SEMINAR REPORT

Instructor: Sunil Achia & WonJoon Chung

Carleton University | School of Industrial Design

Session B

Instructor: Sunil Achia

Objective & Theme

The objective of this Seminar course is to engage students in exploring and deliberating upon theoretical facets of industrial design. During these seminars, students will actively participate in group discussions, express their viewpoints through group presentations, develop group and individual reports, and also present them in the final design seminar.

Main Theme:

Entrepreneurship is the ability to transform an idea into a viable business opportunity by embracing risk. It usually starts with an innovation to a business model, a product, or a service. The goal can be to deliver better value to the customer, or to improve how the company operates. This can stimulate the economy by creating jobs, developing new markets, and using existing resources in more effective ways. When factors align and a business can scale, it can lead to a paradigm shift. Entrepreneurs are the business leaders driving social changes within their industries. There is a closer relationship between entrepreneurs and designers to develop a purposeful customer experience that will win the customer over: an iconic product, the ability to manufacturing according to business goals, the unboxing experience, engaging messaging & marketing, corporate responsibility, 5 star reviews, digital assets, etc. When the entrepreneurs' vision in partnered with the designers' ability to execute – the results can change the world. There are several ways for a designer to be entrepreneurial in their own career: they can start their own design consultancy (service based) or they can be entrepreneurial within a large company. Both these options give them the ability to innovate with no personal risk. Another option is for a designer to independently take their own ideas to market. The last option will force a designer to learn many more skills and actions required to run a business, something that is not explicitly taught in the design school curriculum. In this seminar course, we will explore the idea of Design Entrepreneurship.

Potential sub-topics to begin with are:

1. Innovation, Marketing & The Market: Many companies mis-understand the role of Marketing, as it has become combined with Sales, e-Commerce and social media. Explore how brands have successfully connected product design and marketing to achieve the entrepreneurs' vision brand notoriety and loyal customers.

2. Leadership, Culture, Vision, Values: Explore how passion drives entrepreneurs to become thought leaders, how company culture can inspire employees, how to build effective teams, and the importance of mentorships and networking.

3. Entrepreneurs Across the World: Explore the similarities and differences when looking at entrepreneurship from across the globe; Are there universal truths present globally? What can one learn from the other?

4. Human Aspects of Being an Entrepreneur: Inherently risk takers, entrepreneurs are expected to deal with high levels of stress & shoulder burdens of business failures. Explore topics of vulnerability, empathy, communication, and ways to deal with stress.

5. Technology and Entrepreneurship: There are a lot of unknowns when starting a business. Following a framework can ease the transition. Explore emerging technologies such as AI (for ideas & scaling), software and automations to learn new ways to do work.

6. Business Models for Entrepreneurship: There are a lot of unknowns when starting a business. Following a framework can ease the transition. Explore business operating systems and business models that help entrepreneurs innovate and scale their businesses.

If you have other topics of interest beyond the list above that are related to the Entrepreneurship and Industrial Design, please consult with instructor first.

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INNOVATION, MARKETING, AND THE MARKET

Many companies mis-understand the role of Marketing, as it has become combined with Sales, e-Commerce and social media. Explore how brands have successfully connected product design and marketing to achieve the entrepreneurs' vision – brand notoriety and loyal customers.

Charlotte Kenndy
Tomy Tran
Sierra Miller
Ryan Brennan

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Being an entrepreneur has many facets. It is a career path that involves risks, financially, and creatively. Running a start-up is phenomenal and is a career that many wish to acquire. However, you cannot sell products unless you market them to an audience. Marketing is extremely linked to Industrial Design as both are user-based aspects of design. The human at the forefront of design links these two fields, making a good product for a customer and selling the product to the customer because, without one, the other cannot occur. When discussing and researching the line between Entrepreneurship, Industrial Design and Marketing the line gets quite blurry as all fields require similar mindsets and attributes. As an Industrial Designer, your job is to make the best products/services that are centred around the customer. Whereas marketing is the way you sell the product to the customer. Although, as a business, how does one market effectively and with an entrepreneurial perspective? This is when Entrepreneurial Marketing becomes very effective. What is Entrepreneurial Marketing? Entrepreneurial Marketing is defined as "proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation." (Morris, Schindehutte et al., 2002, pg. 5). There are many examples of companies that have succeeded massively because of their Entrepreneurial Marketing approach. These companies find new ways to innovate within their marketing which has catapulted them ahead of competitors or allowed them to break into new markets. Within this report, I will highlight Apple, and how as a company, they have stayed Entrepreneurial in their Marketing over time to become one of the most successful computer and consumer electronics companies in the world. The approaches Apple has taken to become the success they are today and continue to innovate in the world of marketing will also be outlined.

ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING: INNOVATION, MARKETING, AND THE MARKET

While looking at a business one places a company's trajectory within five stages: Launch, Growth, Shake-out, Maturity, and Decline (or Renewal). Within the scope of this class, research was collected surrounding where and how entrepreneurial marketing can be implemented in the growth and decline/renewal of a company. When looking at how different companies are successful at their marketing one can see that the Growth Stage is important to position the product, and make it relevant in the market and the consumer's mind. The approach taken from marketing at this Growth Stage defines who the brand is and can lead to the success or failure of the company. However, if the company can manage to stay successful and continue to grow, the company must also continue to innovate their products and be effective in creating new and exciting marketing. Innovating products with a good marketing strategy allows an opportunity for a company to continue to either mature and renew or decline and fail. If a company can manage to implement entrepreneurial thinking and marketing to the way they promote themselves to their audience, they may have an opportunity to truly thrive within their market. There are very few companies that have successfully achieved the level of marketing that has changed the way the world markets new products. However, within this report, the historically most successful forerunner within the marketing space will be highlighted, Apple. Apple is known as one of the greatest marketers of all time. Apple has won the CMO Survey Award for Marketing Excellence 15 years in a row starting in 2009 to 2023. Apple has been and continues to be one of the best-marketed brands on the planet. Continued domination in the consumer

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electronics field due to its many effective marketing campaigns, innovative technologies: products and services, and loyal fans has elevated Apple to renowned levels globally.

APPLE'S MARKETING

Apple has some of the world's most recognizable products, packaging, advertisements, and overall branding. A company so big has stayed relevant through effective marketing strategies intertwined with its innovative products. As The New York Times stated in 1985, "Apple above all else is a marketing company". They have made some of the most iconic products of this century and you can barely walk down the street without seeing an iPhone… but how? Apple has stayed successful by following a marketing strategy with 6 different "goals" (to be outlined in this essay) which have led them to brand recognition with loyal and returning customers. By creating and cultivating a premium brand for those in their market (Odaymat, 2018) they have achieved global success. Apple's goals are as stated: brand consistency, focus on simplicity and ease of use, strong brand and company values, cultivating a very loyal community of customers, strategic product placement, and price positioning.

First, apple keeps a very consistent brand, especially in terms of its marketing. Apple focuses on simplicity as shown below in its ads, packaging, store, and products. They keep a minimalistic design aesthetic in their product and packaging designs and even in their UI/UX. Apple packaging alone has become somewhat of an "iconic" product itself. Especially with the trend of unboxing videos in the 2010s. Their product line is all part of their "ecosystem" that fits together and matches all aspects of their branding. They make products with similar details and aesthetics. A large focus on simple yet iconic forms from the rounded edges of the iPhone to the home button, to the subtle opening of the Air pods case. Apple's forms and details create consistent attention to detail that are emulated throughout their product lines.

Secondly, Apple stands out as a company by making its design simple. They have simple product lines with

no over confusion on different features based on different iterations of "models". For many of their products, the consumer's only choice to be choosing is just the colour of the product. They keep their packaging simple. Apple's design language is focused on small details on sleek products. Their sleek white packaging with black logos, well-chosen text, and a photo of the product on the front made them stand out. The emphasis on minimal colours or monochrome keeps their colour pallets simple and uncomplicated, adding a pop to their designs. Like their branding, their advertisements focus on a "less is more" attitude. This withholding of information leads to consumer intrigue. Less is more in their commercials and marketing is also used a lot (as shown below in their various advertisements over the years). The simple language and simple photos make a cool product feel more mysterious but equally easier to understand by a broad audience.

Figure 1. 1977 Apple II "Simplicity" Brochure. Source: (Jones, 2021)

Figure 2. 1998 iMac "Chic. Not Geek." Ad. Source: (Petit, 2020)

Thirdly, Apple has and continues to set out its values to its customers well. Their slogan "Think Different" outlines their target market of: those future-oriented individuals ie: consumers. Those who want to push into the modern values or a youthful target. An entrepreneurial spirit of Apple is evident when they highlight "real" storylines in their marketing strategies. Storytelling is a unique way to feature various aspects of Apple products. Apple's storytelling is a marketing method that sets a standard unique to them but imitated by many. A good example of this would be their 2022 advertisement for the iPhone 13. The iPhone 13 ad

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states that their new iPhone is "toddler resistant". This ad (See Figure 3.) indirectly notes the durability of their product through a realistic storyline for the target audience of a parent. Further, in one of their most famous ads "1984" the advertisement (See Figure 4.) doesn't even show the product at all; therefore creating even more suspense and interest for the customer wondering what the advertisement is truly selling. The "1984" ad is focused on the release of the Apple Computer Macintosh, with the dystopian future with a heroine who was unnamed but who represents Apple's breakdown of conformity and empowerment. The commercial ends with the text on the screen and an announcer's voice stating "On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you'll see why 1984 won't be like "1984." and then their colourful logo (Apple, 1984)." (FileStage, 2023). Suspenseful, compelling, well-thought-out storylines used in Apple advertising have set the tone "Think Different" for Apple's values and target consumers.

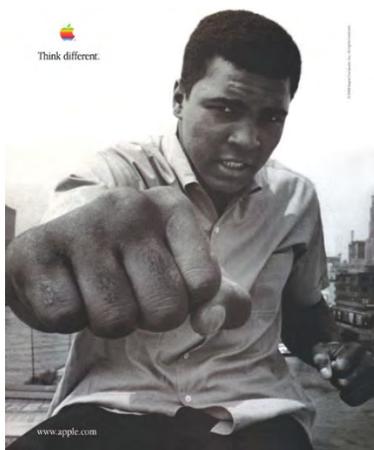*Figure 3. iPhone 13 "Run Baby Run" 2022 Advertisement. Source: (Ramesh, 2022)*

Figure 4. 1998 Think Different Ad, featuring Muhammad Ali. Source: (Petit, 2020)

Fourth, Apple has very successfully created a community of avid Apple "followers". The prestige and "better than" attitude have created a very big base of individuals who are and continue to be devoted to the brand. The use of combative advertising where they directly compare Apple products to other brands, puts a very competitive edge on those consumers who wish to buy Apple over other brands. "Cult Marketing" is one of the ways that Apple creates fervent loyalty within their customer base. "Cult Marketing" is a strategic form of marketing that creates a strong, emotional and passionate bond between a brand and its customers, thus paralleling the behaviour of cult followers. Apple releases become an elusive and awaited event of anticipation and excitement (Bueno, 2023); creating even more fever within their avid consumer base and providing a very successful marketing mania.

Fifth, Apple has successfully leveraged product placement. To stay relevant with the next generation of purchasers the company incorporated a lot of pop-culture references and used new-wave combative advertising. The use of pop culture and combative advertising put Apple ahead and made it very different from other phone brands, computer brands, etc. A good example of how the company used new-wave marketing techniques was their push to have product placement on TV, in movies, on social media platforms, in music videos, and other up-to-date modes for product ads. When the customer is watching their favourite movie, and the main character has a MacBook brand association and recognition are made. In the marketing world of product placement Apple is at the top of the list with 1,884 placements on a plethora of current consumer media/entertainment outlets compared to their rivals. (Sony has 807, Dell has 679 and Samsung has 373) (Steele, 2023). Apple's placements set them far ahead of the competition making them globally recognized especially by consumers who are intertwined in the most current pop culture. If Apple keeps leveraging their product placement in relevant entertainment outlets like movies and TV, it will stay relevant in the young consumer's mind and maintain its historical marketing success.

Sixth, the company tends to set prices according to the "luxury" value of its products. Apple set a higher price on their products to continue with the "premium" and "higher quality" positioning they have always wished to maintain in the market. Increased pricing helps Apple position itself as a "luxury" and "exclusive" product. This unusual way of positioning their products allowed them to market their products based on price alone. The high price point in conjunction with their sleek advertisements, appealing stores and the entire "Apple experience" successfully conveys a high-class profile and brings in consumers who are willing to spend. Their higher prices target an audience of middle-class to upper-class users. Apple targets users from the age of 18 to 45 in urban spaces, both students and (most notably) occupational professionals. The target consumers have been touted to be determined… [with]…ambitious attitudes (Dudovskiy, 2023). The target audience emulates a specific lifestyle and attitude that is further associated with the brand and allows Apple to continue to set high-end prices and reap this unique entrepreneurial marketing benefit.

Furthermore, when looking at Apple's marketing it is clear that they have become one of the leaders. Apple perfectly positions itself as a premium brand of high-end quality products within the world of consumer electronics and computers with a focus on innovation and aesthetics. Their products and services appeal to the masses by keeping an aesthetic that is minimal and sleek (albeit expensively priced). The company released iconic products from the iPhone in 2007 to the marketing release of their Artificial Reality headset the Apple Vision Pro. Apple has made brand-new products but has also innovated on products that already exist. They cultivate existing designs and then use promotion strategies to fit their brand. Their marketing reaches past the product and into the entirety of their "branding". Their focus on the "Yes, this may exist, but ours is better" attitude promotes an egotistical attitude yet effectively sells with a market capitalization of 2.75 trillion USD in May of 2023 becoming the world's largest company of that year (Dyvik, 2023). Further, the company has

positioned itself as a quality brand. Apple is strategic in their pricing by incorporating premium-level price tags. In advertising, Apple creates a strong brand image through a focus on its sleek designs and emotionally compelling storytelling to target various audiences. Apple's iconic "Think Different" campaign from 1997 was a prime example of Apple's advertising innovation. Through the "Think Different" campaign, the company targeted those who think outside the box, are intelligent and have ambitions, the misfits and the rebels. These two target consumer attitudes seem at odds however the iconic marketing by Apple has used this juxtaposition to generate money and success through the "envy-to-own" an Apple product. The advertisements in the "Think Different" campaign featured no photos of the products but rather black and white photos and videos of iconic historical figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., Albert Einstein, John Lennon, and Amelia Earhart. This advertisement campaign was highly successful in conveying a brand image that expressed the way the company wanted to make a difference and change the world (Mupeti, 2023). This campaign was so successful and yet new within the world of marketing. It changed the way that companies would sell products. As a result, Apple and their advertising agency (TBWA\Chiat\Day) earned many marketing awards which most notably also included an Emmy in 1998 and a Grand Effie Award in 2000 (Hoffman, 2023). The entrepreneurial marketing strategy truly excelled in providing an opportunity to make the population stop and think and become intrigued by the imagery and statement Apple was trying to convey through a simplistic yet impactful approach. Everyone elite and less so were now desiring to own Apple products. Further, a good example of emotional yet effective targeted advertisements was their 2022 commercial for the iPhone 13 where the commercial states that their new smartphone is "toddler resistant". This advertisement follows a toddler taking their mother's iPhone and "playing" with it in a variety of settings including dropping it, hitting it against surfaces, and dropping it in water. This storyline indirectly notes the durability of their product through a realistic storyline for the target audience of parents. The line "Relax it's

iPhone" immediately brings comfort to the user that the company that they are investing in "has their back and supports them". Everybody wants a company that understands them and can empathize with them, Apple clearly and effectively states that they care and further shows this by the warranty and tech support named "AppleCare+". Additionally, Apple effectively sells their products with an immersive experience in its stores. The modern design elements of open layouts and glass facades showcase their store interior and create a futuristic experience. Their store allows even more consistency in their innovative branding and clever marketing. The customers are allowed to interact and discover the product features while nearby employees, referred to as Apple Geniuses, can answer any questions. Referring to their employees as Apple Geniuses also encapsulated the attention to detail within the entrepreneurial marketing of the whole brand. As well the linking of the intelligence of the brand to the actual employees gives further creed to the fullness of Apple's marketing. Like the beacon from Superman, the Apple logo draws the customers near. The use of a simple logo, instead of a name, title or slogan, causes any language barrier to become a non-issu. The storefronts are standardized globally. Through exclusive partnerships and a very selective approach to distribution, the company has increased their desirability even more. As well Apple also uses elusive, scarce product distribution and creates intrigue for the customer. Apple excels at making customers feel special and part of an exclusive community when they own Apple products. The marketing mix used by Apple has stayed innovative through the 4 p's of marketing: product, price, promotion, and place. Apple flawlessly combines their mix to create its globally recognized brand empire in the ever-changing world.

CONCLUSION

Apple's calculated design and marketing truly has and continues to be innovative and entrepreneurial and has pivoted them to become the success they are today. As they release more products through incremental design, they heavily lean on new strategies of marketing to promote their iconic products in new ways. Apple found target markets and became the portal through which an item reaches across generations, economic status, cultures, etc. Everyone wants an Apple product. The use of entrepreneurial marketing allowed Apple to push to new levels, reach both broad and specific markets, competitively position themselves and make their brand recognizable. The impact Apple has made on the field of marketing at a global scale is unfathomable and they have changed the marketing field forever through their entrepreneurial spirit.

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INTRODUCTION

In the quick pace world of business designers, entrepreneurs, and the intersection of the two must adapt to the even faster world of technology. Burgeoning independent designers operating as either consultants or freelancers are finding themselves as the pioneers of new tools of the tech industry; social media.

Though it is not a requirement for a small business to grow, and at times not necessary, it is helping grow thousands of small businesses and creatives nationally and tens or hundreds of thousands globally. Compared to generations before reaching intended audiences and target markets has never become easier through the implementation of social media.

Though social media is not perfect and does have downsides and risks associated with it. When working either independently or in a small team, social media has the potential to make or break an entrepreneur's dreams of success outside of the corporate ladder.

1: HIGHLIGHTS

Different social media platforms allow small businesses and freelancers to showcase different facets of their work, portfolio, and personal branding; this creates more visibility for their services to a larger audience. This transparency of work validates expertise through the social proof social media allows and testimonials from clients and peers some platforms allow.

Through professional platforms consultants and freelancers are able to network in a post-physical world and expand their network on a global scale. The global scale of a network leads to a global scale of an audience which then in turn can lead to a global scale of potential clients.

Free lancers, consultants, and small businesses can also leverage themselves as leaders of niche industries through social media content creation positioning themselves as experts in their specific field attracting potential clients due to their perceived expertise.

Finally social media aids in facilitating creatives to adapt to a trend based market, this allows designers and creatives to quickly shift strategies and offerings based on changing market demands.

This essay will discuss and highlight how social media can be strategically integrated to current systems by independent designers for small business growth but also the downsides and potential harm associated with overuse of the tool.

1.1: Social Media: Portfolio, Branding, and Audience Acquisition

Marketing a small business decades prior involved print advertisement, word of mouth, and quality service to acquire a local reputation. This local reputation can in turn become national or international depending on the rate of expansion of a business. This is no longer the only option in the modern world of business.

Small businesses, freelancers, and consultants can use social media platforms reaching more of their base clientele and audiences like never before. The Forrester group (2014) found that instagram alone has the potential to bring a 4.21% engagement ratio compared to Facebook's 0.07%. That accounts for 1 out of every 25 people following any given business account to engage with a post. Applying social media in a lens of business strategy and growth allows small

teams to showcase different facets of their work, portfolios, and personal branding in a way that also establishes transparency and validating expertise.

For designers and creatives, a visual platform like *Instagram* is akin to an art gallery. The only difference is that it is accessible to anyone at a tap of a button. Though the main Instagram can be a highlight reel of someone's portfolio, using the *carousel* feature of the platform which embeds multiple images in the same post allows a creative to showcase the creative process without cluttering the rest of the account. The more dense the content shown on a social media feed the higher perception of the content being 'dense' and reliable (Yogev et al. 2015).

The transparent nature of instagram establishes trust in potential clients and consumers. There are insights in the design process, craftsmanship of the individual, and passion in the work. This enhances the value of the end product any client would receive.

Beyond *Instagram*, creatives have found a place on custom platforms made to showcase their work such as *Behance* which curates and aggregates design, illustration, and creative works from different industries in one place. Han (2020) states "social media… produces numerous knowledge and ideas every day. It can be considered a valuable source of crowd knowledge which can be used to support early phases design activities".

Social media allows for a cross pollination of ideas, in some instances collaboration with other designers, and business or work opportunities when designer managers are looking to recruit talent onto their teams. Integration of *Pinterest* drives non design engagement in which non creatives can put work posted on *Behance* on 'boards' which in turns brings it to the eyes of even more potential clients and collaborators.

1.2: From Local Network to Global Clients

An after effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed more and more workers to conduct their work at home. In the post-physical world of business, digital networking has never become more important. *LinkedIn, the* most popular social media platform for professionals, is now also the go to place to go when looking to validate an individual's professional background and expertise in a particular subject on a global scale. The platform has an integrated feature that allows users to 'validate' or rate connection skills along with a built-in certificate program in the app.

LinkedIn is a point of intersection for professionals to network and meet new clients, keep up those professional connections, and advocate for peers on their expertise (Tanim 2023). The interconnected aspect of the internet allows this to happen across borders and time zones that were once limited to conferences and in person meetings.

The ability to network globally also evens out the playing field for designers who operate and are based in countries where the services are not in as much demand. Likewise, designers, creatives, and freelancers now have the option to work remotely where they want and on their timeline. A designer working in a small town that has a lower cost of living to be close to family now can compete against a designer working in the middle of a major metropolitan city.

1.3: Think Tank Leadership Through Content Creation

Through the smart application and implementation of social media content creation, small teams can position themselves as thought leaders in their industries. By showcasing an expertise in a given field via an online presence the uninitiated may come to their content for educational purposes.

For example if a client was looking to understand the value of better packaging design for a small brewery, finding Youtube videos about the subject would educate them on the value of good packaging. That in turn can turn those looking for insight by industry experts into potential clients for creatives making the content due to the perceived knowledge and wisdom of the content.

Furrylittlepeach, a Sydney based youtuber, often talks about her process being both an illustrator and content creator on her *Youtube* channel. In her 2018 "Q&A" she discussed briefly about how unlike a

polished portfolio that has 'trimmed the fat', a social media page can be more relaxed and show a narrative about the creator. To the audience viewing it a social media page tells the story about the creators journey.

The contents of a social media page can encompass topics such as case studies done by a designer, advice by up-and-coming designers, design strategies and processes. The instantaneous feedback that social media allows with audience and creator engages the viewer solidifying the creator as a trove of knowledge and discourse.

In other Q&A's by *Furrylittlepeach* there is discussion about how brands have reached out to her because of her following. That is, in some cases it is the platform and following that drives the design work rather than the other way around.

Clients see the community as a pillar of expertise, when a creator posts on a consistent schedule; sharing their knowledge and in turn building an audience, the creator becomes an authority in their industry. Clients see this authority and put their trust in the creator that they know what they are talking about and can turn their expertise into business goals and targets through their design work.

1.4: Pivots in a Trend Based Market

Social media can be used as a trend setting tool for creatives, but also a trend analysis tool. In industries that shift in extremes on a seasonal basis due to consumer demands such as web design, packaging, fashion, and graphic design; social media can aid in navigation and experimentation of design work.

Design does not exist in a bubble, it literally serves the purpose of meeting using art as a form of reaching business goals and hitting targets. However, business is at the whim of the market and consumer demands. In the store aisles it is the packaging that can be the deciding factor between being in the red or black for that quarter.

Instagram has more than 1.5 billion active monthly users, and within all that engagement brands can draw information. Gather interest about their geography, age, interest, values, styles, and adjust or pivot their plans and offerings based on the data that they have gathered (Mollard, 2023).

Using social media as a trend forecasting tool, albeit without the AI that large corporations have access to, can let freelancers know what to look for and how to shift their work in order to fit the trends of the year. Inversely, social media is an amazing tool to prove to clients what a designer can bring to the table. To be able to identify what is going to be popular before the client even knows it.

Gaillot (2023) explains *Trend identification* as a technique in which designers can use social media's features such as hashtags and trending topics, or keeping up to date with the trend setting influencers to better align their work to theirs. To understand what resonates with audiences and how the overall market may change and react to that. This helps maintain a quality of relevance and engagement for the creator and end design work.

Moreover, it is important for designers to understand types of trends when considering if a new design would be a smart financial investment. Gaillot (2023) categorises them into three subsections, linear, exponential, and seasonal.

Designers would be smart to invest time, effort, and money into linear and seasonal trends where there is either a slow, visible, and gradual rise in popularity. When trends come back in a regular cycle they become predictable to design for such as buying jewellery for Christmas every year, predictable but tastes still change enough to design new products for the consumer market. It would be ill advised to invest a significant amount of time and man hours in exponential trends as fast as they come in by the time a product or design can come into the market to capitalise on the trend it can as quickly fall out of fashion.

Similar to how social media allows for a designer to interact with their audience immediately can be used as a gauge for upcoming work and how popular it

may be. For short form content like *TikTok* or limited time content such as Instagram *stories* tracking the amount of engagement and immediate feedback from an audience allows a designer to quickly pivot their work. This engagement can come in the form of likes, reposts, retweets, and exclusive in-app voting.

This flexibility to pivot and quick iteration with an audience and potential end user allows the designer and artist to test new ideas with minimal risk to their overall brand and identity.

2: Drawbacks

As of this point in this paper only the positives between design and social media have been discussed. That is to say and emphasised that social media is not a requirement for designers and that there are some drawbacks with social media.

For some, social media may be comparable to saffron or slices of truffle in a dish from a Michelin starred restaurant and used sparingly in a designer's process. Social media can intensify the desire for visibility in an already saturated design field, shifting motivation and validation from intrinsic to extrinsic, and limiting creative expression about one's work from personal aesthetics that blend seamlessly with a client to one that is about chasing the fad and trend of the year or season.

When social media and the internet of things has become inseparable with the average person's day to day life, where are the boundaries that a designer

should place and line drawn to prevent burnout and a dissolvement of good design work from virality?

2.1 Work? Life? Burnout?

In the bustling world balancing work, a personal life, responsibilities, and over stimulation in every direction there just are not enough hours in the day for everything. With a social media following comes pressure to be on a schedule. To update regularly, on time, respond to questions, feedback, and comments or risk fading into irrelevancy.

This pressure to keep up with everyone else on social media can put some on a fast track to burn out, always wanting to be recognized for one's work on a global stage that social media allows. To stand out from the rest in their respective field.

2.2 Imposter Syndrome and Doubt

Social media, especially visual based ones like *Instagram* and *Behance* are superb think tanks to allow ideas to flourish and spark new ideas in other designers; they can also be places that plant seeds of imposter syndrome. There is an inherent sense of comparison when creatives post on visual based platforms (Boring-Bray 2023). This can make designers and creatives feel like they have to meet a standard in order to feel qualified in their professions

When social media shifts from an intrinsic motivated ritual for inspiration to an obsession it can create unhealthy habits for designers. Constantly comparing one's work with others in the profession could push

the designer into a negative feedback loop (Zucker 2021). In the perspective of design it can start to make things look similar to one another or indistinguishable from what the algorithm dictates what the masses should *like*.

2.3 Feedback NOW

Being able to communicate within seconds with a community was unthinkable even a few decades ago. In theory it is an amazing gift of modern technology, though in practice it may push creatives to always have to feel like they are *on*. There is no time to breathe, designs feel like they are pushed out of a production line rather than being well thought out ideas that have merit and weight to them.

Design takes time, anyone who has worked in a creative field or in school knows that a bullet proof concept cannot be produced in a single day. There are so many aspects that have to be considered for a design to be well thought out, but when designs are being pushed out to show to the world like canned food in a factory, how many of those ideas are just good-*enough*?

These good-*enough* ideas put the designers and creatives who post on a potential shooting range at risk to receive criticism and feedback from those who either are not versed in their profession and enjoy giving criticism behind a screen, or other

professionals who may act on emotion and provide equally thoughtless criticism.

Long term exposure to criticism puts a dent in motivation and confidence to post again. Individuals fear the same criticism and backlash.

2.4 For Me or For the Feed?

For some designers and content creators sharing the process and part of their personal lives is something that they enjoy doing. For some it may be uncomfortable and feel like they are forced to invade their own privacy for the sake of relevancy.

This would be considered to be "selling out" in order to maintain engagement of a digital and work life in exchange for a personal life. This craving for external validation through likes, follower count, reposts can become a toxic cycle in which the motivating factor for a designer is to make something pretty and shiny that will get attention online rather than something useful and practical.

3: Conclusion

The relationship between a designer and social media is a fine line that must be carefully manoeuvred. Social media provides an opportunity to showcase work in innovative ways not seen before, but it is imperative to understand the potential risks to mental health that come with it.

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SMALL BUSINESSES AND NICHE BUSINESSES

Team 1 | INNOVATION, MARKETING, AND THE MARKET| Sierra Miller

INTRODUCTION

Definition of Niche Markets

The definition of a niche market is a particular segment of consumers who share characteristics and are likely to buy a particular product or service because of those characteristics. As a result, niche markets comprise small, particular groups within a broader target market.

Significance of Niche Markets for Entrepreneurs

Focusing on a smaller audience means less competition as the market is focused on a particular segment of people. Because there is less competition, consumers are more likely to engage with the products. Business marketing towards niche markets can have a higher profit margin because of the gap in the market for such needs. Customers are more likely to pay more for their specialized needs that have never been met before (Indeed, n.d). With such a small market, the entrepreneur can better know the needs and wants of their consumer base. With more expertise than others, the business can meet the needs of the people in the niche market.

Good marketing strategies can put the company ahead of others in the same niche market. This creates longevity for the business. With their expertise in the market, their consumers are more likely to interact with the business long-term. The entrepreneur can build a loyal customer base and become the go-to brand for their products (Indeed, n.d)

Overview of the Research Questions

Question number one is: What unique value propositions do entrepreneurs offer to niche customers compared to larger competitors? Smaller businesses can innovate quickly, adapting to changing customer demands and market trends faster than larger organizations; how does this work for companies with small product lines in niche markets? Question number two is: What strategies do entrepreneurs employ to ensure the long-term sustainability of their businesses within niche markets? How does a company expand and maintain customers while only being in a niche market with one expanded product line? Question three is: How do entrepreneurs expand their product line after starting and becoming successful in niche markets? How would a company expand outside their niche market while still being true to its origins?

Unique Value Propositions for Niche Customers

Marketing toward niche markets helps businesses establish themselves in the industry by having a unique value proposition that addresses the niche market's specific needs and pain points—creating the product or service to provide unique benefits that competitors may not offer. However, this depends on whether the product is the best solution for the defined problem (Burres, 2022). Having a niche product line is a marketing strategy many companies use for many different reasons. Having a product that has been perfected over many years and that only some customers will value as perfection is better than having multiple decent products (Toften, & Hammervoll, 2010). These also affect the company in different ways. There may be similar products that the business doesn't know how to make because of a lack of practice or materials. The business is ensuring that its expertise is the best it can be to stand out and make a profit off one item. To profit from one item, quality control on goods must be focused. This is to compete with other competitors in this niche and competitors outside the niche (Toften, & Hammervoll, 2010).

Advantages of Smaller Businesses in Niche Markets

One advantage of marketing to a small market is that it is easier to communicate with customers directly, as it's cheaper to scale personalized marketing ads. This could include blog posts, articles, videos, and social media content. According to a study by Yahoo, four out of five consumers desire some kind of content personalization (Tilters, 2021). When a company has a similar customer demographic, the cost of creating different personalized content is much lower. Not only is creating personalized ads cheaper, but they can create a higher return on investment, up to 8 times higher, based on a study done by McKinsey research (Tilters, 2021).

Understanding Niche Customer Needs

Having an active customer relationship is essential for small businesses. Personalized communication and excellent customer service can foster loyalty and positive word-of-mouth within the niche community. Finding what the customer needs most in a product and learning from feedback on improving current products.

Agility and Innovation

When having a niche business, the products offered must be the best compared to the competition; entrepreneurs must constantly innovate to keep up with market demands. One advantage is being a smaller business. Forbes magazine created a model to predict success based on items still in the market five years after its introduction. After five years, large company innovations had a 29% chance of still being on the market. Innovations from small companies, however, had a 50% chance of success (Nichols, 2021). This is because smaller companies communicate more directly with their customers, meeting their needs faster than their larger competitors. It is also easier for smaller businesses within the business to collaborate on new ideas and innovations, as fewer people compete for their voices to be heard. A smaller budget for design can lead to more innovation, so more problems are noticed from lack of supplies. Lack of funding can also create more decisiveness when deciding what innovations to back. Funding limitations can cause the designer to hold out for more tangible, meaningful and unique things (Nichols, 2021).

Innovation and Adaptability in Small Product Lines

Innovation and adaptability are essential in optimizing small product lines, enabling continuous evolution, responsiveness to market changes, and the ability to meet dynamic consumer demands. How can a business create something similar to its original product while creating something new and innovative to fit its brand? Different ways to create quality innovation in the design of new products are to track and document ideas submitted and always document the process. The first step would be to determine each idea's quality level. Next would be to assess how the features and benefits resonate with and meet customer needs, score and rank the product viability, and determine whether the customer would buy (TradeReady, 2022). Assess the current market by creating a product opportunity map to see if the market is saturated with similar products. Assess the new product to determine if it is aligned with the existing product line.

