

DESIGN SCENARIOS

What is it?

Design scenarios are essentially hypothetical stories, created with sufficient detail to meaningfully explore a particular aspect of a service offering.

How is it made?

Design scenarios can be presented using plain text, storyboards, or even videos. Research data is used to construct a plausible situation around which the scenario can be based. In order to lend added authenticity, personas can be incorporated within the scenario in order to orientate the situation being examined around a clearly defined character. Precisely what this situation is depends on the objective of the scenario.

229

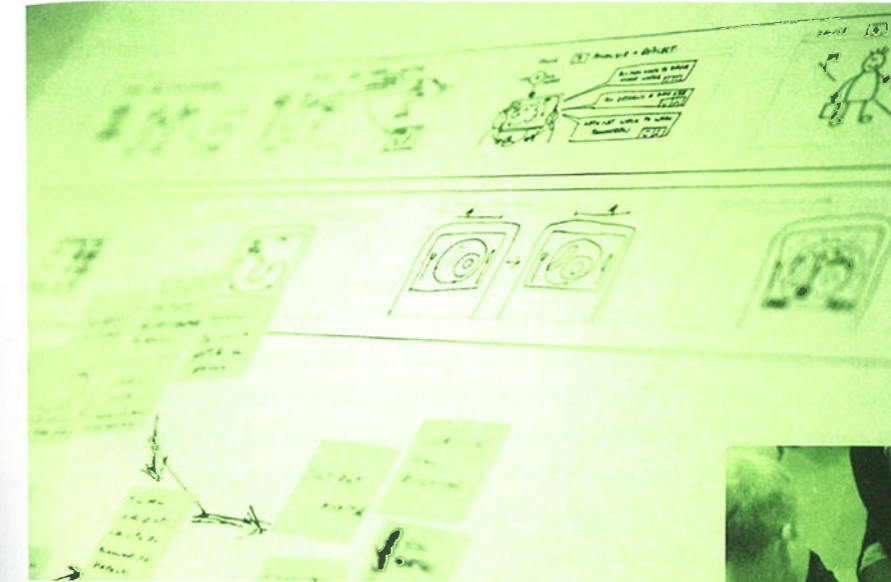
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258

Why is it used?

Design scenarios can be used in almost any stage of a service design project. Problematic areas of a current service offering might be developed into scenarios in order to brainstorm solutions; prototype scenarios examine potential problems new service ideas might encounter; "negative" scenarios ask "How could things be made worse?" in order to provoke discussion on what's actually working well. All of these scenarios are able to help review, analyse, and understand the driving factors that ultimately define a service experience. Creating them in a group setting meanwhile encourages knowledge exchange between the various stakeholders involved.

273



Scenarios make concepts and prototypes accessible and engaging by placing them in an easily relatable context. This helps facilitate discussions about how people will experience new services in the future.



STORYBOARDS

What is it?

A storyboard is a series of drawings or pictures that visualise a particular sequence of events. This might include a common situation where a service is used, or the hypothetical implementation of a new service prototype.

How is it made?

245

Storyboards can be constructed in a number of different ways. The most common is the comic-strip format, in which a designer will create a series of illustrations that tell the story of the situation being examined. The designer will try and include as many contextual details as possible here, so that anyone viewing it will be able to quickly grasp what it is going on. The aim of the storyboard is to gain insights into the user experience being depicted. Either real-life or imaginary scenarios can be used, with the former occasionally being documented in photographs as opposed to illustrations.

