

## Exercise 2.6\_Creating a Case Study for Your Portfolio

Task 2.6: Defining Product Solutions, as part of the Product Immersion Course, was an incredibly valuable exercise in my development as a product manager.

Building on the work from the previous task (2.5: Generating & Prioritizing Ideas), my team and I had developed ideation topics and crafted “How might we...?” questions. Through a collaborative brainstorming session, we decided to move forward with the concept of *“Don’t ram ads down users’ throats.”*



The Miro board on the left was created from our initial brainstorming session and the board on the right was created once we had recorded our ideas via dot voting.

The focus of Task 2.6 was to translate this concept into actionable functional requirements for integrating ads seamlessly into our user’s feed. These requirements were designed to be developer-ready, providing clear guidance for implementing the proposed features into the app.

The second part of the task involved consolidating our findings into a presentation, which we then delivered to the company’s founders via a video presentation lasting no more than 10 minutes. This exercise not only reinforced my ability to articulate complex ideas but also provided invaluable practice in presenting solutions effectively to stakeholders.

### Part 1

Part 1 of this task focused on writing 5 to 10 functional requirements, as the title suggests, drilling down and defining the solution in detail. While the previous task centered on *how* and *why*, this task shifted the focus to *what*. Building on the idea we selected—*“Don’t ram ads down people’s throats”*—from the brainstorming session in Task 2.5, we set out to define clear, actionable requirements that developers could use to implement the solution.

Interestingly, I didn’t anticipate that this idea would take center stage. I had initially imagined that the other two questions—centered on high-quality features or a smooth UI—would resonate more strongly. However, this exercise underscored the importance of collaboration and the value of diverse perspectives in the brainstorming process. It reinforced a key principle of product management: embracing teamwork to challenge assumptions and avoid falling victim to personal biases.

As a team, we used brainstorming once again—building on the successful approach from the previous task—to generate 10 functional requirements, along with follow-up

questions that needed to be addressed. This process highlighted the importance of clarity and precision in functional requirements, ensuring that every feature aligns with the user's needs and the overall product vision.

This task was a valuable learning experience, not only in defining actionable solutions but also in understanding how collaborative ideation directly informs the product development process. It reaffirmed the critical role of teamwork, structure, and clear communication in delivering meaningful product solutions.

<p><b>Task_PM_2.6_Part 1</b></p> <p><b>Functional Requirements for Integrated Ads in Users' Feed</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Ad Placement and Frequency Control</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall insert ads into the user's feed at controlled intervals, ensuring they do not overwhelm the user experience.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is the optimal frequency of ads per number of user-generated posts?</li><li>Should the frequency vary based on user engagement or time spent in the app?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>2. Targeted Ad Delivery</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall use user data (e.g. interests, demographics, previous interactions) to serve targeted ads relevant to individual users.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What user data will be used to determine ad relevance?</li><li>How will the app handle user privacy and data protection in compliance with regulations (e.g. GDPR)?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>3. Ad Appearance and Design Consistency</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall ensure that ads visually blend with the overall app design and resemble user-generated content to create a seamless experience.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What guidelines will be set for advertisers regarding ad design and content format?</li><li>How will the app differentiate between ads and user-generated content to maintain transparency?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>4. Ad Interaction and Engagement</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall provide interactive elements in ads (e.g. like, comment, share) similar to user-generated posts, enhancing engagement.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Will interactions with ads differ in functionality from user content interactions?</li><li>How will the app measure and report ad engagement metrics?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>5. Advertiser Collaboration and Content Guidelines</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall offer tools for advertisers to create or adapt ads that align with user-generated content in style and tone.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What level of creative control will advertisers have?</li><li>Will there be a review process to ensure ad quality and appropriateness?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>6. User Control and Feedback Mechanism</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall allow users to provide feedback on ads and control the types of ads they see (e.g. hide ads, opt out of certain categories).</li></ul></li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How will user feedback on ads be collected and utilised?</li><li>What options will be provided for users to customise their ad experience?</li></ul></li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>7. Performance Tracking and Analytics for Advertisers</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall provide analytics dashboards for advertisers to track ad performance, including impressions, clicks, and conversions.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What specific metrics will be made available to advertisers?</li><li>How frequently will performance data be updated and reported?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>8. A/B Testing for Ad Formats</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall support A/B testing for different ad formats and placements to optimise performance and user experience.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What criteria will determine the success of an ad variant?</li><li>How will the testing process be managed to ensure fair comparison?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>9. Monetisation and Payment Integration</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall include a payment gateway for advertisers to manage their budgets and payments for ad placements.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What payment methods will be supported?</li><li>How will billing cycles and invoicing be handled?</li></ul></li></ul></li><li><b>10. Compliance and Ethical Standards</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Requirement: The app shall adhere to legal and ethical standards regarding advertising, including disclosures and age-appropriate content.</li><li>Questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What measures will be taken to ensure compliance with advertising regulations?</li><li>How will the app manage and verify the age-appropriateness of ads?</li></ul></li></ul></li></ol>
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## Part 2

The second part of this task involved creating a slide deck to present the findings from the recent lessons and delivering it to the company founders. This exercise not only required synthesising a wide range of information but also honing presentation skills to effectively communicate our work and its impact.

