



Define, Design & Deliver Experiences that Users Love

(or at least, will pay you for or use without complaining)

Keith Instone

Rocket Innovators, September 18

Define, Design & Deliver Experiences that Users Love (or at least, will pay you for or use without complaining)



Innovation is hard. Startups are hard.

Among the challenges are creating a sound business model and finding a product/market fit.

The startup “playbooks” advise customer discovery & validation, testing assumptions with MVPs, and other steps, to help you define, design, and deliver innovative experiences for your users.

A good user experience is one of the critical factors in your startup’s success.



User Experience For Innovators
Rocket Innovators discussion Hosted by Jordan Valdiviez
Friday, September 4 2020

Who is here today? Select all that apply to you.



Entrepreneur

Designer

Engineer

Manager

Executive

Student

Educator

Researcher

Other

Startup

Agency, freelance

Small & medium business

Corporation

Public sector

Other

Operator

Inventor

Innovator

Maker

Creative

Troublemaker

Solver

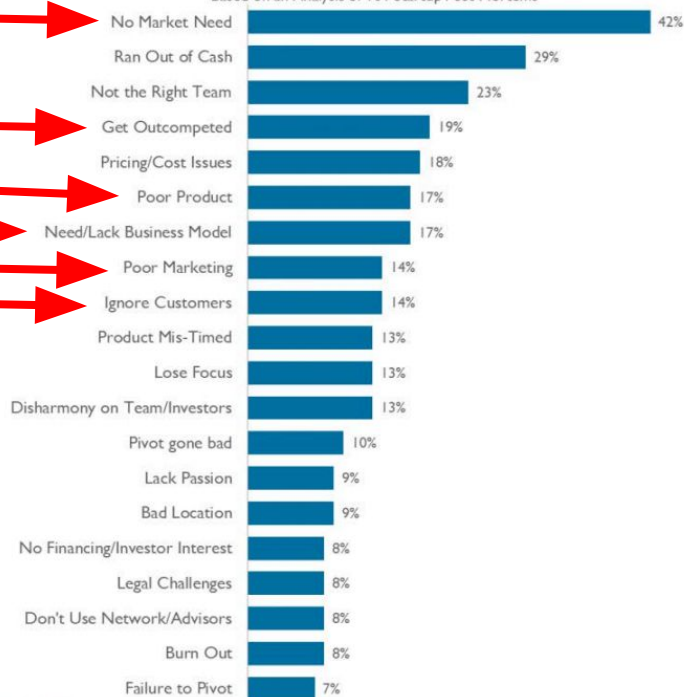
Thinker

Startups are hard



Top 20 Reasons Startups Fail

Based on an Analysis of 101 Startup Post-Mortems



David Skok's common failure points:

Business model: They assume that because they will build an interesting web site, product, or service, that customers will beat a path to their door.

Product: A team didn't do the work to get out and validate their ideas with customers before, and during, development.



Marshmallow Challenge

Build the Tallest Freestanding Structure



- Teams of Four People
- Eighteen Minutes
- Using the Following Ingredients



20 sticks of spaghetti

+



one yard tape

+



one yard string

+



one marshmallow



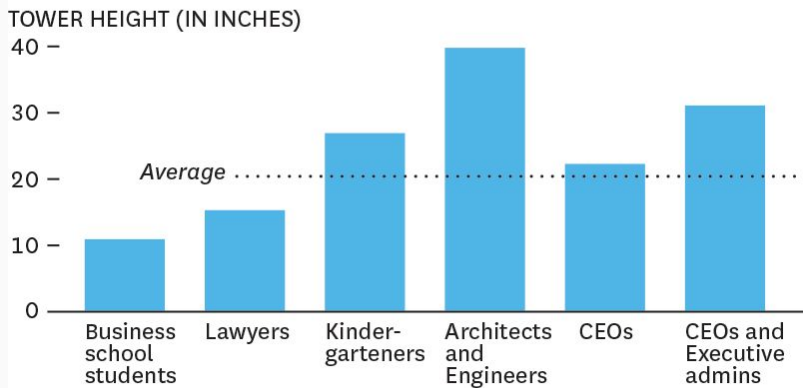
Innovation is hard



Kindergarteners generally outperform new MBAs on the marshmallow challenge

ARE YOU MORE CREATIVE THAN A FIVE YEAR OLD?

