

# Serendipity & Retail



# ‘Towards vital communities’

Expertise Group Community & Retail Concepts

Stenden hogeschool  
Retail Business School  
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Version 1.0 Bèta is the first publication of the Expertise group. The book will be supplemented twice a year with contributions of students in the module Retail Concept Development of the Retail Business School. Based on the basic principles in this module, retailing – healthy interaction spaces – serendipity – creativity, students will publish their case studies in this book.

Visual art is seen as a key driver for the design of new and innovative concepts in vital communities. For this reason we offer at each following publications an artist the opportunity to participate in both the book and through guest lectures.



# Abstract

This book is about creating success for retail organizations in the future by thinking through the concept of **Healthy Interactional Spaces** .

The retailer who understands it's contribution and future contribution in relation with a **Healthy interactional space** can anticipate future investments.

Thinking through the concept of **Healthy interactional spaces** stimulates thinking through connections and relationships.

Any space can be regarded as interactional space. The interactional spaces consist of large numbers of connections which connect people to idea's and places. combinations of actors which enhance future potentialities create **healthy interactional space**. On the other hand combinations which prevent future potentialities create sick **interactional space**. **Healthy interactional spaces** are able to multiply and intensify its connections.

The move from an interaction space towards an **healthy interaction space**, is the subject of this booklet.



The vitality Quadrant provides insight in this process. It is introduced in the page hereafter.

This vitality quadrant has four clusters which address nature of interaction. The concept of hospitality is taken into account as crucial. The question becomes how does the retail concept organizes the space as an hospitality space?

In hospitality spaces, host and guest interact. Moreover the quadrant hosts three important movements to address processes in a healthy interaction space. These three movements can be assessed by different methodologies which are shortly described. The booklet provides a language which enable the reader to participate in current debates about new retail concepts.

# Vitality quadrant

In order to address the vitality in an interaction space, an explorative grit is set up in which different variants of vitalities are situated.

The **horizontal axe** (processes of interaction) represents a integrative process within the interaction space whereby more connections are created and the network becomes larger since more parts integrated. This is a predictable process and common known connections are produced.

On the **left side on the horizontal axe** , interactions are integrated



in their own respect and are highly defined.

The **right end site** can be seen as the side of the retail network. For example the customer in this system is in isolation at the end of the line and has not been integrated.

The **vertical axe** (predictability) represents the predictability of the interaction space, on the bottom end of the continuum is the highly predictable interactions. Interactions and objects of the interaction are highly predictable and described.

On the top end of the **predictability** axe the interactions are very unpredictable and participants needs to anticipate to the unexpected and the unknown. The Participant enters a very unstable environment where on the end the interactions are highly predictable and roles are known.

*Figure 1* shows the vitality quadrant with the four different quadrants that signify movements;

# Four quadrants

The four quadrants are not static but signifiers for movements. These movements are described in the following chapter.

## *Predictable units*

This is the classical retailing situation, in which the interactions are highly predictable and organised. This is advocated in any retail management book. However problems arise when the environment of the retail store changes. fundamental changes the organisation appears as too disintegrated and not dynamic enough to adapt. Regarding hospitalities, the boundaries between host and guest are fixed, the host guest relationship is stable and reflects contemporary structure.



## *Integrated network*

This is a situation in which integration has taken place expansion of the network.

For example suppliers of retailers starting working together and the businesses. Ikea works together with a transport company to deliver products for the customer directly to their homes.

## *Dynamic spaces*

The spaces are highly unpredictable and unstable. The various different types of interactions are not integrated in the interaction space, therefore the space does not prosper from the different new interactions and reflection does hardly take place. The participants find constantly new things however no integrative processes take place. Regarding hospitality, the host lost control of the space and untidy and uninvited guest appear at the threshold.

## *New communities*

These spaces share a high degree of integrations and un predictability. This can be considered as the ideal situation, however hard to continue. Constantly unexpected relatively new elements such as people, idea's and stuff are broad in the

Predictability -> +<	<i>Dynamic spaces</i>	<i>New communities</i>
	<i>Predictable units</i>	<i>Integrated network</i>
- <- Processes of integration -> +		

interaction space. Constantly is there a readjustment towards the interaction space. This makes the interaction space highly dynamic and reflective. The roles between retailers and customers may shift and new connections and interaction (spaces) are born. This interaction space are considered as an healthy interaction space. Retailers come across unsought findings which can be

regarded as serendipitous processes when they become integrated with existing processes. Regarding hospitality, processes of dynamic hospitality are very much alive and constant shifts between hosts and guest. The dynamics results in new communities which are centred on organising lifestyles.



