

Ideating Solutions

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From Problems to Solutions

- Now, you have a clear problem statement
 - Any hypotheses should be tested too



Arnold is a busy executive who needs an easy app experience to hire a dog walker because he's not technologically savvy



Andy is a night owl who needs a sleep motivator because he cannot turn off his computer to sleep on time

- It's time to ideate possible solutions

How?

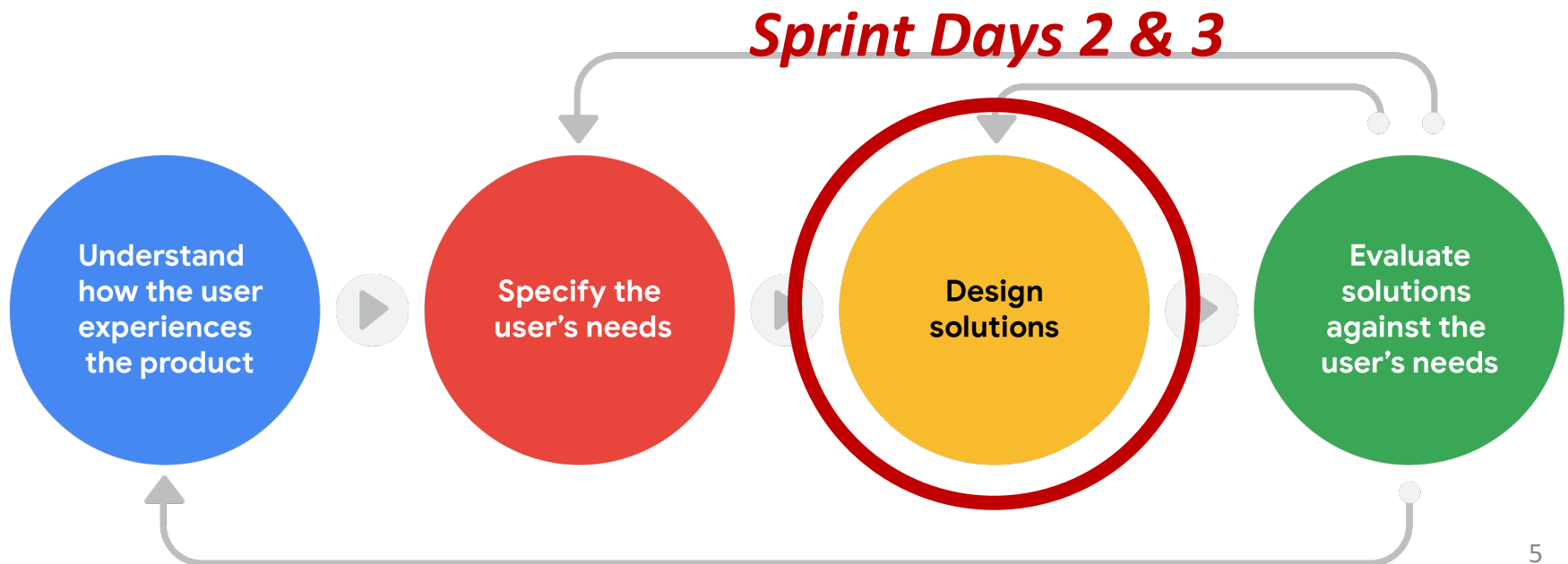
- To have ***a lot of*** (bad) ideas

Ideation

- The process of generating a ***broad set*** of solutions to a given problem ***with no attempt to judge or evaluate*** the solutions