How high can you build a tower out of spaghetti and scotch tape that can hold up a single marshmallow? You've got 18 minutes. Here's how well various teams of children and adults did.



SOURCE TOM WUJEC, TED APRIL 2010

HBR.ORG

Innovative organizations exhibit five key behaviors (according to Scott D. Anthony & others):

1. Assume there is a better way
2. Understanding customers' stated and unstated needs and desires
3. Collaborate across and beyond the organization
4. Experimentation, rapid iteration, and frequent failure
5. Take considered risks, voice dissenting opinions, and seek needed resources



- Understanding human behavior & needs in context
 - Behavior of customers & employees (& stakeholders, & ...)
- Focusing on users' experiences all along the way
 - Defining - Designing - Delivering
 - Imagining - Incubating - Demonstrating - Market entry - Growth & sustainability

In the “startup playbooks”, this is manifested as concepts like:

- Customer discovery & validation
- MVPs, prototypes & iteration
- Product design
- Lean user experience



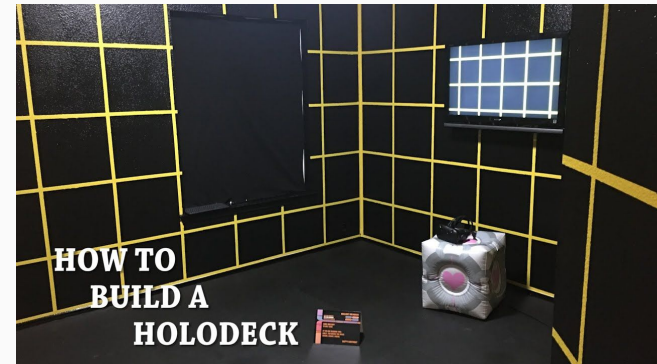
A user experience is an impression someone gets when interacting with a system

- > **Impression:** perceptions, feelings, attitudes, preferences, responses, behaviors, accomplishments
- > **Someone:** customer, employee, citizen, patient, learner
- > **Interacting:** goals, tasks, input, output, feedback
- > **System:** products, services, spaces, brands, organizations

