

VSP Ideation Workshop 1

Sept 17, 2019

How to prepare for the workshop:

1. Update your Slack status that you'll be away for 2 hrs
2. Close Slack and ZenHub (unless you're on call)
3. Have a way to take notes at the ready
4. Have whatever coffee, water, snacks you want with you for the next 2 hrs
5. Be open to the unconventional / seemingly impossible

Agenda:

10 min: Breaking the “Platform” concept box

15 min: VSP North Star investigation

15 min: Future Press Release activity

25 min: Share, discuss, create themes

30 min: “How might we” activity

15 min: Size ‘em up

10 min: Dot voting

Why are we “ideating” ?

To explore a wide solution space -- wide in both quantity and diversity of ideas -- which will later help solidify vision and roadmaps, and help uncover things we may want to prototype and test with users.

More specifically:

- Step beyond obvious solutions and increase innovation potential
- Harness collective perspectives and strengths of team members
- Uncover unexpected areas of exploration
- Get obvious solutions out of our heads, and drive beyond them

What is the VSP?

The systems, resources, and support VFS Teams use to build VA.gov products that enable Veterans to more easily and quickly get what they need online.

What is a Platform?



United States Web Design System

There are a so many kinds. Some sample aspects:

- **Common framework** which others can leverage to build and is **invisible to the end user** (USWDS).
- Ecosystem enabling connection between **many “vendors” and many users** (Craigslist).
- Leverage the **network effect** - i.e. its value increases as the number of active participants increases, either through user data (Waze), or through user content (Facebook Marketplace).
- **Reduce barrier to entry** to a given ecosystem (Drupal).
- Leverage **usage and user ratings to prioritize functionality** (Gmail Labs).



Facebook Marketplace



What is a Platform you love? Why?

VSP North Star

Enable VA to build digital tools at scale that improve Veterans' lives.

VSP North Star - digging deeper in small groups

Could VSP enable VA to build at scale and improve Veterans' lives...

... by creating a common framework invisible to the end user? How?

... by leveraging the network effect? How?

... by enabling connection between many “vendors” and many users? How?

... by reducing barrier to entry into the VA ecosystem? How?

... by leveraging usage and user ratings to prioritize functionality? How?

... by ? How?

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... by ? How?

Future Press Release Activity

It's one year in the future, and the VSP is a wild success!

Write a short press release announcing this ambitious, innovative Platform to the world.

Future Press Release Activity

Guidelines:

- 5-8 sentences
- Bring in your ideas from the North Star - Digging Deeper exercise
- This is aspirational! Embrace the seemingly impossible

Types of questions the press release should answer:

- What are the accomplishments we made for VFS Teams through the VS? How about for Veterans?
- Why is the VSP important to VFS Teams? To Veterans?
- How did the VFS Team experience improve?
- Why do VFS Teams care? Why do Veterans care?
- Why else is the VSP important? What key goals did it achieve?
- What clear, measurable results did it achieve?
- What were the principles that led to success? The hard things we accomplished, the important decisions we made?
- What were the issues we overcame to reach this wild success?

Prompt reminder:

It's one year in the future, and the Platform is a wild success!

Write a short press release announcing this ambitious, innovative Platform to the world.

Distilling themes

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17ubZRzXGaNjxCRE9rdHTdiRjSXtTTgORHGVfb3IVd6k/edit#gid=0>

How might we...

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17ubZRzXGaNjxCRE9rdHTdiRjSXtTTgORHGVfb3IVd6k/edit#gid=0>

Sizing the ideas

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17ubZRzXGaNjxCRE9rdHTdiRjSXtTTgORHGVfb3IVd6k/edit#gid=0>

Dot (or in our case Emoji) voting



= greatest potential for advancing the “helping VA can builds” part of the VSP North Star

You have 6 scale emojis that you can copy and paste onto the post-its of your choice to represent your votes.

You can vote for a post-it more than once.

Dot (or in our case Emoji) voting



= greatest potential for advancing the “enabling builds that improve Veterans’ lives” part of the VSP North Star

You have 6 blue heart emojis that you can copy and paste onto the post-its of your choice to represent your votes.

You can vote for a post-it more than once.

Thanks!

Next...

- Leadership Team will share ideas from all 4 workshops
- DSVA + Leadership Team will use ideas as fodder for VSP Vision
- VSP Teams should use ideas as fodder for Roadmaps and Backlogs



Did you love this? Did you find it pointless? Were you bored stiff? Do you have other feedback?

@rroosh on Slack.