273

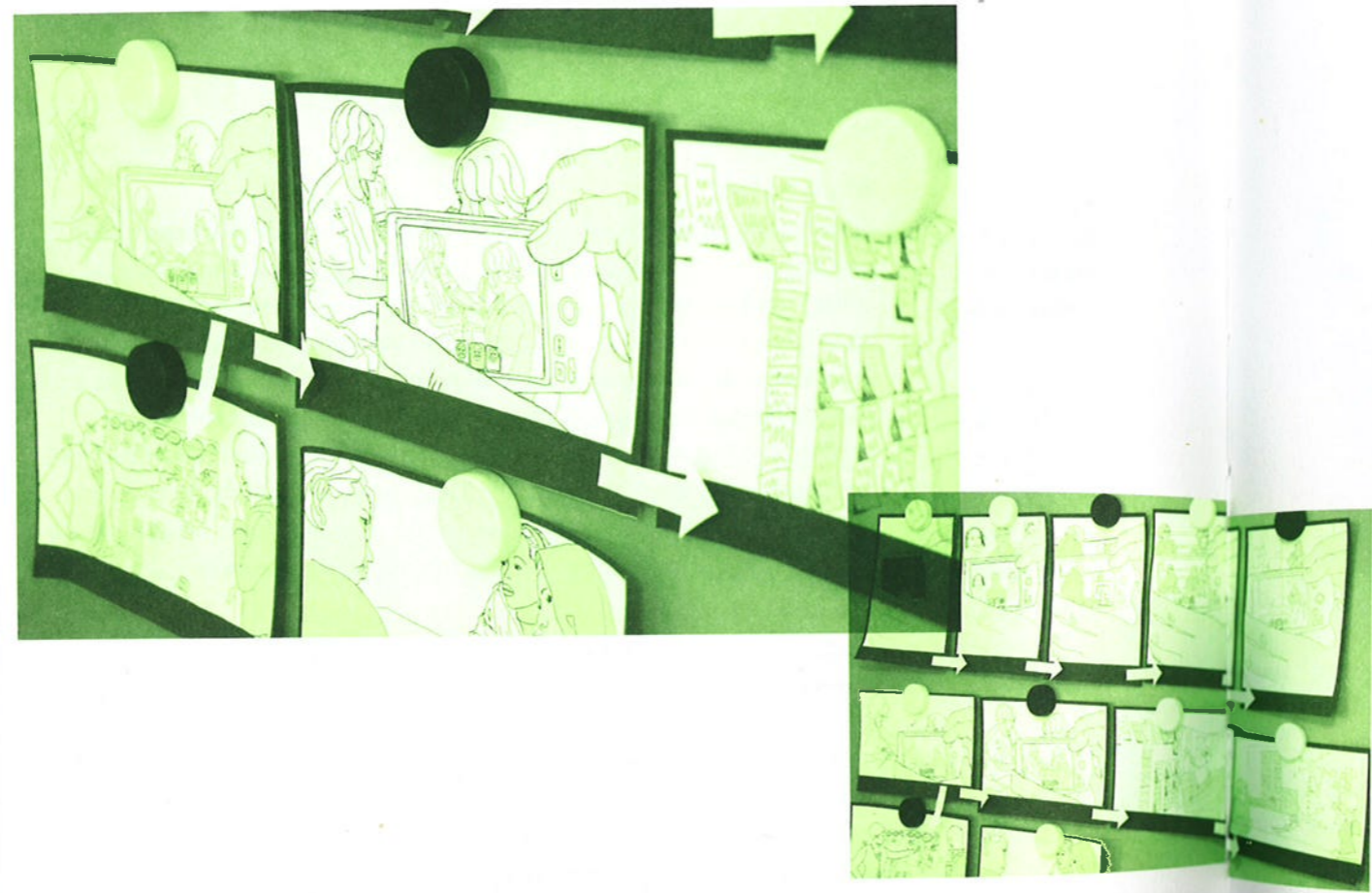
274

When used in a collaborative or workshop setting, the storyboard should be able to convey the key aspects of a service or prototype in as straightforward a manner as possible. This often means presenting a short illustrated scenario in which the service is being used, which might incorporate several contrasting outcomes. This can then be presented to a group of designers or potential customers, with the aim of provoking a discussion about what seems to work and what doesn't.