Example contexts for user experiences

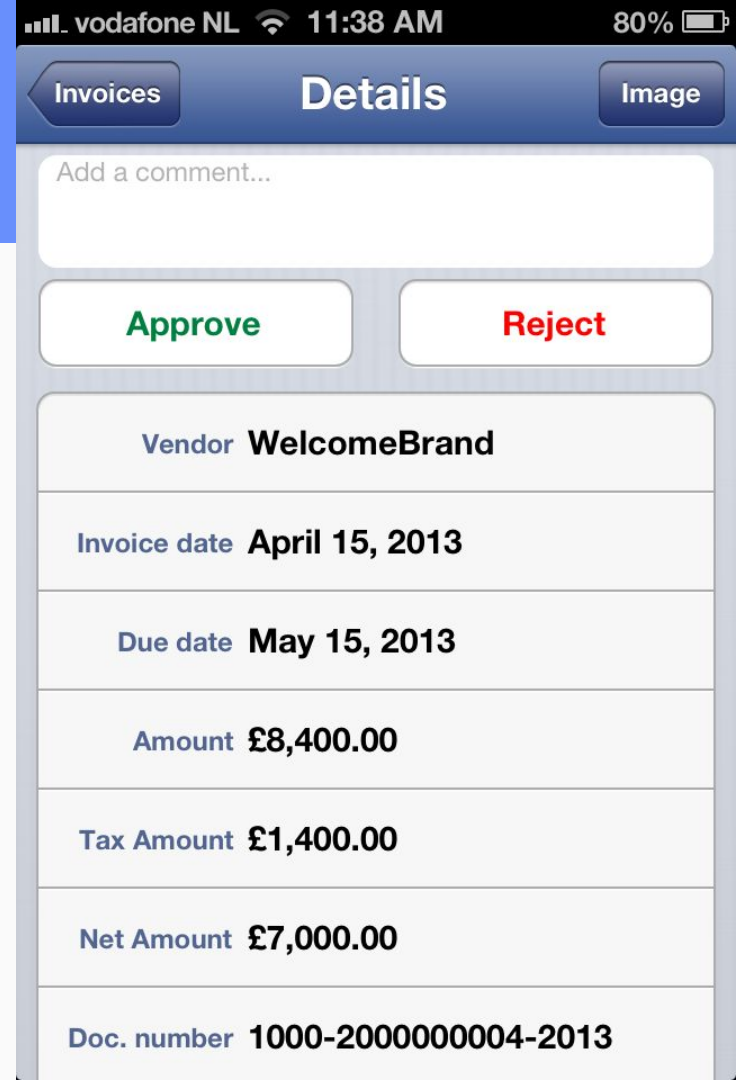


- Websites & Mobile apps
- Embedded software & Internet of Things
- E-commerce (customers) & Enterprise software (employees)
- B2C & B2B
- Government & Healthcare
- Education & Entertainment
- Business & Social



A common story of “innovation”

- > Fortune 100 > CIO > Innovation > Mobile App Development team
 - Big goal: Employee “app store” as good as Apple/Google consumer apps
 - User Experience consultants to map out a long-term strategy
- > Immediate business problem: “Approving invoices takes too long”
 - Solution: Mobile app (of course)
 - Before we start coding the app, we better talk with our users...



User research with invoice approvers re: “mobile app to speed things up”



- > “I live in **email.**”
- > “I have lots of strategic challenges and approving invoices is not one of them. **I will get to it when I get to it.**”
- > “Invoices take so long to approve because I don’t have **all the information I need in one place.**”
- > “We often meet just to approve the paperwork. **Eliminate useless meetings!**”
- > “We have **too many invoicing systems** already. Don’t add yet another app to lose track of.”
- > “If you made an app, I might only check it once a week, and I’d probably **need someone to remind me** to use it.”

Solution, in this case: *no mobile app*



- Create a new email template
- Adjust business processes to compile 6 key pieces of data from 3 different back-end systems
- Upgrade the email platform to pull in the key data from other systems and enable 3 embedded buttons: Approve, Reject, Questions

Lessons:

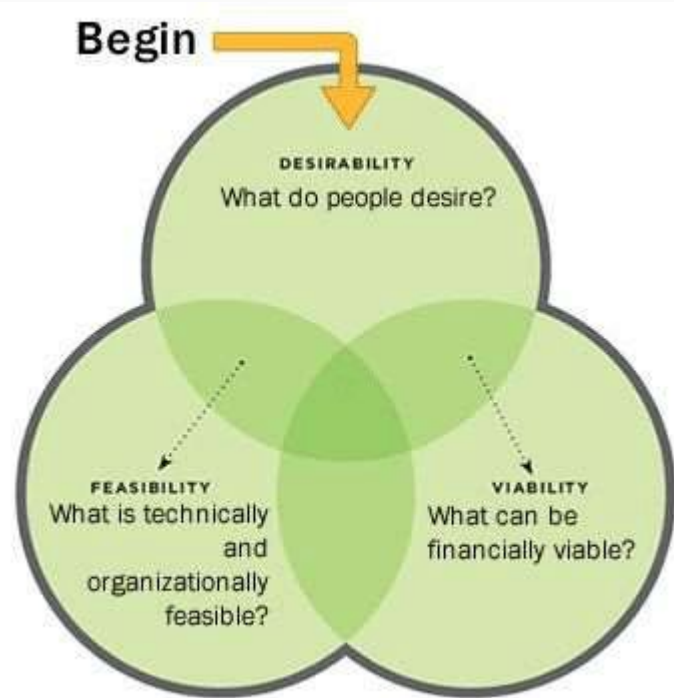
- The solution was a different (simpler) technology than anticipated
- Leveraged existing human behavior (e.g., “people are lazy”) & “culture”
- Addressed deeper pain points: too many meetings & missing information
- If you are an “invoice app startup”, your competition may be email

