Satisfaction	1	57.06*	1	14.01*	1	17.71*
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	1	1.28	1	.63	1	.01
Error	310	(2.08)	311	(1.76)	306	(2.29)

Note: Values in parentheses are mean-square terms. * = $p < .001$.

Table 3.3

*Chi-square Analysis showing number of participants engaging in Customer Citizenship Behavior**

	Made recommendation ^a		Provided feedback ^b		Helped other customers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
High customer satisfaction	14 (8.4%)	153 (91.6%)	51 (30.5%)	116 (69.5%)	36 (21.6%)	131 (78.4)
Low customer satisfaction	3 (1.9%)	158 (98.1%)	32 (19.9%)	129 (80.1%)	35 (21.7%)	126 (78.3%)
	Made recommendation		Provided feedback		Helped other customers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
High OCB	9 (5.6%)	153 (94.4%)	42 (25.9%)	120 (74.1%)	35 (21.6%)	127 (78.4%)
Low OCB	8 (4.8%)	158 (95.2%)	41 (24.7%)	125 (75.3%)	36 (21.7%)	130 (78.3%)

Note: *Row percentage shown in parentheses. ^a $\chi^2 = 7.09$, $p < .01$. ^b $\chi^2 = 4.93$, $p < .05$.

CCB dimensions. Those in the high-customer-satisfaction condition were more than four times as likely to recommend Ceplex to their friends or family ($\chi^2 = 7.09$, $p < .01$) and more than 1.5 times as likely to send feedback e-mails to the organization ($\chi^2 = 4.93$, $p < .05$) than those in the low-customer-satisfaction condition. Customer satisfaction had no effect on helping other customers ($\chi^2 = .00$, ns). Hypothesis 4 suggested that individuals in the high-OCB condition would engage in more CCB than those in the low-OCB condition. As can be seen in Table 3.3, this hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 5 suggested that customer satisfaction would be a stronger predictor of intentions to engage in CCB than would OCB. An analysis of correlations in Table 3.1 indicates that CCB intentions were significantly correlated with customer satisfaction (correlation coefficients ranging from .20 - .39, all p s $< .001$) but not with OCB (correlation coefficients ranging from -.05 to .05, ns). To test these values for significant differences, separate two-tailed t-tests on the correlation coefficients were conducted, following steps outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983) and Steiger (1980) for dependent correlation coefficients. Results show that the three coefficients for correlations between customer satisfaction and CCB intentions are significantly larger than all three coefficients for correlations between OCB and CCB intentions: recommendations: $t(325) = 3.63$, $p < .001$; providing feedback: $t(325) = 2.54$, $p < .01$; and helping customers: $t(325) = 2.45$, $p < .01$. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Hypothesis 6 suggested that customer satisfaction would be a stronger predictor of CCB than would OCB. As Table 3.1 indicates, two of the three dimensions of CCB were significantly related to customer satisfaction ($r_{\text{recommendation}} = .15$, $p < .01$; $r_{\text{providing}}$

$r_{\text{feedback}} = .12, p < .05$, $r_{\text{helping customers}} = .00$, ns) but not with OCB (correlation coefficients ranging from .00 - .02, ns). Again, separate two-tailed t-tests on the correlation coefficients were conducted. Results show that two of the coefficients for correlations between customer satisfaction and CCB are larger than those for correlations between OCB and CCB, even though results fell slightly short of the conventional significance level: recommendations: $t(325) = 1.31, p < .10$; providing feedback: $t(325) = 1.30, p < .10$; and helping customers: $t(325) = 0$, ns. These results provide at least partial support for Hypothesis 6.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to investigate voluntary customer behaviors in Internet service deliveries. Adopting a social exchange theory framework (Blau, 1964), I examined whether customers experience online service deliveries as social exchanges in which a perceived obligation to reciprocate results in increased discretionary behaviors towards the organization. Perceptions of customer satisfaction and OCB were manipulated prior to a simulated Internet service delivery in order to assess participants' citizenship behaviors and future behavioral intentions. Results support the usefulness of the CCB construct and provide evidence that social exchange theory may be extended to the domains of customers and the Internet.