Case Studies of Small Product Line Success Stories

One example of a small product line by a niche business is Dollar Shave Club. The company creates affordable men's grooming products. The company became successful by offering a subscription-based model for razors and grooming products; Dollar Shave Club disrupted the traditional shaving industry dominated by established brands (Dollar Shave Club, n.d). Their witty marketing campaigns and emphasis on convenience resonated with consumers, leading to rapid growth. Unilever acquired Dollar Shave Club for one billion dollars in 2016, showcasing the success of a focused product line. Another example of a small product line being successful is TOMS Shoes. The company creates casual footwear and is known for the "One for One" model (TOMS, n.d). TOMS gained widespread recognition for its comfortable and stylish shoes and philanthropic approach. TOMS pledged to donate a pair of shoes to a needy child for every pair sold. This unique business model contributed to the brand's success and created a strong emotional connection with consumers.

Expanding Product Line in Niche Markets
Challenges Faced by Entrepreneurs in Expanding Product Lines

Knowing when to expand is the first challenge entrepreneurs face when expanding a product line. Introducing a new product is a common strategy for companies looking to expand their market share. Customer feedback is the best indicator of when to expand the product line. When customer feedback is related to new solutions or having a consistent problem with a product, it tells the business where it should look into its next product solution (Bauer, 2023). Whenever the business is expanding from a single product to a platform, it's crucial that any new products complement what is already offered. Stick within the niche or expand the segment market the current brand is in. If the Niche is Vegan cookies, consider keto cookies or other health diets as a new product. New customers may find a broader range of products more appealing than a single product. When creating a new product, remember to innovate and look for new solutions that would fit within the company.

Case Studies of Entrepreneurs Who Expanded Successfully

An example of a company that expanded its product line successfully is Casper. Casper is a direct-to-consumer mattress company. Initially offering mattresses, Casper expanded its product line to include pillows, sheets, bed frames, and other sleep-related accessories (Casper, n.d). This diversification turned Casper into a comprehensive sleep brand, allowing customers to create a complete sleep environment. Another example of a company that expanded its product line successfully is Huel. Huel is a nutritionally complete food brand. Initially focused on meal replacement shakes, Huel expanded its product line to include various nutritionally balanced products such as powders, bars, and ready-to-drink beverages (Huel, n.d). This strategic diversification appealed to different consumer preferences and dietary needs.

Balancing Growth with Maintaining Niche Identity

Balancing company growth with maintaining a niche identity is a delicate challenge that requires strategic planning and careful execution. Having a clear brand identity by defining a niche and what makes the company unique. Identify the core values, mission, and characteristics that set the company apart. Ensure the brand messaging aligns with the brand values and core niche. Plan strategic growth to ensure the brand stays consistent with its core values. When planning for growth, target areas that align with your niche. Consider expanding product lines or entering new markets that resonate with your existing customer base.

Long-Term Sustainability Strategies Strategic Capabilities

There are a couple of different ways to look at the strategic capabilities of a niche business. There are three stages: inbound logistics, production, marketing, and sales (Toften, & Hammervoll, 2010). Inbound logistics is all about having enough finances to secure long-term supply contracts, high-quality materials and a proper way to store all the materials and goods to ensure longevity and freshness, depending on the goods. Having high-quality materials is essential to the strategy of delivering high-quality products. For the production stage, the processing location of the raw materials is essential if the goods are a food product or a product that must be housed at specific temperatures (Toften, & Hammervoll, 2010). Location is almost vital for proximity to where the raw materials are produced

to save money on transportation. The next important step is manufacturing the goods. Knowing how to make the product the business is selling is essential for ensuring that the product is high quality. If needed, having a production license granted by public authorities is equally essential. The next step is marketing and sales. The most important aspect is having a close, long-term relationship with customers. The business should be seen as trustworthy, honest, reliable and committed.

Marketing Strategies

Marketing by search engine optimization: In small targeted markets, it is easier to create an optimized website and create content for niche-specific keywords to improve visibility in search engine results. This can help startups be found by individuals actively searching for products or services within the niche. The company Lefty, the Left Handed Store, is a company that generates almost all of its online traffic from search engine optimization from simple searches like left-handed scissors and left-handed pens (Ong, 2023). Another is segmenting the market further, dividing the market into smaller segments within the niche, and tailoring the marketing strategies to each segment. This ensures a more personalized and targeted approach.

CONCLUSION

Implications for Entrepreneurs in Niche Markets

Entrepreneurs operating in niche markets face both unique challenges and opportunities. Understanding the implications of navigating a niche market is crucial for success. Niche markets have a limited target audience, and niche markets often have a smaller target audience than broader markets. Entrepreneurs can develop highly specialized products or services tailored to the specific needs of their niche audience. Having deep customer relationships, entrepreneurs can build strong relationships, leveraging direct feedback to refine products or services and enhance customer satisfaction. Niche markets have limited scaling potential due to the limited size of the target market.

Entrepreneurs can explore diversification within the niche or identify complementary niches to expand their product or service offerings. Operating in a niche market has marketing challenges, as reaching a niche audience may require uncommon or highly targeted marketing strategies. Entrepreneurs can leverage digital marketing, social

media, and other targeted approaches to effectively reach and engage their niche audience. Niche markets face long-term viability due to susceptible changes in consumer preferences or external factors. Entrepreneurs can change this by staying adaptable, continuously innovating, and diversifying. Marketing toward a niche market isn't for everybody.

Still, it has many benefits, like a more loyal consumer base, a secure spot in the market and a good reputation based on high-quality goods. Starting as a niche company is easy to expand if the company sticks to their core values, benefits and improves on customer feedback. There are many examples of companies that have started small and expanded further later on successfully.

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INTRODUCTION

Marketing exists as a critical tool for entrepreneurship. It is the way companies communicate with the world, and dictates the public perception (Klement, 5). You can have great entrepreneurial ideas, but the way you communicate those ideas to the world around you is how you enact them. It has been shown that companies engaging in high levels of entrepreneurialism typically have similarly developed marketing skills (Morris et al.). Entrepreneurship is about finding opportunities and creating new solutions, for our purposes entrepreneurial thinking (in regards to a company) is well summed as the organization's willingness to encourage creativity, flexibility, and to support risk (Stevenson et al. 5). This description notably highlights how core change and innovation are to entrepreneurship, and subsequently core to a company's growth.

The specific goals a company attempts to achieve via entrepreneurial marketing shift over its lifetime, and as a team we sought to determine those differences and what that entails practically. As a part of this, it was crucial to understand how you determine whether the marketing you are engaging in is successful; one element of that being customer sentiment, as determined by what's being said online and in reviews. The public holding a negative sentiment demands change, as it is indicative of a problem somewhere in the chain. As change is so elemental to entrepreneurship, I sought to explore how negative customer sentiment might represent a unique entrepreneurial moment, waiting to be executed with carefully tuned marketing.

LIFECYCLE STAGE AND MARKETING AS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The importance of entrepreneurial marketing is evident. Entrepreneurship is clear in a startup, the act of starting a business or releasing a product is inherently entrepreneurial, but entrepreneurship is less clear in an established company. Everything's up and running. While established companies marketing established products is not entrepreneurial, the creation of an innovative marketing strategy for that product is. The release of a new product is too. Innovation (change) is what's required, to meet this companies must engage with entrepreneurial thinking as a practice - being open to new opportunities and seizing them when presented. It is crucial to be open to change and adapt to the situation rather than overfit ideas, and move to be in a position ready to seize opportunities.

Company goals and priorities change over time, we wanted to better understand how that change impacts the use of entrepreneurial marketing. To determine this we prioritized case studies and papers, seeking to determine what this kind of marketing looks like, what are the goals of the companies producing it, and what is the greater context this tool exists within. A key difference we found was in what information is utilized for action. Established businesses have the benefit of having a history. There is data to pull from to learn what works and what doesn't, and to better predict customer trends to theoretically release a more effective product. The more information you have, the more opportunities you have to notice. However, an article from the Harvard Business Review highlights how this reliance on data can result in blindspots, missing notable opportunities (Gans et al.) . Startups lack this resource of consumer preferences and behaviors, and as a result rely on research around a well defined target market.

The difference in goals can be put simply; Startups are looking to define, established companies are looking to redefine. A startup's primary goal with marketing is to introduce themselves and their product, to create a clear definition of what is being offered for the consumer.

As an unknown player, they have the responsibility of establishing authority in their given space to give credibility to their actions. The form this takes is dependent on the preferences of the target market. Established companies benefit from the consumer already having context by virtue of the brand. At this stage, providing full context is unnecessary, instead the marketing serves to redefine a consumer's understanding or perception of the brand. In a similar way to startups, there exists the need for specificity around brand personality. Often, companies do not just release a single product and then coast for the rest of their existence, they continue to release new products. Products being introduced do not always fit into the same family. The introduction of a new product type can often come at a conflict with your established customers to some degree. In this position companies must engage in marketing that serves to guide users through this transition, to maintain a clear understanding between customers and company. Similarly, entrepreneurship often exists as a response. when people know you they'll talk, and the entrepreneurial thinking mentioned suggests recognizing opportunities within that. Marketing can be used to redefine the story people are telling. When properly executed this piggybacks on the narrative people are already connected to, and just aligns it to support the brand.

NEGATIVE SENTIMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Once a company has made it through its initial establishing phases, there exists the base level goal of growth. This growth is supported through products and consumer relations. Generally speaking, opportunities' allow for the development of products and consumers' knowledge about them. The opportunity for new people to engage with the product, or the opportunity for a new type of product all together. In either case, the concept of new' being inherent to entrepreneurial marketing. Opportunities come from the understanding of a situation, how the elements are connected, and the subsequent identification of pain points. To understand the situation you must know what's happening, and know how those involved feel.

In order to do this you must utilize success metrics in some form. Marketing, especially in a digital age, benefits from countless metrics as discussed in Measure Marketing (Davis,   ). These metrics, such as who s seen an ad vs interacted with it, are excellent for refining marketing campaigns to ensure expected results, but lack nuance in customer opinion. In the age of social media and digital reviews, it is a modern business priority to know what is being said about the company online. A strong understanding of customer sentiment is crucial in order to properly engage with consumers with marketing they'll be receptive to. While social media has long been used as a source of product feedback, the need to read every comment limits its e cacy. With the developing ability to technologically parse natural language, the holy grail of understanding customer sentiment comes from users speaking freely in social media comments (Ordenes et al.   ).

The public's response directly influences company action. Positive sentiment is nice to receive, but can oftentimes be less informative. While It is reassuring to the current course and is typically a sign of expected growth, it fails to effectively highlight what can be done better. Positive sentiment does not exist exclusively as a by-product of a job well done, but can be targeted as an emotional goal for marketing efforts. Good will is good will, and as such social responsibility can be leveraged for the sale of products. Take for example Harry's, a razor company. Their emphasis on men's mental health serves as both a moral foundation for the company, and an effective marketing tool, with a clearly stated profit donation showing how supporting them means supporting mental health (Harry's,   ). This type of positive sentiment can be far more recursive in comparison to negative sentiment, as a greater positive response further builds that connotation. In comparison to positive sentiment being able to just exist passively, negative sentiment is often indicative of a problem. In Brand Hate Navigating Consumer Negativity in the Digital World, Kucuk suggests how no user gets mad without a reason, and provides a framework for conceptualizing the brand hate journey.
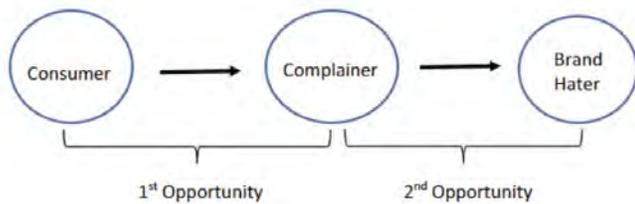
He suggests that in most cases, when the user encounters a problem they will initially give some benefit to the company. Something must be done to change opinion or through consistent encounters they will become a regular complainer. At this stage, their complaints must be heard and addressed, or the negative perception will be cemented. As the author suggests, within this process there exists two opportunities for intervention (Kucuk,   6). Two opportunities to transform your business and its relationship with consumers, and that transformation isn't limited to pu   ng out fires.

Rather than introducing a new product, innovation in the story breathes new life into an already established offering. I'd like to present   case studies, companies that utilized the opportunity created by negative sentiment, and offer a framework of how this might be done.

Crocs is an iconic footwear company. Developed in the early   s, Crocs were well received as a practical, but ugly, footwear. Their adoption into daily life was viewed through the same lens as socks with sandals. This negative perception turned many away from the brand. In   , an usual situation unfolded. Covid hit and people were stuck indoors in an unprecedented way. Fortunately for Crocs, they happened to have an incredibly comfortable shoe, that s great indoors, and doesn t need to look nice if you're not going to see anybody. They successfully recognized this as an opportunity to reinvigorate the product. Rather than trying to run a contextless ads campaign about how great Crocs are, they examined the product s current position within culture. Utilizing influencer marketing they owned their uncool' title, and used the social

influence to prioritize the comfort aspect and redefine what cool' even meant, bringing consumers on board while validating their previous opinions.

PBR was initially created aimed at blue collar workers, and was accepted by this audience. Overtime, pressure to compete with larger beer companies forced an ad campaign targeting a younger city audience. This was rejected by this new target, and succeeded in alienating its current audience. This left PBR without an audience and an overall negative perception, and became no one's chosen beer for around   decades. Surprisingly, this resulted in the drink achieving an underdog status in certain counterculture circles. Recognizing this as an opportunity, PBR examined their position and the preferences of consumers in those circles. Recognizing a distrust for traditional marketing, they engaged in a series of product placements, sponsoring various community events to simply get the drink in the right environment. This successfully fostered the connection between PBR and counterculture, transforming its lack of audience into a point of pride.

Nicknamed the Domino s Pizza Turnaround' this now legendary PR move successfully navigated massive negative sentiment. In the early   's Dominos Pizza was struggling immensely with perceived quality, most notably earning the title of tasting like cardboard. This became a very common phrase, Domino's righ ully understood that something had to be done. Rather than hiding from these statements, possibly making changes, and continuing to advertise how amazing your pizza is like every other pizza place, they launched an ad campaign entirely focused on people's negative comments. They used it as a point of transparency and put the statements front and center. This allowed them to claim we're with you, and here's how we're fixing it , recognizing an opportunity to appeal emotionally. This bought massive trust with the audience and brought them onto the companies side, while also validating their opinions.

These companies found success in navigating these moments, but this can only happen when the company is positioned and willing to seize new opportunities as they arise. The process for how this was accomplished can be broken down into three phases, the demand for innovation, recognizing the opportunity, and aligning the story.

To engage with these moments entrepreneurially, you must first understand the negative story surrounding the product. The demand for innovation. In this phase the goal is a full understanding of the need to change anything. This involves determining the pain point - why people are actually upset, and the rhetoric around it. How are people talking about it? Are they angry, disappointed? This information is necessary in order to market with an appropriate tone your audience will respond to.

Next you must recognize the opportunity. This begins with determining the context. Starting with the product, identifying its base elements - what is the offering without an added story. What is the value this product adds? This is followed by understanding the environment: socially, politically, trends, seasons, etc. As well as where the product currently sits within that environment (positioning and perception). By combining this understanding with the demand for innovation, determine the area for growth. Is the fault in product design or positioning, how is that addressed. This serves to define the entrepreneurial opportunity presented, whether that be to strengthen the brand identity, grow the consumer base, or introduce a new product.

Arguably the most crucial step is aligning the story. This is where understanding turns to action, marketing with entrepreneurial intent. The goal of aligning the story is to take what is being said and use that as the base for marketing purposes. By aligning yourself with the users, you give users a feeling of control your opinion is correct . When there is a sentiment the larger public agrees as true, giving validity promotes connection. You can then adjust the context that sentiment is

viewed from, addressing issues to create positive brand engagement, as well as riding the public's existing trust of the common sentiment to give perceived validity to new product positioning. As shown in the case studies, this must be done with the correct kind of marketing. PBR was only successful by aligning marketing tactics with the story; print ads would not have had the same impact as the product placement they engaged in. Position yourself in line with customer rhetoric, showing sympathy to say we agree with you'. Then place that rhetoric in a new context. While maintaining validation, showcase how this negative concept fits into a larger positive picture. The big picture is then trusted as it is based on what they are already saying.

CONCLUSION

Companies engaging in growth are typically doing so in part via entrepreneurial marketing. This is true regardless of stage. Established companies have the unique situation of contending with their own history, in things such as reputation, and access to customer data.

In many ways this is good, they are able to leverage data to understand needs and target more successfully. Alternatively can be harmful, a bad reputation can be hard to shake. This negativity can be extremely valuable if you can look past the surface. A negative public sentiment can serve as an opportunity to stretch the entrepreneur muscles as a developed company, and further develop the business and its connection with the public. By aligning yourself with the public rhetoric you can move to a better position, while also gaining trust with your audience.

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Leadership. Culture. Vision. Values

Explore how passion drives entrepreneurs to become thought leaders, how company culture can inspire employees, how to build effective teams, and the importance of mentorships and networking.

Caroline Scapol
Anthony Chan
Dora Lau
Xiaoduo Lin

THE IMPACT OF OVERWORKING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE
TEAM 2 | LEADERSHIP, CULTURE, VISION, VALUES | CAROLINE SCAPOL BARBOSA

BACKGROUND

This report will go over a main topic that was defined in the early stages of research, which is: 'Leadership, Culture, Vision, Values: Explore how passion drives entrepreneurs to become tough leaders, how company culture can inspire employees, how to build effective teams and the importance of mentorship and networking'. Based on this main topic our group defined a subtopic after further discussing what the previously stated theme meant for our research and how we could better individually aim to answer it, we decided to focus on The techniques to build effective teams and successful companies.

Building effective teams goes beyond simply bringing individuals together, and working in a company; it involves a joint effort of leadership, culture, and values from all parts, employers, employees, staff, and entrepreneurs alike. In this exploration, our goal was to unravel the processes that turn the passion commonly found in entrepreneurs into effective leadership and also to uncover how company culture influences the motivation and creativity of its employees.

DISCUSSION

To further distill the research and allow each of us to have our lenses into the topic and subtopic, we started with an initial brainstorming session to define the most important techniques for effective team building. During this exercise, we realized the importance of leaders and the importance of mental health prioritization as well as how strong values shape companies. One technique that stood out to me was the prioritization of work-life balance. Work-life balance is in itself a well-researched and talked about theory, but sometimes overlooked when in actual practice.

I decided to focus my research on understanding the importance of this practice as well as the impacts that overworking has on individuals. With a specific focus on industrial design professionals.

INITIAL QUESTIONS

During the beginning stages of my research, I set out to define the main questions that guided my research. These would allow me to understand the approach and the scope of my research and serve as a lens to guide my findings. They are as follows:

Is Work-Life balance an effective technique for building teams and successful companies?

Why are work-related boundaries stigmatized or even discouraged by employers, leaders, entrepreneurs, and colleagues?

What role do companies play in either facilitating or hindering a healthy balance between work and personal life?

It is important to mention that these questions were meticulously chosen as they were most influential for my research and were important to understanding the impact that overworking and work-life balance have in the lives of industrial designers, entrepreneurs, and employees.

QUALITATIVE AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH OVERVIEW

To begin understanding the impact that this topic has and how it affects those around me, I began my research by observing new young professionals around me and taking notes of how they view their new work endeavors.

It was interesting to observe how people's impressions of work and overtime work expectations vary based on profession and company.

I observed how two recent graduates from the same area of study who graduated together and received job offers within months from each other view work and how they prioritize their personal lives. Without intervention and simply as an observer I noticed how young professional 'A' weekly put in extra overtime hours as well as taking on responsibilities outside of their work description, sacrificing at times their plans, such as physical activity times and time with friends and family. On the other hand, young professional 'B', who works in a similar industry and has also worked on the job for around a year, works their agreed schedule of 8:30 am to 5:30 pm from Monday through Friday and returns home. Individual 'B' can make a clear distinction between work time and personal time, for this reason, they can enjoy time to themselves as well as friends and family.

Individual A showed to be displeased with their work situation but seemed hopeless about a solution, mentioning feelings of burnout and even anger towards the situation. On the other hand, Individual B seemed indifferent to their work hours, as it was what was contractually agreed from the beginning, and simply expressed content towards the company and responsibilities.

This distinction is observable in many different industries and different age groups. At first glance and during the beginning stages of my research I could not identify a common denominator for these two work ethics.

An additional layer to our research involved a firsthand interview with a retired former CFO and VP of Volkswagen. The interviewee shared a unique perspective, tracing their work journey back to the age of 14, when they began working long hours to earn their own money, and shared that since the beginning they have followed strict work ethics passed down to them by their father. Stating "The work that we do is a means to income and not much

else [...]". However as they moved up their career the demand for extra time, overtime, and standby hours increased significantly, and they found themselves sacrificing family time and personal hobbies. Looking back on this the individual seemed upset with the outcome but ultimately stated that this is the norm of the nature of the job and how big corporations work, and there was nothing that could be realistically done.

CULTURAL IMPACT AND RELEVANCE
This subject has sparked my interest since I was exposed to a full-time work experience in a multinational company during my summer internship. The job was located in Mexico and I was able to observe how my coworkers went about work obligations and extra work. I noticed that most days my coworkers would on average stay at least 1 hour longer at the office than their already scheduled 9 hours, and would consistently complete extra work at home and be accessible via phone at late hours of the evening. Although most times, they are not being compensated for the extra effort put in. These observations were also made about the previously interviewed individual, however, in this scenario, the individuals did not hold any relevant positions of power. When asked about this behavior they stated that although they were not explicitly asked to comply with extra hours, it was somewhat expected not only from those in higher positions but their coworkers alike. Another reason was the want to cause a positive impression, and in some cases, they were not very conscious that they were overworking themselves as it was 'normal'.

Although the observation was done superficially to protect individuals' privacy it was enough to engage the research with my last question, What role do companies play in either facilitating or hindering a healthy balance between work and personal life? If workers felt that there was pressure to put in extra effort at their jobs could this have been caused due to company culture and values? Are companies aware of the role they play in overworking workers? Finally, what are the possible effects of putting work-life balance aside?

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Statistics Canada 21.2% of employed people experience high or extremely high levels of work-related stress, with heavy workload & balancing work and personal life, being the most common causes of work-related stress.

Studies have shown that the "40-hour workweek" is actually more like 47 and that it hasn't been 40 hours in many years. In 2014 Gallup conducted a survey that showed that 21% of American adults employed 'full-time' actually work on average 50-59 hours, and 18% work over 60 hours per week, with 42% stating to work 40 hours and only 8% working less than the recommended 40 hours. Found in the same study is the correlation between salaried workers putting in on average 5 extra hours per week.

Roy Maurer an editor for SHRM also wrote in a 2020 article that according to studies, almost 70% of workers who have transitioned to remote work since the pandemic are now working on weekends and 45% stated to be working more during the weeks than they did before the pandemic. Although workers obtained a new sense of flexibility remote working has made it harder for employees to disconnect from work and focus on their personal life.

But are these extra hours of work actually worth it?

The truth is that not really. Productivity seems to decrease exponentially from 49 weekly hours on. So these extra hours although seemingly beneficial to the employer are not accomplishing much more than overworking employees.

The very origin of the work-life balance concept began with the 19th-century fight for the 8-hour workday. This was a movement that transcended borders and soon began the norm across the world. The motto that followed the fight was usually "8 hours for work, 8 hours for rest, and 8 hours for recreation". It implied and demanded a clear distinction between work and leisure hours, as well as sufficient rest. There was fear at the time that the

productivity of workers and of the companies would decrease. However, the opposite was found to be true. Workers were more alert and productivity increased after the implementation of the 8-hour day 5 day week.

After analyzing the history of the work-life balance movement it is important to note that we find ourselves in unique times. The invention of personal smart devices, for example, portable computers, smartphones, and video conference systems has posed a real challenge for workers that is difficult to tackle. It has become increasingly hard to form clear work boundaries, it is easy to read an email, pick up a phone call, or complete 'quick' tasks when supposed to be on recreation or rest time, given that we are all always connected.

Relating back to our previously mentioned questions and research, we are confronted with the task of understanding the nuanced ways in which overworking and stress impact entrepreneurs, a demographic known for its strong work ethic and dedication. From the time money and effort dedicated to their endeavors to the sacrifices made. Studies show that "75 Percent of Entrepreneurs Are Concerned About Their Mental Health" Stemming mainly from the pressures of building a company and lack of rest and recreation.

Entrepreneurs are mostly self-employed and handle their own schedules, which to some might be an unattainable dream, is in reality the main reason for overworking and burnout amongst entrepreneurs. Most times these entrepreneurial endeavors come with high stakes, and high risk, meaning the individual has more on the line. Forming clear Work-life boundaries in this context is exponentially harder. This is why there should be a bigger focus on incentivizing work-related boundaries within companies, amongst colleagues, and individually.

IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT

These facts and analysis although seemingly negative are not meant to discourage or to say there is no solution to the work-life balance effort. In fact in

recent years especially with the pandemic and its impact on workers, more attention has been brought forward and more and more individuals have come out and stated their opinions.

The United States alone saw more than 50 million people leave their jobs in 2022, and nearly 48 million in 2021, as a consequence of the phenomenon being referred to as the 'great resignation'. More than half of Gen Z and millennial workers who quit cited either a lack of work-life balance or lack of flexibility as the reason. Another study showed that when asked about work priorities the only thing that rivaled financial stability was work-life balance.

With these drastic effects on workplaces and environments, word is spreading about worker rights and demands, and that the current situation is not acceptable to a majority of people.

How can we make a difference? How much will we have to sacrifice for a company, being that as an employee or owner, until we realize the consequences this has on our mental and physical well-being?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this comprehensive exploration into the dynamics of work-life balance, overworking, and stress within the context of entrepreneurship, sheds light on a situation that is often uncomfortable to address with coworkers, colleagues, employers, and even friends and loved ones. With mental health, stigma still plays a significant role in hindering this open communication.

The journey into this research was eye-opening in many ways, beginning from the observation of young professionals around me to my coworkers and at times my own behaviors and work ethics. By examining the broader theme of 'Leadership, Culture, Vision, Values,' with a specific focus on the techniques employed to build effective teams and successful companies. I was able to conclude that prioritization of a healthy work-life balance is not

only extremely beneficial to the employees and entrepreneurs but also to the companies, as productivity increases by significant amounts when workers are well rested and satisfied with their work life.

The quantitative research section underscored the evolving nature of the current work landscape. With a special remark on the effects of the 2020 pandemic and the transition into remote and work-from-home systems. A highlight was made to the statistic that states that the 40-hour work week has been slowly being left behind unannounced as a majority of workers reported working over 40 hours regularly. This finding emphasizes the challenges faced by individuals in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

A noteworthy finding was the discrepancy between the perceived benefits of overworking and the actual outcomes. While extended work hours might seem beneficial to employers, research suggests productivity beyond 40 hours falls significantly. Which goes against the perception and basis of the 'hustle culture'.

Moving forward, it is clear that a culture that values work-life balance is not just a matter of personal choice but collective benefits and responsibility. Companies play a crucial role in fostering workplace cultures and incentivizing the prioritization of the well-being of their employees. Individuals need to raise their voices for change and engage in dialogue that promotes the protection of our rights and the well-being of our population. The delicate connection between passion, dedication, and well-being in the workplace and within leadership and entrepreneurship positions is a powerful tool for a good work-life balance.

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HOW WORKPLACE DIVERSITY INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE?

TEAM   LEADERSHIP, CULTURE, VISION, VALUES   ANTHONY CHAN

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

In today's world, we encounter, interact and work with people from diverse cultures, ethnicities, sexuality and more. As a team, we decided to explore the overarching theme of leadership, culture, vision, and values as we wanted to know the techniques used by companies to build effective and successful teams. While exploring this theme, each of us focused on a specific topic that we wanted to explore. This led me to investigate how workplace diversity can influence performance.

I have chosen this specific topic as I wanted to learn more about the various benefits to having a diverse workplace, learn how various ways it is has been implemented and how design is impacted by diversity. Diversity at its core is a subject that is in itself very broad ranging from race, values, sexuality, and beliefs. In my research, I have gathered sources with a global perspective on diversity to gain comprehensive insights about diversity as it is a multifaceted concept that cannot be distilled into a single point.

In the next sections, I have distilled the various findings that I have acquired during my research and the various discussions we had among team members. I will share my opinions on the question of diversity and team performance based on the findings and my personal thoughts.

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SUBTOPIC

With the advent of globalization, technological prowess, and migration, we have evolved into a more than ever interconnected society. We all depend on each other and to a certain extent the major corporations we have built and rely on. They are responsible for many things in our daily activities. As such, understanding how these companies have grown and will grow is important if we want to one day run our own company.

Running a company is quite a daunting task; how many companies who were once at the top are now but mere skeletons? During our various discussions, we first investigated the broader topic of what it takes to be a leader and how should a leader act towards their employees. We discovered numerous ways a leader can have a positive impact on the company; some of the findings we find can be summed up below.

We found that a leader is not just the person who created a company, a leader is someone that is able to bring people together through their charisma, panache, and showing their own true self. A leader can be anyone that is able to connect with their fellow co-workers, bring out the best out of others and is able to show them what the greater vision is. To be a leader is to inspire, motivate and guide the people following you.

As we have seen lately with massive layoffs from major companies and the ever-excessive exodus of talents within companies, we cannot help but think about ways to help build and retain talent to help them grow within a company. As the leaders of tomorrow, we need to understand the various techniques that leaders can implement to build effective teams and a successful company.

While exploring the various ways to create effective teams and successful companies, we discovered that company culture, values and vision are the cornerstone to a company's success in the long run. The leadership of a company needs to strive towards creating an environment that allows employees to express themselves, feel proud of their work, be interested in their work, respect their work-life balance, and feel understood by their peers.

DISCUSSION ABOUT INDIVIDUAL'S WORKING TITLE

Diversity, a very sensitive topic to some, can cause discomfort to others and is sometimes hard to talk about. Firstly, we need to understand what diversity means. In an article written by McKinsey (*What Is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?*, 2022) diversity is described as "*Diversity* refers to who is represented in the workforce" it also mentions the various types of diversity in the workforce namely: gender diversity, ethnic diversity, age diversity, physical ability and neurodiversity.

In our modern age where companies are comprised of people coming from various countries, ethnicities and have various sexual orientations, we are to consider how this diversity can possibly impact the functioning of an organization. We are going to explore how workplace diversity influence performance and uncover the links between being an entrepreneur and design. I have formulated three questions that will help us better understand the topic and they are: 1) Understanding how diversity helps performance, 2) What ways is diversity helping innovation, 3) How does design benefit from diversity?

There has been much debate in the diversity realm concerning how to best implement diversity in a way that will promote performance. As mentioned in Kochan et al. (2003), "During the 1990s, diversity rhetoric shifted to emphasize the "business case" for supporting workforce diversity." An example promoting this rhetoric can be found in Kochan et al. (2003), where the former CEO of Hewlett Packard was trying to convince his executives and managers that employing a more diverse workforce across different level of management would result in a better business performance.

However, to prove that this rhetoric was valid, much research had to be done and one entity called the Building Opportunities for Leadership Development (BOLD) Initiative was created to research this topic. The findings from the research of BOLD and Kochan et al. (2003), have proved quite elusive because of how sensitive the issue is, low participation from organizations or from data obtained in controlled study and real life which were not conclusive. Even though elusive, some evidence states, "Instead, the evidence suggests that diversity may simultaneously produce more conflict and employee turnover as well as more creativity and innovation" (Kochan et al., 2003).

In their research, they concluded that there was no direct link between gender or racial diversity on team performance, gender diversity increased group processes, training helped reduce the negative effects of racial diversity on constructive group processes. This disproved my optimistic assumptions of the correlation that having more diversity would help performance and rather showed that depending on the type of diversity, the outcomes can be different.

My research led me to also investigate how inclusion and management can have an impact on diversity. First, we need to ask ourselves what inclusion means to understand its impact. Inclusion is the sense of belongingness that one experiences when being part of a group. In a workplace setting, inclusion can be felt in two different ways namely, the feeling of uniqueness in a group and the feeling of belongingness in a group. As seen in Shore et al. (2010), "There is support in the diversity literature for the advantages of experiencing belongingness and uniqueness simultaneously."

In an article by Barak (2015), talks about the two different stages of organization workforce inclusion processes namely reactive organizations which recruit and employs a diverse workforce and proactive organizations which invests efforts in active diversity management aiming to enhance inclusion fostering organizational effectiveness in their workforce. This study by Barak (2015), also concluded that "Overall, accumulating research in the past few years has strongly supported the basic hypothesis that diversity representation and diversity management with a focus on inclusion have a positive impact on organizational performance."

As leaders/ entrepreneurs, it is important to not only diversify but also know how to implement diversity to achieve the best possible outcome. Apart from inclusion, some methods used in a study conducted by Ely and Thomas (2001), showed various outcomes when it came to diversity and group functioning. The three perspectives identified in the study were: the integration and learning perspective which values the diverse experiences brought by the employees and encourages cross cultural learning among members, the access and legitimacy perspective which implements cultural diversity by matching its workforce to the market it is trying to cater to gain legitimacy with the clientele and markets, the discrimination and fairness perspective believes that everyone should be treated fairly and uses a color blind way of managing their employees and tries to eliminate discrimination. I have concluded from this study that the method that was the most promising was the integration and learning perspective as it fostered the best cohesion between members, was able to make each member respected, heard, and reduced conflicts.