Typical startup focus on user experience

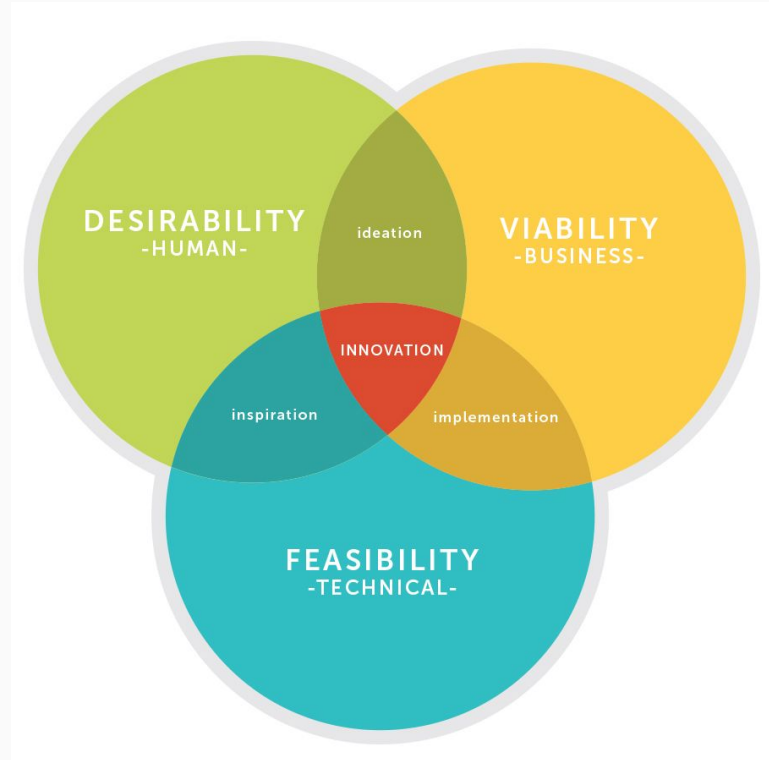


1. Screens need to be designed. ASAP. Coders are waiting!
2. Wait! Who are the users (e.g., the same as the customers)? What are their goals? What tasks are they trying to perform? What “jobs” are to be done?
3. Wait! What are your objectives? What do you want to learn with the MVP? What is the Minimum Viable *Experience* from your users’ perspectives?
4. Wait! What assumptions about human behavior are you making in your business model? Will people really change their habits just to use your product?

How innovation works better



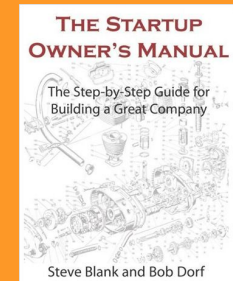
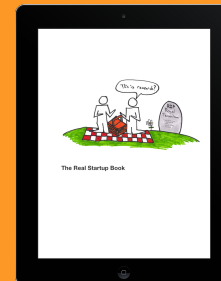
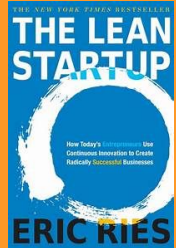
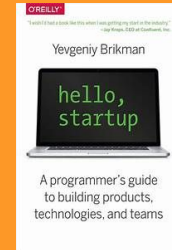
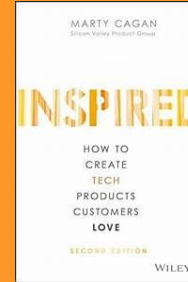
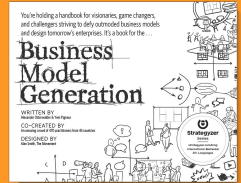
Adapted from IDEO Human Centered Design Toolkit



Which of these “Startup Playbooks” are you familiar with?



