

RYAN W. BUELL

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EDUCATION

Harvard Business School Doctor of Business Administration, Technology and Operations Management	Boston, Massachusetts 2012 (expected)
Harvard Business School Master of Business Administration, High Distinction	Boston, Massachusetts June, 2007
University of Michigan, Stephen M. Ross School of Business Bachelor of Business Administration, High Distinction Emphases in Computer Information Systems and Marketing	Ann Arbor, Michigan June, 2000

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Research:	The effect of operational choices on service outcomes, empirical service operations, service technology, the customer operating role
Teaching:	Operations Management, Managing Service Operations, Strategic Services Management, Integrating Marketing and Operations, Operations Strategy, Technology and Innovation

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS AND WORKING PAPERS (abstracts in appendix)

Buell, Ryan W. and Michael I. Norton. 2011. "The Labor Illusion: How Operational Transparency Increases Perceived Value." *Management Science*. 57(9) 1564-1579.

Buell, Ryan W., Dennis Campbell, and Frances X. Frei. 2010. "Are Self-Service Customers Satisfied or Stuck?" *Production and Operations Management*. 12(6) 679-697. *Awarded the Decision Sciences Institute Stan Hardy Award for the Outstanding Paper Published during 2010 in the Field of Operations Management.*

Buell, Ryan W., Dennis Campbell, and Frances X. Frei. "How Do Incumbents Fare in the Face of Increased Service Competition?" Harvard Business School Working Paper, No. 11-084, February 2011. *Invited for 2nd round review at Management Science.* **Job Market Paper**

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Buell, Ryan W., and Michael I. Norton. "Think Customers Hate Waiting? Not So Fast..." *Harvard Business Review* 89, No. 5. May 2011.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2011 Wyss Doctoral Research Award, awarded to Harvard Business School doctoral students who have excelled at conducting outstanding academic research, Harvard Business School.
- 2011 Stan Hardy Award, outstanding paper published during 2010 in the field of Operations Management, for “Are Self Service Customers Satisfied or Stuck?” with Dennis Campbell and Frances X. Frei. Decision Sciences Institute, Midwest Region.
- 2011 Finalist, Best Student Paper Award, for “The Labor Illusion: How Operational Transparency Increases Perceived Value” with Michael I. Norton, INFORMS Decision Analysis Society.
- 2011 Finalist, Best Student Paper Award, for “The Labor Illusion: How Operational Transparency Increases Perceived Value” with Michael I. Norton. Academy of Management - Operations Management Division.
- 2010 Finalist, Student Poster Award for “The Labor Illusion: When Waiting Increases Liking.” with Michael I. Norton. Society for Personality and Social Psychology.
- 2007 George F. Baker Scholar, Harvard Business School (top 5% of MBA graduating class)
- 2000 Phi Beta Kappa, University of Michigan
- 2000 James B. Angell Scholar, University of Michigan
- 1998 General Motors Global Internship Scholarship
- 1993 Eagle Scout

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2011 Building Sustainable Service Excellence, Executive Education
- 2011 Managing Service Excellence Through Statistics, Executive Education
- 2009–2010 Teaching Fellow, Technology and Operations Management MBA Course, Harvard Business School. Ratings: 6.94/7.00, $n = 71$ (Fall 2010); 6.94/7.00, $n = 110$ (Fall 2009). *Verbatim responses from students available on my personal website.*
- 2009 Head Teaching Fellow, Analytics Program, Quantitative Analysis, Harvard Business School. Rating: 6.33/7.00, $n = 91$.
- 2008 Teaching Fellow, Analytics Program, Accounting, Harvard Business School. Rating: 6.14/7.00, $n = 78$.

PRESENTATIONS AND SEMINARS

The Impact of Customer Heterogeneity on Service Outcomes. with Dennis Campbell and Frances X. Frei. **2011 INFORMS Annual Conference**. Charlotte, North Carolina. November, 2011; **2011 MSOM Annual Conference**. Ann Arbor, Michigan. June, 2011.

How Do Incumbents Fare in the Face of Increased Service Competition? with Dennis Campbell and Frances X. Frei. **2011 INFORMS Annual Conference**. Charlotte, North Carolina. November, 2011; **2011 Workshop on Empirical Research in Operations Management**. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. October, 2011; **2011 Academy of Management Annual Meeting**. San Antonio, Texas; **2010 INFORMS Annual Conference**. Austin, Texas. October, 2010; **2010 MSOM Annual Meeting**. Haifa, Israel. June, 2010; **2010 POMS Annual Meeting**. Vancouver, Canada. May, 2010.