When looking at how diversity can influence innovation, we need to understand the various ways innovation can be measured. In a study done by Rocio Lorenzo (TED, 2017), they conducted a study across 171 companies to find out how diversity impacts innovation and they found that indeed innovation is affected by diversity. They made innovation measurable by quantifying the value of the ideas and services brought to their company's success. Although they concluded that there is a link, they could not say whether it is diversity that helped innovation or was it innovation that brought in diversity.

While researching more sources linking diversity and innovation, I stumbled upon an article that reveals that "He focuses on cognitive differences between people, not identity differences like race, gender, ethnicity or religion." (Denning, 2012) The author mentions that cognitive diversity is comprised of: diverse perspectives, diverse interpretations, diverse heuristics, and diverse predictive models. These models are very interesting as there has not been any article mentioning cognitive diversity before.

In the same article, he also coins the term supper-additivity which is described as "When a collection of people works together, and one person makes an improvement, the others can often improve on this new solution even further: improvements build on improvements. Diverse perspectives and diverse heuristics apply sequentially: one gets applied after the other and in combination. As a result, one plus one often exceeds two." (Denning, 2012) When you think about it, it makes total sense as the popular saying goes, two brains is better than one, this "super-additivity" is what diversity often brings when in team settings.

In an article by Hewlett (2014), it cites "By correlating diversity in leadership with market outcomes as reported by respondents, we learned that companies with 2-D diversity out-innovate and out-perform others." This study separates diversity into two different types namely, inherent which we are born with and acquired which we gain from experience. Leaders should understand how crucial these two types of diversity could help their companies be more innovative since with diverse mindset comes, out of the box ideas.

Diversity in design is nowadays more than ever crucial. With a more interconnected world, we as

designers need to cater to a wider consumer base which is hard if everyone were to think alike. This is where diversity comes in, with diversity, the experiences brought by people from various backgrounds can help design adapt and thrive. In the article (*Diversity in Design: Why Does It Matter? | Big Human*, n.d.) it shows that there is a lack of diversity in design. The graph below reveals the data obtained by the Design Census.
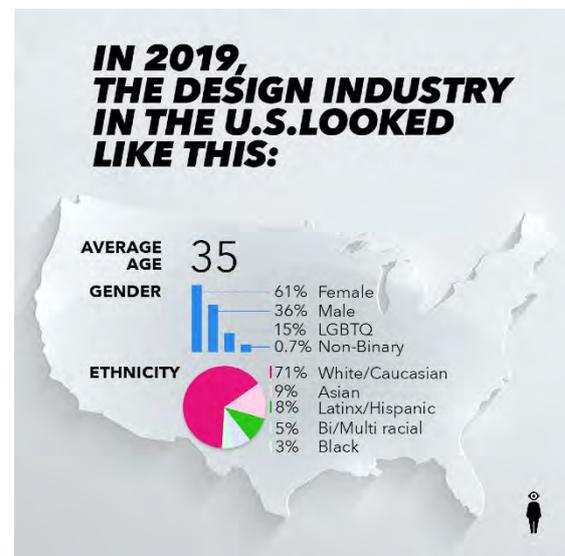
So, what does it take to help foster diversity in the design world? In the article by Rees (2018), it describes various ways that we can help promote diversity at work. Some methods that I found interesting were to be more open to new ideas, become a mentor to someone and stand up against discrimination. By applying those methods in our lives, we as designers can foster an environment where diversity thrives. It also allows us to better understand our target audience and as such helps us be more mindful of their struggles to better design for them.

In my search for how diversity influence performance does, I have concluded that in fact, it does have an impact that is noticeable. My research answered many of the questions I also had on how diversity can be implemented to bring about performance, whether there is a link between innovation and diversity and finally how does diversity impact us as designers.

Some key takeaways from my research are that firstly, our society could not have become what it is without diversity. Since we have become a globally connected society, we cannot live in our own bubble and as such diversity brings in fresh points

of view which helps us thrive. Secondly, I have realized that without having diversity, we would not have been able to progress as a civilization. Innovation and diversity work together to bring about the experiences and knowledge that we desperately need to move forward. Thirdly, as designers, diversity is crucial as it helps us be more aware of the people surrounding us. Diversity helps us open our eyes to the experiences of people and as such it helps us design for all the people.

CONCLUSION

During this whole learning journey, I have found this class to be very eye opening. The theme of entrepreneurship and design is something that we as design students need to understand as it will help us in navigating our future career path. The topic that we have chosen about the techniques used to build effective teams and successful companies has taught me how complex it is to be a leader.

In our weekly discussions with my other team members, we were able to each pick out various ways that could be used by the leader to build effective teams and successful companies. In those discussions that we had, we shared our individual findings on the topic, and this helped us better understand each other's individual topics. The topic of building an effective team that we chose coincidentally reflected what we were all doing as a team, which was collaborating and sharing our ideas.

This project showed me how broad research can be and that narrowing things down can allow for more effective learning rather than cramming lots of research to review and being inefficient in the end. Reading through all those articles about diversity, I learned how researchers have designed methodology to analyze data to generate qualitative and quantitative conclusions which was very interesting. I have greatly grown from learning about diversity in the workplace with all its implications and seeing its effects on people.

As leaders of tomorrow, I have learned a great deal on how to consider diversity and implement it to foster innovation. The research I read showed how important it is to know how to implement diversity to achieve the best performance as well as the various methods used to create a workplace that people feel valued and heard. As a designer, many

of the findings will forever shape the way that I view my surroundings and consider other people's views. We cannot live in a society that does not value its diversity for the various benefits it brings.

Apart from the topic of diversity, I also was able to learn from my other team members about how each of their topics can also help build effective teams and successful companies. Some other topics were how important work life balance is, how strong values set forth by leaders build strong teams, how to add value to the work we do, and finally how designing the workspace is crucial for employee satisfaction.

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THE POWER OF ADDING VALUE TO WORK PRODUCED

TEAM | Leadership, Culture, Vision, Values |TSZ CHING (Dora) LAU

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Unlocking the potential of a successful team and thriving company involves understanding the transformative power of adding value to the work produced. This concept goes beyond meeting basic project requirements, emphasizing the enhancement of quality, utility, and significance in a professional or business context. By delving into strategies such as autonomy, mastery, purpose, and a customer-centric ethos, we navigate the dynamic landscape of organizational success. This exploration serves as a comprehensive guide, shedding light on the interconnected strategies that contribute to the creation of effective teams and enduring success in the ever-evolving business landscape.

HOW TO BUILD AN EFFECTIVE TEAM?

In our subtopic, we discuss techniques for building effective teams and successful companies in the context of leadership, culture, vision, and values.

The evolution of effective leadership, company culture, and team dynamics has been crucial throughout the history of successful companies. Leaders who harness their passion often emerge as tough but inspiring figures, such as Steve Jobs or Elon Musk, driving entrepreneurial ventures to new heights. Over time, the significance of fostering a positive company culture, emphasizing a compelling vision, and adhering to core values has become increasingly apparent.

This discussion focuses on the techniques for building effective teams and successful companies within the broader context of leadership, culture, vision, and values. Specifically, we will address work-life balance, team diversity, leadership qualities, value in work produced, and the significance of a positive work environment.

Existing research highlights the lack of work-life balance diminishes employee well-being and job satisfaction. Studies also underscore the advantages of diversity in teams, emphasizing the varied perspectives it brings. Effective leadership is identified as a critical factor in team success, with a focus on adding value to the work produced. Additionally, research consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between a good working environment and heightened productivity.

We explored real-world examples of successful companies and delved into the leadership philosophies that have propelled them forward. We also investigate case studies that provide valuable insights into the practical application of techniques for building effective teams.

Addressing the question of effective team building, our investigation reveals that maintaining a healthy work-life balance, fostering diversity, and emphasizing leadership qualities are essential. A good leader, we found, adds value to the work produced by motivating and guiding their team. Moreover, the positive impact of a conducive work environment on productivity cannot be overstated.

TIPS TO ADD VALUE TO WORK PRODUCED

Adding value to work produced refers to enhancing the quality, utility, or significance of the output generated in a professional or business context. It involves going beyond the basic requirements of a task or project to create something that has a greater impact, utility, or appeal.

A focus on adding value not only enhances individual contributions but also contributes to the overall effectiveness and success of a team and a company. It creates a positive, dynamic work environment

where team members are motivated, innovative, and committed to achieving shared goals.

AUTONOMY

As stated by Daniel Pink. in his book Drive. Autonomy, our innate desire for self-direction and control over our lives, often clashes with traditional management approaches. While conventional management methods excel at eliciting compliance, they fall short in fostering engagement, a crucial aspect in today's workforce where individuals tackle increasingly sophisticated tasks. The preference leans towards self-direction for optimal outcomes.

For example, Atlassian, an innovative Australian software company, is an exemplar of radical self-direction in the workplace. Every quarter, the CEO initiates a distinctive practice: on a designated Thursday afternoon, developers are granted 24 hours of complete freedom. During this time, they can work on any project of their choosing, collaborating with whomever they wish. The only requirement is to present the results to the company at the end of the 24 hours. (Pink, 2011) This gathering, far from a stern evaluation, fosters an atmosphere of creativity and collaboration. Google also embraced this with its '20% time' policy, leading to the creation of successful products like Gmail and Google News (CNBC, 2021). Same as 3M, embraced this with their '15 %' policy, leading to more than 60,000 products has been produced (3M, n.d.).

A single day of unrestrained autonomy has yielded a plethora of positive outcomes. It has spurred a multitude of fixes for existing software issues and generated a host of innovative ideas for new products. The experiment showcases the transformative power of granting employees the freedom to pursue their passions, resulting in solutions and ideas that may have otherwise remained undiscovered.

MASTERY

Mastery, a second tip mentioned by Daniel Pink., is a fundamental inclination towards improvement. The intrinsic desire to enhance our skills and capabilities is a universal motivator. For instance, the weekend hobbyist playing a musical instrument. Despite the apparent lack of economic gain or reproductive advantage, individuals are drawn to such pursuits because they find joy in the process of improvement.

An example of the mastery drive is evident in the phenomenon of Wikipedia – a collaborative platform where contributors willingly dedicate their time and expertise without financial compensation(Pink, 2011). The driving forces behind this voluntary commitment are rooted in the intrinsic satisfaction derived from challenge, mastery, and opportunity to make a meaningful contribution.

Daniel Pink underscores the significance of mastery in the pursuit of excellence. Continuous learning and skill refinement are key components of personal and professional development. When individuals are afforded the chance to cultivate their abilities, a profound sense of accomplishment and fulfillment ensues.

A company that recognizes and embraces the concept of mastery can implement a robust training program for its employees, providing them with the tools and resources to master their skills. By offering avenues for professional growth and development, the organization not only taps into the inherent desire for improvement among its team members but also cultivates a workforce that is adept, engaged, and driven to excel. This commitment to mastery creates a positive feedback loop, where individuals experience a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment, contributing to the overall success and effectiveness of the team.

PURPOSE

Organizations are going through a big change in how they operate- a shift toward having a clear and meaningful purpose (Pink, 2011). Companies are not just doing this to attract top talent but also to make the work experience better. Leaders like the one who started Skype and Steve Jobs are leading the way, expressing goals that go beyond just making money. They believe in maximizing purpose and encouraging

people to contribute to something bigger than themselves.

According to Daniel Pink, a motivation expert, having a real purpose at work goes beyond just doing tasks. He argues that true motivation comes when the work is meaningful and has a positive impact on others. The idea is to connect individual tasks to a larger purpose, not only for personal satisfaction but also to create a sense of shared mission within organizations. This shift towards purpose-driven ways of working is becoming more common, as companies realize how it positively affects employee morale and attracts high-quality talent.

In this changing landscape, leadership takes on a new role. A good leader is not just someone who plans well but also someone with a clear and inspiring purpose. Being able to express a big goal similar to the ambitious aims of the Skype founder Steve Jobs wanting to 'put a Ding in the universe,' is what motivates teams to work together toward success.

CUSTOMER CENTRIC

While many companies have exceptional talent and resources, why don't all of them manage to consistently add significant value to their work output? For example, Nokia. Despite its robust brand and substantial resources, serves as a poignant example. The company faltered in the face of competition from the likes of Apple and Samsung, primarily due to its inability to innovate swiftly.

The genesis of groundbreaking ideas lies not in fixating on obstacles but in exploring potential solutions. Entrepreneurs understand this as looking for consumer-centric ideas born from identifying problems or needs, commonly known as pain points. Netflix, for instance, tackled the issue of late fees imposed by Blockbuster, proudly heralding "The End of Late Fees." Uber, not aiming to dismantle the taxi industry, gained popularity as a repose to the hassles associated with traditional taxis. Airbnb, rather than intending to disrupt hotels, addressed limitations in pricing choices. Amazon's early mission wasn't to eliminate bookstores but to counter poor customer

service in brick-and-mortar retail, eventually becoming known for competitive pricing.

Figure 1. Overview of Replaced Brands. Source: Helpance

While technology and the sharing economy play roles, the crux lies in being "Customer-Centric." Brands that eclipse established giants often prioritize addressing pain points and enhancing overall consumer experiences. The demand for talent in "User Experience"(UX) and "User Interface"(UI) has surged since the game-changing debut, emphasizing the importance of identifying and resolving user experience pain points. (David, n.d.)

In stark contrast, businesses that rely on exploiting consumer issues or resist adapting to new challenges can encounter significant troubles. Survival in today's dynamic market hinges on innovation aligned with customer wants and needs. Amazon stands out as a prime example, epitomizing a brand built around the customer. As Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos (2018) asserts, 'We see our customers as guests to a party, and we are the hosts. It's our job every day to make every

important aspect of the customer experience a little bit better."

A focus on customer satisfaction goes beyond mere transactions; it cultivates a customer-centric culture within the team. This cultural shift makes team members more attuned to customer needs and pain points, fostering better decision-making and a proactive approach to problem-solving. In the ever-evolving marketplace, the imperative for business is clear: innovate with a keen eye on customer satisfaction to stay relevant and resilient.

CONCLUSION

In the context of building effective teams and successful companies, our discussion delves into 5 key viewpoints, work-life balance, team diversity, leadership qualities, putting value into work produced, and the importance of fostering a positive work environment. By examining these aspects within the broader framework of leadership, culture, vision, and values, we aim to elucidate the techniques that contribute to organizational success and the cultivation of high-performing teams.

Building a successful team and company involves considering various factors. It's not sufficient to rely on a single perspective or viewpoint. For example, the concepts discussed for adding value can be implemented as a strategy by team leaders, showcasing leadership qualities. Entrepreneurs should embody tough leadership while also prioritizing work-life balance. Therefore, building an effective team and achieving success requires looking at multiple viewpoints rather than focusing on just one.

From the perspective of adding value to the work produced to achieve effective team and organizational success, the integration of autonomy, mastery, purpose, and a customer-centric ethos forms a framework of essential principles for positive change. Drawing from Daniel Pink's insights, autonomy is highlighted as a catalyst for innovation, with companies like Atlassian, Google, and 3M showcasing the positive outcomes of granting

employees the freedom to pursue their passions. Mastery underlines the importance of continuous learning and skill refinement for personal and professional development, as companies fostering a culture of mastery cultivate adept, engaged, and professional teams. The paradigm shift towards a clear and meaningful purpose transcends mere trends, with purpose-driven work connecting individual efforts to a larger mission, exemplified by visionary leaders such as Skype's founder and Steve Jobs. Simultaneously, a customer-centric approach emerges as a critical factor for business longevity, evidenced by companies like Netflix, Uber, Airbnb, and Amazon, which prioritize addressing consumer pain points and fostering proactive problem-solving within trams. As the business landscape evolves, the imperative for innovation aligned with customer satisfaction becomes increasingly clear, positioning it as the cornerstone for organizational relevance and resilience in today's ever-changing marketplace.

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CRAFTING WORKSPACE ENVIRONMENTS TO FOSTER CORPORATE CULTURE AND COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT

TEAM | LEADERSHIP, CULTURE, VISION, VALUES | XIAODUO LIN

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

This report is about understanding how the design of workspaces can transform a company's culture and teamwork dynamics. My main focus zeroes in on the power of workspace design to shape how employees collaborate and engage within an organization.

The primary aim of this report is to uncover the hidden impact that workspace layouts have on corporate culture and teamwork effectiveness. I'll be diving deep into how deliberately shaping work environments can significantly influence how teams operate and how a company's values are upheld.

Come along on this journey as we unravel the secrets behind how office spaces can become powerful drivers of teamwork, collaboration, and overall success within an organization.

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SUBTOPIC

Leadership, Culture, Vision, Values

Our team explored how different aspects of corporate life, like balancing work and personal life, adding value to work, embracing diversity, and upholding core values, contribute to effective leadership, culture, vision, and teamwork. I specifically focused on how the design of workspaces impacts company culture and collaboration among employees.

My focus was on understanding how workspace design influences corporate culture and teamwork. This exploration involved analyzing academic research, real-world case studies, and expert perspectives.

I delved into some critical inquiries: How does the physical layout of a workspace impact employees' sense of belonging to the company? Which design elements contribute to fostering a strong corporate culture? How does workspace design align with a company's values? My investigation encompassed diverse sources, from scholarly articles to practical examples.

My findings highlighted compelling insights. Companies like Airbnb, Google, and Riot Games strategically use their office designs to reflect their core values. This intentional alignment nurtures a sense of unity among employees and reinforces their connection to the company's ethos.

This emphasizes the strategic importance of workspace design. When offices are thoughtfully designed to echo a company's principles, employees tend to feel more engaged and devoted. This aspect holds significant implications for contemporary businesses striving for success.

DISCUSSION ABOUT INDIVIDUAL'S WORKING TITLE

Crafting Workspace Environments to Foster Corporate Culture and Collaborative Engagement

Amidst the daily hustle, employees invest a significant portion of their lives within the workplace (One third of your life is spent at work). Just as individuals curate their homes to reflect personal comfort, many seek to infuse their workspaces with personal touches, be it a humble potted plant or a collection of cherished photos.

Next, we will delve into the strategic design of workspaces to invigorate corporate culture, amplify employee engagement, and stimulate creative collaboration within businesses.

Corporate Culture Propagation through Workspace Design

In the world of workspace design, how offices look and feel reflects what a company is all about. Take Google's and Riot Game's offices, for example— they're not just cool-looking spaces but carefully designed to match their own vibes.

The revolutionized workplace designs, evident in Google's Bay View campus and Riot Games' offices,

have significantly contributed to the pervasive corporate culture within their respective organizations (Radcliffe, 2022; Vanette, 2016). Both campuses serve as physical manifestations of their companies' core values, emphasizing the pivotal role of workspace design in fostering and reinforcing corporate culture.

Google's Bay View campus embodies a human-centered design philosophy, placing paramount importance on the experience of its employees (Radcliffe, 2022). This approach stems from a deep understanding that employee satisfaction, creativity, and productivity are deeply intertwined with the work environment. Consequently, the campus design prioritizes spaces that cater to various work modes, emphasizing both collaborative teamwork and individual focus. Team spaces on the upper floors foster collaboration, while dedicated areas for deep-focus work are situated below, providing a balance that aligns with Google's culture of innovation and collaboration (Radcliffe, 2022).

Similarly, Riot Games' office design reflects the company's cultural ethos of creativity and innovation (Vanette, 2016). The workspace is conceived as an environment that challenges and inspires employees. Riot's emphasis on providing an engaging and thought-provoking workspace underscores its commitment to cultivating an atmosphere where employees are motivated to push boundaries. The office space is intentionally designed to stimulate creativity, encourage interaction, and promote a sense of ownership and pride among employees (Vanette, 2016).

Both campuses integrate elements that resonate with the ethos of their organizations. For instance, Google's campus features curated artwork reflecting local culture, emphasizing a connection to the community and fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity (Radcliffe, 2022). Riot Games' office adopts a similar approach, where its spaces reflect the company's commitment to encouraging personal expression and creative thinking through an environment that mirrors gaming culture and artistry (Vanette, 2016).

By intertwining their physical environments with their cultural values, both Google and Riot Games create workplaces that serve as living representations of

their distinctive cultures. These spaces not only promote employee engagement but also reinforce a strong sense of belonging and purpose, inspiring employees to contribute actively to the organization's overarching mission and values (Radcliffe, 2022; Vanette, 2016).

Enhancing Employee Engagement and Sense of Belonging

As mentioned in the previous section, workspace design plays a crucial role in creating an environment where employees feel connected, engaged, and valued. "The Best Place to Work: The Art and Science of Creating an Extraordinary Workplace" by Ron Friedman (2014) sheds light on the psychology behind exceptional workplaces, emphasizing elements that contribute to employee satisfaction and productivity. Airbnb exemplifies how innovative office design can be instrumental in nurturing a profound sense of belonging(Office Snapshots). Their office layout goes beyond the conventional cubicle setup, strategically emphasizing communal spaces that prioritize the concept of belonging. By embracing a "neighborhoods" theme, the office is segmented into distinct zones, each mirroring various global communities. This intentional design choice is more than spatial; it symbolizes diversity and inclusivity, fostering interaction and a shared identity among employees.

The "neighborhoods" concept celebrates cultural diversity within the workspace. Each zone represents a different global community, incorporating elements of various cultures, traditions, and aesthetics. This intentional diversity encourages employees to engage and connect across boundaries, fostering a deep sense of community and shared identity. The design isn't just about physical spaces; it's a reflection of Airbnb's commitment to inclusivity, echoing the principles outlined in "The Best Place to Work" (Friedman, 2014)

Airbnb's innovative office design aligns with the themes in Friedman's book (2014), which underscore the importance of psychological factors in creating an exceptional workplace. The intentional layout promotes social interaction, collaboration, and a sense of unity among employees. This, in turn, enhances engagement, creativity, and a feeling of

belonging, contributing to a thriving organizational culture.

The office environment becomes a dynamic ecosystem where employees feel valued, appreciated, and connected. The deliberate design encourages spontaneous interactions, informal discussions, and cross-functional collaborations. It fosters an inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels heard and valued, promoting a sense of ownership and commitment to the company's goals.

Motivation and Well-being in Workspace Layouts

The design of a workspace profoundly influences employee motivation and well-being. "It seems that creativity is adaptive, like anything else. When a space becomes available, work emerges to fill it" (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012). Jennifer Magnolfi's article on Apple's new headquarters, Apple Park, offers an insightful perspective on the divergent approaches to workspace design, shedding light on the relevance of spatial environments to employee motivation and well-being (Magnolfi, 2017).

Apple Park's unique design, contrary to prevalent trends in Silicon Valley, showcases the importance of workspace as a driver of motivation and well-being. Steve Jobs envisioned Apple Park as more than just a functional workspace; it was intended to be a symbol of enduring values, inspiring innovation and shaping the company's trajectory for generations (Magnolfi, 2017). This emphasis on the workplace as a symbol aligns with the principles outlined in "Make Space," which highlights the significance of spatial design in fostering creativity and collaboration (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012).

The spatial layout at Apple Park reflects a deliberate strategy to intertwine architecture with nature, creating a conducive environment for employee well-being (Magnolfi, 2017). The incorporation of parkland, green landscapes, and a wooded preserve amidst the architectural structure showcases a commitment to employee welfare, promoting a sense of tranquility and connection with nature. This concept resonates with the notion from "Make Space" that well-designed environments can enhance creativity and overall satisfaction among employees (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012).

Moreover, the strategic placement of workspaces within Apple Park, such as the modular "pods" for teamwork, focused work, and socialization, aims to optimize employee interactions and productivity (Magnolfi, 2017). This approach aligns with the concepts in "Make Space," emphasizing the role of spatial arrangements in facilitating collaboration and creative exchange (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012).

However, Apple Park's departure from the prevailing trend towards adaptable, flexible workspaces in Silicon Valley has invited criticism (Magnolfi, 2017). Critics argue that the design lacks flexibility and may not cater to evolving work patterns. This criticism echoes the ongoing debate highlighted in "Make Space" regarding the challenge of balancing adaptable spaces with the need for permanence in architectural design (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012).

Stimulating Creative Collaboration Through Design

In their book, "Make Space: How to Set the Stage for Creative Collaboration," Scott Doorley and Scott Witthoft advocate for adaptable and collaborative environments in workspaces (Doorley & Witthoft, 2012). This notion resonates strongly with the innovative strategies Google is implementing, as outlined in Daisuke Wakabayashi's article "Google's Plan for the Future of Work: Privacy Robots and Balloon Walls" published in The New York Times (Wakabayashi, 2021).

Google is transforming its office spaces post-pandemic, recognizing the shift in employee work preferences toward flexible arrangements. Drawing inspiration from "Make Space," the company is emphasizing the creation of dynamic and versatile environments that support collaboration and cater to evolving needs. This is evident in the introduction of "Team Pods," which mirrors the book's advocacy for adaptable spaces. These pods offer configurable arrangements with movable furniture, promoting spontaneity and facilitating varied interaction styles among employees.

Furthermore, Google's focus on inclusive spaces reflects the book's principles. The introduction of "Campfire" meeting rooms, designed to ensure equality between in-person and remote attendees, aligns with the book's emphasis on creating

collaborative environments that accommodate diverse working styles.

Addressing distractions and privacy concerns is another area where Google's initiatives converge with the book's recommendations. Google's innovative solutions, such as movable walls, inflatable partitions, and noise-muffling chairs, resonate with "Make Space's" emphasis on customizable and adaptable spaces that cater to individual preferences, fostering a conducive environment for creative collaboration.

Google's endeavors in redefining office spaces align closely with the principles advocated in "Make Space." The company's commitment to flexible, adaptable, and inclusive workspace design reflects a proactive approach to nurturing collaborative environments, echoing the core philosophy of fostering creative collaboration espoused by Doorley and Witthoft.

CONCLUSION

We've explored key elements like leadership, company culture, values, and workspace design, learning how they shape today's businesses. Each aspect—like balancing work and personal life, diverse teams, values in business, and crafting workspaces—has shown us important parts of how modern companies work.

Our look into workspace design was more than just looks; it was about creating a culture and boosting teamwork. Examples like Google and Riot Games showed how workspace design reflects a company's values, making employees feel more connected and purposeful.

We also learned from places like Apple Park and Google that workspace layout affects how employees feel. Thoughtful designs can boost creativity and happiness, but there's debate about how flexible these spaces should be.

Overall, our teamwork in exploring these topics gives us a better picture of what makes businesses successful today. By blending leadership, culture, values, and workspace design, companies can find their way to success in a fast-changing world.

This report is a guide for businesses looking to build strategies that truly make a difference. It shows how important these elements are for shaping successful companies in today's ever-changing business world.

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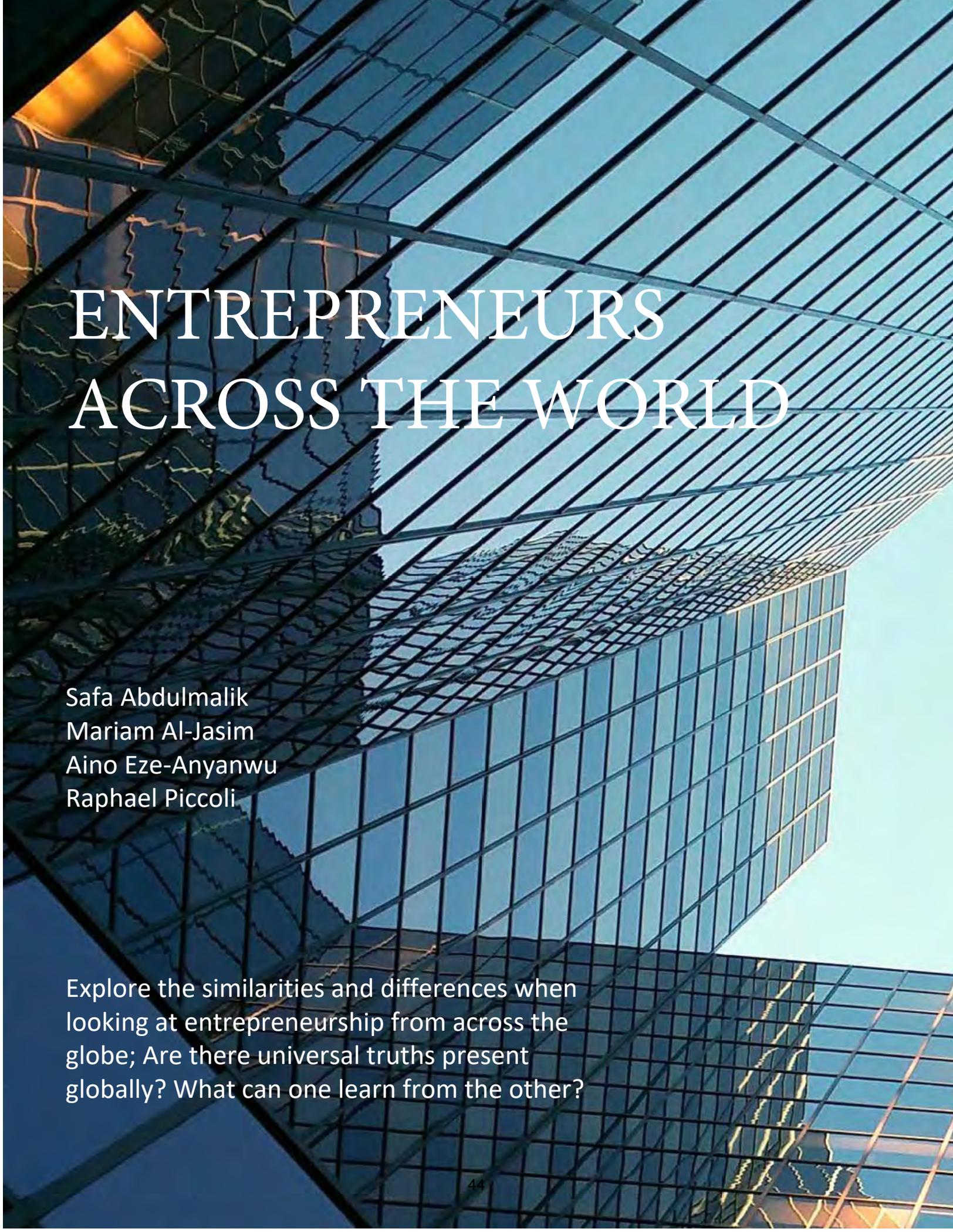
ENTREPRENEURS ACROSS THE WORLD

Safa Abdulmalik
Mariam Al-Jasim
Aino Eze-Anyanwu
Raphael Piccoli

Explore the similarities and differences when looking at entrepreneurship from across the globe; Are there universal truths present globally? What can one learn from the other?

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP & DESIGN THINKING

TEAM 3 | ENTREPRENEURS ACROSS THE WORLD| SAFA ABDULMALIK

INTRODUCTION

Our world is ever-evolving and we tend to face many abstract and complex challenges that demand innovative solutions. This is where entrepreneurship becomes a crucial role as it promotes social change and improves the way people live and work. Although entrepreneurship does not look the same worldwide, it is pivotal to understand the similarities and differences of entrepreneurs from across the globe. Can we pinpoint any universal methods and processes and what can one learn from the other? In this report, I will be exploring how entrepreneurs from diverse cultures leverage design thinking to tackle global challenges, and what insights can be gained from their innovative approaches. To answer this question it is essential to lay the groundwork about what design thinking and the entrepreneurial process are. This will give us a comprehensive understanding that will later help understand the global perspective on both these processes. My focus will be on three distinct cultural landscapes: North America, Japan, and the Middle East. For each region, I will be exploring

- How entrepreneurs across the globe embrace the design process. Is it universally applied?
- To what extent do opportunities and resource availability influence the adoption of design thinking?
- What role does cultural diversity play in shaping the approaches of entrepreneurs to design thinking globally, and how does this impact innovation and problem-solving?

ENTREPRENEURS AROUND THE WORLD

My team and I chose the subtopic entrepreneurs around the world. We wanted to understand entrepreneurs on a global level to explore the differences between our perspectives as students at

Carleton University Verse the perceptive, opportunities, resources and emotions of individuals who are entrepreneurs or want to purse entrepreneurship but are in completely different circumstances. The subtopic has importance as it presents entrepreneurial success irrespective of cultural and geographical contexts, and how different drives and circumstances create entrepreneurs. The questions my team and I focused on for our subtopic were:

- Explore the similarities and differences when looking at entrepreneurship globally; Are there universal truths present globally?
- What can one learn from the other?

Each team member focused on a different issue relating to entrepreneurship on a global scale. For example, Mariam wanted to focus on the topic of "THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP" where she explored different businesses globally that were affected by the pandemic as well as entrepreneurs that flourished during this time and how entrepreneurs adapted their business models during the pandemic. Aino focused on" ENTREPRENEURIAL DESIGN EXPERIENCES ACROSS THE WORLD" focusing on What inspired people to become entrepreneurs and What are the experiences of entrepreneurial designers across the world. Rafael focused on sustainability and how local sourcing and sustainable practices impact the competitiveness and profitability of design entrepreneurship.

