Designing Maritime Services

The 7Ps, service blueprint and one integrated PortSpare case

Management of Shipping Companies

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Services II

Where we are in the Business Plan

- **Last session:** define the customer, problem, proposed value and evidence.
- **Today:** design an actual service that can deliver that value.
- **Next stage:** connect delivery choices to costs, capacity and risk.

Business Plan: Sections 4 and 6
Today contributes to **Service & 7Ps** and **Operations / service delivery**.

Learning outcomes for today

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

1. Define the **7Ps** for a maritime service.
2. Explain why the seven decisions must fit together.
3. Distinguish a **customer journey** from a **service blueprint**.
4. Identify the people, partners, handoffs and controls needed for delivery.

A reminder: what is the customer buying?

Service value

The useful outcome the customer expects from the provider, rather than ownership of the provider's assets.

Maritime example: Port agent

The ship manager buys **coordination of a port call**, not the agent's office or telephone.

Key point: Service marketing must explain not only the promise, but also how it becomes reality.

From the 4Ps to the 7Ps

Marketing mix
A coordinated set of decisions about the offer and how the business brings it to customers.

- The traditional **4Ps**: Product, Price, Place, Promotion.
- Services add **3Ps**: People, Process, Physical Evidence.

Key point: For services, the experience and the delivery system are part of what customers evaluate.

The 7Ps at a glance — the original 4Ps

Product	What service and outcome are promised?
Price	What does the customer pay, and for what?
Place	How can customers access the service?
Promotion	How is the offer communicated and trusted?

Key point: The original four decisions describe the offer and how it reaches the market.

The 7Ps at a glance — the three service Ps

People	Who performs and supports the service?
Process	Which steps deliver the promise?
Physical Evidence	What visible proof supports credibility?

Key point: These three decisions show how services are experienced, delivered and made credible.

P1 — Product means the total service

Product in services marketing
The complete package the customer receives: a core outcome plus the activities required to make it useful.

- **Core:** the main reason to buy.
- **Facilitating:** necessary for access or delivery.
- **Supporting:** increases convenience or differentiation.

Maritime example: ferry transportation

Maritime example: Ferry service package
A passenger purchases travel from one port to another under stated conditions.

- **Core:** transportation between ports.
- **Facilitating:** ticket and boarding instructions.
- **Supporting:** optional onboard amenities and customer updates.

Key point: The total service may be evaluated even when the core transportation occurs successfully.

P1 — Define the boundaries of the offer

Service scope
Exactly what the provider **includes**, **excludes** and promises.

Maritime example: Port agency
An agent may arrange port formalities, but cannot guarantee when a berth becomes available.

Business Plan: Service description
State the customer, intended outcome, exclusions and dependencies.

P2 — Price is more than a number

Price
The payment requested for a defined service, usually with specified billing terms and conditions.

- **Fixed fee:** one agreed amount for a job.
- **Per-unit fee:** charge per shipment or transaction.
- **Subscription:** periodic payment for an agreed scope.

Key point: Price must match service scope, cost exposure and what the customer values.

Maritime example: ship-management pricing

Maritime example: Third-party ship management

A shipowner may pay a management fee for clearly defined technical or crew-management services.

- The fee depends on **which activities are included**.
- Additional third-party costs may be billed separately.
- Two fee quotations are not comparable unless scope is comparable.

P3 — Place means customer access

Place
The channels and arrangements through which the customer can find, purchase and use the service.

- **Direct:** contact the provider by email or online portal.
- **Intermediary:** book through an agent or specialist partner.
- **Coverage:** where and when the provider can deliver.

Maritime example: arranging crew changes

Maritime example: Crew-travel agency
A ship manager may request crew travel by a dedicated account manager or online system.

- **Place** is not only the agency's street address.
- It includes contact hours, response channels and geographic coverage.
- A promised 24-hour service requires realistic staffing and partners.

P4 — Promotion communicates the promise

Promotion
Activities that help the target customer understand, evaluate and choose the service.

- **Direct selling** and specialist industry contacts.
- **Relevant proof:** references, credentials and documented performance.
- **Clear message:** the problem solved and limits of the promise.

