The SatSure Newsletter

September - October 2020
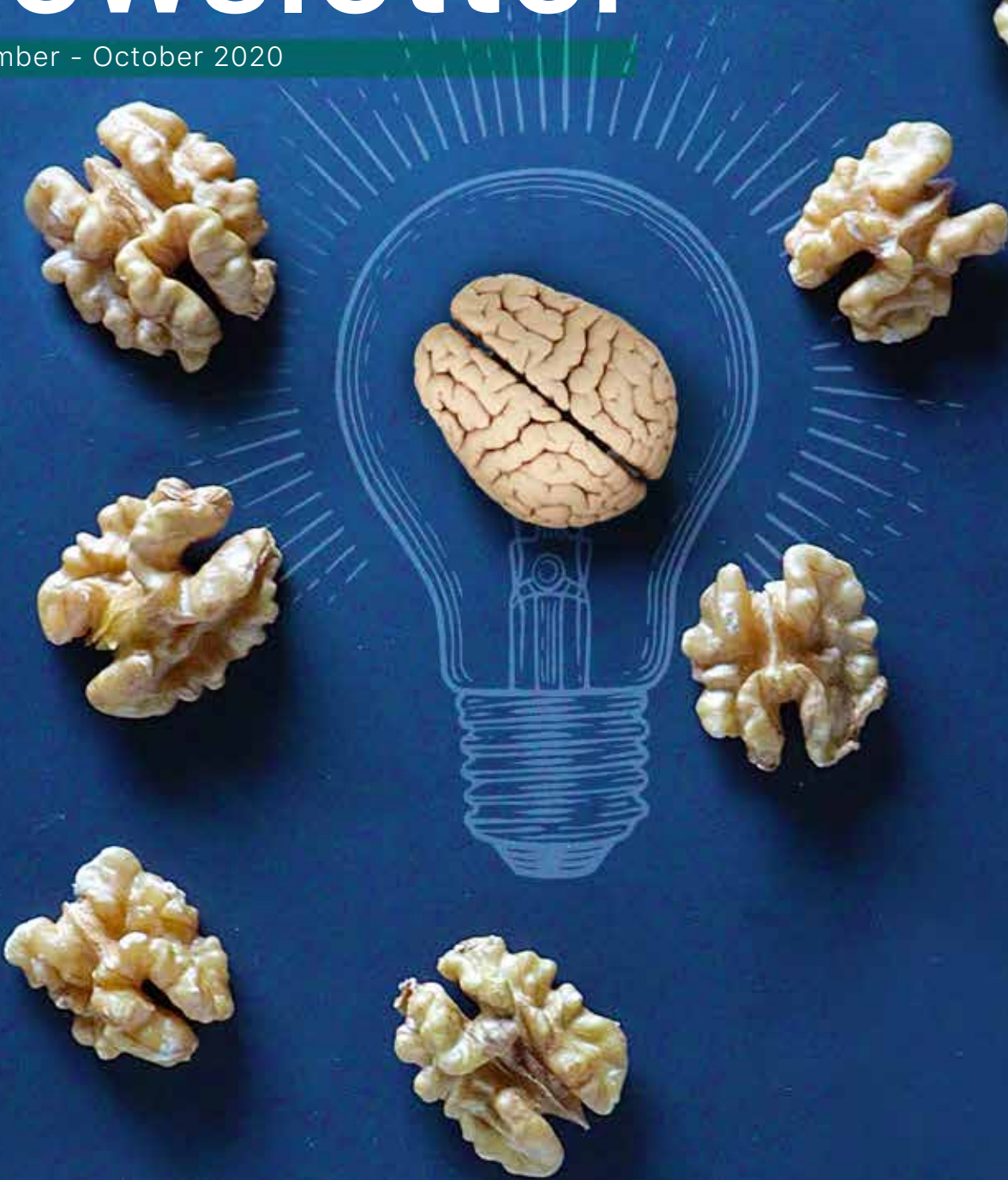
FOREWORD

As life starts coming back to normalcy, despite COVID-19 still being a threat, all of us need to reflect on the silver linings that the pandemic brought about globally. Like a transition to video conferencing for meetings instead of having to take two red-eye flights a week for entrepreneurs like myself, or the fact that digital transformation became the immediate priority rather than being a mid-term one.

In this edition of The SatSure Newsletter (TSNL), we focus on one of the good things that make companies tick - Design. It is something that is all around us and adds value faster than cost.

"Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works." -- Steve Jobs

"Design is intelligence made visible." -- Alina Wheeler

Our first article by Mirjam E. Ros and Deepika Jeyakodi, authors of 'The Innovation Matrix', is on the legal design of the intellectual property generated by firms and how it forms the core of the innovation management practices. The second article by Dr Pavan Soni of Inflexion Point delves deeper into the need for Design Thinking as a competitive advantage strategy for firms. In contrast, the third article by Prerak Mehta, Creative Lead at Dalberg Design, takes it one step further by bringing in his deep experience to define the best practices of designing products that serve the agriculture sector. The last article by Sarvesh Kurane and Bharat Aggarwal of SatSure explores the utility of Design Thinking principles in product marketing and sales for better customer experience.

While the pandemic led business disruption has brought about many a pivot for companies all around the world, there are a few things which will always remain a constant. I believe the importance of design is one of these things.

Hope you enjoy reading this edition of TSNL as always!

