Toolkits for Mass Customization
Customer-centric configurator architecture based on problem solving

1. Although some scientists and practitioners claim Co-Creation as the product design of the future...

- Customers are willing to pay a price premium up to 200% (e.g. Luinge et al. 2016; Interbrand 2001; Author 2022)
- Co-Creation can be viewed as the ultimate form of niche marketing (Doney, 2005, p. 394)
- Reduce the rate of product complaints (Zhang et al. 2013)
- Loyal customers for long-term relations
- Market research tools for firm’s new product developments (Schroeder 2001)
- Customers receive individualized products (Aaker, 2001; Interbrand 2001)

2. ... toolkits have not fulfilled these expectations yet.

- Very few consumers actually use online toolkits to create their ideal product (e.g. Frankie and Hadler 2016)
- Customers tend to get overwhelmed by self-design processes via toolkits and experience the process as frustrating and time-consuming (e.g. Jenker et al. 2016)
- If they attempt to co-create, very high termination rates are observed (e.g. Frankie et al. 2017)
- As a consequence of this unsatisfactory issue, many companies have abandoned their co-creation programs (Walsh and Wee 2011)

3. This might be explained by the fact that the design process is primarily production-oriented...

- Origins of co-creation are in the field of Supply Chain Management.
- The structure of the design process is very often still based on the transfer of product specifications into the toolkit (as in the case of a functional and performance specification).
- In this conceptual research project reasons for this discrepancy should be identified.

4. ... instead of user-oriented.

- To make the design process easier for the customer, it should become more intuitive for them
- To improve toolkits, the process should therefore be oriented on creative problem solving.