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Design Thinking

► New Product Development
Essentials from the PDMA

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DESIGN THINKING

New Product Development Essentials
from the PDMA

Edited by

Michael G. Luchs

K. Scott Swan

Abbie Griffin



WILEY

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CONTENTS

About the Editors xvii

1 A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO DESIGN THINKING 1

Michael G. Luchs

Introduction 1

**1.1 The Concept of Design Thinking and Its Role within
NPD and Innovation** 1

1.2 A Framework of Design Thinking 4

1.3 Design Thinking as a Nonlinear Process 8

**1.4 The Principles and the “Mindset” of Design
Thinking** 9

PART I: DESIGN THINKING TOOLS 13

2 INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN BRIEFING 15

Søren Petersen

Jaewoo Joo

Introduction 15

2.1 Nine Criteria of an Inspirational Design Brief 16

2.2 Writing the Inspirational Design Brief 21

**2.3 Research Findings about Inspirational Design
Briefs** 23

2.4 Three Pitfalls to Avoid 24

2.5 Conclusion: Keys to Success 24

3 PERSONAS: POWERFUL TOOL FOR DESIGNERS 27

Robert Chen

Jeanny Liu

Introduction 27

3.1 Defining Personas 28

3.2 The Importance of Personas 29

3.3 Creating Personas 30

3.4 Illustrative Application of Personas 31

3.5 Summary 37

3.6 Conclusion 38

4 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MAPPING: THE SPRINGBOARD TO INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS 41

Jonathan Bohlmann

John McCreery

Introduction 41

4.1 Inputs to the Experience Map 43

4.2 The Experience Mapping Process 48

4.3 The Experience Map as a Springboard to Innovative Solutions 50

4.4 Conclusion 55

5 DESIGN THINKING TO BRIDGE RESEARCH AND CONCEPT DESIGN 59

Lauren Weigel

Introduction 59

5.1 Challenges in Idea Generation 59

5.2 The Need for a Systematic Method to Connect to the User 60

5.3 The Visualize, Empathize, and Ideate Method 61

5.4 The Importance of Visualizing and Empathizing before Ideating 63

5.5 Applying the Method 64

5.6 Conclusion 68

6 BOOSTING CREATIVITY IN IDEA GENERATION USING DESIGN HEURISTICS 71

Colleen M. Seifert

Richard Gonzalez

Seda Yilmaz

Shanna Daly

Introduction 71

6.1 Where Do New Design Ideas Come From? 72

6.2 A Tool to Assist with Idea Generation: Design Heuristics 72

6.3 How Design Heuristics Were Identified: The Evidence Base 73

6.4 77 Design Heuristics for Idea Generation 74

6.5 How to Use *Design Heuristics* to Generate Design Concepts 77

6.6 Evidence of the Value of the *Design Heuristics* Tool 80

6.7 Conclusion 80

6.8 Appendix 81

7 THE KEY ROLES OF STORIES AND PROTOTYPES IN DESIGN THINKING **87**

Mark Zeh

Introduction 87

7.1 A Design Thinking Product Development Framework 87

7.2 What Is a Story? 89

7.3 What Is a Prototype? 92

7.4 Putting It Together—Combining Stories and Prototypes 95

7.5 Employing Stories and Prototypes in Your Process 100

7.6 Conclusion 102

PART II: DESIGN THINKING WITHIN THE FIRM **105**

8 INTEGRATING DESIGN INTO THE FUZZY FRONT END OF THE INNOVATION PROCESS **107**

*Giulia Calabretta
Gerda Gemser*

Introduction 107

8.1 Challenges in the FFE 108

8.2 Design Practices and Tools for Assisting in Problem Definition 109

8.3 Design Practices and Tools for Assisting in Information Management 112

8.4 Design Practices and Tools for Assisting in Stakeholder Management 117

8.5 How to Integrate Design Professionals in FFE 120

8.6 Conclusion 122

9 THE ROLE OF DESIGN IN EARLY-STAGE VENTURES: HOW TO HELP START-UPS UNDERSTAND AND APPLY DESIGN PROCESSES TO NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT 125