Prateep Basu

Prateep Basu,
Co-Founder and CEO,
SatSure

An Intellectual Property Recipe for Social Innovation
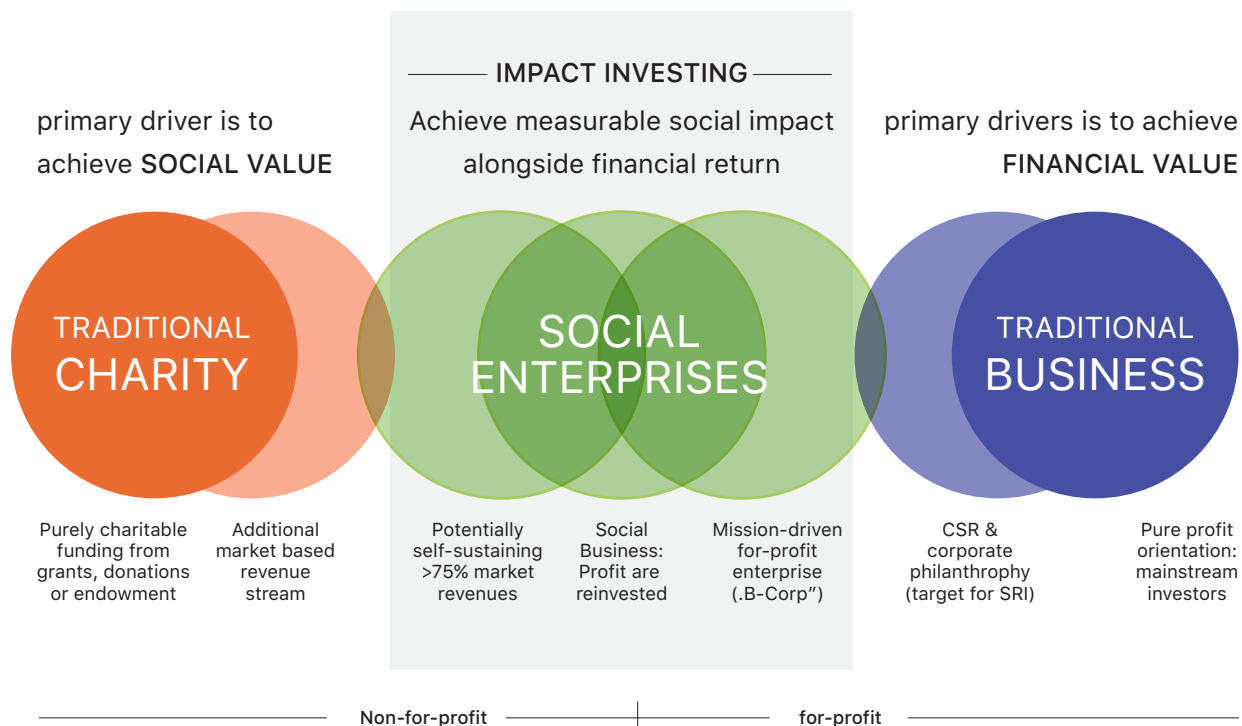
Mirjam E. Ros   **Deepika Jeyakodi**

Globally, there is a shift in attitude within organisations; from a short-term approach, driven predominantly by creating value for shareholders, to a long-term approach, driven by creating value for multiple stakeholders-shareholders being one of the many- taking into account their social and environmental impact[1].

Innovation from such organisations increasingly seek to create value for the society, and Intellectual Property (IP) plays a discerning role in tying innovation to progress, whether it comes from grassroots or a corporate. 'Social Innovation'[2] is deployed to address the current challenges we face as a society, such as tackling climate change, responsible use of our resources and giving people equal and fair access to wealth, education, and labour. Organisations manoeuvre themselves in a

range of positions between a non-profit charity and a for-profit business. On the one hand, businesses need to adapt to the changing demands of the society that is calling for more responsible action from them. Commercial organisations are prioritising the creation of a 'shared value'[3] within or from their traditional 'for-profit' business, in multiple ways: creating impact by fulfilling their Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) obligations, innovation for social impact within their core business itself, supporting social innovators with technology transfer or capacity building, taking up projects that aim to fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), for example. On the other hand, traditional non-profits, have to sustain themselves to continue the work they do for communities in the most appropriate way.

Whether an organisation is a traditional business (for-profit) or traditional charity (non-profit), or somewhat of a hybrid, they face similar challenges in creating value and capturing value

IMPACT INVESTING

primary driver is to achieve **SOCIAL VALUE**

Achieve measurable social impact alongside financial return

primary drivers is to achieve **FINANCIAL VALUE**

TRADITIONAL CHARITY

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

TRADITIONAL BUSINESS

Purely charitable funding from grants, donations or endowment

Additional market based revenue stream

Potentially self-sustaining >75% market revenues

Social Business: Profit are reinvested

Mission-driven for-profit enterprise (.B-Corp")

CSR & corporate philanthrophy (target for SRI)

Pure profit orientation: mainstream investors

Non-for-profit ——————— for-profit

Source: Adapted from J. Kingston Venturesome, CAF Venturesome, and EVPA

What does this shift mean for an organisation's innovation approach and what's the role of Intellectual Property (IP) in this transition? How does this impact a business model for a company or a sustenance model for a charity? What do organisations, who aim to find solutions through social innovation, choose; open or closed innovation strategies? Is it logical to also share IP to accelerate the diffusion of relevant IP?[4] Or is the more classical approach still valid; guard and protect your IP closely as an ongoing boost for a business model?

The ultimate question is: what is the best way to use IP to realise the objectives of social innovation?
This article will highlight a few aspects that may influence the IP approach for social innovation with some examples.

The Matrix gives an overview of nine possible innovation & IP strategies.
The x-axis of the Matrix represents how

many parties you can work with: open versus closed innovation, so whether you innovate individually, with some parties, or with many parties. The y-axis represents the approach taken towards IP: whether the organisation guards their IP, licenses it to some or instead reveals it to many. The four corners of the Matrix are the extremes with Classical R&D, Reveal to the Public, Open Source and Crowd Innovation. The cross or the mellow middle is dynamic in the sense that organisations can get creative in their approach to Innovation and IP.