Maritime example: selling a digital service

Maritime example: Digital documentation support

A service provider may demonstrate how a real shipping document progresses through approval steps.

- A **demo** helps make an intangible service understandable.
- A sample report shows the output received.
- Claims like “error-free” need evidence.

P5 — People are part of the service

People
Employees, managers and external personnel whose actions influence service quality and customer experience.

- Skills, training and responsibility matter.
- Courtesy matters, but so does reliable execution.
- Customer-facing and behind-the-scenes staff must coordinate.

Maritime example: a delayed port call

Maritime example: Port agent and operations team

If berth information changes, the agent must communicate accurately while the operations team checks the practical consequences.

- **People:** who talks to the customer?
- **Competence:** who can verify the new information?
- **Authority:** who decides how to respond?

P6 — Process turns a promise into delivery

Process
The ordered steps, decisions and responsibilities through which a service is produced and delivered.

Maritime example: Export documentation
Receive shipment data → check details → prepare documents → obtain approval → send confirmation.

Key point: A process should identify **what happens, who owns each step and how errors are handled**.

P7 — Physical Evidence makes service visible

Physical Evidence
Tangible or observable signals that help a customer assess an otherwise intangible service.

Maritime example: Maritime monitoring service
Shipment dashboard, timestamped alerts, a closing report and an invoice that matches the agreed service.

Key point: Evidence must be authentic; a polished dashboard is not proof of performance by itself.

The 7Ps must be consistent

Internal consistency
Every promise must be supported by the people, channels, process and resources actually available.

Maritime example: 24/7 monitoring promise
A provider cannot credibly advertise round-the-clock response if only one employee checks alerts during office hours.

Business Plan: Service & Operations
Match the message to hours, staffing, partner contracts, standards and costs.

What is a customer journey?

Customer journey
The sequence of stages a customer passes through before, during and after using a service.

1. Find a provider and request service.
2. Agree scope, timing and price.
3. Receive the service and updates.
4. Confirm completion, payment and follow-up.

Port agency: the customer journey

Enquiry	Ship manager requests port-call support.
Confirmation	Agent confirms scope and conditions.
Port call	Agent coordinates services and sends updates.
Close-out	Agent provides documents and final charges.

Key point: The journey describes what the customer experiences across time.

Touchpoints and moments that matter

Touchpoint
A moment when the customer interacts with the provider, its system or a service partner.

Maritime example: Port agency
Request acknowledged; berth update sent; final disbursement information received.

Key point: Critical touchpoints often involve uncertainty, delay or a decision by the customer.

What is a service blueprint?

Service blueprint
A map that shows **how the customer journey is produced**: visible contact, internal activities, partners and key handoffs.

- **Customer actions:** what the customer does.
- **Frontstage:** activity visible to the customer.
- **Backstage:** work the customer does not see.
- **Partners:** external organisations needed for delivery.

Customer journey versus blueprint

Journey	What does the customer experience at each stage?
Blueprint	Which people, activities and partners make it happen?

Maritime example: A shipment status update

Journey: the customer receives an alert. Blueprint: a system detects an event, staff verify it and a message is issued.

Blueprint: visible work and hidden work

Line of visibility

The boundary between what customers **see** and internal work they do not see.

Maritime example: Crew change service

Frontstage: travel manager confirms the itinerary.
Backstage: staff check options and partner availability.

Key point: Hidden work still needs clear owners and quality controls.

Handoffs are where services often fail

Handoff
The transfer of a task, information or item from one person or organisation to another.

Maritime example: Spare-parts coordination
The supplier passes the part to a courier. A wrong vessel name or contact detail can stop delivery.

Key point: For each handoff specify: **what, from whom, to whom, by when, and how confirmed**.

Service failure and recovery

Service recovery
Actions taken when the planned service cannot be delivered as promised.

- **Detect** the problem and its customer impact.
- **Assign** a responsible person.
- **Inform** the customer honestly and promptly.
- **Respond** with a feasible alternative and record the outcome.

Maritime example: missed delivery handoff

Maritime example: Urgent logistics service
A courier reports that a package has not been released by the supplier at the agreed time.

- Operations checks the reason and the realistic new timeline.
- The customer receives an update rather than an unsupported assurance.
- A backup is used only if feasible and authorised.

