What *is?* ....Exploring the current reality
What *if?* ....Envisioning alternative futures
What *wows?*............ Getting users to help us make some tough choices
What *works?*............Making it work in-market, and as a business

CO-Creation -> Learning Launch

Learning in Action… Live experiments in the real world bring to the surface the incremental changes to make the idea resonate with live users and lead to success in the market.

What Works? - THREE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS…

1) When you are happy with the prototype start sharing it with users. Get their input and iterate the prototype.
2) Watch for assumptions that don't prove out as you expected. Move and react quickly.
3) Don't be afraid to launch. In a measured way, of course.

What Works?   Tools, Tips, Tactics, Considerations and Strategies

Why do Geoff and George matter?

CO-Creation FIRST, LAST, ALWAYS

Customer (user) co-creation engages a potential customer as a partner in the development of new ideas. Using prototypes customers explore alternative futures and actively shape the product or service.

Participatory Design - Put small experiments in front of potential customers, get their quick reactions, and iterate to an improved offering.

Not A "Field of Dreams" - Co-creation provides an alternative to waiting for the "ROI Fairy" or going for the "Field of Dreams" approach. It is the most value-enhancing, risk-reducing approach to growth and innovation.

Invite Users Into The Process – You must invite users into the process for innovations to have meaning for users and be worth investing in both financially and psychologically.

Co-Creation Is Required - To be truly customer-centric, customer co-creation is not merely an option, but a required stage any time funds are allocated to a growth project.

Stop Talking and Launch! - Don't be afraid to launch… Try it and see what happens… You might be surprised!

Get Feedback from REAL LIVE Stakeholders

Real Stakeholder Engagement - Stakeholder or customer co-creation is the process of engaging potential stakeholders/customers in the development of new product/service concepts.

Concept Improvement - Put your iterated (evolved) rough prototypes in front of stakeholders, observe their reactions, and use the results to further iterate your way to an improved concept.

Invite Users Into The Design Process - To make your innovations meaningful to those you are trying to create value for, you must invite them into your design process.

Stakeholder Connection - And your stakeholders will love being involved in the process.

Five steps to Get Stakeholder co-creation Feedback

1. **Stakeholder Selection** - Enroll/engage stakeholders who care about you but not as much as they care about themselves. You need stakeholders/customers whom you trust since they are being exposed to your possible future plan and who are hungry for a solution and motivated to be completely candid.

2. **Diversity = security** - Enroll a diverse group of stakeholders/customers for co-creation sessions. There is a temptation to choose only target stakeholders/customers, but you may be surprised to learn that non-targets are just as keen for what you have to offer.

3. **Create a no-selling zone** - Co-creation sessions are not opportunities to "sell" your solution. A rule of thumb is that the stakeholder/customer should do at least 80% of the talking. You want candid feedback, not false agreement.

4. **One at a time** - Engage one stakeholder/customer at a time. This may seem inefficient but remember you are not going for a statistically significant sample size. You will learn so much more from them when there is no social pressure… when they are alone with you and not influenced by others expressing their opinions at the same time.

5. **Few Choices** - Offer a small menu of choices. Presenting a single concept, well considered, defies the purpose of co-creation. Typically, you want to give stakeholders/customers two or three options and invite them to begin exploring one that they are drawn to. Expect changes. It's a good thing.

What can co-creation look like?

Three Rounds - A typical co-creation phase might have three rounds. Each new round reflects the changes and improvements learned in the previous rounds. There are a variety of prototypes that can be used during customer co-creation. One of the most basic (and most effective) formats is the concept storyboard and discussion guide.

The Questions - Along with the concept storyboard, you should also write a series of questions and probes around each story panel to elicit feedback from customers in your co-creation session. These questions will be your discussion guide and will help you stay focused on the key assumptions and concept features you most want to understand.

Making Changes - Once a customer/stakeholder has modified the storyboard, take a photo of the changes, then reset it to its beginning form to get ready for the next cocreation session.

Topics for co-creation session debriefing:

Stimulus: What you showed users to gauge their response.
Observation: What they did and said (literal transcript).
Feelings: What emotions their response signaled to you.
Needs: The possible underlying needs indicated by those emotions.
Implications: What this means for us

POWER PROBLEM SOLVING
WITH DESIGN THINKING

What is a learning launch and what does it mean?

Learning Launch - Experiments conducted in the real world quickly and inexpensively. They form a bridge between co-creation and a rollout. In contrast to a full new-product rollout, a learning launch's success is about not how much you sell but how much you learn. The goal of each launch is to test some of the remaining critical assumption required for your concept to actually work in the market.

Skin in the game - Use the learning launch when you are ready to ask stakeholders to put some skin in the game. Merely asking what they think, however useful for developing a new concept, is a weak form of testing it. Unlike a co-creation session, learning launches need to feel real to both launchers and stakeholders. Unlike a pilot, a learning launch needs to be tightly constrained during execution but open to major changes at the end.

The Basics For A Successful Learning Launch

Your learning launch design should be specific. Make sure you articulate all the key elements:

Test Group - Who is the target stakeholder of this test? Actual names are best. If you don't have them, describe how you'll get actual people to participate.

Location(s) - Where will you conduct the test?

Make It Real - How will you test the key elements of your napkin pitch and make it feel real? Test your required behaivior change. Need Proof.

