

Design Thinking for entrepreneurs

Design thinking helps us find the right problems to solve and to design and deliver products/services/experiences that are not only memorable but also meaningful at the same time



How would you define customer experience? Speed? Convenience? Personalisation? Efficiency? Consistency? If you said all of the above, you're headed the right way...but is that all? When a customer describes the experience you delivered using two words – meaningful and memorable – you are in the right place. If you deliver an experience that is only meaningful or only memorable, you have work to do. Lots of it.

So, how can a company overcome this seemingly insurmountable task? This is where 'Design Thinking' and a human-centred design lend a helping hand. A human-centred design can help us lay the foundation for delivering an experience that customers love and also love to talk about. Design Thinking helps us find the right problems to solve, and to design and deliver products/services/experiences that are not only memorable, but also meaningful.

If it is so hard, why bother? Well, it is about a small two-digit number – 16%. According to PriceWaterhouseCoopers' (PwC's) Future of Customer Experience Survey 2017/18, customers are willing to pay price premiums of up to 16% for an unforgettable experience!

Here are four practical ways of leveraging Design Thinking in this digital age to deliver meaningful and memorable customer experiences. And, to get that 16% price premium.



Encourage the challengers

“What if” – two of the most potent words in the English language insipid enough on their own but have the ability to open up a world of possibilities when used together.

- What if we help people be ‘mobile’ without actually getting into a vehicle?
- What if we were a bank without branches?

It is important to foster curiosity and a culture of asking questions. That is a very big ingredient for helping you identify the right problems to solve. As Charles Kettering said, “A problem well stated is a problem half-solved”. Design Thinking will help you find the right problems to solve or it will help you reframe the context in a way that makes the problem statement significantly more meaningful



Graphic: PwC

Create the 'new', now! Speed is the name of the game. Faster time to market gives companies a tremendous advantage. Clearly, direction is more important than speed, but once you have the direction right, the question is how do you go fast in the right direction? Design Thinking helps companies create a culture of rapid experimentation. Rapid prototyping and testing with key stakeholders allow for 'friction points' to be identified at an early stage, allowing companies to rapidly progress towards a solution that is perfect not only according to the company but is perfect also according to customers.

Embrace technology but... Did you know that 80% of consumers say that speed, convenience, knowledgeable help, and friendly service are the most important aspects of a great customer experience? They don't really care about trendy features, eye-popping designs, or high-end technology unless the core elements of customer experience are met. Don't adopt the latest technology for the sake of it. Instead, prioritise technologies that provide the core benefits.

It is important to know that while humanity has made exciting and huge strides in technologies like AI, machine learning, IOT, robotics, blockchain, etc., only people understand people best. Without empathy, the cornerstone of Design Thinking, one cannot deliver a good customer experience.

Empower your employees: The **Customer Experience Survey** found that almost half of the world's consumers feel that the employees they interact with don't understand their needs. Sixty per cent said they would stop doing business with a brand if the service they received wasn't friendly. It's therefore critical to empower employees with the right attitude, skills, and information – delivered through the right technologies – to serve customers better.

Happy hunting that 16% price premium! Your customers are waiting.

Using Design Thinking

An automotive ancillary client approached us recently to help create a system to accurately record the date of sale for their product. The date of sale was deemed necessary to determine if the warranty was yet valid or not. The client had also developed a list of requirements for the system. An easy enough solution was

to create the system and an app to capture the date of sales and roll out the solution. We were, however, curious about the "why" more than the "how" of the issue. We decided to get into this using Design Thinking and discover the real problem – which, during the course of our research, we realised, was unorganised sales channels and their motivation (or lack thereof) to record the date of sale accurately. So, instead of simply creating an app like the client initially wanted, we developed a comprehensive yet innovative solution that addressed the obvious as well as the unarticulated needs of key stakeholders.



Prateek Sinha

prateek.sinha@pwc.com

About the author:

Prateek Sinha leads the Design thinking and Consumer Experience practice at PwC India. Having worked with leading retailers and CPG firms across the globe, he has the ability to empathise, ask the right questions, connect the dots, and challenge the status quo to deliver game-changing outcomes.

