

# How we used *Google Design Sprint* to help Infuture Institute create new online experience.



In August 2018 we were approached by Infuture Institute to help them figure out how to fix their website. Truth be told, the site was a mess. Firstly, it wasn't promoting new content, which was published regularly at a very high cost of production. Awesome and super well researched articles were hidden in the cellars of the website or locked in pdfs, unsearchable by bots. The site was not communicating clearly what services of the Institute are, and if that wasn't all, each team member had a different, sometimes conflicting vision as to what the new website needed to accomplish.

This seemed like a perfect fit for a design sprint and with a little bit of convincing the client agreed to go ahead and spend some intensive days with us over the coming week. After the week worth of work we're able to achieve the results which were quite astounding.

- **infuture** Forecasting institute focused on identifying and describing key
- **hatalaska** trends and showing what implications they might have for the
- **foresight** economy, market categories, and specific brands.
- **institute**

## We're able to:

- + get the client team aligned on goals, challenges and ways to tackle them,
- + had all team members influence the direction of the project and contribute to the final solution,
- + design a lo-fidelity sketch solution (6 screens in total),
- + create a user flow and the scenario for user tests,
- + design 5 hi-fidelity screens and created a clickable prototype out of them,
- + organize and conduct user tests, and what's most important - get super specific feedback as to what needed to be improved,
- + And finally - the client engaged us in further work to fix the aforementioned flaws. The resulting website seems much clearer, simpler and better communicating client's services.



And that is because the sprint method is democratic. Each design idea placed on the wall has to speak for itself. Team members vote with their dot stickers on what they think is the most promising idea, but ultimately it's the decider, after reviewing the votes, who chooses what gets taken to the next stage. This way each team member is motivated & accountable and also, there is no risk of changing the vision 180 degrees at the last minute, by the higher-up, who wasn't participating in the sprint, which is quite common in the traditional design process.



*This way we're able to avoid a common trap of "group think"*

## What do you think about the style of 'working alone' in a group setting?

Yeah. That's an interesting one. Indeed, each exercise was in fact individual work done in silence. After finishing with our 'alone-work' we put our ideas on the wall anonymously and then simply voted for the best ones. We didn't pitch ideas, didn't discuss them much and didn't really justify our selections.

And if you think about it, this way we're able to avoid a common trap of "groupthink", where the group silences or suppresses good ideas presented badly in favor of mediocre ideas presented with passion. We're able to separate ideas from their authors.

## What do you think about time management during Design Sprint?

Using a **Time Timer** - a special clock displaying time left for a given activity - is brilliant really. Each exercise is limited to a certain amount of time. This stringent time management cuts discussion down to minimum. There are no unnecessary digressions or side conversations. Because of this all activities are fast paced and already after couple of them you're visibly closer to your objective. On the flip side, this rigid approach to measuring time requires participants to park certain points and leave them to be discussed later.



## In summary, how did you like the Design Sprint?

The process is consistent and well thought through. The sprint goal summarized in one simple sentence, acted as kind of a strategic compass. Each time we're going off course, we could easily correct our direction. Other great thing about the sprint was the grand finale - a user testing session & the feedback from real customers. It became clear what assumptions were incorrect and what had to be improved. After the tests we received a Sprint Summary Dock outlining the things that went well in a test and these that required further changes.

It's not all roses when it comes to Sprint. The process is super intensive and at the end of the second day we're totally exhausted. Due to time restrictions we could only touch certain subjects superficially and had little time to explore them further. Finally, the process requires strong moderation, luckily we had Maciek running the show, but normally this process requires a seasoned moderator.

*“In a nutshell, we believe our time and energy was well invested. We got to a solution quickly and got early user feedback which steered the project further.”*



# About

## *Google Design Sprint*

The Sprint is a five-day process for answering critical business questions through design, prototyping, and testing ideas with customers. Developed at Google Ventures, it's a “greatest hits” of business strategy, innovation, behavior science, design thinking, and more—packaged into a battle-tested process that any team can use.