# Four movements

Four different movements can be distinguished. These movements are happening on the vitality quadrant. It's possible that movements follow each other in a short period. The movements are considered to be alive. A healthy interaction space is characterized by movement four. On the four movement are represented however more movements can be identified.



# Movement towards integrated network

The movement towards integrated network, intergrades business processes such as supply chain management. The Methodology to address this movements is through case descriptions.

Table 2 Towards integrated network

Predictability -> + Predictability -> +	<i>Dynamic spaces</i>	<i>New communities</i>
	<i>Predictable units</i>	<i>Integrated network</i>
	- < Processes of integration -> +	



# Movement towards dynamic spaces

Towards dynamic space, entering the unknown, this is the most vital movement, which enhances creativity and the creation of new more or less temporary communities.

Serendipitous processes are actively facilitated. Methodology to address this movements is Servqual (Zeithaml, Parasuraman en Berry, 1988) whereby expectations en experiences are confronted.



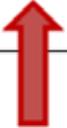
Predictability -> + <	<i>Dynamic spaces</i> 	<i>New communities</i>
	<i>Predictable units</i>	<i>Integrated network</i>
- < Processes of integration -> +		

Table 3 Towards dynamic spaces

# Movement disintegration new communities

New communities is a temporal position and the network requires a constant input of the new. When this new “supply” stops. Old patterns will be walked over and over and the space moves

towards predictable units. It’s also possible that the thing disintegrates into chaos, towards dynamic spaces.

since to disintegration process of new community space into predictable units is complex it requires a method which address to the question what does space do? In this case the relations become to fixed and determined.

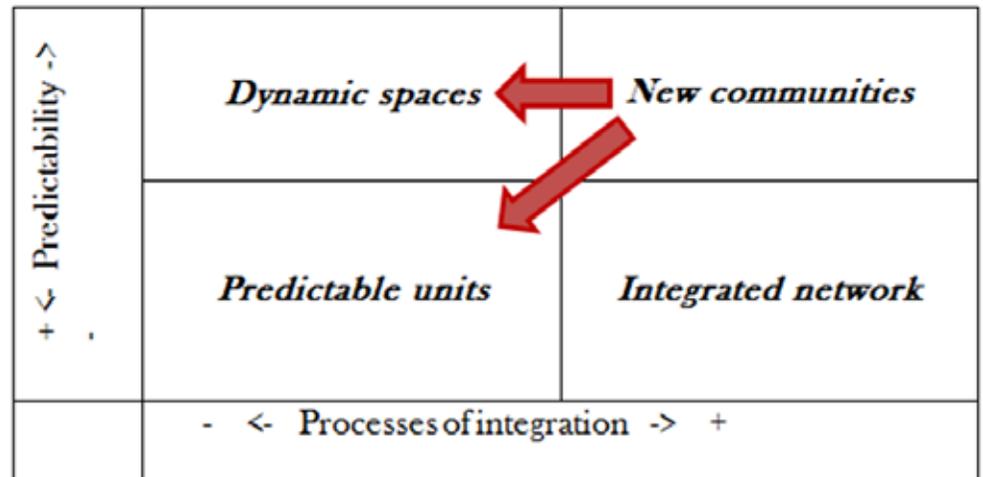


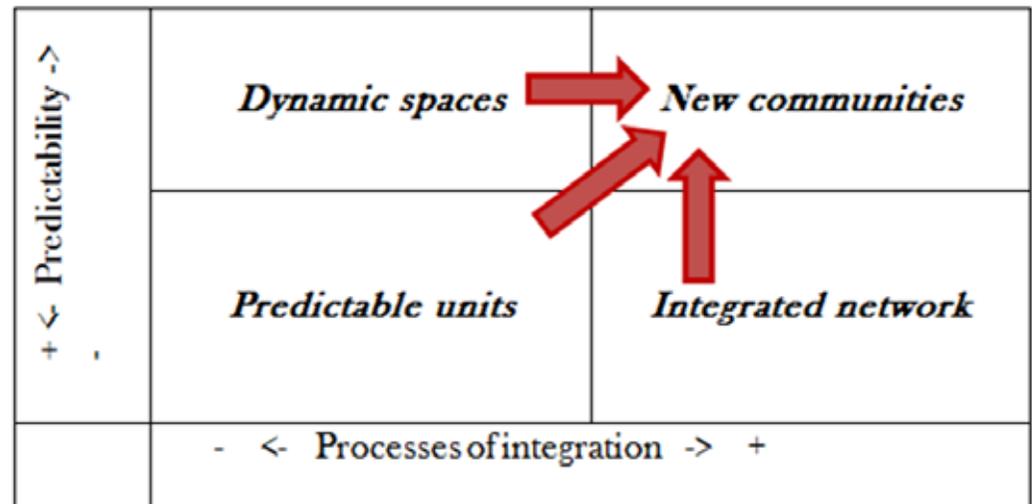
Table 4 Disintegration new communities

# Movement towards new communities

New communities is a temporal position and the network requires a constant input of the new. When this new “supply” stops. Old patterns will be walked over and over and the space moves towards another quadrant. The vitality becomes disintegrated.

