



**SOCIETY OF
DESIGN
THINKING
PROFESSIONALS
NEWSLETTER**

FOUNDER'S SPEAK

"In Design Thinking, imagination isn't just a tool; it's the catalyst that transforms problems into possibilities, inspiring creative methods that redefine solutions and shape the future."



Today, the real challenge for businesses lies in navigating the complexity and unpredictability of 21st-century markets. This intricate blend of constantly shifting scenarios with no straightforward solutions is often termed a 'common problem.'

Imagination is the key here, a process that has evolved to grapple with these complex issues that professionals face daily. What's valuable for businesses is that when properly harnessed, the power of imagination can decipher this complexity and identify challenges and more significantly, can unearth areas of potential and risk, paving the way for the much-sought-after holy grail of 'innovation' in the commercial world.

One common misconception is to confuse imagination with creative thinking. While creative thinking is essential to the imaginative process, it's just one facet. Understanding when and how to introduce creative thinking within the imaginative journey is even more critical, a variable that shifts with each unique project.

Imagination is frequently presented in an evangelical manner, often using mythical or superficial terminology like 'Determine; Discover; Define; Distil; Decide; Deliver' or 'Entice; Enter; Engage; Exit and Extend.' While these models are valuable, they sometimes fail to grasp how they interact within business and commerce.

With this perspective, let's delve into re-imagining the future of business through the transformative lens of Imagination and Design Thinking.

Happy Reading...

Dr. Jimmy Jain
Founder
Society of Design Thinking Professionals

Editor's Speak

Imagination is the literary engine that sparks innovative conversations and shapes compelling narratives. It's the force that turns ordinary discussions into vibrant stories, capturing the essence of diverse perspectives.

Design Thinking, on the other hand, becomes a collaborative blueprint. It's not merely a problem-solving method; it's a narrative structure, a carefully crafted storyline that guides our journey toward shared goals. In online spaces, understanding when and how to introduce creative thinking becomes paramount – a variable I navigate with a storyteller's finesse, ensuring the narratives resonate and inspire.

Together, imagination and Design Thinking weave a web of innovation to uphold a space where every exchange is a chapter, and every person is a co-author, collectively contributing to the evolving narrative of our lives.

Feel free to write to me at afreen@sdtpro.co.uk, in case of feedback, input, or if you want us to cover any specific topic.

Afreen Fatima
Content & Community Manager
Society of Design Thinking
Professionals





In any organization, making improvements is the third wheel of business management. The key is to create a workplace that encourages creativity, flexible thinking, and understanding of risks.

Businesses need to understand that the nature of this process requires collaboration, flexibility, and adaptability to produce effective results. Relying on toolkits and manuals often serves no purpose and can sometimes complicate and trivialize the process. To make use of any toolkit or manual, one must first understand how something works before taking it apart and reconstructing it.

Being innovative means to come up with new solutions that meet the needs of businesses and customers. To sustain itself in the market, every organization strategizes its business needs and expectations – a lot of whiteboard sessions about turning creative ideas into real things. Fundamentally, imagination is the core element that emphasizes thinking outside the box matters. It's a mix of creativity, technical know-how, communication skills, and well-developed imagination. So, let's unfold the concept of imagination.

We Have Ignited The Spark
of Innovation at -

AIR PRODUCTS

BAJAJ | Allianz

CGI

Deloitte.

Dr.Reddy's

EY

ICICI PRUDENTIAL
ASSET MANAGEMENT

kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

LODHA
BUILDING A BETTER LIFE

MassMutual

Mercedes-Benz

pwc

BOSCH

YES BANK

And many more...

Architectural Imagination

Think of this as the grand blueprint of your creative vision. Just as an architect envisions an awe-inspiring skyscraper before it's built, you, as a business owner, need to create a grand plan for your organization. It's about seeing the entire structure of your business in your mind's eye, from the foundation to the pinnacle, and then working diligently to bring that vision to life.