The most successful organisations often combine two or three strategies from the Matrix instead of just applying one strategy for one product or service, based on the needs and objectives of the organisation.

One way to approach IP in social innovation is by asking the following three questions to determine which strategy to deploy:

1. Which IP is core for your organisation in order to create social impact?
2. Can you better guard or reveal your IP?
3. Can diffusing your IP stimulate social impact and the business model?

?

These questions are applied to the cases below to illustrate the role of IP in strategy:

G-STAR is an example to demonstrate the relevance of the core/non-core question. This brand is known for designing, producing and selling jeans worldwide. One of their social innovations is the development of sustainable jeans ('our most sustainable jeans ever' as they say). G-Star decided to make the process to produce this most sustainable jeans open source. How does this work for their business model? They distinguish themselves on their core: branding and design. The sustainable production process of the fabric as raw material is not considered as the core, with which they want to compete in their market. Instead, they share their innovation as a contribution to enable their industry to be sustainable.[5]

ColorADD is a sign code for aiding colour-blind people to recognise colours. Their business model is based on two pillars: a pro bono licensing system (for free) for the use of their code in the education field and sale of the code through license fees for all other markets. In this example, you see that ColorADD differentiates its strategy based on the use of their product in a market. Is it their interest to diffuse their code as much as possible in the education channels, and through that have it known in other markets too? Is the social impact the highest in the field of education? And does the diffusion of their code via education boost their business model to make profits via license fees in other markets? The answers to these questions determine their strategy!

Tesla – global electric car manufacturer – is illustrative of an organisation diffusing their IP to create social impact, or simply expanding their eco-system, and at the same time boosting their business model. Tesla started developing their electric vehicle technology as classic R&D. After some time, Elon Musk realised that the classical car manufacturers were his biggest competitor and that by revealing the IP to the public, knowledge would be shared amongst the electrical car manufacturers and the eco-system he wants to transform. The needed infrastructure would be scaled up in a shorter timeframe, and cost could be shared amongst the parties in the upcoming electrical car industry.[6] The debate on whether this is to create a social impact, or boost the business model is left for another discussion.

These cases illustrate that IP can be diffused and at the same time, be protected. IP need not be considered a stumbling block for innovation, let alone social progress.

To conclude, if you are a business engaged in social innovation:

First, assess which IP is core and non-core for your business. Only diffuse your core IP for free when it is a catalyst for your business model.

Second, if you are diffusing your core IP for free and it adds as a catalyst for social innovation only and not for your business model, then it could pose a challenge for the organisation's lifecycle and its resources.

Third, if you purely aim for social impact, and you have your investors who are backing you in this 'diffusion for free' strategy of your core IP, it could still be the right thing to do.

Although the approach taken by social innovators with business ambitions can be largely different from that of non-profits, the same principles can be applied by replacing the term business model with the organisation's sustenance model.

So, what is the best IP recipe?

On a scale of companies being 100% commercial versus organisations being 100% social, many organisations operate in the zone between these extremes. This diversity is creating multiple strategy options, based on also synergies created with others in their eco-system, as a consequence of which new business, innovation, and IP distribution models emerge. As a result, there is no right or wrong answer. It's all about creativity within your context.

Economic mechanisms in the management of IP that incentivise the development of technologies do not have to be hurdles for achieving social objectives. One can strike a balance between commercial and social interests. Start by asking the three key questions today to develop a clear and flexible IP strategy for your organisation and its innovation/social purpose. Make your IP recipe!

Reference:

[1]https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/business/business-roundtable-ceos-corporations.html

[2]'Social innovation is the process of developing and deploying effective solutions to challenging and often systemic social and environmental issues in support of social progress'. Stanford University, Stanford University; Soule, Malhotra, Clavier.

[3]Defined as policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates, in the Harvard Business Review: 'Creating Shared Value' by Michael E. Porter Mark R. Kramer, from the January–February 2011 Issue.

[4]Eppinger, E., N. Bocken, C. Dreher, A. Gurtoo, R. H. Chea, S. Karpakal, V. Prifti, F. Tietze, and P. Vimalnath, The Role of Intellectual Property Rights in Sustainable Business Models: Mapping IP Strategies in Circular Economy Business Models. Presented at the 4th International Conference on New Business Models, Berlin on 1-3 July 2019.

[5]https://www.g-star.com/nl_nl/sustainablejeans

[6]https://www.tesla.com/blog/all-our-patent-are-belong-you

About the Authors

Mirjam E. Ros, Deepika Jeyakodi are authors of "The Innovation Matrix" (Published by Bis Publishers, 2019)

Mirjam E. Ros is a business strategist who believes in simplifying the complex and in making 'common sense more common'. She holds a Master's degree in Business Law and a Master's degree in Public Administration & Policy, and has twenty years of experience in the aerospace, oil & gas industries and in R&D. In 2007, she wrote her thesis for Business Law on the subject of IP in Open Innovation. For the last ten years, she has been holding management positions in a reputable Dutch aerospace company.

Deepika Jeyakodi is a Commercial Contracts officer at an aerospace and defence company in the Netherlands. She holds an Advanced LL.M. in Air and Space Law from the Leiden University, an LL.M in International Law and Indian Constitutional Law from the Madras University, a diploma in IP laws and a B.A., B.L (Hons) from the TNDALU in Chennai, India. She is the co-founder of a human rights-based NGO in India, and practised law at the Madras High Court prior to moving to the Netherlands.

Design Thinking in the World of Intangibles

Dr. Pavan Soni,
Innovation Evangelist
and Founder,
Inflexion Point

Design Thinking is a human-centred, systematic approach to problem-solving. With its roots in product and industrial design, design thinking is often associated with the world of tangibles. However, the likes of IDEO and Stanford d.school are bringing the technique to the mainstream business, and a growing number of organizations are embracing the tenets and approaches to designing superior human experiences.