Clear Cost Estimate - What is your budget for the learning launch?

Schedule - What's your timetable?

Tips For A Successful Learning Launch

Once you have a prototype, a goal, and a time frame, solid project management skills along with these tips will get you to actual product launch:

Set tight boundaries - Since this is a learning launch and not a pilot, it is important to plan for it to end. Set concrete limits on key variables, such as time, geography, number of stakeholders, features, and partners.

Test assumptions - Design with a sharp focus on the key assumptions that need to be tested. Pay special attention to "make or break" assumptions and areas where you can learn quickly and cheaply.

Know what you need to do - Be explicit about how you will generate the data you need, especially behavioral data. Also be explicit about the search for disconfirming data.

The team is everything - Build a team that is both disciplined and adaptive. Have a few skeptics around to ensure that you aren't designing a test to give you the answers you want. Conducting a learning launch is a team sport, and the composition of the team makes a difference.

Be, think and do agile - Think fast and cheap. The learning launch is when your project first makes contact with reality. Expect surprises, and be prepared to respond quickly.

Real works - Make it feel real. Everyone has something at stake. If your test feels like a game of make-believe, then the behavioral data it generates are suspect.

What's next? - Consider a series of learning launches. Once you gather data to test your initial assumptions, review where you are and move on to another round. Or, if your concept hasn't met your "make or break" criteria, shelve this concept for another day.

What is the On-Ramp?

Getting There - When you design your new experience, you naturally will be obsessed with how the experience works when customers use it. But you also have to ask yourself, "How will those users get here in the first place?" How do customers learn about the offering, try it out, become regular users, and enlist others?

The User On-ramp - The on-ramp must be brainstormed, prototyped, co-created, and iterated just as carefully as the solution it serves. On-ramps don't apply only to consumer products. They're also important for the adoption of new systems, procedures, and services. It's more than a customer acquisition strategy. Much more.

Design the On-Ramp

The Essential User "Stair Steps" – The on-ramp is a set of stair steps that leads your target user to become a zealous advocate.

Where To Focus Now - Your focus prior to this step in the design thinking process has been on the "Purchase and Use" and "Repeat Use" steps in the figure below. To design the on-ramp, you must shift your attention to the first four steps.. Awareness, Understanding, Consideration, and Tryout.

Possible On-Ramps - Hold a brainstorming session focused exclusively on possible on-ramp strategies. Brainstorm for specific steps along with ways to test and implement them.
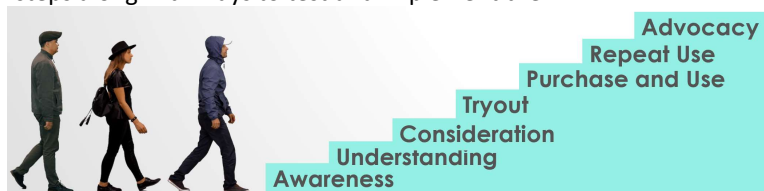
Tips for Effective On-Ramp Design And Implementation

Artifacts And Tags - Use artifacts and Tags. If you want potential users to notice and remember your concept you need to use an intriguing artifact or tag that gets noticed and remembered. A visual place holder in their brains for your concept. EXAMPLE: Amazon makes its logo prominent on its box because many orders are shipped to the workplace, where others will see the packages.

Network Effect Value - Build in network value. Design your service/product so users will find it valuable to connect with others or with some opther tpe of "beyond the product/service" dimension. EXAMPLE: Online photo services enable sharing, which provides a crucial on-ramp for new customers.

User Created Content – Enable, facilitate, and promote user-created content. Let people customize their own content. Make it their own. EXAMPLE: LinkedIn and other network services depend on getting people to share their created content with others as an on-ramp.

Social Status - Provide social capital, perks, recognition, and status. If you give positive social status to power users, it will make others want to emulate them. EXAMPLES: The airline frequent flyer programs turn their top flyers into ambassadors this way. Ebay designates "power sellers." Facebook has "likes". LinkedIn has "connections". These mechanisms are highly affordable and effective on-ramps.

Social Pressure - Provide social pressure. This works just as social status/capital does. EXAMPLE: If you want all your employees who are smokers to sign up for a smoking cessation program, send an enrollment postcard to their home address so their spouses will see the offer and encourage (i.e., pressure) them to sign up.

No-Cost Initial Nudge - Use affordable/free giveaways. It may be necessary to nudge prospective users onto the first steps and up the on-ramp through giveaways. EXAMPLE: Starbucks often gives "$2 off" coupons for any cold beverage after 2PM. This is the on-ramp to help customers add an afternoon visit in addition to their morning visit.

Test Your On-Ramps Early and Often – Test the market by pre-selling through social media. Explore potential on-ramps even before you create a 3D prototype. Advertise an early version of the solution in social media. Buy some Google AdWords or use a LinkedIn campaign to sign-up alpha testers once the MVP solution is ready. This is an easy way to discover potential online on-ramps.

Alternative On-Ramps - Test alternative on-ramps. During the learning launch, try different on-ramp approaches, lead pipelnes and messages to see which ones work best. Be ready to be surprised!

Document Your Tests - Write down the possible on-ramp elements for your concept and keep track of the strategy and results. The basic model is: Assumptions, on-ramp strategy, test, results, PROOF! Only move ahead when you have clear proof something will work.