J. D. Albert

Introduction: An Emerging Start-up Culture 125

9.1 The Basics 126

9.2 The Process 128

9.3 Troubleshooting Common Mistakes 138

10 DESIGN THINKING FOR NON-DESIGNERS: A GUIDE FOR TEAM TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION 143

Victor P. Seidel

Sebastian K. Fixson

Introduction 143

10.1 What Do Non-Designers Need to Learn? 144

10.2 Challenges Teams Face with Design Thinking 145

10.3 Three Team Strategies for Success 147

10.4 Conclusion 154

11 DEVELOPING DESIGN THINKING: GE HEALTHCARE'S MENLO INNOVATION MODEL 157

Sarah J. S. Wilner

Introduction 157

11.1 GE Healthcare's Design Organization 158

11.2 The Menlo Innovation Ecosystem 158

11.3 The Significance of Design Thinking at GE
Healthcare 168

11.4 Conclusion 171

12 LEADING FOR A CORPORATE CULTURE
OF DESIGN THINKING 173

Nathan Owen Rosenberg Sr.
Marie-Caroline Chauvet
Jon S. Kleinman

Introduction 173

12.1 The Critical Impact of Corporate Culture on Design
Thinking 173

12.2 What Is Corporate Culture? 176

12.3 Corporate Forces that Undermine Design
Thinking 178

12.4 Four Pillars of Innovation for Enabling Design
Thinking 180

12.5 Four Stages of Transforming to a Culture of Design
Thinking 184

12.6 Conclusion 186

13 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AS INTELLIGENCE
AMPLIFICATION FOR BREAKTHROUGH
INNOVATIONS 187

Vadake K. Narayanan
Gina Colarelli O'Connor

Introduction 187

13.1 Designing Amidst Uncertainty 188

13.2 Knowledge Management Tasks for Breakthrough
Innovation: From Intelligence Leveraging to
Intelligence Amplification 190

13.3 KM and Selected Tools for Breakthrough
Innovation 194

13.4 Organizational Implications 199

13.5 Appendices 200

14 STRATEGICALLY EMBEDDING DESIGN THINKING IN THE FIRM 205

Pietro Micheli

Helen Perks

Introduction 205

14.1 Role of Key Personnel 207

14.2 Organizational Practices 210

14.3 Organizational Climate and Culture 212

14.4 Embedding Design Thinking 215

PART III: DESIGN THINKING FOR SPECIFIC CONTEXTS 221

15 DESIGNING SERVICES THAT SING AND DANCE 223

Marina Candi

Ahmad Beltagui

Introduction 223

15.1 Products, Services, and Experiences 224

15.2 How to Design for Compelling Service
Experiences 227

15.3 Services that Sing and Dance 232

15.4 Designing a Service Experience Is Never
Finished 233

15.5 Conclusion 234

16 CAPTURING CONTEXT THROUGH SERVICE DESIGN STORIES 237

Katarina Wetter-Edman
Peter R. Magnusson

Introduction 237

16.1 Service Design 239

**16.2 Context, Stories, and Designers as
Interpreters** 240

**16.3 Context Through Narratives—The CTN
Method** 241

16.4 Case Illustration of the CTN Method 241

16.5 Conclusion and Recommendations 248

17 OPTIMAL DESIGN FOR RADICALLY NEW PRODUCTS 253

Steve Hoeffler
Michal Herzenstein
Tamar Ginzburg

Introduction 253

**17.1 Communicate the Challenge Goal toward Radically
New Products** 254

17.2 Shift Time Frames to Future and Past 256

**17.3 Promote an Emerging Technology Focus across the
Consumption Chain** 257

17.4 Promote the Use of Analogical Thinking 259

17.5 Look for Novel Ways to Solve Simple Problems 261

17.6 Leverage More Ideators via Crowdsourcing 261

17.7 Conclusion 263

18 BUSINESS MODEL DESIGN 265

John Aceti

Tony Singarayar

Introduction 265

18.1 What Is a Business Model? 265

18.2 When Do I Need to Think about My Business Model? 267

18.3 What Value Should I Expect from a Business Model Design? 268

18.4 What Method Can I Use to Design a Business Model? 269

18.5 Process of Designing a Business Model 271

18.6 How Do I Implement My New or Revised Business Model? 276

18.7 Conclusion 277

19 LEAN START-UP IN LARGE ENTERPRISES USING HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN THINKING: A NEW APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING TRANSFORMATIONAL AND DISRUPTIVE INNOVATIONS 281

