

## Chapter 36

# “Cozinha da Madeira”: A Sustainable Tourism Service Concept for Madeira Island

**Valentina Nisi**

*Madeira-ITI, University of Madeira – Funchal,  
Portugal*

**Kanarak Isarankura**

*Carnegie Mellon University, USA*

**Nuno Nunes**

*Carnegie Mellon University, USA*

**Jodi Forlizzi**

*Madeira-ITI, University of Madeira – Funchal,  
Portugal*

### ABSTRACT

*Sustainability is an outstanding global issue. Our present vision of wellbeing requires resource consumption that cannot be reproduced in a sustainable way. In this chapter, the authors present a case study of “Cozinha da Madeira” (CdM), a service design concept. CdM is a design concept that highlights how one can leverage tourism in order to promote sustainable services and experiences. Through the design of the CdM transformational experience, one invites customers to appreciate local products, resources, and traditions of the island, and in general orient themselves towards more sustainable practices in their further travels abroad as well as in their own home countries. The authors are currently developing a Web-based mobile application based on the premises and research presented in this chapter in order to deliver the service to potential users and evaluate the hypothesis.*

### INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is an increasingly important global issue. Quite simply, human beings, and particularly those in the western world, use resources far faster than they can be reproduced. The most popular definition of sustainability can be traced back to 1987 UN conference. Back then sustainable developments were defined as those that “meet present needs without compromising the ability of future

generations to meet their needs” (WECD, 1987). Today, human beings, and particularly those in the western world, use resources far faster than they can be reproduced (Manzini, Walker & Wylant, 2007; Manzini, 2005). This behavior is arguably a consequence of the seductive vision of “wellbeing” afforded, enabled and encouraged by industrialization – a vision based on personal ownership and mass consumption (Manzini, Walker & Wylant, 2007). These well-established definitions set an

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ideal premise, but do not clarify specific human and environmental parameters for modeling and measuring sustainable developments. For instance that sustainability requires an attitude in development that looks at natural resources (water, land and energy) and natural cycles in a way that celebrates continuity, uniqueness and placemaking. In review of the plurality of these definitions, the site or the environmental context is an important variable in most working definitions of sustainability. This plurality is address in our attempt to design a service that takes into considerations multiple issues related to sustainability and create and experience that reflects on this plurality.

Sustainability has long been a core concern in the design community, from architecture to product/service design (Blevins, 2007; Gupta & Vajic, 1999). More recently that interest grew in the HCI and interaction design communities (e.g. Blevins, 2007). From a design point of view, a sustainable system is one which maintains or enables a high “context quality” without depleting resources, highlighting that a sustainable solution must be combined with an improved quality of both social and physical life. A sustainable solution is therefore defined as the process by which products, services and know-how compose a system enabling people to achieve a result coherent with the principles of sustainability: low energy, material intensity, and a high regenerative potential (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Gupta & Vajic, 1999).

Furthermore, our approach builds on Manzini’s concept of enabling services, where enabling means emphasizing users activity versus a disabling service, where services seem to bring comfort to its users by helping them to do less. For example services such as dry cleaning, day care for kids, elder care, not to mention holiday packages or supermarket, precooked meals are all examples of disabling services, as they seem to bring comfort to its users by helping them to do less. The idea behind disabling services to spare time and energy (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). But, on the other hand, as humans, we are fundamentally

receive pleasure from action. An enabling service can foster engagement with the service itself by promoting the pleasure derived from action, increasing the probability that these initiatives spread and develop. Through changes in the way individuals or communities act to achieve a result, social innovation is also fostered and promoted. For example, by observing creative communities where individuals initiate their own sustainable solutions, such as communal rooftop gardening in urban space or car sharing, emphasizes the value of enabling services as opportunities in co-creation and innovation (Manzini, 2005).

Designing solutions for sustainability no longer lies only on the conventional concept of re-use or re-cycle materials. It means in the first place to understand the reasons that drive the existence of specific objects and services and the experiences that those products and services enable. In order to look at such a diverse range of outcomes, we engaged with service design and an interdisciplinary team who were part of a sustainability research project. Our goal within the service design effort reported here is to observe and extract the essence of existing and traditional services that could inspire us in designing new sustainable ones.

Customers as well as companies are concerned with sustainable solutions for different motives. Companies are interested because issues related to sustainability have reached policy levels and need to be followed by companies when producing their outputs. Corporations increasingly gain in image and marketing promoting sustainability related concerns, branding themselves as sustainable can even increase their profits. On the other hand, for consumers being sustainable is a desirable attitude but is often coupled with more effort and less results. This is due to the fact that today the idea of wellbeing is still coupled with very high rate of energy consumption (transportation, electricity, printing etc.) and a series of disabling services (Manzini, 2005) where the users are disconnected from the pleasure of doing and rather connected with the idea that doing less is the desirable thing.

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