

DESIGN THINGS THAT MAKE SENSE

IDEATION WORKSHOP.

**BOOST CREATIVITY AND
GENERATE GREAT IDEAS
FOR TECH PRODUCTS**

In a half-day workshop, your team will map out consumers' pain points, identify which Design Strategies can help ease the pain, generate product and feature ideas, and cluster the most promising ideas into value proposition directions.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

- 1 GETTING STARTED (30 MIN)
- 2 BRAINSTORM ON CONSUMER MOTIVATION, THE CONTEXT OF USE, AND PAIN POINTS (45 MIN)
- 3 GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE DESIGN STRATEGIES (30 MIN)
- BREAK (15MIN)
- 4 GENERATE LOTS OF IDEAS FOR PRODUCTS AND FEATURES (90 MIN)
- 5 SELECT PROMISING IDEAS (15 MIN)
- 6 LINK IDEAS TO DESIGN STRATEGIES (45 MIN)
- 7 WRAP UP (15 MIN)



Successful innovations manage to combine different and often difficult to unite elements into one logical whole. At first encounter, they instantly make sense. It's easy to recognize products that make sense but challenging to create them.

The book Design Things That Make Sense, and complementary toolkit, will get you on the right track.

AS A STARTING POINT, YOU NEED TWO INGREDIENTS:

1 A TECHNOLOGICAL INVENTION THAT SOLVES A PROBLEM OR OFFERS A NEW CAPABILITY

Technological invention: an algorithm that translates sound to vibrations, enabling people to “feel sound.”

2 A GENERIC TARGET GROUP YOU INTEND TO SERVE WITH YOUR FUTURE INNOVATION

Target group: adult consumers that want to enhance their media and entertainment experience.

The orange boxes in this manual contain examples



PREPARING THE WORKSHOP

A READ THE BOOK

As a workshop facilitator, you should be well-acquainted with the Design Strategies.

B INVITE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

3-8 creative people with varying core competencies works best.

C ARRANGE FACILITIES

If you'll be meeting in person: book a room with a beamer and flipchart, print and cut out the Design Strategies Card Set (print on A3 if possible). If you are meeting online: prepare a Miro Board, a Mural Board, or any other digital collaborative space.

D SELECT DESIGN STRATEGIES CARDS

Download the the “Design Strategies Cards” from the website. Print them, if possible on A3 paper, and cut them out.

Filter out the Design Strategies Cards that clearly don't match the scope of desired solutions. If in doubt, keep the card in. This will allow you to make good use of time during the workshop without limiting creativity. On average, your selection will reduce the card set from 37 to around 25 cards.

E PREPARE A PRESENTATION

Prepare a short presentation describing your technological invention and your target group. Share all relevant information available to help workshop participants understand who the target users are and what their needs are. Source from past consumer research, your own knowledge, studies found online, etc. Prepare the slide deck by yourself or together with others.

F GIVE A HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Recommended: give workshop participants a homework assignment. For example, read your slide deck, do (online) research on a specific topic, interview a few consumers in the target group, or read the book Design Things That Make Sense.

For “feeling sound,” the facilitator filters out the following cards: B2 Personalize, B7 Offer Structure, B8 Decision Making, B9 Save Money, B10 Increase Efficiency, B21 Facilitate Sharing, B22 Lengthen Lifespan, B23 Reduce Footprint, R2 Preserve Data Privacy, and R3 Offer Transparency.

Although these Design Strategies might trigger new ideas, they don't match well with “feeling sound” and the enhancement of media or entertainment experiences. The remaining 27 Design Strategy Cards will be used during the workshop.



1A EXPLAIN THE WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Explain the outline of the workshop. Keep it general; there's no need to go into detail at this point. Check if workshop participants will be present for the entire workshop program and ask them to mute their phones.

1B EXPLAIN DESIGN STRATEGIES

If workshop participants have not read the book "Design Things That Make Sense," give them a short introduction about the Design Strategies. Make sure that you have one or more copies of the book on hand for people to browse.

