From a product-centric to a customer-centric brand identity through servitization:

The case of FOSS, a Danish food safety, and quality solution provider

by

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to explore the effects on the elements of a company's brand identity when a firm is moving towards a customer-centric orientation by engaging in the process of servitization. By utilizing a single case study, we aspire to examine how the servitization elements portray the servitization level, as well as which elements of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix are affected by the elements of the servitization process.

Methodology: A qualitative, single case study with an abductive approach has been applied. The case is portrayed by the Danish food safety and quality solution provider, FOSS.

Empirical Material: The empirical findings are a result of 16 semi-structured interviews with employees of FOSS. These primary findings are complemented by a document and archival study of FOSS' corporate written records.

Theoretical Contributions: By investigating the influence of the servitization process on a company's brand identity, a subject that has not been previously studied, we opened a new field of inquiry. Considering the complexity of the servitization phenomenon, we shed more light onto this research field and enriched its comprehension. We also added to the understanding of the B2B brand identity by analyzing the case company's brand identity through the CBIM. Due to our proposed framework, as well as thick description of findings and exhaustive analysis, we further contribute theoretically with this paper.

Managerial Implications: This paper can be supportive for businesses as it is an example of a firm reorienting its approach from product- to customer centricity through servitization. In this sense, firms can recognize that the corporate culture and competences need to be monitored carefully during the process of servitization. Moreover, managers can understand that the nature of their customer and non-customer stakeholders' relations is crucial when servitizing. Lastly, companies with a product-focused orientation, aiming to become more service-focused, can be educated about the role services can play in a firm.

Originality Value: This paper provides the first known framework that integrates Urde's Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (2013) with the servitization elements proposed by Martinez, Bastl, Kingston, and Evans (2010). Thus, an exploration of the two research fields in association is depicted in the food safety and quality industry.

Keywords: servitization, brand identity, CBIM, customer-centricity, product-centricity

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1 Introduction

Today, the business-to-business (B2B) industry is faced with intensified pressure to remain competitive (Parniangtong, 2017). As technology is being commoditized and digitization ensures new and improved ways for all market players to become competitive, firms are looking to gain a unique and sustainable competitive advantage (Parniangtong, 2017). As such, differentiating through products is not enough in today's environment. B2B companies are now starting to value, not only their capabilities and resources but the importance of value creation for their customers, an orientation known as customer-centricity (Raddats & Easingwood, 2010; Parniangtong, 2017). Shah, Rust, Parasuraman, Staelin, and Day, (2006) provide an overview of the differences between a customer-centric and a product-centric approach. In their view a product-driven firm would focus on selling products, which is reflected in a product-centric organizational structure, being transactional-oriented as well as internally focused. In addition, these firms would consider the number of products and profitability per product as performance metrics, and customers' data are regarded as a control mechanism. On the other hand, a customer-centric company would aim to serve customers, to make decisions starting with the customers at the center, to be relationship-oriented, to promote customer value, and to consider customer needs in terms of design and supporting the solution offering. Moreover, these companies are organized in customer segment centers, are externally focused, think about customer loyalty and satisfaction, and consider customer knowledge as a valuable asset (Shah et al. 2006).

In order to become more customer-centric, many B2B are investigating to add services to their current offering which are aligned with their customers' operations and develop the position of a solution provider, a phenomenon also known as servitization (Raddats & Easingwood, 2010). To understand this phenomenon, the model by Martinez, Bastl, Kingston, and Evans (2010) is introduced due to its utility to display the diverse elements of servitization on the one hand, and because of its ability to distinguish between a low-servitized and high-servitized level of manifestation. Moreover, Shah et al. (2006) and Parniangtong (2017) argue that the transition towards a more servitized and a more customer-centric firm is a journey that an entire organization needs to take. This transformation requires a change in the company's strategy, culture and mindset, process and philosophy so that the company shifts its focus away from the products towards services and customer value (Parniangtong, 2017). A term that encompasses the elements requiring a change is the organization or the brand's identity (Leinwand & Mainardi, 2014). While authors such as Aaker (1996), Collins and Porras (1997), Kapferer (2012) or de Chernatony (2010) attempt to

formulate a model for distinguishing a company's identity, it is Urde's (2013) Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) that we consider as the most holistic and inclusive model used to portray it because of its underlying purpose, its newness, and its nine elements. While Urde (2013) refers to the framework as a 'brand' identity matrix, he emphasizes that it depicts, not only the brand as a visual design but the organization behind it, with its culture. What is often thought as the brand, i.e., the visual aspect demonstrates only one of the nine elements, and together with the remaining components, they provide a complete view of the company as a whole (Urde, 2013). It is based on these two concepts, brand identity, and servitization, that we attempt to answer the question about how the elements of a company's brand identity are affected to become more customer-centric during the process of servitization.

In the first chapter of this master thesis, a general overview of relating themes within the research fields of brand identity and servitization is presented, while product- and customer centricity are recurring subjects. Moreover, the context and background of this paper are detailed upon, leading to the illustration of this research's positioning. The purpose of this study is also presented, as well as the aim, and the research question that is connected to it. Following this, we explicitly state how this paper can contribute to existing research empirically and theoretically. In addition, we point out the limitations of our research, before we conclude the first chapter with an outline of the entire thesis that states the content of each section.

1.1   Background and Context

The phenomenon of companies moving from product-centricity to customer-centricity can be identified in various B2B industries. However, the focus of this paper will be the food industry. This sector is increasingly transforming to become an "interconnected system with a large variety of complex relationships" (Trienekens & Zuurbier, 2007, p.107). Moreover, as the demand for safe, sufficient and nutritious food increases, the competition among suppliers to satisfy that demand increases (Trienekens & Zuurbier, 2007). As more emphasis is placed on quality and safety control, traceability of food, and on environmental issues related with the natural resources used for food production (Trienekens & Zuurbier, 2007), more and more successful businesses are focused less on deploying resources or performing activities, and more on outcomes they can create for their customers (Parniangtong, 2017). According to Parniangtong (2017), this development to customer-centricity is recognized as a transition from solutions provided from the perspective of the company's own products, towards offering solutions that satisfy customers' needs and bring value. From a customer perspective, these solutions ought to be complete and holistic as more companies focus on their core operations and are concentrating their supplier base as they gain procurement power to source

globally and strategically (Senn, Thoma, & Yip, 2013). From a provider's perspective, products are no longer guarantees for a business success since they do not sufficiently meet the hard-to-copy stipulation (Parniangtong, 2017). Many B2B firms have seen servitization as an opportunity to provide such solutions as customers place increasingly more value on intangible services (Parniangtong, 2017), while the solution provider strengthens its competitive advantage as services are intangible and harder to imitate (Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003). Thereby, understanding customers and gaining the ability to deliver value to them relies on a strong company identity, ensuring that the organization lives indeed up to a solution provider and a partner (Leinwand & Mainardi, 2014).

The first crucial step to build a strong identity is defining it (Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986; Urde, 2013), followed by the communication of the established identity (Kapferer, 2012; Urde, 2013). As a result, the brand image and reputation about the company develop in the customers' minds. A compliant image with the identity is therefore important because it is the interpretation and decoding of the organization's identity (Kapferer, 2012; Urde, 2013). Additionally, it was found that the identity communicated by the company has to be in accordance with the identity that is perceived by consumers, as Urde, Greyser, and Balmer (2007) outline. Thus, the role of the brand identity is becoming essential when a firm has to respond to internal or external adjustments (Gioia Price, Hamilton, & Thomas, 2010) such as placing a stronger emphasis on its service offering with the goal of becoming more customer-centric. In this way, the internal alignment of the organization's identity is crucial to ensure a successful transformation process. How a business transition of this kind within the food industry sector might impact a firm's brand identity is still vague and has not been investigated yet. Further, no apparent literature attempts to examine the impact of the servitization phenomenon as a means of achieving customer centricity and how that influences the brand identity. We, therefore, consider that we identified a gap in existing literature that needs to be filled and that calls for more empirical research. As a result, we were endeavored to be among the first researchers who explore the concept of brand identity in association with servitization and customer centricity. In this way, our positioning of this research can be seen in Figure 1.

★ Positioning of research
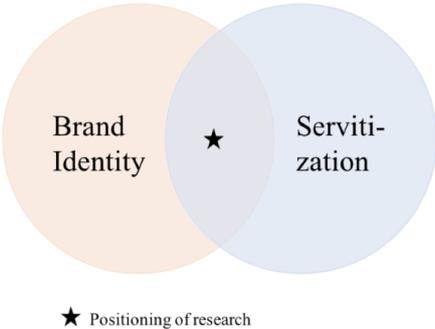
Figure 1 Positioning of research

1.2   Research Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to make use of a company case to investigate the effects on the elements of a company's brand identity when a firm is moving towards a customer-centric orientation by engaging in the process of servitization, meaning when a company extends its offerings by the inclusion of services. A single case study has been selected in order to illustrate and explore the transition from product- to customer-centricity through servitization. In this way, we want to understand how the nine elements of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix are changing to become more customer-centric when the case company has been engaging in servitization actions. In this sense, we want to examine how the components are affected and if they indicate a change in their existence. This guides us to the possibility to analyze the overall matrix and to spot potential adjustments of its composition.

1.2.1   Aim and Research Question

According to our research purpose, we formulated one main research question:

RQ: How are the elements of a company's brand identity affected to become more customer-centric during the process of servitization?

In order to be able to provide an answer to this research question, we utilized the case of FOSS, a Danish food safety, and quality solution provider, to illustrate the phenomenon of servitization, as well as to represent and analyze it in connection with the brand identity. To help us answer our research question, we also found it relevant to identify how the servitization elements portray the servitization level, as well as which components of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix are affected by the elements of the servitization process.

The aim is to expand the existing literature on servitization on the one hand and to explore the topic regarding brand identity in association with a company's intention to become more customer-centric by adding services, on the other hand. The primary objective is to look at the process of servitization through an organization identity lens by developing a framework through which the phenomenon of servitization and brand identity can be understood.

1.3 Research Contributions

To address the purpose, aim and research question of this paper, this study intends to further enlighten the rationale about brand identity in the context of a company's reorientation towards customer centricity through the servitization phenomenon illustrated by Raddats and Easingwood (2010), or Martinez et al. (2010). Furthermore, we intend to contribute to the brand identity literature previously investigated by Kapferer (1986; 2000), Aaker (1991) or Urde (2013). We also aim to develop a new field of inquiry regarding the brand identity changes developing as a result of the servitization process within a company with the purpose of transitioning from product- to customer-centricity. In this way, a connection between servitization with branding and brand management can be noted. Therefore, it is our aspiration to contribute empirically to the observed phenomenon of servitization in association with brand identity and to derive knowledge from actual experiences related to the paper's case. Moreover, we want to contribute theoretically and practically within those research fields. Regarding the theoretical contribution, we aim to enrich the existing literature on servitization by investigating it from a brand management angle. This paper's case will further enhance our theoretical contribution by providing a base from which abstract conclusions can be drawn and applied in another context. We also intend to offer managerial implications to help companies identify the potential effects the servitization process can have on the brand identity of a particular firm. Thus, the management of the servitization process can be approached in a structured way to overcome uncertainties and difficulties.

1.4 Research Limitations

One limitation of this research paper is the sole focus on the food industry. This means that every other existing industry is not taken into consideration within the scope of this thesis which narrows down a broader application of this research. Another limitation of our thesis is the sole focus on one case study, which decreases transferability to different settings. Other methodological limitations include the exclusive investigation of FOSS' Danish headquarters in Hillerød, Denmark, to examine the impact of servitization on brand identity which leads to the exclusion of subsidiaries in the other 28 countries FOSS operates in. Thus, our sample universe is restricted based on geographical homogeneity. In addition, we as researchers were the first who attempted to combine the concepts of brand identity and servitization. Hence, this issue can symbolize a risk to dive into two research fields that have not been put into context yet.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis consists of eight main chapters, and the outline of this paper is structured in order to fulfill the research purpose and to answer our research question. In the introduction, we present the current issue about the importance of moving from a product- to a customer-centric company, as well as display the concepts of brand identity and servitization. Moreover, we present our problematization, research purpose, contributions, and limitations of this study. In the literature review, our two streams brand identity and servitization are thematized and presented coherently and understandably. The analytical framework concludes chapter two with a display of the different elements of the research fields. The methodology chapter details this paper's research strategy, research design, followed by the argumentation for the selected case, sampling strategy, data collection, data analysis, data quality, concluding with research ethics, politics of access and reflexivity. Following that, the case description gives a comprehensive overview of the chosen company FOSS and outlines the company profile and business activities throughout the process of servitization. The various findings collected throughout the research process and through the employed methods described in the methodology are demonstrated in the findings chapter. Following this, the empirical material is analyzed by relating it to existing literature presented in the literature review, as well as the case description. In the discussion chapter, we again point out our main findings on which brand identity elements are influenced by the servitization elements and raise questions for future research. The final chapter concludes this paper by answering the research question, as well as articulates the theoretical contributions, managerial implications, research limitations and suggestions for future research.

2 Literature Review

The literature review is focused on presenting the two research fields this thesis is contributing to, namely brand identity and the rationale of servitization. For both streams a definition and reasons for their application is mentioned. The servitization part will also provide an overview of the evolution of the phenomenon and likewise discusses the service integration and the effects of servitization in terms of internal and external corporate challenges. The chapter will conclude with the presentation of the analytical framework, where elements from both research streams are displayed and combined to aid towards answering the research question.

2.1 Brand Identity

Brand management in the context of striving for the creation of strong brands is a highly discussed topic that is credited with crucial importance. According to Roy and Banerjee (2014), strong brands are considered as an essential necessity in the current business environment in order to sustain a company's position within the market. This rationale goes in line with Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis (1986) findings about a company's brand identity. These authors go so far as to say that the success of a brand is strongly linked to the identity of a company. Further, they state that three elements have to be in alignment to ensure that the firm benefits from the efforts building a brand identity. First, the choice of it plays a crucial role. Second, how the identity is utilized in order to develop a brand image should receive attention and lastly conformity between the identity and the image has to exist (Emeraldsinsight, 2018). On the basis of the noted significance of brand identity, we explain what brand identity means, why it is used, and later on, in the analytical framework, we describe what elements brand identity entails.

2.1.1 Definition of Brand Identity

In literature, several diverse definitions about brand identity are apparent. In 1986, Kapferer proposed brand identity as a means to generate purposeful and exclusive interpretations of the company's brand. Aaker (1991, cited in Roy & Banerjee, 2014, p.208) characterizes it as "the sum of brand meanings expressed as a product, organization, symbol and person." Further,

this author categorizes brand identity as a component of the brand which intends to differentiate the brand in the course of time and to illustrate what the brand is promising. Moreover, a brand identity aspires to cultivate associations consumers hold towards the brand (Aaker, 1991) and to take the notion of a brand's positioning as well as its personality into consideration (de Chernatony, 1999). Kotler (2011) supports that, as he considers identity as a form to analyze the company or to position the offered products. Perera, Tang, Smith, Turchet, and Paramchand (2009, cited in Roy & Banerjee, 2014) seize the idea of true brand identity and define it in a more particular way. For them, identity "specifies, clearly and objectively, the forces, the values and the vision of a brand, and makes it an important tool for internal and external communication" (p.208). Wheeler (2012) also considers brand identity as a tool but regards it more strategically. According to him, it is an asset that determines the quality reporting, recognition and the competitive advantage over opponents in the market. This goes in line with Kapferer's definition from 2004, which states that brand identity is about the differentiator factor that makes a brand more unique in relation to others. Due to the pursuit to make the brand a differentiator, Upshaw (1995, cited in Roy & Banerjee, 2014) considers it as the aim to achieve attention of consumers. When referring back to the beginning of this chapter, Roy and Banerjee (2014) argue that the brand identity has to develop the brand image which needs to be aligned respectively. De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo (1998) already pointed out earlier that identity and image can be viewed from two different angles. Thus, the corporation and consumer side are becoming crucial since the identity entails the corporation brand's message and the image is what consumers decode from the company's identity (Nandan, 2005). In addition, Kapferer (2000) claims that brand image is the most effective means for the communication with consumers, revealing the significance of a brand identity.

2.1.2 Reasons for Brand Identity

In today's business context, the importance of brand identity is a well-known and applied concept (Urde, 2013). In research and academia, the effects of brand identity are addressed in a growing manner (Kapferer, 2000; 2004; Kotler, 2011; Urde, 2013). Literature is consistent on why brand identity is utilized and of immense relevance for enterprises. Hence, the differentiation aspect, the augmentation of reputation and the establishment of loyal customers are decisive reasons for engaging in building a brand identity (Emeraldsinsight, 2018). Furthermore, it is argued that a strong identity supports a company's management to realize its goals (Emeraldsinsight, 2018). To continue this thought, Roy and Banerjee (2014) claim that a strong brand identity also guarantees a transparent and authentic impression of the organization which supports purchase intentions of customers. To gain a powerful and sustainable competitive advantage, brand identity is a perennial subject within a company's daily business activities. Therefore, a strong identity can be seen as an enabler to achieve a

certain dominance over competitors in the market (Roy & Banerjee, 2014). De Chernatony (2001) further stresses that brand identity is utilized for communication reasons and the distribution of the organization's characteristics. Through the communication of the brand identity, de Chernatony (2001) argues that the relationship between the company and its customers can be initiated and strengthened. A strong brand identity can also enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty (Pina, Martinez, de Chernatony, & Drury, 2006). To be more concrete, with a clearly communicated brand identity, a company has a better initial situation to position the brand towards its customers but also for the processes of the company's management direction (de Chernatony, 2001). As aforementioned, a company's positioning is further enhanced due to a precise alignment of the brand's identity and image which is also essential for the overall success of the brand (Park, Jaworski & MacInnis, 1986). However, it is often a complex task to ensure that the image, how internal and external stakeholders perceive the brand, matches with the identity. In this sense, the conformity of the communicated identity (CI) and the perceived identity (PI) is responded to (Emeraldsinsight, 2018).

For Collins and Porras (1994, cited in Roy & Banerjee, 2014) another potential reason to create a strong brand identity and in this way, build a strong organization, is to help companies adapt to market changes and handle market challenges. A change can also be seen in a company's business activities when a brand extension is followed to make an existing brand even stronger (Pimenta, Lopes, da Silva, & Serralvo, 2014) or when a company re-focuses its approach from product to customer-centricity (Parniangtong, 2017). These internal or external process changes can be overcome more easily when the brand is already perceived as strong and favorable by its customers (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Positive associations about a company's brand should enable a better position to make customers accept company changes such as a brand extension (Pina et al. 2006). However, according to Gioia et al. (2010), a company's brand identity might be affected by organizational internal and external influences. This raises the question if a firm has to adjust its brand identity in accordance with influential impacts occurring within the company and outside of the company.

2.2 Servitization

The phenomenon about the servitization process is ascribed with growing interest within the scholarly world, as well as in the literature of brand management research (Baines, Lightfoot, Benedettini, & Kay, 2008). Throughout this chapter, the term servitization will be described in depth within the different subheadings.

2.2.1 Definition of Servitization

Whereas a product is classified as a material artifact, services are not assembled, rather performed and symbolize an intangible offering like maintenance, insurance, and repair (Baines et al. 2008). In 1988, Vandermerwe and Rada were the first to coin the term servitization as "market packages or 'bundles' of customer-focused combinations of goods, services, support, self-service and knowledge" (p.314). Since its conception, various authors have investigated the concept of servitization resulting in different perspectives and definitions. Through a systematic literature review, Paschou, Adrodegari, Perona, and Saccani (2017), identify three main themes in existing servitization literature based on the terminology used to describe the phenomenon. The first research strand refers to the process manufacturing firms undertake in order to progressively add services to their product offering, moving along on, what Oliva and Kallenberg, (2003) call, the product-service continuum. According to Kindström and Kowalkowski (2014 cited in Paschou et al. 2017), innovation is a crucial aspect enabling the development and delivery of services for firms evolving along the product-service continuum.

The second stream details the concept of Product-Service Systems (PSS), defined as "a system of products, services, supporting networks and infrastructure that is designed to: be competitive, satisfies customer needs and has a lower environmental impact than traditional business models" (Mont, 2002 cited in Paschou et al. 2017, p.3). Evans, Partidario, and Lambert (2007) argue that PSS is the most common strategy employed by servitizing manufacturing firms. Extensive contributions to the PSS literature have also been made by authors such as Kuan and Aspinwall (2004), Tukker (2004), Tukker and Tischner (2006), Meier, Roy, and Seliger (2010), Meier, Völker, and Funke (2011), and more recently Boehm and Thomas (2013).

The third stream identified by Paschou et al. (2017) reflects the changing orientation of a firm to a customer-centric view, emphasizing the role of the customer in the development of 'Solutions' or 'Integrated solutions.' This stream is described as "innovative combinations of products and services leading to high-value unified responses to customers' business and operational needs" (Davies, Brady, & Hobday, 2006 cited in Paschou et al. 2017, p.3). This view is also supported by Ren and Gregory (2007 cited in Baines et al. 2008, p.545), who describe servitization as "[a] change process wherein manufacturing companies embrace service orientation and/ or develop more and better services, with the aim to satisfy customers' needs, achieve competitive advantage and enhance firm performance". Further, Auramo and Ala-risku (2005) also add to this stream by considering servitization as a movement from transaction-based business activities to integrated development of value-adding services to customers. This last view is what this paper aims to investigate.

2.2.2 Reasons for Servitization

Over the past 30 years, manufacturing companies have been extending their product offerings by adding related services to their core business activities through product inspections and maintenance, technical support and consulting, to name a few (Cohen, Agrawal, & Agrawal, 2006). Slater (1999) once said: "The (service) market is bigger than we ever dreamed" (1999 cited in Gebauer, Bravo-Sanchez & Fleisch, 2008, p.12) which goes in line with Cohen, Agrawal and Agrawal's (2006) finding that between 29% and 50% of a company's revenue is generated by the inclusion of a service. In literature, particular reasons are mentioned why the offering of services is of high importance. Financial, strategic and marketing-related motives are referred to repeatedly throughout the literature of the brand extension rationale (Baines et al. 2008) and are recognized as the three primary reasons that emphasize a company's transition from being product-based to service-based (Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003). Services are perceived as a valuable source of generating a more stable and significant revenue that leads to higher profit margins, classified as the financial aspect. Moreover, services are added as a strategic attempt to differentiate from competitors in a superior fashion, as services are long-lived and often more difficult to imitate (Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991), thus helping the company to achieve its competitive advantage and gain opportunities over other firms (Auramo & Ala-risku, 2005; Baines et al. 2008; Bustinza, Parry, & Vendrell-Herrero, 2013). These strategic maneuvers are often performed in order to engender customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bustinza, Bigdeli, Baines, & Elliot, 2015; Hakanen, Helander, & Valkokari, 2017). Marketing-related aspects further enable the possibility to increase customer loyalty, to intensify contact opportunities, to get insights into customers' needs and therefore be capable of serving more tailored offerings (Baines et al. 2008). As Auramo and Ala-risku (2005) state, in many businesses, customers request more custom-built services in addition to the sole offering of products.

2.2.3 Evolution of Servitization

The phenomenon of servitization has commenced since the 1980s and has received a great deal of attention from academia, businesses, and the government (Baines et al. 2008). Servitization has been studied by various research communities, such as those investigating Service marketing, Service management, Operations management, Product-service systems, with the most numerous contributions being brought forth by Operations management scholars (Lightfoot, Baines, & Smart, 2013). While many advantages have been linked to the servitization process in the past (see Tukker, 2004; Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2008; Carlborg, Kindström, & Kowalkowski, 2013; Coreynen, Matthyssens, & Van Bockhaven, 2016), recent studies show servitization is becoming more complex and challenging to capitalize on (Gebauer, Fleisch, & Friedli, 2005; Kowalkowski, Witell, & Gustafsson, 2013;

Visnjic, Wiengarten, & Neely, 2014). To overcome these barriers, servitizing manufacturers are now exploring the possibilities delivered by the digitization phenomenon (Paschou et al. 2017; Lenka, Parida, & Wincent, 2017). While growing interest has been shown to discover how IT innovations including big data, analytics, cloud manufacturing or Internet of Things are digitizing the world (see, for example, Colombo, Bangemann, Karnouskos, Delsing, Stluka, Harrison, Jammes, & Lastra, 2014; Li, Da Xu, & Zhao, 2015; Demirkan, Bess, Spohrer, Rayes, Allen, & Moghaddam, 2015), little is known about how servitizing firms can integrate and utilize new digital technologies to their advantage. As a result, the latest research branch of servitization has now appeared under the heading of digital servitization, defined by Holmström and Partanen (2014) as the provision of digital services embedded in a physical product. Various authors (Grubic, 2014; Vendrell-Herrero & Wilson, 2016; Cenamor, Sjödin, & Parida 2017; Paschou et al. 2017) are looking to investigate how firms can make use of digital technologies in order to enable, enhance and advance their servitization processes (Vendrell-Herrero, Bustinza, Parry, & Georgantzis, 2017).

2.2.4 Effects of Servitization

It appears clear that changes need to occur within a firm in order to successfully servitize. Based on works of Matthyssens and Vandenbempt (1998), Mathieu (2001), Galbraith (2002) and Shepherd and Ahmed (2010), Perona, Saccani, and Bacchetti (2017) it is identified that one dimension of change concerns human resources, the organization, and corporate culture. Dubruc, Peillon, and Farah (2014) for example, detail in depth the impact of servitization on corporate culture by concluding that a servitization orientation does indeed come with a different culture and manufacturers undergoing this process should provide enough time to integrate the new PSS culture. In the same way, Nordin and Servadio (2012), also conclude that a product-centric culture acts as a barrier to develop a service-centric cultural mindset.

Perona, Saccani, and Bacchetti (2017) further identify another dimension of change, debating whether the service organization should be integrated into the existing organization structure or constructed as an independent business unit. This issue has also been discussed by Nordin and Servadio (2012), who point out that a separation between the product and the service unit, occurs more at a strategic level, and not at an operational one. Not constructing a separated business unit for the service element could become problematic, as many researchers agree that the development of a dedicated organization enables the cultivation of the service culture (Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003) while the current organization can maintain existing knowledge and capabilities (Sawhney, Balasubramanian, & Krishnan, 2004). Moreover, a separation could enable the creation of a profit-center, thus mitigating risks from possible losses (Anderson & Narus, 1995).

2.2.4.1. Internal and External Challenges

Dimache and Roche (2013) identify a few streams of challenges firms can experience while servitizing. For one, firms can undergo fundamental changes to the culture, production, and resources. Oliva and Kallenberg (2003) identify a number of main internal barriers for companies to overcome the transition from products to services. For businesses that have been highly focused on their product offerings, it might be difficult to believe in the financial capability of services and to change the company culture and the mind of the employees or customers (Robinson, Clarke-Hill, & Clarkson, 2002; Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003). Furthermore, it is likely that the development of a service business unit falls outside the power of the firm although a service market potential has been recognized (Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003). Another internal challenge can be seen in the resistance from different departments within the company when the new service strategy is not well communicated or understood by personnel (Baines et al. 2008). Hence, it might be intricate for employees to accept a new organizational structure and to adopt a downstream position where the company's products are not the core anymore. Overall, moving to a PSS model is a complex, multidimensional process (Dimache & Roche, 2013).