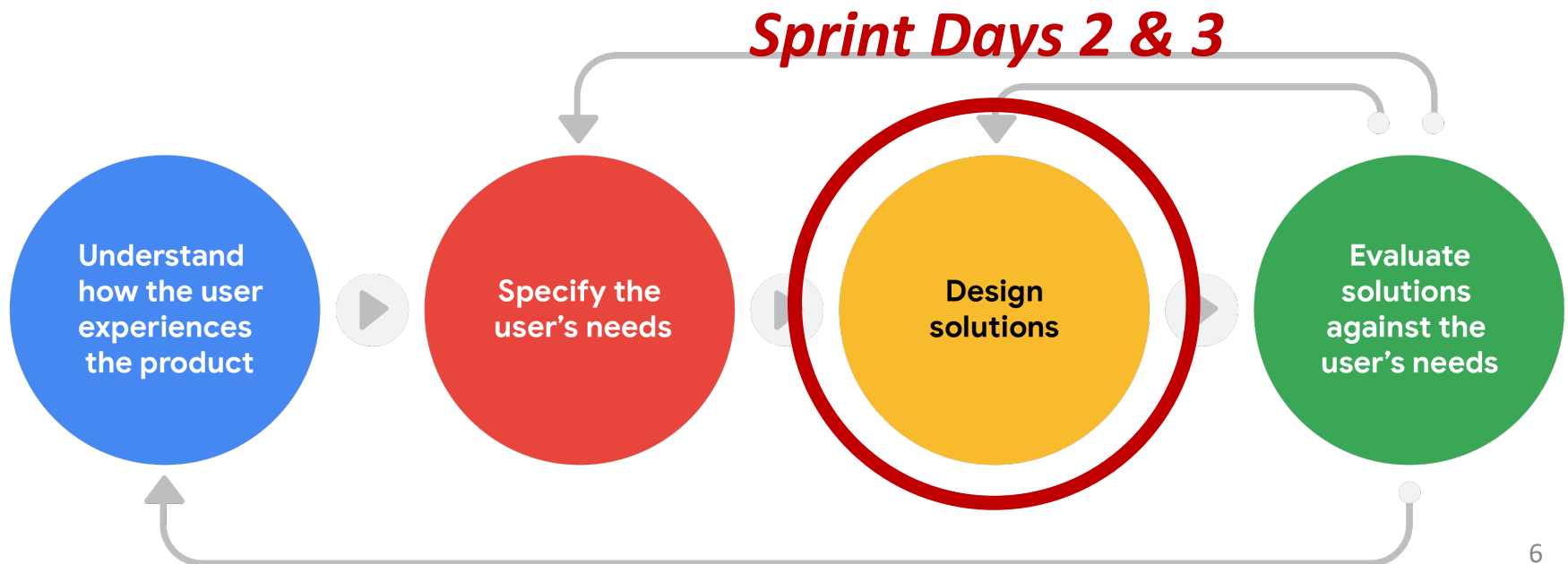
Outline: Ideating Solutions

- Brainstorming and the Crazy 8
- Competitive Audit and Unique Value Proposition
- Refining and deciding the best solutions



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Crazy 8

- A design ideation exercise that asks you to sketches 8 ideas in 8 minutes

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- Crazy 8
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Example (Parent-Kid Cycling)



Jane is a parent in New York, who needs a safe way to ride her bike with her two-year-old kid, Luca, because Luca is still learning how to ride his own bike



Best Practices for the Crazy 8

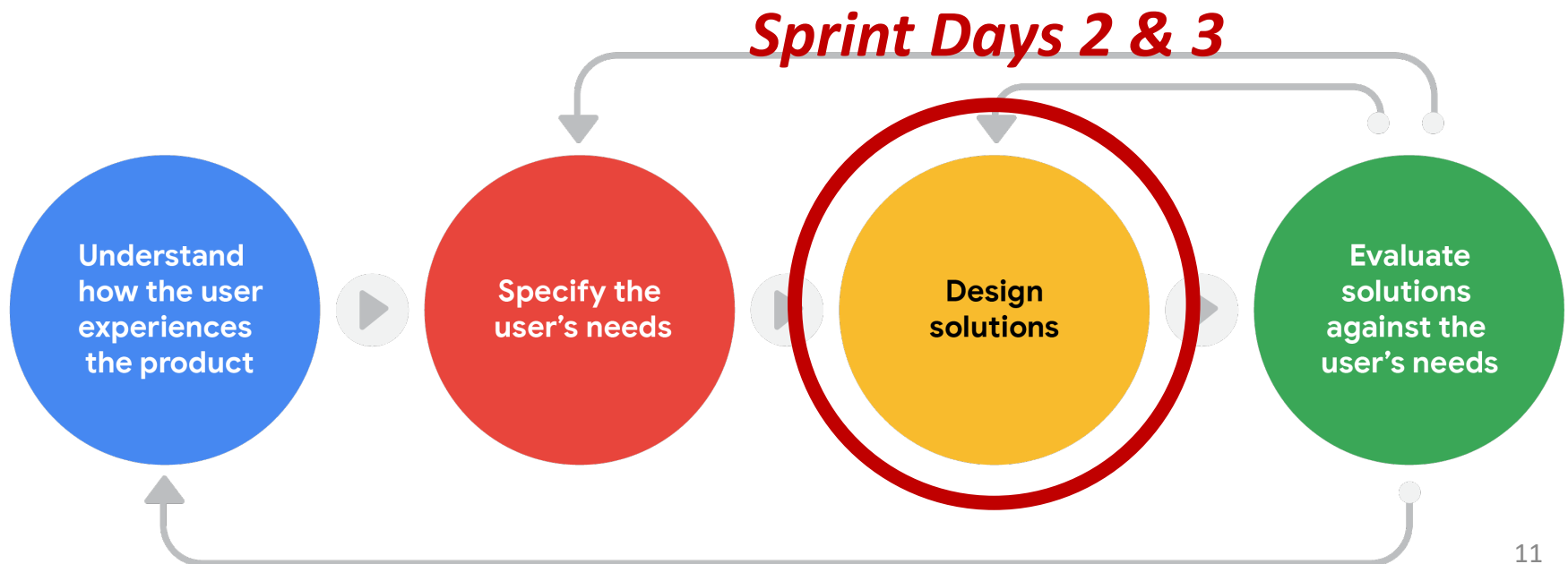
- Make sure your problem is well defined
- Sketch on real paper to *move fast*
- *Quantity* over quality
- “Crazy” ideas are welcome
- Respect the timer
- Warm-up exercise helps
 - E.g., “draw your interpretations of love”
- *Don't judge* (your and others' sketches)
- Include a diverse group
- Ideate in a comfortable environment



For more ideation techniques,
[read this blog post](#)

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- Brainstorming and the Crazy 8
- Competitive Audit and Unique Value Proposition
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Competitive Audit