The graduation from designing products and services to crafting meaningful experiences is an important one. Yet, if you ask most executives about their understanding of design thinking, the word 'design' dominates thinking. The perception is that it's an approach to designing smart products, often in the hi-tech realm and suitable for startups. This article aims at dispelling this very myth and offering means through which a more comprehensive host of organizations can embrace this meaningful approach to solve their thorny problem elegantly.

The Move from Products to Services to Designing Memorable Experiences

We all crave for authentic experiences. That's why millions of Indians queue up outside stadiums to see their favourite players in action or spend a fortune to experience their dream vacations. While TED talks are available online for free, and yet being in the company of the thinkers and doers remains priceless, literally. The investment on innovation has shifted from pumping in more technology to expand the possibilities, to hiding the technologies so that

Regardless of the industry you are a part of, designing memorable experience is everyone's job, and with design thinking, this can be done more predictably and reliably.

benefits could be highlighted. Minimalism has become the dominant way of thinking and designing, and products and services have given way to compelling experiences.

These experiences aren't necessarily between the organization and its customers; but also, between other individuals, regardless of their function or position in the value chain. With experiences growingly occupying centrality the amount of intangibility has gone up, and this means you have

to design things that you can't see, you can't inventory, and even predict with a high level of certainty. And yet they must be designed and delivered with consistency, by people and using technology that is not always in your control. **This calls for a systems-level of thinking, and empathy of the highest order.** You can think of how Disney almost engineers visitor experiences across its theme parks in a very reliable manner, or how Pixar manages to espouse the right emotion from the child within you every time you engage with one of its creations. Regardless of the industry you are a part of, designing memorable experiences is everyone's job, and with design thinking, this can be done more predictably and reliably.

Treat Design Thinking as an Addition, and Not a Replacement

One of the most relevant and frequent questions I've come across is— "does design thinking render all the previous models of problem-solving irrelevant?" The answer is undoubtedly no. Then what is the distinctive contribution of design thinking? There do exist some powerful methods of

problem-solving, ranging from TRIZ (Theory of Inventive Problem Solving) to Lateral Thinking, Blue Ocean Strategy framework, SCAMPER, and Theory of Constraints (TOC) – each with its distinctive strength and applicability. For instance, the Russian technique of TRIZ is most amicable for addressing physical constraints, whereas TOC suit scenarios involving process issues and flow-related problems. Then there are a host of tools from the realms of Lean Thinking, Six Sigma, and Agile, among others, that come in handy while solving point problems or aiming at continuous improvement.

The view that design thinking attempts to bring to practice is human-centricity with a focus on empathy. Making who (read the customer) more central to the discussion than what (read the problem), design thinking helps uncover one of the most severe blind spots in any problem-solving exercise – a loss of context. **To add to this, the prominence of an iterative model of idea generation and validation, coupled with visualization and collaboration techniques add to taking a more holistic view, which further helps tie the loose ends.** So, you don't have to replace your existing and well-working models of problem-solving (provided you have one). Instead, it would be best if you borrowed inspiration and disciplines from design thinking. To begin with, embrace the significance and some of the practices of empathizing.
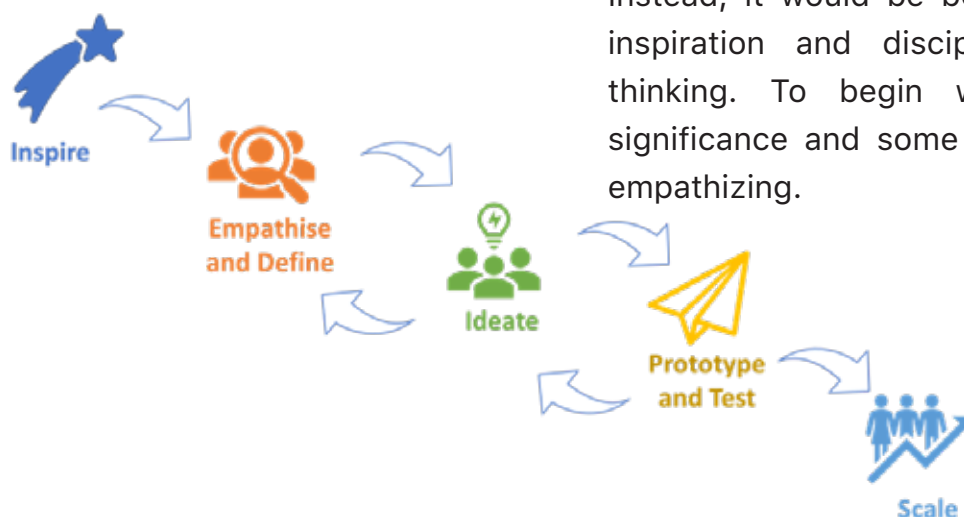
The Customer is the One Whose Problem You Wish to Solve

Another critical question is – who's the customer? While design thinking brings to fore the importance of human centricity, in the world of business, it is narrowly perceived as 'customer-centricity'. But that needn't always be the case.

A more precise understanding of the customer is always helpful. Think of a customer as anybody whose problem you wish to solve. It could be your employee, your supplier, an investor, supervisor or subordinate, or perhaps the end consumer. The key is to look at the problem and the person whose problem you want to address. So, if you are in the HR team and far removed from the end-customer, your customers are the employees. Similarly, for a procurement executive, the customer is the supplier and ditto for the person in the finance team for whom the customer is the business that seeks timely approval, help in cost control, and advise on managing expenses.