Results suggest that focusing on the CCB construct as a service-related outcome is a valuable addition to the service management literature. Studying customers' extra-role behaviors moves beyond prior research on customer coproduction in that it focuses on a set of behaviors not captured by previous conceptualizations. In addition, the

distinction between customer in-role and extra-role behavior is theoretically consistent with research on employee behavior, where a distinction between task performance and citizenship behaviors has shown to be useful for managers and researchers alike. Given that OCB theories suggest a number of additional antecedents of employee citizenship, research on customer behavior should benefit from investigating a number of additional predictor variables beyond those examined in this study.

The most interesting result of this study is the relationship between customer satisfaction and citizenship behaviors. It appears that customers who perceive satisfaction to be high are more willing to go above and beyond expectations in order to help an organization. Results clearly show a link between satisfaction and CCB intentions as well as actual behaviors. This finding provides much needed empirical support for a conceptualization of customer-organization links as social exchange relationships (Bowen, 1990; Hoffman & Ingram, 1992; Solomon et al., 1985). In addition, results provide evidence for a causal link between customer satisfaction and CCB and therefore move beyond past research which has generally relied on self-reported attitudes or behavioral intentions.

The proposed relationship between perceived employee citizenship (OCB) and customer citizenship (CCB) was not significant. Although the manipulation checks indicated that the OCB manipulation was successful, participants who received information about frequent OCB in the organization were not more likely to engage in CCB or to indicate that they would be likely to do so in the future. It is possible that the OCB manipulation was too artificial in that customers never interacted with employees or

actually observed them engaging in citizenship behaviors. Simple reading that such behavior takes place may not have been sufficient in establishing a perceived obligation to reciprocate with similar extra-role behavior. Furthermore, the lack of interpersonal interactions with employees in the simulated service delivery may have been a reason for the nonsignificant results. Nevertheless, the proposed relationship between OCB and CCB is well grounded in theories of social exchange, and recent findings of a “spillover effect” (Bowen et al., 1999; Masterson, 2001) of employee attitudes and behaviors lend further support for such a link. Future research should examine this relationship by using improved manipulations of OCB or collecting field data of employee and customer citizenship behaviors within the same organization.

Finally, this evidence provides support that social exchange theory can be extended to the domain of the Internet. As a relatively new mode of service delivery, Internet service deliveries differ substantially from traditional face-to-face deliveries in that (1) customers often need to perform a range of behaviors for successful service completion and (2) the amount of human interaction is very limited. Nevertheless, the results of this study indicate that customers perceive their relationship with virtual companies as social exchanges. This result is especially interesting considering that time has been identified as a major determinant in the development of social exchange relationships because parties become familiar with each other and develop trust over the course of repeated interactions (Blau, 1964; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). Because study participants did not have any knowledge of or relationship with the company prior to the study, the influence on CCB might be even stronger in cases where

customers develop service relationships with companies or individual employees over the course of time (Gutek, 1995).

Managerial Implications

The results of this study have a number of practical implications for service organizations. The conceptualization of the CCB construct allows managers to focus beyond traditional customer coproduction behaviors that are limited by focusing on required task behaviors only. Distinguishing between in-role and extra-role behaviors has no doubt been very useful in the domain of employees (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2000). Applying this framework to the customer domain may allow managers to more clearly identify antecedents of target behaviors that they want to increase, train, or discourage. For example, many Internet companies often rely heavily on word-of-mouth recommendations by their customers. Results of this study suggest that promoting recommendation behavior (e.g., by including a hyperlink to “send this to a friend” on their website, as many companies do) may not be the most effective way to accomplish this goal, especially if customer satisfaction is perceived to be low. As organizations may differ from their customers in which behaviors they perceive are required versus discretionary, management may benefit from more clearly communicating their expectations to their customers, who might not be aware or familiar with certain citizenship behaviors available to them (e.g., posting a book review at an online bookseller).

