BOOK REVIEW
THIS IS SERVICE DESIGN THINKING/ THIS IS SERVICE DESIGN DOING

I recommend "This is Service Design Thinking" pretty often, but a client reminded me recently that we've never actually reviewed it for Customer Insight. It's time to set that right. Despite being 8 years old, it remains a useful reference for anyone with an interest in service design and, in particular, in the tools of service design. While we're at it, we'll also take a look at its younger sibling "This is Service Design Doing" so we can compare and contrast the two.

If you had to buy only one, which would you buy? That's actually a surprisingly difficult question to answer. "Doing" has, as the name suggests, a more practical focus on how to actually apply the tools and techniques covered. It also includes the best part of a decade's worth of slight evolution and development of those tools. Nonetheless, the authors got many things very right with "Thinking", and it's hard to beat as a quick reference when you need to look up a particular concept. It's not a book that you will sit down and read cover to cover, but it is one that you will find yourself reaching for, flicking through, and cribbing from on a regular basis as you jog your memory, look

for inspiration, and explain techniques to other people.

To make that difference in approach clear, let's have a look at the sections on personas from both books excerpted below. In a nutshell, the difference between the two books is that "Thinking" is more of a reference book, organised into neat sections of which by far the most useful is the catalogue of tools. "Doing" takes a slightly different tack, and mainly works through the stages you would go through in a service design project.

This is Service Design Thinking Sections
- *Introduction*
- *What is service design?*
- *Who are these service designers?*
- *How does service design work?*
- *What are the tools of service design?*
- *Applied service design*
- *Deep service design thinking*

This is Service Design Doing Sections
- *Why service design?*
- *What is service design?*
- *Basic service design tools*
- *The core activities of service design*
- *Research*
- *Ideation*
- *Prototyping*
- *Implementation*
- *Service design process and management*
- *Facilitating workshops*
- *Making space for service design*
- *Embedding service design in organizations*

It's much more likely that you'd want to sit down and read it cover to cover, and it makes much clearer how and why you should use the tools and approaches that it outlines. If "Thinking" is a reference book, then "Doing" is more like a course.

So which should you choose? Now that it exists I'd probably start with "Doing" as a more complete picture of the practice of service design, particularly if you are relatively new to the field. I still find myself turning to "Thinking" more often than "Doing", though, because its list of tools is so well organised and so clearly written.

You might learn more about how to be a service designer from "Doing", but if you want a neat definition of a service design tool to send to your boss then you'll get plenty of value from "Thinking" as well – I think you should buy both!

This is Service Design Thinking

This is Service Design Doing

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