Urban regeneration of the Central District of Taichung city – A culture creative approach based on service design

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In recent years, the topic of space renovation has seen growing awareness in Taiwan. It becomes an opportunity to condense culture and creative art and build a city connection. As being the first urban planning district in Taiwan, the Central District of Taichung City has gone through prosperity and depression iteratively. This research first examines the ecosystem of cultural industries in this District where comprised a great majority of art cultural festivals; homemade craft shops, selection and coffee shops; rich historical and cultural heritage, civilian architecture, and more. To respond to this investigation, an exhibition consists of documentation and craft creation is initiated to explore the future of regeneration within this area based on service design. The research result shows that a new service system could have a significant impact on the future development and operation of the business circle in this District.

Keywords: urban regeneration; culture and creative art; service design

1 Introduction

In terms of the process of urban regeneration, the role of culture has become a major and often driving factor in recent decades. It has been significantly extended as a factor in regional transformation in response to both competition among cities and sustainability demands in cultural industries (Sepe, 2013).

Since the 1980s, the creative city (Landry, 2008) started to become a new broad strategy trend, which applies to not only developing the economy but also revitalizing city neighbourhoods and communities. Through regenerating a discarded region, culture is acting an important role to form the creative city. This process has been seen in many cities in North America, Europe, and Britain (Glasgow, Liverpool, etc.), which have turned the arts into a means of branding or re-imaging the city. That is to say, cultural facilities and activities are becoming a significant component in the formation of the creative city. In the above mentioned, cases of creative cities are more focused on how to improve the interaction regarding building regeneration, economic development, and social renewal to develop the city more comprehensively. (Carta, 2004; Florida, 2005).
Moreover, the regional cultural features of creative cities are differentiated in the design, promotion, and activation of urban areas. Some areas have become creative clusters because of the realization of economic and structural innovation projects associated with regional development strategies based on economic distinction, culture, and territorial quality. In terms of a cultural ecosystem, many international cities are going through a significant structural transformation from an emphasis on traditional industries towards cultural industries based on new service design and innovation. The cultural industries drive the transition and innovation of regional cultural features to a knowledge economy.

With attention to several well-known case studies and media coverage, we keyed in on the recently popular trend of exploiting or renovating the spaces which lead to the phenomenon of a creative cluster. Especially for some creative cities and communities in Europe, Britain and North America, there are a majority of design cases which utilized discarded or inactive spaces and factories to shape the new image in the region. Similarly, we also found that there is a greater number of buildings and spaces with the identical method to be renovated in the Central District of Taichung City.

Exploring the interactions of the cultural ecosystem in Central District of Taichung City, there are great quantities of historic buildings under renovation and re-imagining. One of the most famous cases is Miyahara, which was an ophthalmology clinic in the 1970s, but now become a gift shop that selling an assortment of tea, desserts and ice cream. The Miyahara building functions as important role in assisting this area to form a unique and attractive urban core. Secondly, a dense cluster of social networks and interactions exist in the area, showing that these industries may become creative clusters that make positive impact on enhancing regional economic development.

This paper examines the ecosystem of cultural industries in the Central District of Taichung City. The aim is to deeply understand the structure of cultural industries’ ecosystem, development trend, problems and potentials in this District. However, we found that the present situation of the interactions and regional connections involving shops, industries and buildings in this area are developed in a scattered manner, lack comprehensive integration and systematic planning required to construct a well-managed cultural ecosystem.

As a result, this paper mainly uses Service Design as a methodology to comprehensively and systematically discuss the interaction of the current ecosystem which can be turned into a useful, usable, effective service system in this region. A curation team is formed to plan an exhibition containing local industry documentary collections and art and craft creations. Through the user-oriented, inter-disciplinary and systematic approach for service design, this paper focuses on examining how service design will affect the urban regeneration of this region.

2 Literature Review
The idea of creative and cultural industries has drawn the public’s attention in various domains. The first concept of ‘creative industries’ was coined in the UK in 1997. The term “creative industries” has various representation in different countries. The cultural heritage and components of its creative activities based on local traditions and arts are usually emphasized in most European countries (Skavronska, 2017). At a basic level, cultural industries require creative ability and skill since it includes the production of traditional cultural products in the visual and performing arts, music, and literature, as well as
contemporary production of ‘content’ in multimedia, software packages, computer games, design (graphic, web, furniture, fashion, etc.) and architecture (Enilil, et.al, 2011).