The Labor Illusion: How Operational Transparency Increases Perceived Value. with Michael I. Norton. **2011 Academy of Management Annual Meeting**. San Antonio, Texas, August 2011; **QUIS 12/POMS Service College 2011 Meeting**. Ithaca, New York, June 2011; **MIT Media Lab**. Cambridge, Massachusetts. April, 2011; **Harvard Business School Marketing Unit Seminar**. Boston, Massachusetts. March, 2011; **2010 INFORMS Annual Conference**. Austin, Texas. October, 2010; **2010 MSOM Service Management SIG**. Haifa, Israel. June, 2010; **2010 SPSP Annual Meeting**. Las Vegas, Nevada. January, 2010; **2009 SJDM Annual Conference**. Boston, Massachusetts. June, 2009.

Are Self-Service Customers Satisfied or Stuck? with Dennis Campbell and Frances X. Frei. **2009 MSOM Annual Conference**. Cambridge, Massachusetts. June, 2009; **2009 POMS Annual Conference**. Orlando, Florida. May, 2009.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Buell, Ryan W., Dennis Campbell, and Frances X. Frei, "The Impact of Customer Heterogeneity on Service Outcomes."

Buell, Ryan W., Richard B. Chase, Frances X. Frei, and Scott E. Sampson, "Customer Contact for the 21st Century: Delivering Customized Service Efficiently."

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

2010–2011	Student Advisory Committee, Harvard Business School Doctoral Program
2010	Learning Management System Advisory Committee, Harvard Business School
2008–2010	Student Mentorship Lead, Harvard Business School Doctoral Program
2008	Student Chairman, Harvard Business School Centennial Community Events

REFEREE SERVICE

2008-2011	Ad-Hoc Reviewer, Manufacturing and Service Operations Management Journal
2010	Reviewer, Manufacturing and Service Operations Management Conference
2009-2010	Ad-Hoc Reviewer, Journal of Operations Management
2008-2009	Ad-Hoc Reviewer, Production and Operations Management Journal
2009	Ad-Hoc Reviewer, Research Policy

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

McKinsey & Company, Inc.

Seattle, Washington

Summer Associate, High Technology Strategy Practice

2006

Member of team developing a holistic global strategy for a \$1B+ vertical business of a high technology company. Created market opportunity maps for specific countries, triangulating market size and growth potential, and identifying hot spots for investment consideration. Presented findings to client management team. Conducted interviews with industry experts, surfacing key needs, and synthesizing and communicating results. Collaborated with client to develop in-depth profiles of surfaced product and program opportunities.

The Tour Now Network, LLC.

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Founder, Business Development Manager

2000-2005

Founded and managed online company that provides virtual tours and related marketing services for real estate professionals throughout the United States and Canada. Refined business model, acquiring over 3,300 agent accounts, and over 70 resellers nationwide. Forged alliances with industry partners. Achieved average annual sales growth of 133% through the management of day-to-day business operations, including sales, customer support, finance, and ongoing market research.

General Motors Corporation

Flint, Michigan

Production Supervisor

1999

Managed staffing, scheduling and logistical decisions on a daily basis for three production lines. Decreased internal defects by 25% and increased uptime by 3%.

Fixed Asset Analyst

1998

Completed fixed asset inventories of six Delphi Automotive Systems manufacturing facilities. Tracked projects for engineers and issued work orders for resource allocations.

Sales and Marketing Analyst

1997

Redesigned "Voice of the Customer," monthly self-evaluation report promoting customer enthusiasm. Researched competition and created competitor profiles on prominent automotive components manufacturers.

REFERENCES

Frances X. Frei (Chair)

UPS Foundation Professor of Service Management
Harvard Business School
Morgan Hall 411
Soldiers Field Road
Boston, Massachusetts 02163
617-495-7968

Michael I. Norton

Associate Professor, Marketing
Harvard Business School
Morgan Hall 189
Soldiers Field Road
Boston, Massachusetts 02163
617-496-4593

Dennis Campbell

Associate Professor, Accounting
Harvard Business School
Morgan Hall 391
Soldiers Field Road
Boston, Massachusetts 02163
617-495-1797

Ananth Raman

UPS Foundation Professor of Business Logistics
Harvard Business School
Morgan Hall 437
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Boston, Massachusetts 02163
617-495-6937

APPENDIX: ABSTRACTS

Title: “How Do Incumbents Fare in the Face of Increased Service Competition?”

Abstract: We explore the conditions under which service competition leads to customer defection from an incumbent and which customers are most vulnerable to its effects. We find that customers defect at a higher rate from the incumbent following increased service competition only when the incumbent offers high quality service relative to existing competitors in a local market. We provide evidence that this result is due to a sorting effect whereby the incumbent attracts service (price) sensitive customers in markets where it has supplied relatively high (low) levels of service quality in the past. Furthermore, we show that it is the high quality incumbent’s most valuable customers, those with the longest tenure, most products, and highest balances, who are the most vulnerable to superior service alternatives. Along the way, we also show that firms trade-off price and service quality and that when the incumbent offers relatively low service quality in a local market, it is susceptible to the entry or expansion of inferior service (price) competitors. Our results appear to have long run implications whereby sustaining a high level of service relative to local competitors leads the incumbent to attract and retain higher value customers over time.