1C WARMING UP EXERCISE

Ask workshop participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name, job, and which design strategy best describes who they are (and why). Ensure that every participant has access to the overview of all design strategies (give everyone a copy of the book, prepare a slide or print the "Design Strategies Overview" that is available for download from the website).

Hello! I'm Deborah Nas; I created the Design Strategies that we'll be using during the workshop, and I'm the author of the book "Design Things That Make Sense." The Design Strategy that best describes me is B4 Save Time. I'm always striving to do things faster and more efficiently; I program shortcuts for my laptop, use handy tools that enable people to schedule appointments with me without me having to check my availability, and always try to take the fastest route when traveling somewhere.



1D SHARE KNOWLEDGE

Give a short presentation of the technological invention and the target group.

1E DESCRIBE THE TARGET GROUP

Optional, in the case that there is little available information about the target group: jointly create a mindmap describing the target group; who they are, what they use, how their lives look, what they find important, etc. This exercise will add 30 minutes to the workshop program.

“ If you lack knowledge of the needs of your target group, first do research! ”

2 BRAINSTORM ON CONSUMER MOTIVATION, THE CONTEXT OF USE, AND PAIN POINTS

45 MIN



RULES OF BRAINSTORMING:

- DEFER JUDGMENT; EVERY IDEA IS A GOOD IDEA
- ENCOURAGE WILD IDEAS; WILD IDEAS STIMULATE CREATIVITY
- BUILD ON IDEAS OF OTHERS; ALL IDEAS ARE OWNED BY THE GROUP
- QUANTITY OVER QUALITY; YOU NEED A LOT OF IDEAS TO FIND EXCELLENT IDEAS

2A GIVE A SHORT INTRODUCTION

- The goal of this exercise is to deep dive into consumers' pain points. The results will feed into the next exercise, which is brainstorming solutions.
- Explain the rules of brainstorming.
- Instruct participants to explain their idea aloud, then write it on a post-it and stick it on the flip chart/ wall/ brown paper. This sequence helps ensure that everyone is aware of – and inspired by – ideas of others and prevents doubles.

2B BRAINSTORM ON CONSUMER MOTIVATION

Why does the target group buy or use a particular "product"?

The target group for "feel sound" is adult consumers looking to enhance their media and entertainment experience. Media and entertainment products cover music, movies, internet content, games, etc. The target group uses these for fun, relaxation, excitement, education, e-sports competition, social engagement, and to prevent boredom.

2C BRAINSTORM ON THE CONTEXT OF USE

Where, when, and how does the target group use the "product"?

The target group consumes audio, video and other multimedia content in many locations, on various moments, and through different products and services:

- *Where?* In the living room, study, bedroom, gaming room, man cave, gym, and office. On the go, in the car, on the bike, in public transport, in an airplane, and when walking. Sitting outside, and when waiting somewhere.
- *When?* Morning, afternoon, evening, and night. During work, after work, while doing chores, and working out. When travelling, bored, tired, trying to fall asleep, and seeking enjoyment.
- *How?* 3D surround audio system linked to TV, wireless audio speakers, earbuds, noise-canceling headphones. Music services like Spotify and Apple Music, Video streaming services like Netflix, Apple TV, HBO, Amazon Prime Video, and online platforms like YouTube and social media platforms.

2D BRAINSTORM ON CONSUMER PAIN POINTS

What are the drawbacks, friction, or nuisances that can occur? First have an open brainstorm, then select all pain points relevant to the scope of the workshop.

For media and entertainment, relevant to “feeling sound,” the following consumer pain points come up:

- Family, housemates, or neighbors complain about noise, especially the bass sounds.
- The room or environment has low acoustic properties, limiting the experience.
- Noise-canceling headphones give you a better audio experience, but disconnect you from the environment, causing socially uncomfortable or dangerous situations when traveling.
- The discomfort of headphones, possibly sweaty ears.
- There are big price differences in headphones, but little audio quality improvement over a certain price point.
- Limited immersion: it’s difficult to feel “like you’re really there.”