Finally, results of this study suggest that satisfying customers by providing quality service may have benefits that have been overlooked in the past in the service

management literature. Previous research has focused on service-related outcomes such as customer loyalty, customer retention, profits through increased sales to long-term customers, etc. (Iacobucci, 1998; Swartz & Iacobucci, 2000). There is no doubt that these are important consequences of customer satisfaction worthy of empirical investigation. However, the present study suggests that managers should also focus on customers' long-term behavioral patterns of citizenship behaviors. Although it is difficult to put a dollar value on behaviors such as helping other customers who do not know what is expected of them or providing management with first-hand experience on how their operations could be improved from a customers' point of view, common sense suggests that these behaviors could be a tremendous asset to an organization.

Finally, extending social exchange theory to the Internet provides much needed empirical evidence of the usefulness of organizational behavior frameworks in a virtual environment. The results of this study tentatively suggest that even in an environment with very limited face-to-face contact with customers, organizations may nevertheless successfully establish long-term relationships with customers based on trust and the norm of reciprocity. Future research should examine the applicability of other organizational and human resource management principles to the domain of the Internet.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study need to be addressed. First, although the laboratory setting provided tight control of the study design and allowed for experimental manipulation, external validity is inevitably sacrificed with such a study design. For example, although participants believed that they were interacting with an actual

company, they were aware that their shopping experience was simulated in that they would not actually purchase any items. Furthermore, the experimental manipulations of customer satisfaction and OCB were somewhat indirect. Participants received information about satisfaction of other customers, which may not be equated with their own satisfaction. Similarly, as indicated earlier, participants never observed any OCB directed towards them or other customers, which might explain the nonsignificant results for the OCB manipulation. Despite these shortcomings, every effort was made to increase the realism of the study and informal results of pretests and debriefings indicated that that effort was successful.

It would have been an asset to this study to observe coproduction behaviors, in addition to CCB, as a dependent variable. Although it was the author's intention to do so at the onset of this study, practical constraints of the website development did not allow for any meaningful measures of coproduction behaviors. After several unsuccessful attempts in the programming phase to include such measures, this idea had to be abandoned. It is my hope that future research will attempt to measure both coproduction and citizenship behaviors simultaneously in order to compare these two types of behavior more directly.

Conclusion

In the future, the role of customers is likely to grow in importance due to forthcoming technological innovations, such as the Internet, and due to increased competition in the service sector that compels organizations to pass on manual labor to their customers. The question of how to manage customer behavior is complex and

requires additional research before a confident answer can be given. Nevertheless, this study sheds light on the importance of managing customers in Internet service deliveries. It demonstrates that well established organizational theories of employee behavior can be extended to customers. Future research needs to replicate and extend these findings in order to increase our understanding of managing customer behavior.

Footnotes

¹As part of a larger study, an second sample ($N_{\text{Total}} = 255$; $N_{\text{Response-generation}} = 124$; $N_{\text{Categorization-phase}} = 81$; $N_{\text{Cross-validation-phase}} = 50$) was used to identify dimensions of customer citizenship behavior in face-to-face service deliveries. All steps were identical to those described in the text, except that participants were instructed to recall an incident when they or others had engaged in citizenship behavior in a face-to-face service interaction. Results were identical in that the same three dimensions were identified.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine customer behavior in service deliveries. For reasons outlined in the introduction, I particularly focused on the Internet as a mode of service delivery, even though many of the results will likely generalize to more traditional modes, such as face-to-face or telephone interactions. I built on previous research in the service management literature which has identified customers as partial employees and coproducers of service organizations and has taken a human resource management approach to investigating the role of customers in services. Using this approach, I developed a typology and nomological network of customer behavior that distinguishes between in-role behaviors (customer coproduction) and extra-role behaviors (citizenship) of customers. This approach is conceptually consistent with theories of social exchange and OCB, which have received ample attention in the organizational literature. However, my dissertation adds to previous research by applying social exchange and OCB theories to the customer domain.

Methodologically, I used two distinct methods of data collection, each with unique advantages and challenges. In the first study, presented in Chapter 2, I used the survey method to sample prospective jurors awaiting panel selection in a jury pool. This sampling technique allowed for a fairly representative cross-section of the county's population. Unfortunately, using such sampling approach only allowed to assess self-report measures and behavioral intentions, a limitation that is common in survey studies. Furthermore, this approach was subject to common method bias, even though some of the

most interesting results of the study, the fact that the two types of customer behavior were predicted by differential antecedents, cannot be readily explained by common method bias.

