

# HUMAN-CENTRED innovation

BUSINESSES TODAY NEED TO RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO INCORPORATE CUSTOMERS INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND DESIGN IS ONE AVENUE TO FACILITATE THIS.

## THE COMMON MISCONCEPTION

The origin of innovation is often attributed to the industrial and business sectors of the economy. An idea sprouts within the confinement of likeminded professionals or entrepreneurs whose sole purpose is to satisfy the never ending-appetite of the market.

## RECENT FINDINGS

The traditional division of labour between innovators and customers is breaking down, according to revealing research conducted by M.I.T.'s Sloan School of Management. End-users are increasingly used to develop and improve business products and services.

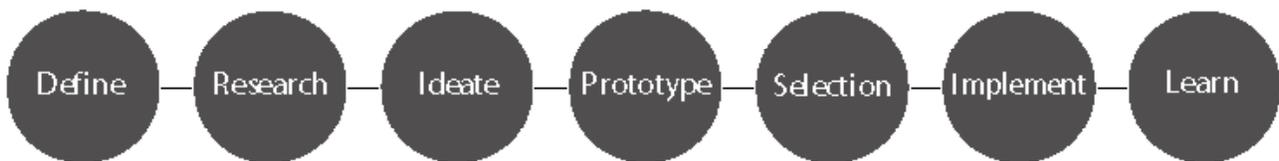
Individual consumers spend double the amount of money making and improving products as the amount spent by all British firms combined, according to another large scale survey. Funded by the British government, it targeted consumer innovation over a three-year period.

## FITTING THE DESIGN METHOD

Deconstructing the outdated notion of producer driven innovation is vital in understanding the true needs and wants of the consumer . Design thinking may provide the adequate tools to foster this user-driven innovation. The Research stage in the design thinking process, at which information is collected to help generate design ideas, allows for a greater definition of consumer profiles and target groups, quantitative and qualitative information and feedback from past projects. Furthermore, the design method's idea generation process uses different methods and sources of inspiration to generate creative solutions. In this case, the source of innovation is the consumer itself.

## DT TOOL CHECK LIST

- User-Centred Research
- Interdisciplinary Integration
- Collaborative User Innovation



“The traditional division of labour between innovators and customers is breaking down”

THE SEVEN STAGES OF THE DESIGN PROCESS.  
REMEMBER, STAGES MAY OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY!

## AT&T'S MMODE (DEVELOPED BY IDEO)

A precursor to the smartphone, At&T's mMode service was launched in 2002 and aimed to be America's first wireless internet browser.



THE AMERICAN TELECOM GIANT AND AWARD WINNING GLOBAL DESIGN FIRM TEAM UP TO MOVE BEYOND EARLY ADOPTERS AND ATTRACT A MASS CONSUMER AUDIENCE.

**The Problem:** Although the product caught on with web-savvy individuals, average consumers were reluctant to sign-up for the service – they perceived the mMode as overly complex and inconvenient.

**The Process:** IDEO's first order of action was to assemble an interdisciplinary team of AT&T managers. It sent them on a scavenger hunt in San Francisco with the mMode to see the world from their customers' perspective. Finding their own browser too difficult to operate, managers were forced to use the newspaper or phone directory instead. Yet, the value in this collaborative user experience was clear: by transforming a group of once independent experts into an integrated, multi-skilled powerhouse, IDEO hoped to change the idea generation process within AT&T to emphasize the importance of customer driven innovation.

The next step was obtaining user-centred research by directly observing, videotaping and interviewing customers sampling the mMode service at various AT&T locations. Through these customer insights and observations, a clear culprit emerged: far too many "clicks" were required to use the software at full potential.

**The Solution:** Using research on the segment's behavior and primary observations and insights, IDEO was able to come up with a simple solution: reduce the amount of clicks in navigating websites. The opening page was organized like a browser's favourite list and is easily managed, allowing for a mere two clicks when looking for information. IDEO also included an mMode Guide

to facilitate travel for users possessing GPS enabled phones that allowed users to list five favourite locations. On top of all this, the mMode could automatically locate the nearest movie theatres and check for seat availability. Finally, IDEO introduced My Locker – a service that allowed consumers to download photos and ringtones from AT&T. The mMode was fully suited to enter the wireless information age and set the industry standard for future generations of wireless devices.



THE AT&T MMODE, REDESIGNED.  
THE NEW USER INTERFACE ORGANIZES YOUR INFORMATION TO LIMIT AMOUNT OF CLICKS.

“The product caught on with web-savvy individuals, average consumers were reluctant to sign up”