

Needfinding

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“You Can Observe a Lot
Just by Watching”
—Yogi Berra

1. What do people do now?
2. What values and goals do people have?
3. How are these particular activities embedded in a larger ecology?

The Importance of Being Curious

Malcolm Gladwell on Journalism

from the introduction to What the Dog Saw



Additional Strategy: “Apprentice”

- Set up a partnership with the people to be observed
- Be taught the steps in the process
- Observe all of the practices
- Validate what you are observing with those observed as you go along

Tacit Knowledge: Deep Hanging Out

WHEN USER
HITS MACHINE

The Paradox of Observation

Process v. Practice

Walmart

Jack Whalen & the Call Center

“That’s Obvious!”

Look for workarounds & hacks

“Errors” are a Goldmine

PAY ATTENTION TO ARTIFACTS

What Are Good Questions?

“Is the daily update an important feature to you?”

“Does your employer or his representative resort to trickery in order to defraud you of your earnings?”

What would you like in a tool?

“Tell me a story about yourself”

Good Questions

(a little bit of)
Silence is Golden

Say you were designing...

- A lecture support system
- Who would you interview?

Finding People...

1. Set goals
2. Observe
3. Synthesize

Plans are useless,
planning is invaluable

Documenting Fieldwork

- Notes
- Camera
- Action

Before your first
“real” interview...

Interviewing tips

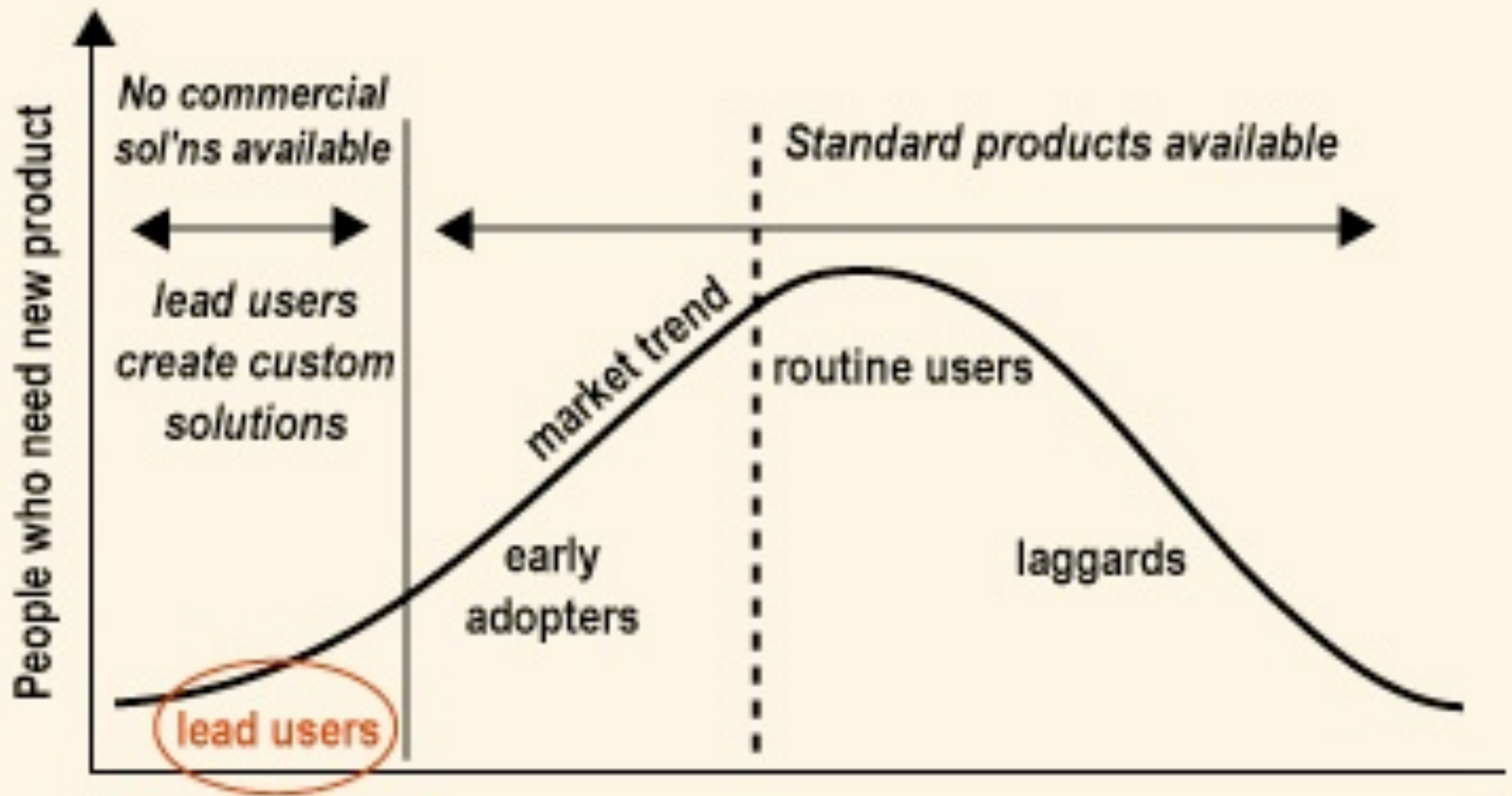
- Introduce yourself, explain your purpose
- The interview is about them, not you!
- Ask open, unbiased questions
- Ask the question and let them answer
- Follow up
 - Adjust your questions to their previous answers
 - Ask questions in language they (use) understand
 - Pick up on and ask for examples
- Be flexible

should you record
audio or video?

where to interview?

Additional Strategy: Lead Users





Source: von Hippel, Eric (1986) "Lead Users: A Source of Novel Product Concepts," Management Science 32, no. 7 (July):791-805.

Additional Strategy:

Diary Studies

Ultimately, it's the
design

Questions ?

Announcements

- Forums
- Application
- Friday Studio