DESIGN THINKING

Design thinking is a method focused on a human-centred approach to solve abstract challenges. This method requires designers to ideate, prototype and test solutions as a way of problem-solving. While this method of problem-solving has been used for

centuries, it was only given the terminology "design thinking" by Tim Brown in the 1990s who was CEO and president of IDEO, an innovation and design firm. In his research, he mentions that the design thinking process consists of inspiration, ideation and implantation. This process can be reorganized and revisited to build up ideas. It powers up a deep understanding of what people want or need in their lives. Design success is the integration of design thinking into an organization: at that level, it becomes a powerful tool to solve unpredictable problems. It can be used as a set of principles that can be applied to diverse people to a wide range of problems. He also talks about how the nature of design thinking makes it impossible to create an outline of what a designer should do to gain a successful design. Designs may loop back through more than once as the team explores new directions and refine ideas (Brown, Design thinking in Harvard Business Review 2008). Stanford University David Kelly then came up with its model of design thinking which consists of 5 stages shown in Figure 1: Empathize, Define, Ideate, prototype, and tests (Standford, An introduction to design thinking process guide -Stanford University 2004) this type of method is utilized more often in the design world. Both processes agree that the designer should always aim to create desirability, feasibility, and viability of a product or service.
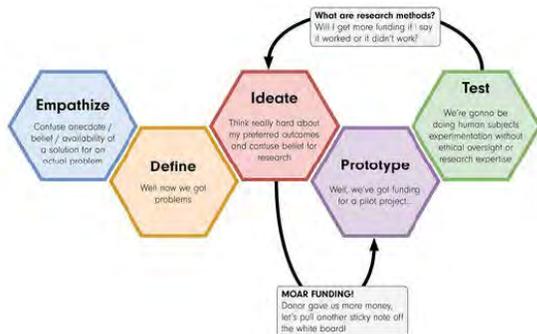

Figure 1: Stanford U 5 Stages of Design thing diagram

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCESS

Entrepreneurship is the exploration of market opportunities that leverage innovative goods and services. This is done to extract social and economic value from the environment, allowing independent businesses to exist. The process of entrepreneurship is all activities and actions that are taken to perceive an opportunity in the market and establish a business to provide an innovative solution (University of Pretoria, (Chapter 3: The entrepreneurship process) (Bygrave, 1997:2; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003:62). When starting the process is transformed into a recurring development of opportunities recognition, and decision-making about the allocation of scarce resources in seeking opportunities to add value. (The University of Pretoria, (Chapter 3: The entrepreneurship process) (Glancey, 1998:18; Kodithuwakhu & Rosa, 2002:443) Similarly to the design thinking process this process could also be revisited and reorganized. There are a few variations of how the entrepreneurial process looks but they all share similar elements. For example, Pretorius et al (2005a:57) identify it as "opportunity recognition and resource acquisition", and Gruber (2002:193) identifies three distinct stages " pre-founding stage (opportunity identification and evaluation); a founding stage (business plan, resource gathering, incorporation and market entry); and an early development stage (building the company and market penetration)"

While Bhave (1995:223) identifies four stages "opportunity identification, technology set up, organization creation and the exchange stages." Hisrich & Peters recognized Bhave's stages and supported him by developing their business plan consisting of 4 stages (The University of Pretoria,(Chapter 3: The entrepreneurship process) found in figure 2 :

- Innovation
- Triggering event
- Implementation
- Growth

All these steps have factors that affect them like:

- Personal
- Sociological
- Environmental
- Organizational

This is where this process may look different around the world and how some individuals can implement this and some cannot.
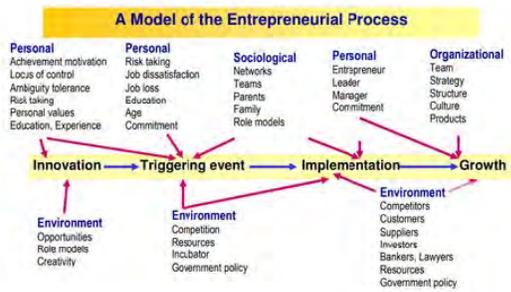

Figure 2:Hisrich & Peters model of Entrepreneurial process

VALUE OF DESIGN THINKING IN BUSINESS

Design thinking serves as a distinctive approach to consumer behaviours. Companies that started on entrepreneurship like Apple, Microsoft, and Disney have demonstrated how design thinking is a valuable competitive advantage, positively affecting financial outcomes and promoting company growth.

When applying design thinking entrepreneurs will understand the context of their idea (instead of designing with assumptions). Designing based on observations and research of culture, behaviour and how end-users think to gain insight into what the user is true of.

"The desirability for the customer, viability at the business level and feasibility for technology."
(Pikover, The value of Design Thinking in Business: Toptal, 2017)

ENTREPRENEURS AND DESIGN THINKING IN NORTH AMERICAS

Entrepreneurs in North America often leverage design thinking to create innovative solutions and products. The process and definition they used are defined in the section "What is Design Thinking" Almost all the time entrepreneurs in Canada and the USA use the Stanford stages (found in Figure 1) of design thinking to problem-solve. In the first stage, Emphize, entrepreneurs usually educate themselves

on the needs and challenges of their target audience. This is achieved through research, interviews, surveys and general observations. In the second stage, define, entrepreneurs articulate the problem and opportunity based on their findings in stage one. A problem statement is developed as a template for the next stages. The third stage is the Ideation stage. This is where brainstorming sessions take place and ideas and concepts are generated. The most effective way to ideat is through collaborative activities and getting feedback from different perspectives. The fourth stage is Prototyping: this is usually a representation of your idea in a tangible or digital form. Prototyping is to test out your idea rather than making something aesthetically presentable.

The last stage is to Test, this is in the form of getting feedback from your target audience and is purposed as a way of refining and revisiting your solution (Interaction Design Foundation, 2023). In North America, several individuals and institutions shaped the principles and application of entrepreneurial design thinking. The region has a rich ecosystem of resources and opportunities for those who want to embrace an innovative approach to problem-solving and product development. For example, platforms like IDEO U, Coursera, and LinkedIn Learning all provide design thinking training and they are easily accessible. North America also has a culture of co-working and co-designing which may not be found in other regions of the world. This is an advantageous method as it provides support, a way to share ideas access to mentorships and a way of networking as an entrepreneur (Ribeiro, 2020). Many tools are available for entrepreneurs to utilize that are widely accessible like Miro, Figma, and Adobe XD to collaborate and enhance their design thinking methods. Funding is also an advantage of being an entrepreneur in North America as there are various funding options like venture capital, investors and government grants available to support small enterprises. Many universities also integrate design thinking into different disciplines to provide the student with a successful approach to tackling challenges and innovating. For example, Stanford

University's Stanford's design school Hasso Plattner Institute of Design, and Harvard University's Harvard Business School offer courses and initiatives focused on innovation and design, and the University of Toronto- Rotman School of Management courses related to design thinking and business innovation and many other universities across North America. These Opportunities, tools, and knowledge provided allow many individuals to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams and develop the world with innovative problem-solving skills.

Figure 3. Carleton University's Industrial Design student prototyping models

ENTREPRENEURS AND DESIGN THINKING IN JAPAN

While the design thinking method I mentioned in the previous section has become mainstream, thanks to our diverse surroundings and our interconnected world, it does not have the same recognition in Japan. One reason is that design thinking is seen as a collaborative approach which requires many to engage, co-design and make continuous adjustments. This approach does not align with Japanese traditional values of interacting with end users, as post-presentation feedback is seen as failure rather than room for improvement. Brainstorming is also not common due to the strong sense of group belonging which limits diverse ideas (Járfás, 2018).In this section, I want to focus on the Japanese way of design thinking that has been used and preferred for centuries and is still modern today and what methods have been discovered to work to

problem solve. Kaizen 改善(Continuous Improvement) is a philosophy that requires small changes to a product or service over time to improve its quality and productivity. This is favored as it limits the discomfort associated with deviating from the mainstream. Although this is not a collaborative philosophy it allows for change from any employee at any time. This is an effective problem-solving method as it's seen as small changes now can have huge impacts in the future.

Kaizen involves five key principles: know your customer, let it flow, go to gemba (or the real place), empower people and be transparent (Hargrave, 2023). This philosophy is paired with Kanban 看 板 (visual cues) boards (shown in figure 4)—a form of visual project management where tasks represented as cards move through stages of work represented as columns. That way, the team can see where work is in real-time (Martins, 2022).

Figure 4: a illustrated diagram of Kanban process of ideating

Brittany Arthur, a design thinking and innovative speaker based in Japan talks about her experience with facilitating design thinking sessions in Japan. In her article, she mentioned to fascinate these sessions one must have a sense of the Japanese culture. When they innovate they focus on people, empathy and iteration. With her knowledge of Kaizen and Kanban, she implemented a method called round robin which is an ideation method that encourages group alignment by building on each other's ideas through written and silent brainstorming. This method became successful because it was 1. Silent, written, collaborative

methods break down seniority hierarchies, 2. Structured roles fast track feedback and consensus, 3 utilize the exceptional high written language skills common to the Japanese and 4. Manages the Un-said in high-context cultures (Arthur, 2017). Due culture that stresses conformity and is highly critical of failure and the small venture capital in Japan entrepreneurial rates are on the lower end. Yet there are still many resources that can support Japanese. For example, there is a government Support program called J-Startup as well as other subsidies for innovation to encourage entrepreneurship. Many other non-governmental organizations like Techstars, Samurai Incubate, and NEDO support startups with mentorship, funding, and networking. With the popularity of design, japan has educational institutions and organizations that implement design and design thinking for example Tama Art University and Musashino Art University and agencies like IDEO. Unlike the North American approach to tackling global issues, Japan seems a lot more foreign yet it works. As we can see japan is one of the most advanced countries in the world and implementing their methods and philosophy can help us perceive and solve problems in a way we never anticipated.

Figure 5:A snapshot of what innovation in Japan looks like

ENTREPRENEURS AND DESIGN THINKING IN MIDDLE EAST

Design thinking in the Middle East was coined in 2010 as "   . It didn't become recognized until 2014 and 2015. Enterprises and hackathon arenas saw it as a valuable tool for supporting businesses in the Arab World. It gained

interest from business incubators and entrepreneurship hubs. They integrated the conceptualized version of design thinking: Empathize," "Define," "Ideate," "Prototype," and "Test". Nahdet El Mahrousa based in Egypt was one of the first non-governmental organizations to set up workshops for design thinking and social innovation to support small enterprises in North Africa. Similarly, a non-profit BINA based in Turkey centred its efforts on social development specifically towards refugees from Syria to help them develop community initiatives to address their urgent challenges (BINA, 2017). Moving towards the gulf, Dubai established a platform for entrepreneurs in the Middle East called Wamda. It provided its users with a media site to receive startup and entrepreneurship news. It funded programs like the "Mix N Mentor" event series (wamda.com), highlighted the significance of Design Thinking in diverse aspects and guided students in problem-solving within education and transportation (Menon, 2016; Wamda events, 2017; Rahal, 2017). Although many of them use Stanford stages of design thinking and it's a fairly new concept, the Middle East has made a great effort to implement this among entrepreneurship and businesses and help people in both the Middle East and North Africa(Traifeh et al., 2021).

Figure 6:A snapshot of the Wamda student workshop around education and mobility UAE

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, exploring entrepreneurship on a global scale, with a focus on design thinking, displayed a diverse approach across North America, Japan, and the Middle East. In North America, design thinking is strongly implemented with an emphasis

on Stanford stages of design thinking, collaboration refining, and accessible tools.
Japan, had more traditional values, relying on continuous improvement philosophies like Kaizen and Kanban. Despite a cultural aversion to failure, Japan thrives through government support and growing interest in design.

The Middle East, a newcomer to design thinking, showcases efforts by organizations like Nahdet El Mahrousa and Wamda and many others to integrate it into social innovation. The region's commitment to addressing social challenges and fostering entrepreneurship is apparent.

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INTRODUCTION

Design entrepreneurship is something that looks different for every individual who describes themselves as one. On an even broader scale, entrepreneurship in itself is an occupation that takes many different forms depending on a number of variables. However, there seem to be some universal truths across the board. Looking at design entrepreneurs around the world, one can notice similar trends in experiences, regardless of the size of a business or the specific venture.

Depending on what part of the world being referred to, the prevalence of designers and design entrepreneurs vary. The emergence of Industrial design as a profession is heavily ⍰ed to the first industrial revolution (Machinedesign.com, n.d.). With and increase in societal development, there was an increase in the demand of design. As a result, more developed countries are more acquainted with the existence of the profession as opposed to less developed regions.

This essay explores the different ways design entrepreneurship takes shape and reveals those universal truths. There is also discussion on what design entrepreneurship can look like and how that varies in different parts of the world. In addition, the perception of design entrepreneurs in their various communities was explored.

Finally, this essay will highlight the parallels between the characteristics of a designer and an entrepreneur, which could be used to argue that most designers can inherently be successful entrepreneurs.

SUBTOPIC DISCUSSION: ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACROSS THE WORLD

There were various topics discussed within the group. A major one was the idea that entrepreneurship can look very different for every individual. In less developed countries, people are more likely to start their own businesses out of necessity, as the society does not have a strong enough infrastructure to provide jobs to all individuals.

We also had some speculations on what some other reasons were that could lead people to entrepreneurship. As mentioned previously, a reason could be out of pure necessity, where someone needs to be able to provide for themselves or for their family. For some people, their desire to solve a certain problem is enough motivation to push them into entrepreneurship. Another reason that we explored was the motivation that can come purely from financial gain. Our speculation was that most people who fall into this category of motivation may not be able to sustain a business as well as someone who had either of the first two reasons.

During group discussions, we found that we went beyond design entrepreneurship most times and found ourselves talking about entrepreneurship more generally. We had to make active efforts to tie our discussion back to design. This got me curious on why design entrepreneurship was so difficult to focus on and helped start my exploration on the perception of design entrepreneurs within their communities.

Finally, a major point of discussion was the effect of the pandemic on entrepreneurs as well as sustainability and how it can relate to entrepreneurship. Other members of the group were able to further explore these topics as they

focused their essays on answering certain questions relating to these topics.

INDIVIDUAL TOPIC DISCUSSION

As stated previously, I wanted to answer the following questions:

- What is the perception of product design and design entrepreneurship in communities across the world?
- What inspired people to become entrepreneurs?

When conducting research to answer these questions, I found the best method was to carry out some case studies of individuals that would fit the description of a design entrepreneur. In order to get a wider range of case studies, I went beyond formerly trained designers and expanded the definition to include individuals who have created a product that meets a need or solves a problem within their community (with some even going to a global level).

I studied the entrepreneurial journey of three individuals in the hope of drawing some parallels from their experiences and giving a more holistic answer to the questions posed.

Case Study 1: Joe Gebbia

Joe Gebbia is an American entrepreneur and designer who studied at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). After graduating, he partnered with Brian Chesky, a friend he met at RISD, and started Airbnb.

After graduating from university, Joe moved up to San Francisco and was later able to convince his friend Brian to move up as well. They had an intent on starting a company but didn t know what just yet. Soon after Brian had moved up to San Francisco, Joe receives a letter from his landlord stating that his rent had increased by   percent. At the time Joe was not making any money, so he had no way to pay this increased rent. Around that same time, there was a large design conference happening in his city, so large that all the hotels we re sold out. Joe had realized that he had an air mattress that he used to host his college friends when they came over and

thought to buy more beds and rent them out to people who were trying to come to the conference that weekend. Joe also taught to make this an experience for his guests where he included airport pickup, a free breakfast, as well as transit passes to get around the city (Ep 5 : Joe Gebbia Changed the World with Airbnb. Here's What He's Building Next.).

Joe was able to act as a personal guide for his guests, creating bonds which led to lifelong friendships. Those guests are still friends with Joe and are somewhat celebrities within the company.

After the conference, Joe had made   from renting out air mattresses- more than enough to cover his rent for the month. However, along with this he realized how much of a social interaction was created. Joe and his friend Brian saw that there was an opportunity and if they could get enough people to also experience it, it would be something that people would enjoy and benefit from.

Joe also stated that he had faced a lot of difficulties getting funding for his startup. This would be very discouraging for most people. However, when asked what kept him going, he said that his firsthand experience of this social interaction was undeniable, making him sure that there was value there.

Joe also mentioned that having passion attached to your entrepreneurial venture is more likely to lead to success as he has experienced (Ep 5 : Joe Gebbia Changed the World with Airbnb. Here's What He's Building Next.).

Case Study 2: Adekunle Adeyemi

Kunle Adeyemi is a Nigerian Architect who grew up in the North of Nigeria. He studied architecture and started a research project called the African Water Cities Project. Currently, he runs a design and development practice in the Netherlands called NLE'.

Kunle went to University in Lagos as well as Princeton. During the earlier years of his career, he was constantly travelling between Europe and Lagos. As he stated in an interview, he saw the gap in levels of development continue to grow and no one was doing anything about it. Kunle is also very conscious

about climate change and tries to create structures that take away from that problem (Practicing Architecture in Nigeria).

Being Nigerian, Kunle was familiar with the community in Lagos called Makoko'. This is a community entirely based on water, where there are no roads or any other form of infrastructure. Kunle was intrigued by this community and was eager to find a way to improve their system. This led to the birth of the African Water Cities Project.

After some research, studying the community and learning from how to build the way they did, the floating school was built. This is not only used as a school but is also used as a community center when classes are not on. This design was easily replicable, and all materials used were locally sourced. The design was also scalable, as various versions and sizes can be built. Another feature is that the floating school can be moved from one location to another, making it extremely adaptable to its environment.

When asked what inspired him, Kunle mentioned that his passion about the effects of climate change as well as his desire to help build and develop cities that include social and cultural considerations drives the work that he does. In addition, the opportunity he had to see both sides of the world (i.e. the developed versus the underdeveloped countries) acts as a large source of inspiration, giving him the chance to marry both sides and develop new ideas (Louisiana Channel).

Case Study 3: Rose Twine
Rose Twine is the co-founder of Eco-Stove. She grew up in Uganda and moved to the United Kingdom to study nursing. After spending   years in London and creating the first few prototypes of the Eco-Stove, she moved back to Uganda and began the mass producing them there (Rose Twine - Eco Stoves Uganda Narrates the Journey to Reinventing Clean Cooking for All.).

During an interview, Rose spoke about her experience in Uganda as a child. She remembered searching far and wide for firewood in order to be able to cook for her siblings at home. In here community, there was a great reliance on firewood and coal for cooking, which had extremely negative effects on the environment. Rose is also very interested in research, which led her to the solution of using volcanic rocks as a fuel source as opposed to wood or coal.

Rose was also aware of the negative effects the smoke from cooking had on the health of Ugandans. She said she could not see anything changing in the near future so decided to take matters into her own hands.

While Rose was in London, she was exposed to the concept of a fireplace in the home and how a small fire was able to keep the entire home warm. She said this was a point of inspiration for her. While collaborating with her brother, a systems engineer, they were able to come up with the first Eco-Stove prototype.

The original design of the Eco-Stove went beyond cooking but considered other di   culties and frustrations one may face in Uganda.

Rose is still extremely passionate about providing safer cooking options to Ugandans that are also environmentally friendly. She is now the director of Eco Group LTD in Uganda where   stoves are produced per day. The product line has also expanded to include ovens as well as a number of stove top variations.

CONCLUSION
After gathering the stories of these various entrepreneurs, there were multiple similarities in behavior and way of thinking.

All entrepreneurs mentioned definitely had a level of passion towards their ideas. They all had a drive to accomplish their visions regardless of how much support they got. Especially in Joe Gebbia's case, when starting Airbnb. He had a strong belief that there was value in his idea, even though some may have described him as irrational at the time. Rose Twine was also determined to find a better solution to cooking that would be safer for the user and better for the environment. For all these

entrepreneurs, passion seemed to be a bigger motivator than the possibility of monetary gain.

A second common trend was the connection between the entrepreneur's idea and their own personal experience. Kunle Adeyemi's desire to start the African Water Cities Project was born out of his experience living in Nigeria, a developing country, as well as a more developed country. Personally, this story of this entrepreneur resonates with me as I have also seen firsthand the disparity that exists in Nigeria and have had the chance to experience a country that is considered developed.

This experience shows that there are many things that can be implemented easily in that part of the world but would make a great difference. Being able to gather ideas from a different environment and use that as inspiration to further develop another community.

In conjunction with that, the desire to solve a problem, create a solution or meet a need is consistent between all the case studies. Another major trend was partnership. None of the entrepreneurs studied had founded their companies or organizations solely on their own. For two of these case studies, these partnerships were more than just an acquaintance-style relationship. Joe had founded Airbnb with a close friend from university while Rose had created the first prototype of the eco-Stove with her brother. In order to work well with another individual, there seems to be a need for a solid connection. The best work is done, and the best ideas are had when working with a team of people that have a good understanding of each other.

Using these case studies to answer my second question, I found that design entrepreneurs are seen more as entrepreneurs as they are designers. In some cases, designers will find themselves dropping the role of designer' and acting more as a director within their organization. The idea of a design entrepreneur' can be interpreted in many ways.

The design consultant entrepreneur: this is more typical entrepreneurial route that an industrial designer may go through. One may have the desire to establish a design consultancy where they can help other entrepreneurs bring their ideas to life. However, none of the individuals from the case studies fit into this category.

The design entrepreneur: this category is to define individuals who have a design background and choose to invest in their own ideas. An example of such a person is Joe Gebbia who has formal design training and decided to start his own company as an entrepreneur.

The Problem solvers': this is for entrepreneurs who have invested in their ideas, have developed a product but do not have any formal design training. Rose Twine would fall under this category as she studied nursing in university but was able to develop a physical product that works well and meets the needs of the users.

After discovering these similarities between design entrepreneurs in different parts of the world, it led me to another question: do designers have the skillset to be inherently successful entrepreneurs? According to an article by Jessica Alter, there are a number of similarities between designers and entrepreneurs.

Designers would make great entrepreneurs as they are great at problem-solving and reiterating solutions. They are also empathetic to understand the needs of all the stakeholders in the product and would be able to accommodate them all adequately. In addition, there is this similar experience of an obsession that builds towards solving a certain problem.

In my personal experience with design, I had never thought entrepreneurship was an option. I had been caged into thinking a designer should always be a designer; nothing more than that. It is easy to get stuck in that mindset, but through the research and discussion done on this topic, my ways of the thinking about career paths have definitely.

Ultimately, designers are trained to solve problems using creative and well-thought-out solutions. Entrepreneurship is about identifying a problem and solving it. With a design skillset, one can be referred to as an expert problem-solver' and with the right amount of passion and dedication to a project, designers can be exceptional entrepreneurs.

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THE EFFECT OF THE PANDEMIC ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Team 3 | Entrepreneurship Across the World | Mariam Al-Jasim

INTRODUCTION

This report explores how the pandemic had an effect on entrepreneurship, focusing on how challenges created opportunities for innovative solutions. It looks at industries hit hard by the pandemic, the role of design in adapting to changes, and the support governments provided in various parts of the world. This report also compares how different regions coped with the challenges. Information was gathered from articles, case studies, and academic papers.

Many industries suffered during the pandemic, especially those relying on personal interactions or travel. Airlines, hotels, and businesses like gyms faced significant losses. However, online shopping thrived, and companies like Zoom gained traction with the sudden shift to remote work.

Governments globally supported businesses through various measures like loans and tax relief programs. Canada, for example, invested heavily in support programs like the Canada Emergency Business Account. Other countries, such as Japan and the UK, also introduced certain measures to help businesses.

Despite the challenges, the pandemic sparked design innovations. From Zoom's success, to the creation of hijabs with ear holes, startups found creative solutions to new problems. The report also includes a case about Grumpy Kid Studio, to show how some small businesses adapted and even thrived during these times.

THE SUBTOPIC

Design entrepreneurship is defined as the process of producing and marketing viable concepts, involving assuming risks, financing, and managing (Gunes, 2012). Essentially it combines both business and design to create and develop innovative ideas. Entrepreneurs alone are able to transform these ideas into a viable business that consists of a

business model, service, and/or product, but when there's a close relation between design and design thinking, it allows firms to produce strategic methods that push for success. Design entrepreneurship is also said to "contribute to economic growth and innovation by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to create and market viable design concepts, fostering high-growth-oriented ventures, and promoting strategic innovation and creativity in the market."(Gunes, 2012).

As for this team, the focus was shifted to, " Entrepreneurs Across The World". The goal was to compare and contrast how different entrepreneurship looks in the vast regions of the world. Some questions that were posed are Are there universal truths present globally? What can one learn from the other?

THE SUBTHEME

The subtheme, "The effect of the pandemic on entrepreneurship", takes an in-depth look at how challenges faced foster opportunities for design to emerge and thrive as a problem-solving method. Although many industries and sectors collapsed through the sudden global circumstances, others found this time as their breakthrough to success. In order to conduct rich analysis and research on this subtheme, there are a couple of questions that were posed to help guide through;

1. What industries or sectors have been most affected by the pandemic in terms of entrepreneurship? How did design contribute to these big changes?

2. How have entrepreneurs adapted their business models during the pandemic? How has moving online and remotely affected the overall business? Did certain businesses

bloom due to these changes? Or did they fail?

3. What role has government support played in helping entrepreneurs during the pandemic? grants? Loans? How did this look in various countries? Were they offered more or less in comparison to others?

The other goal for this subtheme, is to compare how different regions in the world adapted and dealt with the pandemic in terms of design and entrepreneurship. The answer to the majority of these questions was found through reading articles and academic papers, conducting case studies, as well as YouTube videos from content creators that emerged during the lockdown mandates.

EFFECT ON THE DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES GLOBALLY

Without a doubt, the pandemic had a negative impact on almost all industries. The majority have suffered great losses, profit being the most impacted. If we were to measure through statistics which industry suffered the most loss, it would definitely be ones that rely on personal interactions or travel, "Industries that rely on personal interactions or travel have been hardest hit. This includes recreational services, such as gyms, and accommodation and food services (pubs, cafes, and restaurants), where sales were more than 50% lower than normal in the past year due to Covid-19."(2021). Complete lockdowns and restrictions on non-essential movement have made it impossible for entrepreneurs who work in the food industry to operate and gain any profit.

The airline industry with its different sectors as a whole suffered great losses as well. Statistics show that "The airline industry took a sizable hit to the tune of $35 billion in 2020, according to CNBC. American Airlines' stock dropped 45% in 2020, while Delta lost 31% and United plummeted 51%" (*The 10 industries that have been impacted the most by COVID-19*). Again, this is because of the restrictions imposed by various states and countries that

reduced the number of flights and passengers. Not only did airlines suffer but so did hotels, which makes sense since they go hand in hand, " 70% of hotels would likely not survive without federal or state assistance and that as many as 59% were in danger of foreclosure"(*The 10 industries that have been impacted the most by COVID-19*).

However, there are some industries that gained growth and profit during the pandemic. The main one being non-store retailers (i.e., online shopping), "sales for non-store retailers (i.e., online shopping) increased by 15%—Amazon added 400,000 jobs this year, nearly doubling its workforce in response to the pandemic (...) Facebook also announced plans to hire 10,000 additional workers in April 2020" (Aaron Klein et al., 2023).

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

To survive the pandemic, governments all across the world provided support measures for small and medium enterprises. These measures include: 1. Debt finance, 2. Employment support, 3. Tax-related measures (Governments have introduced tax relief measures), 4. Business costs (Governments have taken steps to reduce administrative and government fees, provide rent/leasing reductions or direct payments) 5.Business climate improvements (This includes simplifying bankruptcy, business closure, insolvency, and business restructuring regulations) and much more (Adian et al., 2020). Governments usually target support for vulnerable SMEs like young firms, high-growth firms, exporters, and innovators. However, it recognizes the challenges in reaching SMEs in need of support, particularly in low-income countries(Adian et al., 2020).

Canada had a very supportive response to this crisis and invested a total of $27 billion in direct support to Canadian workers and businesses. There were many support programs and new subsidies introduced. For example, the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) provided interest-free, partially forgivable loans to more than 850,000 Canadian small businesses. The CRA also allowed all businesses "to defer, until August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become

owing on or after today and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as installments, under Part I of the Income Tax Act. No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period. The Canada Revenue Agency will not contact any small or medium (SME) businesses to initiate any post-assessment GST/HST or Income Tax audits for the next four weeks. For the vast majority of businesses, the Canada Revenue Agency will temporarily suspend audit interaction with taxpayers and representatives."(Canada, 2020).

Other countries across the world also introduced similar opportunities to support their businesses. The Japanese government extended its existing business employment subsidy (the Employment Adjustment Subsidy) to include emergency cash relief for businesses affected. Another example is the UK, where they invested £21.3 billion in grants for micro, small, and medium-sized firms across different business sectors to benefit from the funds available.

SHIFT TO REMOTE WORK

As for work culture, there was a massive shift to remote work at home. This came with its own set of struggles, with people either loving it or completely hating it. It was harder to maintain teamwork and control productivity as there was less face-to-face contact. Most leaders had to get themselves familiar with technology and setting up meetings online. Remote work and virtual operations have forced businesses to adapt. Virtual leadership has become critical in remotely guiding and managing teams. Small businesses, on the other hand, face challenges in implementing virtual leadership, such as limited technological resources and connectivity issues, particularly in rural or remote areas (Thambusamy,2020). The term "virtual leadership" describes the activity of managing and leading groups of people virtually, usually with the aid of the internet and technological tools. Team members may be dispersed across different time zones, countries, or even organizations, so it entails leading and organizing their actions. Establishing trust, coordinating, and communicating effectively with

team members are all methods essential for virtual leaders to accomplish organizational goals. They must modify their management approach for the online setting and make use of technology to promote teamwork and efficiency (Thambusamy,2020).

This was a major learning experience on how a leader's most important trait is to learn to adapt and problem-solve during challenging times. The way virtual leadership can be effectively harnessed is by: 1. Investing in the necessary technological resources to support remote work (equipment), 2. Focussing on clear and consistent communication, setting expectations for remote work, and establishing protocols for virtual team collaboration and 3. Prioritizing maintaining team cohesion and engagement through regular check-ins, virtual team-building activities, and fostering a sense of community despite the physical distance (Thambusamy,2020).

RISE OF DESIGN: ZOOM, MASK STRAPS & PANDEMIC-FRIENDLY HIJABS

Although there were many challenges with the pandemic, it also brought new opportunities. Many startups brought forth innovative design ideas to deal with challenges people faced, like Zoom or the face mask adjusting straps that were sold everywhere.

Zoom's CEO and founder is Eric Yuan. He was raised in Tai'an, China's Shandong Province, where he was born. In April of 2011, Eric began to prototype and test out ideas for a mobile-friendly video system. The first beta release was in 2012, and four months later it became available to the public. In March when the pandemic hit, Zoom was downloaded 2.13 million times in one day. By April 2020, Zoom surpassed 300 million daily meeting participants (2023). Mainly being used for work and school meetings. Through gaining this massive attention, there were many areas in the platform that needed improvement, which created design opportunities.

A more personal case is trying to wear a hijab but with a mask underneath. A hijab is a head covering worn by Muslim women when out in public or in the presence of men who have no blood relation. The hijab typically covers the hair, ears, and neck. Having the ears covered made it extremely difficult

when trying to put on or adjust a face mask. Hijab companies saw this as a design opportunity and introduced a scarf with an ear hole to make it easier for Muslim woman to stay safe without compromising their comfort. This also solved numerous other issues, such as trying to put on earphones or stethoscopes for women who work in the medical field.

CASE STUDY: GRUMPY KID STUDIO

Grumpy Kid Studio is a small business that sells unique pottery based in Montreal. Garbo, the founder, graduated in 2020 with an Architectural Design degree from Ryerson University. She worked at an architecture firm and switched jobs multiple times. When the pandemic took over, she had to work at home and picked up pottery as a hobby to pass time. She posted her work on social media and gained attention, enough to allow her to quit her architecture job and make a living out of her pottery.

She started off by working on her own in her parents' basement and within a year, she managed to rent out a studio with 5 employees, all with hard work and the use of social media. Garbo had no investors nor any funds to support her business, she simply invested any profit she made from selling her pottery back into her business. She built a personal connection with her customers by creating vlogs and other types of content with her as a spokesperson talking about her experience, why she started, and what difficulties she faced throughout her journey.

Garbo made sure to showcase the entire process of making clay mugs, from the building, firing to painting, and glossing which she says "helped to justify the pricing" since customers got to see the hard work that takes place behind the scenes.

Garbo's case is only one example of the many small businesses that emerged during the pandemic that share the same experience as Grumpy Kid Studio. This illustrates how powerful social media is and how creating genuine connections with people and customers goes a long way.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, through this report, many areas were touched on such as, how the pandemic affected businesses and industries, how they adapted to the sudden changes, and what struggles they faced within that. The findings and research done did an adequate job of answering the majority, if not all, of the questions posed in the beginning. It was found that the industries that struggled the most were ones that relied on personal interactions such as gyms and airlines, while industries like online shopping thrived during the pandemic.

Governments across the goal introduced subsidies and various programs (partially forgivable loans, tax relief, and so on) to support their small businesses that were struggling. Canada, for example, introduced the Canada Emergency Business Account.

Amidst the struggle and hardship, designers thrived by solving new problems that surfaced through health restrictions and lockdown rules such as mask straps and hijabs with ear holes for easier access. Through the shift to remote work, many individuals were able to start their own businesses and turn to entrepreneurship to turn their hobbies into full-time jobs.

I found this subject matter to be very interesting and highly informative as it is something that had a direct impact on me, and I was able to experience and see all the events during the pandemic unfold right before my eyes, which makes it easier to confirm whether the research papers were accurate or not. The pandemic was a life-

changing moment that has affected multiple industries and people from all over the world.

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In an era marked by a growing awareness of the environmental impact and global interconnectedness, the intersection of design entrepreneurship and sustainability stands as a pivotal focus. This paper delves into the intricate dynamics of sourcing and sustainability, probing the delicate equilibrium design entrepreneurs must strike between following global design trends and addressing local sustainability concerns.

The fundamental question guiding this explanation are: How do local sourcing and sustainable design practices influence the competitiveness and profitability of design entrepreneurship? What strategic approaches do design entrepreneurs adopt to harmonize global design trends with the imperative for local sustainability? Additionally, we examine the environmental and social implications inherent in local sourcing within design entrepreneurship and explore how entrepreneurs can adeptly navigate and mitigate potential challenges.