- An overview of your competitors' strengths and weaknesses

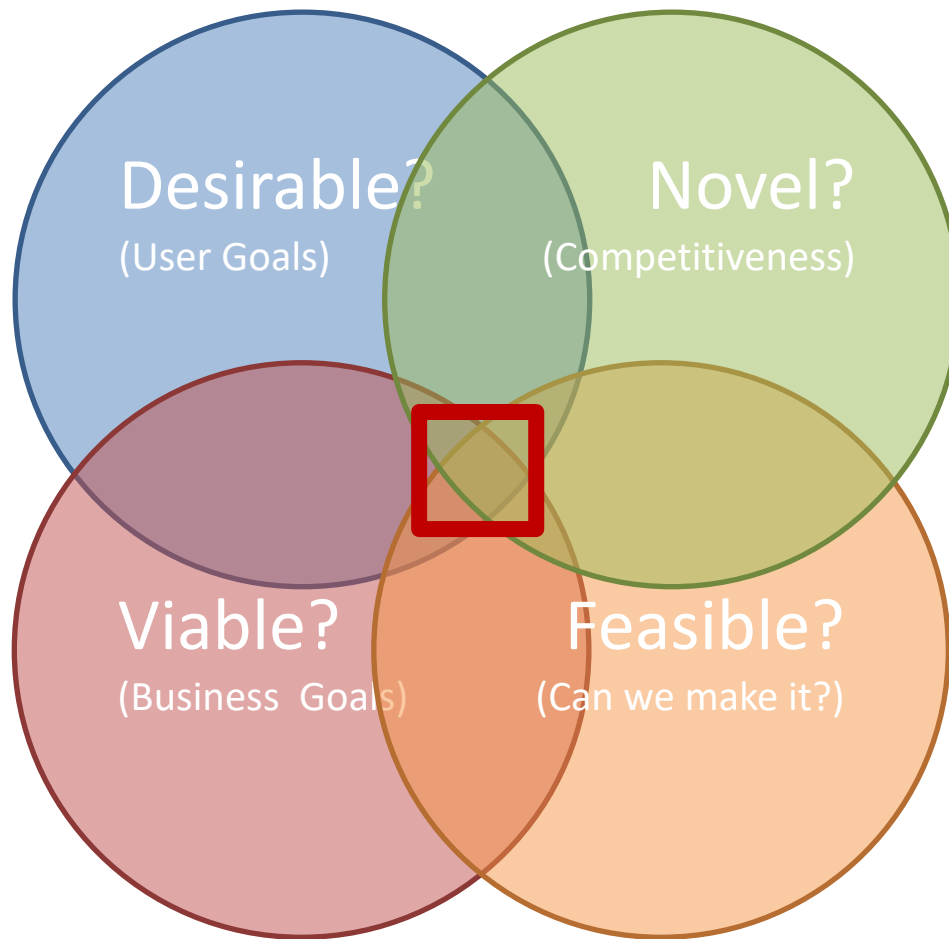
Value Proposition

- A simple statement that summarizes why a customer would choose a product/service over its competitors

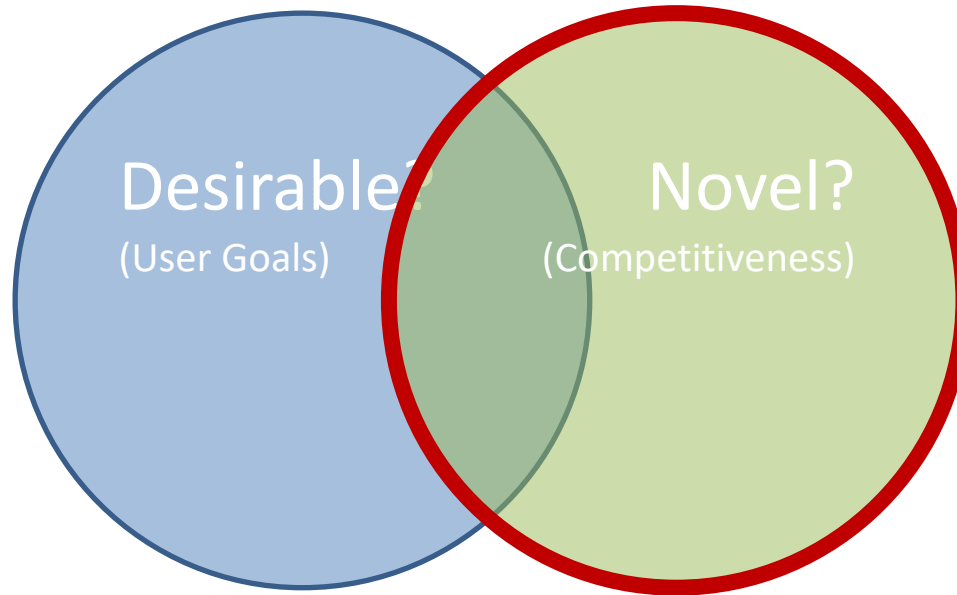
Your Competitor...



What Are Good Ideas?

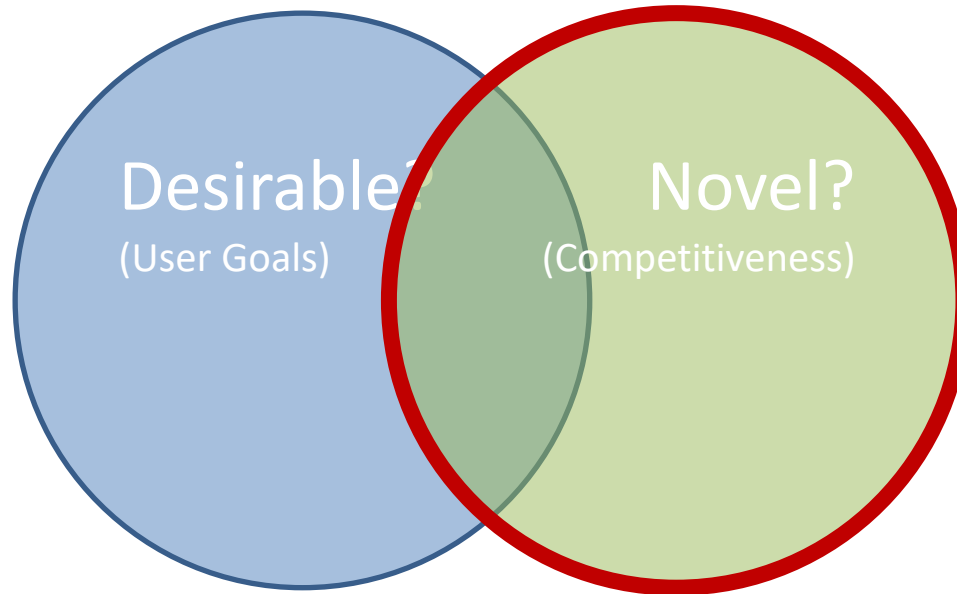


Why Novelty?