*“You can fast-forward into the future to see your finished product”*

Working together in a sprint, you can shortcut the endless-debate cycle and compress months of time into a single week. Instead of waiting to launch a minimal product to understand if an idea is any good, you’ll get clear data from a realistic prototype.

The sprint gives you a superpower: You can fast-forward into the future to see your finished product and customer reactions, before making any expensive commitments.”

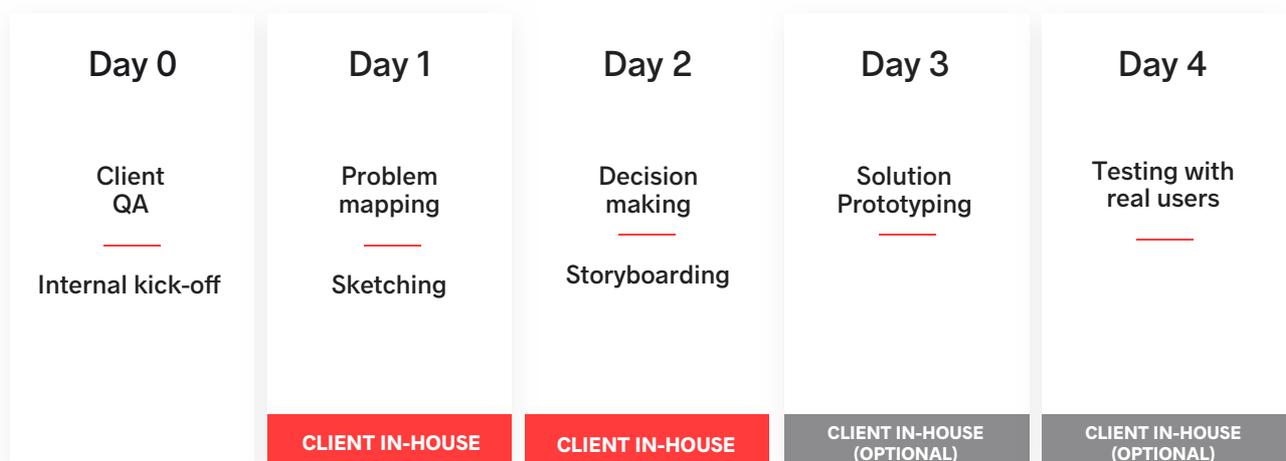
Source: Google Ventures <http://www.gv.com/sprint/>



## Objective

The main objective behind the Sprint is speeding up of the process of decision making in product development.

Time-constrained to 4 days, the process entails breaking down high level business objectives and challenges into workable product ideas, prototyping them and testing with users.



## Key Principles

- + Emphasis on individual work in a group setting and reduction of group brainstorming resulting in groupthink.
- + Versatile team. Sprint team consisting of members of various departments and not restricted to just designers or product people.
- + Starting with strategic and general (goals & challenges) and steadily moving towards tactical and specific (product solutions).
- + Strong reliance on prototyping & user testing - the grand finale of the Sprint.
- + Dynamic, rigidly planned & time-boxed. Each 4 days broken down into specific tasks restricted in time.
- + Restricted use of mobile phones and laptops. No laptop-busy observers, only active participants.
- + Important roles of sprint moderator (facilitator, moving things forward) and a decider (person in charge of making critical sprint decisions)



# Why Sprint *Matters?*



by Maciej Saganowski Head of Design & Founder  
at Ultimo Studio.

Design Sprint is an antithesis of the common exciting-but-futile brainstorming workshops and never-ending innovation initiatives. In this process, an idea is judged based on its value, not based on who came up with it.

Every minute is scripted and we work through this week-long process at a steady clip. We don't build castles in the air or polish ideas endlessly. Group discussion is limited to a bare minimum.

We start with high-level objectives and business challenges and move on to identify practical solutions. We then build a prototype based on the most promising idea and test it with end-users to see how they respond to it. It's quite incredible, but something that took long weeks, if not months, before discovering Design Sprints, now takes us only 4 days! Most importantly, we're able to get customer feedback, way before anyone breaks ground on a new project or commits to writing a single line of code. We're saving time and money. Currently, it's by far the best tool for working on products and spurring business innovation.

sprint with  
**us!**

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