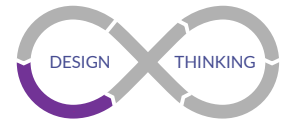# DEFINE

Consolidate insights and outline user problems.

DESIGN THINKING

Why define ?

The Define stage is about pausing to consider and identify what problems to tackle before jumping straight into development. This requires the team to pull together and make sense of the research findings from the Empathise stage. Taking the time to do this allows you to:

- define the main trends, user needs and opportunities to improve an experience
- provide clarity around which pain points are the most significant, so that the development of different areas can be prioritised in line with user needs
- create deliverables that offer a single source of truth and encourage a human-centred focus amongst stakeholders
- provide a strong foundation for ideation, as concepts can be aligned to the defined problem statements or opportunities, that are grounded by prior research.
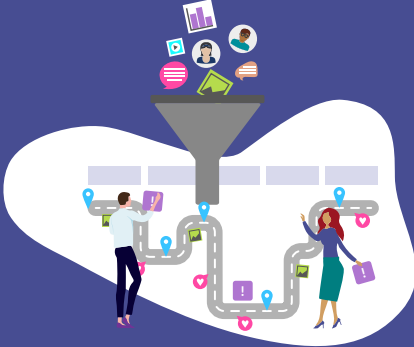
Steps to success

1 Re-visit unknowns to align new knowledge.

Return to the knowledge gaps and questions identified during the Empathise stage and determine which ones the research has fulfilled. Where unknowns still exist, consider conducting further research before, or in conjunction with, ideation to capture all user needs.

2 Distil research findings into artefacts.

Consider familiar, robust deliverables such as personas or customer journey maps to structure insight in a way that is meaningful, and useable within the company. Identify and highlight themes, defining moments and pain points in the experience, while displaying the data visually to engage the whole team. Ensure that artefacts can be updated easily in the future as the experience and user audience evolves.

3 Start to tell a story.

Once you have combined insights in a digestible format, share them with the project team and beyond! Rather than overwhelming people with lots of information in a meeting, consider communicating in other formats such as through posters on the office walls or via an online platform.

4 Generate problem statements, collaboratively.

Look for meaning in the insights you have gathered, by talking through and discussing user stories as a team. Identify where challenges exist to improve the user experience and create an actionable, human-centred problem statement for each area, to bridge the gap between the research and design. Keep statements free of technical requirements and other constraints to allow for creativity during ideation.

5 Record everything.

All insights, questions or ideas generated by users or members of the project team should be documented for future reference. This is particularly important when outlining problem statements as people are naturally prone to begin thinking of solutions. Remember that details that may seem insignificant, could become important following a change in focus.

Top tips

Create a service blueprint.

Consider expanding your customer journey map into a service blueprint that uncovers how different teams and practices feed into the user experience behind the scenes. This will allow you to identify where there is a mismatch between the user experience and organisation, so that you can address problems at their route cause. Our article about the benefits of service blueprinting contains more information.

Bring insights to life.

Allow stakeholders to immerse themselves in the data. For example, use imagery, pull out key soundbites from the research sessions, or offer shared access to the raw data so the team can dip into and follow along with the research.

Turn problems into opportunities.

Look to frameworks such as HMW (How might we?) or JTBD (Jobs to be done) to help you reframe your problem statements, while retaining focus on the context and goals of the user. Putting a positive focus on pain points will engage and empower your team to come up with innovative ideas.

Build a shared repository.

Ensure that everyone can access project information in real-time by using a single tool to document everything. Use clear categorisation so that you can quickly look back at previous stages. Some of the tools we use with our clients include:

- Miro
- Google Docs
- Trello
- Dropbox Paper

If you need help defining user problems, please reach out to our UX team via:

✉ enquiries@system-concepts.com

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Use our infographic on the ROI of user experience to build a business case for UX across your organisation.

System Concepts
Insights for success