



Experiment 14

Storyboard Your Idea

A storyboard is an easy way to robustly illustrate an offering idea within the life of your organization and its customers.

Storyboards provide details on users, flow, interactions, and dependencies, and act as early stage mock-ups or prototypes.

STEPS

- 1** Identify the concept you want to illustrate and imagine what the experience might look like over time. It's helpful to think through the lens of a story: Where does the interaction take place? What specific challenge is being tackled? Who are the main characters? What tools do they use? Break down steps and key moments of your story into a beginning, middle, and end.
- 2** Illustrate key moments of your user's experience in context. Don't worry about your artistic abilities – think of comic strip panels and keep your sketches rough (a sticky note makes a great frame). Title each scene and write a short caption that describes what's occurring. (If you're feeling ambitious, add relevant dialogue to create a deeper understanding of your characters and their interactions.) Limit your storyboard to 4-6 scenes.
- 3** Share your storyboard with your team for review. What does it reveal about your idea? Are key steps missing or can they be expressed differently? What works (or doesn't) within the storyboard, and what are the implications for the design of your concept? Note: storyboards can illustrate services, products, and experiences.

TIME

45-60 minutes

ROLES

1 facilitator
2-4 participants

MATERIALS

Paper (half sheets)
Sticky notes
Pens
Tape

EXPERIMENTS IN ACTION: DESIGN IMPACT GROUP, CHILE / INDONESIA

In 2015, a large foundation engaged Design Impact Group, the Dalberg social impact design practice, to develop and test interventions that secure the livelihood of artisanal fishermen and support their transition to sustainability in Chile and Indonesia. One intervention involved enrolling them in branchless banking services to provide savings and loans products tailored to the unique demands of small-scale fishing while incentivizing a transition to sustainable gear.

The concept involved novel systems and new behaviors for the fishermen and other stakeholders. Because of its complexity, storyboarding was an essential part of the process. Storyboards helped align the team, provided clarity on concepts, and were used as prompts to gather the first round of feedback from fishermen.

The team started by creating a visual map of the new concept and breaking it down

into storyboards that illuminated relevant interactions. For example, how do fishermen learn about the program? How do they set up an account? What does their first use look like? How are fishermen retained in the program? These interactions were mapped individually so the team could test variables such as the best stakeholder to act as a branchless banking agent; appropriate loan size and interest levels; and the right frequency and channel for loan repayments.

Storyboards were crucial for prioritizing and making tough decisions about where to spend resources in prototyping and concept development. After sketching out an online buyers' platform, the team realized that it fell outside the scope and capacities of the partner organizations to implement. Storyboarding was crucial to accelerating in-field prototyping and ultimately honing the sustainable gear concept.

USE IT WHEN

- You've finished brainstorming and identified ideas you want to understand better
- You're trying to decide what to prototype and test in the field with actual users

USE IT TO

- Explore and refine your concept with your team
- Explain your idea to a stakeholder
- Conceptually test and refine an idea to better understand how it works in context