- People hate to change

How to Be Novel?



- Traditional marketing: brand personification + emotions
 - E.g., to be your friend, boyfriend, grandma...
- No! ***Products are objects*** to our brands, not a person
 - Products do not activate the medial part of the frontal lobe

Customers buy a product because of its *expected instrumentality* to achieve a certain *goal*

Consumer Goals

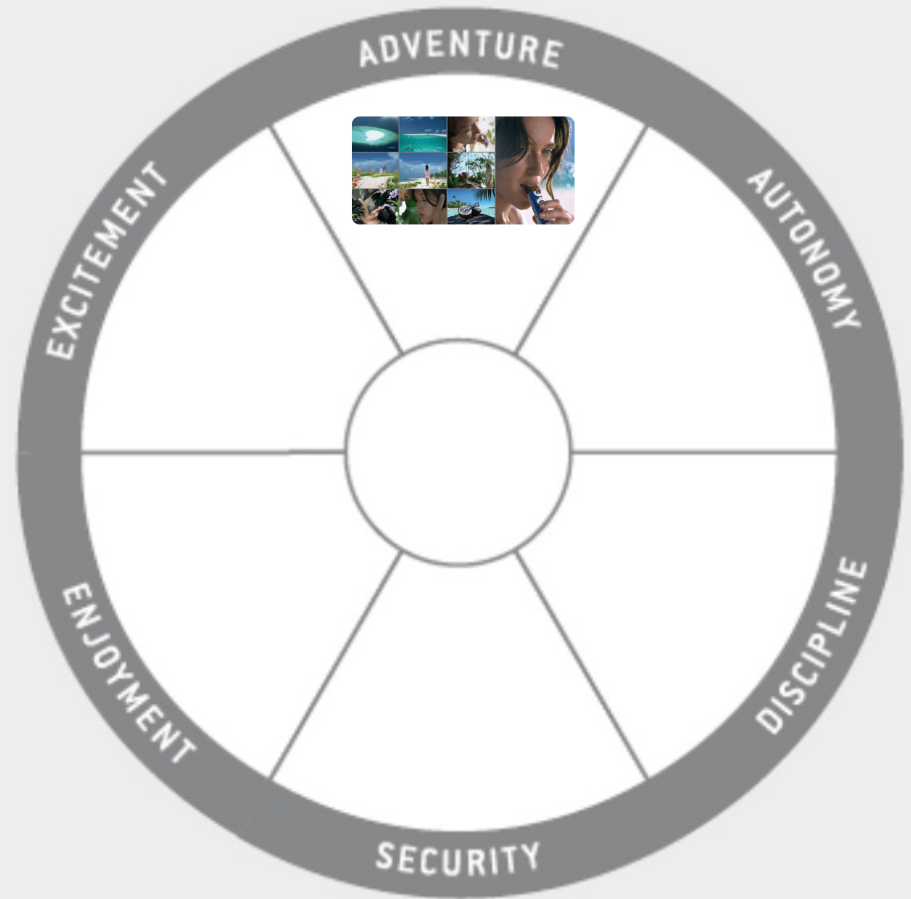
- Explicit goals
 - Category specific
 - E.g., moisturizing our skin, reliability of a car, removing stains...
- Implicit goals
 - More general
 - Operate on a psychological level
 - E.g. energizing, being sensible, fun, status...

What Did You See?






Anatomy of Implicit Goals

- Security
 - Care, trust, closeness, security, warmth...
- Enjoyment
 - Relaxation, light heartedness, openness, pleasure...
- Excitement
 - Vitality, fun, curiosity, creativity, change...
- Adventure
 - Freedom, courage, rebellion, discovery, risk...
- Autonomy
 - Pride, success, power, superiority, recognition...
- Discipline
 - Precision, order, logic, reason...



Benz vs. BMW vs. Volvo

	Signal	↔	Explicit goal	↔	Implicit goal
 Mercedes-Benz	Automatic braking system	↔	Shorter braking distance	↔	Superiority
	Automatic braking system	↔	Shorter braking distance	↔	Driving pleasure
	Automatic braking system	↔	Shorter braking distance	↔	Security

- Same auto breaking system
- How to differentiate if you are Benz?

