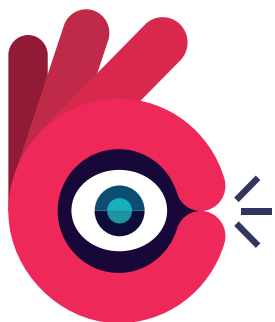


HEALTHCARE & DESIGN

Individualised solutions for people living with dementia

Design in innovation insight series:
How Do I? & Humanly



Working
HUMAN-CENTRED



Working
EARLY STAGE



Benefit
MANAGE RISK



03333 403250
enquiries@ktn-uk.org
www.ktn-uk.org

“Given that design is an emergent process, as a micro-enterprise it can feel risky to put all our eggs in one basket - it’s scary - there can be an OMG moment. But most people are converted when they see the insights that emerge from the process. There is a common misconception that designers just bring the solution to life towards the end of the product development. In fact, it works best when they are there from the start to establish insight. How often do people get together with designer to solve a problem without already having a solution in mind?”

Taryl Law, Co-founder, How Do I?

HOW DO I? Learning videos via smart phones

As a company dedicated to helping people learn how do things using mobile technology, How Do I? developed a project called Living Well to improve the lives of people living with dementia. With the help of the Design Foundations funding they teamed up with design agency Humanly and, together, they set about designing, prototyping and testing appropriate learning tools. Co-founder of How Do I?, Taryl Law, and founder of Humanly, Jenni Parker, explain how human-centred design was the driving force behind their award-winning video-based products.

Early stage - starting with a clean slate

Humanly were involved in the Living Well project right from the start, having helped How Do I? develop the funding bid for Design Foundations. This immediate involvement, Taryl Law says, strengthened their proposal. By bringing a fresh set of eyes, Humanly encouraged How Do I? to broaden out their research and postpone any user testing and prototyping. “It is better to start with a clean slate than going in with something you had in mind,” Law says. As a small business they needed to find the most cost effective way of bringing a product to market. The Design Foundations funding gave them more time to work on idea generation before they launched into the expensive process of building a whole service without understanding user needs.

Through their research the team discovered people living with dementia have highly individualised needs, which meant their ambition to ‘design for people with dementia’ didn’t make sense, as they are not a homogenous group of people. Usually designers create personas to design for by combining elements of various people,

but the persona building approach was too generic for the needs of people with dementia and so they started co-creating solutions with clients on a one-to-one basis. “People’s experiences are so individual, very divergent and their needs are constantly changing,” says Law. They discovered that people’s passions stay clear in their mind until later stages of dementia – from cooking a favourite meal to playing cards. A person might forget to eat, but a video on their mobile phone shows them they can still execute a relatively complex task like cook spaghetti bolognese, or remind them they still know the rules of the card game rummy.

Human-centred - individualised design

Having developed three prototypes: a digital cookbook, a video calendar, and a medicine reminder, the team decided to make the project open source. “We packaged all our research, even what didn’t work, so it can be easily shared. We hope by generating new insight, knowledge and stimulus that other people can pick it up and take it further. Perhaps this individualised design approach isn’t limited to those with dementia?”

Design in innovation

Thanks to increased awareness about the benefits of human-centred design, more businesses want to bring designers on board in the early stages of innovation. Too often, however, companies struggle with finding or justifying the budget required for such a collaboration. Through the Innovate UK Design Foundations programme in 2017 £4 million of funding was awarded to 93 businesses of varying sizes. The objective was helping businesses work with designers to identify innovation opportunities and find viable routes to market. This insight series selects several of those projects to highlight a variety of design approaches.



This project managed risk through:

- Broader scope for research
- Clearer problem definition
- Iterative prototyping