External challenges are comprised of additional competitors and rivals within the service segment (Baines et al. 2008). Whenever a company decides to concentrate on other activities besides the existing offerings, there is always a risk linked to potential failure due to the lack of expertise and knowledge (Baines et al. 2008). Moreover, these companies have to deal with a certain amount of uncertainty since customers' responses to the new business unit are unpredictable. Customers are also used to owning the products, which can create a difficult barrier to overcome the higher levels of servitization, where customers and suppliers have more integrated value chains (Dimache & Roche, 2013). Furthermore, Gebauer, Paiola, and Saccani (2013) show that the interaction between external and internal actors can create additional challenges. As firms become part of their customers' operations by providing integrated solutions, challenges can arise within their value network (Perona, Saccani, & Bacchetti, 2017).

2.3   Analytical Framework

The analytical framework is based on the two research fields this thesis relates to, brand identity, and servitization. By presenting our framework, we frame our research and demonstrate that we are knowledgeable about the fundamental concepts, theories, and models that relate to the topic. In addition, the framework gives the paper direction and provides scientific justification for the investigation of brand identity in relation with servitization.

Therefore, it shows that our research is grounded in and based on theory. In the following section, we will first present the brand identity elements by using the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix by Urde (2013) and explain why this matrix was most suitable for our purpose. After that, a display of the elements of the servitization process follows. In the end end of this chapter, we will introduce our analytical framework (see Figure 3).

2.3.1 Corporate Brand Identity Matrix

A framework that we consider as the most integral and all-embracing model to portray the brand identity of an organization is the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) by Urde (2013) as it can be utilized for the description, definition, and alignment of the elements of the brand identity. The framework does not only present the brand as a visual design, but also the organization behind it (Urde, 2013). Hence, the CBIM is a powerful tool to identify, describe and analyze a company's organization identity along the nine components the CBIM entails (see Figure 2). It is important to mention that the CBIM unites theoretical and managerial requirements. Thus, the internal and external perspective of a brand is put into a balance, which contributes to a deep understanding and overview of a company's corporate brand identity. The internal (sender) part consists of three characteristics of an organization, which are: 'Mission & Vision,' 'Culture' and 'Competences.' The external (receiver) side is divided into 'Value Proposition,' 'Relationships' and 'Position.' The last three components are both internal and external and are classified as 'Personality,' 'Expression' and 'Core.' All parts of the matrix are interrelated, seen on the arrows connecting each component. This, in turn, means, that all factors are aligned to reflect the 'Core' of a company's brand and vice versa (Urde, 2013). In the following paragraph, the various individual elements of the CBIM will be introduced and clarified, starting with the internal elements, followed by the external ones, and concluding with the ones that are both internal and external.
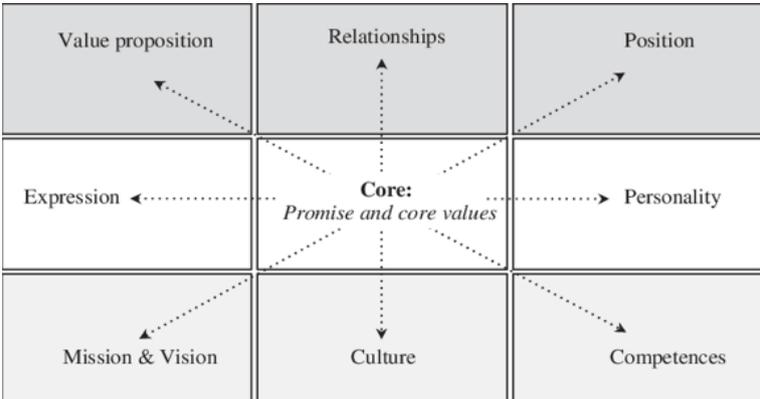
Figure 2 Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013)

While the 'Mission' states why a company exists or what it drives for, the 'Vision' can be seen as an extension of the 'Mission' and points out the future direction of the organization. 'Culture' is the mirroring image of corporate attitudes, values, and beliefs. In addition, Urde (2013) claims that 'Culture' embodies how the firm performs and behaves. Several other aspects about 'Culture' are mentioned by Urde (2013), meaning that this element can also be reflected upon a company's aspiration, country of origin or way of communication. Further, capabilities and skills refer to a company's 'Competences' and are incredibly crucial for building a brand identity and a sustainable competitive advantage.

Concerning the external elements, 'Value Proposition' is concerned with key offerings a company provides its stakeholders. It is a way of creating a positive relationship with customers and non-customers stakeholders, as well as building a favorable brand reputation. Moreover, the 'Value Proposition' should echo the firm's competences in order to create an authentic brand identity. The factor 'Relationships' indicates links the company has with its customers and other stakeholders, and is connected with the 'Culture' of the company to establish relationships with customers and non-customers. How the brand and the firm should be positioned in terms of customers and other stakeholders within the market, are part of the component 'Position.' Urde (2013) mentions that the decision on the position guides the brand identity for differentiation reasons. Further, the stated 'Mission & Vision' have to be in harmony with the 'Position' to portray the same point of departure for the company which is why the two elements 'Position' and 'Mission & Vision' are connected via a diagonal arrow.

The element 'Expression' describes the verbal and visual aspects of a brand. It involves the aim to achieve a unique way to communicate the company, respectively the brand. 'Personality' belongs to this group which describes the character of a brand. From a corporate perspective, Urde (2013) highlights that the employees' personality is the crucial factor for building up the brand's characteristics. The character of a brand is consequently also a means important for the element 'Expression.' At last, the 'Core' embodies a company's entity of heart values that ultimately result in an organization's promise. According to Urde (2013), the position of the 'Core' in the middle of the matrix, demonstrates the vital role of it within a company which has to be transferred internally and externally. Furthermore, a determined 'Core' is of utmost importance for the creation of the brand identity.

Overall, the CBIM framework is a suitable tool to analyze the core principles of a company's brand identity. Thus, it can be used to investigate what the brand identity of a company is, how it is operating and how it can be developed. It is an essential prerequisite to acquire knowledge about and communicate each of the framework's elements in terms of the external and internal support for the corporate brand as well as to ensure a mutual comprehension of them.

2.3.2 Servitization Elements

Martinez et al. (2010) present four criteria for determining a firm's servitization level (see Table 1). These criteria will be further discussed in detail in relation to supporting literature within the following sections.

Level of Servitization	High Servitization	Low Servitization
Value Basis of Activity	Relationship based	Transactional based
Primary Role of Assets	Asset utilization	Asset ownership
Offering Type	Total service integration [customer intimacy]	Physical product plus peripheral services [Maintenance]
Production strategy	Pure/mass customization	Mass production

Table 1 Criteria for the identification of an organization's servitization level (Martinez et al. 2010)

2.3.2.1. Value Basis of Activity

Martinez et al. (2010) define the 'Value Basis of Activity' as the value identified by the customer to be the main driver for their recurring purchase. In this way, they determine that a relationship-based orientation is typical for firms who are highly servitized, while transactional-based relationships characterize lower servitized firms. This is supported by Brax (2005, p.151), who claims that: "Transaction-oriented systems and practices are insufficient in managing information about products possessed by customers." She supports her statement by arguing that knowing customers' business context and operations is crucial in ensuring the development and delivery of satisfactory services, as they need to be designed to support the customers' business goals and practices. Gaining knowledge about the customers can be achieved through ongoing communication and customer support, leading to the development of the service relationship and the service co-production. In this way, she concludes that firms undergoing servitization cannot use services only as an add-on to the product since it conflicts the transaction-oriented business philosophy, suggesting a change to a relationship approach has to take place if firms ought to servitize successfully (Brax, 2005).

2.3.2.2. Primary Role of Assets

According to Martinez et al. (2010), the 'Primary Role of Assets' are indicators of the nature of the asset's demand, meaning that highly servitized firms would focus on the delivery process rather than the ownership of the product. Tukker (2004) and Fischer, Gebauer, and Fleisch (2012), support this by detailing how manufacturers move to a performance-based business logic as they increase the relative importance of the service elements. Tukker (2004) identifies three categories of manufacturers, namely product-oriented, use-oriented and result-oriented, based on the level of value provided by the product versus the service. As the manufacturers move to the end of the product-service system, result-oriented firms aim to achieve what is defined as the practice of thinking and working in terms of ends, thus gaining freedom to fulfill customer needs better (Tukker, 2004). It is at this stage where services can be co-created (Green, Davies, & Ng, 2017).

2.3.2.3. Offering Type

The 'Offering Type' shows the spectrum of the product-service offering; from tangible products supported with a peripheral service to total services (Boyer, Hallowell, & Roth, 2003 cited in Martinez et al. 2010). Baines and Lightfoot (2013) argue that companies generally provide services on three different levels: base, intermediate and advanced. They classify base services to include product provision, spare parts and warranty; intermediate services include, for example, scheduled maintenance, delivery to site, operator training, condition monitoring and in-field service; advanced services focus on providing customer support, revenue-through use and risk and rewards agreements between the supplier and the customer. Thus, the base services are services which support the product, while advanced services are ones that support the customers. Moreover, by providing base services, the manufacturer focuses on an outcome based on product provision; intermediate services focus on outcomes based on the maintenance of the product, while advanced services focus on the capability to deliver through the product's performance. The authors further argue that advanced services are particularly interesting in the servitization phenomenon, as they appear to be the most complex, with scarce information on the implications of implementing them. They further develop their findings by identifying six main areas of interest for manufacturers to consider when managing their operations to deliver advanced services (Baines & Lightfoot, 2013). The first finding discusses the company's facilities and their location, noting that co-located facilities, which are distributed throughout the customer's supply chain operations, are critical for the delivery of advanced services, as it enables responsive and reliable maintenance and the opportunity for continuous product design improvements. For the same reasons, manufacturers integrate forward by adopting a range of customer activities and backward by retaining design and production capabilities, concluding the authors' second finding. Research such the ones of Cova, Dontenwill, and Salle (2000) or Sawhney, Balasubramanian, and

Krishnan (2004) further debate where in the customer's supply chain should the manufacturer position itself. Moreover, Baines and Lightfoot (2013) present how the manufacturers can make use of information and communication technologies through, for example, remote monitoring technologies, in order to better deliver advanced services. Relating back to Tukker's (2004) view on the 'Primary Role of Assets', Baines and Lightfoot (2013, p.18) also conclude that the delivery of advanced services is enhanced by adopting "performance measures that reflect outcomes aligned to individual customers […] complemented by a set of more emotional measures that demonstrate value to the customer". The author's fifth finding suggests that the front-line employees' skills, such as flexibility, empathy, authenticity, commitment, relationship building, and technical capabilities are crucial to ensure the development and sustainability of customer relationships. Lastly, Baines and Lightfoot (2013) identify that manufacturers deploy a set of processes enabling a wide range of customer touch-points, in order to "proactively manage people, information, and facilities to maintain the condition, use and location of products as they are used by customers" (Baines & Lightfoot, 2013, p.21).

2.3.2.4. Production Strategy

Finally, Martinez et al. (2010) describe the 'Production Strategy' as an indicator of the product customization level along the servitization continuum. This means low servitized firms make use of mass production, whereas high servitized companies offer pure or mass customization. This translates into a standardized product or solution or a solution customized for specific customers or groups of customers. Product and system architecture is a well-researched field (Christopher & Hsuan, 2009), providing insights into how products and systems should be designed to function and interact with other objects with the addition of functions and services, and so develop a production strategy.

According to the sections above, our analytical framework is as follows (see Figure 3). The elements of servitization are shown and placed external to the matrix to influence the elements of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix.

VBA

PRA

Value Proposition	Relationships	Position
Expression	Core	Personality
Mission & Vision	Culture	Competences

OT

PS

VBA = Value Basis of Activity
PRA = Primary Role of Assets
OT = Offering Type
PS = Production Strategy
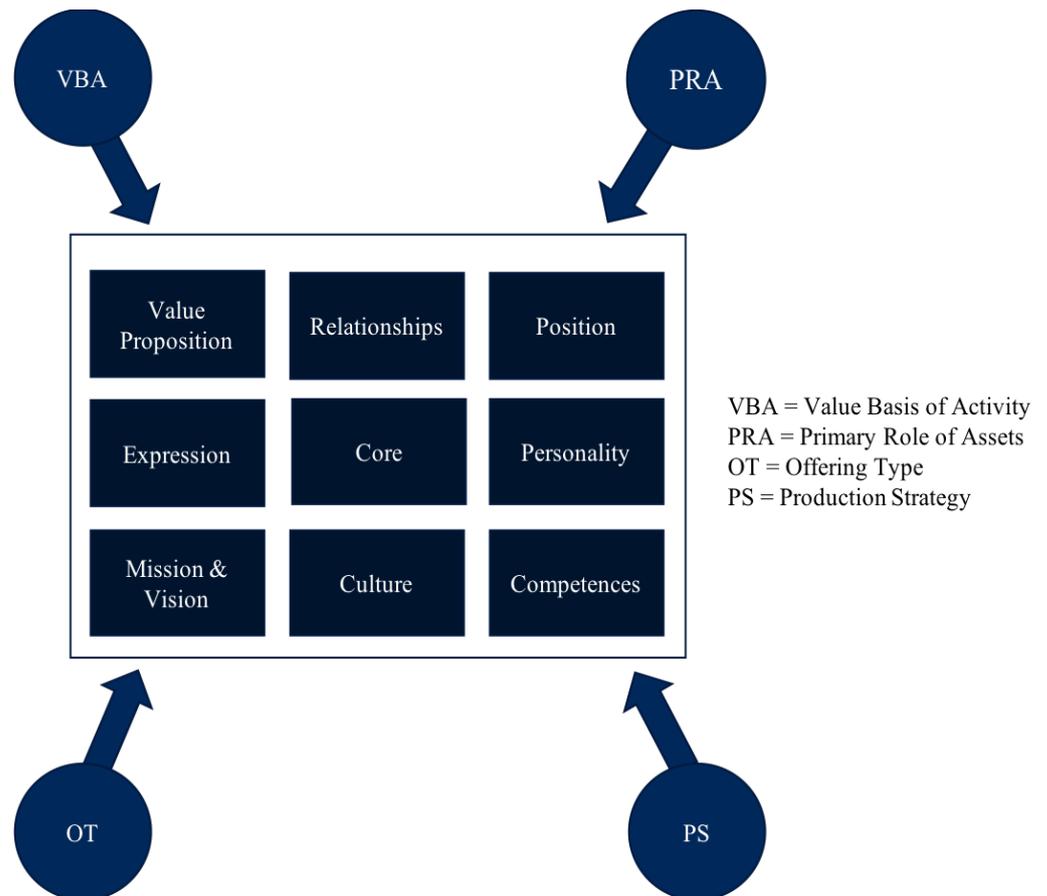
Figure 3 Analytical Framework

2.4 Chapter Summary

In the literature review, we first presented brand identity as one of our research fields. In that section, several different definitions of brand identity were mentioned: from Kapferer (1986; 2004), who sees brand identity as a way to differentiate and to create purposeful and exclusive interpretations of the company's brand, to Perera et al. (2009 cited in Roy & Banerjee, 2014), who not only consider brand identity as a specifier for a brand's vision and values but also as an essential asset for the internal and external communication; to Kotler (2011), who regards brand identity as a mode to analyze the company or to position the offered products, to Wheeler (2012) who states that brand identity determines the quality reporting, recognition and the competitive advantage over opponents in the market. The definition of brand identity was further complemented by depicting the diverse reasons for the engagement in building a strong brand identity. Thus, to only name a few, brand identity is utilized for differentiation, enhancement of reputation, improvement of customer relationships, competitive advantage as well as to overcome and handle internal and external market challenges.

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The second research field, servitization, was commenced with giving an overview of the existing definitions. Hence, the definition by Vandermerwe and Rada (1988) for example was selected to show that servitization can be considered as combinations of goods, services, support, self-service and knowledge that are available for the customers. As well, the reasons for servitization were presented which are first and foremost financial, strategic and marketing-related reasons. In this sense, servitization is used to generate a stable revenue, to differentiate from competitors and to increase customer relationships. Moreover, we demonstrated the evolution of servitization that began in 1980 and has received an ongoing attention ever since which can also be attributed to the development and exploration of possibilities of the digitization phenomenon. In the last part, we illustrated the internal and external effects of servitization. Thus, a company's whole organization might be impacted when a new PSS is implemented, or the entire orientation of the company might change from a product focus to a service focus. The decision on how to integrate the service into the existing business departments might also be difficult to address. In addition, the company might face new competitors and rivals within the service segment, there might be a high uncertainty, and there might be the potential that existing employees do not agree with the new business approach.

As the last step, we concluded our literature review with our analytical framework that combines both research fields. The first part was based on a detailed description of the nine elements of brand identity, presenting the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix. Thus, 'Mission & Vision', 'Culture', 'Competences', 'Value Proposition', 'Relationships', 'Position', 'Expression', 'Personality', and 'Core' were introduced. Following that, we displayed and explained the elements of the servitization process which are: 'Value Basis of Activity', 'Primary Role of Assets', 'Offering Type', and 'Production Strategy'. The presentation of all elements of the two different research fields was necessary to create the analytical framework.

3 Methodology

This section of this paper concentrates on the methodological path that we have chosen for this thesis. More precisely, our research approach and strategy will be discussed in depth. Further, in the research strategy part we present arguments for the selected case, explain our data collection method that covers primary as well as secondary material. In order to complete the picture of the primary empirical material, our sampling design decisions will be provided. Another element of the methodology is the data analysis where we transparently clarify how we worked with the gathered data which in the end is completed by a discussion about validity and reliability of the whole thesis.

3.1 Research Approach

Qualitative, exploratory approach

Generally, qualitative research approaches are concerned with the study of the human element, that is behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals, within social and natural science (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). The strength of this approach lies in its ability to provide elaborate descriptions of people's experiences on a particular issue (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). This approach is able to answer more than what, where, when, or who questions, but details why and how something occurred (Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1988; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). As this paper's purpose is to identify how the brand identity of a company is influenced by the process of servitization, we considered discovering the sophisticated understanding of what brand identity means of the uttermost importance. As brand identity is created, lived and ultimately delivered by people, especially B2B brands (Wirthwein & Bannon, 2014), it is crucial to enable the interviewees to provide information in their own words, using their personal accounts (Myers & Newman, 2007). Unlike in quantitative research, where data is to be gathered and measured, without the possibility of understanding why those results have developed (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015), a qualitative research approach allows freedom and flexibility for thoughts to emerge and to be explained. Furthermore, as a company's brand is created by a multitude of employees (Wirthwein & Bannon, 2014), qualitative research allows for various perspectives to be included in the analysis, as the underlying beliefs and emotions of individuals are emerging (Stake, 1995). An additional

argument for our selection of a qualitative approach is derived from the need of an in-depth understanding of our phenomenon, gathered through methods allowing the collection of rich empirical material, as opposed to statistical methods often associated with quantitative research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Moreover, we also agree with Jackson (2015, p.189) on his perception of qualitative research, which he defines as "the open-ended dialogue through which contextually grounded meanings are collaboratively explored." In this way, we aim to achieve our purpose and answer the research question through a shared understanding of the studied field.

In this paper, we further make use of the particularities of qualitative research, namely exploratory research. As we are the first to attempt (to our knowledge) combining the concept of servitization with the concept of brand identity, we considered the exploratory approach to be best suited in guiding us to fulfill our research question (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). With our exploratory approach, we aim to not provide conclusive solutions to the issue in question, but to help understand the servitization in connection with brand identity better (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

Abductive approach

The deductive and inductive approaches are the two main research approaches used in business research to relate the research process to theory creation (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). While the deductive approach aims at creating theory from existing literature, the inductive approach grounds theory development in the empirical world (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Recently, scholars have been recognizing the possibility of theory building based on a combination of the two main methods, referred to as the abductive approach (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). This particular logic describes theory building as a process of alternating between the inductive and deductive approaches or moving back and forth between the empirical findings and existing literature (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Dubois and Gadde (2002) define this process as systematic combining between the empirical world, the case, theory, and the theoretical framework.

In our research processes, we made use of the abductive approach by first defining the case company, after which, desk research about the operating industry of the firm allowed us to identify a few relevant and interesting research fields. We presented our ideas in a fruitful discussion with some of the firm's managers, while staying open to new possibilities. We followed our meeting with a more in-depth literature review on the agreed subjects. We found it necessary to possess these insights in order to utilize the literature as a foundation for gathering empirical material which supports the study's aim (Merriam, 1988). Based on the literature review, we redefined the direction of our case to include additional events with the purpose of portraying a clearer picture of the changes happening in the case company. We then referred back to the literature with the scope of identifying a matching theoretical

framework. In order to fulfil the purpose of our research, we found it most appropriate to construct a framework consisting of elements relating to both concepts identified as relevant. Because we believe to be the first ones to attempt combining these two concepts, we did not identify a completely matching framework to fulfill our purpose or match our findings. It is therefore why we combined two models, one from each concept we employ, into one analytical framework. Thereafter, we gathered empirical material while carefully keeping our analytical framework in mind, so as to allow the possibility for new ideas to emerge, while maintaining an appropriate level of structure. Afterwards, we decided to further develop the literature review in relation to the novel information gathered through the conducted interviews and make changes to the structure of the paper. For example, we built on our brand identity literature and realized the need to uncover and explain the transition from product- to customer-centricity, which we articulate in the introduction. We also made changes to the relationships between the two concepts involved in our analytical framework, as to better portray the empirical findings. This was done with the scope of answering our research question in a novel way, as well as to develop our contribution to both streams of literature we inquired into. Furthermore, we developed our case based on the interview findings to include more events and instances that portray and were crucial for the move towards customer centricity through servitization. By going back and forth between all the four elements of Dubois and Gadde's (2002) systematic combining we consider we have closely followed an abductive approach. Below, Figure 4 visually presents our process.
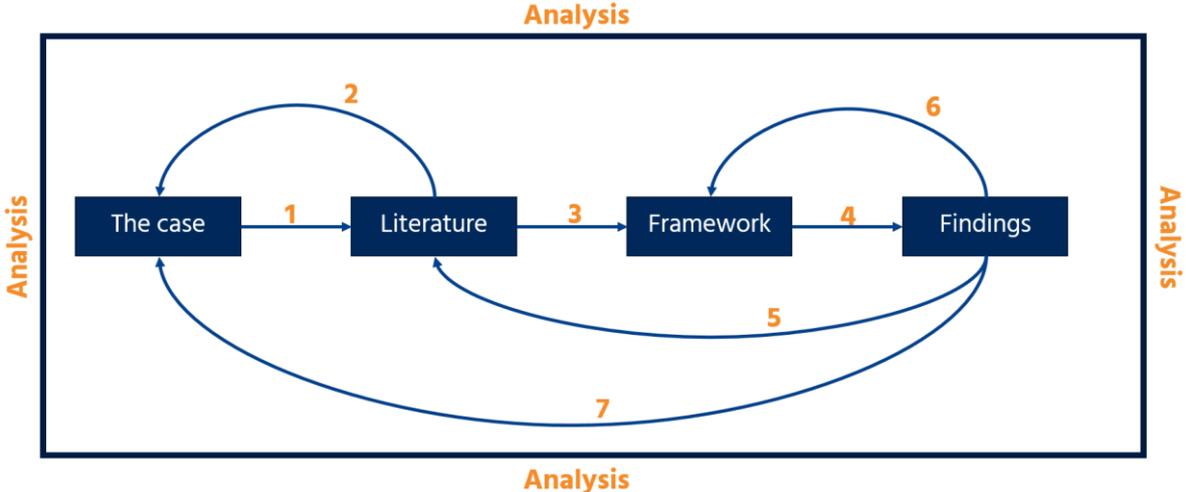

Figure 4 Visual representation of this research's abductive approach

3.2 Research Strategy

Authors such as Merriam (1988), Eisenhardt (1989), Stake (1995, 2005) and Yin (2003, 2009), have dedicated their careers to exploring the purpose of qualitative case study and concluded that case studies are best suited to answer research that inquires "how" and "why" questions (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2005). Moreover, a case study design allows for a holistic understanding of the research topic from the perspective of those involved, in a real-life context (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2005). It is therefore why we found it most suited to design our research based on a case study approach. As our purpose is to investigate how brand identity is influenced by the process of servitization, we found it necessary to examine these concepts in the context in which they take place, such as a company, and investigate the subjective perceptions of the actors involved in them. We did so in order to identify how the brand identity is constructed or reconstructed by various employees, in different departments, as well as located in different places in the organizational hierarchy, during the process of servitization, and as the company is moving towards a customer-centric approach (Stake, 1995). Furthermore, considering that this operation can be understood only by accessing how it is intended and experienced by the actors, the selected case study design is only logical, since 'verstehen' - understanding an action through the actor's subjective experience of it, is a social science guiding principle (Welch, Piekkari, Plakoyiannaki, & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2011). Moreover, case studies allow and enable thick descriptions and the construction of a narrative, which is essential to the process of understanding according to Lincoln and Guba (1985). Overall, we chose the case study approach as it allows us to integrate two complex, abstract concepts, operationalize them through the collection of empirical material, and present them into one narrative. Based on our research purpose, we also agree with Siggelkow (2007 cited in Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015), who argues that cases are "particularly valuable for demonstrating the importance of particular research question, for inspiring new ideas and for illustrating abstract concepts". This also goes in line with our exploratory approach to this research.

In order to remain consistent with our philosophical orientation, we followed Stake's (1995, 2005) and Merriam's (1988) constructivist approach to case studies, as opposed to Yin's or Eisenhardt's positivist views (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick & Robertson, 2013). Moreover, we further distinguished our abductive approach to this case, from Eisenhardt's view on the case study as an inductive strategy, enabling the discovery of testable theory from the empirical material, and from Yin's approach of using the case study as a way of verification, with explanatory purposes. Dubois and Gadde (2002, p.555) articulate clearly that an abductive approach to case studies provide "unique means of developing theory by utilizing in-depth insights of empirical phenomena and their contexts," which we agree with and follow during this research. Furthermore, Welch et al. (2011) also appreciate the interwoven nature of the

empirical elements of the case study and theory development. Based on our philosophical orientation and considering the implications of the stance in which the empirics and theory are tangled, we designed our case study considering both Merriam's (1988) and Stake's (1995) views on case study strategy. On the one hand, we found that the literature review is an essential step contributing to theory enrichment, and allows for the theoretical framework to emerge and shape the research question (Merriam, 1988). On the other hand, from the start, we also considered Stake's (1995) flexible research design, which enables significant changes to be made even after the research process took place.

Based on our purpose, we investigated a single case study reflecting on a case study's function to fulfill theoretical insights (Robinson, 2014). Robinson (2014) defines this function to provide an intensive examination of a single case, which can be put forward for validation in other samples and is relevant at the beginning of the exploration of a new domain. We also describe our case to as an instrumental case study which aids us in providing insights into the servitization's influence on brand identity (Stake, 2005). We see the case of FOSS as beneficial since it provides us with a supportive role and facilities our understanding of the two concepts as both of them can be observed to occur in the company (Stake, 2005). However, the case itself takes a secondary interest, playing a supportive role in understanding our issue (Stake, 2005).