Practical Imagination

Practicality is the cornerstone of any successful venture. As you aspire to run a thriving marketing agency, practical imagination involves finding real-world solutions to the challenges you'll encounter along the way. It's about bridging the gap between your creative ideas and their practical execution. Just like a guitarist fine-tunes their instrument to create beautiful music, you must fine-tune your strategies to deliver practical, measurable results for your clients.

Aesthetic Imagination

This dimension is where the artistic finesse of your content writing and marketing skills shines. Just as a musician crafts a beautiful melody, your content should be aesthetically pleasing, engaging, and resonating with your target audience. Aesthetic imagination is about the visual appeal, the tone of your messages, and the overall experience you offer through your marketing efforts. It's the 'wow factor' that captures the hearts and minds of your audience.





Even though imagination can be wild and free, it needs a clear purpose. That’s where design thinking comes in place, which aims to use imagination to make things not just delightful but also functional. Designers need to focus on the future and deeply understand problems and their possible solutions. Both require imagination and a structured approach to make things better and more elegant. To help create products, services, or systems that work well and are refined for end users — Disciplined imagination is essential in design thinking.

Now, people are always kept at the center of the imagination process in design thinking. It's like playing a game where you brainstorm with an open mind. Because it is crucial to have open discussions, align on what innovation means, motivate everyone, and get support from management. Whether you're designing processes or user interfaces, the main goal is to improve the customer's experience. Imagination helps you come up with ideas and see how customers will react to them. The structure of your design ensures that different parts work well together, while innovative designs change the way things are done, making them easier to use.

Re-imagine the Future of Business: Imagination and Design Thinking

In business landscape, products or objects must satisfy two fundamental principles: functionality (does it work?) and aesthetics (does it look good?). Here, we assume that the product serves a genuine need. The experience component directly stems from the product's functionality – is it user-friendly and reliable? Furthermore, how the product is visually perceived is intertwined with branding and whether it meets or surpasses consumer expectations.

A positive imagination process sets the stage for expanding into related applications and systems, broadening the product's commercial reach, and potentially establishing a more contemporary approach to brand loyalty.

Effective communication and signs only thrive when the product and experience are positive. You can sell a bad product once, but not twice to the same consumer. Understanding a brand's DNA becomes pivotal here – your products might be of high quality, but if they're not the right fit for your target audience, it won't translate into success.

In a nutshell, innovation requires both creativity and imagination, but it also demands an intelligent and flexible application of imaginative research to recognize the potential for groundbreaking solutions. Organizations must be open to change and create an environment that sparks imagination, encourages design thinking, and handles risks smartly. An open mind leads to creativity and creativity helps master design thinking.



Views from Thought Leader - Mr. Annu Anand

"Innovation is not in doing the obvious; it's about breaking the clutter of conventionality and transforming big ideas into tangible experiences."



Annu has over 15 years of impactful Sales and Marketing expertise, navigating roles in distinguished organizations like Xerox, Daewoo Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Sony Entertainment Television, and Chevron. Proficient in Product and Brand Management, Communication Planning, Media Buying, CRM, New Media, Events, and PR, Annu's contributions extend to iconic brands like Scorpio, Bolero, Big Boss, Indian Idol, and Boogie Woogie. With a rich international exposure across Southeast Asia, the Middle East, South Africa, and Eastern Europe, Annu has honed a best practices model for customer-centric strategies. Annu is a dynamic professional who drives brand growth through innovative initiatives, reinforcing their reputation as a results-oriented leader in Sales and Marketing.

Join us in this insightful session with Annu as we delve into the exploration of creativity and innovation in client interactions. Be prepared for a thought-provoking discussion that offers a deeper understanding of the synergies between creativity, innovation, and successful client interactions.

Why did you name your company "A for Pineapple?" What's the story behind it?

