

Market-Driven Creativity

Worksheet #3: Designing Products and Services that Solve a Problem

Instead of looking at your existing products and figuring out what problems they solve, market driven creativity is about identifying a problem and using your creative vision to solve it. When you create products and services that solve a problem for your customers in a way that utilizes your create voice, you create products that practically market themselves.

Use this worksheet to help you through the process of creating products and services that meet your customers' needs.

Step 1. Identify the problem.

1.) What problems have you overcome on your own?

2.) What problems do novices in your field have?

3.) What problems do your peers have?

4.) What questions pop up via customer service?

Choose ONE of these problems to work with.

Example: 52 Weeks of Blogging Your Passion - The problem Tara addressed with this book is that people have a hard time coming up with ideas for blogging. It was the number one question she was asked by peers & novices, alike. It came up at workshops and in casual conversation.

Step 2. Identify who suffers from this problem. Be as specific as possible. (and how large is that group)?

1.) Are they beginners? Amateurs? Professionals?

2.) Is it a problem they see for themselves or a problem that others see for them?

3.) What else in their lives contributes to this problem?

4.) What other products do they buy?

5.) Do they prefer to do things for themselves or pay others to do things for them?

6.) Are they a lot like you but not quite as clever?

Example: Wide Sarcasm Sea - Nicole knew there were plenty of people out there just like her who wanted greeting cards that weren't all sappy. She created this brand of sarcastic cards to market to people who shared her sensibilities - but just weren't quite as clever!

Step 3. Identify what products or services already exist to try to solve this problem.

Look at your competition - or potential competition. Your idea is not wholly unique, we guarantee it. Consider how what's come before can help inform the decisions you make about your own product.

Even if these products aren't exactly what you're thinking of (hint: they shouldn't be!), consider how related products could make your product stand out.

List 5 competitor's products here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Step 4. Why aren't these other products successful in solving this problem?

If the problem still exists, there are reasons these products aren't working. Dissect your experience and others experiences with these products to find their faults or shortcomings. It's not nasty - it's about finding out what will work better.

Use the 5 products you listed above.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Example: Paloma's Nest - People wanted wedding keepsakes to give brides & grooms. Tons of wedding keepsake products are on the market - but none really conveyed both a loving sentiment & a modern craft aesthetic. Paloma's Nest utilized these two shortcomings to create a product that modern couples love to give & receive.

Step 5. How does your creative vision make you suited to solve this problem?

Time to make it your own. Consider the problem you selected, the people who have this problem, and the shortcomings of current market offerings. Where do YOU fit in?

Infusing your unique perspective to a product is one of the best ways to make it “sticky.”

List what talents, expertise, and perspective you bring to the table that can make your product great!

Step 6. Brainstorm products or services that help solve this problem.

Put it all together. Use your unique perspective, common problem, audience, and competitor shortcomings to brainstorm ideas for your product.

When brainstorming, remember that more ideas are better. Crazy ideas are better. Don't judge - just THINK. Revisit your brainstorm after a day or two and rework ideas you still think have merit.