Although the case study has become a typical design in many scientific research fields, we also acknowledge the critique towards this strategy. Yin (1994) argues that case studies have previously been carelessly conducted, leading to the case findings to be influenced by biased views and equivocal evidence. Moreover, both Yin (1994) and Weick (1979) criticize case studies to be rich descriptions from which the readers are expected to come up with their own conclusion. To overcome these challenges and following Stakes (1995) interpretation of case studies, theoretical boundaries have been set to control the possibility of overwhelming and unnecessary descriptions (Weick, 1979). It is therefore why we delimited our case based on the theoretical concepts of servitization and brand identity. By using an abductive approach to our case study, we further overcome the challenge of providing unnecessary descriptions, as the abductive approach relies more on theory than what is suggested by true induction (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

More than the theoretical boundary, the importance of a time boundary is further emphasized by Dubois and Gadde (2002), who articulate that the researcher should create a deliberate time frame when case studies are focused on processes, such as in our case and the process of servitization. As processes continue in the real world, the research process often involves a set time frame. It is, therefore, the researcher's choice which time frame to consider when defining the case (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). We defined our case to focus on a longitudinal perspective, by investigating FOSS' brand identity during the process of servitization, which

began in 2008. Another boundary we set for our case is a geographical one. Due to various constraints and implications, the case has only been researched from the perspective of the Danish organization. We found important to assert and present this boundary as our purpose is to discover how is brand identity influenced by servitization. We would be hopeful to believe that a company's brand identity is globally aligned, so considering FOSS operates in 28 countries, we would not, in good conscience, be confident enough to state that the brand identity identified from using primary sources only located at the company's headquarter in Denmark, would also identically correspond with the brand identity in the 28 global locations. One could argue that, to a certain extent, a corporate identity could and should be present in all subsidiaries (Urde, 2013), but because this paper's goal is to unravel deeply rooted perceptions and provide thick description of subjective, individual experiences, we regard that those individualities are linked to the individuals near environment (unconscious bias). Because of that, we consider that we would not be able to generalize the brand identity to the whole of FOSS organization within the 28 countries, but present an accurate and authentic representation of the brand identity and the servitization process as experienced by FOSS' Danish organization, and so delimit the scope of the case within this boundary.

3.2.1 Arguments for the Chosen Case

Remaining consistent with Stake's (1995) view, we chose a case with the greatest opportunity to investigate and learn about the dominant issue, namely servitization influence on brand identity. This type of case is one that provides the resource access in order to yield the best opportunity for learning (Stake, 2005). As an employee in the company, one of the researchers had the capability of not only gaining access to one point of contact within the organization but to numerous ones (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). As such, many of the challenges proposed by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) that deal with managers' reluctance or even denial to provide information have been overcome by avoiding a bottleneck. Moreover, being a FOSS employee throughout the duration of the master program, has permitted the one researcher to build rapport with various employees, thus allowing for much more genuine opinions, attitudes, and beliefs to emerge during the interview process. Both these actions enable the collection of more reliable and valid empirical material, a concern often present during the data collection process (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, this case also allows for the collection of unbiased and reliable secondary data, as one of the researchers had unconstrained access to company information during the research process.

It is evident that the case also fulfills a purposive sampling technique (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015), as the aim of this paper was to investigate the influence of servitization on brand identity. FOSS has not only been undergoing this process for a steady

ten years but it also a market leader in the operating segment of analytical solutions. This means that they are likely amongst the first in the industry to go through this process, providing a unique opportunity for this research to be performed. Moreover, the sampling was also considered based on the case's theoretical objective. Although case studies can fulfill many functions, we identify the goal of this case most with what Miles & Huberman (1994) consider theoretical or hermeneutic insight. The authors argue that when the case aims to provide theoretical insights, the case should be chosen considering how insightful, comprehensive, articulate and/ or honest it can be, with the goal to provide rich information. We consider FOSS to fulfill those criteria due to the extensive access the researchers had to company information and informants, the long history of the company, and the professionalism and market-leading position.

3.3 Data Collection

Case studies are commonly known and appreciated for the ability to use multiple data sources, an approach which enhances data credibility (Yin, 2003). Is it important to notice that, it is a phenomenon that dictates the data collection method, even including the type of participants, and not the other way around (Hycner, 1999). In this way, considering our purpose, philosophical orientation and the design of our study, our research includes exclusively qualitative methods. The collection of primary empirical material was undertaken by conducting interviews, with the purpose of obtaining material specifically for this research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, we made use of secondary sources to find suitable material and information to create literature streams that guided us to our research purpose and research question and aid triangulation. (Eisenhardt, 1989; Turner, 2010; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). These methods are further detailed upon in the following sections and are summarized in Table 2.

Research Activity	Type of Material	Material Source	Research Material
Qualitative interviews	Primary material	Informants who work at chosen case company	Interview audios, transcriptions, and notes
Literature review	Secondary material	Academic books and journals	Text
Document studies	Secondary material	Website of organization, company presentations, internal news postings	Text
Archives	Secondary material	Company presentations, internal news postings	Text

Table 2 Data Collection Methods

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3.3.1 Qualitative Interviews as Primary Empirical Material

One part of our empirical material collection refers to qualitative interviews, which are defined as primary data since new information is directly collected by the researcher as outlined by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) and therefore "may better aid data collection in respect to the research questions" (p.350). Further, it is argued by these authors that, qualitative interviews are a suitable method when the researcher aims to gain an understanding of the respondents' mindset which is also connected with their viewpoint and why they hold a particular perspective. Therefore, it is stated that qualitative interviews intend to gather information, discover experiences and explanations that reflect the meaning and interpretation of a specific phenomenon in the context of the interviewee's ideology (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). According to Kvale (1994, p.153), qualitative interviews can be seen as "a linguistically constituted and interpersonally negotiated social world" which is the reason why they allow a profound and thorough conceptualization of the respondents' view on a subject that we want to investigate (Alvesson, 2003).

As a result, based on Kvale (1994), Alvesson (2003) and Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), we decided to choose qualitative interviews as our main method to fulfill our research objectives and in this way to understand a) the rationales about our two research fields, b) the role of the process of servitization on the elements of a company's brand identity and finally c) the potential link between servitization and brand identity. Another valuable reason to use qualitative interviews is, as Kvale (1994) or Lofland and Lofland (1984 cited in Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015) consider, the close interaction with the respondents during the interviews in order to comprehend their individual motives about a particular topic more in-depth. This goes in line with Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015, p. 132) who claim that "there is no single reality that can somehow be discovered, but there are many perspectives on the issue". In this sense, they seize the findings by Collins (1983 cited in Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015, p. 132) and further argue that "different observers may have different viewpoints". With this in mind, we became aware that the respondents and their answers might result in numerous diverse perspectives and opinions which, however, can be advantageous for the scope of our paper as Alvesson, Hardy, and Harley (2008) point out. In their opinion, providing reflexivity as multi-perspectives is a means to offer a better understanding, to create a complete research and to support the researcher to respond to the question of "the different ways in which a phenomenon can be understood and how [respondents] produce different knowledge(s)" (p.483). Hence, this supports the researcher to combine the different subjective perspectives given by each interviewee in order to answer the proposed research question of a particular study as critical as possible.

According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), there are three types of interviews which are highly-structured, semi-structured and unstructured. While unstructured interviews are used for ethnographic purposes and stimulate informal conversations, highly-structured interviews are utilized for market researchers and entail detailed and structured questions often with predefined answers (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Hence, we believed that highly-structured interviews would not allow our respondents to exchange their opinions and thoughts in a frank manner, whereas unstructured interviews would not give us the foundation needed to provide a flow through the different topics during the interviews. Therefore, we did not consider these types of interviews to be appropriate to reach our research objective and to be able to receive the empirical material that is required to answer our research question. Hence, we decided to choose semi-structured interviews with a prepared interview guide that covers specific topics and issues so that the necessary kind of information can be delivered. Moreover, Bryman and Bell (2015) speak out in favor of semi-structured interviews as they allow flexibility to add questions when it is necessary to clarify or to get a deeper understanding of the interviewee's responses. In this context, these authors also emphasize the valuable possibility to deviate from the prepared topic guide, which is for instance not acknowledged in quantitative research, to ask unintended follow-up questions as well as laddering up and down questions. This was decisive at some points of the conducted interviews in order to create a mutual and equal understanding of the given answers and to elicit more precise descriptions by the respondents. Additionally, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) confirm that the use of an adjustable topic guide instead of an exact and explicit structural form facilitates a more explorative interview process.

All of the abovementioned characteristics of semi-structured interviews allowed our respondents an excellent opportunity to answer the asked questions in a flexible and individual manner on the one hand but also generated the possibility for in-depth answers, allowing for think descriptions. In this way, the nature of every interview took on a different direction, depending on the fields the interviewees had the most knowledge in or what they perceived as essential to discuss. Furthermore, we believe that the quality of our collected empirical material was enhanced through the application of semi-structured interviews since the interviewees were more than welcome to mention aspects out of their own desire, which would not have been achieved with highly-structured interviews for instance.

In total, 16 interviews were conducted via face-to-face at FOSS' headquarter site, leading to, according to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), immediate contextualization, depth and the examination of non-verbal gestures of each respondent. The interviews took place over a period of eight days, between the 16th and 23rd of April 2018. The respondents were from different levels of the management and functions or departments of the company. Each interview was conducted in a separate meeting room to guarantee an atmosphere free of unpleasant noise or distraction. The fact that the interviews were held during the respondents'

working hours at the company's facilities did not harm the course of the interviews at any time. We believe that this aspect was beneficial for us as the interviewees were in their working mood and could easily talk about work-related issues, which would have been more difficult if the interviews were conducted outside of the working hours and in a different environment or venue. In addition, the interview was not about emotional or personal experiences, but about the company, which is why our decision for the location for the interviews can be further strengthened. The interviews lasted between 35 and 90 minutes and utilized the aforementioned topic guide to follow the paper's research question and purpose and to relate back to the underlying theory and the analytical framework (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The interview guide did not contain any leading questions and was developed with care while we evaluated each question regarding its usefulness to answer our research question. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), we put the questions into a logical order and covered the theoretical elements of each research field as a separate block. This means the first questions referred to the elements of brand identity, whereas the latter questions were based on the servitization elements. The questions concerning the brand identity of the company were formulated in a way which requested employees to evaluate the current brand identity in relation to changes that have occurred over the last ten years or less, i.e., during the process of servitization. Moreover, each question of the brand identity referred to one element of the CBIM. The questions asked about servitization were inspired by Table 1 presented in the 'Analytical Framework' section. Hence, questions for each element were prepared to examine the extent to which the chosen case has been servitized. Since we prepared key questions, a flow during the interviews was provided, and we had the opportunity to delve deeper into new upcoming issues. Before we started the interviews, we provided a definition of each stream in order to set and ensure a similar comprehension of their meaning for the respondents. The interviews were held in English, while one researcher took a more active role and asked the questions while the other one took notes and jumped in when it was considered as necessary. Each interview was recorded and transcribed afterwards to augment reliability and to facilitate our analysis of the empirical material. The reason why we agreed to interview each person separately, is because of the possible bias and peer pressure to give similar answers that can occur in focus groups. Moreover, we wanted to achieve natural, complex responses and to explore individual perceptions which would not be feasible in a social setting with several respondents like in a focus group (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015).

3.3.1.1. Sampling of respondents

Robinson (2014) elaborately discusses a four-point approach to sampling in qualitative interview-based research. In this paper we followed his approach by first defining the sample universe, representing the totality of persons who can be interviewed. Keeping in mind the purpose of our study, and the case's objective and design, we defined the sample universe to

be FOSS' employees, as the brand identity represents the organization and the organization is ultimately "a group of people with a particular purpose" (oxforddictionaries, n.d.). As the sample universe needs to be based on specific criteria of inclusion and exclusion, we considered homogeneity and heterogeneity as our criteria, since they are the most common and useful (Robinson, 2014). The desired extent of homogeneity and heterogeneity depends on both theoretical and practical factors. The delimiting criteria are set for the sample universe, the more homogeneous the sample becomes (Robinson, 2014). In our case, we aimed for a more heterogeneous sample universe, as we wished to uncover the brand identity perception of diverse FOSS' employees. However, since FOSS is a globally distributed organization, we did limit our sample universe based on geographical homogeneity, since we only considered employees from FOSS' headquarters in Denmark due to time constraints. Otherwise, we intended to gain a heterogeneous sample in order to depict a sufficient general view on FOSS' brand identity and the process of servitization. In this way, we are, to some extent, confident to generalize these perceptions across the whole of FOSS' Danish organization, across departments and hierarchy levels, therefore within the boundary of our case.

The second step as explained by Robison (2014), deals with deciding the sample size. As he describes, idiographic research, which focuses on the individual and their subjective and private experience, seeks to achieve a sample size between three and 16 participants for a single case study (Robison, 2014). This range of sample size fulfils both theoretical and pragmatic purposes, as it allows for the individual perceptions to emerge, which is highly relevant considering the purpose of this study, while it provides a manageable amount of data at the same time and shows consideration for time restrictions (Robinson & Smith, 2010 cited in Robinson, 2014). As aforementioned, brand identity represents the organization's perception about who the company thinks it is. Because the organization is constructed by individual employees, it is therefore important to understand FOSS' brand identity as an organization through individuals' subjective perceptions. In this way, we are confident to have fulfilled the theoretical objectives by amounting to a sample size of 16 participants. An overview of the informants can be seen in Table 3 below.

Hierarchy Level	Department					
	Sales and Marketing	Digital Business	Customer Service and Support	R&D	Global Quality and Production and Supply Chain	IT and Compliance
Top Management	Top Management Sales and Marketing		Top Management Customer Service and Support		Top Management Global Quality and Suppy Chain Management	
Middle Management	Middle Management Global Marketing			Middle Management R&D		Department Manager of Architecture in IT and Complience
	Middle Management Key Accounts					
Department Manager	Department Manager Market Management	Department Management of Marketing in Digital Business	Head of CSS Nordic in Customer Service and Support			
	Department Manager Marketing and Communication		Head of Product Management in Customer Service and Support			
Regular Employee	Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing department		Employee in Global Support department in Customer Service and Support	Employee in Data and Algorithms Department in R&D	Employee in Global Logistics department in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management	

Table 3 Summary of Informants

Robinson's (2014) third step is to devise a sampling strategy, namely who should be included in the sample. Welman and Kruger (1999) consider purposive sampling as the most important kind of non-probability sampling strategy that is used in identifying the primary participants. In non-probability sampling, the participants are often selected based on the researcher's judgement and the purpose of the research (Babbie, 1995; Schwandt, 1997; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Considering the purpose of this paper and the employment of one researcher in the company, which provided extensive knowledge about the sample universe, combined with the elaborate desk on the research topic prior to defining the sampling strategy, purposive sampling was selected in order to reach out to the most suitable employees and in this way enabling us to answer our research question in a meaningful manner (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Thus, we took a bifurcated approach to select the participants. On the one hand, we selected most of our informants based on their ability to answer questions about FOSS' brand identity through the ongoing change process since 2008. This implied that they were employed at the company during this period. We asserted that they possess valuable insights on how the company's brand identity might have changed. On the other hand, we also selected informants based on their ability to answer questions regarding the servitization process. Consequently, most of our informants have been FOSS' employees between four and 29 years, while only four out of 16 informants have been there between nine and 18 months. We considered that the informants who could not provide relevant information about the past brand identity of FOSS due to recent employment, had a unique expertise and knowledge helpful for investigating the servitization processes which no other employee possessed. The unique experience stems from the position they occupy in the company, namely one employee in Middle Management Global Marketing, the Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing department, one employee in Global Support department in Customer Service and Support and the Department Management of Marketing in Digital

Business. In all instances, we aimed at including individuals who could provide meaningful answers for our research question (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). The selection of the specific individuals has been conducted by combining the employed researcher knowledge about the organization, with the close examination of the company's detailed organization structure presentation, which resulted in a draft of potential individuals. Thereafter, the draft was scrutinized further by analyzing the employee's company profile which the researchers had access through the internal company portal, in order to ensure, as much as possible, his or her ability to answer our research question.

It is also relevant to mention, that while the interviewing process was conducted, the snowballing sampling technique was also applied (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Some respondents, especially those with knowledge within the servitization domain, were able to recommend other individuals in the company who could provide further insights into the topic. We acted upon those recommendations and engaged with the suggested employees in order to uncover deeper, more insightful perceptions to help our case's aim of understanding the servitization phenomenon. The snowballing sampling enabled us to address our research problem appropriately and in a more direct way since we were proposed to interview adequate and knowledgeable individuals who would have been undiscovered otherwise (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015).

The last step Robinson (2014) suggests to complete the sampling is the sourcing part. Once the universe, sample size, and strategy are defined, the sourcing of the participants needs to take place (Robinson, 2014). Recruiting the interviewees within the organization has been completed through a private, individual email, sent from the employed researcher work email, as to enable the receivers to make the mental connection between this research project and the researcher in her employed position at FOSS. We considered this was a critical step in building rapport and accessing a heightened level of openness from the possible participants we would not have been able to achieve otherwise. Prior to sending the email, we secured permission from a FOSS contact person in charge of master thesis projects, who acted as a gatekeeper (Devers & Frankel, 2000).

3.3.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data are considered to play a vital role in the research fields of business and management and give, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the necessary information about a research topic and provide particular support for answering or partly answering the research question (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). The authors further point out that secondary data are a suitable method for case studies which in turn underlines our use of secondary data for our case study research design. A general description of secondary data is made by Bryman and Bell (2015) who state that secondary data are

collected by researchers that have not been part of the initial collection of data. This means that "secondary textual data are written sources of information produced for a purpose other than research but with some relevance to a given research project" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe &, Jackson, 2015, p. 350). Thus, we were aware that secondary data do not naturally correspond to our research purpose we want to examine, and we, therefore, chose our data guided by our research question, as proposed by Ghauri and Grønhaug (2010). This is also confirmed by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), whose suggestion we followed to take on a critical position towards the available data. Hence, we assessed the secondary data depending on the potential fit with our research field and overall reliability, as well as credibility.

Secondary data sources consist of company and governments reports, archival data, articles, blogs, websites to name a few (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). In our case, our document study, as well as archival research, was realized through internal company reports, the company's website, company reports, internal news postings, and company presentations we worked with to receive the information needed for the firm's brand identity on the one hand, and to get a holistic overview of the case on the other hand. The researcher's employment can here be seen as very crucial in order to be permitted to access that kind of information. Our decision to include secondary data sources is based on our case study research design and on the advantages of this type of data to save time and effort for us as researchers (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Moreover, secondary data are often of high quality and can provide a perspective that might have remained uncovered by the sole collection and use of primary data. The utilization of secondary data led us to complement our primary data and triangulate, as it is outlined by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), a topic which is further detailed upon in our 'Data Quality' section.

Furthermore, we utilized secondary literature sources like published academic books and articles in journals (Greener, 2008) in order to create our literature review, leading to our theoretical framework, and to writing the chapter about the methodology.

3.4 Data Analysis

Within the analytical framework, we presented a model that can be utilized to analyze a company's brand identity. Thus, we introduced the CBIM by Urde (2013). The reasons for including the CBIM were partly due to the fact that this matrix is regarded as a helpful enabler to analyze a corporate brand identity and to unite its diverse elements. Thus, it was possible to consider the corporate brand identity of a firm as an entity and not as a single add-on. Moreover, since this matrix entails and balances internal as well as external components

that surround the brand core, it makes the model theoretically valuable as a broader conceptual overview is generated. In this way, 'Mission & Vision,' 'Culture' and 'Competences' are displayed which are also represent external-facing elements. Hence, there is a clear balance between internal and external aspects. Having the element 'Core' in the center of the matrix demonstrates the importance of a company's core values and promise. In this sense, it is very crucial to analyze the heart of a company in order to receive a big picture of a firm's brand identity. Another aspect which is essential for choosing this model was the structured and comprehensive overview of the corporate brand identity. Due to the incorporated arrows between the nine elements, it appears clear how each of the different components is connected and interrelated. In addition, the CBIM contains three more components that can be analyzed than, for example, 'Brand Identity Prism' model introduced by Kapferer (2012). Thus, we were given extended touch points to investigate the brand identity and were therefore provided a more profound approach to relate it to the process of servitization. As a last aspect, that led us to prioritize the CBIM was the fact that Urde (2013) refers to using the matrix as a means of examining whether the elements of brand identity are aligned in order to form a coherent brand identity. In this way, we are convinced, that the CBIM was the best-suited matrix to help fulfill our research purpose and answer our research question. Based on the qualities mentioned above, we used this framework to display and analyze our findings.

The elements of the servitization process were found during the literature review. When we came across the criteria for the identification of an organization's servitization level, we found it logical to consider 'Value Basis of Activity,' 'Primary Role of Assets,' 'Offering Type' and 'Production Strategy' as our chosen factors for the servitization process. Therefore, we used these four servitization elements to present our findings based on the primary data collection, supported by secondary data in the form of document studies. We based our selection of this model on the extensive literature investigating each element. Moreover, the model's function of assessing the level of servitization for each element was perceived to provide a relevant application useful for answering our research question and elevating our contribution in connection with brand identity.

From here on, we combined both models in our analytical framework and put them into context, while we kept the elements of the CBIM and extended the model by the four factors of the servitization process that are placed around the brand identity elements. The reason to put the servitization components outside of the CBIM framework is because of the aim of this paper to examine how and which of the brand identity elements are affected by the phenomenon of servitization, relationships which we wished to uncover through our research. We perceive the servitization elements to influence the brand identity from the outside based on the literature review, as well as the findings. Both mention that the servitization process with the intent of achieving customer-centricity is a strategic decision and it would have to be

implemented from the top level of management downwards, or deeper into the organization identity. Moreover, servitization and customer-centricity were also new affairs at the time FOSS started engaging in them, therefore they would still lay outside the respective brand identity. Although we combined elements from both concepts in a somewhat organized way, we considered the design of this conceptual framework to be relatively unstructured based on Stake's (1995) principles, as we have yet to discover the influences and relationships between the elements of the two concepts. In this way, we created a flexible model, which only guides the data collection and analysis, as opposed to Yin's (2009) use of the conceptual framework as a formal structure, based on which propositions are tested, and accepted or refuted as data collection and analysis progresses. Ultimately, we chose Stake's (1995) approach to create an analytical framework, while adding a slight structure to operationalize abstract concepts for data collection and analysis, to not only remain true to our philosophical orientation, but also to allow us to uncover, instead of test, possible relationships between the concepts (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995).

Before the findings and the analysis chapter, the research paper presents the case of FOSS. Here, primary and secondary data provide an overview of the company, and information about this firm's servitization process and move towards customer centricity. Various events and incidents gathered through desk research are outlined to portray this transformation. These are supplemented with primary findings, which enhance the depth of the description.

In our findings chapter, we first used the CBIM model as outlined above to present the perception of each brand identity element individually, supplemented with document research to further support our research. Furthermore, we used the four criteria for the identification of an organization's servitization level to introduce our empirical material and presented each element individually by displaying the informants' perception about each servitization element, supplemented with document research to further support our research. We exhibited the findings in a thematized way, based on the opinion of the informants. To do so, we coded the transcribed interviews in an Excel spreadsheet. After we created a column for each informant and a row for each brand identity and servitization element, we inserted a cryptic text in each box. The text represented a concise version of the interviewees' answers in order to observe themes and patterns across responses. We ensured that quotes are accounted for by informants by referencing their position, in accordance with the research ethics principles. Furthermore, we grouped and color-coded the informants in the spreadsheet according to their respective business units in order to keep track of their department and their position in the organization's hierarchy.

Subsequently, in our analysis chapter, we used the analytical framework in order to analyze our findings. First, we found most important to analyze the servitization elements, as we were looking to discover how those elements influence the brand identity of the case company.

After presenting the findings chapter, it appeared natural to first identify the level of servitization, and after that, show how the brand elements are impacted. We used the four elements presented by Martinez et al. (2010) to show the level of servitization by taking the informants' perceptions and document studies into consideration. In this analysis chapter, we combined the literature on servitization, the findings, and the case in order to provide an explicit and adequate picture of the company's servitization process through the four servitization elements. Secondly, we pursued to answer our research question by analyzing the brand identity elements in conjunction with the servitization elements. In this way, we explored each brand identity element individually and analyzed its connection with each servitization element. We did so by coding our information in an Excel spreadsheet, which took the form of a matrix. In the first column, we inputted the main takeaway of each brand identity element depiction as identified from the findings. Through this, we sorted and reduced our data as presented by the guest lecturer Jens Rennstam during our Qualitative Research Methods course (Rennstam, 2018). Thereafter, we placed the findings from each servitization element in a column next to the individual brand identity element in order to observe a potential relationship between them, and most importantly, whether or not the brand identity element has been influenced to become more customer-centric. Lastly, we presented the analysis by showing each brand identity element movement or idleness towards customer-centricity, based on argumentation relying on the empirical findings. Here, we portrayed the evolution of the brand identity element from product- to customer-centricity, while the definitions of these orientations presented in the introduction were seen as enablers to describe the evolution. By doing the analysis in this way, we also consider that we followed Stake's (1995) categorical aggregation method of data analysis, which is described as the collection and coding of empirical material, from which meaning emerges.

Overall, we aimed to provide descriptive arguments of the conclusions we draw in our analysis in order to construct and answer our research question. While we draw our own analysis and conclusion, we also provided a considerably detailed depiction of our findings for the reader to make his/ her own judgments. We hoped that by doing so, our analysis could be further supported by others. In the 'Discussion' section, we intended to relate our analysis to theoretical concepts and elevated our empirical findings to a more abstract, theoretical level.

3.5 Data Quality

The discussion of the quality of a research paper is crucial whereby Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) point out a researcher's potential concern regarding the credibility of the qualitative research findings. The authors further state that the concepts of reliability and

validity should be addressed in order to increase the credibility of the research. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the main critique of qualitative research concerns the subjectivity, the difficulty for replication, problems for generalization as well as the lack of transparency. However, since qualitative research is "concerned with the meaning people attach to things in their lives" (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016, p.7), we found this approach as appropriate to understand the peoples' experiences, insights and opinions in reality from their own point of reference. For this reason, we tried to exclude our own perspectives and taken-for-granted views of the world. The following paragraphs will further outline our attempt to do so.

The validity of the research findings illustrates whether the findings genuinely reflect what they appear to be about (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) and if an appropriate number of perspectives has been included (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Therefore, the interview forms were carefully reasoned out and planned before we conducted the actual interviews. While using our designed analytical framework as a guide to the two research fields, brand identity, and servitization, we derived tailored questions for the corresponding elements of brand identity and servitization. Although FOSS is a Danish company, the semi-structured interviews were performed in English since both of the researchers do not speak Danish on the one hand, and on the other hand to decrease the threat of the validity as no translation of the interviews was required. Furthermore, the corporate language of FOSS is English (Fossanalytics, 2018a). All of the interviews' participants had a good knowledge of English which enabled a clear comprehension of our interview questions.