Superiority



Competitive Audit Steps

1. Outline audit goals
2. Identify your direct & indirect competitors
3. Review the products that they offer
4. Understanding how they position themselves in the market
 - Their *value propositions*?
 - What explicit and implicit goals achieved?
5. Examining what they do well and what you could improve

Direct vs. Indirect Competitors

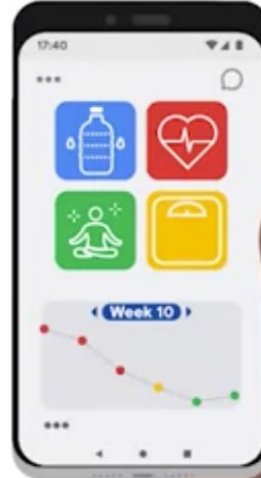
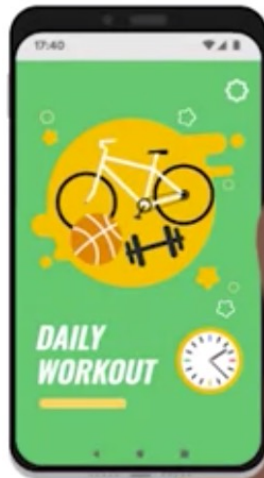
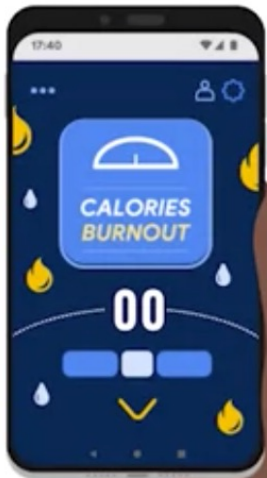
- Direct competitors
 - Have offerings (products, services, or features) similar to your product and focus on the same audience
- Indirect competitors
 - Have a similar set of offerings, but focus on a different audience
 - Or, have a different set of offerings and focus on the same audience

Example (Weight-loss App for 30's)

Indirect

- Health/wellness apps targeting 30's
- Weight-loss apps for 60's

Direct



Step 1: Outline Audit Goals

- Example (CoffeeHouse):

“To compare the purchasing experience of each competitor’s app as a new and returning user”

Step 2: List Competitors

Competitive audit	Goal: Compare the purchasing experience of each competitor's app as a new user and a returning user.					
	General information					
	Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)
JavaMate	Direct	Canberra, Australia	Variety of different quality coffees	\$\$	www.javamate.coffee	Large
BeanTown	Indirect	Sundsvall, Sweden	Rotating selection of high-end coffee	\$\$\$\$	www.freshbrewed.bean	Small

Step 3: Determine Aspects to Compare

- General information
- UX
 - First impressions
 - Interaction
 - Visual design
 - Content

Step 4: Research (General Information)

Competitive audit	Goal: Compare the purchasing experience of each competitor's app as a new user and a returning user.							
	General information							
	Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition
JavaMate	Direct	Canberra, Australia	Variety of different quality coffees	\$\$	www.javamate.coffee	Large	Working adults	Offers a diverse variety of coffee
BeanTown	Indirect	Sundsvall, Sweden	Rotating selection of high-end coffee	\$\$\$\$	www.freshbrewed.bean	Small	Higher-income clientele who work in the suburbs or from home	Offers a subscription mail-order service

- Gathered from products, websites, marketing materials, and financial reports, etc.

Step 4: Research (First Impressions)

UX (rated: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)								
First impressions		Interaction				Visual design	Content	
Desktop website experience	Dedicated mobile app experience	Features	Accessibility	User flow	Navigation	Brand identity	Tone	Descriptiveness
Outstanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website is well-designed and easy to use Elegant design with strong branding 	Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> App is well-designed and easy to use Smooth ordering process Limited number of features 	Needs work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-click payment that remembers payment info Lack of other useful features No loyalty rewards program 	Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audio option for menu available in English and Spanish Offers 2 different languages 	Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy and useful order and payment processes Straightforward user flow Not memorable 	Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy basic navigation Clear indication of clickable elements 	Outstanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong brand identity including colors, fonts, style, and imagery Visual design communicates company ethos 	Sophisticated and informative	Good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key info is present Too descriptive
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Step 4: Research (Interaction)

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Step 4: Research (Visual Design)

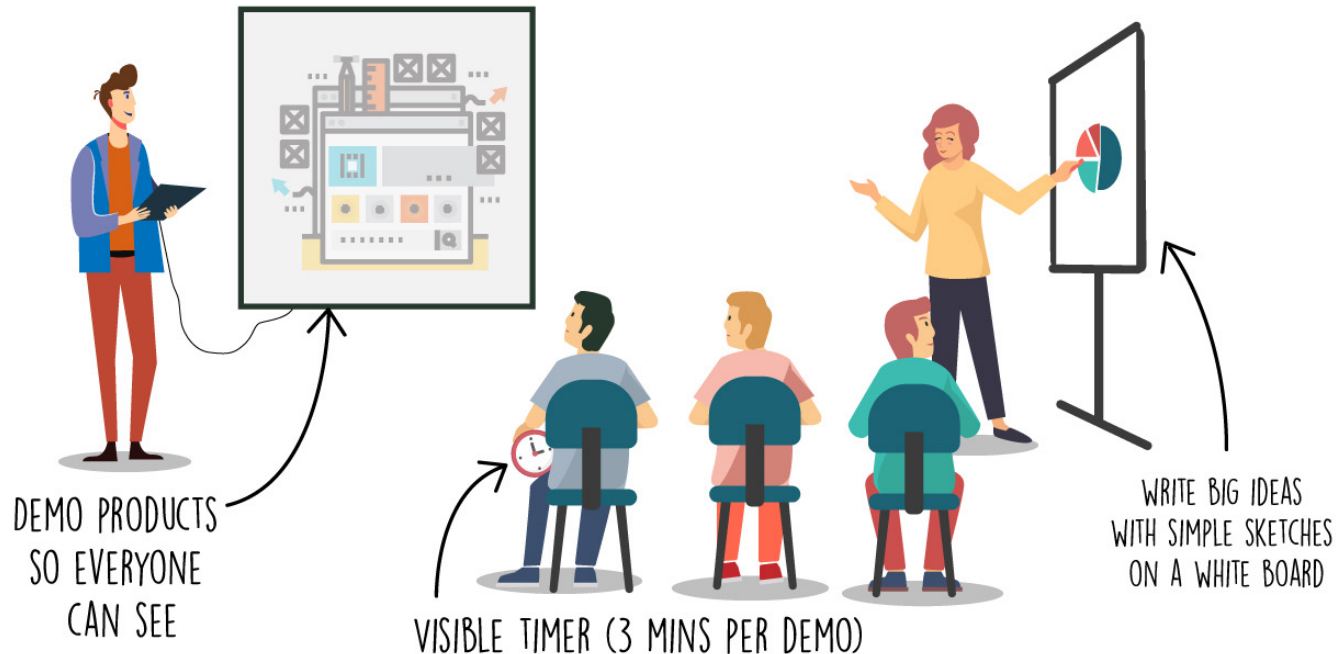
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Step 5: Lightning Demos