A broader view of who the customer is would help you embrace customer-centricity more holistically. Companies like Starbucks treats its employees (called associates) as the primary customers, who, in turn, manage the consumer experiences across thousands of the touch- points. Similarly, McKinsey has a clear pecking order – client, firm, and you—which gives the highest priority to the client, followed by the company itself, and only then to the associate. For Google, the developers are important, and for Wikipedia, these are the contributors. Clarity on who the customer is would help exhibit customer-centricity and then help prioritize your ideas as you address tricky problems involving multiple stakeholders.

In summary, as we move towards the world defined by experiences, both personal and professional, it's time that we pay attention to how they are designed and delivered. Design thinking can offer a disciplined approach, suitable for internal and external customers alike and in conjunction with existing models of problem-solving.

About the Author

Dr Pavan Soni is an Innovation Evangelist and the founder of Inflexion Point, a strategy and innovation consultancy. A teacher by passion he completed his PhD from IIM Bangalore in the domain of Strategic Management. He is also an Adjunct Professor at IIM Bangalore, ISB Hyderabad and IIM Lucknow. To know more, visit: https://www.inflexionpoint.net/

Design is the New Tech in Agriculture

Prerak Mehta
Creative Lead at Dalberg Design

> **We want to plant tomato, bean, gourd but we weren't able to plant it because we didn't get the seeds due to the Covid-19 crisis. This season is also a little unpredictable, it's raining, there's hail, so the produce is getting affected.**

Deepa is a 39-year-old female farmer and construction laborer who stays with her husband and children in a rural area in Jharkhand, India. She estimates that it will take her family four months to recover from the financial losses that they have suffered. In the future, she plans to purchase seeds by selling some of the stocked-up food grains or by borrowing money from friends[1].

2020 has been an unpredictable year. **The world is facing an unprecedented crisis as a culmination of challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, increasing unemployment[2] and rising poverty[3].** It is evident that people's lifestyles and behaviors are changing rapidly, and the crisis has impacted their financial health, livelihoods and psychosocial support, to name a few. These challenges are further magnified for the low-and-middle-income people in emerging economies.

Most professions are facing the brunt, especially one of the oldest in the world - farming - needs urgent attention. Agricultural supply chains have been disrupted, crop prices have been fluctuating, finances available to farmers have thinned, safety nets have vanished,

Source: Dalberg Design Photo Archives

and the ability to sustain crop cycle shocks has become negligible. The need for technology to play a prominent role in agriculture has never been more evident. Access to and knowledge of technology for farmers can help democratize learning for best agricultural practices, open up new avenues for financing, improve crop yields and pest management, increase awareness of price fluctuations, and enhance connectivity to markets, among other benefits.

A farmer with no mobile phone access is still a farmer. A farmer with mobile phone access is a farmer well connected with his friends, extended family and local suppliers. A farmer with a mobile phone and internet access is a farmer well connected to the world.

> **WhatsApp is a faster and more convenient way to communicate. It's much better than a mere call. For example, if you have a problem with your crops, you can take a picture and send it directly so that other farmers or experts can see and give advice accordingly.**

Richard is a 34-year-old male farmer who stays in a rural area in Makueni County, Kenya. Due to restricted social meetings because of the Covid-19 crisis, Richard's ability to learn from other farmers and problem solve with agri-extension officers in-person has reduced. He believes that adults learn by seeing and if a mobile-based service provided videos and chat-based support to farmers in the local language, it would help fill the gap[4].

The focus of our work at Dalberg Design has always been on the individuals and communities we serve, and we have often been part of successful user-centred technology-based initiatives in the agriculture sector.

We recently collaborated on a digital technology platform and services initiative in agriculture, with a large mobile network provider, a sustainable media social enterprise, a digital technology start-up and a global non-governmental, humanitarian aid organization in East Africa. We designed rich media-based remote agricultural advisory services, emergency pest and insect control services, weather alerts, among others. These services were to be delivered through WhatsApp for Business and USSD platform, and adaptable to other media channels like TV and radio for both farmers and agriculture extension officers. We leveraged past work in the sector, conducted remote human-centered design (HCD) interviews with farmers and agriculture extension officers, rapidly developed and tested mobile prototypes including chatbots, and provided a roadmap to implementation and pilot launch.

On another front, we collaborated with a social enterprise focused on low-cost technology solutions and end-to-end services for small farmers in India. We helped co-design an ultra-low-cost greenhouse which will enable smallholder farmers to receive higher crop yields through the year and build more resilience to fluctuating market prices. We leveraged existing best practices, past work by the social enterprise, remote human-centered design (HCD) interviews with farmers, user personas, technical inputs from experts; and planned rapid, low-cost testing for the physical prototypes.

Source: Dalberg Design Photo Archives

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> **If I can get higher yields, grow crops through the year, get protection from untimely rains and extreme sun with a greenhouse, then I am willing to take a loan and cultivate greenhouse vegetables even on half an acre.**

Sariamma is a 38-year-old female smallholder farmer who stays with her children, husband and extended family in rural Telangana, India. She is eager to try out new farming techniques to improve her livelihood. She has school-going children who help the family in small farming chores. She is affected by fluctuating market prices due to Covid-19 crisis and unpredictable weather that has reduced her annual income by up to half. She regularly discusses issues with her husband and makes joint decisions with him[5].