The reliability of a study indicates the "extent to which [the] data collection and technique or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings" (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 156). Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) argue that it is important to question if it is feasible that similar observations can be reached by other researchers. Since it was our intention to minimize potential threats regarding the reliability of our study, such as observer error or interviewer bias (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012), two researchers conducted the interviews and interpreted them at all time. Therefore, we ensured objectivity and reflexivity of the respondents' views and statements within our research paper. The second researcher, who is not part of the company provides additional objectivity since this researcher is not as engaged with the company as the researcher who works there. Being objective and reflexive is highly important for the reliability of a research study. Moreover, due to the recording of and the note-taking during the interviews, we were able to listen to and reread the interviews when we found it necessary to hear the interviewees' explanations another time to draw consistent and accurate conclusions.

Despite all this, the concepts about validity and reliability are less adaptive for qualitative research as it is not intended to measure or statistically generalize a phenomenon (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Therefore, we utilized and adopted the rationale of trustworthiness to evaluate our qualitative research mentioned by Bryman and Bell (2015). Trustworthiness is in turn

divided into four sub-criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The first criterion, 'credibility,' refers to the internal validity of a study and rates whether there is a coherent and plausible connection of the researchers' observations and the theoretical ideas they develop (Bryman & Bell, 2015). To increase the credibility of our paper and to verify the results of our findings, we made us of triangulation of data sources introduced by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015). Thus, we ensured to interview as many different people from diverse departments to generate multiple perspectives on the effects of servitization on brand identity. Moreover, the credibility was further enhanced since we did not only rely on the respondents' arguments but also considered our document and archival study. The mentioned triangulation of diverse data sources is a valuable enabler to reduce difficulties that can occur regarding interviews that are based on a shorter period of time and interaction between the two parties, interviewer and interviewee. Having access to multiple sources helped us to overcome the barrier of receiving background information (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson (2015). Another crucial aspect of 'credibility' is focused and explanatory probing questions which were included in our interviews in order to provide a shared comprehension of the given answers. At the same time, we utilized confirmation questions to ascertain that we interpreted the respondents' answers correctly (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015) as we were aware to have limited opportunities to re-confirm the interview findings after their completion.

The criterion 'transferability' refers to the external validity and points out the degree to which a study's findings can be generalized (Bryman & Bell, 2015). According to Bryman and Bell (2015), transferability is highly relevant to qualitative research as a smaller group in a particular context is studied. Therefore, Geertz (1973) and Merriam (1988) propose the need for thick descriptions of the conducted study so that others, which are external to the research, can make inferences about the potential transferability of the findings to other circumstances (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In this sense, the generalizability aspect of a study is responded to (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Our document and archival study can be considered as useful to provide a more thorough overview and understanding of the internal processes of the company and the interview findings (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). In this way, we made use of Stake's (1995) triangulation of sources, as well as investigator triangulation and compared various perspectives from 16 informants employed in different departments and different hierarchical positions. However, a weakness that has to be addressed is the fact that only one case was selected for the scope of this study. Therefore, the transferability is depleted to a certain extent.

The criterion 'dependability' is associated with the external reliability and embodies the degree to which a study can be replicated and considered as trustworthy (Bryman & Bell,

2015). Therefore, it was our intention to ensure the complete access to records throughout the entire course of our research. Thus, the interview transcripts, the selection of research participants and fieldwork notes were available at all time as it is outlined by Bryman and Bell (2015). As we declared earlier, the semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed after the completion of them. Furthermore, the records were stored as files on our computers and on our shared Google Drive to ensure an unlimited and unbound use of the data. Our attempt to enhance dependability, as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), applies to how accurate and particularized the research design, and strategy have been explained. Additionally, it was our aim to receive empirical material of very high quality. Therefore, we paid attention to create a comfortable and pleasant interview atmosphere to avoid bias on the one hand, and to permit honest answers on the other hand. Lastly, we were aware of our role as researchers at all stages of our research process which in turn allowed us to be reflexive and to comprehend our indirect influence on the study itself (Alvesson, Hardy, & Harley, 2008). We further enhanced dependability of this study by providing thick descriptions of our findings, analysis, and our detailed description of the research processes. Since we are the first researchers who attempted to combine servitization with brand identity, we decided to make our 'Methodology' chapter as extensive and all-embracing as possible in order to assist future research in replicating this study.

The last criterion 'confirmability' can be attributed to the internal reliability and identifies whether the findings and interpretations of the research team members can be achieved and agreed by others, outside of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Bryman and Bell (2015) argue that achievement of complete objectivity is impossible in business research which is why they point out the great importance of the researchers' behavior. In this sense, any researcher should not be influenced by personal values or preferences. With our attempt to remain reflexive throughout the whole research process and due to the reason that we acknowledged our role and motivation as researchers, we increased the level of confirmability as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Our critical approach helped us to be encouraged to question our assumptions, and thus we were enabled to offer something genuinely novel (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015).

3.5.1 Ethics in Research

In current management and business research, the adoption of definite ethical codes and practices are ascribed with great importance which implies the adherence of a set of universal principles (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). In a conducted content analysis, Bell and Bryman (2007) argue for ten key principles in research ethics that are divided into the protection of the research participants and the protection of the integrity of the research community.

Therefore, this part describes the codes of ethics applied in the process of undertaking research. With the conducted interviews we ascertained to adhere to the fundamental principles in research ethics mentioned in Bell and Bryman (2007) and Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015). When reaching out to potential informants, we already emphasized the communication of the topic and purpose of the research. As well, it was clearly stated what the participants could expect from the interviews. Therefore, the requirement for an open, transparent and honest delivery of information about the research was fulfilled (Bell & Bryman, 2007). Furthermore, we fully ensured the informed consent of each interviewee (Bell & Bryman, 2007) when we explained that the material would be used for university reasons to accomplish a course assignment with the attention to publish it. In addition, each participant was informed about the option to not answer a question as well as to withdraw from the study entirely at any time. We agreed to protect the anonymity and privacy of the informants' names while they accepted our use of the company name and department category, thus following the ethics of confidentiality as outlined by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson (2015). Further, we ensured that each participant was treated with dignity and respect so that any harm was avoided. In order to respond to the protection of the integrity of the research community, we guaranteed a clear and transparent presentation of the nature and aim of our research. Moreover, we highly took into account the accurateness and reliability of our research to avoid any misleading findings or bias in research results (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015).

With the protection of the organization and the interviewees as well as our observance of ethical behavior of our role as researchers, we realized to respond to the fundamental principles of research ethics.

3.5.2 Politics of Access

Research projects that are built to include information from individuals require researchers to understand the importance of getting access to data and the desired people. Hence, Feldman, Bell, and Berger (2003) claim that it is essential to give special consideration to the possibility of getting access to demandable data before continuing with the actual research. According to them, gaining access to a particular company or workforce of a firm can be considered as a critical part of a research. Yet they argue that "the process of getting in" (p.7) is affecting the collection of information as well as what kind of information is made available for the researcher. Hence, it is assumed that gaining access to a corporate boardroom, for instance, is very difficult when researchers and managers do not personally know each other. Since one of the researchers is employed at our chosen case company FOSS, many of the outlined difficulties to get in contact with a firm were simplified for us as researchers. Moreover, we were aware that the access to gather data would be provided to us, thus the continuation of the

research was not affected. This means that the initial personal contact was already established before starting the master thesis, thus allowing us formal access to collecting data. Therefore, we were able to diminish the barrier 'to get in' and to communicate with FOSS employees. Furthermore, the employment of one researcher was valuable for setting up a prior meeting with the researcher's co-workers to discuss the aim and purpose of the research paper on the one hand and to introduce the second researcher to the company on the other hand. Another advantage is that trust and rapport among the researchers and the company could be built in a smooth and fast manner, hence allowing us to get access to high positions within the company that we considered as very beneficial for the scope of our research project.

3.5.3 Reflexivity

In literature, reflexivity is described as a process which ultimately aims is to become self-aware so that the researcher understands his or her role in the course of the research on the one hand and his or her impact on the research progress and outcomes on the other hand (Begoray & Banister, 2010; Haynes, 2012). Therefore, according to Begoray and Banister (2010), reflexivity is considered as a constant critique and reflection of the researcher's biases and assumptions. To achieve reflexivity, we followed Alvesson and Sköldberg's (2000) insights and became aware of the fact that we as researchers and the object of our study influence each other in a mutual and continuous manner throughout the research process. We thus realized, that we are part of the world we study and are therefore closely connected to our research process, which entails the participants, the data, the methods utilized to interpret and represent our findings, and lastly the outcome of the research. Thus, how Haynes (2012) formulates it, "our researcher reflexivity involves thinking about how our thinking came to be, how [our] pre-existing understanding is constantly revised in the light of new understandings and how this, in turn, affects our research" (p.73). Once we were aware of the various influences, we believe that we were more capable of investigating the difference between the individual perspectives shared by the interviewees.

We considered the concept of reflexivity as highly essential to ensure our objective position as researchers (Begoray & Banister, 2010), to question knowledge claims and to enhance understanding (Haynes, 2012). We further wanted to assure that we were aware of our motivation for undertaking this research and our underlying beliefs related to the research (Haynes, 2012). Additionally, reflexivity is relevant in case study research as outlined by Begoray and Banister (2010) to "self-critique [the] frame of reference, cultural biases and the ethical issues that emerge in fieldwork" (p.788). We, therefore, regard our decision to apply reflexivity as strengthened since our master thesis is based on a single case study. To further respond correctly to a reflexive case study research, we displayed how we interacted with the interviewees to demonstrate how additional knowledge was acquired. Thus, we not only

contributed to augmented transparency but also ascertained the validity of the study results in a more accurate way. Another consideration to applying reflexivity in case study research refers to an ethic of care for the people that participate in the research. Hence, we recognized our responsibility and care towards the selected interviewees to establish collective dialogue and understanding (Begoray & Banister, 2010).

3.6   Chapter Summary

In the methodological part of this thesis, we explained and argued for our chosen approaches. In this sense, we selected a qualitative and exploratory strategy in order to obtain rich data and various perspectives, an in-depth understanding of our research positioning, as well as to comprehend the connection of servitization with brand identity better as we are the first who attempt to combine those concepts. Further, we described our use of a theoretical framework which we used as a fundament for creating our interview guide and discussion points. On top of the aforementioned approaches, with our abductive technique to move back and forth between the empirical findings, the case, theory and theoretical framework, we ensured to follow the process of systematic combining. In addition, we presented our case study approach and elucidated the advantages of it to achieve a holistic understanding and overview of the research subjects. In our chosen case arguments, we displayed explicit arguments why the company FOSS was considered as beneficial for the scope of our master thesis. In this sense, the researcher's employment as well as FOSS' process of servitization were depicted. The data collection section illustrated our methods to obtain empirical material, which are the 16 conducted interviews where we followed a purposive and snowballing approach, literature review as well as our document and archival study. In our data analysis, we described several reasons for selecting the CBIM and illustrated how we discovered and used the servitization elements. Additionally, we pointed out how we analyzed servitization and brand identity, by putting the relevant findings into an excel file. Within The 'Data Quality' chapter, we pointed out how important it is to discuss the credibility of our findings on the one hand, and that our interview guide was prepared with care while we utilized the theoretical framework on the other hand. Furthermore, through our reflexive and objective attitude throughout the whole research process, we responded to the 'confirmability' of our thesis so that others can come to same results. To increase 'credibility,' we made use of data source triangulation and probing questions during the interviews. As we aimed to deliver thick descriptions during the entire time of our research process we reflected the ideas of 'transferability.' Lastly, our interview recordings, note-taking, and transcripts as well as providing thick descriptions helped us to increase the 'dependability' of our study. In 'Ethics in Research' and 'Politics of Access' we described how we approached and interacted with interviewees as well as how we achieved to get access to the company and corporate documents.

4 The Case of FOSS

FOSS is an end-to-end solution provider for securing and improving food, from raw material to finished products (Fossanalytics, 2018b). FOSS provides analytical solutions, relying on analytical instruments combined with superior service to transform unrefined measurements into information management (Fossanalytics, 2018b). The company operates in the B2B, food safety industry, catering for Dairy, Feed, and Forage, Grain, Flour Milling and Oilseed Processing, Laboratories, Meat, Raw Milk Testing, and Wine segments (Fossanalytics, 2018b). FOSS operates on a global level, in 28 countries, with more than 1400 employees across the globe. FOSS considers itself a financially strong company, with a turnover of €285 in 2016. To this day, FOSS has remained 100% family-owned (Fossanalytics, 2018b).

FOSS' history started more than 60 years ago, in 1956, when the engineer Nils Foss first developed an analysis instrument for testing moisture in grain (Fossanalytics, 2018b). The following year, the Danish harvest season happened to experience an excessive amount of rain, which set the path for FOSS' success (Andrup & Skotte, 2006). Throughout time, FOSS has placed great emphasis on product development and innovation, succeeding at being the first one to deliver new analytical solutions and focused mostly on the functional benefits of their product (FOSS, 2014).

In 2007, FOSS took the first step towards servitization. As a result of the challenging global financial situation and increasing price pressure from competitors, FOSS developed a 'Total Solution' strategy, aimed at providing additional value for the customers through software and services (FOSS, 2007). Until that time, FOSS has not yet succeeded in generating significant revenue streams from sales of value-added software and services (FOSS, 2007). The goals of the 'Total Solution' concept were to increase revenue from value-added services, save costs (especially from the remote support of instruments) and increase value and competitiveness of FOSS' Dedicated Analytical Solutions (FOSS, 2007). With the investment in 'Total Solution,' FOSS was able to build a platform of value-added software and services that can be offered to a wide range of instruments of the installed base and new instrument solutions (FOSS, 2007). 'Total Solutions' consisted of two elements: Mosaic (software) Services and Managed Services. Mosaic Services are a variety of software services among which the network management service is the most important. Network management is a network solution to which additional software and so-called Managed Services can be offered according to customers' needs (FOSS, 2007). The Managed Services include calibration monitors, instrument surveillance, IT support, etc. FOSS was successful with shifting to a

'Total Solution' approach, as can be regraded from the revenue generated by service and software sales in 2010, 33% compared to 7% in 2006 (FOSS, 2007; 2018a).

However, only engaging in servitization and providing solutions was not enough for FOSS customers. Disappointing results of the 2009 yearly customer satisfaction survey and challenging market conditions drove FOSS to engage in a new approach that continues until today (FOSS, 2009a). In 2010, FOSS took the first step moving from a product-centric towards a customer-centric orientation (FOSS, 2010a). The 'Customer Value Optimization' (CVO) project was therefore developed with the goal of identifying how FOSS could maximize the value created for their customers and subsequently align processes, activities, and resources according to these findings (FOSS, 2010a). By ensuring alignment of all customer-related activities, the aim was to improve efficiency and thereby the overall competitiveness of FOSS (FOSS, 2010a). As Torben Ladegaard, FOSS CEO at the time, puts it: "The intention with the CVO-project was to improve the quality of services that our customers find valuable all the way through the customer journey, and at the same time reduce or even eliminate the services that our customers do not value" (FOSS, 2010b).

In order to achieve these goals, FOSS implemented the 'Customer and Sales Support' strategy in 2010 (FOSS, 2010b). One of the major changes resulting from this strategy was the separation of the sales and service organization into two separate business units, namely Sales and Marketing and Customer Service and Support. More than that, these two units are to act as a global support system, for the whole of FOSS organization around the world (FOSS, 2010b). Starting in 2010, the change process was slowly being implemented throughout FOSS' global organization (FOSS, 2010c). The Sales and Marketing unit responsibilities include the realization of marketing and communication and develop the customer journey part before the customer has made the purchase. Activities falling within this unit's scope are leads generation, campaigns, events, exhibitions, etc. (interview, Department Manager Marketing and Communication, 23 April 2018). Customer Sales and Support activities deal with the customer journey part when the customer is about to purchase an instrument and afterwards (interview, Department Manager Marketing and Communication, 23 April 2018). This unit is constructed of a commercial side, which deals with sales of instrument and service agreements, pricing or positioning activities, and a technical side, which includes all technical responsibilities, such as instrument repairs, monitoring, user instructions (manuals, videos, etc.), service instructions (manuals, instructions, technical notes), serviceability, fulfilment of service agreement contracts or technical training (FOSS, 2010d). The CSS department is currently perceived to fulfill an important role in the company. During the research period, FOSS's employees reached a consensus regarding the important part the CSS organization plays in providing the company with a competitive advantage (interview, Top Manager CSS; Top Manager Sales and Marketing; Top Manager Global Quality and Supply Chain Management; Middle Manager Key Accounts; Head of Aftersales, 16-23 April 2018).

While services are recognized in the company as crucial for building customer relationships and creating a unique competitive advantage (interview, Top Manager Sales and Marketing, 23 April 2018) the instrument is still regarded as the basis for business, and services are seen as a supporting role to the instrument's performance (interview, Department Manager in IT and Compliance, 16 April 2018).

While FOSS has been focusing on internal changes, competitors have also started to consolidate in the market and changes in customer behavior have been observed (FOSS, 2016a). While FOSS' solutions were considered by customers as the same or superior quality compared to competitors, their interaction with FOSS was unsatisfactory (FOSS, 2016a). As a response to these challenges, in 2016 FOSS deployed their new 'Customer First' strategy, aimed at reflecting a customer-centric approach, while continuing to grow profitably and engage in a more agile and competitive business model (FOSS, 2016a). Through customer-centricity, FOSS aims to become a solution-providing partner to their customers by developing solutions designed according to their needs (FOSS, 2016a). As aforementioned, the change in focus came as a result of a changing marketplace, both in terms of customers, but also regarding competitors. As the requirements and challenges in the food safety industry are becoming more demanding, buyers of analytical instruments are consolidating their efforts in all their business areas, with careful consideration for their suppliers (FOSS, 2016a).

As such, FOSS observed a shift in their customers' purchase gatekeepers, from the operator of the instrument to C-level individuals within a firm (FOSS, 2016a). These managers adopt a completely different perspective on purchasing solutions, to which FOSS responded to by engaging these new types of customers on various fronts in order to understand them better and ultimately, satisfy their needs and convert them into loyal buyers (FOSS, 2016a). These initiatives include the management of customer experiences, customer service and support excellence, global support, the optimization of end-to-end logistics, revitalization of FOSS brand, internal and external communication, innovation, sales excellence, organizational management, etc. In a buying situation where the replacement cycles are long, and the solution value is high, losing even one customer can have impactful consequences (FOSS, 2016a). On the other spectrum of the market, competition is intensifying. While FOSS has the advantage of size and legitimacy, gained through their 60 years of experience, new competitors are challenging FOSS' position with the help of mergers and acquisitions (FOSS, 2017a). The incorporation of customer needs into the business, combined with the increase in competition in the market, urged FOSS to adopt a more agile business model and deliver new products and solutions in shorter cycles (FOSS, 2016a). The previous projects have been gradually preparing the company to strategically re-orientate to become more customer-centric. FOSS's organization has been perceiving the aforementioned, incremental changes over the past ten years, however, the transition is still considered as slow because this transformation is not regarded as natural for an engineering company and the service is still a

new business area for FOSS (interview, Middle Manager in Key Accounts, 18 April 2018; interview, Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business, 19 April 2018).

In order to realize their strategic goals, FOSS has implemented a series of concrete changes during 2017 (FOSS, 2017b). In April 2017, the company underwent a rebranding, changing most of the visual aspect of the brand, including their URL from foss.dk to fossanalytics.com, which developed into an updated, modernized website; their colors to represent a more modern palette and their slogan - from 'Dedicated Analytical Solutions' to 'Analytics Beyond Measure' to emphasize their changing ways of doing business (FOSS, 2017b). Moreover, FOSS has also decided to take advantage of the transition of businesses towards digitization in order to achieve its strategic objective. Hence, the company has recently added a new business unit in 2016, Digital Business, with the purpose of delivering digital solutions that add value to customers by exploiting data analysis and carry FOSS into the digital service domain, while improving and optimizing food production (FOSS, 2017c). Nevertheless, necessary improvements have been recognized by the organization in order to become more customer-centric. The paramount developments revolve around three main themes. First, FOSS ought to acquire more customer understanding and based on that develop internally (interview, Middle Manager in Key Accounts, Head of Product Management in CSS, 18 April 2018). Secondly, it is also perceived that a change in the culture needs to take place for FOSS to become more customer-driven trough servitization. Along these lines, the service-mind can flourish more appropriately (interview, Middle Manager in Global Marketing, 19 April 2018; Middle Manager in R&D, 19 April 2018). Lastly, FOSS' competences would also need to evolve in the sense that commercial skills need to be developed to encourage better relationships with customers, complexity in the company needs to be reduced in order to become agiler, more people with the skills and a mindset for customer-centricity would need to be employed (interview, Head of CSS Nordic, 17 April 2018; interview, Department Manager in IT and Compliance, 16 April 2018).

In the future, the service business is perceived to play a more important role. Several employees believe that the CSS department is working on service activities and initiatives which will lead to a shift in the future, so that FOSS becomes more service-oriented (interview, Top Manager Global Quality and Supply Chain Management, 20 April 2018; interview, employee in the R&D, 16 April 2018). Along these lines, the service is recognized as a number one differentiator as only selling products in the future is not enough in the changing business environment (interview, Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business, 19 April 2018). One recent effort to display FOSS' consideration for services in the future is the development of FOSS Ambassador scheme in January 2018, which has the purpose of training service engineers in handling customers in a more professional manner when they are disappointed or angry with FOSS' performance.

The importance of services in the future is additionally highlighted by FOSS' objective that 20% of FOSS' turnover in 2020 should come from digital services. Through this, FOSS wants to apply a more customer-oriented approach and in this way push the customer first strategy forward (FOSS, 2016a). Further, in a company presentation, FOSS states that it is the company's aim to digitize and to engage in the service aspect more in depth in order to further improve their solutions and its present market position, to strengthen its market leadership, and to become the preferred partner for future development (FOSS, 2017d).

Besides the positive perspectives articulated on the future role of services at FOSS, the company does not feel the need to push for advanced services yet because there is no 'burning platform' that would drive a sense of urgency to react (interview, Middle Manager in Global Marketing, 19 April 2018; interview, Department Manager in IT and Compliance, 16 April 2018). The reason for this is that FOSS is still very profitable with selling the blue boxes, and competition is still mild. Therefore, no internal or external pressure is compelling FOSS to act (interview, Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business, 19 April 2018).

5 Findings

In order to answer this paper's research question on how the elements of a company's brand identity are affected to become more customer-centric during the process of servitization, the empirical material section will start by presenting the nine elements of FOSS' brand identity during the servitization period starting from 2008, as regarded from the interviewees' perspectives, as well as supported by documents and reports as secondary material. The four servitization elements will be following after.

5.1 Brand Identity

As identified from the literature review, a company's brand identity consists of nine elements according to the CBIM by Urde (2013). These elements will be detailed upon for the case of FOSS, showing their transformation or lack of development during the servitization period. The presentation of the brand identity elements will start with the introduction of the internal elements, followed by the external elements, and conclude with the elements which are both internal and external, and ultimately the core.

5.1.1 Mission & Vision

The 'Mission & Vision' illuminate why a company exists and also demonstrate the direction of the firm's business activities as we pointed out in the presentation of the CBIM (Urde, 2013).

In 2008 Annual Report, FOSS' mission was presented as: "FOSS provides rapid, reliable and dedicated analytical solutions for routine control of quality and processing of agricultural, food, pharmaceutical and chemical products" (FOSS, 2008b). In 2017, as a result of the rebranding effort, FOSS' mission changed to declare that:

> "[FOSS] contributes to the sustainable use of our planet's agricultural resources and thus to the nutrition and health of the people of the world. We provide analytics beyond measure to add value to our customers by improving quality and optimizing food and agricultural production" (Fossanalytics, 2018b).

Although the tagline modification from 'Dedicated Analytical Solutions' to 'Analytics Beyond Measure,' and the addition of the sustainability angle appear as a clear change in the mission both in the wording, but also in the meaning, the recurring perception of the interviewed FOSS employees is summarized quite well by one Top Management employee in the Sales and Marketing unit who has been working for FOSS for almost four years:

> "We are still focusing on making easy dedicated analytical solutions for our customers. Of course, we are changing some words, but the core is the same."

This perception was shared by most interviewees, who considered that the 'Mission & Vision have not changed. One of the employees, who has been with FOSS for almost 29 years, mentioned the same belief by saying:

> "I think the mission has been rephrased a bit recently, but it's still the same core [...] I think it is good that we want to make something good and help people utilize the scarce food resources last a bit longer."

One Top Management employee in Sales and Marketing (S&M) further emphasizes this point by saying:

> "I wouldn't say the mission changed. The basic mission is still actually providing value for our customers in the food and agri industry, but also globally, making the most of the raw materials."

Informants expressed that they perceive it to be a good mission and that FOSS is aware of the current world context in relation to food and has integrated that into the organization. As one employee working in Research and Development unit (R&D) states:

> "[The mission] is aligned with what we see today in the world, especially the bigger middle class is asking for safer, higher quality food. It is a good mission because it is important that, with a growing population, we need to produce food more efficiently, because otherwise, we are not going to feed the world."

One top management employee in the Customer Service and Support (CSS) unit was also attentive to the customer inclusion in the mission, as he stated that: "We make a business for our customers and help them raise their quality and profitability." He further emphasizes his point by illustrating that:

> "In the past, we have been providing results and data, the mission has changed also to provide analytics, so there is a higher level of information for the customers than just data results coming out of the instrument."

He refers to the old mission, the "Dedicated Analytical Solutions," as one that does not portray FOSS as a true solution provider, but more of a product provider. Now, FOSS' mission includes information and data management "beyond measurement," which enables FOSS to not only rely on the instrument as a measurement tool but provide insights based on those metrics.

The vision question was left unanswered by many except one employee working in the R&D unit, who mentioned that:

> "The vision is to become more digital, focusing on the digital services, and moving away from only providing instruments. That is the way we are going to achieve feeding the world growing population because we cannot support all these instruments, we need a way to connect them."

Many informants considered the mission to be the vision. They perceived that the sustainability element is a way of connecting the bigger picture to the role of FOSS.

5.1.2 Culture

As explained by Urde (2013), the culture of an organization is a broad reflection of its corporate attitudes, values and beliefs, and of the ways in which it works and behaves. Based on that, multiple questions were asked about the employees' views on teamwork, communication in between and across departments and level of management, in order to discover those attitudes and beliefs. The interview guide also included questions about the employee's perception towards the service culture mindset at FOSS which was imperative to investigate if the company is changing to become more customer-centric.

One first hint about the company's culture can be identified in its current statement about people, displayed on the company's website: "Many employees have a top-level scientific or technical background, including more than 130 Master of Science and more than 20 PhDs in areas such as photonics, chemometrics, physical chemistry, analytical chemistry, fermentation and bio-engineering, astrophysics, optical communication, physics, quality, nanotechnology, food science and adaptive radiotherapy. We also employ many factory-trained and certified support engineers stationed close to our customers" (Fossanalytics, 2018b). It emphasizes the importance FOSS places on the expertise of its employees. This is one of the main reasons why one of the R&D employees enjoys working for FOSS: "It is [...] the skilled colleagues that we have [...]." He reinforces his view later in the interview by mentioning: "We rely on people on having the knowledge, which is another value of ours."

