

Ideation

Kick-Off-Sprint - Phase 2

To conduct the ideation session correctly in practice, it is recommended to carry out the **different methods below** with the project team and all stakeholders. The ideation part consists of **5 modules**, all of which contain tasks that must be performed sequentially in the group.



I. Lightning Demos

The goal of this method is **to open the scope**. During the lightning demos the client should take other products in their own company or from completely different areas into considerations. The participants are encouraged to think about existing solutions and how they can be adapted to their own problem area. **The aim is to combine and improve existing ideas**. The following steps will help with the task:

1. Make a List

In the next 10-15 minutes, the participants create a list of innovative digital products. They should explicitly look at other different areas and leave out the competition. It is not about copying the competition. Ideally, participants should take what they learn about machine learning into account when selecting products. Although smartphones and laptops are usually strictly avoided during any ideation session, an exception can be made in this assignment. This time is used for research. The goal of the assignment is to introduce them to as many different innovative existing products, services, or ideas as possible. Detailed information can be omitted.

2. Narrow Down

The second step is to narrow down the created list and focus on two to three innovative products, services or ideas. The participants have ten minutes to gather more detailed information about it.

3. Three-Minutes Demos

In this step, all participants are given three minutes to present their favorite product, service or idea to the other participants. The presentation can be supported with visual aids, but does not have to be. During the presentations, the audience notes down exciting information and interesting facts that they like.

II. Data Brainstorming

The aim of the second part of the ideation is to **familiarize the participants with possible data sources and the respective data value**. This should give participants a **better idea of the benefits** that data can bring in products and services. It is important to know how data can be generated and what kind of data already exists.

1. Listing of Available Data

In the first three minutes, everyone thinks for themselves about what data or data sources already exist in their company. Even though some stakeholders may not have much knowledge in this technical area and are not familiar with it, assumptions can be made. Once the three minutes are up. In the group, a list of data and their sources is made for eight to ten minutes.

2. Benefit of The Data

For the next task, each participant takes two to three data sets and thinks about the following questions:

- What benefits and advantages can the data bring to the end user?
- Do we need more data for this? If so, what is it?

The insights from the Lightning Demos can help participants to think outside the box. Further, there should not be too much thinking about a possible end product yet. The focus is on the data and its benefits.

Here is an example:

The train company can see from the travel data how many passengers travel which route. With the help of this data, the company can put more or fewer trains into service and make the journey more comfortable for the passengers by providing more seats. If the train company has even more accurate data not only on the route, but also on the busy travel times, the original problem: poor user experience during rush hours, can be counteracted.

3. Presenting The Results

Just like at the end of the first ideation part, the results and findings are presented to the group within a few minutes.

III. Doodle Rough Solutions

The third module attempts **to link the data to the problem area**. The participants have 20 to 30 minutes to **sketch out rough ideas for solving the problem**. The notes taken beforehand are very valuable in this process. Ideas and insights from the previous presentations can be taken as inspiration. The solution ideas can be drawings, doodles, example headings, diagrams or stick figures. Everyone can choose the method themselves. **Unlike the first two modules, the results are not shared with the group**. At the end of this module, favorite ideas are circled.

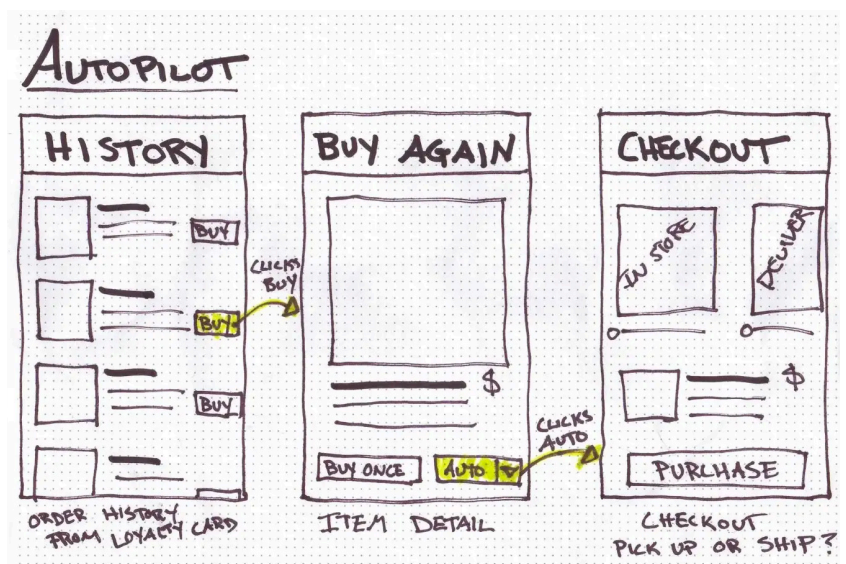
IV. Crazy 8s

Crazy 8s is a fast design thinking method. For understanding the „Crazy“ in the exercise name **does not refer to the generation of crazy ideas, but to the pace**. Because once all participants have divided a sheet of paper into eight sections, the team is given **sixty seconds per section to create eight thumbnail sketches of a possible solution idea**. It is important to be quick and messy. This exercise works best when participants sketch **several variations of the same idea**. Therefore, each participant should decide on a favorite idea before the exercise. This exercise forces participants to **go beyond their first reasonable solutions and improve them or at least find alternatives**. The ideas that emerge from the Crazy 8s are not shared with the team.

V. Solution Sketch

The goal of the last module is for each participant to **elaborate their best idea in detail**. Everyone will have 30 minutes to outline a three-panel storyboard. The storyboard should represent what the end user sees when they interact with each product solution.

Since the results will be made available to everyone at the end for review and evaluation, the storyboards, while not perfect, **must be self-explanatory**. Words, as well as a catchy and memorable title, can therefore be very valuable. In order to obtain a subjective evaluation from all participants after ideation, it is advisable to **maintain anonymity**.



At the end of ideation, some exciting solution ideas should have emerged. The next section is about evaluating and prioritizing the results and selecting together a possible solution approach.

Other sources

- Knapp, J., Zeratsky, J. and Kowitz, B. (2016). *Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days*. Simon & Schuster.
- Image Source: <https://gulbuke.medium.com/phase-3-sketch-65e60ea48f21>