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Queensland, Australia

Social Marketing @ Griffith

CO-DESIGN: 6 STEPS TO UNCOVER NEW IDEAS AND ATTRACT MORE CUSTOMERS

> " Co-design workshops are conducted to empower customers as experts of their own experiences. "

Are you stuck for new ideas? Are you looking to improve your offering? Are you failing to attract new customers?

This handbook shows you how to work with the people who know best to discover innovative ideas. Following six easy steps, you can apply co-design to attract more people to your offering.

" We need to work with the
people we are trying to reach
and draw on their experience
to innovate.
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Background

The constant strive for new and improved experiences is a popular topic around the world. Whether it's the latest mobile phone, a self-driving car, video game or smart refrigerators, it is quite easy to find excited people who are willing to help companies improve their design or develop new products, services and programs.

Co-design empowers people recognising they are experts of their own experience. Working with the people who know your offering best can prevent costly failures.

> 'Co-design workshops are conducted to empower customers as experts of their own experiences.'

Not everyone recognises that they are experts who have a lot to offer. Recently, Social Marketing @ Griffith co-designed Blurred Minds with 58 high school students aged 14–16 years across six co-design sessions.

By working with the people who know best (students who would have to participate in the program) the research team was able to discover new and innovative ways to improve the program. New online games (including a virtual house party) and activities were developed with students. Students were able to voice their opinions and they felt "empowered" to be part of an important cause – changing the lives of their fellow students.

The 6-step co-design process

The 6 step co-design process was developed to guide readers into discovering new, innovative and unique ways to attract more customers. This step by step guide details the six co-design steps showing you how to apply co-design to your offering today. Over the next few pages, we take you through one of our main examples "Blurred Minds." Blurred Minds was successfully co-designed with high school students to develop a new and useful alcohol education program
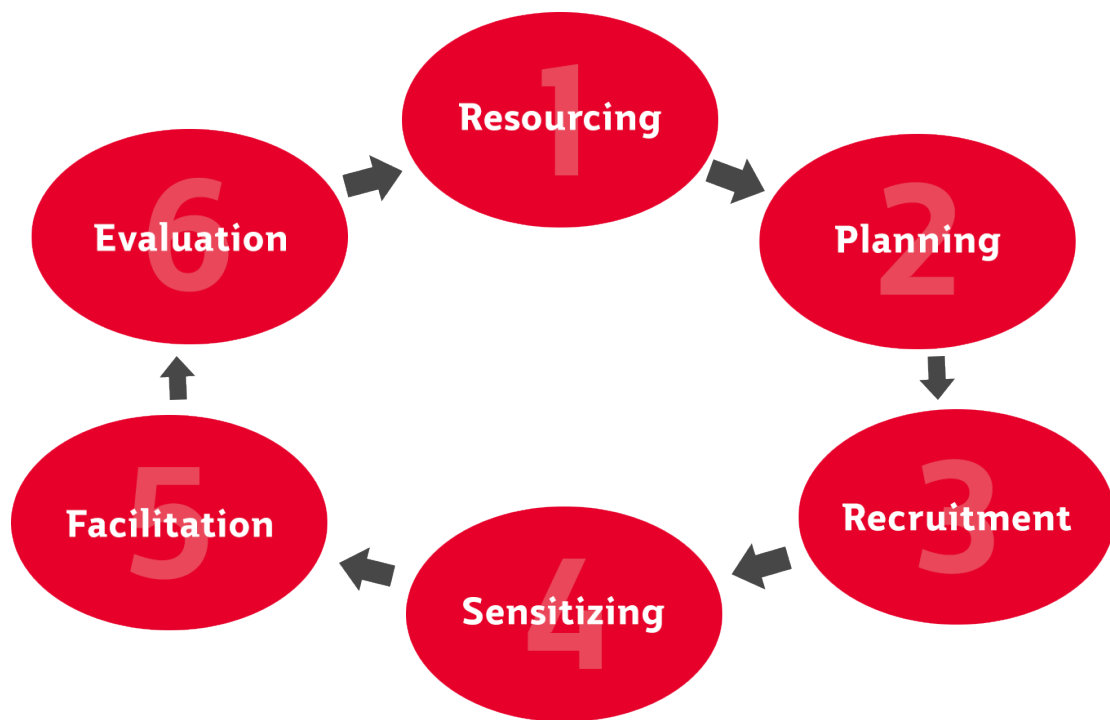
Figure 1: Six step co-design process

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Collaboration with users
during design processes is
considered vital as users
possess specific needs
and problems and thus
can contribute valuable
knowledge.

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Step 1 – Resourcing:
Doing the hard yards

To start, you need to find best practice examples from around the world. Your aim is to find ideas that you think would help to improve people's experiences with your product, service or program offering. You can use these as design tools to get the conversation started in your co-design session. The materials you find can then be used to build activity cards, role-playing, collage making, sketching and many more.