- Business Model Generation (Osterwalder)
- Inspired (Cagan)
- Hello, Startup (Brikman)
- Lean Startup (Ries)
- Real Startup Book (Kromatic)
- Startup Owner’s Manual (Blank)
- None



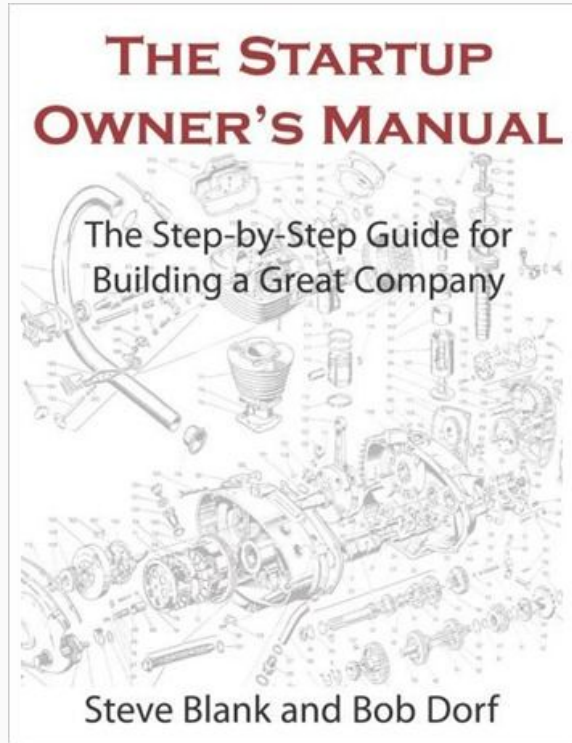
How are you defining, designing & delivering user experiences already?



Depending on what startup “playbook” you are going by (if any), you are already doing things to help create innovative experiences for users.

- > The Startup Owner’s Manual
- > Business Model Generation
- > Inspired
- > The Real Startup Book
- > Hello, Startup
- > The Lean Startup (series)

The Startup Owner's Manual (I-Corps, Startup Weekends)

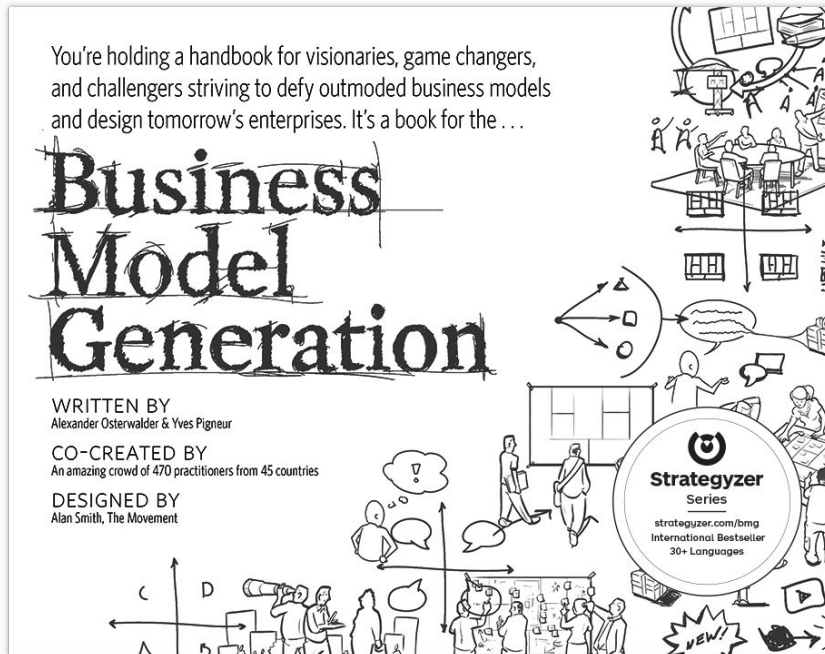


- > Customer Discovery: Get Out of the Building
- > Customer Validation: Usability Tests

“Rule No. 6: **Design Experiments and Test to Validate Your Hypotheses**....To turn your hypotheses into facts, founders need to get out of the building and *test* them in front of customers.”

“Get the *customers* to talk, *not you*.”