Since to disintegration process of new community space into another quadrant is complex it requires a method which addresses the question what does space do? In this case the relations become to fixed and determined.

Methodology to address this movements is experimentation, since new community space is complex it requires a method which address the question what does space do?



12 Table 5 Towards new communities



# Serendipity

In quadrant four new communities is the term serendipity used to address dynamic space, here the concept is further elaborated. The concept of serendipity as described by Andel (1994), defines true serendipity is the art of making an “unsought finding” followed by a process of abduction. This process of abduction can be explained as; “The process of forming an explanatory hypothesis” Andel argues that it is the only logical operation which introduces new idea’s.

Healthy serendipitous suggested to be the act of making an unsought finding (Andel, 1987). Something valuable or delightful which was unintended or unexpected as the finding of things without seeking them (Austin, 2003), and as any pleasant surprise (Tolson, 2004).

Serendipitous discovery involves active learning and analysis (Cunha, 2005). Despite its accidental nature, people discover things by accident when the make a purposeful search effort. They may learn through analysis, intuition or improvisation. (Mintzberg and Westley, 2001).

By accepting multiple realities in complex spaces which are differently organized, it is interesting to know that serendipitous and playful experiences have potential to lead to difference and new power relationships with learning power.

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Andel argues that that is the only logical operation which introduces any new idea.

Andel means, with ‘finding’, that two or more elements (observations, hypotheses, ideas, facts, relations or insights) are combined together. For a serendipitous ‘expression’, two aspects are important, the finding and the process of abduction.

The finding has to be unexpected. When the finder finds the thing, and decides to ignore the finding, it does not become serendipitous but remains a ‘finding’. However when the finder recognizes the finding it becomes serendipitous and a process of abduction starts.

During the analysis of the data, it appeared that in home exchange settings, especially in private settings, the home exchanger researcher encountered unanticipated and unexpected things, which Andel would call serendipitous and could also become a part of creative becoming’s.

# Examples of Serendipity

*The discovery of penicillin, by scientist Alexander Fleming in 1928.*

*Teflon, by Roy J. Plunkett, who was trying to develop a new gas for refrigeration and got a slick substance instead, which was used first for lubrication of machine parts.*

*Chemical element helium, chemist William Ramsay, isolated helium while looking for argon but, after separating nitrogen and oxygen from the gas liberated by sulfuric acid, noticed a bright-yellow line that matched the D3 line observed in the spectrum of the Sun.*

*The first oral contraceptive was discovered by Dr. Carl Djerassi accidental production of synthetic progesterone and its intentional modification to allow for oral intake.*

*Discovery of the planet Uranus by William Herschel. A double beneficiary. Herschel certainly wasn't looking for new planets when he found Uranus. Like many astronomers of his time, he was looking for*



*comets. He first identified Uranus as a comet, naturally, and it was only after noticing the circularity of its orbit and its distance that he proposed that it was a planet, the first "new" one ever.*

*Vaccination, discovered by English physician Edward Jenner, after he observed that milkmaids would not catch smallpox since they caught benign cowpox first.*

*X rays, by Wilhelm Roentgen. Interested in investigating cathodic ray tubes, he noted that some fluorescent papers in his lab were illuminated at a distance.*

*Corn flakes and wheat flakes were accidentally discovered by the Kellogg brothers in 1898, when they left cooked wheat untended for a day and tried to roll the mass, obtaining a flaky material instead of a sheet.*

*The microwave oven was invented by Percy Spencer while testing a magnetron for radar sets at Raytheon, he noticed that a peanut candy bar in his pocket had melted when exposed to radar waves.*