- A structured “show and tell” group session to present competitive audit results to gather ideas and inspiration



Example Slides

Goals & Methods

Objective

Burger Garden says their clients have lost interest in their product.

We audited industry competitors to understand how the BG app compares.

Research Questions

Are they attracting the audience that they say they are speaking to?

How does their app look and feel?
Does the design complement the product?

Will the user get confused as they navigate?

Procedure

We reviewed these aspects of each restaurant and their app or website design:

- Audience
- First Thoughts
- User Interaction
- Visual Design

Burger Garden

Location: Kansas City, Missouri

Cost: Burgers cost around \$10 each

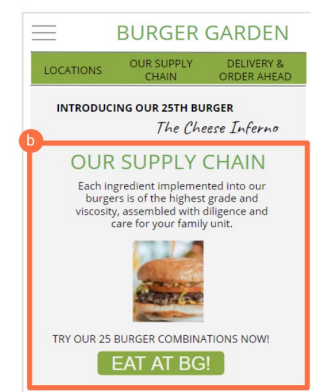
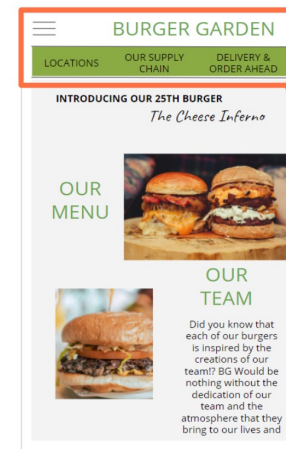
Business size: Small

Audience: Millennials (ages 25 to 40)

Unique Value Proposition:
Large variety of burgers and toppings

Initial Findings:

- Clear branding (a)
- Content tone is inconsistent (b)



For more details,
read this [blog post](#)

Why Is Competitive Audit Important?

- Inform market status
 - How users solve their problems currently?
 - Product life cycle?
 - Marketing strategy (e.g., SEO/ASO keywords)?
 - Business model?
- Reveal opportunities for improvement
 - What's the gap between market and user needs?
 - Usability problems in existing products?
- Inspire new ideas
 - Something good to borrow from?
- Provide evidence for your hypotheses

Limitations

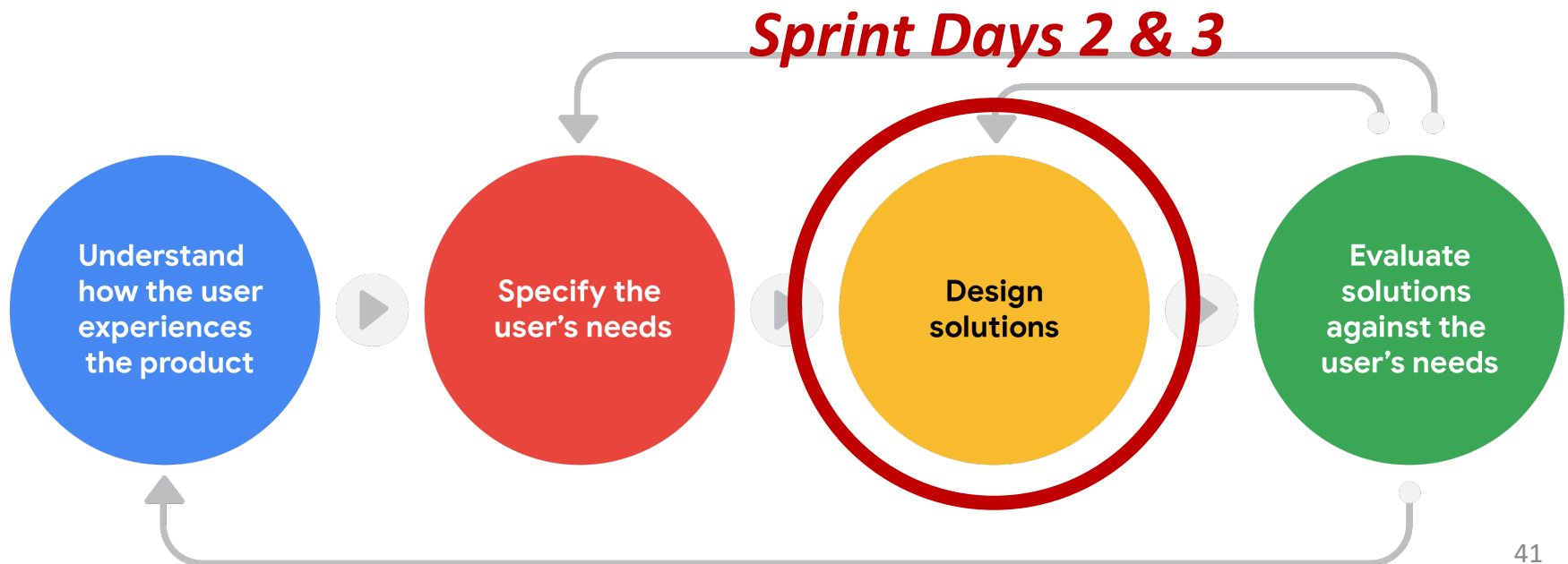
- Stifles creativity
 - Solution: brainstorm *before and after* competitive audit
- Depends on how well you interpret the findings
 - Ask 2 or more people to review the same product
 - Focus on users' goals
- Design that works well for a competitor might not work well for you
 - E.g., Are the “Share” or “Like” buttons necessary?