Another element of the culture that was brought to light by people being asked to describe FOSS' culture was the entrepreneurial spirit of the company. One informant working with IT

and Compliance (IT) interpreted this trait as an unfavorable feature with regards to FOSS' company size and today's market environment. As he exemplifies:

> "The company was built 60 years ago on the entrepreneurship and tradesmanship values. This meant that if a product could be done technically and profit was made, then we would do it. It wasn't driven by great strategies or architectures, or any kind of processes. We are slowly installing that now, 60 years later, because otherwise, the company cannot continue to grow."

This cultural element is also perceived by one Middle Management employee in Key Account:

> "We want to do a lot of things at the same time, so we have a tremendous amount of different projects running concurrently and sometimes overtaking each other. Sometimes the resources are not there to completely fuel the next one. That's one [...] of the reasons why we have so many broken systems. As a work environment, this attitude of always wanting to do something more is a bit frustrating. Rather than searching to fix one area, we are more focused on the number of products, the number of applications, the number of customer types, the number of redoing something we just finished. Especially considering the size of FOSS, that is at a scale of 4-5-6 bigger than other companies. Some significantly bigger companies than FOSS, focus their resources on much fewer processes and areas."

He also considers this lack of processes to be due to an ingrained entrepreneurial and engineering DNA that has been living inside the culture for many years:

> "It is in the DNA. A lot of the senior managers and a lot of the employees have been in FOSS for their entire career, 20-30 years."

With respect to the service aspect, the Department Manager of Architecture in IT and Compliance considers it as a challenge for the culture to integrate the service mindset since the company has "such a proud history of great engineering products [...]." This is an issue which is also indicated by the Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business who explains that the service mindset is not incorporated yet because of "negativity or unwillingness." He further points out: "When you are used to doing things a certain way, it is difficult to change [the organization]."

The opinion by an employee in the Global Support Department in CSS also stresses that "for now the cultural change is not the priority." In addition, the Middle Manager in Global Marketing considers this aspect as very slow:

> "It is hard to convince an organization or to drive for a change when [..] the results are better than ever before. So how is it then possible to change the organization?!"

The relationship between employees has also been described to evolve during the servitization period, which affected one R&D employee in two different ways. On the one hand, he mentions how the relationships between employees within and outside his department are becoming weaker as the company is growing. He describes how he was able to be in close contact with many of his colleagues in the past as they were a small team, but how that is not possible any longer in a bigger team. On the other hand, he also notes that the move from product-centricity to customer-centricity meant employing individuals with more commercial qualifications, which made it more difficult for him to communicate technical details about the instruments.

> "I think the communication between departments is becoming more difficult and more employees are not technical anymore. That means that they are trained in selling, which makes it more difficult for me to explain things to them, and sometimes, they also run into problems in the field."

Other employees also mention the hardship of communicating between department by expressing it as a silo culture. For example, one Top Management for CSS recalls the separation of the Sales and Service business unit into two as an example:

> "It used to be in the same unit 6-7 years ago, a lot of the people from the service organization, the application, and product specialists, they were sitting together with marketing in a big marketing unit. Then it was separated, and I think the separation throughout many years, was just building silos."

In 2017, FOSS implemented a new cross-functional segment team, which includes individuals from different departments assembled in a team (FOSS, 2017e). It can compose of, for example, a product specialist, a market manager, a concept developer, a software developer, and a salesperson. The purpose of these teams, according to FOSS, is to create better solutions for the customers, and it can be interpreted that the silo culture can also be reduced as a result.

Overall, informants enjoyed working at FOSS. The culture was described as friendly, relying on good values and long history, the attitude towards improving the global food situation, the strong focus and goal-orientation, teamwork, and the expertise of all the employees operating within the firm.

5.1.3 Competences

As outlined by Urde (2013), the 'Competences' reflect a firm's skills and abilities. Four main competences, namely focus/ niche, global coverage, technology, and commercial capabilities can be identified from the interviews conducted and from analyzing documents throughout the transformation period. Their evolution will be further detailed upon.

FOSS currently covers Dairy, Feed and Forage, Grain, Flour Milling & Oilseed Processing, Laboratories, Meat, Raw Milk Testing and Wine segments from the food and agricultural industries. This was not always the case. In 2008, FOSS was also promoting its expertise within the pharmaceutical industry (see Appendix A). This focus sharpening is acknowledged by the Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing department, who mentions: "I think it's a very focused company with some very clear competences and I think that is very valuable."

One employee working in IT unit also refers to FOSS' keen focus on being niche, and remarking:

> "FOSS has been great at differentiating, making niche solutions that are not being commoditized as quickly as other things. The company has been great at defining those niche solutions that have created this niche business, which is possible to protect."

He emphasizes that the individual segment markets are not valuable, but combined as a whole it provides the company with a competitive position in the food industry.

Further on, both the Top Management employees from S&M and CSS, as well as the Department Manager for Market Management, mention FOSS' sales and service global coverage as one of the main competences of the company. The latter noted:

> "We have a strength in our global coverage. Even though our sales organizations are relatively small, they are big enough to be able to cover several segments in a country."

The Top Management employee from Sales and Marketing details his view by saying:

> "If you contrast us to competitors, then one of the advantages we have is that we are a worldwide company and we have our own sales and service force in a lot of countries we operate in. That makes us unique because we are close to the customers, and none of our competitors has the same number of people or is in the same number of countries."

The Top Management employee from CSS highlights the same idea by noting:

> "I think we are particularly good at being and thinking global and having an organization that supports this global mindset, which is important for our key accounts. We make a big difference for the key accounts in being able to support the whole world, which our competitors have a hard time doing."

He further emphasizes that this is a competence FOSS was was keen to gain from since the beginning of the firm's establishment: "For example, we've been in Japan for 42 years, I think. We've been in many parts of the world for many years." His perception can be verified by the fact that FOSS has been operating in Japan since September 1974, as confirmed by two independent sources (Doda, 2018; Ipros, 2018), and FOSS' presence in 28 countries around the globe, which is a considerable reach compared to competitors providing instruments for in the food and agriculture industry (FOSS, 2017a). This demonstrates FOSS' attention to gaining a competitive advantage out of a global sales and support organization from the conception of the company, and not something that came as result of the servitization process.

The technology competence is mentioned by employees operating both in a commercial and in a technical setting. For example, one Top Management employee in S&M mentions: "You can say we are the company who has launched the newest technologies and new solutions to the market." The approach FOSS takes towards new product innovations is represented both in their LEAP framework (FOSS, 2014), which states that the company should launch a strategic risky innovation product every second year, but also through the fact that 10% of their revenue is reinvested into R&D (FOSS, 2018a). The employee in R&D supports this view by noting that FOSS' employees "technical level is as a high as it can get, and definitely higher than of competitors."

The Top Management employee from S&M points out that the technological competences have evolved, especially in the near past:

> "We recently also acquired SoftFlow, so our capabilities in creating different solutions using different technologies have enlarged, because now we have access to microbiology, a new way of analysis."

His statement can be confirmed by several news postings, which detail the acquisition of SoftFlow by FOSS (Softflow, 2016).

Two other employees support the evolution of FOSS' technological competences by highlighting the increasingly important role of software technologies. One CSS employee mentions that "software is taking on the larger part of the technologies FOSS provides." The Top Management employee from CSS further supports this:

> "I think we have definitely changed a lot in the sense of going from hardware and instrument knowledge to software. Maybe 20 years ago, the software department was

only two people, who also worked on the hardware, now it's 100 people just doing software development. So the software and network capabilities have grown tremendously."

The technology competence is also accentuated on FOSS' website, as one of the main drivers of their business:

"We pioneered advanced analysis for the challenging production environments in the 1960's [...] Over the last 60 years, we have made it our business to define the standard of analytical solutions for the food and agricultural industry." (Fossanalytics, 2018b)

The employee in IT also relates to the technology competence and perceives that FOSS is good at developing its technologies in an industry that is not going to be commoditized as quickly as others. However, two Top Management employees in CSS and Production Quality and Supply Chain think otherwise, mentioning that this risk is quite present today. The CSS employee notes that:

"We are no longer the only one who can make a NIR or FTIR[1] instruments. Other companies also make good instruments and that development will continue - the hardware will become more commoditized."

The Production Quality and Supply Chain employee highlights his point of view by saying that: "We risk that we will be reduced to a commodity product sending a signal [...] At the end of the day, our instrument ends up being a sensor."

The commoditization is mentioned as one of the causes for the development of FOSS' commercial competence. This is considered as the newest addition to FOSS' competences, developed as a result of the market pressure and through the 'Customer First' strategy. These commercial competences are described in terms of digital capabilities and a stronger customer focus. For example, the Top Management employee from PQSC believes that FOSS instruments might become commoditized because "[t]he whole production of the customer will be integrated into the same information platform." This commoditization can lead to FOSS' inability to charge a premium price for the instrument, and that is why he believes that the competences should lay in digital connectivity, and in the ability of the instrument to integrate with or create that information platform:

"I think we should do everything we can [regarding digital business], but we need to go this way to be better prepared to what role will we play in the future."

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[1] NIR and FTIR refer to Near-infrared spectroscopy and Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy, respectively, and are types of infrared technologies used for analysing raw materials based on molecular overtone and combination vibrations.

Furthermore, the Top Management employee from Sales and Marketing highlights how a few initiatives have been implemented in Sales and Marketing prior and during to the 'Customer First' strategy period in order to enhance the firm's focus on the customers:

> "We introduced the Sales and Marketing Excellence programs in 2015 and 2016, respectively. Sales Excellence focused a lot on the interaction with our customers and pipeline management. Marketing Excellence focused a lot on competitor understanding. Both activities lead to the establishment of the department Launch Excellence, where the focus is on ensuring a successful product launch."

The introduction of these programs can be confirmed by documents, which attest their development (FOSS, 2015a).

The Department Manager for Market Management also sustains this view by concluding that:

> "The competences have developed and have become bigger, right now we are working on a stronger marketing competence [...]. "

The enlargement and enhancement of commercial competences can also be exemplified by FOSS's developing presence on social media networks, such as LinkedIn. Campaigns addressed to customers, as well as internal training courses on using LinkedIn as a sales tool have started since 2015 (FOSS, 2015b; 2015c).

5.1.4 Value Proposition

The value proposition evolution from 2008 to 2018 revolves around providing solutions for FOSS' clients. One employee in the Global Logistics department in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management unit did not perceive a change in the value proposition which means that FOSS still wants to provide solutions. This perception goes in line with FOSS' current value proposition, as they mention on their website that

> "FOSS creates end-to-end solutions that secure and improve food quality. Our analysis instruments refine measurements into information management that enables businesses to run intelligent data-driven productions with less waste and bigger yields. From raw material to finished product. Controlling cost and quality across all sectors and value chains, we help food and agricultural producers limit the number of human errors, scale their business faster and reduce manual labor as well as labor costs." (Fossanalytics, 2018b).

However, when comparing this current one to FOSS' 2008 value proposition, when FOSS only mentioned to "provide and support dedicated, rapid and accurate analytical solutions" for

the "enhancement of the customers' business", today's emphasis is placed on a more holistic solution with the addition of the 'end-to-end' part. Some informants did perceive this change as significant. For example, one Top Management employee in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management expresses that by saying:

> "I think it is changing slowly in the sense that we are offering other products and services, where we offer remote services to ensure the instrument performs well. Slowly but surely, we're also looking more into the process industry, where our instrument is no longer a stand-alone instrument where you go and make a test and evaluate the result, but it's integrated into the production value chain of the customer."

His perception is aligned with FOSS' mention of "from raw material to finished product" in their value proposition, an addition developed as a result of the 2017 rebranding.

On the other hand, one employee working in IT believes that the solution element of the value proposition is "a bit of a stretch." He perceives that FOSS supplies only the instrument, while the clients design their own solutions around it. His perception can also be reflected in the addition of the word instrument in FOSS' newer value proposition, where it is mentioned that: "Our analysis instruments refine measurements into information management." The instrument part was not expressed in the previous value proposition.

The words reliability and accuracy were often mentioned by informants in relation to the value proposition in 2008. When thinking about what FOSS currently offers to its customers, some informants come to the conclusion that the instruments still provide accurate and reliable results. However, it is the peace of mind and data analytics that customers get out of those metrics. As one informant explains:

> "The value proposition is right now trying to combine their two levels in one statement: measuring, which is what we're known for, is rock solid [...] but then what we're also implying now, is that you measure to develop your business and you want to help to develop because we are a development company."

According to one informant, this change comes as a result of FOSS providing instruments integrated more into their customers' production. He mentions that:

> "The instrument is no longer a stand-alone instrument where the customer would go, make a test and evaluate the result, but it is integrated into the production value chain of the customer, and that gives an increased request for more up-time, more services, more reliability."

5.1.5 Relationships

Many informants shared the same perception of FOSS' current customer relationships. They identified FOSS to have either key account or non-key account customers. It is worth mentioning that no informant discussed relationships with non-customer stakeholders. The biggest change was recognized by informants in the company's relationships with key account customers. This relationship is portrayed by the Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing department as an interaction where new ideas are developed cooperatively, and new products can be tested before entering the market:

> "Global key accounts have a role of exchanging ideas, and they come with ideas for FOSS about technology and offerings that we should develop, and we can also push into the other direction and tell them that if you measure something here, then your production would be able to improve. They also test our new products, and they are the expert clients, so to say."

This perception is also shared by the Middle Management employee in Key Accounts department:

> "I think we have a very strong relationship with customers that we have worked with for many many years. It's almost like a marriage [...] like we're in this together, we're in this for life, so we have to make it work."

While the informants provide valuable insights in conjunction with the nature of FOSS' relationship to key accounts, the evolution of this relationship is exemplified by two informants. One employee in R&D mentions:

> "[The relationship] is much better now. We have these regular meeting with them and listen to what their requirements are, and sometimes share that we are coming with new instruments. It is a more open discussion we have with key accounts compared to before 2008."

Another informant working in IT and Compliance shares the same opinion, which he expresses with an example:

> "Yes, it is changing, and the evidence is in, for example, FOSS Net Olive, for olive farmers in Spain. They used to have a tedious process to validate that the mills were measuring all olives the same way. Now they have this toolkit they can all see; it has changed the dialogue between each other. Now they're focusing on their business and on the cooperative, and I think they see FOSS in a different light, as kind of guys that enable them to operate."

The Head of CSS Nordic details the same experience as he mentions that he is directly involved in one of the change actions:

> "One thing I'm trying to implement with the bigger customers, is that if they had a problem, I would like to have touchpoints on a monthly basis, to follow up if there are any new problems so that we show that we are willing to help and not just running away and leaving them on their way [...]."

He also mentions that, previous to 2015, key account relationships were relying on one sales person who would have all the contact with the customers. Now, as customers are growing bigger and many more decision makers are involved from their side, more people from FOSS working in different functions are also participating and building relationships with a respective partner from the customer side.

Another example of an employee perceiving the change is the Top Manager in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management, who mentions:

> "I have a sensation that there's been a change over the last couple of years to a more customer-oriented understanding. I think the Sales and Service organizations are listening a little more than they did in the near past."

This change is also portrayed in FOSS' development of a dedicated Key Account Management department in 2011 (FOSS, 2011a). The FOSS KAM Policy was established to ensure a globally coherent and structured approach to a selected group of Key account customers, in order to increase the top and bottom line, lower cost of sales, build stronger customer relationships, and ensure a market-driven R&D process. Moreover, this initiative's objective is to establish FOSS as the primary or selected supplier of analytical solutions to an increasing number of the top 100 Food/ Agri customers.

In contrasts, FOSS' relationships with non-key account customers appears have started moving into a more transactional-based approach. This relationship is portrayed by the Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing department, who says that small customers "are not interested in how to get the analytical results, but they're more interested in just getting reliable results when they need it." She further emphasizes the fact that these customers want a simple, cheap and 'plug-and-play' solution. This thought is also shared by the Top Management employee in CSS, who highlights the fact that, because of FOSS' lack of processes in place, the company is using a relationship-based approach also for the small customers, instead of offering "objective value":

> "The goal would be to make the connections more transactional because we spend a lot of time on the [non-key account customers] [...] I think it's the right thing to do to not spending the same amount of time on one instrument customers than we do on a

global customer. I don't think we do it to that extent, but I think we spend too much time compared to the value they bring. They also need more standard solutions, that works, they often don't have any special requirements."

5.1.6 Position

The 'Position' helps a brand to position itself in terms of customers and other stakeholders within the market. Two phrases that were repeated numerous times regarding FOSS' position in the past were "be the first" and "be the leader" which is for example identified by the Middle Manager for Key Accounts, the Head of CSS Nordic, the Head of Product Management in CSS, one employee in R&D and the Top Manager in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management. As per the Department Manager in Market Management and the Middle Manager in R&D, FOSS had a technology/engineering position.

From the perception of most employees, FOSS' position of being "first" has not changed which can be supported by the constant mention of FOSS' value to be the first in the company's annual reports (FOSS, 2009b, 2018b). In addition, the current position of being the leader is illustrated on FOSS' website (Fossanalytics, 2018b). The Top Manager in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management indicates the following: "I think it's the same position, FOSS wants to be the first in price, first in performance and value." The Middle Manager in Key Accounts supports that:

> "Being the first. I still think we want to be an engineering company. I think the current position shows that we are the most dedicated company serving that market, we are the ones having the most resources to develop the best products and to support them, and to truly focus on that customer segment, and to understand the customer's operation and making instruments that best help them. We are the innovators; we set the industry standard. We almost have the position of the IBM of the old days. Nobody got fired for buying IBM. It's the safe choice, the expensive choice. We have some outstanding production capabilities, and our quality is getting better so we have the whole value chain pretty strong and that is also the foundation of our position in the market - the full package all the way."

The Department Manager in Market Management shares a similar opinion on FOSS' position in the market:

> "[It's still the] technology provider with some kind of partner aspects. [FOSS] is the market leader, driver of innovation, FOSS wants to be the best in food and agriculture industry and the best in developing quality results. Also, FOSS wants to help each customer to make their business better and more efficient."

However, some employees believe that the position today is enhanced in terms of customer-centricity. For example, the Department Manager in Marketing and Communication articulates:

> "I think we have a strong position, a market leader position. But we do have competitors just next to us, not behind us like a few years ago. I think that has changed a lot. When I started, [our competitors], were behind us, but now they're at the same level as us, quality wise. Now we hear that their products are also as accurate and robust as ours. But we can still justify the higher prices because of our brand and our service organization. We definitely have strong assets in having service people around the world compared to our competitors."

Her view is supported by one Middle Manager in R&D, who notes that:

> "FOSS' position now is to dominate the world [which is a] barrier for competitors. FOSS is more knowledgeable about customers and the industry which is supporting the move towards services. We want to be perceived as our core value: to be the first."

The fact that FOSS is more knowledgeable about its customer can be reflected in the increase of customers' loyalty and satisfaction taken from the customer satisfaction survey conducted yearly (FOSS, 2011b; 2017d) .

5.1.7 Expression

When asked about what is special about how FOSS communicates or expresses itself, informants hold mixed opinions, and three main points of view emerged. First, there are employees who believe FOSS has never and is currently not unique in the way it expresses itself. Secondly, there are employees who believe FOSS is changing to become more unique, whereas some believe that FOSS has always been unique in its expression.

Firstly, the opinion that the expression has never been unique is presented by one employee in Middle Management Key Accounts:

> "The communication is not unique or special. Partly because of the toolbox, it's a standard toolbox. It is the same tools that everybody has available: email campaigns, websites, exhibitions, product sheets, application sheets, conferences, seminars, speakers, demos at the customers' sites."

He continues by stating that, although the communication channels are not unique, FOSS tries to employ a wide range of touchpoints in order to reach the customer better. However, he concludes by saying that is not unique either.

"We have an extensive range of communicating to the customers and the market, and we play pretty much on every single one of them. But that's not that different from everybody else."

Further on, the Department Manager in Marketing and Communication paints the pictures of what exactly FOSS communicates:

"Although we are the company having the newer stuff out there, the way we communicate and brand ourselves is maybe not that different from others. We want to say it is different, but we are still very product nerdy and technology-focused. Even though we try to understand the customer and present and communicate in a different way, I think we are still doing pretty much the same thing as competitors. It takes time to do it differently because we are so product-focused in the company."

She additionally mentions that that is now changing, as she explains:

"I think it has been changing for the past couple of years. We are not always just focusing on technology and features, we are more focused on solutions, what the business benefit for the customers is."

Her perception is supported by other employees who believe FOSS' expression has evolved. For example, one employee mentions how FOSS has developed communities for their customers in the shape of online forums and events:

"Something we've done really smart is our grain network and our NIR forum, where we have created communities for our customers to share their experiences [...] I think it is a brilliant way, because it is not a sales presentation, where it feels like we are trying to push them into a decision, but they have a community and have something in common - the fact that they work in the same industry and use FOSS. It's a great tool for maintaining customer loyalty. I don't think competitors have that."

Some employees also identified the change towards a more unique way of communicating as a result of the rebranding of the company in 2017. For example, according to one Top Management employee in Sales and Marketing:

"Two years ago, before we made the new brand, our communication was very much looking backward, it was telling the same story we have been telling for a long time: dedicated analytical solutions. We were not addressing the trend of moving forward and what we want to go forward. With the new branding we have managed to keep our roots and also paint the picture for our customers about where we will be in the future [...] There's a much better match between our branding today with the real things happening in the market and in our company."

Lastly, different employees believe that FOSS has always been unique in the way it expresses itself. For example, the Top Manager for CSS articulates:

> "I think [the communication] is very consistent. We had design lines [...] which have been sticking through for about ten years. We have FOSS colors, but also FOSS shapes which are very unique, you can always recognize FOSS instruments. For example, the blue with the orange dot is one of the expressions that is unique, and it looks cool compared to competitors, which is just a grey box."

All views can be identified from FOSS documents. For example, Appendix B displays pictures of older and newer FOSS instruments, where an evident design similarity can be identified supporting the Top Manager in CSS's view. Moreover, significant contrasts in FOSS Powerpoint presentation styles amongst other examples, appear clearly when compared in Appendix C, showing the evolution some employees perceive. Lastly, Appendix D shows FOSS lack of uniqueness as identified by some employees. For example, one of Perkin Elmer campaigns, identified as one of FOSS biggest competitors, looks similar to one of FOSS'. Their website's resource center also provides similar information to FOSS'.

Only one employee, the Head of CSS Nordic, expressed his perception about how FOSS expresses itself internally by saying that people are valued. Document research further shows that FOSS communicates with their employees through its online news portal, as well through a newsletter regularly distributed by email (see Appendix E). Recently, FOSS has also developed a new design of its communication through the office screens/ TVs located around the office space. The updated visual design and information includes FOSS' colors better and presents FOSS' news, new employees, upcoming launches and events, news from Corporate Management and various ad-hoc updates (see Appendix F).

5.1.8 Personality

The element 'Personality' describes the character of a brand as outlined in the chapter "Elements of Brand Identity." The interviewees were asked to share their perceptions on FOSS' personality from the past and the current personality. In this way the character of the brand is compared to the different time periods. First, the findings on the personality from the past are presented, followed by the findings on the current personality.

The Middle Manager in Key Accounts thinks of FOSS' past personality as an "engineer" because the "majority of the people were engineers and scientists."

FOSS was seen as "too bold and too cocky" by the Head of CSS Nordic in Customer Service and Support. He further states: "We didn't really acknowledge the competition." This perception is supported by one employee in the R&D department, who refers to FOSS as

"arrogant." He explains that because FOSS has always had a leading position in the market, it developed an arrogant attitude towards its customers and the market, thinking they were the best.

The employee in R&D moreover details that his perception of FOSS also includes adjectives such as "elderly and experienced, old and reliable". Nowadays, he still perceives FOSS as experienced but "more open-minded towards new trends and what customers want." A similar personality is further depicted by the Top Manager in CSS:

> "I was thinking about a mature adult [...] getting wiser and more confident, but a little bit slow in comparison to a company with young people, which are on another clock frequency."

Being slow is a trait also emphasized by the Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business: "[FOSS is] old-fashioned, product-oriented, because it is an R&D company. FOSS is more inside out looking instead of outside in looking." These informants depict FOSS' personality over the investigated servitization period, and hence do not believe that this has changed to a great extent.

The Department Manager in Marketing and Communication describes FOSS' past character as a "cozy, safe and nice person." However, in her opinion, the personality has changed and became "much more competitive, robust, professional and sharper."

5.1.9 Core

As outlined in the section concerning the elements of brand identity, the 'Core' represents a company's entity of heart values that conclusively eventuate in an organization's promise. The 'Core' is vital to be transferred internally and externally and for the creation of a strong brand identity (Urde, 2013).

When asking the interviewees about FOSS' core offerings, the Department Manager in Market Management has the following to say: "We offer reliable results customers can count on." The word 'reliability' is mentioned by several other employees as the next quotes exemplify. One employee in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management mentions: "[FOSS' core is the] provision of more reliable solutions so that customers can count on them." The Head of Aftersales in Global Marketing Department also details that: "[We promise] reliable results to make good decisions for production [...] and to ensure better results for the customers."

Some employees also conclude that FOSS optimizes its customers' business, as exemplified by the Head of Product Management in CSS, who states: "We optimize customers'

production and solutions. Also, we are more focused on value rather than solution." One R&D employee supports this and declares that FOSS develops solutions to make these processes better.

Another perspective about FOSS' core promise is given by the Top Manager in Sales and Marketing who illustrates that FOSS will try to be more focused on the customer side so that the company will not only sell instruments anymore but will look at the total solutions:

> "We have the instruments in the center, and then [the customers] will have all the extra parts outside the instrument […] because that's what the customers are looking for."

The Department Manager in Marketing and Communication also points out the importance to focus on the customer side and expresses the following:

> "Developing new things for the customers is part of [FOSS'] story and the promise. We definitely promise [our customers] that we can help them with their business. So we help them work smarter and be more efficient. [...] And that's different from our competitors because they are mostly focused on getting the job done, but we are trying to do more than that, continuously improving what we do."

During the course of the interviews, the informants not only describe their perception of the 'Core' element but also emphasize that it has not changed during the servitization period, namely the past ten years but it has taken a different direction, which will be emphasized in the future. The Department Manager in Marketing and Communication points out that although the essence has not altered, a more customer-centric approach will be incorporated in the future:

> "I don't think [the core] has changed. I think it has been the same for the customers, but I think it will change in the future because of the digitization, the digital services, so we are making it easier for the customers to work smarter."

As per the Top Manager in Sales and Marketing, he also recognizes a shift in the direction of FOSS' core when comparing it to the past. Thus, a more customer-focused approach is mentioned.

> "It was stated in our values, that the customer was a core part of our values, but there's always the risk, if you are a big company, you are dominant, then you become a bit arrogant, and you forget the fundamentals. And we have forgotten it; there's no doubt. FOSS was focused more on the instrument itself. I think that has been changed very recently and will continue to change in the future."

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The Top Manager in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management identifies that the core "has changed a bit in the sense that it has to be a bit more dynamic and agile." However, according to the manager, the promise towards FOSS' customers has not changed.