Our learnings from long-standing work at the intersection of agriculture, technology, and human-centered design (HCD) has helped us piece together best practices for innovations in this space:

1

Make the navigation as simple as possible, to not intimidate or deter farmers from an unfamiliar digital service

• Break each navigation task into small steps so that farmers are not overwhelmed
• Use different font styles and big font size to indicate when an action is required from the farmer
• Use numbers for menu-driven responses instead of text to minimise the chance of user errors and the effort required from users
• Break-up any information into short, digestible bullet points

Source: Dalberg Design Photo Archives

www.satsure.co

2 Build farmers' trust and familiarity in the digital service, and the information provided

• Add a visible logo to the introductory message, so it appears 'official.'
• Use regional language in your interface to make it feel familiar and overcome language barriers
• If using a chatbot, have a conversational and professional tone and refer to the chatbot as an 'expert.'
• Indicate to the farmer when switching between a chatbot and a human response
• Where feasible, connect farmers on your digital service through chat groups, to build social capital and companionship in the service

3 Provide farmers with an incentive to report any data back to you

• When crowdsourcing data from farmers, have a small and clear ask
• Emphasize that farmers will be helping others by sending this data

4 Minimize farmers' concerns about hidden charges and costs

• Paying for technology-based services are often a new experience for many farmers, avoid any hidden fees and emphasize that in your messaging

5 Make farmers your co-designers, especially for product innovations

• Use participatory research methods to engage farmers early on in your product design process, going beyond the usual feedback loops and treating them as your core design team members
• Understand the farmers' local ecosystems and thought partner with farmers about product sustainability and long-term maintenance

6 Build solutions that account for farmers' core needs, aspirations, behaviors and cultural beliefs

• Farmers, like any other consumer, like to have desirable products which not only solve for their challenges but tap into their aspirations and take into consideration their belief systems
• Leverage mixed-methods approach like human-centered design (HCD), short surveys, rapid prototype testing loops, among others to iterate and achieve a product which 'wows' the farmer

7 Test willingness to pay early on, before making substantial investments

• Conduct willingness to pay tests early on in the design and development process,

much before the design is finalized or technology integration completed

• Use low-fidelity prototypes like product flyers, mobile wireframes, rough sketches, photo and video references, among others

Challenges emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic along with the accelerating climate change crisis has provided us with a unique opportunity to leverage technology-based solutions rooted in HCD to fast-track disruptive innovation in the agriculture sector. Designs which are scalable at low-cost, sustainable, desirable and affordable by farmers in emerging economies have the potential to catalyze the agricultural space into an ag-tech revolution

Dalberg Design is a global practice dedicated to social impact, with studios in Dakar, London, Mumbai, Nairobi and New York. We sit within a broader firm with deep expertise in the development and strong relationships with government institutions. Our design teams have spent the last few years working at the intersection of agriculture, technology and human-centred design (HCD) with philanthropic foundations, governments, financial institutions, mobile network operators, social enterprises and start-ups, in multiple countries across Africa and Asia.

> We don't know much about new technology but are open to using it. Our plants can't talk to us, but we need to take care of them.
>
> *A smallholder farmer anywhere in the world, if you are willing to meet them where they are and co-design solutions.*

Source: Dalberg Design Photo Archives

Reference:

[1] Swetha Totapally, Petra Sonderegger, Priti Rao, Gaurav Gupta, Efficacy of government entitlements for low-income families during Covid-19. Dalberg, 2020

[2] International Labour Organisation 2020, ILO monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. 6th edition, ILO, [Geneva], <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/WCMS_755910/lang--en/index.htm>

[3] World Bank. 2020. Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2020: Reversals of Fortune. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-1602-4. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

[4] Dalberg interviews in East Africa, for a project on leveraging WhatsApp for business and other digital technology platforms for agriculture, 2020

[5] Dalberg interviews in India, for a project on developing an ultra low-cost greenhouse for smallholder farmers, 2020

About the Author

Prerak Mehta is a Creative Lead at **Dalberg Design**, where he leads engagements with a wide range of private and public sector clients including national and regional government agencies, Mastercard Foundation, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, Omidyar Network India, among others. His expertise lies in understanding deep user needs, attitudes and behaviors, and quickly building prototypes with a high emotional quotient that can be tested in the real world. His design work has been published in top design research journals, and he often collaborates with social enterprises to provide inputs on their strategy and guidance on setting up HCD centered processes. He is an Acumen fellow, Aspen institute scholar, has a B.Tech in Computer Engineering and a Master's degree in Design from IIT Bombay.

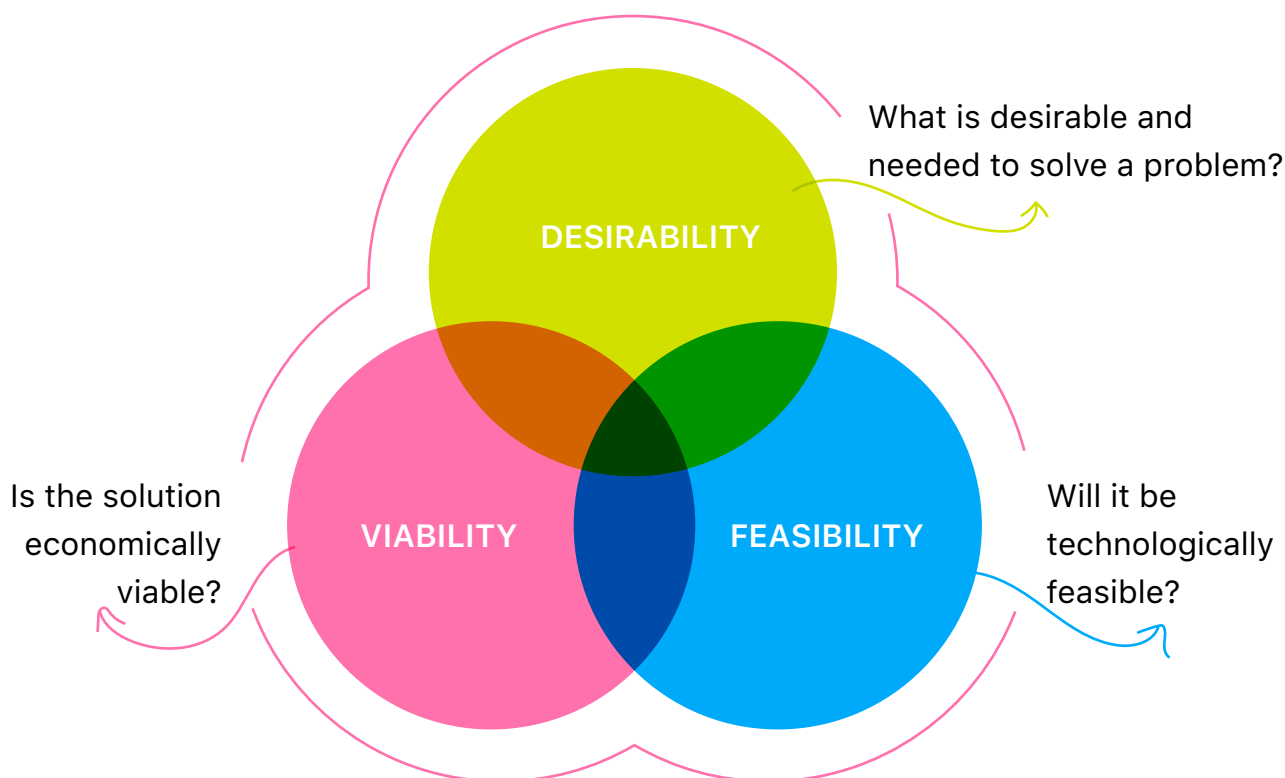# Design Thinking for Brand Evolution and Product Marketing