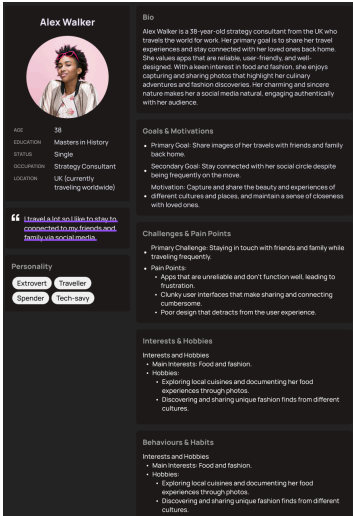
The slide deck was structured around the following key sections:

- 1. Research Conducted**
- 2. Research Findings**
- 3. Research Insights**
- 4. Ideas Generated**
- 5. Solutions Defined**

The presentation provided a comprehensive overview of our efforts. It showcased the brainstorming and ideation work that formed the backbone of this task, where collaboration as a team played a pivotal role. Additionally, it tied together earlier components of the achievement, such as codifying data and articulating information

effectively. These earlier exercises included the development of user personas and gathering actionable insights from data, which informed the solutions we proposed.

Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Too many ads - it takes away from the experience."</li><li>• "I like the filter selection, but I wish there were fewer ads."</li><li>• "Great app, but I would pay to get rid of the ads."</li><li>• "Good user experience and never came across a bug."</li><li>• "All my friends are on this app, so it would be hard to change—not that I would necessarily want to."</li><li>• "Good privacy and sharing permissions."</li><li>• "Reliable app. Good customer support if you need them. No complaints."</li><li>• "As a content creator, this app just doesn't have enough features—I can't fully express myself."</li><li>• "I like that they're keeping it simple."</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Love this app - I can add music snippets to my photos to really bring them to life."</li><li>• "It's a good app, and it's easy to upload photos, but some filters are really over the top and make the product feel childish."</li><li>• "I prefer apps with fewer filters because the content feels more authentic."</li><li>• "I like the music snippets, but I wish they didn't autoplay when I view a photo."</li><li>• "I keep trying to get my friends on this app, but they think the content is too branded."</li><li>• "Their latest release [because they do, like, 100 a month] locked everyone out of their accounts for 15 minutes—they solved the issue quickly, but it didn't feel great. I trust them less now."</li><li>• "I find some of the new options and buttons confusing—not quite sure what will happen when I tap on something."</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Since it became possible to upload videos, the entire app has gotten really slow - even viewing normal photos feels slow."</li><li>• "Good app. I've been using it for a while now. The new video feature is cool, but I think it's slowed the app down a bit."</li><li>• "Their big update was the video feature, and it's nice, but they didn't get it right - it takes way too long to upload the video. Sometimes it even takes too long for other people's videos to load before you can watch them."</li><li>• "A lot of my friends use this app to share/watch videos and use a different app for sharing photos."</li><li>• "They should fix their current issues before rolling out more features."</li></ul>



Alex Walker is a 28-year-old strategy consultant from the UK who travels the world for work. Her primary goal is to share her travel experiences and stay connected with her loved ones back home. She values apps that are reliable, user-friendly, and well-designed. With a keen interest in food and fashion, she enjoys capturing and sharing photos that highlight her culinary adventures and fashion discoveries. Her charming and sincere nature makes her a social media natural, engaging authentically with her audience.

**Goals & Motivations**

- Primary Goal: Share images of her travels with friends and family back home.
- Secondary Goal: Stay connected with her social circle despite being frequently on the move.
- Motivation: Capture and share the beauty and experiences of different cultures and places, and maintain a sense of closeness with loved ones.

**Challenges & Pain Points**

- Primary Challenge: Staying in touch with friends and family while traveling frequently.
- Pain Points:
  - Apps that are unreliable and don't function well, leading to frustration.
  - Clunky user interfaces that make sharing and connecting cumbersome.
  - Poor design that detracts from the user experience.

**Interests & Hobbies**

- Main Interests: Food and fashion.
- Hobbies:
  - Exploring local cuisines and documenting her food experiences through photos.
  - Discovering and sharing unique fashion finds from different cultures.

**Behaviours & Habits**

- Main Interests: Food and fashion.
- Hobbies:
  - Exploring local cuisines and documenting her food experiences through photos.
  - Discovering and sharing unique fashion finds from different cultures.

codifying data

User persona

This process reinforced the importance of presenting information in a clear, structured way, particularly when communicating with key stakeholders like company founders. It also underscored the value of connecting each step of the product development process, from research to ideation to solution definition, into a cohesive narrative.

Conclusion

This project was my second time working with what I would consider *my own team*, and it felt incredibly collaborative and rewarding. As the course progressed, the process became increasingly realistic. While we were provided with the initial application idea, all the research and subsequent development were entirely up to me and my team.

It offered an invaluable opportunity to gain hands-on experience that closely mirrored real-world scenarios, serving as excellent preparation for the future—and, hopefully, a role in product management.

Additionally, I became much more comfortable presenting my ideas. Although I was only speaking to the camera on my laptop, articulating research and ideas out loud was a critical step in building confidence. I recognised that this practice is essential for preparing to present in front of an audience.

In summary, this project was an incredibly fulfilling experience. I had the chance to explore new concepts and practices, conduct real-world research, and work collaboratively with my team. These skills and experiences are ones I'm eager to carry forward into my future career.