In the second study, presented in Chapter 3, I used an experimental laboratory approach to identify antecedents of customer citizenship behaviors and intentions. This research design overcame some of the limitations of the first study. Most importantly, due to the manipulation of the independent variables, a causal link between customer satisfaction and citizenship behaviors and intentions could be established. Furthermore, tight experimental control in a laboratory setting minimized the confounding effects of unknown third variables. Nevertheless, the research design posed a set of different limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the use of a student sample may have limited the generalizability of the results. Although using student samples is a common criticism of many laboratory studies in the social sciences, I believe that this criticism can be minimized in this study. Given that the purpose of this dissertation was to investigate customers in Internet service deliveries, it appears that college students are a fairly representative sample of the target population. Most college students are very computer-savvy and have ample experience with e-commerce and online purchases. Another limitation of the laboratory study design was the simulated nature of the service experience. Even though every effort was made to create an environment as close to an actual Internet service delivery as possible, participants nevertheless were aware throughout the process that their shopping experience was somewhat artificial in that they would not actually purchase any items. It is not clear to what extent that influenced the

results. For example, it is possibly that participants were less committed and less willing to engage in any sort of cooperative behavior because they did not actually view themselves as customers of the organization.

Despite these limitations and challenges of the research study designs, the combined findings of both studies are very encouraging. A consistent finding is that a typology of customer behavior consisting of in-role (coproduction) and extra-role (citizenship) behaviors appears to be useful. Customers seem to make a clear distinction between those behaviors that they perceive to be a required part of their role as customers and those behaviors that they feel are at their discretion. The first study clearly showed that these two behaviors were predicted by differential antecedents. Whereas customer citizenship behaviors were more strongly predicted by customer satisfaction, customer coproduction behaviors were more strongly predicted by customer socialization. These results are consistent with literature on employee socialization and OCB and provide evidence that customers may view their relationship with organizations as social exchanges, much like employees often regard their relationships with organizations as social exchanges.

The second study established a causal link between customer satisfaction and customer citizenship behaviors, therefore replicating some of the results of the first study. In addition, the study breaks new ground in that it examined actual customer behaviors during the service delivery process. This provides an important addition to the service management literature, which has almost exclusively relied on self-report measures in the past. Contrary to my expectations, a link between OCB and CCB could not be established

in the second study. As discussed in the results section of Chapter 3, even though this proposed link seems to be consistent with existing theories, the manipulation of OCB in the study may have been limited because participants did not actually interact with any employees and therefore did not experience any OCB first-hand. In addition, the limited amount of interpersonal contact between customers and employees on the Internet may be another reason why no significant link between OCB and CCB was found. It is my hope that future research will attempt to further study this link, either with an improved manipulation and research design in a laboratory setting or with field data that allows for observation of employees and customer of the same organization.

Conclusion

Overall, there are three crucial lessons that can be learned from the two studies presented in this dissertation.

First, managing customer behavior in service delivery may be a complex process for which it is difficult to develop clear-cut guidelines. But even though understanding customer behavior is a challenging task, it is nevertheless important for managers, given that involving customers in the service process can be a competitive advantage for an organization. With competition steadily increasing in many service sectors, it appears that, at least to some extent, most managers cannot afford not to manage customer behavior.

Second, as customers are increasingly coproducing services and, therefore, boundaries between employees and customers are blurring, it becomes increasingly important to view customers as resources and assets to organizations, as opposed to

passive consumers who simply want to exchange money for services. The results of this dissertation show that existing theories and frameworks from the organizational literature, most of which have been developed for employee behavior in traditional employment settings, can be meaningfully applied to customers. Future research needs to extend and expand current thinking in order to better understand the changing role that customers play in traditional workplaces.

Third, the Internet is an important mode of service delivery that is here to stay. Due to its relative novelty, relatively little empirical research on behavioral aspects of customers and employees in a virtual environment has surfaced in the academic literature. This is unfortunate, given that millions of Americans purchase products and services over the Internet every day. With competition among online organizations increasing rapidly, it becomes essential for managers to better understand behavior of invisible customers at the other end of the line. My results shed some light on managing customer behavior and demonstrate that customers may be willing to engage in a variety of voluntary behaviors that may greatly benefit the organization. It is encouraging that social exchange theory, the main theoretical focus of this dissertation, can be meaningfully applied to Internet service exchanges. Future research needs to test and expand additional existing organizational theories to the virtual workplace in order to further our understanding of employee and customer behavior on the Internet.