Arts, Cultural and media sectors in the Cultural industries have been converted into creative industries and the consumption of these creative outputs lay the foundation of the capitalist economy in the post-industrial paradigm (Slottje, 2015). Creative City theory addresses the probably notable effect on city dynamism, growth and creative development due to its ability to renew and reinforce the regional culture specification and quality of life. A desirable and better living creative city gathers active, experienced and creative citizens and integrates their ideas. The intention is to reinforce and grow participation in all life aspects that trigger targeted development in every city. Since the concept of “Creative” is related to “artistic” and “culture” in some situations, the creative economy has been commonly discussed along with culture and cultural policy (Gwee, 2009).

Moreover, service design was originally considered in the discipline of marketing and management that uses “service blueprint” to map the process of a service event and service’s essential functions in an objective and explicit pattern for documenting and arranging service activity into a systematic code. Documenting the interaction throughout the customer lifecycle between customers and organizations is represented in the service blueprint. It had been developed as a methodology for emphasizing the influences of the service process that occurred in the physical environment and explaining the behaviour of people in this service environment. Service design was later applied in design field in which more and more creators and companies use it as a methodological approach not only for understanding people’s activities, communication, infrastructure involved in service contexts but also as a way to enhance the interactions between service providers and their service recipients (Mager, 2009). In short, service design is a user-oriented, inter-disciplinary and systematic approach for investigating customer experience and the quality of service implementation to create better and closer relationships between customers and service offers.

In this research, several service design activities and tools, such as empathy map, persona, customer journey and service blueprint are applied to systematically investigate the customer’s experience, the current cultural ecosystem in the Central District of Taichung City, and potential service system that would provide encouraging urban regeneration. The result of implementing service design in our case is to reach the design concept of craft creation and the planning of exhibition for exploring the future possibility of cultural creative industry in the Central District of Taichung City.

3    A culture creative exhibition planning based on service design

In early Taichung, under Japanese colonial rule, the control of commercial activities led to the cluster and development of particular industries. The local economic structure was scattered and distributed in rural areas, gradually forming an aggregated economy of urban settlements, and a city with the core economic development of the central metropolis of Taichung. For example, there are many jewellery stores on Zhongshan Road and many fabric stores can be seen on the Chengkung Road in Central District of Taichung City. Lots of cultural creative activities and exhibitions have been curated in this area and used to trigger a rebirth of the local industry. To initiate the planned exhibition and craft creation activity in this research, a survey of recently held exhibitions and interview with some
subjects were first carried out and followed by several service design implementation approaches. The opportunity to curate a cultural creative exhibition and craft creation in response to urban regeneration is then identified.

3.1 The scenario and persona based on an interview

The service scenario and persona are set up based on the empathy map method along with face-to-face interview. Some quotes retrieved form interviewee are listed as follows:

“I was stopped by a stylish poster.”

“I totally had no idea what was going on before walking in the exhibition. But I found that it’s so lively and interesting after I walked in.”

“The most impressive demonstration was that the performing artist would assign some tasks to participants and lead an unpredictable consequence.”

“It would be better if I can get a poster from the exhibition because I would hang it on my wall.”

A virtual character represents the targeted participant of cultural creative activity is created as shown in figure 1.

![Figure 1. Designated persona.](image)
The diagram (Figure 2) shows the information about the interaction during the period of visiting an exhibition which mentioned in the above interview. Three design point of view are listed in "how might we" format: How might we create an interactive approach to offer the five senses experience to visitors? How might we provide a "wow" guidance to reach the venue during visitors' exploratory finding journey for visitors? How might we create a specific atmosphere where the volunteers can merge well into the site in order to do performing with exhibits for visitors? This paper will focus on the topic of "How might we create an interactive visiting approach to offer the five senses experience to visitors?" as the main design viewpoint.

3.2 Customer Journey
A customer journey is analyzed to figure out possible touch points provided by the service system from the user's perspective (Figure 3).