Figure 2: Example of developed activity card

How we did it with Blurred Minds: We developed activity cards to help participants recall activities that they had previously experienced in the Blurred Minds program. We added a range of activity ideas that our experts hadn't experienced before.

Step 2 – Planning:
Getting organised

Before you run a co-design session, you need to set session venues and times and you need to plan ahead for possible unexpected events (e.g. drop-out/disengagement of participants, conflicts, off-topic discussions, etc.).

Figure 3: Planning the key stages of co-design

How we did it with Blurred Minds: The co-design sessions for high school students required the research team to ensure that key school staff involved were supportive and allowed for the facilitation of these sessions at school venues. School staff helped our team to recruit students for the co-design sessions.

Step 3 – Recruitment:
Finding the right people to attend

Find the people who have experienced your program, product or service and/or the people that you think should be experiencing what you have to offer. Identifying and working with the right people is critical because these people know best.

Figure 4: A range of different people with different backgrounds, culture, interests and personalities.

How we did it with Blurred Minds: Working with high school students to develop new alcohol education resources is not something that gets done every day. Some students might not want to participate. We worked with key stakeholder groups (funding partners and school staff) to help us recruit participants into the co-design sessions which were conducted on school grounds, making it easy for students to be able to attend sessions. We offered incentives (itunes gift vouchers) to thank our people for their time.

Step 4 – Sensitising:
Priming the audience

This step is essential for the success of your co-design session. Building trust is a key factor and having a warm up activity really helps people to feel comfortable showing them that they can contribute great ideas.

Figure 5: Participation in a previous program sensitised students to the task at hand.

How we did it with Blurred Minds: Students were asked thought provoking questions to get them excited about the upcoming co-design session.

Step 5 – Facilitation:
Building trust and developing engaging activities

Competitions help to engage people providing a challenge. Role playing or fun games help creativity and encourages collaboration between people involved in co-design. Facilitation helps by giving step by step guidance and sequencing of activities that helps people to engage actively in design.

Figure 6: An example of one student's final co-designed program with the use of activity cards.

How we did it with Blurred Minds: All students had previously been engaged in some form of gameplay and were then handed a series of activity cards. Each person was asked to individually reflect and rate the activities provided. Participants also received blank cards giving them the freedom to include new ideas from the start. Our co-design participants reported feeling empowered knowing that their ideas would help us to shape a new alcohol education program.

Step 6 – Evaluation:
Selecting the most suitable ideas

All data collected from the co-design sessions needs to be evaluated for relevance, innovation and feasibility. You need to select ideas that you can execute. Importantly you want to take ideas that came up frequently into your planning. Listening to those who know best is the key to success.

Figure 7: Evaluating the collected information

How we did it with Blurred Minds: We analysed people's preferences and examined all newly proposed ideas with regards to their feasibility. These were used to develop the new Blurred Minds program.

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Working together allows for more meaningful insights to emerge. Many participants feel 'empowered' as a result of participating.

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Takeaway message

Following this step-by-step process allows you to open your thinking. Our research has demonstrated that we need to work with the people we are trying to reach and draw on their experience to innovate. A user-oriented process can help you to avoid costly failures.

Resources

Other industry examples

Co-designing services with vulnerable consumers
The purpose of this paper is to investigate how vulnerable consumers can be involved in transformative service design and how this approach may enhance the design of such services. The study also analyses how co-design with vulnerable consumers differs from existing user involvement processes with the purpose of developing a co-design framework.

Read the full paper here:
http://hdl.handle.net/10072/341561

Co-designing with young consumers – Reflections, challenges and benefits
This paper aims to explore co-design as a method for actively involving young consumers in the design of an alcohol education program that utilizes an interactive Virtual Reality (VR) component.

Read the full paper here:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320308992_Co-designing_with_young_consumers_-_Reflections_challenges_and_benefits

How co-design delivers agency, advocacy and real-world impact
The VicHealth Newsletter explores how collaborating with end-users to clarify problems and develop solutions can be the difference between making something that works – and something that doesn't.

Read more here: https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/vh-letter-45-co-design

Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government and Community Services Organisations
The (ACT) Government and Community Services Organisations have provided a helpful online guide for anyone interested in learning about co-design. They reflect on each process involved through the 'Listening to Families Project' implemented in 2012 and include unique tips on how to collect your own research for the project, preparation, how to innovate and much more.

Read more here: https://www.betterservices.act.gov.au/about/co-design-online

Conclusion

Need some help?

To learn more about how you can apply this 6 step co-design process in your organisation, please contact Dr Timo Dietrich at t.dietrich@griffith.edu.au.

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Dr Timo Dietrich engages in team-based multidisciplinary research that has real world impact and helps communities and our planet. His overall research mission is to drive change for the better integrating Social Marketing, Digital Marketing and Gamification.

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