# Attachment

## Expertisegroup Community & Retailing concepts

*De expertisegroep community retailing is drie jaar geleden gestart als denktank van ondernemers, politici, retailers, vertegenwoordigers van overheden en docenten van Stenden's Retail Business School. Basisgedachte was het initiëren van onderzoek naar de maatschappelijke functie van retailing. In dit kader is ondermeer onderzoek gedaan naar de rol van retailing bij leefbaarheidsvraagstukken in krimpgebieden (Ferwerderadiel). Daarnaast functioneert de groep als denktank en creatieve werkplaats voor de ontwikkeling van innovaties en retail concepten. De expertisegroep wordt ontwikkeld tot een lectoraat*



*Community & Retailing concepts. Hierna worden de aanleiding en de doelen van het lectoraat kort uitgewerkt.*

### **Creëren van vitale omgevingen en interactiemilieus**

Retailorganisaties zullen in de toekomst meer betrokken zijn bij sociaal maatschappelijke vraagstukken. De bijna stabiele positie in het domein van de huidige economie is geen vaststaand gegeven meer voor retailorganisaties die uitsluitend uit

winkelvestigingen bestaan. Op verschillende vlakken zullen retailorganisaties op een andere wijze verbindingen moeten zoeken met groepen in de samenleving om te overleven. Deze verbindingen kunnen (naast economisch gewin) leiden tot

concepten voor zogenaamde vitale leefomgevingen waarbij samenhang ontstaat tussen maatschappelijke voorzieningen, de openbare ruimte en het commerciële domein.

Het samenspel tussen verschillende soorten voorzieningen zoals retail en openbare en virtuele ruimte leidt tot zogenaamde interactiemilieus waarbij marktplaatsen, ontmoeting, ontplooiing en uitwisseling kernwoorden zijn.

*Deze gedachte staat centraal in de Sociaal Ruimtelijke Ambitie van de dienst Ruimtelijk ordening (DRO) van de gemeente Amsterdam (Maart 2011).*

Vanuit economische overwegingen zijn goed functionerende interactiemilieus van belang, ze zorgen voor innovatie in ondernemerschap en een gezonde markt. Ook vanuit sociale overwegingen zijn deze plekken van belang. Hier worden verbindingen gelegd en bruggen geslagen tussen verschillende werelden.

### **Rol van retailers bij het creëren van interactiemilieus**

Retailers zijn een belangrijk onderdeel van deze zogenaamde interactiemilieus.

Ze bieden commerciële ruimte die klantwaarde en beleving biedt. Echter, veel retailers zijn zich onvoldoende bewust dat zij onderdeel zijn van lokale, regionale, nationale en internationale netwerken en markten. Kennis met betrekking tot interactiemilieus, nieuwe concepten en klantwaarde is schaars en veel retailers zijn onvoldoende geïnformeerd over technologische,



sociaal en organisatorische mogelijkheden bij het vermarkten van retail concepten. Wanneer retailers zich meer bewust zijn van de mogelijke rol die zij zouden kunnen gaan spelen komt er ruimte voor nieuwe organisaties die zowel fysiek als virtueel opereren.

Cor Molenaar, hoogleraar E-Marketing aan de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, wijst naar de rol van Internet voor retailers en geeft aan dat ondernemers, leveranciers en dienstverleners opnieuw hun 'business model' moeten evalueren, opnieuw hun waarde bepalen voor klanten en opnieuw hun strategie definiëren.

Vanuit consumenten en (semi) overheidsorganisaties kunnen retailers verwachten dat een beroep wordt gedaan op

retailorganisaties voor initiatieven gericht op leefbaarheid en stimulering van kennisintensieve creatieve economieën. Retailers worden aangesproken op de verbindingfunctie, waarbij de inzet van technologie essentieel zal zijn.

### Doel en werkwijze

De verbindingfunctie vindt vertaling in het lectoraat door het concept van serendipiteit welkom te heten. Het lectoraat richt zich op vragen als 'hoe kunnen we verbinden' en 'hoe werken nieuwe concepten'?

Het doel van het lectoraat is tweeledig - enerzijds verzamelen, samenstellen en verspreiding van kennis door middel van een kennisbank. Deze kennisbank levert studenten en ondernemers informatie op het gebied van designcriteria voor innovatieve concepten. De rol van nieuwe technologie (enabling technology) wordt hierin meegenomen. Anderzijds richt het lectoraat zich op het bieden van een rijke context van leren en experimenteren voor retail studenten. Studenten en docenten verbinden zich door het ontwerpen, evalueren en uitvoeren van projecten aan het werkveld. Het type onderzoek dat zal worden uitgevoerd is zogenaamd design directed research, waarbij een bestaand concept wordt geëvalueerd of een concept opnieuw wordt samengesteld en vervolgens geëvalueerd.

