Pushing the Frontiers of Service Research – A Taxonomy of Proactive Services

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Abstract

Rapid advancements in digital technologies and data analysis led to a new service type. With their push-rationale, proactive services (PAS) are pushing the frontiers of traditional and even digital or smart services. Such PAS anticipate consumer needs and address them proactively. For instance, a smart fridge replenishes groceries in line with the consumer's preferences, based on anticipated demand, and without the consumer's intervention. In this paper, we contribute to a better understanding of the PAS phenomenon. Therefore, we propose a literature-backed and empirically validated multilayer taxonomy of PAS along the layers consumer, data, and interaction. Further, we compile a list of 45 PAS examples, demonstrate our taxonomy with three illustrative scenarios, and evaluate their understandability and applicability in seven interviews with domain and method experts. Based on gained insights on this rapidly emerging and important phenomenon, we highlight implications for both researchers and practitioners, and suggest future research directions.

Keywords: Taxonomy, Proactive Services, Digital Services, Smart Services