Service standards and performance measures

Service standard
A measurable commitment or target for how the service should be performed.

Maritime example: Shipment updates
Possible measures: acknowledgement time, on-time update rate, missing-information incidents and complaint-resolution time.

Key point: A target is not evidence of achievement; teams must explain how it would be measured.

What goes into the Business Plan?

Business Plan: Section 4 — Service & 7Ps
Define the scope, the seven marketing-mix decisions and why they fit the customer's problem.

Business Plan: Section 6 — Operations
Explain customer journey, frontstage/backstage work, partners, handoffs, quality controls and capacity. Include a blueprint.

Key point: A Business Plan must link the marketing promise to an executable operating model.

PortSpare Express: a concrete service problem

PortSpare Express — fictional case

Fictional teaching case: a ship calls at Piraeus and needs an urgent technical spare part before departure. Several organisations must coordinate.

- **Customer:** shipping / ship-management company.
- **Current workaround:** calls to the supplier, courier and port contact.
- **PortSpare's offer:** one coordinator and clear delivery updates.

PortSpare: define the service boundary

Included

Request confirmation, supplier and courier coordination, progress updates, and proof of delivery.

Excluded

Manufacturing the part, guaranteeing supplier stock, repairing vessel machinery, or promising zero delays.

Key point: Sell a service you can coordinate and monitor—not an outcome outside your control.

PortSpare 7Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion

Product	Coordination of urgent spare-part deliveries and clear updates.
Price	**EUR 250 per job (illustrative)**; third-party charges are extra.
Place	Direct email or phone requests; initial service area: Piraeus.
Promotion	Direct B2B outreach; explain scope, seek pilot evidence and avoid unsupported promises.

PortSpare 7Ps: People, Process, Physical Evidence

People	Coordinator, supplier, courier and port partner: clear responsibilities.
Process	Request $\rightarrow$ confirm $\rightarrow$ arrange $\rightarrow$ update $\rightarrow$ close.
Physical Evidence	Written confirmation, timestamps where available, proof of delivery and transparent invoice.

PortSpare: service blueprint in four stages

Layer	Request	Confirm	Deliver	Close
Customer	Sends need	Accepts fee	Gets news	Checks proof
Frontstage	Replies	Sends offer	Updates	Sends proof
Backstage	Checks input	Books job	Tracks job	Closes file
Partners	—	Stock check	Moves part	Signs receipt

PortSpare: a critical handoff and recovery

Handoff
The supplier releases the part to the courier, who confirms collection.

Possible failure: The part is not ready at the agreed time.

1. Check the new availability and effect on delivery.
2. Alert the ship manager without promising an invented deadline.
3. Consider a backup only with customer approval.

Business Plan Section 4: service description

Business Plan: Illustrative report paragraph

"PortSpare Express would coordinate urgent spare-part deliveries to vessels calling at Piraeus. The service would include booking confirmation, coordination with suppliers and couriers, progress updates and proof of handover. Availability, timing and third-party charges would be confirmed before acceptance."

Key point: A good paragraph defines **scope, customer outcome and dependencies**.

Business Plan Section 4: the 7Ps in prose

Business Plan: Illustrative report paragraph

"The proposed offer would target ship-management companies through direct B2B contact and a per-job coordination fee. A designated coordinator would manage requests and customer updates, supported by suppliers and transport partners. Booking confirmations and delivery records would make performance visible."

Key point: The seven Ps should describe **one consistent service**, not seven unrelated lists.

Business Plan Section 6: operations paragraph

Business Plan: Illustrative report paragraph

"An operations coordinator would receive and validate each request, confirm supplier readiness, and assign a courier or port partner. Critical handoffs would be tracked with confirmation records, and the customer would be updated if delivery conditions changed. Service availability would initially remain within defined geographic and staffing limits."

Key point: Describe **who does what, how delivery is controlled and what limits apply**.

What you can write now—and what is still untested

- **Write now:** service boundary, justified 7Ps, customer journey, blueprint and one failure response.
- **Verify later:** actual problem frequency, customers' willingness to pay, partner availability and full costs.
- **Next Business Plan work:** market and competition, then financial viability and risk.

Key point: Separate a proposed service design from verified market demand.