Working Backwards Questions

Who is the customer?

Our target audience are young people who committed at least one crime (delinquency). The youth and adolescents have come into conflict with the law by the age between 12 and 21. They have been convicted to a term of probation or an alternative sanction by a German court. A large part of the target group is resident in the city and the surrounding area of Munich, Fürstenfeldbruck, and Landshut.

The teenagers are not able to solve their everyday problems on their own and are faced with very individual problems such as alcohol and drug addiction, problems within their families, teenagers who live on the streets, and psychological abnormality, just to name a few.

The teenagers feel not being understood and left alone to face the complex task of development. Nevertheless, they have the willingness to open their minds and develop their sense to work on themselves. A vast portion of the target group does not have any reading experience and questions about life in their heads. Instead of reading books, our target group gives more importance to everything else. For them, it is challenging to spend their free time in a sensible way. The children and teenagers are growing up with the Internet and often participate very actively in it so that a certain degree of technical skills and interests exists/ can be assumed.

What is the customer problem or opportunity?

Youths who have committed a criminal offense and have been convicted of taking part at KonTEXT find reading books tedious and the process of learning through reflection unmotivating, not tempting, and overwhelming. Their inexperience with reading books leads to excessive demand on the part of the teenagers. Typically, they would prefer to do anything else before spending time with a book. This is also due to the reason that they are forced to read and do not do it by their own choice. Therefore, our target group does not feel free to decide where, when, and what to read. On top, they are not thrilled to use the app as a digital assistant within the project. We have the opportunity to motivate them and make them feel passionate to read books, use the app and continue to like it. We will be glad to help them to succeed in processing the past and reflect on themselves. We are very glad to have the opportunity to help them be back on the right track.

Our Challenge: How might we help young people who committed a crime to have a greater motivation towards reading and participating in the project with a lasting effect, in order to successfully complete the project and reduce the risk of committing another criminal offense. Motivating an unmotivated teenager who committed a crime to continue reading and using the app can definitely be a challenge.

What is the most important customer benefit?

By solving the above challenge, the young people in the program could be accounted for the hours they spent with reading and playing, resulting in the successful completion of the program and there would be no need for them to go to jail. Additionally, by making them like using the app and reading books, they would spend more time with books and less time with activities that might have a negative influence on them. Moreover, the information, the knowledge, the moral lessons, and the positive examples that the app and books are transmitting to young people would form their character in a positive way and they would get new motivations and aspects for their life. Eventually, youngsters would feel encouraged to reflect and discuss one's own behavior and to rethink their past activities/crimes. In comparison to the earlier situation, this approach provides the following benefits:

Societies Benefit: the teenagers and their communities will be better off if they let others help them find ways to make a difference. The program and technical companion provide emotional and practical support.

Educational Benefit: teenagers will playfully learn through quizzes, podcasts, reading and writing reports. Education improves their health and livelihood, contributes to social stability and drives long-term personal development goals.

Benefit of Personal Development: the teenagers will become the person they want to be. They will learn to respect, accept and love who they are by reflecting about themselves. They will find their own path and not themselves back in jail. Therefore, they will probably not commit crimes after they have finished the program.

Benefit of Motivation: increased motivation is crucial as it allows the teenagers to change behavior, develop competencies, set goals, grow interests, make plans and boost engagement.

How do you know what customers need or want?

Due to the fact that their personal data will be properly protected it is unfortunately impossible to get in touch with the teenagers. All personal data will automatically be deleted and removed from the system after completion of the project. The team got a good impression of what the target group really needs and wants through the contact person, working at KonTEXT. The contact person (project manager) previously received direct feedback and explanation regarding the procedure and status of success. In addition, involved students can provide information and confirm the underlying assumptions. They can talk about their impressions and experiences they have made with project participants. Furthermore, there are studies that show the problem of learning and reading pleasure in combination with guilt and punishment.

The team also thought about conducting anonymous interviews (no name, no video, no voice) to create a questionnaire which can be passed over or provided to the client. However, in agreement with the client this was not easily carried out due to data security regulations. Furthermore, the testimonials from the website were considered to be used as confirmation of approval. However, there are only positive testimonials published, thus it can be assumed that the significance of these abbreviations is limited.

What does customer experience look like? (please see Solution Storyboard)

The story is told from the perspective of Alex and is explained in 6 pictures. Attached you will find the storyboard pictures.

Picture 1: Hi my name is Alex, and I am 14 years old. Usually I am a cheerful, open-minded teenager, but I have made one big mistake and I definitely want to make sure it doesn't happen to me again. The judge decided that reading a book as punishment will teach me a lesson. I might not personally be quite so enthusiastic about literature and books but do you know what? Somehow I see that this is a great opportunity for me! I find it difficult to concentrate on the essentials of life, as I constantly have to think about the fear of prison, my friends and family. I do not like reading books and dealing with topics whose contents I would rather not have to deal with in my free time. However, I will participate and give the reading project at KonTEXT a chance.

Picture 2: When starting the program, I needed to download the ReadUp. app to better organize and check up on my progress. However, I do not see a point to read the books or use the app and it does not make me happy. Instead, I would prefer to surf on Facebook or Instagram. Actually, I would prefer anything else. Out of nothing my phone rings and I receive a notification.

Picture 3: The message is from ReadUp. and what I see surprises me somewhat. I am ranked last in the list – and this cannot remain as it is! Someone as cool as me can't be last in a game and I also want to show myself that I am far better than the last place in the ranking.

Picture 4: For this reason, I am suddenly very motivated to read and use the app. Actually, the app is cooler than I thought and offers gamified features which I did not realize in the beginning. I am aiming to improve my position and want to climb up the ladder. Therefore, I will start reading and use the app.

Picture 5: Through the playful elements within the app, I completed tasks easily and much faster as I want to go further. At the same time, however, I have the feeling that I am learning many things about the topic I still have to learn a lot of. I have also now begun to read and already finished a couple of chapters. I suddenly have the feeling that I have accomplished something – It feels good.

Picture 6: While reading and using the app – and that on a voluntary basis - I have noticed that besides the effect of climbing up in the ranking there are other advantages - you actually learn something - and the books are not as boring as I thought. Now, I really like to use the ReadUp. app.

Solution Storyboard

(created with the software "Storyboard That")