The power of design thinking

Finding the optimal solution to your biggest business challenges with design thinking.

cognition

Design thinking

Design thinking is a solutions-based approach to addressing big problems. It is an iterative process that encourages businesses to focus on customers and their problems when designing new products and services. Due to its emphasis on group thinking, understanding users, challenging assumptions and redefining problems, design thinking often helps businesses identify strategies and solutions that might not be instantly apparent.

Our approach to design thinking

At Cognition, we specialise in applying design thinking to solve problems through technology and digital transformation. We've applied our design thinking expertise to over 70 engagements and have helped a broad range of businesses from different industries accelerate their digital transformation journey.

Our methodology draws on design thinking, customer experience design and agile methods. It is a circular and iterative processes to allow for the continual refinement and technological advances that are at the core of digital transformation.
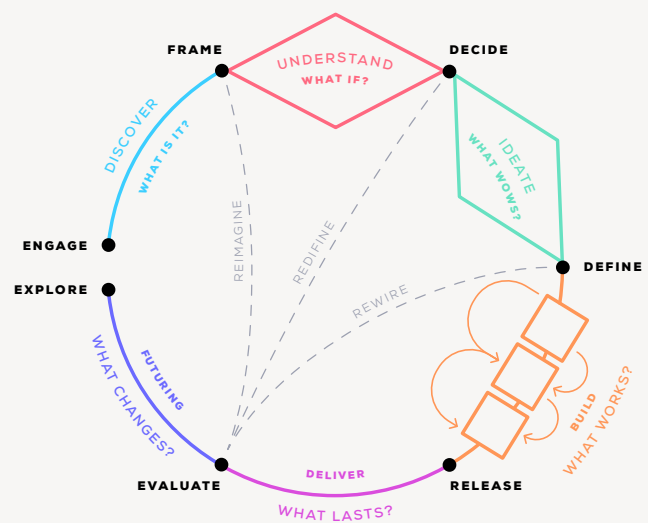
The problems we solve with design thinking

Our team of specialists and experts has applied our design thinking methodology and framework to help a diverse range of businesses address some of their most critical challenges, including:

- How should we go about implementing our digital strategy? Where do we start?

- How can we modernise our ageing infrastructure and applications – without disrupting the existing business?

- How can we differentiate our products and services, outperform our competition or create new ways of doing things without failing?

- How can we streamline our business to reduce cost and improve operational performance to be more price competitive and more resilient to threats of new market entrants?

Our design thinking workshops are designed to help businesses address challenges like these and other business-critical problems.

Components of our design thinking workshops

Every workshop we run is tailored to the individual customer and their problems and goals. However, all of them are based on our proven methodology, which has five phases that span the whole digital transformation lifecycle. In total, we have over 60 design thinking methods and activities at our disposal to tailor a workshop to almost any business problem or design challenge.

Five common methods from our design thinking workshops

Activity	Description	Output
Context Canvas	Expands the scope of considerations that may impact a system beyond expected or assumed boundaries	• Creates a collective point of view and understanding of broader system • Considers possible futures/impacts • Informs prioritisation, decision making & evaluation criteria
Empathy Map	Synthesises observations by mapping a user's thoughts, emotions, words and actions	• Uncover and gain a deeper understanding of user behaviours, drivers, patterns and needs • Increased empathy and cohesion amongst stakeholders
Customer Journey Map	Understanding of user's goals, motivations, pain points, overall character, context, progression, devices, functionality and emotion	• Visualisation of user interactions • Provides a holistic perspective on the interactions, dependences and opportunities within an integrated system
Value Chain Analysis	Borrowing a tool from business strategy, doing a value chain analysis while maintaining a growth mindset tracks the findings from the Pilot with the customer journey and service map.	• Identifies most valuable activities to save time, cost, safety & environment and sell more • Explores opportunities for differentiation • Includes and considers input from additional key partners
Importance/ Difficulty Matrix	A prioritisation matrix that orients importance and difficulty to facilitate the prioritisation of features through tradeoffs and maximising relative value	• Prioritises items quickly based on value • Resolves different opinions • Helps develop a plan of action for strategic optimisation and new business models

The benefits of having Cognition involved

Design thinking is a proven process that has been studied and applied by many organisations and experts. There are numerous resources available that teach leaders and teams how to run design thinking projects. However, while you might be able to apply design thinking on your own, there are several critical benefits of having an expert like Cognition involved.

Experience

We have worked on over 70 design thinking projects with a wide range of businesses.

A Fresh Perspective

We are not burdened with legacy knowledge about your business. We bring a fresh perspective, can transfer ideas from other industries and might see things you've missed.

Expert Skills

We bring a team of experts with skills and experiences in different areas to the table.

Accountability

We ensure you work through the process in an efficient and meaningful way without cutting corners.

Design thinking in action

Here are two examples of how we have helped innovative businesses solve big problems through design thinking.

Automotive

A large automotive company, specialising in leasing and financing solutions for businesses, came to us with a very specific problem; How can we make the process of calculating fringe benefits tax (FBT) for our fleet of over 40,000 vehicles more efficient?

The business wanted to move away from a manual, paper-based system of recording mileage to a more efficient digital solution. Through our design thinking process, we helped them not only identify a mobile app as the best solution but also helped define details of the solution and implementation – both critical to the success of the initiative.

As a result, the business now not only has a simple way of tracking mileage and calculating FBT, but has also been able to realise some additional unintended benefits such as the ability to compare fuel usage and service needs of different vehicles and drivers, as well as tracking driver performance, such as percentage of time drivers are exceeding the speed limit. While those insights did not add direct value to their own business, working through the design thinking process highlighted that they would potentially be valuable to their customers, giving them a competitive edge and increasing customer loyalty.

Healthcare

An Australian healthcare provider with over 500,000 members wanted a better way to engage with their members and, in particular, make it easier to make appointments and then be reminded before and on the day, to reduce the high no-show rate.

A related overseas organisation in a similar market had developed a mobile app solution to this problem, so the healthcare provider's initial suggestion was to simply recreate what they had done. However, working through the design thinking process with Cognition, they realised that there were some unique differences between the overseas market and Australia.

Through the process, we were able to identify the specific local needs and obstacles, and design a solution that would resonate more strongly with their members. The resulting solution, a customer-facing mobile app, was a big success - much more so than a direct copy of the overseas organisation's app would have likely been.

What business problem do you need to solve?

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reimagine. redefine. rewire.