Initially, I was entrenched in the corporate world until 2009 and desired to start something unique. As a marketing professional, I noticed a cluttered landscape in the industry. To stand out, we aimed to break the mould by avoiding the obvious. Instead of going with "A for Apple," we opted for "A for Pineapple." The goal was to encourage innovative thinking and differentiation, focusing on solutions that ventured far from the conventional.

Our company, "A for Pineapple," aims to redefine norms by fostering innovative thinking and challenging conventional approaches. We strive to create unique experiences and solutions aligned with our client's brand essence.

Design Thinking is essentially about creativity and innovation. How do you approach the brief you receive from clients and link it to the concept and execution? Could you share the complete cycle of the process in any client engagement you've handled?

The critical part for us lies in the ideation phase. Execution is standard; the challenge is aligning our strategies with the client's brand essence. Initially, we discard obvious ideas and deeply link our proposed solutions with the brand's positioning and messaging. For instance, we transformed a standard conference into an "unconference," creating an atmosphere akin to a café, breaking traditional conference norms. The aim was to open minds and shift away from standard business talks.

How did the audience react to your unconventional approach during the conference?

The response was exceptional! Participants were pleasantly surprised by the unconventional setup. Rather than typical workshops or slides, we challenged them to create three-minute films on their learnings, using just their smartphones. The result? Amazing stories and an incredibly positive response.

When working with a client long-term and needing new themes each year, how do you consistently generate fresh and creative ideas?

Continuously innovating for a long-standing client is challenging. We focus on gradually elevating the experience, adding new elements and enhancements each time. For instance, shifting conference locations from Mumbai to Dubai and incorporating activities that push boundaries to keep it fresh.

Can you elaborate on how you maintained innovation across different conference themes and locations?

Moving from Mumbai to Dubai, we introduced international speakers and diverse experiences, aiming to broaden perspectives. It's about introducing new ideas, industries, and mindsets to stimulate fresh thinking among participants.

Any specific insights for individuals designing products or services in corporate settings based on your experience?

The key lesson is translating big ideas into tangible experiences. Making intangible concepts tangible helps people understand and relate. It's crucial to take significant ideas and break them into smaller, relatable elements.



Design Thinking, as fueled by imagination, aligns with Einstein's wisdom: "Imagination is more important than knowledge." To leap into the future, imagination is the pivotal element often lacking today. Envisioning a different future requires a disciplined imagination. "Exceptional designers" are a blend of nature and nurture, encompassing creativity, technical prowess, and effective communication. Design thinkers fearlessly deploy their imagination, breaking down and reconstructing ideas with experimentation. This process, devoid of rigid expectations, leads to the elegant design of products, services, or business systems with both effectiveness and ingenuity.

"Design is thinking made visual"

—Saul Bass

"Design creates culture, culture creates value and value determines the future."

— Robert L Peters.

If you want to build a boat, do not instruct the men to saw wood, stitch the sails, prepare the tools, and organize the work, but make them long for setting sail and travel to distant lands.

—Antoine De Saint-Exupéry

"Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere."

—Albert Einstein

"Reason can answer questions, but imagination has to ask them."

—Ralph Gerard

'Thoughts' of our Esteemed Thought Leaders in 2023



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Design Thinking brings a fundamental difference in the way you think, do things, and interact with people.

— Dr. Lalit S. Khatpalia, Growth-oriented Management, Technology, Design Thinking Practitioner, Leadership and Education Professional

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As we reimagine our workplace, it demands us to look at the new world way with a new lens, and the application of Design Thinking is the key to redefining the new and emerging possibilities.

— Kaushal Parikh, Head of Talent Management at Bajaj Consumer Care

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Design Thinking shifts your approach to being customer-centric and helps understand the challenges occurring in the system more clearly.

— Deepak Kumar, Design Thought Leader, Business Growth Expert: Associate Vice President - MSME @CIMSME



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We can champion the concepts of Design Thinking by mastering three elements - stories, visuals, and rituals.