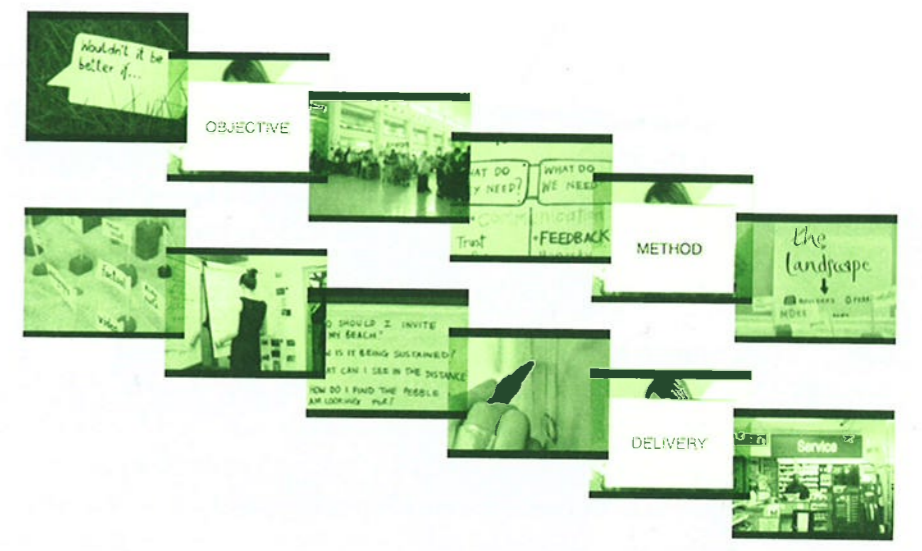
Why is it used?

Storyboards do exactly what the title implies – they allow stories about user experiences to be brought into the design process. The kinds of stories used are those that provide a perspective on a service or prototype – they're a way to encapsulate the experiences of people using the service. By putting a service situation in its proper context – even if it's still a prototype that doesn't physically exist yet – storyboards can be used to provoke meaningful analysis, sparking discussions about potential problems and areas of opportunity. The process of creating them meanwhile forces designers into the shoes of the people using a service, which again helps to bring that perspective into the design process.

EXAMPLE →



Storyboards visualised as comic-strips are a good way of communicating and reviewing future customer journeys. Organising them on separate cards makes it easy to adapt the story when new insights arise.



Storyboards should be easy enough for anyone to follow. They can be used to quickly introduce a new concept, and provoke discussions without the need for lengthy introductions.



DESKTOP WALKTHROUGH

What is it?

A Desktop Walkthrough is a small-scale 3-D model of a service environment. Employing simple props like Lego figures lets designers bring a situation to life, acting out common scenarios and helping develop prototypes.

How is it made?

The models are usually kept fairly simple, and developed out of insights into the service environment. Simple Lego buildings with labels attached can be used to build the “set”, whilst the characters inserted can be based on staff and customer personas. Common situations can then be acted out by moving the characters around the model and simulating the interactions they may have.

Why is it used?

Desktop walkthroughs allow an iterative analysis of the situations depicted. The same scene can be acted out multiple times, and in several locations, with new ideas and refinements constantly being introduced to the simulation. Prototypes can also be tested using this method, as they're “brought to life” in a highly engaging manner. Walkthrough models provide a common language in which various people can assess and co-develop a prototype, or analyse and restructure a problematic touchpoint.



Desktop walkthroughs can take many different forms. The main aim is to have a tangible setup that enables people to exchange expectations on future usages. The more personal the setup is, the more lively discussions it will provoke.

CREATE & REFLECT

TESTING SERVICE CONCEPTS WITH LIFE-SIZE PROTOTYPES



SERVICE PROTOTYPES



What is it?

A service prototype is a simulation of a service experience. These simulations can range from being informal “roleplay” style conversations, to more detailed full scale recreations involving active user-participation, props, and physical touchpoints.

How is it made?

231

Usually some form of mock-up of the service system will be created. The prototype can vary greatly in terms of tone and complexity, but the common element will be the capacity to test the service solutions being proposed in something approaching a “real-world” environment.

242

The prototype will generally be developed iteratively, with suggestions and refinements being constantly incorporated.

259

274

Why is it used?

286

Service prototypes can generate a far deeper understanding of a service than is possible with written or visual descriptions. The principle of “learning by doing” is prevalent throughout, with the focus on user experience meaning the prototype can also generate tangible evidence on which solutions can be founded. Prototypes also help iterate design solutions, as they can quickly incorporate and test the ideas and refinements they may provoke.

288



Prototypes don't have to be confined to a studio setting or workshop – testing them out “in the wild” can also provoke insightful responses.

20



SERVICE STAGING

What is it?

Service staging is the physical acting out of scenarios and prototypes by design teams, staff, or even customers in a situation that resembles a theatre rehearsal. Those participating will usually act out an encounter that one of the team has experienced, or explore a prototype situation.

How is it done?