Business Model Generation

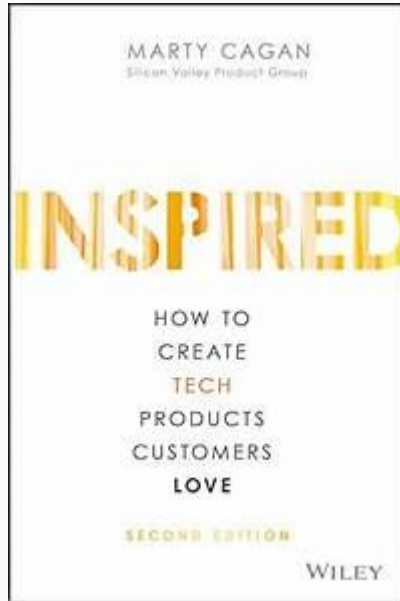


Chapter 3, Design: the tools and attitudes of the design profession are prerequisites for success in the business model generation

- > Customer Insights
- > Ideation
- > Visual Thinking
- > Prototyping
- > Storytelling
- > Scenarios

“**Bait & Hook Pattern:** Customers are attracted by the instant gratification of a cheap or free initial product or service.”

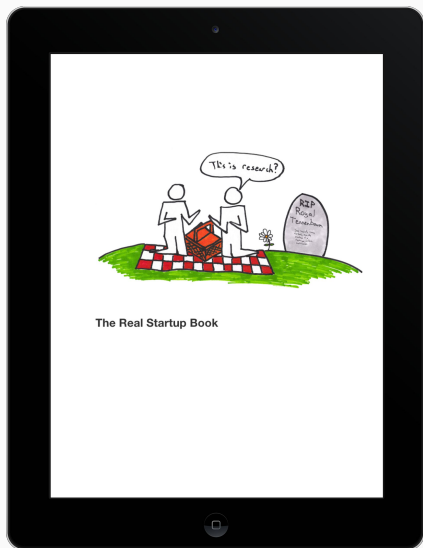
Inspired (for “Product people”)



- > Chapter 11 The Product Designer
- > Chapter 14 The Supporting Roles
- > Chapter 41 Customer Interviews
- > Chapter 47 User Prototype Technique
- > Chapter 50 Testing Usability

“It’s amazing to me how many companies I encounter that just don’t understand why having strong and talented **designers** is so important. They understand the need for **engineers**, but often will **waste significant time and money** because they do not understand the need for design.”

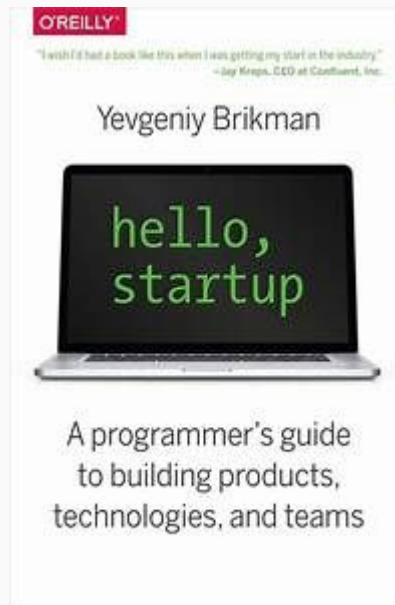
Other playbooks



The Real Startup Book: Think of this e-book as a toolbox

- > Generative Market Research: Contextual Inquiry
- > Generative Product Research: Competitor Usability Testing
- > Evaluative Product Experiment: Usability Testing

“**The Wizard of Oz (WOZ) test** involves one or more individuals simulating fully functioning product features without the use of technology.”