2E IDENTIFY KEY CONSUMER PAIN POINTS

Discuss, cluster, and rank consumer pain points.

The team selects the following pain points as most interesting to solve:

- Limited immersion: it’s difficult to feel “like you’re really there.” Reasoning: adding a sensory dimension significantly increases the level of immersion. Therefore, this pain point is where “feeling sound” can add most value.
- There are big price differences in headphones, but little audio quality improvement over a certain price point. Reasoning: by adding “feel sound” to headphones, you create a new experience that makes it impossible to compare these headphones to other headphones.
- Noise-canceling headphones disconnect you from the environment. Reasoning: “feeling sound” might make you more connected to the environment when translating sounds from the environment to vibrations.

“ Understanding people’s motivation and pain points is crucial to successful innovation. ”



3A FREE BRAINSTORM

The objective of this exercise is twofold: it helps participants get acquainted with the Design Strategies and puts people in a creative mindset. Thus, no judgments are allowed in this phase! Any idea is a good idea. The facilitator can keep track of ideas on a flipchart; they can serve as a source of inspiration later on in the workshop.

Place the Design Strategies Cards upside down in a stack.

- Flip over the first card for everyone to see. Have an open brainstorm on examples of products or features that are good examples of this Design Strategy. When the flow of ideas dips, flip over the next card. In total, do this three times.
- Ask everyone to take two cards from the stack, read them silently, and select the card they think is worth brainstorming.
- Continue brainstorming, using the selected cards. Repeat the previous steps until all cards are finished, or until time runs out.
- Place all Design Strategies Cards used in the brainstorm next to each other; leave out the cards that participants read but did not select for the brainstorm. Add unused cards that are left in the stack, if any. Ask all participants to choose one Design Strategies Card they want to use in the next step, the solution brainstorm. Explain to workshop participants that they have to take the top three pain points from step 2E into account when selecting a Design Strategies Card.

The Design Strategy “Elevate Performance” inspires the following examples:

- Ferrari offers speed
- Tesla Model S Plaid is the fastest accelerating car
- Dyson improved suction power by using cyclones and removing the bag
- Fitbit offers the longest battery life
- Grammarly uses AI to help you write better
- Sony includes 3D sound in their Pulse gaming headset

3B SELECT DESIGN STRATEGIES

Place all Design Strategies Cards used in the brainstorm next to each other; leave out the cards that participants read but did not select for the brainstorm. Add unused cards that are left in the stack, if any. Ask all participants to choose one Design Strategies Card they want to use in the next step, the solution brainstorm. Explain to workshop participants that they have to take the top three pain points from step 2E into account when selecting a Design Strategies Card.

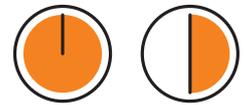
3C ADD DESIGN STRATEGIES

If you, the facilitator, feel that participants tend to choose the obvious Design Strategies, add one or two cards that are a bit more out of the box.



4 GENERATE LOTS OF IDEAS FOR PRODUCTS AND FEATURES

90 MIN



4A 'HOW MIGHT WE' BRAINSTORM

Start with the highest-ranking consumer pain point from step 2E. Randomly combine this pain point with one of the Design Strategy Cards selected in step 3B and 3C and a context of use (where or when the target group uses the product; select one from the results of step 2C). Turn it into a "How might we ..." question to stimulate creativity.

The goal is to generate as many ideas as possible for solutions, products, or features. Remember the brainstorming rules!

The facilitator writes all ideas on a flipchart, or every participant writes ideas on post-its and sticks them onto a flipchart. In the case of the latter, ask every participant to say their idea out loud before writing it on a post-it. This sequence helps ensure that everyone is aware of – and inspired by – ideas of others and prevents doubles.

Workshop participants compose the following combination:

- Limited immersion (consumer pain point)
- B1 Customize (Design Strategy)
- Enjoying your favorite music at home (context of use).