— Ritesh Ranjan, Vice President of Human Resources for APAC GDCoE at CGI

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'Thoughts' of our Esteemed Thought Leaders in 2023



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We, as thought leaders, have to understand the problem from all the layers of the business, as it is the process that drives change in different ways of working.

— Katie Lewis, Chief Operating Officer at ASPIRE

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Design Thinking is the combination of art and science that we use with our intellect and rejig with every different case.

— Rajesh Fanda, Business Head at Globus Spirits Limited

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Design Thinking has the potential to create a product that can outgrow the market and be used most feasibly. There is no final product as they always keep on improving with user experience.

— Jyoti M. Tiwari, Certified Digital Marketing and Design Thinking Expert

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To enable human-centric solutions in a world of data-driven approaches, design thinking principles can be used as fundamental to enhance user experiences.

— K. Rajeev Narayan, Founder and CEO of The Leadership Elements

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'Thoughts' of our Esteemed Thought Leaders in 2023



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Design thinking infused with insights from neuroscience can revolutionize problem-solving by harnessing the complexities of the brain.

— Dr. Srin Pillay, CEO of NeuroBusiness Group

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Design thinking is a versatile methodology that extends from shaping strategies to creatively solving problems, making it applicable across various organizational aspects.

— Sameer Sortur, Founding Partner of SquareCircle Ventures

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“Design Thinking is a universal beacon of innovation, transcending industries and fostering transformative impact across the corporate landscape.”

— Dr. Rahul Vilas Ghodke, Senior Vice President and Business Unit Leader, GTO: Infra, Cloud, Automation & Emerging Tech

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“Understanding the brain science underlying creativity allows us to unlock our creative genius, foster innovation, connect unrelated data points, and manipulate ideas all of which are necessary to make your dreams or ideas become a reality. Unlocking secrets of the human brain, helps us to forge new ways forward in this uncertain landscape.”

— Michelle Anne, CEO of System2

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'2023' in a Glimpse

A Year of Extraordinary Milestones!



From organizing the largest Drum Circle events in Mumbai (1000 people), Goa (500 people), and Chennai (LDGM & Drum Circle for 500 people), to spearheading Global Training Initiatives in Yerevan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.

In India, our Training Initiatives spanned across Leh, Chandigarh, New Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Pune, Goa, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Mysore, and Chennai.



'2023' in a Glimpse

A Year of Extraordinary Milestones!

We touched 7274 lives this Year

Growth Mindset



Design Thinking



The Search for Lost Dutchman's Goldmine



Startup Mentoring



CliftonStrengths

Being a Global Leader



Executive Presence



Competency Enhancement Programs



Drum Circle



Train The Trainer

Leadership Development Programs

'2023' in a Glimpse

A Year of Extraordinary Milestones!

We're proud to have hosted numerous Open Workshops at our Design Studio like Internationally Certified Trainers & Facilitators Programs, along with the impactful Design Thinking Practitioners Program- A Certification Course by the Society of Design Thinking Professionals.

As a Consulting Partner for the India Finland Hackathon, we played a crucial role in fostering innovation and collaboration in the youth. Here's to a year of growth, learning, and making a significant impact!

Year Highlights:

- Trained over 7,274 individuals from January to December 2023.
- Conducted Drum Circle Sessions for 2,627 participants.
- Led The Search for Lost Dutchman's Goldmine for 1,571 participants.
- Facilitated Leadership development for 639 accomplished leaders.
- Conducted various Competency Enhancement Programs for 625 Participants.
- Fostered Innovation in 354 individuals through Design Thinking.
- Conducted Cultural Leadership Programs for 225 Participants.
- Empowered 219 individuals through Clifton Strengths.
- Trained 488 individuals in Sales
- Equipped 75 individuals in Train The Trainer as International Facilitators.
- Trained over 496 Leaders to cultivate a Growth Mindset.
- Trained 55 individuals to build an Executive Presence, a future skill, and the current focus of organizations.

Team Sequel Wishes you a



Happy

New Year