Second-Round Ideation

- What's your unique value proposition?
- Explicit goals?
- Implicit goals?

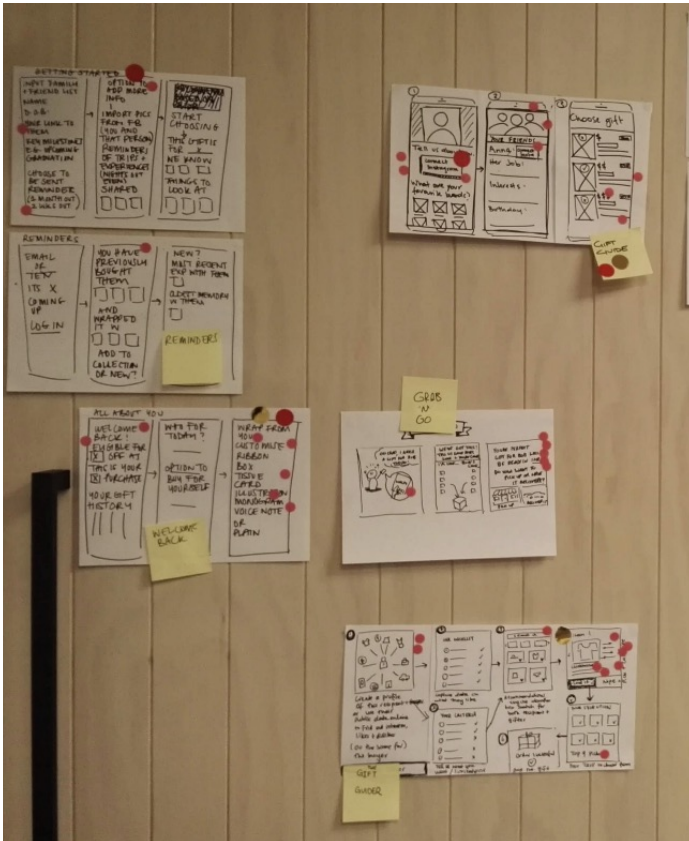
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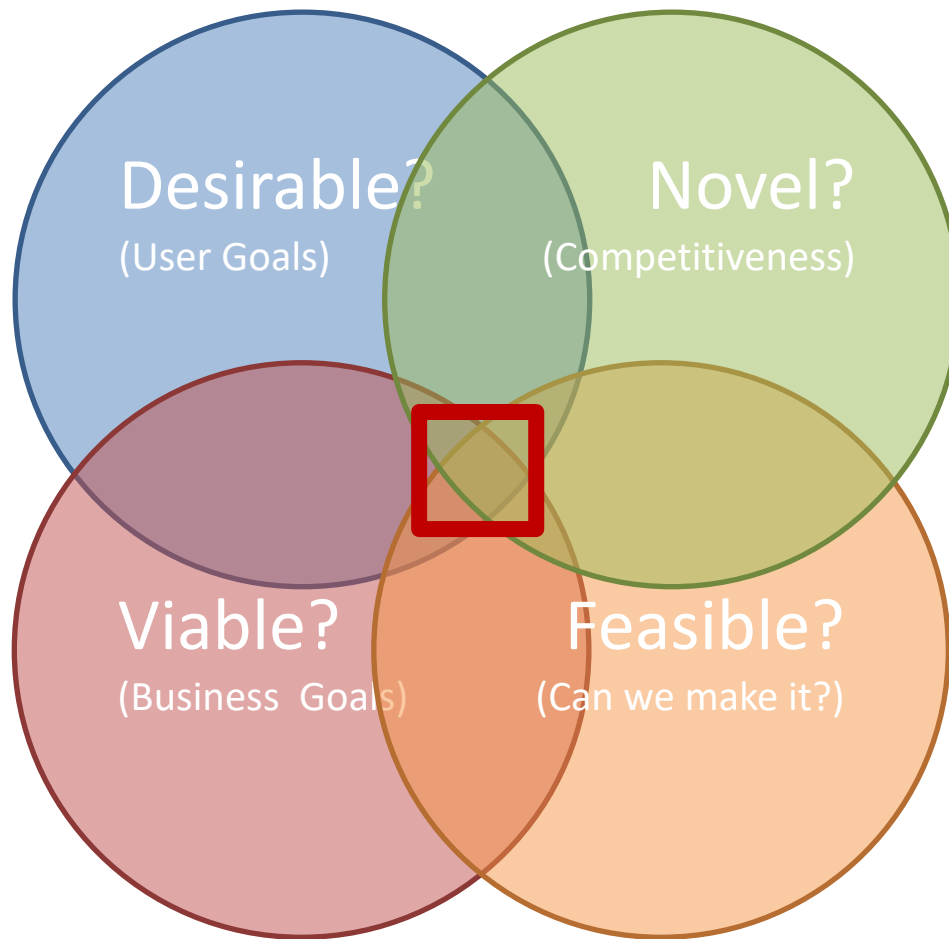