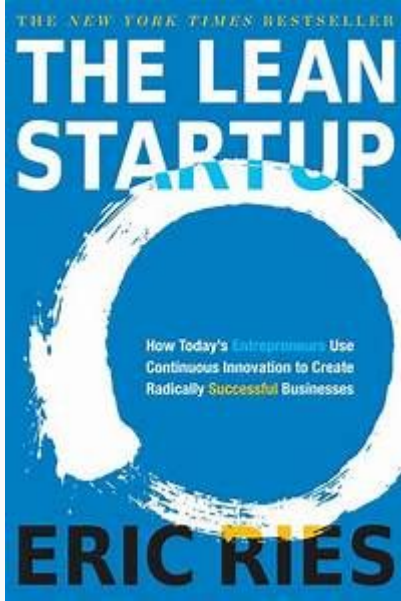


Hello, Startup

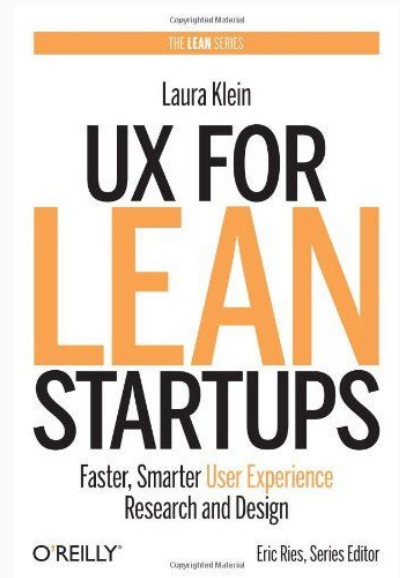
- > Chapter 2: Startup Ideas
- > Chapter 3: Product Design

The Iceberg Secret: “When they see a user interface that looks crappy, they assume everything about the product is crappy.”

The Lean Startup (series)



- > Chapter 3: Learn What Your Users Want
- > Chapter 6: Test with the Minimum Viable Product



“I’m just going to give you some tools to help you get out of the building, design a simple product, and validate all your assumptions.” (Laura Klein)



- > Impression someone gets when interacting with a system
- > Understanding human behavior & needs in context
- > Focusing on users' experiences all along the way
- > Customer discovery & validation
- > MVP(E)s, prototypes & iteration
- > Product design
- > Lean user experience

Q&A: Common questions



- Which customer segment should we focus on first?
- Can you help me make a better pitch to investors?
- I love talking to people about my idea: how hard can it be to get feedback?
- What if we design for users but the customer (CIO) won't pay for it?
- Tell us if our MVP is ready to launch.
- Why is our adoption rate so low?
- We are a brick & mortar store: why do we care?
- Should we put the buttons on the top or the bottom of the screen?

How does the COVID-19 pandemic change things?

What else?

Options for you



- > Follow the steps in your favorite “Startup Playbook”
 - I hope I helped you see the importance of design and user experience as you proceed on your journey.
- > Get some advice
 - I am happy to listen and learn about your situation. I’ll give you my view. You are on your own.
- > Mentor
 - I can be there at key points of your journey, like pivots, planning interviews, evaluating MVPs.
- > Helping hand
 - We can do things like customer validation together.
- > Outsource it
 - Not recommended! But I can help you find people with the needed skills for your team. Or a partner.

No idea how to start or which of the above steps makes sense? Let’s talk.

dexterity

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More information

- > [CB Insights The Top 20 Reasons Startups Fail](#)
- > [David Skok's 5 Reasons Startups Fail](#)
- > [Breaking Down the Barriers to Innovation](#)
- > [Innovation Leadership Lessons from the Marshmallow Challenge](#)
- > [IDEO Human-Centered Design Toolkit](#)
- > [A Venn Diagram for Innovation](#)
- > [User Experience for Economic Success and Social Impact](#)
- > [Growth+Sales: The New Era of Enterprise Go-to-Market](#)
- > [Build Your User Base with These Human Behavior Hacks](#)

Playbooks

- [The Startup Owner's Manual](#)
- [Business Model Generation](#)
- [Inspired](#)
- [The Real Startup Book](#)
- [Hello, Startup](#)
- [The Lean Startup: series](#), esp. [UX for Lean Startups](#)

Other Books (by Rosenfeld Media)

- [Validating Product Ideas Through Lean User Research](#)
- [Interviewing Users: How to Uncover Compelling Insights](#)
- [Why We Fail](#)