When using service staging it is crucial to create a playful “safe space” environment to ensure that participants are comfortable and open enough to become fully involved with the exercise. After a storyboarding phase to record real experiences or develop new prototypes, people take on roles – such as customer or staff member – and act out the situation in an iterative cycle, moving from the starting storyboard to a new design. Group methods like “forum theatre” are used for idea generation and to keep everyone involved. Alternatively, one person may serve as the “director”, making suggestions to solve the problems that are revealed.

Why is it used?

Service staging brings kinaesthetic learning and emotion into the design process. It allows people to focus on the minutiae of subtext and body language, both of which are crucial to understanding the real-world situations in which a service is delivered. Playing different characters in a reality-based scenario allows designers to empathise with the personas on which they are based.



Service staging can be used for the design of services in and around a new building by creating a part of the space “on-site” and asking people to try it out.



AGILE DEVELOPMENT

What is it?

Agile Development is an iterative methodology that allows projects to grow and develop over time, adapting around both the evolving needs of the client, and the research materials the project may generate.

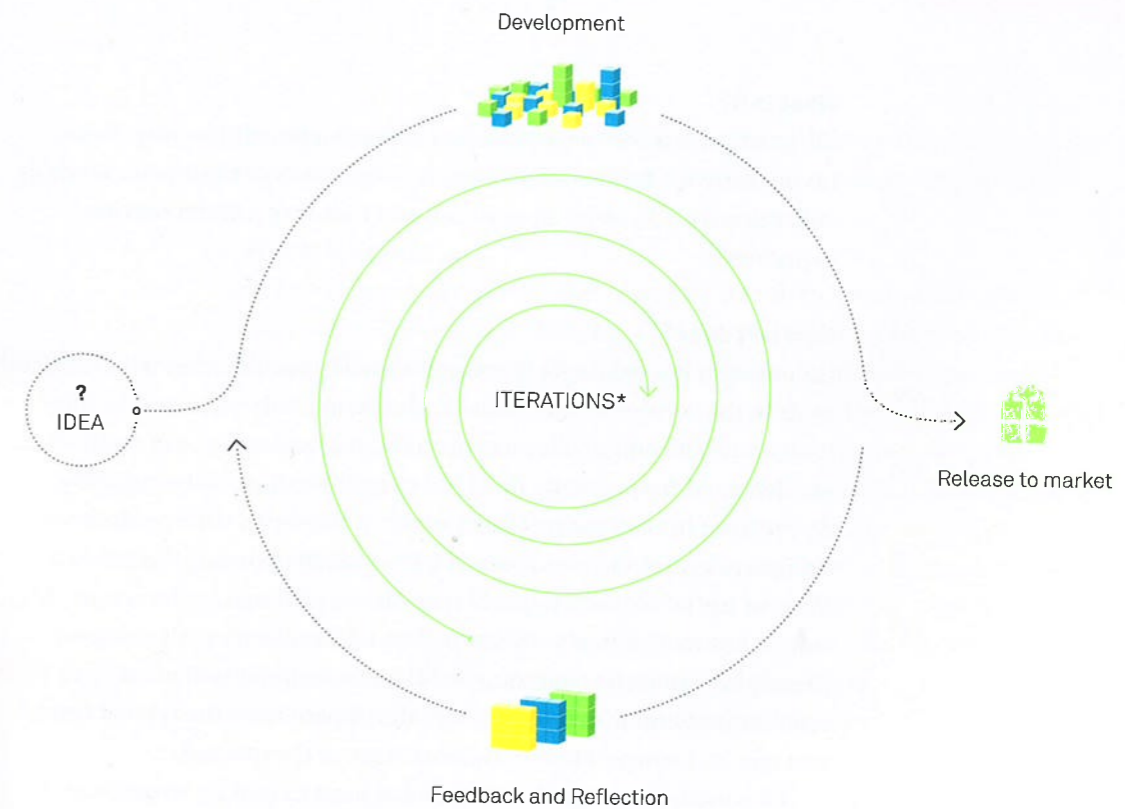
How is it done?

245

Derived from the world of software engineering, the approach is centred on several key principles. An agile project places emphasis on individuals and interactions over processes and tools, for example. This means that formalised methodologies are abandoned in favour of iterative approaches that can accommodate the input of a wide range of stakeholders. This allows a project to adapt and evolve as it progresses, instead of constraining it within a rigidly formalised methodology.