This exploration aims to unravel the complexities of a rapidly evolving landscape where entrepreneurial tasks are shaped not only by global aesthetics but also by an unwavering commitment to sustainable, locally conscious practices. Design Entrepreneurship across the world dates back to the late 19th century, where the Arts & Crafts Movement emerged as a pivotal force shaping the market. This movement aimed at reviving craftsmanship and reintegrate design with traditional art forms, envisioning its influence on various design realms, especially during the era when product design was rapidly emerging.

The notion was that design could seamlessly blend artistic pursuit with commercial viability. Progressing through time, the digital revolution catalyzed a paradigm shift in design entrepreneurship by challenging traditional models and fostering collaborative design practices. Graphic design, web design, and later, interaction design became integral components for businesses and industries.

Importantly, this was not the culmination, as the present showcases heightened environmental awareness and a surge in sustainable design entrepreneurship. Designers now prioritize eco-friendly materials, ethical production processes, and the circular economy, reflecting a significant shift towards responsible and socially conscious design entrepreneurship. Meeting the demand for eco-friendly materials, incorporating energy-efficient processes, and implementing waste reduction strategies introduce complexities that necessitate a delicate balance between innovation and environmental responsibility.

No single factor is more important to successfully greening a company than for its leaders to create a sustainability vision and make a commitment to continuous progress toward realizing that vision and so getting a team to embark on this mission and own it, live it, work through it. Once this is done, the vision is infused into the corporate culture and becomes self-replicating. To begin green design improvements is by examining every current process step and asking the question, "Why is it done this way, and is there a better way to do it?" (Street Smart Sustainability, 2023). In design entrepreneurship, the integration of local sourcing and sustainable design practices shapes the competitiveness and profitability of the company. In today's manufacturing world, there are webs and webs of manufacturing habits that are in great cases, really good, or very bad. In the following example, a manufacturer of compact fluorescent lights (CFL's) had to eliminate fluorochlorinated solvent it used to clean metal parts after they were stamped out from cold rolled steel. The parts were cleaned so that they could be electro-plated first with copper, then with

nickel, and finally with chrome to protect it from corrosion. However, the new solvent failed to remove all the rust from the edges of the metal-stamped parts. With rusty edges, the electroplating could not produce a corrosion-proof seal. In time, the company had to give up and change materials, merging towards expensive stainless steel instead of cold rolled steel, which was eight times cheaper. But because the parts did not have to be cleaned after the stamping, and then followed with three successive electroplating coatings, the whole product ended up being 30 percent cheaper. The real problem however comes to merging profitability & sustainability is how well a sustainable product can sell itself. The perennial challenge in sustainable design and manufacturing persists, highlighted by a study from the Harvard Business Review reports that 65% of consumers express a desire to buy from purpose-driven brands, yet only 25% follow through. The crux of the issue lies not in the design itself, but in the deficiency of effective market communication, often swayed by political and psychological influences.

However, the North American Market reveals a challenge – local production costs are higher due to differences in human rights standards and manufacturing quality. This translates into a notable 50% increase in the final production costs, highlighting the nuanced decisions local stakeholders face in balancing sustainability and financial considerations. As a result, the drive for the company is simple — Create a mission statement. Once the mission statement is prepared, post it prominently on the company website, on company letterhead, on invoices and purchase orders, on the back of the business card, and on a sign at the front door greeting employees, visitors or in the house shed if it is just the beginning of the journey. The more public the vision is, the harder it will be for the designer not to live up to it. To be successful, you have to model the vision at least in some form. Renewable energy company Real Goods' founder, John Schaeffer, built and lives in a home completely powered by renewable energy.

Jirka Rysavy, founder of Gaiam, lives in a home without electricity and running water. Gary Hirshberg built his home from trees he sustainably harvested on his land. Sustainability economist Hazel Henderson wears only pre-worn clothes bought in thrift shops. Joe rides his bike back and forth to local meetings (thirteen miles each way). All of these successful leaders walk their talk in one way or another. It's great for employees to see some behavior in their principal that stands out and communicates in no uncertain terms — "I really mean what I say about sustainability".

This is inherently a step towards creating a profitable market, given the consequences of sustainability are in fact profitable as the goal is to reduce costs by production and reach a broader audience. In full circle, the integration of local sourcing and sustainable design practices not only shapes the competitiveness and profitability of design entrepreneurship but also plays a pivotal role in building an authentic commitment to sustainability.

Effective leadership, as exemplified by successful entrepreneurs, involves creating and communicating a sustainability vision, incorporating it into the corporate culture, and modelling it in day-to-day practices. The challenge lies in effectively communicating the value of sustainable products in a market influenced by various factors. Balancing the financial considerations of local production costs with sustainability goals remains a nuanced decision for entrepreneurs. The key to improvement lies in the continuous examination of processes, strategic market communication, and an unwavering commitment to sustainability at all levels of the organization.

In this dynamic landscape, the quest to align global design trends with local sustainability imperatives stands as a key challenge. The nuances of global market dynamics pose a critical challenge for design entrepreneurs venturing beyond local borders. Adapting to diverse consumer preferences, navigating trade regulations, and understanding

cultural intricacies become essential considerations in making a mark on the global stage. By navigating the delicate balance between staying relevant to global design currents and addressing local environmental concerns, entrepreneurs in the field are tasked with finding innovative solutions. In today's market, staying relevant unfolds on two worlds, requiring a balance between statistical advantage and sustainable practices. The secret lies between compromising quality and durability for impressive statistics or cultivating a product's sustainability, positioning it prominently in the realm of eco-conscious marketing. A pervasive phenomenon, commonly known as planned obsolescence, sees manufacturing companies intentionally designing products with a predetermined expiration, strategically aligning with warranty timelines. Many of our loved ones can account for instances of a car breaking down just after the warranty is complete, or shortly after having it fixed with OEM parts. This strategy allows companies to cut corners in quality control, offering products at a lower cost and reaching a broader audience. In a market weary of planned obsolescence, consumers increasingly seek consistency and reliability. In contrast, companies like Tilley Hat take an entirely different approach, fostering their image through customer loyalty and a commitment to durability. With lifetime guarantees, their hats have endured improbable encounters, including being ingested by an elephant multiple times, only to be recovered, washed, and worn again. The market for sustainable products is undeniably expanding, with statistics revealing that 55% of global consumers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly options. However, an even more significant 78% express intentions to switch to green products, emphasizing that the majority only considers eco-friendly alternatives if they are comparable in price and quality with conventional options. Unilever accounts that nearly 70% of its greenhouse gas footprint depends on which products customers choose and whether they use and dispose of them in a sustainable manner.

Encouragingly, the market for green practices has experienced exponential growth, particularly with the rise of carbon-labelled products. In 2021, products bearing certifications such as "1% For the Planet" or "Climate Neutral" grossed over $3.4 billion in sales, doubling from the previous year. Leveraging current virtual practices, sustainable products have demonstrated their presence in online e-commerce, with 75% of consumers witnessing superior market share for sustainable options compared to in-store sales. As the market landscape evolves, the convergence of sustainability, affordability, and online accessibility becomes the focal point for designers seeking to navigate the intricate terrain of modern consumer preferences. In a market weary of planned obsolescence, consumers increasingly seek consistency and reliability.

Designing a product to be durable is key to successful green design resulting in every brand's dream - customer loyalty. While designing environmentally friendly products is a straightforward endeavour, the real challenge arises when striving for affordability. The true challenge, therefore, lies not just in crafting green products but in creating cost-effective and sustainable alternatives that remain within global desirability.

In conclusion, the modern product landscape necessitates a delicate balance between statistics and sustainability for enduring success. The challenge lies not just in crafting green products but in making them economically viable. The encouraging surge in the market for sustainable practices, as evidenced by the success of carbon-labelled products, signals a shift towards eco-conscious consumerism. Sustainable products' remarkable success in online e-commerce underlines their growing appeal. Navigating this evolving terrain requires a holistic approach that seamlessly integrates affordability, quality, and environmental responsibility. As designers move forward, the convergence of these elements becomes pivotal for resonating with the conscientious modern consumer.

In the realm of design entrepreneurship, the practice of local sourcing introduces a spectrum of

environmental and social implications that demand careful consideration. From assessing ecological consequences to evaluating social dynamics, design entrepreneurs face a landscape of challenges and opportunities. Through a nuanced exploration of these implications. This approach becomes imperative when considering the environmental impact of greenhouse gases. A greenhouse, akin to the Earth's atmosphere, allows visible light to penetrate its glass roof, transforming it into heat. However, the glass traps this heat by not transmitting infrared, similar to the effect of harmful gases like carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and CFCs identified by the UN under the Kyoto Protocol. Despite increasing awareness, global markets, particularly in the US and China, still lack consistent regulations.

Consequently, the business landscape must evolve, recognizing that externalizing costs and using the environment as a private profit centre is no longer sustainable. The statistics from 2023 reveal a lag in the US regarding ecofriendly consumer choices, with only an estimated 21% of the population making changes. Design entrepreneurs are now confronted with the challenge of aligning business strategies with sustainable practices in this evolving landscape. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, as emphasized by organizations like Carbon Concierge. They employ online tools for calculating carbon footprints, underlining the importance of understanding energy use for establishing a carbon baseline. As the call for sustainability intensifies, suppliers' practices are no longer optional knowledge; Walmart's recent launch of a fifteen-question supplier sustainability questionnaire attests to this shift (Street Smart Sustainability, 2023). Transitioning to a different sector, the automotive industry
serves as a beacon of sustainable design. CALLUM's innovative research team, led by Charlotte Jones and Ian Callum, delves into unconventional materials like coffee pulp, eggshells, red lentils, walnuts, and rice for car interiors.
This forward-thinking approach not only explores environmentally friendly alternatives but also

addresses the issue of textile and food waste, a significant concern globally. CALLUM's exploration extends beyond the materials themselves; they advocate for a circular economy by using materials that would otherwise end up in landfills. This proposal allows for the replacement of common automotive products. In their example, they had used out-of-date rice to produce translucent buttons for the interior of their reimagined Porsche, and on coffee pulp for dashboard inserts. This further underscores the potential for a future where viable, automotive-grade, and production-feasible materials are commonplace by 2030. In summary, design entrepreneurs must navigate the intricate interplay between environmental and social considerations in local sourcing. Mitigating challenges involves adopting sustainable practices, understanding energy usage, and actively engaging with suppliers. CALLUM's pioneering work in automotive design serves as a testament to the viability of such approaches, emphasizing the urgency for a shift towards more sustainable choices in the business landscape whilst avoiding massive costs.

In design entrepreneurship, challenges extend beyond the drafting table to encompass international markets, sustainable practices, and technological disruptions. Integrating local sourcing and sustainable practices shapes competitiveness, profitability, and an authentic commitment to sustainability. Effective leadership involves communicating a sustainability vision, modelling it in day-to-day practices, and addressing the challenge of communicating the value of sustainable products. Entrepreneurs face challenges in navigating diverse consumer preferences and planned obsolescence. While the market for sustainable products is expanding, the challenge lies in making them economically viable while maintaining global desirability. In the realm of design entrepreneurship, local sourcing introduces environmental and social implications, necessitating the adoption of sustainable practices. Pioneering
work in automotive design, such as CALLUM's use of unconventional materials, serves as a testament to the viability of sustainable approaches. In

conclusion, the modern product landscape requires a delicate balance between statistics and sustainability, demanding a holistic approach that integrates affordability, quality, and environmental responsibility for a sustainable and profitable future in a conscientious market.

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THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR

The human aspects of entrepreneurship encompass the interpersonal and social dimensions of starting and running a business. These aspects revolve around interactions with various stakeholders and the impact of entrepreneurship on individuals and communities.

Julia Matar
Sondos Bazara
Tallia Rosso

TEAM DYNAMICS OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR

TEAM 4 | THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR | JULIA MATAR

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

The human aspects of being an entrepreneur involve navigating the interpersonal and social aspects inherent in starting and managing a business. This encompasses interactions with various stakeholders and considers the impact of entrepreneurship on both individuals and communities. In this analytical essay, the focus will be on exploring the critical role of collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds—spanning culture, expertise, and educational backgrounds. This collaboration significantly contributes to an entrepreneur's company's growth, emphasizing the inherent diversity crucial for success. Effective collaboration involves managing conflicts and cultivating a positive work environment, both of which are considered indispensable for achieving business goals. This research journey is an opportunity to unravel the intricacies of teamwork and collaboration. Through thorough research, interviews, personal experiences, and a comprehensive review of research, including articles and books, this assignment aims to address key questions guiding the investigation into the nuanced realm of collaborative entrepreneurship.

Here are the questions:

- How can effective communication be established between team members of different experiences to facilitate seamless collaboration?
- What strategies can entrepreneurs and leaders employ to foster a successful and collaborative team, emphasizing empathy in addressing complaints, and problems, or proposing solutions?
- In ensuring an inclusive business environment, what approaches guarantee that every team member has a meaningful voice?

- How can entrepreneurs prioritize and acknowledge the opinions and feelings of their employees and peers to create a culture where everyone's input is valued?
- Delving into understanding human behavior, what actionable tips—blending business and psychological insights—can be employed to identify opportunities, treat people with consideration, and garner their support?

The purpose of this assignment is to acquire vital insights into the significance of fostering healthy partnerships and understanding the crucial role that collaboration plays. It aims to underscore the importance of making informed decisions when selecting and training a team for the purpose of building a successful business. The primary goal of this assignment is to educate and emphasize the pivotal role of a team in the initiation of one's own business. Contrary to the misconception that entrepreneurship is a solo endeavor, this exploration highlights that starting a business is, in essence, an exercise in social skills. It is a journey to discover and build a community tailored to the unique needs of your business.

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SUBTOPIC

I began delving into my subtopic, "Team Dynamics in Entrepreneurship," when I realized that my previous topic might clash with my teammate's topic about the advantages and disadvantages of being an entrepreneur. Instead of pushing for my own topic, I recognized the importance of teamwork. Our success as a team hinge on open communication, the negotiation of ideas, and the willingness to listen to one another. It's about being transparent, trusting each other's abilities, and having an open mind. After a conversation with Tallia, who has experience answering the question better and is already

minoring in the subject, I decided to pivot and let her research the advantages of being an entrepreneur. This decision reflects our team's commitment to collaboration and leveraging each member's strengths. As I reevaluated our group's topic, "The Human Aspects of Being an Entrepreneur," I realized that discussing teams and collaboration directly aligns with our theme. It's a recognition that successful businesses or projects are often the result of a collective effort.

To kickstart this exploration, I addressed the first question in my research: "How can effective communication be established between team members of different experiences to facilitate seamless collaboration?" Drawing from our own collaboration experience on this seminar project, I can confidently affirm that transparency and open communication are important. Sharing our opinions without fear, finding common ground during challenges, and navigating hiccups through healthy communication have been the keys to our success. It's a practical lesson learned from real teamwork.

In addressing the second and third questions, it is essential to understand the five dysfunctions of a team, as identified by Lencioni (2002). The first dysfunction, the absence of trust, poses a significant challenge as it inhibits open communication and the sharing of ideas among team members. To remedy this, a solution involves creating a safe and supportive environment where team members feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and vulnerabilities. Moving on to the second dysfunction, the fear of conflict hinders the exploration of diverse perspectives and robust discussions within the team. Encouraging healthy conflict by valuing differing opinions and establishing guidelines for respectful disagreement is key to overcoming this obstacle. The third dysfunction, a lack of commitment, can result in suboptimal outcomes if team members do not actively participate in decisions or initiatives. Addressing this issue involves ensuring clarity in decision-making processes and encouraging all team members to commit to agreed-upon courses of action. The fourth dysfunction, avoidance of

accountability, can lead to a decline in overall team performance if team members fail to hold themselves or others responsible for their commitments. To combat this, establishing clear expectations for individual and collective accountability, along with regular check-ins and peer evaluations, is crucial. Lastly, the fifth dysfunction, inattention to results, occurs when team members prioritize personal interests over the overall success of the team. The solution involves fostering a mindset that values team success over individual accomplishments and regularly celebrating achievements collectively. By actively addressing each dysfunction with these solutions, teams can overcome obstacles and cultivate a collaborative and high-performing environment.

According to Maxwell (2006), there are 17 essential qualities of a good and successful team player that contribute to the progress of an entrepreneur's business. Addressing the question of understanding human behavior and employing actionable tips blending business and psychological insights, one crucial quality Maxwell emphasizes is flexibility. He argues that inflexibility is one of the worst traits a person can possess, stating, "The rigidity of the mind has no antidote; it carries the seeds of its own destruction.". Using the example of a musician named Jones, Maxwell (2006) illustrates how flexibility and creativity have propelled him professionally. Jones's ability to adapt to various music genres enabled him to collaborate with artists across genres, expanding his influence into television production with hit shows like **"The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air"**.

Another essential quality discussed by Maxwell (2006) is the ability to stay committed and consistent. Maxwell asserts that when one commits definitively to oneself, providence aligns with their commitment. He emphasizes, "*Ordinary people with commitment can make an extraordinary impact on their world.*" According to Maxwell (2006), commitment and consistency go beyond relying on someone's talents and God-given gifts; they involve dedicated hard work toward a goal. Incorporating

commitment as a fundamental rule in a workplace fosters consistency and motivation among the team. Drawing from personal experience as a manager at one of Guess?'s high-end stores called Marciano, I faced increased responsibilities in the absence of my store manager. The pressure prompted me to stay consistent, work harder, and commit to learning. Leading by example, I stayed dedicated, resulting in being the top salesperson for three consecutive years. This not only motivated my team to stay consistent and learn from my approach but also showcased how dedication and professionalism can inspire others in a team to achieve goal-oriented success. I was able to implement a goal each day during work for the team to meet this goal by the end of the day. Not only did it inspire the team to enhance their communication and sales skills with customers, but it also instilled a sense of dedication to mutual assistance and collaboration. Each team member played to their strengths—one styling a client, another expertly locating sizes, and a third efficiently managing the cash register to prepare items for sale. This dynamic collaboration allowed us to create a seamless and supportive shopping experience, showcasing the power of teamwork in action.

Drawing from personal experiences is important, as it injects authenticity and relatability into the subtopic. It serves as a testament to the qualities and adaptations necessary to forge not just a successful team but one rooted in genuine connections. Reflecting on these experiences allows for a deeper exploration of the dynamics and qualities that foster both professional success and sincere camaraderie among team members. It transforms the analysis from a theoretical discussion into narrative rich with real-life examples.

Now, let's address the final question: How can entrepreneurs prioritize and acknowledge the opinions and feelings of their employees and peers to create a culture where everyone's input is valued? I'll delve into this by drawing from insights gathered during interviews, shedding light on practical experiences. Additionally, I'll touch on the nuances of partnership, offering tips to prevent conflicts. Based on an interview conducted with an individual who used to run a family business, more insights and understandings are gathered and further analyzed, aiding in understanding the online research taking place in this analysis.

According to Landström et al. (2008), when it comes to entrepreneurial businesses, they talk about family businesses and how they play a crucial role in job creation, value generation, and the incubation and financing of new ventures. However, inherent challenges arise within this familial framework. In the study by Vincent Molly, Eddy Laveren, and Ann Jorisson (2008), they scrutinize the financing and growth behaviour of 613 small and medium-sized family firms. The research aims to underscore intergenerational distinctions within family businesses, using first-generation family firms as a baseline for understanding subsequent generational behaviours. Findings indicate that generational involvement in managing a family firm significantly influences financing and growth decisions. For instance, first-generation firms exhibit higher debt levels, lower cash holdings, and faster growth rates

compared to their third-generation counterparts. The study also reveals that family-oriented firms report fewer innovations, a phenomenon attributed partly to differences in strategies.

In a personal interview with my father, we discussed the downfall of his family business, attributing it to mismanagement and greed. The reluctance of some family members, notably his eldest brother, to adapt strategies for success in the evolving economic landscape proved detrimental. Despite my father's recommendations for change and adaptability, his ideas were consistently overlooked. The neglect of family responsibilities, the uneven distribution of workload, and the inability to infuse new talent into the business further contributed to its decline. The difference in mindsets and goals between my father and his brother, particularly concerning business expansion and financial responsibilities, led to irreconcilable conflicts. My uncle's greed, coupled with a lack of accountability for the debts he put the business in, ultimately forced the family business into bankruptcy, resulting in permanent closure and financial losses for both partners. The interview serves as a poignant illustration of the critical role that effective management and partnership play in successful teamwork. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of financial management through the implementation of stringent controls, budget creation, and transparent financial practices. Successful team collaboration necessitates partners driven by shared goals, contributing equitably to workload distribution. A well-defined plan outlining procedures for ownership transfer, decision-making, and business continuity emerges as a cornerstone for success in team collaboration and sustained business growth. (Landström et al., 2008).

As I progressed in my research, new questions piqued my interest, prompting an exploration into their significance. Why is effective team collaboration important? This question delves into the core of understanding the value of cohesive teamwork. How does teamwork affect the human aspect of being an entrepreneur? By examining the impact of teamwork on the human dimension, this question seeks to unravel the intricate interplay between collaboration and entrepreneurial experiences. Are teamwork and collaboration genuinely crucial in entrepreneurial businesses? The final question encapsulates the overarching inquiry, urging an evaluation of the genuine importance of teamwork and collaboration within the context of entrepreneurial ventures. Together, these questions form a comprehensive exploration into the multifaceted realm of effective team dynamics in entrepreneurship. Establishing shared goals insures a collective focus and a clear understanding of each team member's role in achieving these objectives. The centrality of a shared goal cannot be overstated, serving as the main point for cohesive teamwork and communication. A unified goal allows team members to leverage their strengths based on their respective roles, contributing to the overall success of the collaboration. In the realm of team collaboration, diversity in expertise emerges as a critical component for business success. Hoegl (2008) emphasizes that effective communication is the linchpin of successful business operations. Communication quality, described in terms of formalization, structure, and openness, plays a pivotal role. The degree of formalization reflects the spontaneity of team conversations; informal, spontaneously initiated communication is deemed crucial for teamwork. Hoegl (2008) further contends that an open communication structure, where team members communicate directly, enhances collaboration quality. In essence, effective communication and a shared understanding of goals form the bedrock of successful team collaboration in any form of business. So, to end this understanding of my subtopic, I have come to conclude that teamwork in entrepreneurship cultivates collaborative decision-making, emotional support, increased creativity, adaptability, shared responsibility, continuous learning, networking opportunities, improved problem-solving, and a diverse cultural and global perspective, contributing to a more holistic, innovative, and fulfilling entrepreneurial experience.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this course is to equip students with entrepreneurial skills applicable to the design field, especially for those aspiring to launch their own businesses, and through both group and individual projects, the course fosters an understanding of entrepreneurial tactics and skills. It endeavours to instill the importance of entrepreneurship in collaborative work environments, preparing students for leadership and business ownership. My exploration of team dynamics in entrepreneurship has provided insights into the five dysfunctions of a team and preventive strategies crucial for launching a business. The emphasis on clear communication has emerged as a cornerstone for mitigating potential issues, offering valuable lessons for collaborative success. This course has served as a catalyst for personal growth, encouraging not only personal research but also drawing insights from diverse class experiences. While initially focused on the drawbacks of entrepreneurship, my trajectory shifted to exploring teamwork dynamics, prompting a commitment to delve deeper into communication and social intelligence. The goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the human aspects of being in a team and their correlation with an entrepreneur's success and mental well-being, thus applying the acquired skills in real-world scenarios.

By dissecting insights derived from diverse research methods encompassing books, articles, interviews, and personal experiences, I have deepened my understanding of team collaborations and the crucial role they play in the growth of businesses and the success of entrepreneurs. The questions that arose during this exploration served as catalysts for delving into various avenues and seeking comprehensive answers. This endeavor not only enhanced my existing understanding of teamwork, a skill applied in real-life design projects within academic settings, but also refined my approach to reading and online research. Engaging with articles and studies that provide nuanced insights has contributed to a more profound comprehension of my subtopic. This process of continuous learning has been instrumental in flourishing my knowledge base and, consequently, positions me to offer readers of this

analysis a profound understanding of the critical importance of teams and healthy teamwork in fostering business success.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication and Customer loyalty is a strong asset for an entrepreneur's success, that influences the entirety of a business's journey. This essay delves into the strategies of an entrepreneur, to communicate their vision and foster customer loyalty. The exploration unfolds in three dimensions: Effective communication strategies in entrepreneurship, Building strong customer relationships, and the Impact it may have on customer loyalty. Through real-life examples and practical insights, the benefits and the challenges entrepreneurs face can help navigate them to create meaningful, lasting connections with their clientele.

Effective Communication Strategies in Entrepreneurship

VISUAL ASPECT OF COMMUNICATION

To get an idea across effectively, it needs more than just hand gestures and words. An entrepreneur needs to be able to showcase their vision to other people for them to understand and act. Visual elements such as logos and photography are essential to attract and communicate to buyers about the brand.

With that, brand consistency is also crucial to achieve. This means that by having a consistent and recognizable theme throughout the brand journey, People can relate and find reliability with that Brand. This also helps the entrepreneur establish their own brand identity and make a name for themselves. They can then foster recognition with their client base and create a sense of trust and belonging.

Take Apple for example, their visual presence has become the definition of combining innovation and elegance, all while creating a lasting impression on clients. Apple's messaging is globally impactful, and we wonder why. WHY is actually their problem statement to every product they have launched. Based on Simon's (2009) research in his Book "Start with Why", He explains how even when Apple doesn't necessarily make the best ipods or the best computers, it is their marketing and visual communication strategies that attract customers to wait in long lines for their products. Simon explains this through his Golden circle concept (pp.37) The outer shell explains the "what" of a project, the second layer being "how" the project is achieved, and the third centre layer is the "Why" the project is conducted. He strongly emphasizes the importance of understanding the real subconscious reason behind a brand. Creative Technology Ltd, which is a Singapore based company introduced iPods into the market about a year before Apple did. The difference is, They marketed it is a "5GB mp3 player" where as Apple's Marketing Strategy was to humanize it and deliver it as "1,000 songs in your pocket". Creative's form of messaging was through their "What" and Apple's was through their "Why". This evidently argues that maybe a simple and more direct form of communication is what is needed.

As an entrepreneur, they really need to ask themselves "What is it the client actually wants? What is their latent need" which can help them go about solving it.

How can entrepreneurs use visual communication to establish a strong brand identity?

They can strategically use visual communication to build their own brand identity through defining their values and mission statement as a business, (their WHY), and developing a cohesive visual identity in the Businesses brands, across all mediums and platforms. Keep in mind that the Brand's messaging needs to be

appropriately reflected through their visuals in order to create a memorable and recognizable brand. This can be done by understanding certain emotions and learning how they can be evoked through visual communication.

DESIGN ASPECT AND ITS CONNECTION WITH COMMUNICATION

Design is not just an aesthetic, but rather a tool to allow entrepreneurs to communicate their business goals, visions, and intentions. In this case, it is evident to mention that design is not just limited to the communication aspect with the customer, but also the overall interaction.

< *Figure 1. Google Designer, Rachel Schwitz Project Recap (Image available in Website for larger viewing)*

Rachel (2017), a Google UX designer took part in a product design product for Google Attribution. The product's purpose is to help businesses effectively allocate their budgets by understanding different market channels. Her project can be seen in the image above. She extensively explains her process on how she can communicate this information to businesses, but generally, she collected the complex existing UI information in the software and translated it into a clear and visual format. Within this project, Rachel also included a checklist to help navigate the outcome of this project.

1. Make the process more clear
2. Tell a story
3. Help users understand the complex flow without overwhelming them
4. Empower users to correct errors themselves.

Notice how each goal is linked to a certain emotion the user may be feeling and how they can go about acting on it. This case study also showcases the strong messaging that Google uses, not only in this project but in their overall interface. Their minimalist design on all platforms reflects commitment to their user-friendly values which strengthens the experience of a user.

What role does design play in conveying the values and personality of a business?

Design can be used in many different ways in order to either communicate a message, evoke an emotion and motivate an interaction. They could also be used to express an overall personality for the brand to tell the story of a business. Layout styles, colour choices and even fonts can influence the impression a user has of a business. For example, a colorful and playful design gives the feeling of creativity and acceptance. Whereas a more muted, sleek and futuristic design can inspire innovation and efficiency. The overall goal with design is by effectively using branding to connect with customers beyond the product/service, but rather through emotions.

Building Strong Customer Relationships

THE BUFFER BETWEEN CLIENT AND ENTREPRENEUR

After conducting interviews with a Business owner and a Business Start-Up mentor, it was discovered that one of the hardest things to do as an entrepreneur is establishing the delicate balance between professionalism and friendliness with clients. By having a product focused approach, the entrepreneur can show confidence with the product but it can also build a boundary. Whereas the more human focused approach is very mindful of the clients reaction and helps in building human connection, but can also have its own negative impacts.

By creating a professional buffer, it can help avoid the conflict of a personal relationship with the dynamic between an entrepreneur & a client. This concept can also merge into the broader theme of brand consistency. Through aligning personal interactions with customers and clients with the overall brand image, the business can solidify the trust and bond that they have with their customer base, and grow their presence in the market.

An interesting view point of this is that if an entrepreneur prioritises people more, they might struggle to keep the product's value high without offering discounts to their products/services. On the other hand, if they focus more on the product, they risk alienating customers who don't relate to the product/service and might not buy it at all. It's a balancing act.

What are effective ways to maintain a professional buffer while building personal relationships with customers?

A strong and effective way to do this is by setting clear boundaries and expectations, starting with oneself as a new business owner, and with the client base. The entrepreneur needs to ask themselves about certain goals they want to achieve and the desired outcomes of these goals. This can then be communicated to the client through the form of communication in their branding and even their form of dialogue. Entrepreneurs can opt for a customer-centric approach without compromising professionalism. Things like personalizing a conversation, remembering a client's preferences and even addressing a customer by name, can all contribute to making them feel valued within the presence of a business. It's important to note that oversharing more personal details as an entrepreneur can be considered unprofessional and could even harm the growth of your business and even your reputation. Therefore, it's crucial to balance creating personalised experiences while providing the reliability of a professional business.

TAKING FEEDBACK EFFECTIVELY

Effective communication with customer relationships involves listening and observing a customer's input to help start and evolve the business. One take away from the interview session with John (2023), was understanding the different pain points certain clients have. By understanding what people and their needs are, it can help an entrepreneur focus on the problem they're solving and how they're positioning themselves through Market segmentation. This way, instead of having to wait to receive feedback, the entrepreneur is actively searching for the problem and building the business around the solution for the clients needs.

An interesting tactic that John recommended was looking at the complaint and product review pages of current existing products. He notes that It is a great starting point to find out what people are struggling with, which can then be showcased as its own unique product, notifying clients that a specific issue isn't a problem with this product. An example of this is Amazon's customer review systems, which not only collects, but uses the feedback to generate a list of options for other similar products. This is a healthy practice for entrepreneurs, as it motivates them to explore the different ways a solution can be solved, rather than being stuck on a solution, without a defined problem. This is the difference between a problem focused approach vs a solution focused approach.

Taking feedback from clients doesn't always have to be negative. By incorporating clear and concise design elements to the product/service page, it can motivate customers to take part and initiative and be part of the solution. It could include prompts and polls on what works, and what doesn't, to understand the success of the product in the market. Not only does this enhance the feedback process, but it is also engaging and beneficial for both entrepreneurs and customers.

How can entrepreneurs gather and utilize customer feedback to improve their products or services?

They can leverage customer feedback. It's as easy as listening to what your clients need and applying it to your solution. The active engagement with customer feedback can help the business grow towards developing innovative solutions, as well as enhance the customer satisfaction rate.

Impact on Customer Loyalty

BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

One of the positive results through effective communication is gaining the trust of a customer. Trust becomes the source of positive outcomes in customer relationships, which is why it is crucial to build that bond as early as possible in a business. When customers experience a strong sense of trust with a brand, their satisfaction with those products/services tends to increase, which leads them to develop loyalty to the brand. They can even help promote the product/service through Positive word-of-mouth, which takes part in the overall success of the business.

The interview with Magdi (2023), the owner of 3cents cafe, gives insights to some customer service strategies. Throughout the interview, He emphasizes the need for personalized conversations to build trust with the customer base inorder to reflect his commitment in creating a welcoming environment. Magdi also mentions the importance of adapting the business to location. For example, after opening his second location before covid within the UOttawa campus, He noticed that most people (students in this case) would order sandwiches and items to-go. With this, he switched his original concept of 3cents cafe into another brand extension 3cents Eats-to-go. This way, by addressing specific customer needs and preferences the business is also able to solidify long-term loyalty.

Gaining trust from a client can also be cultivated through effective communication with the use of design. Certain visual elements, and brand imaging can create a sense of reliability and commitment. By also showing some transparency with the brand itself and keeping true to the Business' mission, the visual reinforcement can significantly impact and sustain customer loyalty.

CHALLENGES IN COMMUNICATION

Communication across cultures has never been easy. From language barriers, to Cultural norms, there is usually some sort of misunderstanding. Effective cross-cultural communication is not just a necessity to have as a business owner but an important factor for creating a product/platform that encourages

cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This approach enhances the overall user experience, fostering a sense of loyalty among users worldwide.

This strategy can be seen in Airbnb's business model, where they were able to navigate around those cultural differences and language barriers on a global scale. They were able to connect hosts to travelers from diverse backgrounds while ensuring effective communication. Overcoming communication challenges is a fundamental aspect of Airbnb's success, as they also had to tackle issues like cultural sensitivity.