Directions for Future Research

Although results of the two studies presented in this dissertation are encouraging, more research is needed to more fully understand the nature of customer coproduction

and customer citizenship behaviors. First, the scale development of my measure of customer citizenship behaviors needs to be replicated and, possibly, extended. Although it appears that the three dimensions identified, recommendation, providing feedback to the organization, and helping other customers, represent the most commonly voluntary extra-role behaviors performed by customers, it is possible that additional dimensions will surface in future studies. Some clusters were eliminated in the Q-Sort procedure that did not meet the requirements for consistent overlap, even though they seemed to be of a distinct nature. Providing feedback to an organization may be further divided into providing positive feedback (e.g., praising the business in a survey) and negative feedback (e.g., complaining to a manager). Also, performing duties of service employees (e.g., cleaning one's table after dining even though it's clearly the responsibility of service employees) seemed to emerge as an additional factor but did not withstand the empirical scrutiny of the Q-Sort procedure.

Furthermore, additional antecedents of customer citizenship behaviors and coproduction behaviors need to be identified. I only focused on a small number of variables in this dissertation, even though OCB theories and other organizational theories provide plenty theoretical justification for a number of additional potential antecedents. Outcome variables of customer behavior are another area that needs to be explored in future research. Unfortunately, doing so was beyond the scope of this dissertation. But this certainly does not imply that identifying outcomes of customer behaviors is any less important than identifying antecedents.

Finally, whereas the great majority of customers are well-meaning, honest individuals, sometimes customers with unrealistic expectations or ill will go out of their way to harm a service employee or an organization. The flipside of customer citizenship behaviors are antisocial behaviors (sometimes revengeful, sometimes unprovoked) that can cause great damage to organizations. Future research needs to identify these behaviors as well as potential antecedents of such behaviors so that managers have the necessary tools to protect their organization, employees, and customers from malicious customer behavior.

APPENDIX A
STUDY MEASURES FOR STUDY 1

Customer Socialization ($\alpha = .81$)

- I understand the policies of this business.
- I feel comfortable with this business.
- I understand the values that are important to this business.

Customer Coproduction ($\alpha = .94$)

- I performed all the tasks that are required.
- I met formal performance requirements.
- I fulfilled responsibilities to the business.
- I adequately completed all expected behaviors.
- I helped the company with those things that are required.

Customer Satisfaction ($\alpha = .94$)

- Overall, how satisfied are you with the service provided by the business?
- How do you rate the customer service provided by the business?
- The company did an excellent job in providing customer satisfaction.

Computer Familiarity ($\alpha = .91$)

- How do you rate your familiarity with ...?
 - ... computers in general
 - ... the Internet

... purchasing products/services on the Internet

Note: Items for customer citizenship behavior (CCB) are shown in Table 2.2.

APPENDIX B

CUSTOMER CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR (CCB) MEASURE FOR STUDY 2

Based on today's experience with Ceplex, how likely are you to ...?

Recommendations ($\alpha = .93$)

-recommend Ceplex to your friends.
- ...refer fellow coworkers to Ceplex.
- ...recommend Ceplex to your family.
- ...recommend Ceplex to your peers.
- ...recommend Ceplex to people interested in the business' products/services.

Providing feedback to the organization ($\alpha = .82$)

- ...fill out a customer satisfaction survey.
- ...provide helpful feedback to customer service.
- ...provide information when surveyed by Ceplex.
- ...inform Ceplex about the great service received by an individual employee.
- ...provide suggestions on how Ceplex could improve.

Helping other customers ($\alpha = .93$)

-assist other customers in finding products.
- ...help others with their shopping.
- ...teach a friend how to use the service correctly.
- ...explain to other customers how to use the service correctly.
- ...show someone how to look for certain products.

Note: All items were assessed on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) = not at all likely to (7) = extremely likely.

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