Sarvesh Kurane,
VP – Value Engineering,
SatSure

Bharat Aggarwal,
AVP - Product,
SatSure

The Design Thinking process is an excellent tool for both product and marketing teams to interact and contribute in the initial stages of the product conceptualisation to lay a strong foundation for the product development and align product marketing. Undergoing the process of design thinking is understanding problems before looking for solutions.

Design Thinking is a process for creative problem solving and lies at the intersection of three areas:

DESIRABILITY

What is desirable and
needed to solve a problem?

Is the solution
economically
viable?

VIABILITY

FEASIBILITY

Will it be
technologically
feasible?

Design Thinking for Marketing & Sales

While the aspect of Design Thinking (DT) has been widely adopted for product design, it plays a vital role in other business-critical areas such as sales and marketing, which are very human-centric jobs. Most professionals rely on their instincts, or their experience, or even on the latest trend to build their sales and marketing strategies. **And this is where DT plays a critical role as it combines customer experience, design, marketing and IT into teams that focus on extensive journey mapping to inform marketing and product.** Each customer interaction can be examined for improvements, from product to purchase, across all the channels.
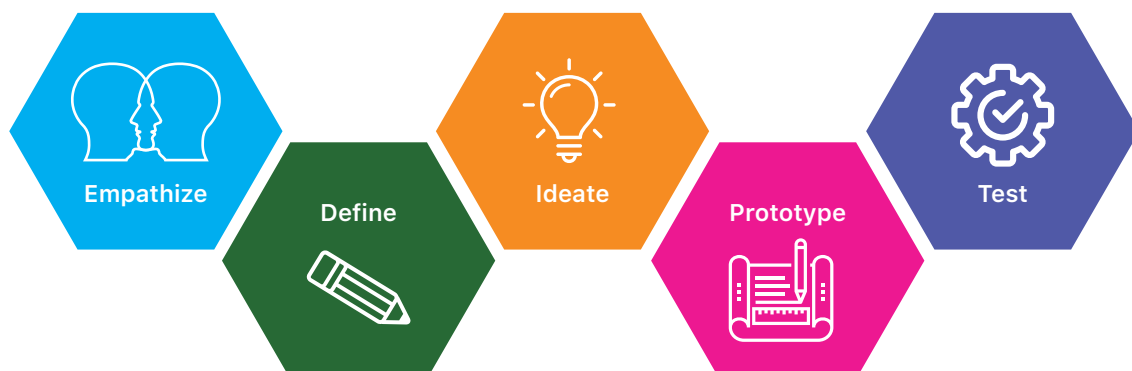
It is not feasible to compete purely on technical capabilities in today's fast-moving industry. And that is why DT assumes such a critical role as it can help a company differentiate its customer service from the competition. By identifying the elements of your customer interactions that can be faster and more convenient, DT provides not only a process but a more agile mindset that increases your understanding of your consumers' needs. With DT in place, the freedom to learn about your consumers, test and improve upon your ideas quickly, will ensure that your company can react in time to meet shifting consumer expectations.

While B2C companies are marketing-driven, B2B, and B2G companies are sales driven. This article focuses on the latter only, drawn from our experience at SatSure. We defined the problem first by empathising with not only our customer's needs but also our customer's customer. By doing so, we wanted to ensure that our sales team do not end up wasting time with unqualified leads. And we tried to achieve it by asking our customers and team unscripted questions since this a very human-centric approach.

The Design Thinking Process

It may initially seem challenging to capture all these elements. However, there are specific set standards and frameworks which can be adapted to create a fair design thinking process for both product and marketing

The following image shows one of the most popular procedures adopted for design thinking:

Source: The Design Thinking Process (http://web.stanford.edu/group/cilab/cgi-bin/redesigningtheater/the-design-thinking-process/)

| www.satsure.co

## Design Thinking for Product Branding

The idea behind product marketing is to create the same experience beyond the product through marketing channels. **Human interactions, how the product is used, it's persona and its subconscious impact, and a feel-good vs complicated product plays a critical role in product marketing.** We build products to solve a particular problem. While the market gaps, user persona, insights, knowledge and pain points are captured through the design thinking process, it needs to feed into the process of product brand evolution simultaneously.