When evaluating corporate documents to identify FOSS' core, the core values that emerge are: first, customer satisfaction, knowledge, and people in teams (FOSS, 2008a, 2018b). These four values can be identified in all nine elements of the brand identity as, for instance, interviewees praising FOSS' knowledge about the relationship with customers or their colleagues' knowledge about the technology. These values have not shown any major changes in informant's perceptions, as depicted throughout the nine elements of the brand identity. It can be supported that these four values have not changed for the past ten years as they are portrayed in FOSS' yearly annual reports.

5.2   Servitization

According to the literature review, four elements of the process of servitization were identified which are 'Value Basis of Activity', 'Primary Role of Assets', 'Offering Type', and 'Production Strategy.' These elements will be presented in detail regarding the case of FOSS. In this way, we will show to what extent they have been integrated or affected the company.

5.2.1 Value Basis of Activity

The element 'Value Basis of Activity' concerns the nature of relationship towards customers and is divided into transactional-based and relationship-based (Martinez et al. 2010). When asking the interviewees about their opinion of the nature of relationships, it became obvious that different perceptions are shared among the employees and departments. The majority of interviewees refer to a relationship-based connection towards customers which can be illustrated by several quotes. The Top Management employee from Sales & Marketing states: "[…] it has and will always be the long-lasting relationships." Additionally, the employee of Top Management of Global Quality and Supply Chain Management enunciates: "I think there are many customers where there is definitely a strong relationship, and they have been our customers for 30 years, and they are very loyal to FOSS." This is also identified by an employee of the Middle Management of Key Accounts and two employees in Research & Development. An employee in the Global Support department in Customer Service and Support declares the following:

> "I hope it to be more relationship-based. I think we need to address the customer and show him/her what kind of relationships we are offering and having."

This goes in line with FOSS' establishment of the so-called KAM (Key Account Management) Policy in 2011 as mentioned in the 'Relationships' findings (FOSS, 2011a).

Other interviewees articulate a mixture of relationship- and transactional-based relationships and differentiate among diverse customers and departments within the company. The head of Aftersales in Global Marketing Management says: "It is a mix. It is transactional-based regarding the customers that only need one instrument." According to the Head of CSS Nordics:

> "The company aims to have a very close relationship with bigger customers, but if it is smaller customers who are buying products that they can install themselves [...], it is more transactional."

The employee of the Top Management in CSS also shares the same opinion when he illustrates that for non-key accounts customers, the goal would be to make the connections more transactional.

This goes in line with the statement by one employee of the Department Management of Marketing in Digital Business: "We have been used to sell boxes and now we start to sell services and value instead of boxes [which] takes a company five to ten years."

In addition, some interviewees express that while they acknowledge the importance of strong relationships with the customers, they argue in favor of a more transactional-based relationship with non-key accounts. The employee in Top Management Customer Service and Support expresses the following:

> "We are too dependent on relationships. I still think we need the relationships, but we don't need the face-to-face contact. And we can achieve that with the digital services."

An employee of the Top Management in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management further says that it should be concentrated less on relationships and especially in the servitization process it would be better to focus on tangible deliverables rather than personal relations to add value.

This perspective shared by the interviewees that the customer relationships with non-key accounts should be more transactional based is also reflected in the recent development of an e-commerce platform called myfoss.com (FOSS, 2015d). The goal of this webshop is to enable customers to easily purchase spare parts, consumables, service agreements and even small instruments, instead of through the sales call center and empower customers to self-service themselves and thus eliminating the need for a relationship and realizing a more transactional approach.

5.2.2 Primary Role of Assets

The element 'Primary Role of Assets' describes how customers use products in terms of asset utilization or asset ownership (Martinez et al. 2010). FOSS' customers own the products they buy, all of the interviewed employees share the same view on that. For example, the employee of the Top Management in Sales and Marketing communicates the following: "It is correct that 95% of our customers are buying and owning our instruments." An employee of the Middle Management in R&D sustains that and further declares: "[FOSS doesn't] do anything else, we sell blue boxes." According to the Department Manager in Market Management and the Head of CSS Nordics, the customers invest in the products. This is also reflected in FOSS' identity since FOSS is operating old-fashioned and there is no business about leasing, as an employee in Data and Algorithms in the Department of R&D states. An employee of the Middle Management Key Accounts further signifies: "Our initial brand identity has always been about making beautiful products, and that is something that is a capital investment that you own."

Nevertheless, he and other employees mention that FOSS has already started to move into the direction of offering other types of asset ownership or provide cooperations with leasing companies: "We have a few customers that lease or rent our instruments, but that's a tiny part of our business." In this sense, the company progresses towards leasing agreements since customers are asking for "pay per analysis or pay per use" and are ready or respectively more advanced to make use of leasing and hire services, according to the Top Management employee in Sales and Marketing. However, one employee in IT and Compliance points out that FOSS does not have to be the initiator of this new type of product ownership:

> "I am sure we will do that, and we will have to react and meet that demand from customers, but we don't want to push that revolution."

The comment by the Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business describes the ongoing process of providing other types of asset ownership in a comprised and efficient way:

> "We have not been very successful with leasing models so far but we are testing it, but if you ask me in five years from now we will not sell products but offer subscriptions."

However, the employee of the Top Management of CSS shows some concern regarding the future of offering the instruments as a service:

> "Maybe we, in FOSS, are the biggest obstacle to achieve that, because I think the customers would be ready for it. […] But I think we have a really hard time giving up the revenue of the instrument as a one time sale."

Further, he declares that he thinks that FOSS will first engage in leasing agreements when the company gets under pressure in order to not harm the present success of the business.

The current situation of full ownership of the products by FOSS' customers is reflected throughout the investigated period in the so-called Capex investments mentioned in several corporate documents like "Highlights" (FOSS, 2009b) and "ProFoss trial agreement flour" (FOSS, 2018b). Thus, it is shown that FOSS has always been referring to capital expenditures rather than operating expenditures which proves that customers invest in and own the 'blue boxes' which goes in line with the interviewee's statements.

5.2.3 Offering Type

The 'Offering Type' is an element of the servitization process that is classified as a spectrum from a "total service integration" to a "physical product plus peripheral services" (Martinez et al. (2010). The interviewees communicate a common belief that FOSS still puts emphasis on the products because "without the product, there cannot be a service," as the Department Manager in Market Management articulates. As per the Middle Manager in Key Accounts, FOSS is an engineering company which is the reason why people get excited when they see a product. Further, he explains:

> "[The product is] much more visual, much easier to have a relationship with. That's also why we're struggling with the service because it's intangible. That's much harder to intellectually comprehend what it is actually, compared to a product, which you can take apart and see what it is composed of. It's also more difficult to appreciate [the service] until you see the effect of it."

The Top Management Employee in Sales and Marketing and the Middle Manager in R&D pinpoint a similar understanding. The former declares: "The foundation for everything is the instrument," while the latter expresses that "the focus is 100% on the product." The Department Manager of Architecture in IT and Compliance has the following to say:

> "FOSS is a company that prides itself on real revenues, real profits and real solutions, the products. As a company, you cannot leave your position and start talking about something you have not done yet."

The ensuing quotes illustrate that these employees still acknowledge the products as the main focus, however, they also argue in favor of the services to some degree.

A Top Manager in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management considers that:

> "I think the focus is still on the product […] because it is considered as a primary must have, whereas the service is an add-on. So the service is, to some extent, still considered as the necessary evil because it is needed but it is not the most valuable thing in FOSS. I think it's very important that we have the right products to offer, without them we wouldn't have anything to service. So it's equally important to have it."

One employee in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management notes:

> "I think FOSS realized that it could not just be the products […] that's why I mentioned the biggest change towards the customer-centricity. The service is a big aspect as well, so I guess it's half-half."

The Department Manager in Marketing and Communication believes that "it's a mix, but we are very product-oriented in the phase of selling the products and promoting the products instead of really thinking about the service […]."

This focus on the product can also be determined from FOSS revenue over the past ten years. Over this period, FOSS' turnover from instruments accounts for 67% of the total, on average, while service agreements and instrument consumables turnover, average a total of 33% (FOSS, 2018c).

5.2.4 Production Strategy

The classification of 'Pure/ mass customization' or 'Mass production' belongs to the third element of the servitization process which is 'Production Strategy' (Martinez et al. 2010). The interviewees shared similar points of views on the degree of customization of FOSS' products. Hence, the employees argue for instruments that are not customized in terms of the hardware which means that FOSS offers standard and "finished off the shelf products" as the Middle Manager of Key Accounts expresses. Standardization is not only mentioned by the Department Manager of Market Management as being a part of FOSS' core promise but also, according to the Middle Manager of Key Accounts, as an enabler for maintaining the same excellent quality in favor of the customers. Moreover, the Middle Manager of R&D points out that the products are not customized due to the complexity of the instruments.

However, when the focus is being changed from the robust hardware to the software of the instruments, then the interviewees communicate another perspective. For example, the Top Manager in Sales and Marketing articulates that:

"[…] when it comes to software and calibrations, most [the instruments] are customizable, especially when you are looking at digital solutions. Then you can work more with solutions which are fitted to the customers."

The Middle Management Key Accounts supports this by saying:

"There are configuration options, so the more we move from the physical products to the software-based products, the most personalized it is. Sometimes we develop products in conjunction with customers where we see the opportunity for a broad application."

The Department Manager Marketing and Communication further notes that:

"The products can always be adjusted, [the customers] can always buy calibrations, so it fits what they need. So in terms of software, calibration and digital services, you can still get some kind of customized solutions."

Moreover, the Top Management Global Quality and Supply Chain Management states that:

"Of course customers can get an application and they can get individual calibrations so that it suits their product and what they are measuring."

On another hand, the customization aspect is considered as a challenge by an employee in R&D, and an Employee in the Global Logistics Department in Global Quality and Supply Chain Management also states that "the service [part] it is not realized yet."

From company documents that have been studied, i.e. 'Product solutions brief,' which describe the product solution and its value proposition, it can be observed that some products or solutions have a higher degree of standardization than others. A higher degree of standardization is identified in products that are designed for small customers, while more customizable products are addressed to major customers, like key accounts (FOSS, 2018d).

5.3   Chapter Summary

Our presented findings were divided into our two presented research streams, namely Brand Identity and Servitization. For each research field, we depicted the empirical material for each individual element the research streams consist of, according to the CBIM by Urde (2013) and the servitization elements by Martinez et al. (2010). The Table 4 below summarizes the main findings.

Elements		Findings
Brand Identity Elements	Mission & Vision	Mission changed from being instrument-focused to reflect sustainability and information management; Vision is to be more digital in the future
	Culture	No change; Culture is entrepreneurial, engineering, technology experts, old, wise, product pride, silo
	Competences	Old competences: focus/ niche, global coverage, technology New Competences: commercial
	Value Proposition	VP changed from dedicated, rapid, and accurate solutions to end-to-end solutions that secure and improve food quality; VP changed from reliable and accurate results to piece of mind and data analytics; Now additional focus on "instruments" and products more integrated in customers' value chain
	Relationships	Changed to become more relationship-based for key accounts, Change to become more transactional-based for non-key accounts
	Position	No change: to be the first/ leader; Change: more knowledgeable
	Expression	No change in the toolbox but change in the content; Instruments are still in center of communication, however less focus on technology and more on customer value
	Personality	No change: engineer, old-fashioned, experienced Change: more competitive, less arrogant, more open-minded, more knowledgeable
	Core	No change: reliable solutions Change: more focus on customer centricity in the future
Servitization Elements	Value Basis of Activity	Relationship-based towards key accounts; Transactional-based towards non-key accounts
	Primary Role of Assets	Mostly product ownership with limited asset utilization
	Offering Type	Physical product and services as add-ons
	Production Strategy	Customization possibilities of products for key accounts; Standardization products for non-key accounts

Table 4 Findings Summary

6 Analysis

In this part of the thesis, the elements of the servitization process and the brand identity are analyzed by taking the presented literature, our empirical material as well as the information of the case into consideration, and at the same time combine them, with the purpose of answering the research question on '*How are the elements of the brand identity of this paper's case affected to become more customer-centric during the process of servitization?'.* Firstly, we depict the servitization components and funnel our attention on how the servitization elements portray the servitization level. Following this, the brand identity elements are displayed. It is especially here where we have our analytical framework in mind as we intertwine the brand identity elements with the ones of the servitization process and correspondingly aim to comprehend if a specific servitization element has influenced a particular brand identity element to become more customer-centric. We, therefore, refer back to our second discussion point leading to answer our research question. Along these lines, we demonstrate how the brand identity elements of the CBIM are affected by the elements of the servitization process.

6.1 Servitization

6.1.1 Value Basis of Activity

When relating back to the display of the different elements of the process of servitization, we presented criteria for the identification of an organization's servitization level proposed by Martinez et al. (2010). Thus, the 'Value Basis of Activity' is divided into a relationship-based approach which signals a high servitization level and into a transactional-based approach which indicates a low level of servitization.

From our conducted interviews, specific empirical material can derive how FOSS' employees perceive the 'Value Basis of Activity.' In this sense, the majority of interviewees state that FOSS possesses a relationship-based strategy towards its customers as it was pointed out in our findings. According to the empirical findings, FOSS is especially aiming to hold long-lasting and close relationships towards its major key account customers due to their consistent loyalty over an extended period of time. It is here where FOSS' move from a product-centric to a customer-centric orientation in 2010, as we outlined in the case presentation, can be

considered as a crucial enabler to engage further into establishing satisfactory and valuable connections with customers. With the introduction of the project about optimizing the customer value (CVO), FOSS commenced to maximize the customers' benefit and to align all customer-related activities.

Another essential aspect that displays FOSS' intention and likewise the interviewees' perception of becoming more relationship-based and accordingly achieve a higher level of servitization is the KAM policy launched in 2011. As a consequence, FOSS intended to guarantee a globally coherent and structured approach to its key customers on the on hand, to assure solid relationships with them on the other hand, and ultimately get to know the customers better. The 'Customer First' strategy initiated in 2016 additionally strongly reinforced FOSS' decision to develop more durable ties with its customers and to diverge from a transactional-based relationship. As it was mentioned in the case presentation, this strategy reflects FOSS' step towards customer centricity while the company aims to operate in accordance with the needs of its customers. All the displayed activities from FOSS' side go in line with Brax' findings (2005), cited in our literature review, which assert that it is an important requisite to know the customers' business context and operations in order to be able to develop and deliver adequate services. In literature, it is further highlighted that ongoing communication and customer support are fundamental for the development of a service relationship (Brax, 2005), which FOSS responded to with the several projects and strategies introduced throughout the last couple of years. In this way, from the literature, FOSS' activities and the empirical data it can be deduced that FOSS realized that a change was needed to a more relationship-based approach to drive the process of servitization successfully and transitioned accordingly.

Nevertheless, from the findings and FOSS' development of the e-commerce platform myfoss.com, it becomes evident that the intended relationship-based approach is also supplemented with a strategy for developing a more transactional approach. Thus, at some point, interviewees articulate that FOSS would have a mixture of relationship-based and transactional-based relationships, while the goal would be to make the connections more transactional with non-key account customers. The e-commerce platform further decreases the need for a relationship-based and realizing a more transactional approach as customers can easily purchase instrument consumables and services themselves. As seen in our findings, this does not imply that relationships with customers are not needed or are not considered as important at all, but are achieved through a different method. Especially, due to the ongoing phenomenon about digitization as outlined by Paschou et al. (2017) and Lenka, Parida, and Wincent (2017), digital services are introduced by FOSS to be able to assist customers remotely in a non-face-to-face contact. The adding of the new business unit in 2016, Digital Business, gives FOSS the opportunity to add value to its customers by exploiting data

analysis and extending customer touch points and reach a higher strategic position, as described in the case presentation.

All in all, when combining the existing literature and putting it into context with FOSS' introduced strategies and projects, as well as with the informants' experiences and opinions, FOSS has been paving the way to become more relationship-based and to intensify the links with its customers in order to increase the value for them and to better respond to their needs and demands. At the same time, FOSS is looking to make their relationships with smaller, non-key account customers more transactional.

6.1.2 Primary Role of Assets

The 'Primary Role of Assets' classifies whether assets are utilized or owned respectively. According to Martinez et al. (2010), an asset utilization by the customer refers to a high level of servitization whereas asset ownership suggests a low servitization. All of the interviewed employees share the same opinion that, at the moment, FOSS' customers own the products or "the blue boxes" they buy, as pointed out in our findings. However, the intention to move into the direction of offering other types of asset roles than asset ownership was also expressed by informants since customers are demanding options like 'pay per analysis' or 'pay per instrument use.' Thus, in the interviews, it was mentioned that FOSS thinks about providing leasing agreements or engaging in cooperations with leasing companies. The aspiration to offer asset utilization, and in this way to achieve a higher level of servitization, is intricate to translate into action according to the empirical material. Hence, FOSS is shown to obtain its revenue of the instruments as a one-time sale, which is supported by the Capex investments mentioned in the 'Findings' chapter that affirm customers to invest and own the products.

With regards to Tukker's (2004) categorization of manufacturers presented in the 'Analytical Framework' part, the interviewees' shared opinions indicate that FOSS belongs to a product-oriented firm rather than a use- or result-oriented company. In this sense, the level of value provided by the product can be considered as higher as opposed to the one provided by the service. Derived from Gibson (1982), FOSS cannot be characterized as a company that "thinks and works in terms of ends" (p.4) which in turn forms a barrier to co-create services on the one hand, and to better respond to customer needs on the other hand.

When putting the empirical material and the literature findings into context, it appears that in order for FOSS to move to the end of the product-service system and become more performance-based, the company would need to start acknowledging the revenue that can be generated through subscriptions and leasing agreements and to release the deep-rooted impression that FOSS would only sell blue boxes.

6.1.3 Offering Type

Boyer, Hallowell, and Roth (2003 cited in Martinez et al. 2010) conclude that the 'Offering Type' elements of servitization reveal the range of product to service offerings, from tangible products supported with a peripheral service to total services. There is a common perception amongst the informants that FOSS' focus is currently on the product, and views services as an add-on. This is also demonstrated by FOSS' turnover. While 67% come from instruments, only 33% are attained by service sales, over the last ten years. However, some informants shared a slightly different opinion, considering that the service part is almost just as important as the product. This perception could have arisen as a result of FOSS' development of the Digital Business department in 2016 and the increased focus on the customer through the 'Customer First' strategy.

While considering the 'Offering Type' for services, Baines and Lightfoot (2013) argue that companies generally provide services on three different levels: base, intermediate and advanced, described in detail in the literature review. Considering FOSS' current service offering, described in the case as instrument repairs, monitoring, user instructions, service instructions, serviceability, the fulfillment of service agreements or technical training, FOSS can be classified as providing intermediate services. By doing so, the company concentrates on outcomes focused on the maintenance of the product. As findings also suggest, FOSS' customers expect a continuous performance of the instrument, and so, if there are any issues with it, they expect FOSS to repair it as soon as possible. With some recent actions, it appears that FOSS is also looking to further develop into advanced services. The introduction of the Digital Business department, concerned with data analysis services and the increased focus on software technologies, shows that the company is developing its skills to include the provision of advanced services. In this sense, Baines and Lightfoot (2013) argue that these types of services are the most complex, but are also the most interesting, while they present six changes the company should undergo in order to support the provision of this new service category better. The case description and the findings show FOSS is already on the way with implementing changes within three areas mentioned by Baines and Lightfoot (2013). For example, the use of remote monitoring technology and its development as a value proposition matches with Baines and Lightfoot (2013) third finding. The FOSS Ambassador scheme, which enables the first line service people to better respond to customers, corresponds to Baines and Lightfoot (2013) fifth finding. It can also be argued, that the separation between the Sales and Service department in 2010, which led to the introduction of two different departments, one dealing with Marketing and Communication and one with Customer Service and Support, is also supporting Baines and Lightfoot (2013) sixth suggestion of increasing customer touch points. The more focused responsibilities that resulted from this separation enabled FOSS to enlarge, better and sharpen both their marketing communication capabilities, but also their service practices.

6.1.4 Production Strategy

As defined in the literature, the FOSS 'Production Strategy' element of servitization is an indicator of the product customization level. Numerous informants point out how, in the case of FOSS, the physical instrument, namely the hardware part, is not customized or adapted at all due to production efficiencies. However, the findings further suggest that the solution FOSS ultimately offers to the customer has the ability to be customized through the software and calibration part. In this way, clients can design their own solution in collaboration with FOSS. As shown by the document research, this customization is often available for larger instruments, which are purchased by FOSS' key accounts, while the smaller customers are offered a more standardized solution, based on their needs and desire to purchase an off-the-shelf solution. The 'Production Strategy' referred to by the informants can also be reflected in the various actions FOSS undertook during the servitization period, as presented in the case section. The development of the 'Total Solution' concept, which included the addition of Mosaic Services, to FOSS' product offering or the growth of the software engineers of the Research and Development department can be seen as examples.

In this way, it appears that FOSS is adopting a mixed level of customization when it comes to its solutions. On the one hand, the company provides mass customized, and sometimes even pure customized solutions for the key accounts, as in the case of developing an instrument in collaboration with a customer. On the other hand, FOSS is responding to what constitutes the majority of its customer base, namely the small customers, by developing more mass standardized solutions. With the development of the KAM strategy in 2011, FOSS is showing an increased interest to focus more on the key accounts due to profitability reasons. As commoditization is increasing in FOSS' markets and considering FOSS' premium price and position, it is likely that the customer group formed by smaller clients will become more and more challenging for FOSS to satisfy, as competitors will be able to provide cheaper, and equally good solutions, while benefiting from economies of scale through standardized solutions.

6.2 Level of Servitization

In order to discuss the level of servitization for each individual servitization element, we utilized the comprehensive model by Martinez et al. (2010) which we introduced in the literature review. Our analysis chapter was highly beneficial to evaluate how pronounced the servitization elements are.

With regards to the 'Value Basis of Activity,' we discovered that FOSS is following a relationship-based approach towards its key account customers which according to Martinez

et al. (2010) is considered as a high servitization level. Nevertheless, FOSS is also adopting a transaction-based approach towards smaller customers which refers to a low servitization level (Martinez et al. 2010). We can, therefore, infer that the servitization level of the 'Value Basis of Activity' is neither high nor low, indicating a medium servitization level. The asset ownership detailed upon in the 'Primary Role of Asset' section reflects a low servitization level how Martinez et al. (2010) illuminate. Similarly, the 'Offering Type' also embodies a low servitization level since the physical products are regarded as the main focus whereas the services are seen as peripheral (Martinez et al. 2010). The last element of the servitization process 'Production Strategy' shows an identical manifestation as the 'Value Basis of Activity.' Hence, a mixed method is applied by FOSS regarding key and non-key account customers. In this sense, FOSS offers customization possibilities for key accounts which echoes a high servitization level (Martinez et al. 2010). Albeit, FOSS also provides mass production for the non-key account customers which in turn mirrors a low servitization level. Again, we can infer that the servitization level of the 'Production Strategy' is neither high nor low, indicating a medium servitization level.

6.3 Brand Identity

6.3.1 Mission & Vision

The 'Mission & Vision' of a company is one of the internal elements of the CBIM, which enables the analysis and description of a company's current 'raison d'etre' and its future direction. In the case of FOSS, the common theme emerging from the findings is that the mission of the company only slightly changed in wording during the servitization period, but the core has remained that same of providing solutions which improve the quality and safety of the food and agriculture industry. However, the addition of the 'end-to-end' solution provider to the mission and the transition from 'dedicated analytical solutions' to 'analytics beyond measure' can reflect a change from product- towards customer-centricity, influenced by the 'Value Basis of Activity' servitization element. FOSS' focus is more on a relationship-based approach towards its customers, whereas there is a clearer division for the relationship orientation between the key accounts and non-key account customers. Thus, the new mission resulted from the 2017 rebranding, seemed to have become more customer-centric as influenced by the activities oriented towards improving FOSS' relationship with customers. On another hand, FOSS' intended transactional approach towards smaller, non-key account customers is not reflected at all in the updated mission.

The 'Primary Role of Assets' servitization element does not seem to have an impact on the mission change. FOSS' new mission does not reflect a change towards an asset utilization

type of operation and continues to refer to the asset ownership way of solution provision. However, the addition of the abstract description of FOSS' mission to contribute to a better and more sustainable world through the better utilization of raw material, allows the company not to be bound by a specific method of doing so, providing a window for the asset role to change in the future. Moreover, the empirical findings show that FOSS' new mission and tagline, 'analytics beyond measure,' aim at a move towards the provision of a higher level of information for the customers, as opposed to just results from the instrument. However, that does not appear to be reflected in the company's 'Offering Type,' an element of servitization which shows that FOSS is still very much focused on selling the product, as opposed to adding services to provide more value for the customers. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the 'Offering Type' has not influenced the 'Mission & Vision' element.

The 'Production Strategy' servitization element does not show to have affected the mission into a more customer-centric direction since the mission does not reflect the present activities, aimed at more customization. However, informants perceive that FOSS' vision for the future, is to make use of digitization opportunities, and "focus on the digital services, and moving away from only providing instruments," as one interviewee expresses. These possibilities are also outlined by Holmström and Partanen (2014) or Vendrell-Herrero et al. (2017) in the literature review.

All in all, only the 'Value Basis of Activity' servitization element appears to have influenced the 'Mission & Vision' of FOSS to become more customer-centric.

6.3.2 Culture

Overall, the findings suggest that FOSS has developed and continues to have a particularly strong culture revolving around the knowledge, expertise, engineering and the entrepreneurial spirit of the company. Some employees did not see the entrepreneurial spirit and the engineering mindset as favorable in relation to the fast-growing pace of the company and the size and market position it is reaching. Thus, these attitudes are still pervasive because they are ingrained in the company's DNA due to its longevity and family-ownership, and therefore hard to renounce. The findings further demonstrate that the culture has evolved very little over the servitization period. Informants considered that it is only now, in the present, that the culture has started to change. It can also be shown that the recent rebranding efforts, as presented in the case, have been aiming at cultivating a more internal customer-focused culture. However, due to the strong pride and revenue concerning FOSS' products, interviewees described it as very challenging to let the services become a part of the corporate culture.

As only minor changes have occurred to the culture over the servitization period, it can be considered that the servitization elements have therefore not influenced the culture to become more customer-centric. Although the 'Value Basis of Activity' element has shown consideration towards a more relationship-based approach for FOSS' key customers, the culture has not shown a transition towards a customer focus. While the case suggests that various strategies with this objective have been implemented, the informants' perceptions suggest that the culture has still remained concentrated on developing new products, mostly without considering the customer value. This attitude is also reflected in the 'Primary Role of Assets', for which the findings point out that FOSS has a difficult time giving up the instrument revenue, and that even though customers are ready for other modes of asset ownership, FOSS' product-centric way of thinking embedded in the culture is restricting the advancement in this area. On top of that, the 'Offering Type' servitization element supports this product-focused culture. Albeit, initiatives identified in the case that support a transition towards more services, such as the development of the 'Digital Business' department and the perceived importance of services in the organization, the evolution of the revenue over the past years and the employees' perception about FOSS' product versus service focus show that the service is still only seen as an add-on, and not central to the business activities. Therefore, the 'Offering Type' does not show an influence on transforming the culture to become more customer-centric.