Thema's die aan de orde komen zijn het ontwerpen en inrichten van interactiemilieus, community collaboration, ontwerpen voor het gebruik van enabling technology, business model sustainability, intelligent pay models en physical distribution. Het lectoraat zal verbinding zoeken met bestaande onderwijs activiteiten zoals minoren e-busniess, marketing communicatie en modulen uit reguliere programma. Daarnaast werkt het lectoraat samen met een aantal geselecteerde organisaties zoals Nedap Retail en biedt het goede mogelijkheden voor het ontwikkelen van een



doorlopende leerlijn richting masters en eventuele promoties. Het lectoraat werkt aan de toekomst door kennis te vergaren over het ontwikkelen van een raamwerk voor interactie en ontmoeting en

participatie in de context van retailing, gastvrijheid en ondernemerschap.

*Kenniskring:*

Joop Bos – hogeschooldocent en voorzitter expertisegroep Community & Retailing Concepts, Stenden hogeschool

Alexander Grit - beoogd lector Community & Retailing Concepts, Stenden hogeschool

Tjitske Dijkstra –docent en onderzoeker

Chantal Stegink – docent en onderzoeker

Marten Jan Feenstra – hogeschooldocent en onderzoeker

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*Lijst met leden expertisegroep:*

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Jan Waalkens - lector ondernemerschap Stenden hogeschool

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# Bibliography

Alexander Grit is senior research lecturer at Stenden hogeschool. Grit's research focuses on the potentialities of hospitality space and its special serendipitous quality. With Paul Lynch at the University of Strathclyde, he co-developed the research method "sociological experimentation," an innovative methodology for understanding the dynamics of hospitality interactions.

Grit studies the paradoxical tension between control and hospitality. He has published on the relationships between art, serendipity, and hospitality, and in so doing critiques modern hospitality management practices. Intrigued and inspired by the concept of the salons of 19th and 20th century Europe, Grit is the developer of the Serendipity Table, a concept that invites people to find the unexpected. Together with Sjoerd Gehrels of Stenden University, he initiated the successful Line of Flight conferences in Leeuwarden, where salons are reinterpreted in order to invite participants to search for new combinations. Grit received his PhD in management at Strathclyde University in Scotland. His master's degree in leisure management from Tilburg University in the Netherlands earned him the International Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) best thesis award.

Joop Bos (1953) graduated in 1978 at the Academy of Visual Arts Minerva in Groningen. Together with Willem de Boer he founded in 1978 the art foundation 'de Zaak' (with Jouke Kleerebezem, Gilberthe Akkermans, Wiebren Arema, Hans Scholten and Ton Mars). From 1980 he started his career in higher education. At Stenden hogeschool Joop has done a variety of jobs, that can be best characterized by initiation and creativity: one of the founders of leisure studies at CHN (nowadays Stenden), marketing communication for CHN, national projects in the field of the simulation of work in the retail. At present: senior lecturer retail design at the Stenden Retail Business School, initiator and chairman of the Expertise group Community & retail Concepts (2010). Besides his work in education Joop is active in coaching organizations with the development of (visual) positioning strategies.

Elise Ottema, senior retail business student at Stenden university specializes in (online) marketing and the 'new' shopping in retail. Before her study at Stenden Elise studied jewelry design at the art school in Schoonhoven. Together with Joop Bos and Alexander Grit (auditor) Elise created the graphic concept of the book. Elise her expertise can be described by creativity in marketing solutions focused on retail, where the combination between online and offline shopping combines.

Willem de Boer (1943). Willem de Boer graduated in 1975 at the Academy of Visual Arts Minerva in Groningen. Together with Joop Bos Willem founded in 1978 the art foundation 'de Zaak' (with Jouke Kleerebezem, Gilberthe Akkermans, Wiebren Arema, Hans Scholten and Ton Mars) Willem's career can be seen as a mix of education (lecturer) and art. After years of activities on the long term about his Mickey Morf project, his car tyres project, his peanuts project etc. Willem has concentrated on making and showing pure photographic works of art. Journeys to Turkey and the USA are an important context in this. In his photographic art a concentrated way of seeing is essential. The photographs are characterized by monumental compositions and often bright colour settings. An ironic basic attitude but also poetry and visual rhyme always present. Just like his great sensitivity for the accidental. His photograph are open images which invite to associations. Serendipity has been a leading principle in his drawings and photographs. Willem does not consider himself as a photographer in the first place - his photographs can be best seen as a painting. His recent works is made on journeys to among others New York and Las Vegas. The images are not put in scene - they are examples snapshots made by means of pure concentration found by means of just walking around through these metropolises.  
<http://www.deboervangroningen.nl/>