Hence, having a cross-functional team, which comprises of designers, marketers and software developers help capture the different facets of a product journey. A product's utility is not the sole purpose. The emotions it invokes influences its success, purchase, use, and referrals. Thus, having both product and marketing teams involved in the initial stages of user research and product prototype help create a strong brand identity which captures the brand clarity, its consistency, and personality among other facets.

A product's look and feel play as much a role in its success as the actual problem it caters to solve. The entire design thinking process is focused on capturing the market gap, user persona and struggles, which also create a long term brand strategy. The text, colour, content arrangement, tone, texture, icons, logo, all play an equally important role in the success of a product. Considering the product is meant for a human, and they are going to make a purchase decision; the influence will be converted to a purchasing decision only if the user and buyer believe in the story the product is trying to tell. The experience of using the product comes later.

This brings us to an essential step of aligning the product design thinking in a way to capture user journey and using it to tell the product and brand story.

Design Thinking for Brand Consistency across a Customer Journey

Source: https://www.business-to-you.com/marketing-funnel/
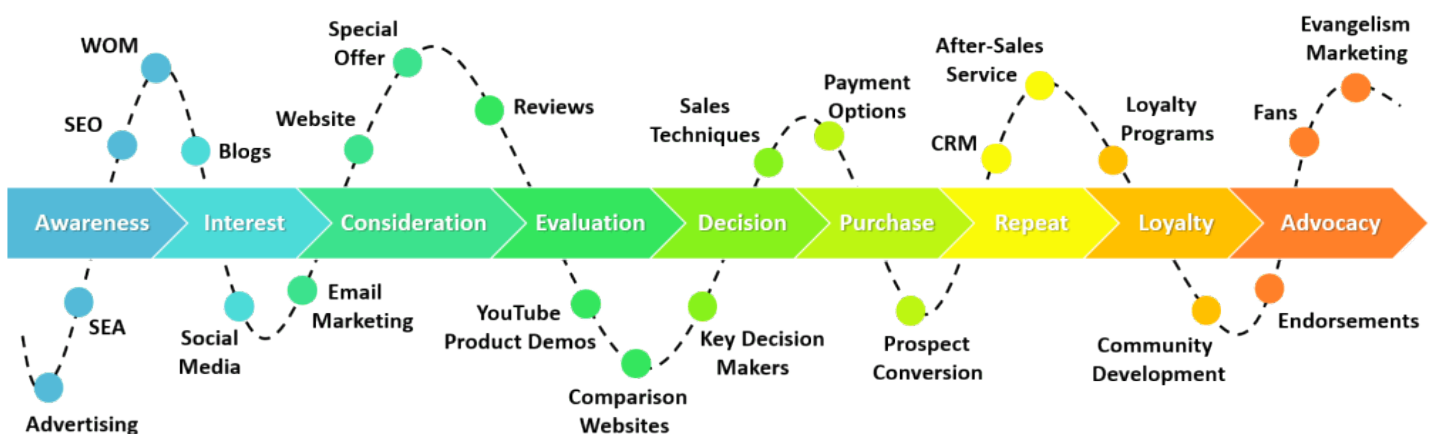
A customer's journey works as a tool to tailor-make the product experience, whether it's online or offline. Empathy, user research and pain points play a role in creating a customer journey and identifying the touchpoints across the journey. These touchpoints, either online or offline, act as a connecting junction to reach out to the customers and influence their experience about the product. The touchpoints help define the product experience stages, as indicated below.

For a company to scale a product, it needs to be purchased by multiple users and organisations. Thus, the product journey plays a role in four essential stages that define the success of a product in the market:

1.Awareness
The idea behind this stage is to make the customer aware of the product and the problem it solves.

2.Evaluation
Once the interest of the customer is captured, the customer shall evaluate the product and possibly compare it with competitor products. This is important to help the customers make a decision.

3.Purchase
Once the customer has decided to buy the product, the next stages define the success of the product.

4.Loyalty and Advocacy
Loyalty and advocacy play an essential role in the B2B market. Multi-year subscription contracts and advocacy to other potential buyers shall define how well your product fares in the market. Different communication mediums, as shown in the figure, work at various stages of the customer journey. Thus, having a strong brand identity and consistency across the marketing mediums influences the product experience while using the product as well as not using it.

Design Thinking for Developing a Relationship through the Brand

In today's competitive world, loyalty towards any product is difficult to find. Emotions and external factors drive the decision to stay loyal to a product. Product features, functionality, ease of adoption and replacement, price play a role in capturing loyalty. However, the decisions associated with the product are taken by a human, and hence we cannot discount the role of emotions. Design thinking helps understand the necessary building bricks to create a stairway for a loyal client-product relationship.

The customer also has social and corporate roles to play. We can use empathy to define these roles and associate it with a product. This shall help create a long-lasting connection which spans across the customer journey; in turn, we can use the numerous touchpoints to create a

story about the brand, relationships and align them with the company's vision. This larger than life image drives decisions beyond just the product and helps create a robust subconscious identity in the minds of the customers for the product.

Bridging the Gaps

The purchase decision for clients depends on the goals they are trying to achieve, its driving factor, and its fit in their existing system. **Design Thinking helps get a grip on the emotions, feelings, perspective, and persona of not just the client but the market as a whole as well.** Using this approach, great marketing strategies can be built that convey a strict brand identity while having a focused product development to have a subconscious impact through the product as well.

These existing needs and gaps can be filled by a simple approach that requires a multidimensional approach which can be brought about by the collaboration of different thinkers, approaches, and diversity brought by marketing, design, and product teams. **The stiff competition requires not just robust technology but also a creative take on the entire customer journey, and Design Thinking helps provide this platform for product and marketing evolution for today's B2B market.**

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