They transform this into a "How might we question":

How might we use "feeling sound" and customization to create an immersive music experience at home?

This inspires many ideas, for example: headphones that vibrate with customizable settings, like choosing from predefined experiences such as relaxing at home, listening to live music, or setting immersion levels to make it feel like you're standing in the front row or the back of a room at a live concert.

When the flow of ideas drops, the team makes a new combination of elements:

- Limited immersion (consumer pain point)
- R1 Increase Personal Safety (Design Strategy)
- On the bike (context of use).

They brainstorm on: **How might we use "feeling sound" to increase personal safety when riding a bike while wearing headphones?**

An example idea from the brainstorm is a pair of headphones that vibrate left or right when danger is close, e.g., a car is honking its horn, a bus or truck is approaching, etc.

4B KEEP IDEAS FLOWING

When the flow of ideas dips, continue by swapping the Design Strategies Card or the context of use.

4C MOVE ON TO THE NEXT PAIN POINT

When you feel you're done with a specific pain point, choose the second-highest-ranking pain point and repeat the steps above. Continue until all pain points are covered or until you run out of time.

“Quantity over quality; you need lots of ideas to get a few good ones.”

5 SELECT PROMISING IDEAS

15 MIN



5A CREATE OVERVIEW

Put all ideas up on the wall for everyone to see.

5B IDENTIFY PROMISING IDEAS

Ask every workshop participant to mark their three favorite ideas.

Optional: give workshop participants predefined selection criteria to ensure they choose ideas that fit your target group, brand, development budget, desired time to market, etc.

6 LINK IDEAS TO DESIGN STRATEGIES

45 MIN



6A CLUSTER PROMISING IDEAS

One by one, discuss the ideas that workshop participants have selected, identify the higher-level benefit, and cluster them around Design Strategies.

6B IDENTIFY DIRECTIONS FOR VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Identify the most common Design Strategies that emerge from the discussion. Most often, you will see that two to three Design Strategies stand out. These are interesting directions to explore further when defining value propositions.

After generating many ideas, selecting the best ideas, and linking them back to the Design Strategies, workshop participants choose three directions for value propositions for “feel sound”.

After further discussing them, they agree to select the following direction: **headphones that Delight the Senses (B12) by enabling people to “feel sound” and by allowing people to Customize (B1) the immersion level and automatically Personalize (B2) their sound experience.**

The features they came up with for customization and personalization serve the overall positioning of headphones that delight the senses, taking experiencing music to a whole new level.



7A SHARE LEARNINGS

Ask each team member to summarize their learning:

“What is your key takeaway from this workshop?”

“ There are so many products that we can create around “feeling sound”! It’s mind blowing. ”

“ It was a great experience; although there was lots of creativity, we were always on topic. ”

“ Using the Design Strategies really helped generate ideas from a consumer value perspective and understand which ideas can be combined to strengthen the future value proposition. ”

7B DEFINE NEXT STEPS

Agree on actions and next steps. Examples of next steps are: reporting results, additional consumer research, competitive analysis, etc.

The team decides to split in two, each doing further research. One sub-team will interview consumers about how and when they listen to what kind of music, what they intend to get out of the experience, where existing solutions lack capabilities, and how they initially respond to “feeling sound.” The other sub-team will analyze high-end headphones in detail, from the perspectives of technology, functionality, and positioning.

7C CELEBRATE

Celebrate a successful workshop. Go out for dinner, drinks, and party all night long. This will greatly improve relationships, which will benefit the innovation process later on.

The team goes out for drinks and pizza. The flow of ideas doesn’t stop; ideas get crazier as the night progresses.

RESULTS FROM THIS WORKSHOP: PROMISING DIRECTIONS FOR VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Congratulations, you have taken a crucial step towards defining a strong value proposition. Are you curious about how to continue your innovation journey? Stay tuned; a workshop manual for using the Design Strategies to detail strong value propositions will soon be available for download from www.designthingsthatmakesense.com