With that, it is understood that communication is not just verbal. By recognizing the universal nature of visual communication, Airbnb strongly involves the use of visuals as a powerful tool to bridge language and cultural gaps. With the use of Visual elements, they help avoid most linguistic barriers, making communication more accessible and inclusive to everyone. Overall, The integration of visuals becomes a strategic choice for effective communication that contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty in a global context.

CONCLUSION

In the entrepreneurial journey, the power of effective communication and building customer loyalty stems from shaping brand identity, customer relationships, and even through global connections. By using a strategic blend of visual and design elements, entrepreneurs can articulate their vision, foster brand loyalty, and navigate cross-cultural complexities. The delicate balance between professionalism and friendliness becomes crucial when building strong customer relationships. As entrepreneurs actively seek and utilize customer feedback, they embark on a journey of continuous improvement, innovation, and strengthening customer satisfaction. The essence of a successful entrepreneur possesses the quality of effective communication, trust, and loyalty.

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Team 4 |THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR| Tallia Rosso

WHAT IS AN ENTREPRENEUR

There are many different types of entrepreneurs, from small-business owners and startups to those who run large, profitable organizations. The ability to take risks and turn an idea into a profitable business opportunity is known as entrepreneurship. Being proactive, flexible, and resilient in the face of uncertainty are characteristics of the attitude of an entrepreneur. Building a team, finding funds, spotting potential markets, and managing the day-to-day operations of their businesses are all common tasks for entrepreneurs. Product, service, or business model innovation is typically the first step. Generating jobs, expanding into new markets, and making better use of already-existing resources can boost the economy. Within their industry, entrepreneurs are the company leaders who are bringing forth improvements in society. These features centre on how different stakeholders interact and how entrepreneurship affects people individually and collectively. Being an entrepreneur may be a fulfilling yet challenging career. In the evolving business world, it demands a blend of skills, character attributes, and a readiness to grow and adapt.

THE HUMAN ASPECTS

Starting and operating a business has social and interpersonal components, which are all included in the human aspects of entrepreneurship. These features centre on dealing with different stakeholders and how entrepreneurship affects people individually and in societies. Establishing a successful firm with a healthy and productive work culture requires striking a balance between the human components of the organization and the personal aspects of entrepreneurship.

Why be an entrepreneur? Is it worth it? What elements must you understand when starting a business? It entails intentionally prioritizing self-care and well-being while managing your time and energy to fulfill both your professional and private commitments.

The team dynamics (Us) - Working together with partners, employees, and co-founders is a requirement of entrepreneurship. Success requires competent leadership, efficient teamwork, and communication. Reaching company objectives requires cooperative resolution of conflicts while establishing a positive atmosphere at work. Strong human resources policies combined with an effective company culture promote an environment where workers feel appreciated, encouraged, and inspired. As a result, this improves creativity, organizational performance, and the capacity to overcome obstacles. An organization's potential to succeed and endure over the long term is determined by its workforce and culture, which define the company as a whole.

Communication and customer loyalty (them) - Establishing a successful business with a healthy and productive workplace environment requires striking a balance between the human components of the organization and the personal aspects of management. Establishing a transparent and open connection to customers through communication promotes confidence in the business. Clear communication makes it easier to understand and satisfy consumer wants, helping companies modify their offers to fulfill customer expectations. Additionally, positive and consistent communication shapes the brand's reputation and appearance encouraging consumer loyalty and ideal recommendations. Businesses may effectively manage consumer expectations and enhance their offers on a regular basis by proactively seeking and receiving feedback from their customers.

The entrepreneur (me) - Being an entrepreneur may involve a lot of responsibilities, but keeping a work-life balance is crucial for an entrepreneur's health, the long-term viability of their company, and the development of a healthy way of life.

Figure 1. Us, them and me model of an entrepreneur and how their communication affects their team and company.

Developing a company requires diligent planning and smart execution. It's an exciting but challenging task. It starts with the development of a workable concept that is supported by in-depth knowledge of industry dynamics and market analysis. It is essential to create a comprehensive company strategy that outlines the objectives, target market, and methods of operation. Long-term success requires constant assessment and adjustment in response to consumer feedback and changes in the market. Resilience, flexibility, and a dedication to lifelong learning are essential qualities that can propel a business from nothing too something. Durning an interview a successful restaurant owner (they would like to remain anonymous as they are retired and no longer own the restaurant) stated "Keep it simple and focus on what makes you stand out. Not everyone will like you but that's okay as long as you have your audience. It's okay to have ups and downs in the restaurant industry specifically we'd have slow days and a slow season it doesn't mean that you're doing something wrong. Having a business plan is important but more importantly, is expecting the unexpected to always staying protected."

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR

What are the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing an entrepreneurial career, and how do they differ based on factors such as industry, location, and personal characteristics? Being an entrepreneur can have many advantages and rewards, but it's important to keep in mind that it also has a unique set of risks and difficulties.

Thinking of becoming an Entrepreneur?
These seven qualities are essential for an entrepreneur to succeed:

- Motivation
- Vision
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Passion
- Confidence
- Risk-taking

Advantages
Independence and Flexibility - Entrepreneurs are free to choose their paths and set their terms for employment. Without the limitations of a typical 9-5 employment, they can create flexible schedules and follow their goals. They can modify their work hours to meet their demands.
Financial Potential - Innovative business owners have the possibility to make large profits, although there is no certainty. Their innovation and hard effort can pay off, bringing in large sums of revenue.
Passion and Innovation - It is possible for them to innovate and develop brand-new goods, services, or business strategies. They can follow their passions and realize their ideas, advancing society and making a positive impact. A lot of entrepreneurs are inspired by their love for what they do. They get to follow their interests, which could end up in extra satisfying employment.
Networking - Building beneficial relationships and connections with other executives in the industry, financiers, role models, and possible partners is possible.
Personal Growth - Managing a company frequently entails overcoming several obstacles

and gaining experience. A wide range of abilities, including adaptability, problem-solving, and leadership can be developed and contribute to their personal development. The direction, approach, and environment of their company are all in the hands of the entrepreneurs. They have the power to mould the company to fit their objectives and ideals. Entrepreneurs who achieve success can make a significant impact on society and their companies by introducing new ideas and inventions.

Disadvantages

Financial Uncertainty - Financial risks are a common part of entrepreneurial undertakings. Financial instability is a concern, particularly in the early phases of a corporation when revenue is erratic.

Competition - What makes your company better than someone else's?

Administrative and Legal Difficulties - navigating through the maze of legal and regulatory obligations can be quite difficult. There could be problems with compliance that need time and money. There are constantly new license requirements, fees, and rules.

Risk of Failure - Not every business endeavour is successful. There is always a chance that something will fail, and entrepreneurs have to deal with the prospect that their efforts won't provide the results they hope for. Small startup companies may have limited resources, such as capital, labour, and technology. Development and effectiveness might be limited by a lack of resources.

No Work Security - In contrast to traditional employment, self-employed individuals are not guaranteed a consistent salary or benefits. Income can fluctuate, and a company's success is frequently a prerequisite for financial security. They work in dynamic marketplaces where things may shift drastically within seconds. Significant problems may arise because of downturns in the economy, shifts in consumer tastes, or unforeseen competitors.

Isolation - Being a business owner may be an isolated activity. Founders frequently bear an imbalance of responsibility, which can cause stress and feelings of loneliness. Establishing and maintaining a business takes a lot of time

and effort. Entrepreneurs might discover that their personal time is limited, which could have an impact on their relationships and general well-being. There could be a lot of strain to make important choices and solve obstacles.

Work-Life Imbalance - Since entrepreneurs frequently put in long hours, establishing a healthy equilibrium between their personal and professional lives can be difficult. Burnout can occasionally result from the commitment necessary to establish and maintain a company.

The average cost of starting a business including website costs, rental office, office furniture, basic supplies/ technology, advertising or promotions, business plan costs, labor, insurance, license or permit fees is anywhere around $184,000 (Sammi Caramela, 2018).

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

How do you maintain a work-life balance as an entrepreneur? How does it change as your business grows? Achieving a work-life balance is crucial for an entrepreneur's health, the success of their business, and the development of a long-lasting and rewarding lifestyle.

A happy and long-term lifestyle requires maintaining a good work-life balance. It entails drawing distinct lines between work and personal life, making sure that particular work hours are devoted exclusively to fulfilling professional obligations. Making self-care a priority is essential; it includes practices like physical activity, mindfulness, and getting enough sleep to support mental and physical health. Achieving efficient time management involves setting priorities and refraining from putting off tasks. Acquiring the skill of delegating duties at work and home may assist with spreading the responsibility and decreasing stress levels. Having reasonable objectives helps to control expectations and reduce the temptation to take on more than one can handle. It's important to communicate. Cognitive shifts in life at work and home are facilitated by taking breaks during the day and creating routines that indicate the start and finish of work. It's crucial to routinely turn off

work-related communications and establish hobbies, relationships, and wellness. When accepting more work puts your health or the calibre of your work at risk, learn to say no. A key aspect of sustaining general well-being is preventing burnout. To prevent the stress that comes with having unrealistic expectations, one important tactic is to define short- and long-term goals that are both achievable and within reach. This is where they come to questions like: How can I motivate myself to go to the gym when I have so many other things going on in my life? How can I the manager best motivate my employees, when I can't motivate myself?

The film Work-Life Balance: Success and Happiness in an Always-Connected World, examines what is happening with a view toward maintaining the right balance that promotes success, pleasure, and good well-being at work and at home. Through interviews with professionals, experts, and students, it offers coping mechanisms for stress, responsibility, organization, time management, and attention. The work-life balance myth : rethinking your optimal balance for success. McGraw-Hill, it explains "All of us have Seven Slices in our lives: our Family Slice, our Professional Slice, our Personal Slice, our Physical Slice, our Intellectual Slice, our Emotional Slice, and our Spiritual Slice. These all need to be served in some fashion—and in serving them, they, in turn, serve us." (McNeff, D. J. 2022) It gives a tried-and-true fresh perspective on life, to help recognize stress for what it is, and significantly enhances your capacity to deal with the inevitable emotional obstacles in a way that benefits the Seven Slices.

Establishing a balance between work and personal life is essential for the prosperity, well-being, and creation of a sustainable lifestyle of an entrepreneur.It entails prioritizing self-care and well-being while managing your time and energy to your professional and private commitments.

MOTIVATION

Ultimately, motivation is what matters. The reasons behind a person's behaviour. This drive is the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented conduct. To foster commitment into a person's daily practice, several strategies are needed to encourage someone with a busy schedule. For both professional and personal growth, setting goals is a transformative and crucial activity. Goal-setting and goal-achieving focus attention and energy on tasks. It offers people a benchmark for progress that is objective so they may assess progress and make any necessary adjustments. Beyond the apparent benefits, goal-setting enhances decision-making by serving as an outline for evaluating priorities and possibilities. It promotes an adaptable mindset while encouraging efficiency, time management, and adaptability.

SMART GOALS

"Specific: Well-defined, clear, and unambiguous
Measurable: With specific criteria that measure your progress toward the accomplishment of the goal
Achievable: Attainable and not impossible to achieve
Realistic: Within reach, realistic, and relevant to your life purpose
Timely: With a clearly defined timeline, including a starting date and a target date. The purpose is to create urgency." (*Goal Setting*, 2023)

Examples:

Long term - "By growing our product range, gaining a 20% market share, and attaining a steady 15% annual revenue growth, my goal is to position my company as the industry leader in the next five years. Furthermore, my intention is to improve our brand recognition by means of strategic alliances, global expansion, and a dedication to environmentally friendly business practices."

Short term - "I want to start an online marketing campaign in the next three months

to build brand awareness and bring in the first 100 clients to my service or product. To increase traffic, I will need to provide interesting content, optimize my social media accounts, and use targeted advertising techniques."

CONCLUSION

Even though starting your own business can have many benefits, it's crucial to approach it with thorough planning, a realistic understanding of the difficulties you may face, and a willingness to adapt. It is worthwhile to take into account the above-mentioned factors in order to enhance chances of success and satisfaction in entrepreneurial endeavours. Strategic planning acts as a compass, defining the company's objectives and providing a plan of action for reaching them. Financial management guarantees the company's financial stability. Setting the tone for the company, motivating the workforce, and reaching goals are all greatly assisted by strong leadership. It is crucial to have a motivated and united team to promote efficient communication and teamwork. Maintaining satisfaction and loyalty requires a strong emphasis on customer focus, which is achieved through comprehending and satisfying customer demands. Selling and advertising initiatives need to be in line with the needs of customers and industry developments. In a company environment that is constantly changing, innovation, flexibility, and technological integration are crucial to sustaining relevance and success. Potential obstacles must be anticipated and mitigated for effective risk management. It is imperative to adhere to legal regulations, as this promotes moral business practices. Effective business leadership is enhanced by networking, continuous enhancement, and social and environmental responsibility. Fundamentally, starting a business is about bringing these components together in an enjoyable manner to overcome obstacles, promote development, and ensure long-term success.

This paper hopes to give students perspectives on design that go beyond its creative components, promoting a comprehensive knowledge of the field and an optimistic mindset toward their chosen career. Remember to take care of yourself and those around you as you pursue your entrepreneurial journey.

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AI Technology in ENTREPRENEURSHIP

AI s integration into business & design operations is reshaping industries and impacting society in profound ways.

Mike Noel
Kole Tromp
David Perras
Tyler Vongsouneth

OVER-RELIANCE ON AI IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP & DESIGN

TEAM 5 | AI TECHNOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP|DAVID PERRAS

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The advent of artificial intelligence brings with it a new world of possibilities and opportunities that are revolutionizing the way we get things done. One area where this is immediately apparent are in the fields of entrepreneurship and design. It seems like entrepreneurs and designers are constantly being introduced to new artificial intelligence programs and tools designed to revolutionize the way they work. These tools are able to assist in virtually every step of the way, streamlining the workflow of entrepreneurs and designers, allowing them to work faster and more efficiently. These topics are well documented by my peers in the other subtopics relating to our overarching theme consisting of the effects of the advent of AI on the entrepreneurship and design landscape.

Although the advantages of these artificial intelligence programs and tools seem immediately evident, they carry with them some significant consequences if used incorrectly. These consequences are not the ones consistent with the ramblings of conspiracy theorists who believe the advent of AI will spell the end of humanity as we know it. Rather, they are negative outcomes that may occur due to large-scale over-reliance on artificial intelligence in the fields of entrepreneurship and design. Over-reliance on AI can lead to stagnation in progress for entrepreneurs and designers in terms of human capital, innovation, and social equality. These consequences will form the basis of discussion in this paper. Prior to this, however, it is crucial to define a few concepts that are integral to the understanding of the topic at hand.

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE SUBTOPIC

The first of these concepts consists of the link between entrepreneurship and design. One may ask themselves why this paper is discussing the consequences of over-reliance on artificial intelligence in the scope of entrepreneurs and designers. In many ways, the fields of entrepreneurship and design are one and the same in the way they both heavily rely on creativity in order to achieve innovation. Innovation is crucial to success in both of these fields as well as human advancement. Technological advancements, for the most part, make everyone better off and this is thanks in part to entrepreneurship and design which incentivises individuals to undertake the process of innovation. Innovation and technological advancement is truly a human quality which sets us apart from the rest of our natural environment.

Artificial intelligence is one of these innovative technological advancements that can be used as a tool by entrepreneurs and designers to further accelerate technological advancements. By considering the other subtopics in this report, one can see that AI is a powerful tool that can allow entrepreneurs and designers to uncover market trends, streamline their workflow, and fill gaps in small teams. but it is important to remember that despite this, artificial intelligence is a tool for innovation and not a solution to innovation. By the end of this paper, it will be evident why over-reliance on AI in entrepreneurship and design is detrimental to innovation as a whole.

DISCUSSION ABOUT INDIVIDUAL'S WORKING TITLE

In the entrepreneurship and design process, there now exists a host of AI tools which can be used to complete every step end-to-end. These tools range from idea generation all the way to bringing a product to market. In a lot of ways, artificial intelligence tools can be used to complete most tasks in the entrepreneurial and design process which is great for small teams who need to act expeditiously; however, over-reliance on these technologies may prove to be detrimental to their skills development in the long run.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime. It is not inconceivable to believe that this adage applies to this situation. According to Cooney (2012), entrepreneurship requires constant skill development and learning in order to grow and continue to innovate. This same notion can be applied to designers, who's human capital can be judged based on their skill sets. Every time an individual is relying on an artificial intelligence tool to complete a task for them, they are not only missing out on an opportunity to learn or practice that skill, but they are actually degrading that skill (Ahmad et al. 2023). Ahmad et al. argue that over-reliance on AI is making humans impatient, lazy, and gradually robbing them of thoughtfulness as they increasingly rely on AI to complete mental-effort intensive tasks for them (IBID). They also relate that "*High-level reliance on AI may degrade professional skills and generate stress when physical or brain measures are needed*" (IBID). Therefore, over-reliance on AI tools by entrepreneurs and designers may prove detrimental to their development and growth in the long run and inhibit their abilities to hone their physical and critical thinking skills required for achieving innovation.

Not only does over-reliance on AI affect learning and honing skills, but it also affects motivation for learning. As AI tools are increasingly able to replicate skilled tasks like most found in the fields of entrepreneurship and design, it reduces the value of these skills (Li et al. 2023). This is called the deskilling effect and it functions through making a skill more easily and widely available to those who do not possess it, thus, reducing the value of the skill and reducing the value of those who possess the skill (IBID). According to LI et al. (2023), this in turn leads to lower wages and longer working hours which de-incentivises individuals affected by this to pursue the acquisition of new skills. This is also coupled with a pessimistic view that Ai will soon replace most of their skills, further decreasing their motivation to continue learning (IBID). A reduction in motivation means that entrepreneurs and designers may not pursue the acquisition and development of skills

which are required to further innovate and achieve success in their fields.

It is important to reiterate that these two scenarios are due to over-reliance on AI for skilled tasks. It is important for entrepreneurs and designers to not get complacent or discouraged with the advent of AI and encourage them to learn to work effectively in conjunction with AI in order to accelerate rather than decelerate innovation (IBID).

One might ask themselves why humans are even required at all in order to achieve innovation since it seems artificial intelligence can easily replicate the skills of entrepreneurs and designers. As previously discussed, the basis for innovation is creativity which is a shared quality between entrepreneurs and designers. According to Ivanyi and Hoffer (1999), creativity is required in order to innovate and solve novel problems. The reason why artificial intelligence is not able to be innovative is due to its inability to be truly creative. Ai is not able to reproduce true human creativity, it is able to generate ideas but it cannot reflect on these ideas and deem them good or bad in order to iteratively improve upon them (Boden, 1998). Artificial intelligence can only generate ideas in-so-far as the data sets it has been trained on, this means that it can produce unique combinations of familiar ideas, generate ideas based on the attributes of previous innovations, and, by means of a combination of these two processes (Kirkpatrick, 2023). Kirkpatrick states that: "*the process is not the same as a human's creativity, which comes from a combination of real-world experience, emotion, and inspiration*" (2023). Somewhat ironically, the best description of AI's inability to replicate true human creativity comes from chatGPT itself. ChatGPT states that AI lacks true understanding in meaning and emotional depth of its creations, it has limited originality due to it being unable to generate groundbreaking ideas beyond the scope of its training data, and it is not able to reproduce serendipity and random associations the way humans can (OpenAI, 2023). Therefore, AI is not able to reproduce true human creativity required for innovation.

The fact that AI is not able to be truly innovative means that over-reliance on this technology by entrepreneurs and designers could lead to an innovation plateau. If entrepreneurs and designers are relying on artificial intelligence programs to generate "innovative" ideas for them and AI is only able to innovate in-so-far as its training data, then there will be a point in which these new combinations of familiar ideas are exhausted and novel innovation comes to a halt due to lack of human creative input. This scenario is exacerbated by the fact that we humans place a higher level of trust in algorithmically based decisions made by AI than we do for the same decisions made by a fellow human (Keding & Meissner, 2021). Studies show that AI-based recommendations positively affect perceived decision quality (IBID). This means that entrepreneurs and designers may be placing a higher level of trust in decisions regarding innovation made by AI, encouraging them to further rely on AI rather than their own intuition. In addition to this, as discussed earlier, relying on AI to perform skilled tasks degrades entrepreneurs' and designers' skill sets and critical thinking abilities required to innovate. Over-reliance on artificial intelligence causes all of these factors to work together in a vicious cycle which could bring novel innovation to a halt; thus creating an innovation plateau.

Again, it must be reiterated that this scenario is only a result of over-reliance on artificial intelligence tools. Despite AI surpassing humans in analytical information processing, humans outperform artificial intelligence in other aspects such as creativity and intuition (IBID). It is important to use AI tools to augment rather than replace human creativity and sense-making in order to achieve continued and accelerated novel innovation.

It is well documented that AI systems are able to proliferate biases based on their training data which may reflect certain societal biases (kirkpatrick, 2023). Kirckpatrick details that artificial intelligence image generators may be "*...creating artwork that renders, say, pilots as male, nurses as female, or song lyrics*

overrun with racial slurs or obscenities" (IBID). In one practical case, Google's targeted advertising tool for Ads was discovered to disproportionately display fewer advertisements for high-paying job opportunities to women compared to men (Ntoutsi et al. 2020). Lesser known is that Ai algorithms can also create and proliferate biases through association (IBID). Ntoutsi et al. (2020) give an example of this where perhaps a minority's preference for red cars, if shared with aggressive drivers, could lead to biased predictions of accident rates, resulting in disproportionately higher insurance premiums for red car owners and impacting minority members unfairly. Further, often many of the data sets on which an AI model is trained were created as the by-product of other activities with goals other than true statistical rigor and representation, leading to under-representation of certain groups (IBID).

For the most part, entrepreneurs want their businesses to be profitable, and designers want their products to sell. Artificial intelligence relies on machine learning in order to extract information from datasets (Kersting, 2018). However, studies reveal that the encoding of machine learning reflects the values and influences of its creators (Roche et al. 2022). Birhane et al. (2022) find that machine learning is "*frequently neglecting societal needs and harms, while prioritizing and promoting the concentration of resources, tools, knowledge, and power in the hands of already powerful actors*". Not to mention, voices and perspectives from the often marginalized populations are often under-represented in artificial intelligence (Roche et al. 2022). Therefore, artificial intelligence assuming entrepreneurs and designers want to be successful may cause it to suggest frameworks and ideas which perpetuate these power structures while ignoring the needs of the marginalized. If entrepreneurs and designers place too much trust on ai without deeply scrutinizing it, they may perpetuate these inequalities and risk overlooking opportunities for innovations which favor marginalized communities.

CONCLUSION

Artificial intelligence tools are proving to be truly transformative to the operations of entrepreneurs and designers. However, If entrepreneurs and designers over-rely on AI tools, they may be degrading their skills and missing opportunities to learn and practice new ones. Over-reliance on these technologies can slowly rob one of critical thinking and intentionality. Over-reliance on AI also imposes a deskilling effect, reducing the value of skills, and potentially leading to de-incentivisation of skill acquisition. The combination of these two effects reduce the motivation required to learn and hone skills required for furthering innovation.

Creativity is necessary for innovation. However, ai is not able to recreate true human creativity because it lacks experience, emotion, and inspiration. It is able to produce new combinations of familiar ideas but it cannot reflect on these ideas, deem them as good or bad, or incrementally improve upon them. AI can only produce ideas in-so-far as its training datasets. Studies show that we humans tend to place a high level of trust in decisions algorithmically produced by AIs. This can lead entrepreneurs and designers to trust AI over their own intuition for idea generation. And, since over-reliance on AI tools can lead to degradation in skills and critical thinking, this can lead to further reliance on AI. This can instill a vicious cycle which results in the deceleration of innovation due to a lack of human input and creativity required for innovation.

AI systems are able to proliferate biases from their training datasets. Over-reliance on ideas generated by AI can incorporate some of these biases and lead to missed opportunities for innovation due to the under-representation of ideas and perspectives from marginalized groups. If entrepreneurs and designers place too much trust in these AI generated ideas without scrutiny they risk only producing businesses and products for the needs of over-represented populations while ignoring the needs of the marginalized, thus perpetuating inequalities.

I must reiterate that these situations are only possible if there is an over-reliance on AI by entrepreneurs and designers. A healthy mix of AI and human input is actually ideal for accelerated innovation. However, we must remember that AI is a tool for innovation, and not a solution to it.

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HOW CAN AI DETERMINE MARKET VIABILITY AND TRENDS

GROUP 5 | AI TECHONOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP | KOLE TROMP

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping industries and impacting our society in profound ways. Learning and discovering through patterns within the data they are fed, AI has managed to revolutionize the marketing industry. As OpenAI's ChatGPT system describes it "Trained through pre-training on diverse internet text and fine-tuning with human reviewers, I generate responses based on learned patterns to input prompts, aiming to provide contextually relevant and coherent information, within the limitations of my design." (OpenAI, 2023).

This paper undertakes the question of *How can AI determine market viability and trends?* By conducting a thorough examination of AI's role in determining market viability and trends, shedding light on the tools, strategies, advantages, and challenges associated with its implementation. Represented by these three questions.

1. How does AI collect and analyze data in order to predict market trends?
2. What competitive advantages can AI provide?
3. What are the disadvantages of using AI in market research?

Using cognitive insight modelling AI sifts through extensive big data analytics and enhances intelligibility of insights to streamline market orientation. The AI tools discussed empower businesses to make informed decisions and gain a decisive edge in the competitive market. However, AI is not without disadvantages and is reliant on provided quality of data, improper perception, and poses concerns with potential risks and difficulties in adoption.

DISCUSSION ABOUT AI TECHNOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP & DESIGN

Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing entrepreneurial endeavors and the design process itself. AI could provide the framework to completely design and automate a business, or be leveraged to

fill gaps in small teams. AI may also lead to an over reliance on other AI tools potentially leading to plateaus in innovation. However those are the sub-theses of the other group five members. Our group underwent individual research about a variety of sub-theses related to AI technologies in entrepreneurship & design.

This paper will delve into the topic of AI and marketing by asking the overarching question of *How Can AI Determine Market Viability and Trends?* In order to answer this question this paper investigated a variety of AI marketing tools and strategies alongside understanding its major competitors. The findings showed that the majority of AI market analytic systems used cognitive insight modeling.

The paper also discusses what advantages AI can leverage over its competitors, *competitors* in this context being both competing market research tools and competitive companies which may not be using AI marketing technologies. Finding that AI provided an easier framework for understanding market information which directly lead to increased company performance.

Finally, this paper addresses the shortcomings discovered while analysing the AI marketing tools finding difficulties in predictive marketing, perception, and ease of adoption. It was also found that AI can appear threatening, and be used without regard to potentially dangerous factors.

DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW CAN AI DETERMINE MARKET VIABILITY AND TRENDS

The first question this paper will address to understand how AI can determine market viability and trends, is *how does AI collect and analyze data in order to predict market trends?*

The majority of AI market analytic systems investigated employ cognitive insight modelling. This is a process that utilizes AI algorithms to compile large amounts of data, determine the meaning of the data, detect patterns in the data, and present crucial

information in the form of insights (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). These programs also improve over time, being able to use each new piece of data more efficiently than the last. Cognitive insight modelling can also recognize when bits of information are associated with the same entity across formats and different databases (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018), allowing for improved consumer profiling.

One of the programs that uses cognitive insight modelling is Kompyte. Kompyte scours a wide array of sources such as social media, competitor websites, product reviews, and even news sites. The program then uses this information to create easily digestible updates for the team. This tool offers a communication system within itself allowing a team to share insights gathered from the AI with each other, centralizing market data. Kompyte also creates 'battle cards' which consist of competitors insights alongside competitive notes such as which company wins on current pricings, current internet reviews, and star ratings on each product (Kompyte, 2023). In one case study posted to Kompyte's website a company called LegalZoom® used the program to set up alerts when competitors entered the market and anytime a trademark violation was detected (Semrush, n.d.-b). In another case study (posted by Kompyte) the company Anyline used Kompyte to follow key market insights. They found that the scale at which Kompyte scoured for data was incomparable to any methods they had used previously and realized they had been consistently missing competitive insights. Their key reasoning for this ability was Kompyte's filtering methods in which it was able to sift through irrelevant information and present only the relevant insights (Semrush, n.d.-a). Kompyte also offered a chat-bot which market researchers could converse with.

Figure 1. Visual Representations of information presented through Kompyte use (Semrush, 2022).

Some similar programs to Kompyte that were investigated were Semrush (the father program to Kompyte) and Valuer. Valuer was similar to Kompyte with a few key differences. Mainly Valuer gears itself to the needs of the user, providing more or less access to tools used by the AI platform as would be needed as determined during a collaboration process with the people at Valuer. Valuer also puts more emphasis on the chat-bot aspect of the AI integrating AI-Search into infrastructure and using conversations with the AI to pinpoint strategic directions that a company would need to take (Valuer, 2023). This tool is used by major companies such as Microsoft and Lux Research.

There was another type of market research tool found during investigation which also used cognitive insight modelling but for a much more controlled dataset. This dataset being surveys. Programs like Poll the People used ChatGPT's framework to distribute large scale surveys and condense the results down into an easily readable summary which includes things like graphs, demographic insights, and word clouds (Poll the People, 2023). The most impressive feature is how ChatGPT takes all the written feedback from a distributed survey and condenses the insights down into short paragraphs ordered by importance.

Another similar tool to Poll the People but with more integration to other applications is Survey Sparrow. This program utilized its own AI program instead of ChatGPT. Crucially Survey Sparrow uses its survey information in conjunction with major programs like google, Microsoft teams, and shoppify, sporting its own personalized app store.

The second question this paper will address is *what competitive advantages can AI provide?*

The advantages leveraged by artificial intelligence are:

- More extensive and varied big data analytics.
- Increased intelligibility of insights generated from big data compared to other tools.
- Boosting market orientation.
- Easier access to information on competitors.
- Automation of time-consuming jobs.

Mass amounts of data is known as *big data* often measured in petabytes, exabytes, or zettabytes. To

frame those quantities of data, one petabyte of information is equivalent to 20 million traditional filing cabinets of text (Erevelles et al., 2016) and one zettabyte is equivalent to 250 billion DVDs (Cisco, 2014).

Big data is characterized by three V's: *volume*, *velocity*, and *variety.* Often two other V's can be added: *veracity*, and *value*. As big data becomes more extensive and varied (within the five V's) it is referred to as 'richer'. The richer the data the better the ability to understand marketing trends and patterns will improve (Erevelles et al., 2016). AI is able to analyze big data to draw insights and relevant information which it can then deliver in palatable quantities to users.

AI's major competitor in big data is other forms of software such as Apache Hadoop. These software are able to process massive data sets by using clusters of computer servers. These clusters can range from a single server into thousands of servers (Apache Hadoop, 2023). These programs are able to handle a larger volume of information when compared with AI tools.

Compared to these other software however, AI is able to analyze data more quickly achieving a higher *velocity*. The AI tools investigated in the previous question such as Kompyte were able to watch information on the internet as it was posted in order to deliver the near-real time insights (Kompyte, 2023). AI tools may also be able to reach a wider *variety* of information as they are able to be trained to read different formats which might not be available to other programs.

The biggest competitive advantage posed by AI is its ability to condense gathered information into easily understandable bits as seen in the tools like Kompyte and Valuer. AI insights are highly valuable as they enable business to make informed market decisions, identify key patterns, and predict trends with a level of precision and efficiency not easily achievable through traditional methods. These insights directly translate into actionable information, which help organizations optimize processes, enhance customer experiences, and gain a competitive edge in the market.

When compared with social media marketing research and traditional big data analytics (including using Apache Hadoop), AI was identified to be the most effective tool for boosting overall market orientation (Zhang & Song, 2022; Wu & Monfort, 2022). *Market orientation* refers to the organization-wide commitment to understanding and responding effectively to the needs and wants of its target customers (Zhang & Song, 2022). High market-oriented firms will outperform their peer in innovation success, customer satisfaction, market share growth, and financial performance (Wang et al., 2020).

AI also positively impacts an organizations performance generating an increase in profits, quality of service/products, sales growth, and customer satisfaction (Wu & Monfort, 2022; Cam et al., 2019). AI adoption can even increase revenue gains by over 10% (Cam et al., 2019).

AI is also able to more easily collect and distribute key information on a business's competitors (Wu & Monfort, 2022). This can be seen in Kompyte's 'battle cards' which it uses to quickly communicate how a firm compares with its major competitors in a simple layout. Companies often use tools like these exclusively to track competitor activity and adjust their own actions accordingly (Semrush, n.d.-b).

Beyond decision making and specific marketing advantages, AI can provide a labour advantage. Using AI tools to optimize previously time consuming jobs like competitor analysis frees up workers to be more creative and take up jobs in more human oriented fields. This advantage was cited by 36% of executives who participated in a survey by Harvard Business Review (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). It can also allow for a reduction in labour costs by reducing the number of employees needed for operations, a controversial topic inherent in AI discussion (Coyle, 2023).

The third question this paper investigated was *what are the disadvantages of AI in market research?*

AI's disadvantages in market research are:

- Acuity is dependent on the product or service and its associated data pool.

- Determining future market trends is more difficult and less accurate.
- AI can be mistakenly perceived as cheaper and faster than other methods.
- Barriers to entry.
- Scaling use requires integration into other systems.
- AI appearing threating to workers.
- Potential risks are not considered or ignored.