Peter Koen

Introduction 281

19.1 Lean Start-up 282

19.2 Transformational and Disruptive Innovation: Defining the Domain Where the Lean Start-up Process Should Be Used 285

19.3 Why Is a Business Model a Valuable Part of the Lean
Start-up Process? 286

19.4 Lean Start-up through the Lens of Human-Centered
Design 289

19.5 Implementing the Lean Start-up Approach in
Enterprises 296

19.6 Conclusion 298

PART IV: CONSUMER RESPONSES AND VALUES 301

20 CONSUMER RESPONSE TO PRODUCT FORM 303

Mariëlle E. H. Creusen

Introduction 303

20.1 How Product Form Influences Consumer Product
Evaluation 304

20.2 Product Form Characteristics and Consumer
Perceptions 305

20.3 In What Way Will Product Form Impact Consumer
Product Evaluation? 308

20.4 Practical Implications 314

**21 DRIVERS OF DIVERSITY IN CONSUMERS' AESTHETIC
RESPONSE TO PRODUCT DESIGN 319**

Adèle Gruen

Introduction 319

21.1 Culture 320

21.2 Individual Characteristics 324

21.3 Situational Factors 328

21.4 Discussion 329

21.5 Conclusion 330

22 FUTURE-FRIENDLY DESIGN: DESIGNING FOR AND WITH FUTURE CONSUMERS 333

Andy Hines

Introduction 333

22.1 A Framework for Understanding Changing Consumer
Values 334

22.2 Emerging Consumer Needs 335

22.3 Going Forward 345

PART V: SPECIAL TOPICS IN DESIGN THINKING 349

23 FACE AND INTERFACE: RICHER PRODUCT EXPERIENCES THROUGH INTEGRATED USER INTERFACE AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGN 351

Keith S. Karn

Introduction 351

23.1 Divergent Paths: User Interface in Physical and
Digital Products 352

23.2 Emerging User Interface Technologies 354

23.3 New Technology Demands a New Development
Process 355

23.4 Seven Questions to Guide the Integration of
Industrial Design with User Interface Design 359

23.5 Practice Makes Perfect 365

24 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION FOR DESIGNS 367

Daniel Harris Brean

Introduction 367

24.1 “Design” in Intellectual Property 367

24.2 Utility Patents 368

24.3 Design Patents 373

24.4 Copyrightable Designs for Useful Articles 376

24.5 Trademark Rights for Product Design 377

24.6 Legal Overlap, Trade-Offs, and Strategic Considerations 379

24.7 Conclusion 380

25 DESIGN THINKING FOR SUSTAINABILITY 381

Rosanna Garcia, PhD

Scott Dacko, PhD

Introduction 381

25.1 Design for “X”? 382

25.2 Design Thinking Integrated into Design for Sustainability 386

25.3 Conclusion 397

INDEX 401

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO DESIGN THINKING¹

Michael G. Luchs

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Introduction

Within the context of new product development (NPD) and innovation, design thinking has enjoyed significantly increased visibility and, for many, increased perceived importance over the last decade. For others, however, this term can be fraught with confusion, questions of relevancy and, for some, the perception of a fad. Within that context, the objectives of this chapter include the following: First, I briefly describe the concept of design thinking and its role within NPD and innovation. Next, I provide and describe a simple framework of design thinking, followed by a summary of some fundamental principles of the “mindset” of design thinking. Throughout, I identify linkages with the other chapters in this book. While this chapter provides an overview of design thinking as well as some context, the remaining chapters in this book provide significantly more detail and a wide variety of specific examples. Thus, this chapter concludes with a visual overview of the book to help guide you to the specific ideas, tools, and practices most applicable to the NPD and innovation problems and opportunities that you and your firm are facing today.

1.1 The Concept of Design Thinking and Its Role within NPD and Innovation

What is design thinking? At its core, design thinking can be construed as a creative problem-solving approach—or, more completely, as a *systematic and collaborative*

¹This chapter was adapted from “Understanding Design Thinking: A Primer for New Product Development and Innovation Professionals.” © 2014 College of William & Mary.