3.3 Service process
The Service Process Matrix is a QFD-like table which is deployed from the demands to functions, and from the functions to the processes in order to identify and confirm the must-needed service functions and the required service processes. Service Resource Matrix then identifies the service resources which can help us to seek and confirm the items that are indispensable for the exhibition based on the service functions and corresponding processes. Using the demand of “Get the exhibition information” as an example. In order to achieve this demand, we need to perform a variety of functions, ranging from: scan QR codes, view the information posted on the official website, search direction on Google map, search transportation, see 3D posters which designed to attract visitors on road, and understand the background stories from cooperated local stores.
4 Exhibition Design

4.1 Introduction
The urban old town is like a city's precious treasure, with a huge number of stories that haven’t been explored yet. The old shops that have been passed down through generations in the Central District of Taichung City carry a long-lasting culture. There are many famous old shops and industries in this area during previous decades, or even over a hundred years. These industries are still extending the preferences of our generations as well as represent the true city life culture.

Although the urban area has fallen gradually, these stores remained. They are continuing their credit and commitment to customers and show their meticulous care and service belief as well. With attention to this exhibition theme of local economic structure in the Central District, our aim is to implement the concept of “human-centered design and social connection” as well as represent specific cases of “visible local industries, community, and urban landscape”. Through the process of service design for more deeply understanding about visitors and the local industry, the consensus of the curating exhibition context and the information transmission regarding industries can be reached. Additionally, we explore issues such as "the imagination of flipping over these dimmed industries", "revitalizing the image and value of faded houses", "the possibility of residents' participatory design to change the community" and "discussion on the residents who live in the depressed areas". The most important thing is to promote the spirit of perseverance as the way to revitalize the core values of community power.
During May 22 to May 31, 2019, the venue of this exhibition in our study was chosen in the renovation of the old house – Liu Art Museum. In addition to the creations from two artists, the story of the industrial development, culture, and history of the Central District since the Japanese occupation era was shared in the form of a documentary exhibition that enticed all five senses. Therefore, this exhibition not only presents the Human-centered design concept but also highlights the core value of social connections between the people and the Central District of Taichung City. It represents the precious values driving the core of Taichung City prosperity during the historical period. These specific features clustered densely in this under 1 km² district (Figure 4).

4.2 Exhibition planning (predefined exhibition site – Liu Art Museum)

4.3 Sketch
The design process involved lots of sketch drawings (Figure 5) to express the imagination of particular industries in the Central District of Taichung City. Their connection and implication of respective industry with sketches based on interviews are listed in Table 1.
4.4 The exhibition – Middle Man

Taichung City is located in the centre of Taiwan, while the Central District is the original centre of Taichung. The people who live here are then the "middlemen". If there is no "middleman", where does the Central District come from? If there is no Central District, how come these "middlemen"? People and the city have always been inseparable, whether you
are passing through or walking in the Central District, or living in this area, you have quietly become a "middleman." As a "middleman", we have a series of stories between the citizens, districts, cities and exhibitions in the Central District. In the exhibition, five neighbourhoods are selected to represent an industry respectively. In addition to craft creation, text and video materials, we also display representative items of the particular store (Table 2).

\textit{Table 2. Exhibition at Liu Art Museum}

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\multicolumn{3}{|c|}{Exhibition at Liu Art Museum} \\
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5 Conclusion
This paper has proposed a service design approach that plays a significant role of branding and re-imaging a territorial region to drive the Central District of Taichung City. We have mainly established a culture creative exhibition to widely connect these independent traditional industries which have clustered for decades as a specific economic system. The exhibition connected local industry with cultural creative events which attract more attention regarding urban regeneration. Collecting data (questionnaires, surveys, interviews), choosing exhibition venue, and finalizing the context of this exhibition were executed during exhibition planning. From the curators’ viewpoint, there are inevitably some shortcomings in the project planning due to inexperience and financial limitation.

In summary, the team was gratified by the exhibition result and received positive feedback from curators, visitors and the selected local industry. Some reviews are appreciated and listed below as the justification of the performance of curating exhibition.

“I've understand the stories of the local industry located in the Central District more.”

“I really agree that the crafting objects were corresponding to the core value of the exhibition.”

“The main elements can be seen on the exhibition planning.”

6 Reference

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