While the last servitization element, 'Production Strategy', uncovered that FOSS adopts two strategies of customization, a more customized approached for the key accounts, and a more standardized one for the non-key account customers, the culture findings dispute this twofold method, as informants critique the lack of alignment and streamline in the company's approach. The findings suggest that the 'Production Strategy' does not influence the 'Culture' to become more customer-centric since the informants perceive that FOSS has always been focused on whether a product can be created, as opposed to what value does the solution bring to the customer.

Overall, the 'Culture' element does not appear to be impacted by any of the servitization elements. However, it was clearly recognized by the interviewees that the corporate culture of FOSS has to be adjusted in order to embrace the service mindset. A required cultural change is also recognized by authors such as Oliva and Kallenberg (2003), Baines et al. (2008), or Dimache and Roche (2013), so that a company can achieve a more elevated servitization orientation. Along these lines, the product-centric mindset at FOSS acts like a barrier to push forward the service business, which is also supported by Nordin and Servadio (2012) and Dubruc, Peillon, and Farah (2014) in the literature review.

6.3.3 Competences

While FOSS has held firmly to such competences like technology, focus, and global coverage, new skills have also developed as a result of the various activities, according to employees' perceptions. On the one hand, the long-lasting competences enabled and will continue to propel FOSS to achieve and sustain its leading position in the market and to be a financially strong company. For example, FOSS has always put technology at its core and thus was able to be the first to launch many new inventions on the market. It is perceived that the technology competence continues to develop today in order to allow the company to keep delivering its legacy of reliable analytical instruments. However, these technological competences are posing a challenge for FOSS, as some informants perceive that the company might be reduced to selling a redundant piece due to the commoditization of technology. This view is supported by Parniangtong (2017) who regards that products will become harder to transform into a competitive advantage because they will not fulfill the hard-to-imitate clause.

On the other hand, new commercial competences are now developing as a consequence of the different strategies employed by FOSS for the past ten years. For example, the case and the findings show how FOSS has been working on improving its marketing and customer understanding skills through the implementation of different programs, like the Sales and Marketing Excellence projects or the 'Customer First' strategy. Therefore, the 'Value Basis for Activity' element has influenced the 'Competences' since an increased focus is placed on a relationship-based approach and FOSS' aim is to offer customers a global sales and service coverage which is highly appreciated by the key accounts.

Despite the aforementioned strategies and activities, informants identified that improvements are needed in FOSS' competences in order to become more customer-centric, as outlined in the case presentation. Employees consider that the addition of services, especially digital services, require FOSS to reduce its complexity as a company, which often results from the desire of the company to be at the forefront of technological innovations. Moreover, the case shows that FOSS lacks certain necessary capabilities for the advancement of the company. For example, some interviewees detail how FOSS is missing employees, or how the current employees lack the skills required to adopt a more customer-centric orientation.

With regards to the 'Offering Type,' it can be seen that the 'Competences' were not impacted by this servitization element since the main focus is still on the product which is reflected in the high technological competences applied to the product development FOSS is proud of. This is highlighted by the explained LEAP framework for example in the findings which shows that FOSS puts enormous effort in introducing new product innovations. This can also be reflected in the company's large R&D department, which occupies a considerably larger percentage than other business units (FOSS, 2018e). The 'Primary Role of Assets' supports this view and likewise does not show an effect. Hence, the 'Competences' have not been

influenced to become more customer-centric, since no competence can be traced back to offering new models of asset ownership.

In another vein, the 'Production Strategy' can be depicted to have an influence on the 'Competences.' As the technological competences are shown to advance, the 'Production Strategy' displays that FOSS is doing so with the inclusion of software. While the software is ultimately an addition to the instrument, its function is to provide customization of the instrument, which makes it design uniquely for individual customer needs, which the literature on servitization depicts as a more customer-centric orientation. This can also be verified by Shah et al. (2006) as it was illustrated in the introduction, that a customer-driven company aims to serve and respond to customer needs in terms of design and solution offerings.

Overall, the 'Competences' element appears to have been influenced towards a more customer-centric orientation by the 'Value Basis of Activity' and the 'Production Strategy' servitization elements.

6.3.4 Value Proposition

The findings show that the informants' general impression of the 'Value Proposition' element of the brand identity is revolving around providing solutions for customers. A change was observed during the servitization period when comparing FOSS' 2008 to 2018 value proposition. This element changed to incorporate a more holistic approach to value creation, as the addition of the 'end-to-end solutions' part suggests FOSS does not only want to supply a solution design by the company for their customers but to help customers throughout their value chain and offer peace of mind instead of simply results. While some informants did not perceive this change, some articulated that the change is happening slowly, but surely, as outlined in the case. The findings further emphasize that the value proposition has changed to become more customer-centric by integrating more of the benefits for the customers' business in the value proposition, which FOSS is working on to deliver through the addition of digital services for example.

As FOSS develops and sells more process instruments, meaning that the instruments become a more significant part of their customers' manufacturing process, as opposed to a stand-alone measurement outside of this process, the challenges and the opportunities both increase. On the one hand, the value for the customers becomes not only the analysis results but, as their manufacturing is constantly assessed through remote monitoring technology, the opportunity for improving the offering can also become a reality. FOSS could, therefore, offer its customers more than simply a 'sensor' for measurement, which is one of the concerns outlined by informants in the 'Competences' findings, as a result of the possible

commoditization of technology. In this way, FOSS could become a partner instead, based on the volume of information that can be gathered, as outlined by Leinwand and Mainardi (2014). On the other hand, this is not realized yet as the case points out.

The 'Value Basis of Activity' servitization element can be clearly shown to have had an influence on the 'Value Proposition,' with a relationship-based approach reflecting the fact that FOSS now proposes to become more integrated into the customers' value chain. Moreover, the strategies presented in the case, such as 'Total Solution' or 'Customer First,' also demonstrate an initiative of FOSS to place the customers closer in the center of their activities. Similarly, the 'Primary Role of Assets' can also be shown to have impacted the 'Value Proposition,' however only to a slight degree. While the main focus of FOSS is to provide solutions the customers can buy and own, an emergent type of offering is developing. As the findings and document studies suggest, FOSS has started to expand into a new way of providing instruments, namely leasing, which is a step forward towards a performance-based business logic, as Tukker (2004) and Fischer, Gebauer, and Fleisch (2012) declare.

The 'Value Proposition' evolution also reflects the 'Production Strategy' servitization element. Through the accentuated emphasis placed on offering key-account customers more unique solutions, FOSS' value proposition has been changed to mirror that, with respect to their holistic approach to becoming a partner to their customers. The value proposition does not appear to have changed to respond to the more standardized offering proposed for non-key account customers, which is shown by the standardized products being developed.

While the previously mentioned servitization elements appear to have transformed the value proposition into a more servitized one, the 'Offering Type' is shown to have the opposite effect. The strong product focus of the company identified in this element is now presented in the new value proposition through the addition of the word 'instrument.' While the previous value proposition did not mention the product and focused on the solution aspect, the new one includes the phrase: "Our analysis instruments refine measurements into information management." The findings also suggest that the value proposition is perceived as rather exaggerated when it comes to the degree of partnership FOSS actually offers. FOSS' focus on the product in their value proposition is also not supporting what Baines and Lightfoot (2013) argue to be a more customer-centric and servitized firm, as they mention that a company should employ "performance measures that reflect outcomes aligned to individual customers […] complemented by a set of more emotional measures that demonstrate value to the customer" (p.18). In this sense, the 'Value Proposition' has not been impacted to become more customer-centric.

Altogether, the 'Value Proposition' has been affected by the 'Value Basis of Activity,' 'Primary Role of Assets,' and 'Production Strategy' servitization elements.

6.3.5 Relationships

A common perception was shared among informants in regard to FOSS' relationships as it was identified that the company pursues relations with two customer groups, key accounts, and non-key accounts. As shown in the findings, the most notable change was observed by informants in the relationships towards key account customers. This change is also reflected in the case, through the different strategies like 'Customer Value Optimization' and 'Customer First' FOSS has been pursuing for the last ten years. The servitization element 'Value Basis of Activity' is probably the one that has moved this brand identity element the most to become more customer-centric. As the findings display, the company aims to have very close and long-lasting relationship with its key account customers, which is reflected in the way the 'Relationships' element has evolved and is impacted by the 'Value Basis of Activity' when considering the key accounts. This can be supported by the development of the Key Account Management department, the purpose of which is to enhance the relationship with important FOSS customers. However, some informants believe that the 'Value Basis of Activity' has not influenced the 'Relationships' element to become more customer-centric, as they articulate that FOSS still pursues a transactional approach regarding smaller, non-key account customers. This can also be supported by the development of more standardized solutions, as the 'Production Strategy' element suggests. Therefore, it can be concluded that the 'Production Strategy' has not shown an impact regarding smaller customers since their connection is still based on standardized products, but it has impacted the key account customer 'Relationships' to become more customer-centric, meaning that that FOSS offers customization to them.

The 'Primary Role of Assets' element does not appear to have influenced the customer relationships to become more customer-centric, as the purchase and ownership of a product do not create the need for lasting relations among the partners. This suggests that the 'Primary Role of Assets' has not influenced the 'Relationships' to become more customer-centric. The 'Offering Type' suggests a similar idea, as a product focus does not create the requirement for developing a relationship-approach, compared to if FOSS was more engaged in services. However, considering the type of investment purchasing and the magnitude of the investment, it can also be argued that, without a relationship developing over time, customers would have difficulties to make such an investment with ease. Moreover, when considering the role of services, they appear to play a small, but important part in aiding this brand identity element to focus on the customer. Both the findings and the case suggest that services have an essential responsibility in augmenting the relationship with the customers, beyond the results of the instrument. Examples can be found in the communities FOSS provides to their customer as a platform to better understand their business. Moreover, the connection between the service engineers and the customer allows for further development of the relationship, as their role is a complex one when a client is experiencing an instrument breakdown, and as

there are some of the employees spending the most time with FOSS' clients. On top of that, the addition of digital services enabled by digitization is further argued by our informants to emphasize the relationship-based approach towards clients. In this sense, the 'Relationships' show an influence towards customer centricity by the 'Offering Type.'

As outlined in the case, the transition currently taking place further supports the relationship moving to a more customer-centric approach, as informants express that a change to build better relationships is happening. This is also supported by the development of the Key Account Management department, which is dedicated to creating partnerships with key accounts. However, the findings suggest that improvements in customer understanding are necessary in order to become more customer-centric. Informants assert that more links need to be established between FOSS and their customers, beyond just the service or the sales individuals, and that a better understanding of customer's business is needed for a better relationship to flourish.

In conclusion, the 'Relationship' has been influenced by the 'Value Basis of Activity,' 'Offering Type,' and 'Production Strategy' servitization elements.

6.3.6 Position

In order to place a company within a specific market, the element 'Position' is crucial to utilize. As illustrated in the empirical material, FOSS' position throughout the servitization period has remained the same to a certain extent, since the company still wants to be the first and the leader, which is also verified by the current FOSS values, visible on FOSS' website and annual reports. The organization still wants to be positioned as an engineering company and as a technology provider that possesses the best resources to create the best quality products for its customers. Despite that, interviewees also shared that in the present FOSS is more knowledgeable about its customers and services as a response to the increasing competition. Thus, additional steps like the introduction of the service organization and the focus on not only selling solutions but also on adding value for customers was necessary to keep the strong and competitive position in the market. In this way, FOSS, the engineering company, has started to position itself in the field of customer understanding. Three of FOSS' core values illustrated in the 'Core,' namely 'first, customer satisfaction and knowledge' findings, likewise reflect the position. It is therefore apparent that the servitization element 'Value Basis of Activity' with the intention to build more relationship-based interactions with customers has impacted the 'Position' to become more customer-centric.

In the findings for the 'Offering Type,' it was presented that the services at FOSS are not totally integrated and are rather considered as an add-on. On the one hand, as outlined in the aforementioned paragraph and also in the 'Competences' findings, FOSS has acquired new

and better knowledge about services and created a service organization that not only entails the 'Digital Business' but also the Mosaic (software) Services and Managed Services that are part of the 'Total Solution' strategy. This, in turn, reflects what the interview participants shared on their opinion on the role of services, which is that the services will occupy an even more elevated role in the future than compared to the present which is also encouraged by the slow but happening transition at FOSS since 2007 to become more customer-centric. On the other hand, the necessary developments to achieve a higher level of customer orientation, presented in the case, still show that FOSS needs to undergo several improvements, like employing more service people or adapt the corporate culture to truly believe in the service mindset, in order to integrate the services in an advanced manner. In a similar sense, the interviewed employees still perceive FOSS' current position to be based on the 'great' products and resources. FOSS would also risk its current position if the company commenced to position itself as a service provider since Baines et al. (2008) regard it as a challenge to deal with additional competitors within the new business area. It is, therefore, why we do not perceive that FOSS' 'Position' has been impacted by the servitization element 'Offering Type' towards a more customer-centric orientation.

The 'Production Strategy' appears to have influenced the perceived 'Position' of the company in regard to FOSS's capabilities of offering a unique, customized solution, as opposed to standard, mass-produced products. The informants mention how FOSS's dedication and resources enable devotion to help customers to make their business better and more efficient on the one hand, and new product development and innovation on the other hand. Since the product is still in focus for FOSS, the 'Primary Role of Assets' could not be identified to exert an influence on the 'Position.' Thus, interviewees did not express that the 'Position' of FOSS has changed in any way to be recognized as providing other types of asset ownership, and in this way become more customer-centric.

All in all, the servitization elements 'Value Basis of Activity' as well as 'Production Strategy' have impacted the 'Position.'

6.3.7 Expression

The way FOSS expresses itself in terms of verbal and visual aspects of the brand is regarded as either not different or unique at all compared to other market players. The reason that FOSS is not perceived as distinct is because some interviewees still consider that FOSS is too product-focused although the company has also commenced to put focus on the customers. On another hand, the increased internal interest and external pressure to push for a customer orientation is regarded as the trigger that evolved FOSS' expression in a way that FOSS has started to engage in moving forward towards customers and promote customer value. Therefore, the servitization element 'Value Basis of Activity' shows an impact on the

'Expression.' This can further be highlighted in the rebranding strategy in 2017 when FOSS changed most of the visual aspect of the brand, like for example, the URL from foss.dk to fossanalytics.com, which developed into an updated, modernized website. The colors were adapted, as we referred to in the case, to represent a more modern palette. The adjusted slogan - from 'Dedicated Analytical Solutions' to 'Analytics Beyond Measure' demonstrates that FOSS changed the way of doing business and paved the way for the process of servitization. Along these lines, it becomes obvious that the content of FOSS' expression has changed.

It seems that FOSS acknowledged the vital role of services through the various implemented strategies presented in the case and therefore initiated to transition into customer centricity by adding services and value for the customers. With the established rebranding strategy FOSS has started to visualize with the new slogan that on the hand, customers can aspect another business branch, the services, and that on the other hand, employees are informed about the business direction. However, as we pointed out in our findings, FOSS' employees place great importance and pride on their products. This was also visible when presenting the empirical material for the 'Offering Type' since the blue boxes are the core of FOSS and the services are rather seen as an add-on. This, in turn, is mirrored how FOSS expresses itself as explained by the Top Manager for CSS: "We have [...] FOSS shapes which are very unique, you can always recognize FOSS instruments." With this quote it becomes evident that despite the fact that the servitization process at FOSS started in 2007, the 'Offering Type' has only been affecting the 'Expression' to a low extent. In this sense, although the augmented role of services has been recognized, FOSS is still expressing itself by putting the products first, followed by the services as an extra tool.

Lastly, the 'Primary Role of Assets,' and the 'Production Strategy' represent elements that do not appear to exert an impact on the 'Expression' as it does not reflect that FOSS has started to engage in leasing agreements or to offer customization possibilities through added services.

All in all, the servitization elements 'Value Basis of Activity' and 'Offering Type' have impacted the 'Expression.'

6.3.8 Personality

The 'Personality' of a company describes the character of the brand by using human traits (Urde, 2013). According to the findings, interviewees perceived FOSS' past character as engineering, arrogant, experienced, being the best and as reliable. What can be derived from the empirical material is that the 'Personality' has not changed in the sense that no world-changing character traits have developed. However, the aforementioned features have evolved and became more profound over the servitization period. Thus, FOSS today is considered as being more experienced and knowledgeable, more competitive and wiser but still as

engineering, old-fashioned and product-oriented. The only aspect that is different is that FOSS is perceived to be more open-minded. Taking the introduced strategies and projects since 2007 into consideration, especially FOSS' aspiration to engage in servitization to become more customer-centric and the establishment of the new unit 'Digital Business' due to the ongoing digitization, we interpret that this has supported FOSS to intensify its previously described traits. We consider this as the reason why FOSS' personality is regarded to be more competent and mature.

As described in the servitization element 'Value Basis of Activity,' FOSS aims to adopt a more relationship-based approach, especially with key accounts in order to place more focus on the customers and less on the instruments. However, since FOSS' employees still perceive the company to be very focused on technology and the engineering mindset as described in the findings, as opposed to customer needs and partnership, we regard that the 'Personality' has not been impacted by the 'Value Basis of Activity' to be recognized as more customer-driven. The case presentation also reflects this aspect since interviewees shared their opinion on FOSS lacking the customer understanding skill. Although the organization has introduced many initiatives, like 'Total Solution,' 'Customer First,' and 'Customer Value Optimization,' to place the customer more towards the center, the character of the brand still does not echo this reorientation.

According to the empirical material, FOSS has become more open-minded which we recognize as the reasons why FOSS decided to take on the challenge to servitize and to digitize in order to differentiate more from competitors and to decrease the gap between the organization and the customers. We, therefore, consider, based on the findings regarding the 'Primary Role of Assets,' that FOSS realized to engage in something different than just offering product ownership. In the findings, it became obvious that FOSS is increasingly looking into providing leasing agreements or 'pay per use' options now, and in the future to respond more accurately to customers' demands. As a consequence, we see the 'Personality' of FOSS to be slightly affected by the servitization element 'Primary Role of Assets' in the way that FOSS became more receptive towards other forms of product ownership.

The 'Offering Type' findings revealed that FOSS' focus is still on the product which was confirmed by FOSS' turnover (67%) from its instruments in our document study. This, in turn, reflects the interviewees' perception of FOSS' product-oriented and engineering character trait. Nevertheless, the participants also expressed that due to the increasing competition and ongoing trends in the manufacturing environment, FOSS understood that the focus could not only be on the product anymore which is the reason why FOSS established the 'Total Solution' and the 'Customer First' strategies to accomplish the substantial move towards customer-centricity. However, given the current character of FOSS, it can be inferred

that FOSS' 'Personality' has not been influenced by the servitization element 'Offering Type.'

The 'Production Strategy' findings illustrated that FOSS indeed is customizing its products for its customers, especially its key accounts, through the engagement in servitization and the 'Digital Business.' Regarding the growing need for quality and safety control for food production (Trienekens & Zuurbier, 2007) as we outlined in the 'Background and Context,' more manufacturers are forced to create outcomes that create value for their customers (Parniangtong, 2017). In this sense, service solutions are utilized and implemented at FOSS to satisfy the customer needs. Moreover, according to Parniangtong (2017), servitization is seen as an opportunity to make the offered instruments more unique and in this way increase a competitive advantage as services are intangible and harder to imitate (Oliva & Kallenberg, 2003). With FOSS' pursuit of servitization since 2007 and the shared opinion on FOSS' increased competitive personality, it appears that the company intends to get closer to its customers and thus, also offers options to make FOSS' products more custom-built by Mosaic (software) Services and Managed Services for instance. We, therefore, derive that FOSS' personality is affected by the servitization element 'Production Strategy' to become more customer-centric.

Due to the recognition of the important role of services and the ongoing transition at FOSS to become service- and customer-oriented, FOSS' personality has become more open-minded as expressed in the findings.

In sum, the 'Personality' element has been influenced by the 'Primary Role of Assets' and 'Production Strategy.'

6.3.9 Core

When the informants shared their perceptions and opinions about FOSS' core during the servitization period, the participants stated that FOSS promise towards its customers has always been reliability, good quality, and constant innovation and development to improve the business efficiently. To continue this thought, FOSS will remain delivering on that in the future but, in addition, FOSS will focus more on customer value rather than just providing an inside-out designed solution, due to digitization and the ongoing process of servitization which is supported by Parniangtong (2017). This process enables the company to gain more information about customers and maintain a closer contact with them. This means that the customers will be more concentrated on in order to optimize their production and to move closer to customer centricity. The numerous implemented strategies by FOSS since 2007, presented in the case, underline FOSS' aspiration to become more customer-driven during the process of servitization. In this way, it can be said that FOSS' core has been impacted by the

'Value Basis of Activity' since growing focus is placed on relationship-based connections with, especially key account, customers.

The second element of servitization, namely the 'Primary Role of Assets,' has always been to sell instruments, according to the findings. Hence, FOSS is promising their customers a solution relying mostly on the blue boxes that customers own which is, according to the interviewees, also aligned with the brand identity and ultimately the core of the business, because the position of the 'Core', as Urde (2013) puts it, is in the middle of the matrix, demonstrating a vital role within the company. As a consequence, while keeping the elements of servitization in mind by Martinez et al. (2010), FOSS' core has not been impacted by the 'Primary Role of Assets' even though the company is looking into other types of asset ownership.

As presented earlier, FOSS offers intermediate services while focusing on the maintenance of the products, especially in the case of a break-down. Moreover, the introduced strategies like the 'Total Solution' strategy, the implementation of the 'Digital Business' or the separation of the Sales and Service department in 2010 led to the possibility to enlarge and sharpen both FOSS' marketing communication capabilities and service practices, thus enabling the move towards more advanced service offerings. The empirical findings suggest that the addition of the mentioned strategies have had an impact on the core, as the employees perceive that, due to digitization, FOSS can better respond to customers as emphasized also by Parniangtong (2017). However, it can also be derived from the empirical material that FOSS' instruments are still regarded as the center of the core while the services are seen as extra. This is further emphasized by the revenue achieved by products compared to the services, elucidated in the 'Offering Type' findings. Furthermore, interviewees expressed that the core has not shown any changes for now, but that a new direction towards customer-centricity is expected in the future. As a consequence, the 'Core' has not been impacted by the third element the 'Offering Type.'

With regards to the 'Production Strategy,' the fourth servitization element, and what interviewees said about FOSS' aim to become more customer-focused, it can be seen that FOSS provides more customized solutions, especially for the key account customers. In this sense, through the 'Total Solution' strategy or the 'Digital Business, for instance, the customer orientation can be better realized. We, therefore, interpret that FOSS' core has been impacted by the 'Production Strategy' in the way that the addition of services can indeed push the customization of instruments forward.

When considering the role of services, interviewees shared that FOSS tries to focus more on customers and the value provided to them. The importance of services is also represented in the addition of supplementary services like the 'Digital Business' and strategic initiatives like the 'Total Solution' concept or 'Customer First' strategy, demonstrated in the case. This can

be considered as an example how the inclusion of and engagement in services is an attempt to achieve a more customer-centric approach and thus understand the business benefits arising from it (Davies, Brady, & Hobday, 2006; Ren & Gregory, 2007; Paschou et al. 2017).

FOSS' aspiration to become more customer-centric is not only perceived by its employees but is also reflected in the 'Core' to some extent. In the findings, it is expressed that FOSS wants to augment its customer relationships while pushing the total solutions with the services forward and in this way improving the customer's' business and production in an efficient manner. However, due to the slow and sluggish nature of the transition as mentioned in the case and empirical material, the 'Core' mirrors an equally sluggish effect. However, the aforementioned strategies and the undertook rebranding in 2017 further reinforced FOSS' aim to be more customer-driven. As a consequence, the transition from a product- to a service-orientation propels FOSS to drive the required improvements and developments to reach the desired customer-centricity.

All in all, the servitization elements 'Value Basis of Activity' and the 'Production Strategy' have exerted an impact on the 'Core'.

7 Discussion

In this chapter, it is again specifically elucidated which brand identity elements are influenced by which servitization elements. Along these lines, we present a table and likewise try to develop specific possible explanations why some brand identity elements have been affected by more servitization elements as opposed to other brand identity factors. In addition, we caught sight of intriguing consideration points for the future.

7.1 Servitization and Brand Identity

In the 'Level of Servitization' section, we identified that the two elements 'Value Basis of Activity' and 'Production Strategy' show a medium servitization level whereas the 'Primary Role of Assets' and the 'Offering Type' display a rather low servitization level in the case of FOSS. Table 5 illuminates with an 'X' which servitization elements have influenced brand identity elements. It is noteworthy to mention, that although an impact on some brand identity elements was recognized by the 'Primary Role of Assets' and 'Offering Type,' their influence is still rather low.

Brand Identity elements \ Servitization elements	Value Basis of Activity	Primary Role of Assets	Offering Type	Production Strategy
Mission & Vision	X			
Culture				
Competences	X			X
Value Proposition	X	X		X
Relationships	X (for key account customers)		X	X (for key account customers)
Position	X			X
Expression	X		X	
Personality		X		X
Core	X			X

Table 5 Servitization Impact on Brand Identity

What can be derived when looking at the servitization elements proposed by Martinez et al. (2010) in the case of FOSS, is that the higher the servitization level of the servitization

elements, the more brand identity elements are impacted. On that note, the higher servitized elements, 'Value Basis of Activity' and 'Production Strategy,' have affected the most brand identity elements. Whereas the former impacted eight out of nine brand identity elements, the latter influenced six out of nine brand identity elements. Contrarily, the lower servitized elements, 'Primary Role of Assets' and 'Offering Type,' have exerted an impact on only two brand identity elements each. Very noticeable attention has to be placed on the fact that the element 'Culture' has not been impacted by any servitization element. It is, therefore, becoming apparent that FOSS has difficulties to push the services forward in the organization and to believe in them, and likewise to change the company culture and the mindset since FOSS' employees still do not see the advantages of the services. The opinion of the R&D employee underlines that, as he expresses that although people at FOSS perceive a transition towards servitization, they want to see it before they believe it. This aspect also goes in line with the theory presented by Robinson, Clarke-Hill, and Clarkson (2002), and Oliva and Kallenberg (2003). In addition, since FOSS, the organization itself, as well as the employees, is still very product-oriented it becomes obvious that FOSS has not rushed into integrating the service culture which is suggested by Dubruc, Peillon, and Farah (2014). Moreover, it is elucidated by the Department Manager of Marketing in Digital Business that if a company is used to handle things in a specific way, then it is intricate to change the fashion of doing business, especially in a mature company. This is, therefore, the reason why we believe that FOSS' 'Culture' has not indicated a change, which can also be derived from a Middle Management employee in Key Accounts: "[...the] ingrained entrepreneurial and engineering DNA [...] has been living inside the culture for many years."

