

Service development in focus when top researchers meet practitioners

On June 10-13th about 200 researchers and practitioners from over 30 countries met at Karlstad University for QUIS13, The 13th International Research Symposium on Service Excellence in Management. During the three day symposium new research findings were presented and future research questions were discussed.

One of the keynote speakers was Gary Bridge, Cisco Systems, USA. His presentation focused on how today's society and services are, and how things are moving forward with technology. Today, for example, a surgery can be done with the help of a robot. Through a small computer chip patients with schizophrenia can be treated and medicated. An important lesson from this is that today's technology promote productivity and require new business models since there are completely different benefits provided.

James R. Weigand, President at DuPont Sustainable Solutions, USA was also one of the keynote speakers. During his presentation he spoke about the company's journey from a product focus to a service focus. This shift in focus is something that many businesses are struggling with today in order to survive.

The conference concluded with a panel discussion on the topic how the little details play a major role and make a difference. An example of the little things that matter are, how to increase the quality of life by allowing residents in retirement homes decide what type of coffee they prefer, and how and when to take a bath. Another example is how by having a close contact with the customers the company could improve the service, speed up procedures within the company and with the customer. Members of the panel were Ruth Bolton, Arizona State University, USA, Manfred Dasselaar, Ericsson, Sweden, Anders Gustafsson, CTF and Janet McColl-Kennedy, University of Queensland, Australia.

During the conference, participants could choose between the 44 different conference presentations. Many of these focused on the development of service in health care, business models and different service systems.

The conference participants also had the chance to see and explore Karlstad. The last evening there was a banquet at Karlstad Conference Center with entertainment by the musicband Top Cats.

[Read more about the conference >](#)



Pictures from the conference. More pictures will soon be published on the conference website ctf.kau.se/quis13



What is service innovation?



Professor Lars Witell

That is the question to be answered in the research profile Service Innovation for Sustainable Business, one of CTFs largest research profiles.

During this spring the activities of the research profile have been presented in an annual report which shows a good foundation for continued research in collaboration with the participating companies.

- In the process of completing our first annual report many people have been involved; our researchers, contacts at our participating companies, international professors, expertise from the industry and our Principal at Karlstad University. Together we have attempted to evaluate the progress of the purpose of the research profile, that is to map and understand the DNA of Service Innovation. The conclusion is that so far we have made a good foundation for continued collaboration and research, but a lot of

work remains to understand what service innovation really is, says Lars Witell, Professor and head of the research profile. During the first year the focus was on initiating research projects together with partners, and to attend conferences to get new impressions and to disseminate research findings.

Guest researcher Jim Salas, Guest researcher from Arizona State University, USA, visited Ericsson and Volvo for a couple of weeks in April to study replication and service innovation. A survey was conducted where we investigated the factors that make companies successful in replicating solutions from one customer to another. Researchers have conducted interviews with leading technology companies in Sweden for a broader quantitative study of what drives successful replication of services.

- The ability to have visiting researchers from our international network on site at our partner companies is one of the strengths of our research profile, says Lars Witell.

Contact: lars.witell@kau.se

NOTICES



Visit by Jane McColl-Kennedy
Janet McColl-Kennedy, Professor at University of Queensland, Australia, was visiting CTF in June. She participated in an Advisory Board Meeting within the research profile Service Innovation for Sustainable Business, and was one of the presenters at QUIS13. She also gave a seminar on healthcare research at CTF and met with the researchers.



Visit by Steve Vargo
In late April Steve Vargo, Shidler Distinguished Professor and Professor of Marketing at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, was visiting. He met with the researchers at CTF and gave a seminar on Service Innovation – a service dominant logic point of view. He also gave a seminar at CSI, Center for Service Innovation in Norway.

CTF was there

Bo Edvardsson, Professor and Director, visited Rom in April. He was invited there to meet representatives for a new research collaboration and to give a presentation on service innovation at University Roma Tre, Italy. During his visit he met with representatives from the European research cooperation EIT ICT Labs Italy, where they train and coach students on how to present their ideas for prospective entrepreneurs and venture capitalists.

Two year with a focus on customer experience



Associate Professor
Martin Löfgren

The research profile The New Service Economy Plus started 2011 and was completed this spring. It is a continuation of a previous research profile within the same area and is financed by Knowledge Foundation, Karlstad University and partner companies.

- CTF has a long tradition of collaborating and co-producing with companies and organizations. The basic idea is for us to achieve excellence in research and for our partners to achieve excellence in business, says Martin Löfgren, Associate Professor and head of the profile.

The aim of the research profile has been to gain a deeper understanding of customer experiences from different perspectives

and to build new theory based on service research and consumer behavior.

The research was conducted in five work packages in cooperation with IKEA, TeliaSonera, Veryday and Tobii Technology. The researchers studied various aspects of customer experience-including customer support, self-service, customer involvement in development processes and customer decision making.

-Together with the participating companies we have generated new knowledge within customer experiences which will strengthen CTFs position as an internationally competitive research environment. At the same time it will contribute to sustainable and innovative activities in companies, says Martin Löfgren.

Contact: martin.lofgren@kau.se