Process

1. Hang & present *anonymous* sketches
 - By the facilitator, who learn from everyone first
2. Vote the best *parts*
 - No discussion allowed
3. Speed critique
 - By the facilitator and voters
 - Time limited
 - Sticky notes
4. Merge the best parts by re-sketching, and go to step 1 if necessary
5. Write goal statements for the final winners



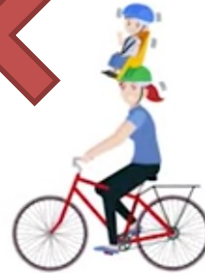
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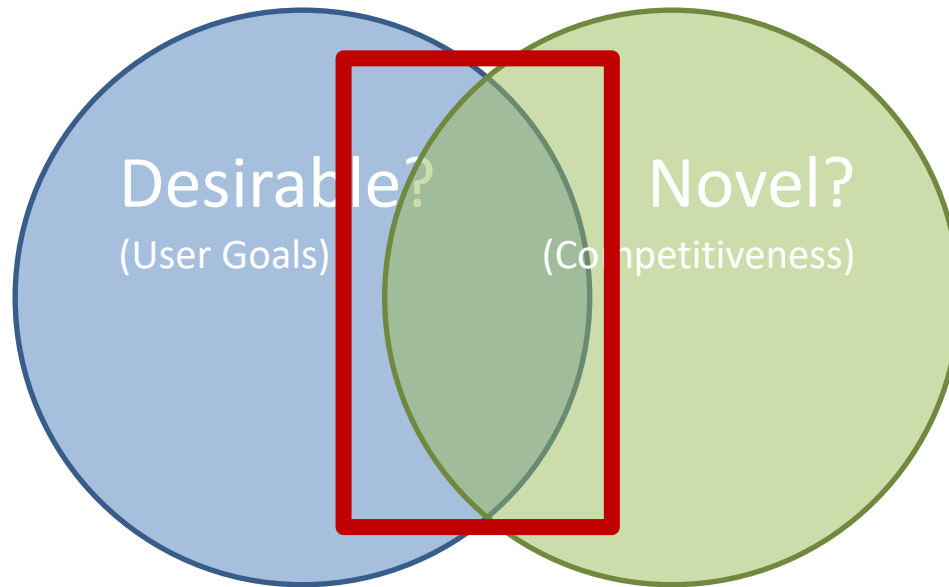
Example (Parent-Kid Cycling)



Jane is a parent in New York, who needs a safe way to ride her bike with her two-year-old kid, Luca, because Luca is still learning how to ride his own bike



Caution!

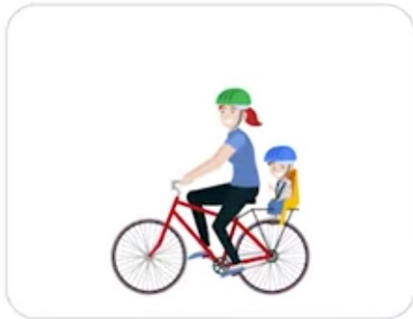


- Don't trade relevance (explicit goals) for differentiation (implicit goals)

Example (Parent-Kid Cycling)



Jane is a parent in New York, who needs a safe way to ride her bike with her two-year-old kid, Luca, because Luca is still learning how to ride his own bike



Goal Statement

- Few sentences that describe a product, its benefits for users, and its measurement to success

<u>GOAL STATEMENT</u>	
Our _____	will let users _____
product (what)	perform specific actions (what)
which will affect _____	_____
	describe who the action will affect (who)
by _____	_____
	describe how the action will positively affect users (why)
We will measure effectiveness by _____	_____
	describe how you will measure the impact

From problems to solutions

Examples (CoffeeHouse App)



Claire is a marketing intern, who needs a quick way to submit and monitor group orders for her colleagues because she wants to save time waiting in line

GOAL STATEMENT

Our CoffeeHouse app will let users place group orders in advance
product (what) perform specific actions (what)

which will affect users who have to make and pick up large orders
describe who the action will affect (who)

by letting users skip the in-store order line and saving them time
describe how the action will positively affect the user (how)

Your unique value proposition

We will measure effectiveness by tracking orders of 5+ items placed through the app
describe how you will measure the impact



Customer Expert
(Sales)



Business
(PM, Marketing)



Creator
(Designer, UX Eng)



Builder
(Developer, Eng)



The Decider
(SVP, VP)



Facilitator

Preparing for Ideation

- ~~Empathize with your users~~
- ~~Define the problem~~
- Find a good place (with whiteboards)
- Set a time limit
- Assemble a diverse team
- Think outside the box

Bean Bag Bonus

Your Favorites

VIP Status

Secret Menu

Monday	_____
Tuesday	_____
Wednesday	_____
Thursday	_____
Friday	_____
Saturday	_____
Sunday	_____

Design Sprint Day 2

- Communicate problems & hypotheses
- Brainstorm solutions
 - Sketch the Crazy 8 under time limit
 - No judgement
- Conduct competitive audit
 - Lightning demos
 - Capture good ideas
- Brainstorm unique value propositions
 - No judgement

Skip the Line

Easy order

Instant refill

...

Open tab

Coffee Stories

Your grower: _____

Flashy sign

Order

Reserve

Design Sprint Day 3

1. Present & vote candidate solutions
 - No discussion
2. Refine/merge parts & decide the best solutions
 - What's your unique value proposition?
3. Write goal statements & evaluation metrics
4. Storyboarding (coming next)