Hereof, we can draw the conclusion that the brand identity element 'Culture' requires the servitization elements to show a high level in order to impact the company culture and move the organization towards a service and customer-focused mindset. We assume that the higher elevated the servitization elements, the more employees would see that FOSS is taking the step towards servitization seriously. Nevertheless, this raises the question, how a whole organization seems to be moving forward by adjusting other brand identity elements, but the culture stays the same. Along these lines, we were wondering if this is a specific incident for product-centric firms or if this can be specifically attributed to FOSS' 60 years of heritage? If it was the case of the longevity at FOSS and the strong engineering and product-focused mindset as the interviewees expressed, FOSS' culture could be considered as a barrier to integrating a more service-focused mindset as it was also outlined by Nordin and Servadio (2012) and Dubruc, Peillon, and Farah (2014). With this in mind, it would make sense to ask if the case of strong cultures is only related to our case or manufacturing industries, or if it is an issue to be found in other companies and industries as well. Another interesting idea would be the cultural change itself, and in this way, how the corporate culture should be adjusted so that employees can reflect and live the new business orientation. Would it be something that is top management driven how the interviewees suggest?

All in all, the brand identity elements that have been impacted the most are the 'Value Proposition' and 'Relationships.' Hence, they have been affected by three servitization elements. Since the 'Value Proposition' and the 'Relationships' are both external facing factors (Urde, 2013) as outlined in the CBIM section of the analytical framework, it becomes apparent that these customer-facing elements have changed the most during the servitization period so that a clear and accurate picture of the company's ongoing business activities towards its customers can be delivered. Along these lines, an updated 'Value Proposition' is crucial for FOSS to communicate the exact key offerings to the firm's stakeholders and to create a positive brand reputation. Since FOSS has started to engage more in service offerings, the 'Value Proposition' has been adapted to ensure a consistent customer approach.

With regards to the 'Relationships', FOSS aspires to become more customer-centric, we assume that since FOSS has commenced to servitize since 2007 it becomes reasonable that the company directly wants to adapt the way they interact with customers and likewise, inform them about the new approach. Nonetheless, we wondered if the twofold strategy towards its customers is counteracting this aim? On the one hand, FOSS is adopting a more relationship-based approach towards key accounts and thus attempts to improve the ties between them and the organization. Moreover, FOSS aims to provide more benefits for key accounts in terms of product customizations. On another hand, the intended transactional-based strategy for FOSS' non-key customers does not necessarily require any long-lasting rapport. We, therefore, asked ourselves if this dual approach is somehow acting as a barrier to accurately communicate the organization's brand identity to the different customer groups? The fact that external brand identity elements have been the most altered during the period of servitization raises the question if FOSS can deliver and fulfill promises based on less servitized internal components. As the 'Mission & Vision,' 'Culture,' and 'Competences' have not servitized to the extent 'Value Proposition' and 'Relationship' have, it seems a bit extraordinary that FOSS is apparently communicating something that has not been internalized yet.

Another interesting affair arises with the 'Position' which is the last external facing factor. Since FOSS still puts a lot of focus on the products and is still not entirely sure about the direction of services in the future, it becomes evident that FOSS cannot position itself coherently towards customers and other stakeholders within the market. Furthermore, we were wondering how FOSS can maintain its future position to be the first, the leader, and an engineering company in the market if the company further engages into and pushes forward the services. This aspect is becoming very crucial since, in the literature review, we discovered several external challenges, like uncertainties and new competitors, that should be expected when a firm is taking on a different business direction (Baines et al. 2008; Dimache & Roche, 2013). In this sense, FOSS has to be be aware that when the company, respectively

the top management, gives the starting signal to significantly drive the transformation to services unfamiliar and unexpected confrontation might emerge.

Since the 'Personality' is still perceived as a very product- and engineering-focused, as well as old-fashioned it becomes reasonable that it is intricate to change a brand's characteristics. Due to FOSS' heritage and the longevity of its personality, it appears clear why this element has only impacted by two servitization elements. It was elucidated by Urde (2013) that the 'Personality' is essential for the 'Expression' in the sense that the character of the brand is what is ultimately expressed internally and externally. Regarding the fact that FOSS has only commenced last year to slightly adapt the expression towards customer-centricity through the rebranding, it is comprehensible that this element has also only been impacted by two servitization elements. The minor adjustment in the expression is also supported by the Top Manager for CSS who does not believe that the services are corresponded to: "I think [the communication] is very consistent. [...] you can always recognize FOSS instruments." However, it was also declared that the role of services is more acknowledged and recognized. On that note, we were wondering how the 'Expression' should change so that the augmenting role of services is also reflected in the brand identity? We also asked ourselves to whom FOSS wants to focus on after the undertook rebranding? Does FOSS want to adjust the expression so that new customers can be attracted, or that 'old' key accounts can be responded to more appropriately, or is it the small, non-key account customers they want to communicate better to?

When we look back at the presentation of the brand identity elements in the literature review, the 'Core' is defined as a vital role due to its position in the middle of the matrix (Urde, 2013). Considering that the organization's promise has to be communicated internally and externally, it becomes logical that the 'Core' has only been impacted twice. In fact, we believe that due to the center position of the 'Core,' it should be amongst the last elements to be determinedly altered and updated. Only after the other brand identity elements evidently indicate that a new business orientation is followed, only then should the 'Core' be adjusted to provide a coherent and homogenous picture of the company accordingly. At least in the case of FOSS, the company's core values are similar to the culture in the sense that they have been rooted in the firm for a long time and will likely be one of the last elements FOSS' is willing to change or renounce.

Although FOSS' 'Competences' are strong and long-lasting, they revolve around technology and solutions' uniqueness. The company's commercial competences are only now developing to incorporate the design and delivery of advanced and digital services and to include customer needs in the product and solution development process. Relating this back to the 'Value Proposition,' it raises the question if FOSS is overreaching itself and is promising its

customers something they cannot deliver. This assumption can also be derived from one Middle Management employee in Key Account who expresses the following:

> "We want to do a lot of things at the same time, so we have a tremendous amount of different projects running concurrently and sometimes overtaking each other. Sometimes the resources are not there to completely fuel the next one. That's one [...] of the reasons why we have so many broken systems. [..]."

With regards to the 'Mission & Vision,' it becomes somehow logical that this element has only been impacted by one servitization element since it is a rather internal facing factor which guides an organization's direction. However, we wondered why FOSS has not yet reflected the services into its mission and vision although the potential and future role of them have been clearly recognized. Although the current mission clearly articulates for the reason of the company's existence beyond the aim of making money (Collins & Porras, 1997 cited in Urde, 2013), and related to the sustainable use of the earth's resources, as well as providing analytics beyond measure to enhance customer value, the 'Mission & Vision' do not clearly express where FOSS will be heading to in the future. We see an opportunity arising for the integration of services into the 'Mission & Vision' as a way of looking ahead, perhaps in relation to the digitization and digital services.

8   Conclusion

The final chapter will conclude and revisit the thesis' purpose, research question, aim and, objective in order to investigate if every intended facet of the paper was fulfilled successfully. Furthermore, theoretical contributions and managerial implications will be discussed as a result of the research. Lastly, the limitations of the study as well as recommended future research fields will be presented.

At the beginning of this paper, we elucidated the purpose of the thesis to explore the effects on the CBIM elements when a firm is moving towards a customer-centric orientation through the servitization process by utilizing a company case. Along these lines, we wanted to examine how the brand identity components are affected and if they indicate a change in their existence. The aim was to expand the existing literature on servitization and to provide new insights concerning the CBIM in connection with a company's aspiration to become more customer-centric by the inclusion of services. Hereby, our objective was to establish a framework through which the phenomenon of servitization and brand identity could be understood. As a consequence, the following research question served as a guide for this study: *RQ: 'How are the elements of a company's brand identity affected to become more customer-centric during the process of servitization?'*

In order to be able to provide an answer to our research question, we also found it relevant to identify how the servitization elements portray the servitization level, as well as which elements of the CBIM are affected by the elements of the servitization process.

Our thorough and profound handling of literature, as well as our in-depth analysis of rich empirical material and findings, consisting of interviews and corporate documents, resulted in the development of our analytical framework, that is composed of nine brand identity elements, based on the CBIM, and four servitization factors.

By applying this framework to the case of FOSS, we are now in the position to conclude and answer our research question as well as the aforementioned consideration aspects. In this sense, we realized that the level of servitization is a decisive indicator of how many brand identity elements exert an impact. Thus, we inferred that the higher the level of servitization the more elements of the CBIM are affected by the servitization elements. To be more precise, the highly servitized 'Value Basis of Activity' as well as 'Production Strategy' displayed to have impacted more brand identity elements than the 'Primary Role of Assets' and 'Offering Type'. Along these lines, we discovered that only one element of the CBIM, namely the

'Culture,' has not been influenced at all during the servitization process, indicating that this element apparently demands a higher overall servitization level.

Looking at the organization as a whole, we displayed that FOSS made the first step towards a customer-centric orientation in 2010 after witnessing disappointing results from a customer satisfaction survey in 2009. Thus, FOSS introduced several projects like the 'Customer Value Optimization' or the 'Customer and Sales Support' strategy. While the former's goal is to maximize the value created for customers and to align processes, activities and resources, the latter aims to reduce the gap between FOSS and its customers. Therefore, another project, the 'Customer First' strategy, was implemented in 2016 to further increase the relationships with customers and hence, to better execute the customer-centric approach. Most recently, the cross-functional team initiation in 2017 subsequently enabled FOSS to create improved solutions for customers. Taking all these mentioned projects into account and following the definition of a customer-centric firm by Shah et al. (2006), it becomes visible that FOSS has started to change its orientation. Hence, FOSS has moved closer to serve customers, to make decisions starting with the customer in the center, to become relationship-oriented, to promote customer value, as well as to regard customer needs to a greater extent. Additionally, the conducted customer survey shows that FOSS takes its role seriously to satisfy customers and gain their loyalty.

In relation to what has been said, the role of a firm's brand identity becomes crucial when a company like FOSS goes through the process of servitization and engages in a new, more customer-centric orientation. Here, Gioia's et al. (2010) findings are considered as highly relevant since an accurate alignment of the organization's identity is vital to ensure a successful transformation process. Therefore, the following elements of the CBIM have changed in the way that they mirror a more customer-centric orientation:

Mission & Vision: The mission has been extended to communicate FOSS as an 'end-to-end' solution provider. A change in mission has been detected in the transition from 'dedicated analytical solutions' to 'analytics beyond measure' that reflects a shift from product- towards customer-centricity. The vision has changed to become more digital in the future.

Competences: The competences have changed with newly acquired commercial skills.

Value Proposition: The value proposition has changed to provide a more holistic approach to create value, to help customers throughout their value chain, and to offer a peace of mind instead of simply results.

Relationships: The connection towards key accounts has changed to become more relationship-based.

Position: The position has changed to become more knowledgeable about FOSS' customers.

Expression: The expression has changed to focus less on technology and more on customer value.

Personality: The personality has changed to become more open-minded towards new solutions and more knowledgeable about customers.

Core: The core has changed in the sense that a future direction towards customer-centricity has been noticed.

8.1   Theoretical Contribution

Our theoretical contribution reflects first in the questions we raised at the beginning of this research. We believe to have opened a new field of inquiry by studying the influence of the servitization process on a company's brand identity, a topic which no previous research attempts to investigate, to our knowledge. Since the servitization phenomenon is becoming more complex and difficult to understand, we consider that relating it to a company's brand identity has shed more light onto it and explored one of its other facets, thus enriching its comprehension. Moreover, the brand identity aspect enabled us to look, not only at individual aspects of the organization, in the way authors like Nordin and Servadio (2012), Dubruc, Peillon, and Farah (2014) or Perona, Saccani, and Bacchetti (2017) did by looking at the culture or the business unit organization only, but also to assess the influence of the servitization phenomenon on the whole organization.

In relation to the brand identity research field, we regard that we have added to the understanding of B2B brand identity by analyzing the case company's brand identity through the CBIM, and so provided a written account of how a B2B manufacturing firm evolves to reflect the servitization process.

We deem that through this thesis, we contribute most to the servitization research field, as we confirm several findings identified in the literature throughout the paper. Along these lines, we exemplify through our case study that firms do indeed engage in servitization with the purpose of becoming more customer-centric, as Paschou et al. (2017) outline. Moreover, we demonstrate that customer satisfaction and loyalty do increase (in the case of FOSS) by adopting a more customer-centric view, which is pointed out by Pina et al. (2006). We believe that we add to this research field through our framework, as well as the thick findings description and exhaustive analysis, which provide a new approach to investigating the servitization rationale. We consider our research especially relevant in the context that servitization is becoming more complex to understand. Therefore, our framework and reference case can be replicated in future research endeavors in a constructive manner.

We also point out that the role of this research was an exploratory one, and therefore, we were not looking to necessarily add to or develop new theory, but provided new insights, initiated a process for investigation, and raised questions for future studies. Despite that, we believe that we have contributed to the enrichment of theory on brand identity and servitization by answering a 'How' question, as proposed by Whetten (1989). By investigating the relationships between the process of servitization and a company's brand identity and demonstrating in what way the brand identity elements are influenced to become more customer-centric as a result of the servitization activities, we consider that we provided a worthy theoretical contribution towards the understanding these two fields.

8.2 Managerial Implications

For firms' business undergoing servitization, several key takeaways should be considered as a result of this research. First, companies should carefully monitor the progression of the cultural development in relation to the rest of the brand identity elements during the process of servitization. Managers should consider pursuing dedicated initiatives with the aim of a cultural change within the organization when the firm is reorienting its business approach. As the literature outlines and the paper demonstrates, it becomes difficult to fully engage in a customer-centric approach if the culture is not representing those attitudes and beliefs. In order to better engage in the cultural element, we consider that a higher level of the servitization elements is needed.

Secondly, this paper's case illustrates Brax's (2005) findings regarding the necessity of a relationship-based approach towards customers when firms are adopting customer-centricity. Therefore, managers should consider the nature of their customer and non-customer stakeholders' relations and should adapt it accordingly. This research illustrates the importance a relationship-focused orientation has during the processes of servitization, and the influence it exerts on the decisions regarding the servitization elements. We consider that FOSS's twofold approach to customer connections, relationship-based for key customers, and transactional-based for non-key customers, is a dangerous path as it can lead to confusion about who is the company actually servitizing. Managers should be aware that if this identity incoherence continues, the brand image and position could be weakened as Kapferer (2012) or Urde (2013) argue. Managers in a similar situation are advised to choose one orientation as their focus, or create separate brands, with an individual identity, serving these two distinct customer segments. Businesses also have the possibility to create different brand positions in various operating markets.

Thirdly, managers should also closely monitor the development of the firm's competences when changing business orientations to become more servitized and customer-centric. Dimache and Roche (2013) note that a company experiences fundamental changes to its production and resources. The case demonstrates how lacking some crucial competences can impede a fuller transformation, especially in the cases of product-focused firms.

The issues of product- and customer-centricity direct the fourth recommendation for managers. Managers of companies with a product-focused orientation should be aware of the current role of services in the firm, the financial capabilities services can provide, the readiness or reluctance of employees and customers to transform, and the interaction between the internal and external aspects of the company, the firm's actual resources and capabilities, as well as the competitive environment.

Lastly, businesses can take this paper as an example of a firm reorienting its business approach from product- to customer centricity through servitization. Manufacturers operating within the food industry can find the case of FOSS especially relevant in the light of the increasing complexity and growing interest in this business area. These firms can apply the proposed framework to analyze their current level of servitization and their brand identity, and based on that, make more informed decisions. Through the illustration of this case, managers can also identify what implication can develop for their brand identity as a result of servitization.

8.3   Limitations and Future Research

The limitations of this paper mainly lie in the sole focus on one case which is correspondingly restricted to one company and one country and thus reduces the number of perspectives leading to the provision of a bigger picture. Furthermore, no interviews were conducted with the CEO of FOSS or the founders (FOSS family) of the company due to the limited magnitude of this project. Along these lines, the exclusion of FOSS' customers can also be considered as another limitation. This can be regarded as an aspect that precludes additional fruitful and valuable insights. Since we can be seen as the first researchers who attempted to combine models of the research fields of brand identity and servitization, it could embody a further restraint as there is a considerable risk to be a first mover. Lastly, since this research did not follow the process of servitization from the beginning and relied on people's hindsight and perceptions on the one hand, and on corporate documents, on the other hand, it accounts for a narrower observation and hence another limitation. The research will not look into continuing to follow the case's servitization process, which limits the provision of a complete process investigation.

Future research can firstly find expression in the development of our framework. Since it is new in its nature, it would be intriguing and essential to test further, validate, and assess the framework both qualitatively and quantitatively for complementary exploration. In this sense, the framework could be applied to other contexts, industries and countries to confirm its authenticity. In the discussion chapter, we already elaborated on the issue if the framework could also be suitable for companies that do not operate in the manufacturing environment or B2B industry.

With regards to quantitative studies, it would be interesting to see if there are causal relationships and more direct correlations between the framework's different elements in general and more precisely to deductively find out if there is a strong interrelation between brand identity changes and the level of the servitization elements. Moreover, employee surveys could also be beneficial to further investigate peoples' opinion on servitization in relation to brand identity. This could further validate that the servitization process is impacting a company's brand identity. The paper's subject could also benefit from additional qualitative studies in terms of the inclusion of more companies to be investigated, as well as to interview more employees in this case, or apply the research to other cases. Building on our previously illustrated limitations, it is suggested to include CEOs and founders of a company in the conduction of interviews in order to examine the individuals' perceptions and understanding as well as the case more in depth. Besides, even customers could be taken into consideration to better triangulate a company's external impression. Along these lines, the reputation of a firm that aims to engage in customer-centricity could also be advantageous for future research in terms of how the reputation will be impacted. From our knowledge, Urde's Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix (2016) would be helpful to investigate this issue. Future research could also entail an ethnographic study or a more longitudinal study that observes a company up until a couple of years in the future to get familiar with the particular organization and its identity. Hence, the impact of the servitization process on a company's brand identity could be discovered more profoundly.

Another interesting and dedicated research project could be the role of digital services itself. Our proposed framework can also establish future research in the sense that it could be improved or extended to further display the relationship between servitization and brand identity so that companies would better understand how to adjust or (re)construct its brand identity elements to consistently reflect the servitization process.

Taking the complexity of the food industry and the servitization process into account, theories from other fields of research, such as network theory, or knowledge management, or through the lens of service-dominant logic, might be valuable to provide a different perspective of this case as well as to create research on other cases.

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Appendix A

Appendix B

Old FOSS Instrument

*New FOSS Instrument*

Appendix C

Old PowerPoint Presentation
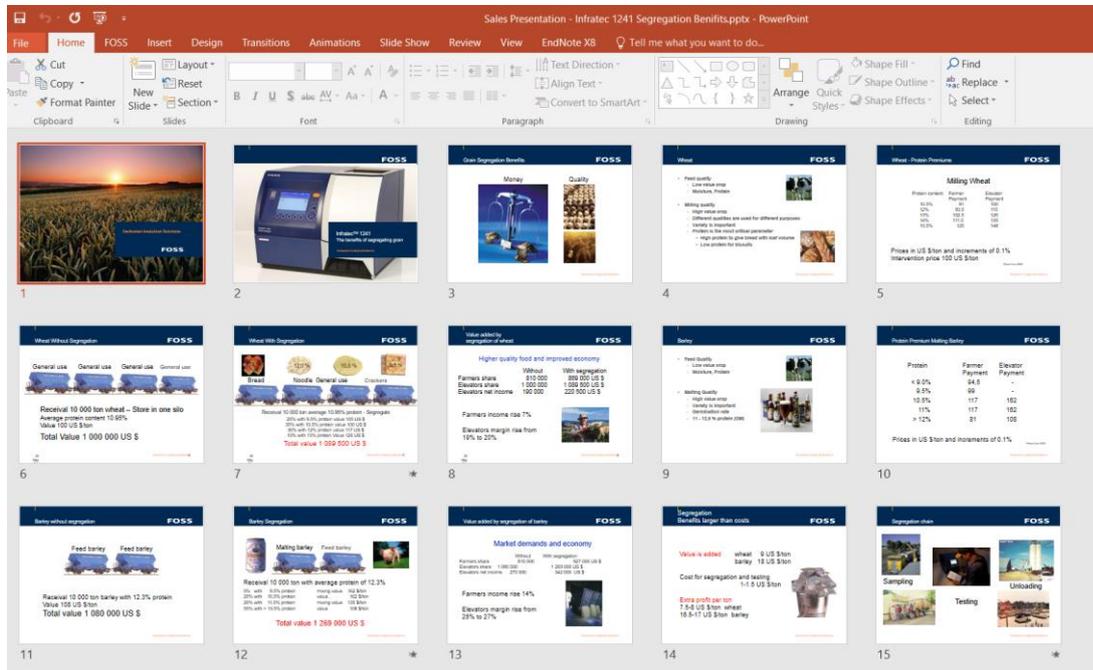
New PowerPoint Presentation
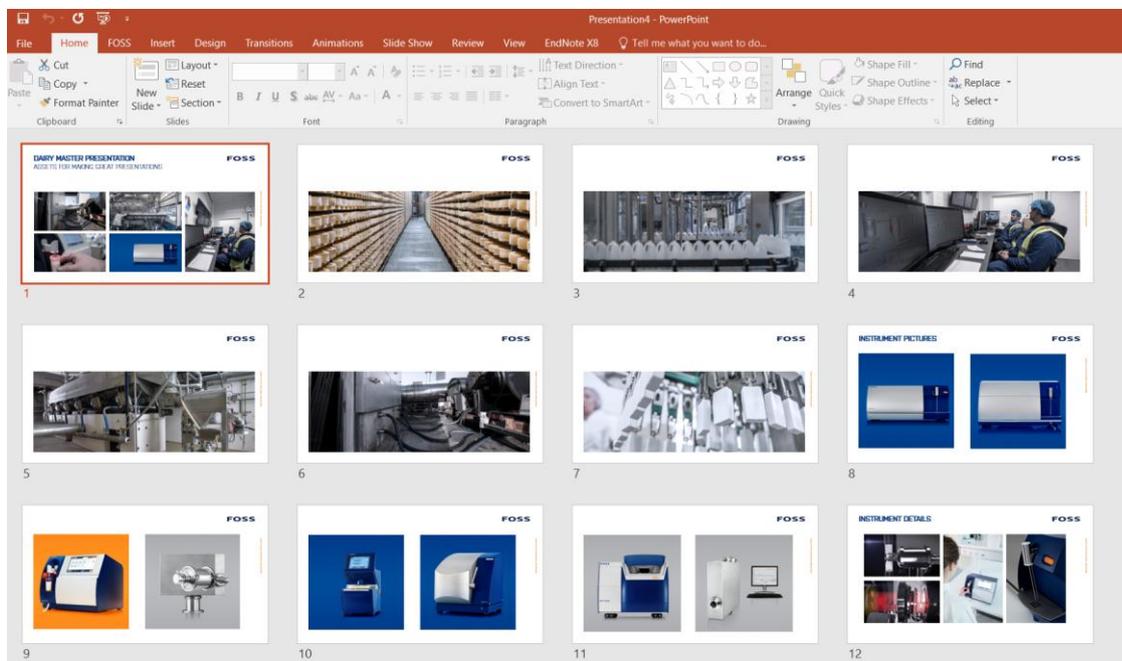
Appendix D

Perkin Elmer Campaign and Website

Applied Markets, (/corporate/stories/index.html?category=Applied+Markets) Innovation Spotlight (/corporate/stories/index.html?category=Innovation+Spotlight) Detection, (/corporate/stories/index.html?category=Detection) Water Monitoring (/corporate/stories/index.html?category=Water+Monitoring)

om/Shopping/Cart/ShoppingCart.aspx)

Like | Share | Tweet

"Are you listening? One word -- plastics," says a family acquaintance to the young Dustin Hoffman in the 1967 classic film, *The Graduate*. "There is a great future in plastics."

http://www.perkinelmer.com/corporate/stories/rethinking-our-microplastic-world.html   1/9

5/11/2018   Rethinking Our Plastic World | Stories | PerkinElmer

A half century after that prophetic statement, scientists and environmentalists are making another profound statement, only this time it is more ominous in nature. In the relatively short period of some 50 years, plastics have indeed conquered the world. In fact, we are literally drowning in organic polymers that come in forms no one ever dreamed of back in 1967. From packaging, bags, and fibers in synthetic clothing to water bottles, cosmetics, and even to toothpaste, plastics and micoplastics are everywhere and in everything… including our own bodies.[1]

The Trouble With Plastics

According to The United Nations Environmental Program, which coordinates the UN's environmental activities, plastic can now be found in abundance across the world's oceans and even on the seabed of the North Pole. There is so much plastic in the water, it is hard to even fathom the actual amount without some comparisons. Just saying there are an estimated 5 trillion pieces of plastic totaling more than 8 million metric tons of the stuff currently floating around the planet is bad enough.[2] Now visualize how much more plastic we are adding to our waterways on a daily basis. Hard to do? Try this. Think about a truck load of plastics, from tires to micobeads,

www.perkinelmer.com/tools/resourcelibrary#/tools

Forms, Tools and Downloads   Resource Library

Tools   **Forms**   **Downloads**
Custom Packed Columns   Contact Us   Software Downloads
Inorganic Custom Standard   Customer Training
Organic Custom Standard   Technical Support Request   **FAQs**
Lab Chip QC Search   Request Service Visit   Compliance to the WEEE Directive
RAD Calculator
Cell Line Product Terms and Conditions
COA Search
Training
Application Support Knowledge Base
Citations Library
Column Finder

Shopping Tools   **Customer Care**   **Connect**
Shop By Product Number   My Account   Contact Us
Place Multiple Purchase Orders Order Support   Offices
Place Standing Orders   Technical Support   Dealers
Online Ordering Solutions   Request Service Visit   Policies

A definition of the technology as applied in food production.

Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) analysis is a spectroscopic technique that makes use of the naturally occurring electromagnetic spectrum defined by the wavelengths between 2,500nm and 25,000nm. This is the 'mid-infrared' region so you will also hear the method referred to as 'mid infrared'. Generally though, it is the name of a technique used to convert measurement data into a usable result (Fourier Transform) that is popular, hence, Fourier Transform Infrared, or FTIR for short.

← Increasing Frequency

Frequency = 1 / wavelength
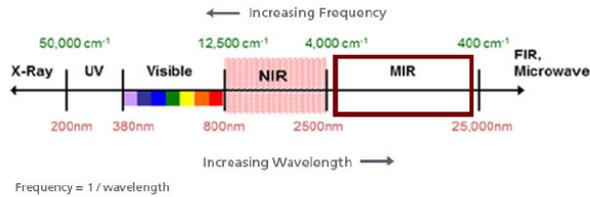
The FTIR advantage

The overall advantages of using FTIR analysis are that it provides rapid analysis data for better decision making in food and agriculture production processes. It is particularly useful for testing liquid samples such as milk and wine. Compared to traditional analysis methods it requires little or no sample preparation and no chemicals or consumables. It is non-destructive, operator friendly, fast, reliable and precise.

How FTIR works

https://www.fossanalytics.com/en/news-articles/technologies/ftir   1/8

5/11/2018   Fourier transform Infrared (FTIR) analysis for food and drink testing

- Light from a broad-band light source containing the full spectrum of wavelengths to be measured is shone through a device called an interferometer.
- The interferometer modifies the light in a special way to allow for subsequent processing of the data
- The beam is passed through the sample where a sample-dependent absorption takes place.
- The light is detected and passed to a computer.
- The computer processes all the data to infer what the absorption is at each wavelength and generates a spectrum corresponding to the data using the Fourier Transform technique.

Appendix E

Appendix F