Why is it used?

Agile projects are able to remain in tune with a project's key objectives, even when the situations, environments, or personnel involved change. They can adapt around the responses and ideas provoked by the material gathered in the initial research stage. The materials that service design projects create aren't limited to a single, "correct" method of application; the key to a successful project is often working closely with client and design teams in order to develop a long-term framework for innovation. Agile projects actively adapt in order to assist with implementation and innovation.



* Loschelder's heuristic spiral

Agile development involves frequent "scrum meetings" where the project team discusses the ongoing development of the service. This iterative process of developing and reflection goes on until the service is ready for release.

← CREATE & REFLECT

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN THE CREATION PROCESS →



CO-CREATION



What is it?

Co-creation is a core aspect of the service design philosophy. It can involve anyone from staff, designers, executives or customers working collaboratively in order to examine and innovate a given service experience.

How is it done?

229

246

257

260

271

Co-creation is a principle that can be used in conjunction with many other tools in the service design toolset. Almost all of the methods in this toolbox can be adapted for use in a co-creative setting, and many of them are designed for precisely this kind of collaboration. Incorporating co-creation into an exercise successfully, however, still requires service designers to address a number of issues when planning the session. Various initial barriers to participation – fear of saying the wrong thing, reluctance to disagree with a superior, unfamiliarity with co-creation principles – must be overcome, whilst the designer will often have to moderate the session in order to ensure that it generates the type of results that can be incorporated in the next stage of the process.

This moderation can be achieved at least in part by structuring a co-creation session effectively. The focus here should be on producing materials that can set the boundaries for a discussion, without constraining the possible responses of the participants. Knowing when to ask a generalised question in order to open up a discussion, and when to

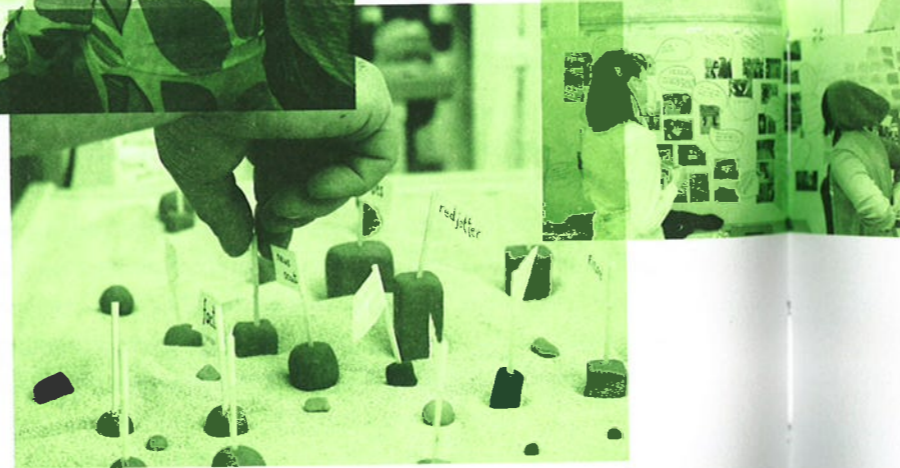
press a specific point in order to bring the focus back to the service under review, is essential in ensuring that co-creation sessions run smoothly.

Why is it used?

In one sense, co-creative exercises are a way to incorporate an open-source development philosophy. This does not mean, however, that the design of a service becomes a “group decision”, as the ideas and solutions proposed will always be iteratively filtered so that only the strongest, most resonant themes are developed into new prototypes and innovations. The co-creation session aims to explore potential directions and gathers a wide range of perspectives in the process. The results of the session will then be used as inspiration for the core design team, who need to develop and refine it further in the next stages of the design process. An additional benefit of co-creation is that it facilitates future collaboration, as it brings groups together and thus creates a feeling of shared ownership over the concepts and innovations that are being developed.

EXAMPLE →

What are the tools of Service Design?



Co-creation sessions usually involve a mix of people working in small groups, who then present their work to the larger group for feedback and discussion.

The materials used during a co-creation session can vary from 3D desktop models to 2D mood boards and drawings. The most important thing is that people feel free to express their ideas – it's crucial to keep things simple and open.