

# Pretotyping and Lean: a match made in heaven

The world of innovation is filled with methodologies, frameworks and ideas around best practice. Within these ideas, the main question often boils down to: *How can we innovate as quickly, as efficiently and as adaptably as possible?* While some teams choose to venture down the road of Scrum, or attempt to follow in the footsteps of Amazon’s methodology, others choose the Lean method (when they all should really be choosing pretotyping, but we’ll get to that later).

The Lean method got its start in a little manufacturing company you’ve probably heard of once or twice: the Ford Motor Company. In an effort to eliminate waste and create efficiencies in every area possible, Henry Ford placed enormous importance on his employees and his company ‘working smarter, not harder’. Following Ford’s success, the Lean method has been and is still used by many companies, predominantly within the manufacturing industry; some descendents of Ford’s include Toyota, Intel and John Deere.

The basic principle of Lean is to make the best possible product, using as little time and resources as possible. Utilising a cyclical process made of three steps – ‘Build, Measure, Learn’ – the Lean method was revolutionary because, according to our founder Leslie Barry, it required teams to “stop postulating and just get out there and build a thing,” measure its success and learn from it going forward. In building the product quickly and efficiently, customer insights are able to be gathered relatively early, with the aim of minimizing even more waste in the product development cycle. This is a method that prioritizes experimentation over a prolonged planning process and celebrates continuous improvement.

Whilst Lean can be a wonderful tool for innovation (as its religiously loyal fans will tell you), it also demonstrates a gap that teams must leap over when choosing it as a strategy: how do we know this idea will even work?

\*Enter Pretotyping, stage left!\*