AI's market research is entirely dependent on the data pool from which it can draw. The larger the data pool, the more accurate the results and insights will be. This can be problematic for niche companies working with small data sets. For example, a company wishing to do an investigation into the social media reception of Glow-in-the-dark Garden Gnomes using a tool like Kompyte will likely yield very simplistic results. However, an AI tool like Survey Sparrow which could send out a series of questionnaires to gauge interest would be able to generate relevant insights. AI cannot be a catch all as many companies mistakenly believe (Zhang & Song, 2022).

Many companies use AI marketing in hopes that it will be a faster, cheaper, and easier method for managing market orientation when compared to using traditional big data methods. However, this is not always the case. AI is disproportionately used by below-average performing firms (Zhang & Song, 2022). This may be due to the under performing firms not understanding how to use the more complex traditional big data analytic tools, as higher performance firms used big data analytics in conjunction with AI more often (Zhang & Song, 2022)

There are difficulties in predictive analysis with AI marketing. AI marketing tools have proven invaluable for identifying *current* market trends and insights, but without a large historical data pool, AI marketing tools have difficulties predicting future trends. Once again this can be offset through training or providing more data, such as allowing the AI algorithms to access previous customer purchasing patterns in order to determine future outcomes, but this tends to be a less accurate process better suited to human expertise.

AI also introduces many barriers to entry, the main one being a lack of a clear AI strategy followed by a lack of appropriate talent. (McKinsey Analytics, 2018). Although more recent AI tools have bridged the skill gap required to use them (as seen in the mass use of OpenAI's ChatGPT), the framework of exactly what a company wants to do with an AI marketing tool is still lacking. Many companies may pick up AI tools as a novelty system meant for specific tasks and not as system wide integration (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). Kompyte attempted to solve this by introducing an all encompassing system within itself, and Survey Sparrow attempted to solve it using an integrated app store to merge existing technologies.

Scaling up AI use in general is difficult. Some tools require specific technology that cannot be sourced easily, others are not able to integrate with existing applications (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). Integrating AI use requires significant investment into IT resources and knowledge. Retraining efforts for staff incur additional costs, many high performing companies already report increases in retraining efforts as a result of AI (Cam et al., 2019).

There are also change-management challenges, many users feeling threatened by AI (McKinsey Analytics, 2018) and pushing back against their use. In one case study when a small retail chain introduced machine learning for product recommendations, buyers became threatened and requested the program to be 'killed' (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). In recent years there as been an increase in AI acceptance (Kelly et al., 2023), however there has also been an increase in fear related to AI and job security which can be seen in the Hollywood writers strike where workers demanded an outright ban on using AI tools (Coyle, 2023).

Finally, the dangers and controversies of AI use are not adequately considered. There is a lack of research regarding the ethical implications of AI in marketing (Maraini et al., 2022). AI can exacerbate racial and gender biases already present in our society based on the data sets they are provided (Akselrod, 2021). The racial bias is prevalent even in clinical applications which AI models as have demonstrated clear patterns of discrimination to

patients of colour (Kapur, 2021). There are also major privacy concerns with programs like ChatGPT potentially illegally collecting peoples personal information provided by their responses (Burgess, 2023). There are also ethical concerns about the training data's acquisition as the programs may not have permission to gather and use personal information gleaned from social media posts in order to improve itself (Burgess, 2023).

CONCLUSION

In addressing the sub thesis of *How AI Determines Market Viability and Trends*? Cognitive insight modelling was highlighted as a powerful tool for deciphering big data and distilling actionable insights. Through powerful tools like Kompyte and Valuer AI not only provides up-to-date information but can empower companies with strategic competitor insights at quantities unattainable with other methods. The competitive advantages posed by AI ranging from extensive big data analytics to streamlining market orientation clearly position AI as a key ally in making informed decisions in marketing.

However, this paper also revealed significant disadvantages and challenges inherent to AI in market research. Dependent on a substantial data pool, challenges in predicting future market trends, and the misconception of AI as a one-size-fits-all solution raise important considerations which must be taken into account when using these tools. The ethical dimensions of AI, including its biases, privacy concerns, and responsible data usage raise questions on the use of AI in marketing, regardless of its positive results.

Artificial intelligence is developing rapidly, the quality of tools and information relating to AI change constantly, it is up to entrepreneurs, marketers, and designers alike to help shape the way these tools become integrated into our society. The future of AI is not certain, but its place as a valuable marketing research tool is already here and here to stay.

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CAN WE ENVISION THE COMPLETE DESIGN AND AUTOMATION OF A BUSINESS THROUGH AI TECHNOLOGY?

Team 5 | AI Technology IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP |Mike Noel

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic realm of industrial design and entrepreneurship, the infusion of artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a transformative influence, poised to reshape business operations through a design lens.

This exploration revolves around a fundamental question: Can AI lead to the complete design and automation of a business? To address this, the report delves into three key questions:

Starting a Business
What essential elements are vital for launching a successful business, especially in the context of a product-oriented venture? Understanding these elements and their rationale provides a foundational understanding for a thriving business launch.

Harnessing AI's Potential for Your Business
How can AI strategically enhance various facets of business operations, and what strengths does it bring to entrepreneurship? Exploring AI's role in foundational business elements unveils its potential benefits, while also recognizing the need to assess its limitations for a balanced perspective.

Human Distinctiveness and AI's Potential Evolution
What unique qualities do humans contribute to commerce that AI currently lacks, and is there potential for AI to overcome these challenges? Can we develop AI to have a more entrepreneurial intelligence so that it can take the reins from the entrepreneur and automate the business.

Addressing these questions allows us to synthesize answers for the overarching subtopic: Can we envision the complete design and automation of a business through AI technology? What current AI components are essential for this vision? This inquiry prompts a discussion on whether steering AI development towards eliminating human involvement in commerce is the optimal direction.

OVERVIEW OF GROUP TOPIC

AI's integration into business & design operations is reshaping industries and impacting society in profound ways. Our group intends to express this view through varying subtopics. Each subtopic delivers an indepth research and analysis on an important facet of AI pertinent to entrepreneurs and designers.

DISCUSSION

Starting a Business
In the initial phase of exploring the essential elements crucial for launching a successful product-based business, I delved into a meticulously curated selection of business and startup literature housed at the Carleton Library. Notable titles included Lesonsky's "Start Your Own Business: The Only Startup Book You'll Ever Need" (Lesonsky, R. 2007), Pinson's "Steps to Small Business Start-Up: Everything You Need to Know to Turn Your Idea into a Successful Business" (Pinson, L. 2014), and a comprehensive guide from the Government of Ontario on small business ventures.

Relying heavily on this literature, the focal point of the investigation centered on identifying the

essential elements necessary to initiate a business. This approach facilitated an easy and objective exploration of the elements, as the answers were firmly grounded in objectivity rather than subjective interpretation. Most, if not all, product-based businesses adhere to the same fundamental elements, establishing a baseline for success. While this phase primarily involved gathering well-known data and did not yield groundbreaking insights, it effectively addressed the question of how to start a business. This is attributed to the wealth of academic and reputable material offering step-by-step approaches to launching and managing startups. By compiling this material and emphasizing common elements, I established a solid foundation for understanding "what is required."

The essence of "what is required" can be summarized as a baseline encompassing 12 crucial business elements necessary to initiate and sustain a successful business. The 12 business elements I identified are:

1. Market Research
2. Product Development
3. Business Plan
4. Legal and Regulatory Compliance
5. Branding and Marketing
6. Sales and Distribution
7. Customer Support and Service
8. Financial Management
9. Human Resources
10. Technology and Systems
11. Intellectual Property Protection
12. Networking and Partnerships

With these elements highlighted, I could proceed with my report and articulate the current resources available to entrepreneurs and designers in the realm of AI to assist, and ideally, automate these crucial business components.

Harnessing AI's Potential for Your Business
Transitioning focus to the integration of AI into the realm of commerce, I sought a holistic understanding of the process before delving into the specifics of available AI software tailored to aspiring entrepreneurs. Consulting resources such as Taulli's "Implementing AI Systems: Transform Your Business in 6 Steps" from the Carleton Library and an insightful article on the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on business from Business News Daily provided a comprehensive overview.

Simultaneously, I harnessed the capabilities of "Natural Language Processing," a form of AI technology, to generate a diverse array of elements for further assessment of their role and benefits in the realm of commerce. This inclusive list covered terms such as Predictive Analytics, Generative Design, Machine Learning, Compliance Management Software, Marketing Automation Platforms, AI-driven Chatbots and Virtual Assistants, AI-Based Financial Software, AI Recruitment, Robotic Process Automation, AI-Powered IP Monitoring. Armed with this knowledge, I proceeded to explore examples of these AI software tools available to aspiring entrepreneurs. The extensive exploration forms a substantial portion of my research, playing a pivotal role in the discussion of how AI is currently integrated into starting a product-based business. It involves evaluating the facets where software expedites processes and ideally minimizes human-driven work. This information was sourced from their own website, forums, reviews, and my own experience with free trials.

The questions posed in this section of my subtopic offered intriguing insights into the diversity of AI software available to consumers. There is a plethora of AI software options for entrepreneurs, presenting a range of choices to accomplish specific tasks. Notably, each "business element" highlighted in the preceding section has at least one or two available software solutions, each with its own set of benefits and shortcomings. For each of the "required business elements" I have listed a form of AI technology that can be used with a quick overview on how it can assist the entrepreneur and the disadvantages it entails.

Market Research - Crayon:

Crayon, an AI-powered market intelligence platform, accelerates business market research through artificial intelligence and machine learning. It provides continuous competitor monitoring, AI-driven trend analysis, and real-time content tracking. Entrepreneurs benefit from customized alerts, gaining a competitive edge and making data-driven decisions. Challenges include concerns about data accuracy, biases, and difficulty grasping contextual nuances.

Product Development - Autodesk Generative Design:

Autodesk Generative Design, an AI-powered solution, revolutionizes product development through advanced algorithms. It accelerates design exploration, optimizes structural performance, and enhances resource efficiency. Engineers and designers can define parameters, explore AI-generated options, iterate for optimization, and collaborate seamlessly. Challenges include a learning curve, dependency on input data quality, and potential complexities in translating designs.

Business Plan - LivePlan:

LivePlan, an AI-driven business planning platform, facilitates the creation of investor-ready business plans. It offers AI-driven suggestions, financial forecasting tools, and industry benchmarks. Entrepreneurs benefit from efficient plan creation, accurate projections, and real-time collaboration. Drawbacks include subscription costs, a learning curve, and customization limitations.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance - Neota Logic:

Neota Logic is an advanced AI-powered legal process automation solution. It streamlines operations through automated legal processes, dynamic decision trees, and document automation. Challenges include a learning curve, potential overreliance, and integration issues. Regular maintenance is crucial for legal compliance, and cost considerations should be weighed.

Branding and Marketing - Albert AI:

Albert AI is an advanced AI-driven digital marketing solution enhancing campaign management through machine learning. It streamlines ad creation, targeting, and budget allocation for optimal effectiveness. The platform seamlessly integrates with various digital marketing channels, ensuring cross-channel consistency and cohesive campaigns. Challenges include a learning curve and potential over-optimization.

Sales and Distribution - Spiro AI:

Spiro, an advanced AI-powered solution for sales and CRM, boosts efficiency with cutting-edge algorithms. It offers features like automated task management, lead prioritization, and intelligent opportunity management. The platform reduces manual data entry, allowing sales representatives to focus on relationship-building and deal closure. Challenges include the initial learning curve and potential loss of personal touch.

Customer Support and Service - Zendesk Answer Bot:

Zendesk Answer Bot, an advanced AI-driven customer support solution, elevates the customer service experience by automating responses to inquiries and support tickets. Through natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning, Answer Bot delivers instant and accurate information, continuously refining its understanding of customer queries. Challenges include limited understanding of complex queries and language limitations as well as a lack of empathy.

Financial Management - Xero:

Xero, an AI-powered accounting software, streamlines financial management for businesses by automating bookkeeping, invoicing, expense tracking, bank reconciliation, and financial reporting. Using advanced algorithms and automation, Xero enhances efficiency, saves time, and improves cash flow visibility. Entrepreneurs can set up intelligent automation, leverage AI-driven reports for insights, and adapt financial strategies based on AI-generated insights.

Human Resources - ADP Workforce Now:

ADP Workforce Now, an advanced AI-powered HR management solution, optimizes various HR processes with sophisticated algorithms. Key features include AI-driven payroll processing, talent management insights, compliance assistance, analytics for employee engagement, and AI-enhanced recruitment. Benefits encompass streamlined payroll, strategic talent management, enhanced compliance, improved engagement, and optimized recruitment.

Technology and Systems - UiPath:

UiPath, a leading AI-powered solution for process automation, leverages advanced robotic process automation (RPA) technology and AI capabilities to streamline business processes. Key features include task automation with AI-driven software robots, cognitive automation with natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning, process mining for analyzing workflows, integrated analytics for data-driven decision-making, and citizen development enabling non-technical users to contribute to automation.

Intellectual Property Protection - TrademarkNow:

TrademarkNow, an AI-powered solution for intellectual property protection, focuses on trademarks by streamlining global monitoring and analysis. Using advanced algorithms and machine learning, it provides insights into potential conflicts with features like automated search, customizable criteria, risk assessment, and real-time updates. Users can efficiently assess brand name or logo availability, prioritize trademarks based on potential risk, and stay informed about changes in the competitive landscape.

Networking and Partnerships - Crystal:

Crystal utilizes advanced AI algorithms to transform product development by analyzing team members' communication styles and personalities. It enhances collaboration, reduces barriers, boosts productivity,

provides proactive conflict resolution, and tailors strategies for optimal outcomes. Teams can create profiles, customize communication, address conflicts, optimize dynamics, and leverage the tool for effective teamwork and innovation.

Entrepreneurs have a variety of resources at their disposal to streamline business operations. However, a significant challenge arises as many AI software options are not open source and come with substantial price tags and significant learning curves to operate effectively. To unlock the potential of AI for your business, entrepreneurs must make a considerable upfront investment to reap the benefits of this software. In summary, my study unveiled that integrating AI is feasible for every essential business element. However, these options are often not one-size-fits-all solutions, usually requiring some degree of input from the entrepreneur to ascertain their alignment with intended goals, taking into account factors such as budget, time, and complexity.

It's crucial to highlight that, as of now, none of these AI resources are designed to entirely remove the entrepreneur or human element from the equation. In their current state, these resources are regarded as excellent tools to assist entrepreneurs rather than alternatives aimed at replacing them. To truly achieve full automation, it is imperative to delve into the distinctions between Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Understanding these differences sheds light on why AI, in its current state, falls short of running a business independently. Moreover, this exploration provides insights into the necessary developments required for AI to evolve toward full automation, addressing the core question of this subtopic.

Human Distinctiveness and AI's Potential Evolution
To delve deeper into the distinctions between human intelligence and artificial intelligence, the subsequent steps entailed an exploration of distinctive traits setting humans apart from AI. This

investigation, deemed pivotal, mapped out the trajectory AI must navigate to achieve a fully automated and successful business model. The research, conducted through Google Scholar and various web journals, aimed to articulate AI limitations in comparison to human competencies. Key resources, including "Human- versus Artificial Intelligence" (Korteling et al., 2021), "Difference between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence" (GeeksforGeeks, 2023), and "Artificial Intelligence vs Human Intelligence: Key Differences" (SkillsStreet, 2022), offered insights into areas where AI currently falls short, spanning creativity, emotional intelligence, adaptability, common sense, problem-solving, and social understanding/awareness, particularly when juxtaposed with human capabilities.

This exploration extended to understanding the integral traits of a successful businessperson, shedding light on areas where AI lacks compared to human proficiency in the business context. Drawing from "Do Business Better: Traits, Habits, and Actions to Help You Succeed" by Mason (2019), this source highlighted numerous traits crucial for effective business leadership. Among these, the narrative of this segment of my sub-topic exploration was shaped by four key traits: the ability to calculate risk effectively, possessing drive and discipline, individual resilience, and visionary thinking. These insights contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced interplay between human attributes that drive successful business and AI limitations, indicating the subsequent steps required for AI to achieve a complete design and automation of a business from inception to fruition.

This part of my subtopic has been particularly intriguing to me. My initial perception that the primary difference between artificial intelligence and human intelligence lies in humans' ability to think, reason, and solve problems using emotion and creativity, whereas AI relies on statistical modeling, algorithms, and data for calculated decisions and predictions, appears to be accurate at this point. AI's

lack of emotional intelligence, creativity, and intuition, or, in other words, its absence of sentience, emerges as a significant hurdle in achieving a more human-like intelligence. However, further research has introduced the idea that perhaps human intelligence is not the benchmark AI aims to reach. Instead, the gold standard may be perceived as the capacity to accomplish complex goals.

In the dynamic intersection of business and design, my exploration unveils the pivotal role that creativity, emotions, intuition, and other humanistic traits play in achieving success. However, the undeniable truth is that AI has significantly empowered entrepreneurs, even in the absence of these inherently human characteristics. Rather than fixating on how AI can evolve towards human-like intelligence to overcome limitations in creativity and intuition, the more pertinent inquiry revolves around how AI can consistently advance its capacity to excel in intricate tasks, free from biological biases.

This inquiry has led me to a compelling realization: AI should be harnessed and nurtured as a tool, an indispensable assistant for entrepreneurs, designers, and individuals, rather than an attempt to replicate or replace human intelligence in automating tasks. The current state of AI aptly demonstrates its prowess in aiding users, as exemplified by dedicated applications for each highlighted business element above. Furthermore, over time, these resources are evolving to become increasingly effective.

CONCLUSION

I am genuinely pleased with the course focus on entrepreneurship, particularly the captivating subject my group has chosen—AI in Entrepreneurship & Design. Acknowledging that AI is a constant in today's world and is continually gaining significance, adds a layer of relevance and anticipation to my exploration. Learning the essentials of initiating a business, especially given the potential direction I might take post-university, holds immense practical value.

The exploration into the current global landscape of AI, specifically its applications in design and commerce, provides invaluable insights that extend

beyond the classroom. These insights are poised to shape my approach to upcoming projects, as I consider innovative ways to integrate this powerful software into my future endeavors.

Moreover, immersing myself in this topic has afforded me the opportunity to formulate a nuanced perspective on the evolution of AI in a business context, an insight I might not have gained otherwise. This has reinforced my conviction that the evolution of AI should be grounded in the concept of it being a tool for humans. This principle guarantees optimal results, untainted by human biases. As a result, it enables entrepreneurs to effortlessly build and foster entire businesses, tapping into the complete capabilities of AI as a catalyst to assist where human intelligence may have limitations, all while keeping humans integral to the equation.

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TEAM 5 | AI TECHNOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP | TYLER TIGER VONGSOUNETH

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to be a powerful tool for companies and entrepreneurs, providing them with skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's business landscape, but as it currently is, could AI be effective in filling roles within small teams as it is effective in larger companies. AI ability is quite limited not but even so still being invested into by many companies of different sizes, it has massive capabilities in its currents state for business and holds a huge potential for growth. Investigating the business world to understand whether AI can be leveraged to support and fill in the gaps of small teams and businesses to be just as effective. Accomplishing the task of understanding by assessing three points: the relationship between AI adoption and entrepreneurial success, Examining AI as a teaching tool, and directly investigating the roles that AI can fulfill with varying levels of assistance from humans. By investigating the effects of the adoption of AI within the Business, the nuances of AI as a teaching tool, and understanding the roles AI can fulfill within teams with varying degrees of assistance; can we understand if AI can be used in small teams to make up for their small team.

AI has emerged as a transformave force in the business world, offering entrepreneurs a plethora of tools and insights to enhance their decision-making, automation of tasks, and personalize the customer experience, however, the extent to which AI adoption contributes to entrepreneurial success remains a complete subject of debate. This analysis aims to evaluate the relationship between AI adoption and entrepreneurial success by examining the performance of AI-dependent entrepreneurs against those who use it vary degrees of extent. Evaluating whether ai usage or not is effective to an entrepreneur can be researched in 3 categories, revenue growth, market penetrations, and overall key performance indicators (KPI).

Revenue growth of an entrepreneur company is indicative of their financial success, providing insight into how a company is faring in the marketplace. AI implementation in tandem with an entrepreneur's company, should yield positive results in a companies' revenue growth, indicating that a company is successful with AI assistance rather than hindering it. In 2022, McKinsey & Company did a survey studying Ai adoption within the business world, gathering responses from 1492 participants, with 744 of those adopting AI in their business in one function; to adjust for differences in response rates, the data they collected was weighted by the contribution of each respondent's nation to global GDP. McKinsey found that those who adopt AI and continually invest into it, referred to as "AI high performers", see a bottom-line impact of at least 20% or more of EBIT (Earnings before interest and taxes) from AI usage within their company. "… respondents say are seeing the biggest bottom-line impact from AI adoption-that is 20, percent or more EBIT from AI use."1. They explain that this can be attributed to AI's ability to boost their top line gains, and optimize cost in many which ways. *"… achieving it superior results mainly from AI boosting top-line gains, as they're more likely to report that AI is driving revenues rather than reducing costs, though they do report AI decreasing costs as well."* An AI's ability to perform operational efficiency, enhanced customer satisfaction, identifying market opportunities, improve employee workflow, and improve an employee's decision-making skills; are all small identifiable abilities that can be attributed to the increasing revenue growth. Increasing revenue growth directly through the company is a great addition to AI's skill set but being able to sell a

company's product is another crucial way of increasing revenue growth; growth by market reach.

Market reach refers to the number of potential customers that could be reached with your message, campaign, or product. AI's analytical abilities should be able to play a crucial role in expanding an entrepreneur's market reach, targeting specific customer segments, tailor marketing campaigns, and optimizing strategies improves the entrepreneur's ability to reach and captivate a larger market beyond their geographic boundaries. It is predicted that at least 10% of Fortune 500 companies will invest heavily into AI-supported digital content creation and a large majority of enterprises have significant investments into AI technology seeing positive results. Applying AI in marketing changes the content and customer journey a potential consumer experiences; customer segmentation and personalization will be fundamental changed from how it is done now; marketing operations will become more data-focused, adaptable, fast, and resilient; and generative AI designs will accelerate marketing campaigns, products, and ads time to the marketplace. Generative AI enhances experiences and creativity through two methods Augmented generative and Automated generative. Augmented generative AI optimizing already preexisting workflow with their human operators by human reinforcement to shape the AI's generated content.

Automated generative AI produces bulk batches of content with little involvement from human operators except for setting the parameters the AI must abide within. All the marketing tools that an AI can perform is great for an entrepreneur, but AI learns from existing content to generate new content reflecting the characteristics without repeating them; so AI's will be unable to understand what needs to be regulate thereby unable to self regulate itself – so humans will need to regulate the content it produces.

What about the content that AI gathers, its other half in marketing is data collection. AI's capabilities are valuable to marketing teams saving time and money by automating the data collection process and comprehending vast amounts of data far greater than humans could. AI's is able to analyze vast datasets, recognizing current trends happening in the marketplace and emerging trends/market shifts; enabling companies to be quicker in the marketplace to capitalize on an opportunity as it emerges within the marketplace.9 Within the data there are small correlations and patterns hidden within it all that some experienced market researchers may only be able to uncover but the AI can recognize and correlate the data leading to improved product development, customer segmentation, and optimized marketing campaigns. An AI being able to analyze a larger data set than a human could is valuable to a company that implements AI but inaccurate data or flawed algorithms can lead to incorrect predictions, that may be used to create a failing marketing campaign.

Suffice it to say, AI is unable to account for sudden unexpected events or shifts in the marketplace such as natural disasters or political events that affect consumer behaviors like the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden growth in toilet paper expenditures. All the good AI can do for marketing teams in invaluable but has to have equal human involvement to access the most of the AI capabilities to benefit the marketing team.

As useful as an AI is to marketing, it will be unable to replace humans as it currently stands due to it being unemotional, lacking the innate human experience, and creativity from nowhere; key aspects of a human researcher that AI cannot replicate. AI won't be able to replace humans as market researchers but are rather effective supportive tool allowing them to make more informed decisions, increasing their workflow and productivity, and lessening focus on repetitive tasks so more creative critical tasks can be accomplished. AI marketing is very data-driven, using its data to personalize the market and predict customer behaviour. In contrast, human marketing uses more conventional advertising techniques to promote products and services using emotions and appeal for a broader audience. A synergy between AI

and human researchers bolsters both of their capabilities resulting in a far better product then either could produce alone. AI marketing is great to help enable a company's outreach within the market, but how do they retain customer loyalty, Customer-centric KPIs.

Customer-centric KPIs, (Key Performance Indicators), are measurements of success in meeting your customer needs, expectations, and preferences. Examples of this can be their retention rate, Customer acquisition, Consumer lifetime value, and satisfaction index. KPIs represent vital signs within your customer support ecosystem that are quantifiable measuring the effectiveness and quality of the customer support. Collecting this data is more crucial then ever as the world's customer expectations are growing; collecting this data and acting upon it will be critical for companies to retain customers and not miss opportunities. AI can help customer support in 3 ways directly acting as a tool for the staff, indirectly gathering and analyzing data, and through consumer self-service.

AI can directly support the customer support staff by providing them in real-time response suggestions, information, and essential client details. In real-time response suggestions and information are invaluable during a customer interaction as the benefits from a good customer experience increase customer satisfaction because of the quicker, more efficient resolution of the customer's needs. AI enables quicker resolution times by providing insights during their decision-making process, predictive analytics so issues can be discovered faster, relevant accurate information to better understand and solve the consumers problems and providing steps moving forwards in complex cases to support the team in customer interactions. If the support team is unable to resolve the issue and needs to transfer the consumer to another support staff, AI is able to take the essential details from the interactions with the previous support staff and summarize it into a case document for quicker more effective hand-offs between support staff members. Unable to resolve these issues leads to a lower customer satisfaction

rate and potentially puts the consumer in "at risk" state, where they are more likely to leave the company for a competitor company. AI is able to analyze consumer behaviours and their historical data to predict which consumers are more likely to leave and why, hence being considered "at risk". The Company can then proactively engage with the consumer and offer personalized solutions to try to retain them, improving their own retention rates.

Indirectly supporting the staff with AI has overlap with direct support, identifying at risk consumers and consumers detail summaries, but indirectly it supports staff through data collection for both the staff and management. Before, during, and after interactions with the consumers an AI collects and monitors data, so the support staff don't have to. Data like customer sentiments to identify issues; customer interactions for first contact resolution, the average handling time of a consumer, escalation rate, and ticket re-open rates to see if a single consumer is having a repeating error or if there seems to be a common symptom among many consumers, preferences, behaviour, and historical data for consumers personas to recommend and determine their state within the marketplace. After a consumer interaction, the AI may question the consumer on their experience for more data all to evaluate the company's customer-centric KPIs from the consumers perspective, pivotal for business growth.

Before even reaching a support staff, consumers can self-service themselves with the help of an AI to resolve their own problems. Ai can serve customer self-service, so they solve their own request through various channels making the customer experience easier, handling routine queries autonomously at all hours of the day. Chatbots can customize and tailor personalized interactions with consumers, respond quickly where most to all question are answered. Trained with company information, AI chatbots are able to answer queries more efficiently and accurately than many of the support staff, and continually improve using analytics to identify areas for further time optimization. Self-service reduces a

customer exerted effort to get their issues dealt with, lowering customer's exerted effort indicating a smoother customer experience that fosters loyalty and satisfaction, establishing a deeper rapport between the customer and service, and reducing customer churn performing support functionality.

This feature benefits the customer support team as well, reducing the overall volume of support tickets raised by providing self-service option first and automating routine task, but when the self service is unable to resolve a customer's query a support staff member can fill in. Past iterations of Chatbots and assistants would put customers in an endless loop leaving them dissatisfied and contributed to a higher churn rate in every sector, Self-service AI options are extremely to interact with now, improving customer-centric KPIs metrics.

The adoption of AI has undoubtedly transformed the entrepreneurial business landscape providing entrepreneurs and businesses with powerful tools to enhance their business's performances. AI has been shown to benefit teams and businesses in many ways, reducing workloads, freeing time, automating processes, informing decision making, ETC… However, it is crucial to recognize that although AI can indeed reduce and fulfill the workloads of human staff members, it can replace them; AI lacks human judgment, experiences, and creativity to create, decide, and do. Balancing between AI's capabilities and Human capabilities is important in the current world as overreliance on either or leads to a loss in the marketplace in many forms as the world continues to evolve and get faster. Blending the two capabilities is imperative for success in the modern marketplace but how are the AI capabilities in teaching humans the capability in the business world.

AI acting as a teacher to an entrepreneur is a new concept but a concept that is steadily rising in popularity. The skill and knowledge it can impart may be highly beneficial at its face value, but are the is knowledge truly understood and adaptable to the business landscape? How do entrepreneurs and businesses who are educated through AI capabilities fare against those who are educated through other means; does it stifle their long-term growth in the marketplace? Examining this question to understand if AI can be in small teams to help guide their effort in the business landscape.

The influence of artificial Intelligence on business value and education in the modern landscape of the business world is huge, as we enter the digital age and AI becomes more accessible to the public; the influence of artificial intelligence is profound. AI positively impacts learning and growing entrepreneurs in multiple ways in their education. Blending both the theory of entrepreneurial research and the everyday practice in the business world, AI can teach this knowledge in analogous transfer. AI teaching entrepreneurs requires the creation of innovative mindset and the agility to evolve and adapt to the market in the entrepreneur. Like all of the tools, Ai must be tempered and used with balance. Overreliance on AI as a teaching tool without coming to understand the implication of the message, the AI is teaching creates an entrepreneur that is unable to adapt and is resistant to change in the marketplace as compared to entrepreneurs who rely on AI teaching less or not taught through AI at all.

Entrepreneurs relying less on AI have a deeper understanding of their business, the market, and the data surrounding their business as they are directly involved in making decisions and interacting with customers. Without AI reliability, entrepreneurs may also be more adaptable to market change, as they are not reliant on AI insight but based on their own knowledge and experience. This can be either good for the business or bad for it depending on the ability of the entrepreneur. However, entrepreneurs who utilize AI can gain a competitive edge by leveraging its ability to analyze vast amounts of data, automate meaningless but important tasks, and have far greater outreach in personalized customer experiences.

Overreliance on AI can stifle an entrepreneur's long-term growth if it leads to the loss of critical skills and decision-making abilities entrepreneurs develop without the reliance on AI. Maintaining a balance between AI capabilities and their own decision-making skills is key for modern-day entrepreneurs as the tools AI can be very valuable but it cannot replace the human aspect of judgment and understanding of business context. Entrepreneurs who can maintain their own skills and adaptability while effectively use the tools AI can provide are likely to have long-term success in the ever-growing business landscape of today. But if not teaching the entrepreneurs what other capabilities can the AI fulfill within the team.

We understand that AI can be a tool to help entrepreneurs in the company through analytical, quantitative means, and as a teaching tool for entrepreneurs to grow and learn in the current day marketplace; directly answering the questions what roles AI can fulfill within a team, can it fill roles by itself, with a human operator, or are they strictly limited to acting as tools for humans to use to reduce their workload. AI can fulfill numerous roles without human assistance and fill more roles with little input from human operators, but the vast majority of roles AI can fulfill are as tools for human operators to use currently, as technology progresses AI may become more autonomous and fulfill more roles by itself than it can now. Currently, AI Is used mainly for data analysis and pattern recognition, analyzing vast quantities of data to identify trends and patterns in the marketplace that humans would find difficult or even impossible to do to the same level effectively due to the sheer amount of data.

As referenced earlier, AI can analyze market trends to discover current trends, smaller trends, and new arising trends or analyze financial data to optimize finances or identify fraud within the company/market. Another job that AI accomplishes by itself is repetitive automation tasks such as data entry, customer service, scheduling, and report generation. These repetitive tasks are critical to an entrepreneur and company's success but are

monotonous tasks that take human resources to accomplish. Controversially, AI can make data-based decisions without the need for human input, seemingly useful for when there is a lot of data to consider all at once and it needs to be made quickly. This can be proved to be dangerous though as they are without full context being an AI of limited knowledge, unethical, lack of transparency, unforeseen consequences, and more; but AI can make decisions its just that there are many concerns due to its currently very limited technology.

With a human operator, AI can perform tasks mostly by itself just needing input from the operators to perform. Ai with assistance is mostly Customer service jobs and content generation. Although we had said earlier that AI can fulfill customer service jobs by itself, AI cannot perform answer every single question, nor complex questions, make quick decisions on the company's behalf, or be empathetic towards the consumer in any context. The content generation has operators regulating it in different ways as explained earlier, AI takes already pre-existing content and takes key characteristics of it to create something new but acts within the parameters laid out by the operators. Operators have to lay out parameters for the AI to act within and regulate the content it produces for a variety of reasons ethically, legally, or morally. Content generation could be writing, design, music composition, or picture generation; the AI can create within the parameters perfectly fine, but it lacks the same feeling that a human creator could perform within the content confines.

CONCLUSION

The theme of AI in entrepreneurship and design was interesting in discussion between my group and I, as we questioned what relationship AI has in design and entrepreneurship. We had some knowledge of that AI was being implemented in large companies for a variety of reasons and factors and that some start-up entrepreneurs were using it to help their products but had no in-depth knowledge of it. We also knew about AI being used for idea generation to

generate design ideas but upon more discovery of the knowledge we realize that there a lot of nuances and caveats to content generation of AI-based design. It was interesting to and fun to dive into a topic I was not very well versed into, understand the perspective of AI from a business perspective, understand and dive into aspects of AI I will likely never need to know, and understand how some of the big companies operate and use certain kinds of AI and how they plan on using it moving forwards. It was just enlightening to see something completely different than what I had known. Seeing that so much of the current technological capabilities of AI today is able to support small and large businesses with varying degrees of adoption is so refreshing; and to see that AI can enable someone to, given enough capital, start a business from the ground up is enlightening. This does beg the question about job security in the future as repetitive automation tasks are likely first to go, and administrative tasks will slowly be given to AI to accomplish; how long before AI will be able to replicate and create its own human creativity?