Title: “The Labor Illusion: How Operational Transparency Increases Perceived Value”

Abstract: A ubiquitous feature of even the fastest self-service technology transactions is the wait. Conventional wisdom and operations theory suggests that the longer people wait, the less satisfied they become; we demonstrate that due to what we term the labor illusion, when websites engage in operational transparency by signaling that they are exerting effort, people can actually prefer websites with longer waits to those that return instantaneous results – even when those results are identical. In five experiments which simulated service experiences in the domains of online travel and online dating, we demonstrate the impact of the labor illusion on service value perceptions, demonstrate that perceptions of service provider effort induce feelings of reciprocity which together mediate the link between operational transparency and increased valuation, and explore boundary conditions and alternative explanations.

Title: “Are Self-Service Customers Satisfied or Stuck?”

Abstract: This paper investigates the impact of self-service technology (SST) usage on customer satisfaction and retention. Specifically, we focus on disentangling the distinct effects of satisfaction and switching costs as drivers of retention among self-service customers. Our empirical analysis examines 26,924 multi-channel customers of a nationwide retail bank. For each customer, we track channel usage, overall satisfaction, and actual retention over a one-year period. We find that relative to face-to-face service, customers who use self-service channels for a greater proportion of their overall transactions, are either no more satisfied or less satisfied with the service they receive, depending on the channel. However, we also find that these same customers are predictably less likely to defect to a competitor if they are heavily reliant on self-service channels characterized by high switching costs. We demonstrate that when self-service usage promotes retention, it does so in a way that is consistent with switching costs rather than via increased satisfaction. As a robustness check, we examine the behavior of channel enthusiasts, who concentrate transactions among specific channels. Relative to more diversified customers, we find that self-service enthusiasts in low switching cost channels defect with greater frequency, while self-service enthusiasts in high switching cost channels are retained with greater frequency. Managerial implications of these findings are discussed, as well as opportunities for future research.

Title: “The Impact of Customer Heterogeneity on Service Outcomes”

Abstract: This paper empirically explores the role of customer heterogeneity in service outcomes. In an analysis of 58,294 retail-banking transactions, we quantify the relative significance of market, location, employee, process and customer-level differences on the explained aggregate variance in customer satisfaction. We find that differences between customers account for more than 90% of the explained aggregate variance in customer satisfaction. In two separate analyses, we find evidence that these satisfaction differences between customers are explained in part by a customer’s degree of compatibility with the operating system. Consistently, in an analysis of 81 retail banks, we find that institutions facing lower levels of heterogeneity across the markets they serve receive higher overall satisfaction ratings from their customers.

APPENDIX: SELECTED DOCTORAL COURSEWORK

Statistics, Economics and Methodology

- Microeconomics, Nolan Miller
- Game Theory, Chris Avery
- Experimental Economics, Alvin Roth
- Probability and Statistics, William Simpson
- Statistics for the Social Sciences, William Simpson
- Applied Econometrics, Raffaella Giacomini
- Advanced Quantitative Research Methodology, Gary King
- Design of Field Research Methods, Robin Ely

Technology and Operations Management

- Operations Management, Noel Watson
- Innovation and Organizations, Michael Tushman
- Technology and Operations Management Seminar, Michael Toffel
- Operations Research Reading Group, Ananth Raman

Human Behavior

- Consumer Behavior, John Gourville and Michael Norton
- Administration and Human Behavior, Rakesh Khurana and Kathleen McGinn

APPENDIX: SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

Service Quality Competition: *Great Service Does Not Always Lead to Loyalty*, Financial Post (June 13, 2011); *What Loyalty? High-End Customers are First to Flee*, Harvard Business School Working Knowledge (May 16, 2011); *Why Your Best Customers Might be First to Flee*, BNET.com (February 22, 2011); *Retention is Not the Same Thing as Satisfaction*, Decision to Lead (March 21, 2010)

Operational Transparency: *Do Customers Hate Waiting?* INFORMS Science of Better Podcast – Crunching the Numbers (September 2, 2011); *This Column Will Change Your Life: The Labor Illusion*, The Guardian (August 12, 2011); *Think Customers Hate Waiting? Not So Fast...*, Harvard Business Review (May, 2011); *Make Your Customers’ Wait Less Painful*, BNET.com (May 2, 2011); *Why Some Websites Make You Wait*, BNET.com (April 14, 2011); *The Psychology Behind the Best Business Strategies*, Forbes.com (November 18, 2010); *Starbucks and the Labor Illusion*, The Operations Room (October 14, 2010)

Additional: *Coming full circle: MBAs in the HBS Doctoral Programs bring a special perspective to their role as future business educators*, HBS Alumni Bulletin (September, 2011)