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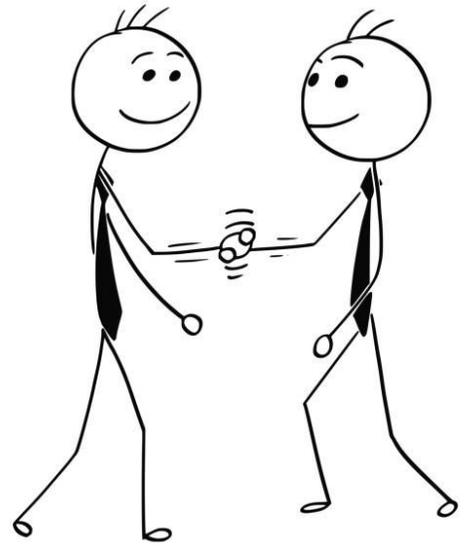
Entrepreneurial Operating Systems -For Designers

There are a lot of unknowns when starting a business. Following a framework can ease the transition. Explore business operating systems and business models that help entrepreneurs innovate and scale their businesses.

Issac Miecznikowski
Audrey Sabbagh
Ben Wright

TEAM 6 | ENTREPRENEURIAL OPERATING SYSTEMS - FOR DESIGNERS | ISAAC MIECZNIKOWSKI

PREFACE

Preceding the fourth year of Industrial Design at Carleton, the curriculum focuses heavily on practical and illustrative skills leaving our discussions surrounding design to oral presentations. These presentations are often thorough reviews of projects and are rather applied as a result. However, design communication is more than technicalities, and often discussing intention and issues surrounding design can provide insight into the discipline and its effects on the world around us. This is the basis of the industrial design seminar, for which this paper is written and relevant to.

INTRODUCTION

A long-standing challenge among designers is figuring out how to properly communicate their value to those unfamiliar. The practice of design is often nebulous and perhaps as a result of its parallels to the world of visual arts, is often reduced to a study of aesthetics. Talk to any designer and they will tell you that aesthetics is often the last piece of a much larger puzzle, and yet without a quantifiable way to explain this, it becomes hard to place value on the work they've done. Regardless, design needs to exist within an often-corporate world, and as such finding crossover skills in business is rather critical for designers. With that in mind, an important subsection of design is its intersection with entrepreneurship. Design thinking often goes hand in hand with problem-solving in its intentionality and exploration of ideas, as such it sets up a good foundation for entrepreneurial ideas and projects. Our seminar session focused on this intersection, design in entrepreneurship, and more specifically our group focused on business operating systems and their role in the latter.

To some degree, all businesses need some sort of management direction to stay productive. At a certain point the amount of people and projects running in parallel demands a form of organization, to ensure goals are met and vision and values are consistent. Business or entrepreneurial operating systems (EOS or BOS's, I use them interchangeably) help provide the necessary structure for larger businesses, and a key component of those is metrics.

Metrics are numerical and measurable values that can be derived from the work someone does, and following these allows for concrete goals to be met, and for the value of an employee to be standardized. If someone is meeting their metrics, they are performing well, if they aren't, it calls for an evaluation of either their performance or of what is expected of them (i.e. the process, maybe the work requires more hands than current). All to say, this process gets challenging when considering design as a profession, as the value of good design can often be challenging to record numerically at least by standard sale-related practices. There is a bad design that sells, there is a good design that doesn't. In considering this issue I formulated my research questions. Is there a way to scoreboard the work designers do (are there alternatives to data that could work to evaluate design)? How can we implement EOS structure into the design process without limiting creativity? Can we determine what design is a "good fit" to a company vision? They each tackle separate parts of the design process and their relations to EOS, with scoreboard relating to employee performance, structure relating to project management, and vision relating to project outcomes and a rigorous and vision-driven approach to ideation. Admittedly, the results and the following discussion is not what is traditionally under the umbrella of 'design discussion', however, there is a great deal of information that is important for both designers and entrepreneurs to consider, and as such its value to both parties should be clear.

SUBTOPIC DISCUSSION

Despite appearances and the vast amount of documentation on the subject, the process for researching designs' role in EOS turned out to be less straightforward than hoped, especially when looking for a counterpart to the subcategory of metrics as established in the leading questions. In the process of research, the books What the Heck is EOS, Good to Great, and Traction were used as well as references from several online articles pertaining to the subject, and a few recorded interviews with entrepreneurs (with backgrounds in design and adjacent fields).

Within the listed subject matter, EOS was a critical read but not without its flaws, as other sources disagreed about innovation being tied to success, and it should be noted that Wickman (2017) even contradicts himself when contrasting innovators and entrepreneurs. It was strange that entrepreneurs were limited to self-managing/founder roles, especially when there was so much information on 'being entrepreneurial' in everyday work. There seemed to be an impression that the world doesn't change without entrepreneurs, and that the only method of success is through unbridled growth and efficiency. Alternative business models such as those used by James Cuda of Procreate (which tended to be more artistic and prioritized their users over monetary gain to improve customer loyalty) seemed to contrast these sentiments. This tended to be the case among most of the readings, however with each covering different aspects of entrepreneurial management. With all the readings considered some conclusions could be drawn.

The design process is often illustrated by a line that starts in a scribble before straightening out, meant as a metaphor for the early lack of direction inherent to open-ended ideation, and the resulting final project that emerges from the disjointed mess. Principally this process is non-linear, personal or professional decisions may drive direction in one direction or another, changes in requirements or unearthing of issues may cause previously undesired concepts to become more appealing. While this process is quite effective at solving problems, it runs in contrast to the principles of EOS when it comes down to rigorous

structure and organization. Unfortunately, the result is often a compromise between the vision of a designer and the requirements but in place, which may not always be the best solution. To some degree, EOS is critical in business function and as such outlining a process for developing design according to the structure of EOS may allow for the most freedom to be given to designing a project, and the key aspects to meet are vision and rocks. When Wickman (2017) talks about vision he is referring to a shared direction held by all employees (or at least management) in a company. A vision is something that the company is working towards or principles that it abides by in order to build a cohesive image for itself and to ensure that everyone is working towards a similar goal. Quite often design can get sidetracked by personal visions, especially if a project is managed by an individual, and as such the primary first step according to Wickman (2012) is to outline the company vision and make sure it is clear and referred to at all steps of the design process. The other major component of EOS as it pertains to the design process is rocks, which Wickman (2017) classifies as short-term goals or metrics. The specifics of the rocks are left to the individual, however, in the case of designers, this can look like quantities of concepts, prototypes or development pages. The important aspect of it is that it needs to be measurable. From here a repeatable workflow can be implemented to ensure progress is continuous and predictable (Pavliscak, 2015).

Evaluating design is not an easy subject, however, a large component of EOS is the scorecard, a means for listing all measurables relating to people or projects. The challenge is that good design does not always reflect directly in the numbers EOS uses to categorize their scorecard, namely profit or sales. Bad design marketed well can sell, and although it may be profitable, it may not be as optimal as good design that fits the entrepreneur or business vision. As a result, it becomes challenging to evaluate design, and as such it becomes hard to place value in the role of a designer. In a search for alternatives, Pavliscak (2015) argues that design can be measured because it has to be measured, and he provides 4 primary outlets for this measuring of design, company metrics, customer

satisfaction, user behavior/loyalty, and areas of inquiry. It's worth noting that these are not all inherently numerical values, however, they are to some degree measurable, and as such some numbers can be extracted from the various aspects of each. Each of the measurables it considers can also be attributed to aspects outside of design, but a clever equation considering multiple factors can specify these metrics to be more directly relevant. Used in conjunction with the Net Promoter Score, defined by Olarinde (2022) as a method for understanding the response that your consumers have to your product, a greater understanding of the reception of a project can be derived. Moore (2018) approaches this issue by arguing that design should be measured on the basis of problem-solving, measuring design success via identifying real problems and providing solutions, though it is considerably more challenging to quantify.

It is here that the literature runs itself into the ground. Academic writing regarding design in this field is limited, and business writing isn't much better. The challenge is that a lot of these systems are developed in a case-by-case manner, or are simply running under established EOS structures, even if they aren't optimal. It was here, however, that primary sources of research proved to be quite helpful, as referring to existing solutions from the industry allowed for a greater breadth of measurable factors relating to design. A lot of feedback suggested ongoing customer feedback as an incredibly rich source of design-related critique, made measurable through ranking forms. Internally, return on investment was listed as a very important resource by the course instructor Sunil, and similar feedback from my prior workplace listed duration and team size as important additional measurables. Among this feedback was the suggestion to corroborate the information into a singular metric. A solution that derives a single measurable for the scorecard from the list of metrics, while also reducing the possible externalities that might occur from an individual biased number. In short, taking an average of all the measurable components that relate to the design process. Though it doesn't allow for a very decisive standalone number, their team used it to compare

projects to each other, and predict timeframes and quotas for upcoming projects.

Although there were early concerns among our research group of the implementation of EOS onto design pipelines, processes like these have the advantage of not intruding too much onto the creative freedoms of the designer. In a similar vein, the questions that this paper tackled certainly changed. The focus went from a 'more practical approach to starting a business' and being entrepreneurial (i.e. a step-by-step guide), to a more abstract analysis of the current methods of business operation and design within it. Whether or not the existing research aligned with what was desired from the paper is up for debate, there doesn't seem to be as concrete of an answer to any of these questions as one might hope. However, part of that stems from the slightly wishful thinking that freeform creative design can work seamlessly in an efficient corporate manner, coming face to face with the reality that some things need to be done to a schedule, within a budget, for a certain user. Not to give off the impression that one should be cynical about this fact, but in our discussions with Sunil we definitely explored ideas regarding true corporate vision, and the importance of design as it stands larger than sales or monetary return. There is some merit in looking at this research in hopes of finding a way to reframe corporate efficiency starting with design, but as it happens, numbers (albeit the right ones) do a pretty good job.

CONCLUSION

In the end, the areas of focus that make the most sense span several aspects of scoreboarding. Customer feedback solutions like the ones proposed by Heather from Re4m make a lot of sense when considering design outcomes. Alongside this are company metrics such as profit and sales, but alone they have the potential to overlap with other scorecards, and good design can still flop with bad marketing or pricing. I think that is why intersectional approaches are the most important for this.

In terms of figuring out if design is a good fit, user testing feedback is paramount, and alongside that metrics for satisfaction, copyright valuation, and initial public response are important (i.e. early social media posts). In depth problem research is also critical in guiding this process, and there are rigorous UX pipelines that can be adopted in physical design that can be tailored to a company's vision (think design strategies like the double diamond). Each phase of these pipelines can be set as rocks or goals, and setting quantities of design outcomes can allow for measurables to be derived from them. Ironically enough, the format of industrial design in education already employs a similar strategy with deliverables, deadlines, and quantity requirements. With the right team, this can produce great work.

For a lot of the research process, I was also having a hard time rationalizing the importance that all these metrics and operating systems would actually have on the designer themselves. To me it seemed like a way to deepen the pockets of executives by making the company more profitable but keeping employees on salary. That being said, as I continued to research I found a lot of articles mentioning the value of designers, and it got me thinking about our prospective value to employers being hard to measure. Unfortunately for designers, the value of their work is often lumped into larger figures on a scorecard, making the measurement of effectiveness and value of design more dilute. This aspect was fairly well documented and my questions regarding these specific metrics were answered pretty straightforwardly. That being said, systems that better represent the value of design, may allow for better design work as well as better outcomes for such designers. I think if there is one avenue I have yet to fully realize, it's where designers can harness these metrics to better prove their worth to employers and I hope to keep researching in that direction. As someone graduating into the field quite soon, I'm hopefully optimistic that it's possible.

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STRUCTURING YOUR DESIGN BUSINESS WITH THE E-MYTH

TEAM 6 | ENTREPRENEURIAL OPERATING SYSTEMS - FOR DESIGNERS |AUDREY SABBAGH

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

For many graduating design students, deciding whether or not to start a business seems like the next step in their career. But knowing where to start with developing a design business and how to structure it for success can be a challenge that feels daunting and undefined. New designers often lack business knowledge that could help them start successful businesses. This is where business operating systems can be applied to help orchestrate success in a field that can seem wholly subjective.

A business operating system refers to a collection of systems and processes that are implemented to structure a business. With the goal of orchestrating success, BOSs such as the Rockefeller Habits (Harnish, 2002) and EOS or Traction (Wickman & Bouwer, 2017) are often full of rigid ways of doing things that are designed to help mid-size businesses to start rapidly growing. For this reason, it is hard to see the relevance of BOSs to designers at first glance, but a closer investigation shows how design businesses can benefit from the structure that BOSs provide.

As I learned about business operating systems through readings and discussions with my team members, I developed the following three research questions:

- How can we start successful firms by applying BOS principles?
- How can BOSs help to guide designers towards deciding whether or not to start a business?
- What might it look like to apply the E-Myth principles to a design business?

In my research, I found that through applying the principles of business operating systems, designers can begin to develop businesses that work and to orchestrate success. I also found that by developing structure and systems for their businesses, designers can ensure that their business endeavors align with their life goals and that their work-life balance remains prioritized. I found that the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995), a BOS for small businesses, could be particularly relevant for designers as a framework to develop structure for their businesses.

You can't just be a designer who owns a business, you need to be a business designer. This statement sums up my research findings and points to the need for design entrepreneurs to develop structure in their businesses. An entrepreneurial designer must develop systems for how things work in their business in order to create repeatable processes that lead to successful results.

BOSs AS A TOOL FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL DESIGNERS

Business operating systems can provide structure for a design company. Not only can they help determine the vision for the company, the business plan, and the jobs within the company, but they can also be applied to structure the design workflow and to evaluate design success. Popular BOSs like EOS (Wickman & Bouwer, 2017) and the Rockefeller Habits (Harnish, 2002) offer ideas for structuring how work is managed and how success is evaluated within a company. However, these business operating systems make assumptions about the company that is implementing them. They presuppose that the company is mid-size with at least a certain number of employees or that it is making over a certain dollar amount in revenue. Moreover, the systems presented in these BOSs are strict and highly specific, not leaving much room for the design process, which is often fluid and involves creative thinking. Similarly, evaluating the success of a design, and thereby the success of the systems that led to the design, is

challenging since so many variables affect the success of a product. So, there is a need for evaluating business operating systems as a tool for design entrepreneurs and for tailoring them to design businesses.

For new grads and designers looking to start businesses, neither EOS nor the Rockefeller habits provides a clear path to developing a business that is structured for success. These business operating systems provide limited help to guide the initial business development process, and they do not help to evaluate an initial business idea. So, there is a need for a structured framework to guide designers who are looking to start businesses.

Compared to mid-size businesses that implement popular business operating systems, design firms are often relatively small. Of the handful of industrial design firms based in Ottawa, many have small teams, such as Momentum Product Design, Studio 63, and Re4m. Many of the common BOSs are not tailored to companies like these firms since they do not meet the company size presupposition. Because of this, the systems and processes presented in these BOSs sometimes do not make sense for smaller design firms. This begs the question of how to structure design firms using BOSs if they are not designed for small teams. This led me to look into the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995), a BOS developed for small businesses.

When scaled down for small businesses, business operating systems can involve more personalization and are less prescriptive. The E-Myth (Gerber, 1995) offers guidance for developing systems and processes through trial and error for entrepreneurs and their companies. It involves identifying a business worth pursuing, structuring the roles in a business, developing systems for how work gets done, and developing systems for what customers experience. In this way, the E-Myth is very relevant for designers starting a new firm, as it outlines steps that any entrepreneur can take to get started. As part of its framework for developing a successful business, the E-Myth involves self-reflection on life and career goals as well as learning about what makes a

successful business. These steps in the E-Myth's business development process can be a useful tool to achieve career success for any designers with an entrepreneurial mindset, regardless of if they are looking to start a business.

THE E-MYTH FOR STRUCTURING NEW DESIGN FIRMS

The E-Myth (Gerber, 1995) is a business operating system designed for small businesses. The E-Myth is all about pointing out the steps to take to develop a new business and the ways in which a small business can fail to achieve success. It doesn't prescribe how things should work in a business, but rather describes how to develop ways of doing things that will lead to business success. Because design is a personal and creative process, it makes sense that a designer's business would be developed by them to support that process, and the E-Myth provides a framework for that self-conducted business development.

The E-Myth as a concept is the belief that entrepreneurs start businesses (Gerber, 1995). Gerber argues that within a business there are three distinct roles: Entrepreneur, Manager, and Technician. The Entrepreneur is the visionary who designs the business. The Manager implements the business design to reflect the company vision. The Technician is a skilled person who delivers the vision to the customers through the end product. Gerber argues that it is not entrepreneurs but technicians who typically start small businesses. Designers can be classified as technicians, as they are highly skilled people who do technical work.

According to Gerber (1995), Technicians who start businesses tend to create a job for themselves instead of a functioning business. For design entrepreneurs, instead of just doing design work like they would at someone else's company, they now also have to do financial work, marketing, managing, and vision building among other jobs at their new company. Because they are not familiar with how to do this work, they have no system for doing it successfully. In this way, they are not able to be successful working on their own, and they are also unable to manage

anyone else doing the work for them. Beyond their lack of systems for doing this extra work, they often do not have documented systems for how to do the technical work that they are good at. Because of this, technicians who start businesses can end up having to do all the work themselves because they are unable to describe to others how these technical tasks ought to be done. As a result of all of these things, Technicians who start businesses either stretch themselves too thin, neglect work that needs to get done, or lose control over the customer experience provided by their business by hiring someone else to decide the best way to do things. All of these can lead to eventual business failure.

The path to business success for a designer is to embrace all of the personalities outlined in the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995) when developing their new business. Gerber argues that anyone starting a business needs to be behind the company vision, the management of the business, and the systems for doing the technical work. This would allow for an entrepreneurial designer to build a successful business that reflects their vision and consistently delivers it to customers.

Gerber (1995) recommends that entrepreneurs think of their business as a franchise prototype, a business that runs without the entrepreneur running it. This calls for the development of systems that are documented and describe how the company operates so that anybody else could run the company instead. In this way, Gerber outlines a path towards business success through consistently meeting customer needs and expectations as well as a method of maintaining work-life balance by offloading work to employees.

According to the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995), developing a business starts with vision building. This is done using a Primary Aim, which is self-reflection documented by the entrepreneur that outlines their values, life goals, and any finances required to be able to meet them. The next step for entrepreneurs is to develop a Strategic Objective. This outlines what their company is going to do and who their customers will be.

Determining whether or not the business idea outlined in the Strategic Objective is worth pursuing is a two-part process. Firstly, by conducting market and customer research, entrepreneurs can make financial projections. Then, by comparing the plan and the financial projections with the entrepreneur's Primary Aim, the entrepreneur can evaluate if their personal life goals could be achieved if they went ahead with the business. If not, the entrepreneur can explore a new Strategic Objective and repeat the evaluation process until they have an idea that aligns with their goals and values.

When the entrepreneur develops a good idea that aligns with their Primary Aim, their next step in the business development process is to plan out the best version of their company (Gerber, 1995). Entrepreneurs need to figure out all the jobs and roles that will be needed in that best version of their company. They can use these to structure their company using an Organization Chart. Once they have mapped out all the work that needs to get done, they can assign themselves and any employees to all the roles. This ensures that all the entrepreneurial, managerial, and technical work is being done from the get-go at the new company.

Once the entrepreneur has created their Organization Chart, they can start to develop how work will get done at their company (Gerber, 1995). Gerber describes a method of systems development using innovation, quantification, and orchestration. Innovation involves trying a new way of doing something within the business, quantification refers to measuring the success of this new method, and orchestration means to repeat and document successful methods. This development process would enable design entrepreneurs to grow their company while still maintaining control over the vision, the product delivered, and the customer experience. As systems for each role are developed from the bottom up, entrepreneurs can hire other people to work the systems. In this way, eventually the entrepreneur can step back into just the CEO or the shareholder position. This leads to business success and a work-

life balance that could allow a design entrepreneur to achieve their life goals.

There are two main types of systems outlined in the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995) that need to be developed in a business: marketing systems and management systems. Marketing systems are all about creating consistency in what customers experience. This consistency allows for a message to get through to customers that reflects the company vision. Gerber argues that customers go back to businesses where they know what they can expect and are never disappointed. Marketing systems involve hard systems, soft systems, and information systems. Hard systems describe everything physical or visual that clients interact with, soft systems orchestrate all communications with customers, and information systems describe how customer behaviour is affected by changes to hard and soft systems. For designers, hard systems could be the style of clothing that employees wear, the look of the studio space, the comfort of the chair that clients sit in for meetings, the coffee that they are always offered when they arrive to meetings, and the usability of the company website. Soft systems could involve the greeting that clients are addressed with in person, the way that project proposals are structured, the way that concepts are presented, and the promptness of responses to inquiry emails. Information systems can be used to develop the hard and soft systems and to evaluate how much they correlate to business success. Designers could measure the percentage of accepted proposals, the percentage of returning clients, or the size of new projects to measure customer behaviour.

The second type of systems outlined in the E-Myth (Gerber, 1995) are management systems. These systems are developed to create consistency for your employees. An Operations Manual is used to outline what employees are supposed to do in each role. It documents all of the systems that employees can follow to deliver the vision to customers. The Operations Manual helps employees to understand the company vision and to get behind it. It also helps to onboard new employees smoothly. Not only do management systems create structure so that employees know how to succeed, but they also ensure that the entrepreneur's vision is being carried through at all levels of the company.

CONCLUSION

Business operating systems are a useful tool for entrepreneurial designers. For those looking to start a business, it can help to provide structure for their business, for their design workflow, and for evaluating design success. In a field that is so exploratory and subjective, creating consistency for customers and employees alike can help to plan for success. The method of business development outlined in the E-Myth is particularly relevant for designers who are looking to start their own businesses, as it outlines a path to business success that aligns with personal goals and values.

For designers who aren't looking to start a business but who have an entrepreneurial mindset, business operating systems can still be a useful tool. Systematic and documented self-reflection can help a designer to plan their life and career goals and to develop their area of interest. With this information, designers can find jobs for which they are well suited by selecting a company whose vision aligns with their personal values and goals. An understanding of business operating systems can also help a designer to assess which companies to work for. Companies without structure may be hard to work for because success for employees within the company is not defined. A designer can also use BOS principles to demonstrate the effect of their design work on the success of the business to convey their value as a team member. In all of these ways, business operating systems can be applied by designers to plan for success.

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AGILE METHODS IN FREELANCE WORK

Team 4 | Business Operating Systems | Ben Wright

INTRODUCTION

My group's subtopic focuses on operating systems for businesses. Business operating systems (BOS) are sets of methods, tools and philosophies that are intended to help effectively run a project or company. My focus is on Agile methods and how they apply (or be adapted) in a freelance context. Agile methods are a set of tools developed for software and UX teams. Its main values are **Iterative Delivery**, **Adaptability**, and **Cyclical Workflows.** Cultural values of these philosophies include **Incremental Improvement**, **Regular Reflection** and **'Team Spirit'.**

Many BOS have a 'growth' mindset, where the ultimate goal of using it is to grow your company. Agile methods, rather, focus on continuous delivery of customer value. This is done by delivering small, but functional elements, rather than releasing the whole product or service at once.

INITIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The three questions I asked initially where;
- What Agile methods would best suit a freelance work cycle?
- How do they apply to solo work? how are they limited?
- What changes could be made to tune them to this context?

Freelance (in this context) is referring to solo design work, where the only employed person in your business is you.

My interest in this subject was sparked by the sheer number of articles about the versatility of scrum. There are so many articles speaking to Agile's effectiveness, not only, in and out of software development, but how it can help you in your love life and personal goals.

HOW AGILE MIGHT HELP

When I think about starting a business, usually I picture what 'The E-myth' describes as the "worst job ever". I see myself working as a technician at my own business, but I often miss the downsides. As I learn more about entrepreneurship, its risk to my personal wants and goals feel threatened. While I love my work, there is far more to life. Also, I won't lie, I'm far from the most organized person, and starting a business while appealing for the normal 'be your own boss' reasons. Managing a business can be a daunting thought.

This paper follows me on my journey to understanding what all the scrum fuss is about. What I have learned about Agile has clicked with me more than any other 'self help' workflow has. Iteration, reflection and focused objectives will save me!

INITIAL INSIGHTS

I started this research project with the assumption that Agile methods would work in a freelance design practice. Turns out these methods are not only effective outside of software, they are relevant to planning personal goals. The core ideology of agile backlogs is very similar to S.M.A.R.T goals (goals that are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Time-bound). Backlog cards are specific to features or aspects of fulfilling a user story. (a user story is similar to a user journey in UX design). They are directly actionable and are bound within the timeframe of a sprint.

Another key insight that I gained at the beginning of this process was the conflict between roles with agile scrums. The artifacts and ceremonies of scrum are very easy to apply to most practices, though one of the key strengths of scrum is its designated roles.

THE MAN WITH THREE HATS

An interesting limitation of shifting agile to a freelance context is the merger of roles. Specifically the roles of developer and scrum master. An interesting limitation of the human body is our one head. This means that we are unfortunately unable to wear two hats at once. This is obviously a literal statement, though it holds as a metaphor for multi-tasking. Imagine every time you multitask, you literally had to switch hats. This is not dissimilar to how our brains actually work. When Switching tasks our brains take time to put on the new hat and get back up to speed. This demands that tasks are clearly separated and structured appropriately.

BEING YOUR OWN SCRUM MASTER
During sprints, you will have to act as your own scrum master by delegating work and organizing your backlog. These are both distinct roles that are a full time job. Though since your workload is likely manageable by yourself, taking on both these roles should cause less of a problem. But, it will demand structure and discipline. Before the start of a project, all three roles work on the creation of the backlog. While helpful to the solo worker, it is important to build it with distinct lenses from each role. A developer might think 'how is this feature going to be coded?' and how that plays into the backlog. The scrum master will view these backlog items as sprints. How do they play into the greater feature, and what is possible within the sprint timeframe. Finally, the product owner views the backlog through the 'big picture' and stakeholder lens. What is being demanded from the product, what of these demands are possible etc. So, as you set up your backlog, remember to leave time to put on each hat.

WHO OWNS THE PROJECT
The bigger issue is the role of project owner. All of my research has pointed to the roles of scrum master and project owner must be separated. This is due to the 'big picture' nature of the project owner role, and that it will create too much of a split if the role is shared. Beyer refers to the product owner as the person who protects the team from the shareholders. They are meant to keep the boat level and demands on the team in check. While… in

theory we should be the nicest to ourselves… Right? Well, I feel that depends, but personally, I find that I tend to overwork myself. Good leaders put lots of work into not overworking their staff. They do this through operating systems, optimizations and prioritization. So, as you own your own project, remember to treat yourself like a worker. Maybe this will help to view yourself with enough empathy.

ADAPTING AGILE
Regarding my final question, "What changes could be made to tune them to this context?". The main change to a traditional agile team is changing 'daily standups' to personal retrospectives. The main purpose of a daily standup is for the scrum master (and the rest of the team) to see where you are and what help you may need. It is also meant to reinforce the agile culture of 'everyone is in the same team' 'your problem is all of our problem'. This could be changed to a personal check-in. Where you state what your goals are for the day. This should also be done at the end of every sprint and improve on weak points and recognize strengths.

OPPORTUNITIES WITH THREE HATS
There is a potential for you to put on the scrum master hat during this time as well. Reflect on what you should be doing today, as if you are telling your scrum master. See what needs to be done today. Is there anything new that must be added to this sprint or the next? At the end of sprints you should look at your work with an objective view. You might not like it, or maybe it was a struggle, but did you meet your goals. If you were your boss, would you be satisfied? It is important to view where you can improve with the same lens. Your feedback to yourself must be constructive. Self-criticism can often degrade into personal feelings on the matter, which is a risk of not having an objective leader.

SPRINT SETUP
I structured October 30th until December 8th as three sprints. These are based on deliverable dates and the work cycle from the semester schedule. Sprint 1 was for interim deliverables (Oct 30th to November 10th). Sprint 2 was for setting up and

preparing for sprint 3 (Nov 13th to Nov 24th). Sprint 3 will be final deliverables (Nov 27th to Dec 8th)

SPRINT REFLECTION

I will be honest… It did not work out. The more 'bite sized' 'fluffy' articles don't really highlight how difficult applying these structures to your workflow. They paint this picture of all the free time you will get back. They proclaim you will leave stress on the side of the road towards a productive utopia. This is far from the case. Similar productivity methods share this same learning curve.

SIMILAR AREAS

The Pomodoro Technique is often showered in praise, until the point you ask the person how it was when they started. They will then start to talk about the loss in productivity, 'time wasted' making schedules and the anxiety of restructuring your workflow from the ground up. But, the reason people push through is the tangible results in the end. This was my primary roadblock, and it would have been more appropriate to begin this process at the beginning of the semester.

"I DON'T HAVE THREE HEADS"

As I suspected, taking on each role in this operating system was a challenge. This mostly arose from the backlog being set up midway through a semester. While agile encourages concepts akin to 'replacing the wheels on a moving car', it does not change how difficult that can be. The real challenge was not having another 'me' manage my backlog. This is where I saw the opportunity to break up the roles between days or even fractions of the day. I often feel driven to dive right into the things that need doing after I eat breakfast. Once I was "in the zone" it was very difficult to step back and give an overview.

A HAT FOR EVERY SEASON

So I propose that each day must start with you in the scrum master role. You must look over what has been done, what needs doing and what you will be doing today. This is where you should be refining your backlog and setting up your work for the day.

After this, it is time to put on your developer hat. You have your tasks, now do them. This will hopefully take you to the afternoon, where you can put on your scrum master hat again. Review and reflect on the work you have done. Take this time to update your backlog again, and make sure that it is ready for the next day. Finally, you will likely need to be in communication with clients, complete HR tasks or any number of "less than fun" tasks. While under stimulating, these tasks provide the opportunity to unwind at the end of the work day. This is where you can put on your product owner hat. You can update clients, send emails and complete administrative tasks. Since it is at the end of your work day, solid progress reports and informed responses can be provided at this time.

ARTIFACTS OF THE TRADE

While a project backlog (As a whole) was not created for this project, each sprint has started with creating a backlog and goals. This backlog was formatted in a Kanban template in Miro. Cards (User Stories) were changed to incremental aspects of each project, organized by priority. I had several issues with this method of organizing my backlog, though only one of them is an issue with the fundamental concept. That issue is the 'in-progress' stage of the kanban. While fundamental for scrum masters and larger tasks, I feel that your cards as a freelance worker should be small, and doable within the day. If a task does not feel complete, new cards should be added to the backlog, rather than extending a task.

ANALOGUE V. DIGITAL

My first issue was with how I created my Kanban. Having it online with Miro (While super convenient and intuitive) did not provide what I needed personally. I tend to create pseudo-backlogs on large format sticky notes. Each note is a different project and they go on the wall over my desk. This keeps my task 'present' and accessible in my workspace. I found that the miro board was not present enough to be effective.

The key issue with the more analogue method is the lack of flexibility. The limited size of the sticky notes encourages me to group tasks that should be

separate, and once it is written, I cannot change the order.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

As I continue to explore this in the coming semester, I think I have a solution. The iconic sticky notes app is something I often forget about. I feel that this is a strong solution. These notes can be structured like my wall notes and they do not require me to access the internet. Modern iterations of the app provide far more text and formatting options, allowing for a more visual kanban.

IN CONCLUSION

This has been an interesting and somewhat uplifting dive into the world of Agile. The core principles of Agile sync with my work style very well. Iterative, incremental, reflective and organic are how I would describe my workflow. That is how I perceive this learning experience as well. I have learned a lot from this iteration of my new workflow, and I'm looking forward to building off of it in the next 'release'. I think in the same way a piece of software is developed, this practice will evolve over stages in the coming years. I didn't have the timeframe to have a full answer to the overarching question of "How do you apply Agile to freelance work", but I hope to find out soon.

DISCUSSION

With respect to my first question ("What lean/agile methods would best suit a freelance work cycle?"). Key takeaways from my research are: Kanbans, backlogs, sprint structures and holidays. There are other methods that can be helpful, though these are the ones that stood out to me.

Holidays (in the context of scrum) are non-sprints, where developers are given time to fix bugs and structural issues with the product. This also is meant to break up the periods of fast paced work from sprints. In the context of this paper, this would be a period to organize files and catch up on admin.

My question of "How do they apply to solo work?" has become somewhat irrelevant. While not designed specifically for freelance, its application is only limited by your imagination. It is not hard to see

how these methods apply to any form of project planning. This question shifted more towards Agile's specific application and adaptation. I didn't foresee the difficulties in combining roles within this structure, and that became a key focus of this paper. The bright side of this, is I believe my results will be constructive to my workflow in the future.

COMMENTS

A limitation of my study is the lack of time to thoroughly test these methods. I have begun laying out work in this style, and I will continue to do so in the next semester. In this spirit, I will also approach it with the revised techniques outlined above. As I mentioned above, a major limitation to the primary research of this paper was the mid-semester implementation. Not only due to the in-progress workload, but also creating the infrastructure itself. Time was spent finding software and setting up the kanban. This will not be an issue with the second attempt.

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