

Better **building design briefing** via the **connected intellect**

Here are two key steps to use to make sense of the diverse perspectives that must come together in a brief to deliver the properties of the future most likely to generate a superior customer experience (CX) and improved ROI.

By using their precision, you can reduce risk by creating designs that can be tested to fit and perform better for your business in every dimension that matters most to those who will use, invest in, live in and work in them.

It's time to think differently about competition in property's future

The fact that, at minimum, two of Australia's very largest developers and owners of commercial property now employ managers with "customer experience" in their titles offers one indication of how, through digitisation, the marketing landscape for commercial property in Australia is evolving to bring its providers closer to customers.

Against this, in the connected, digital age, the approach we describe here to strike back against those players, while unique, is also obvious and of its time.

We may still be in the earliest years of the internet, but just as in your own company, every mind in every other business with which you compete is also now better connected than ever before.

Hence, the degree of precision with which those minds can be steered in unison to bring to clarity the needs and preferences of any group of building users is unprecedented.

The connected intellect is our path to the collective imagination; the collective imagination is our path to our future.

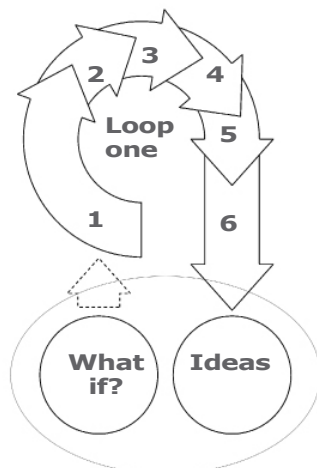
Because it will learn quickly how to work with and grow that collective intelligence, the competitor best able to mobilise that most potent resource in its business and customer base, guided by better data, at speed, will become the most formidable of competitors.

And in this, the resource to put to work in designing a better business and products – the connected intellect of the post-Facebook mind (as described on the following page) – is already present and at work at every desk within your own and every rival's business.

Making sense of how it works for advantage is every property provider's great challenge.

Phase one: Exploration

1. Frame key questions
2. Explore
3. Investigate
4. Search
5. Probe
6. Report



Critical learning in two simple loops

With this dependable, double-loop briefing process, you can build new value from what your people and your customers know.

Until it is harnessed, the idea of capturing a workplace's knowledge, let alone that of a customer base, sounds potentially chaotic and messy, which it is. However, making sense from a cacophony of competing voices and opinions is no different to the challenge faced by news organisations reporting around the world every day.

As such, our solution isn't rocket science, but a communication process proven both by our own repeated personal experience of written reporting and sense-making over many years, and by centuries of practice by others.

Its goal is to document for those involved the information they require in a consistent, reliable fashion, such that they can drill down into this resource to keep on refining their approach to getting from it what they need when they need it.

Our briefing process therefore follows the diagrams beneath, using sense-making rules that apply to all publishing of professional quality.

Loop one

Depending on the question put to it, the first loop's aim is to fish for possibilities, ideas and insights, based on what is believed, known and experienced by the exercise's target group.

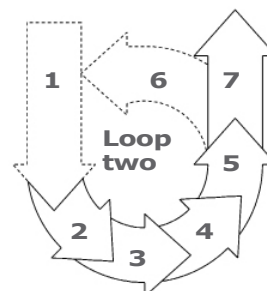
From what its members submit, at the end of this loop, a broad, outline report is generated.

Loop two

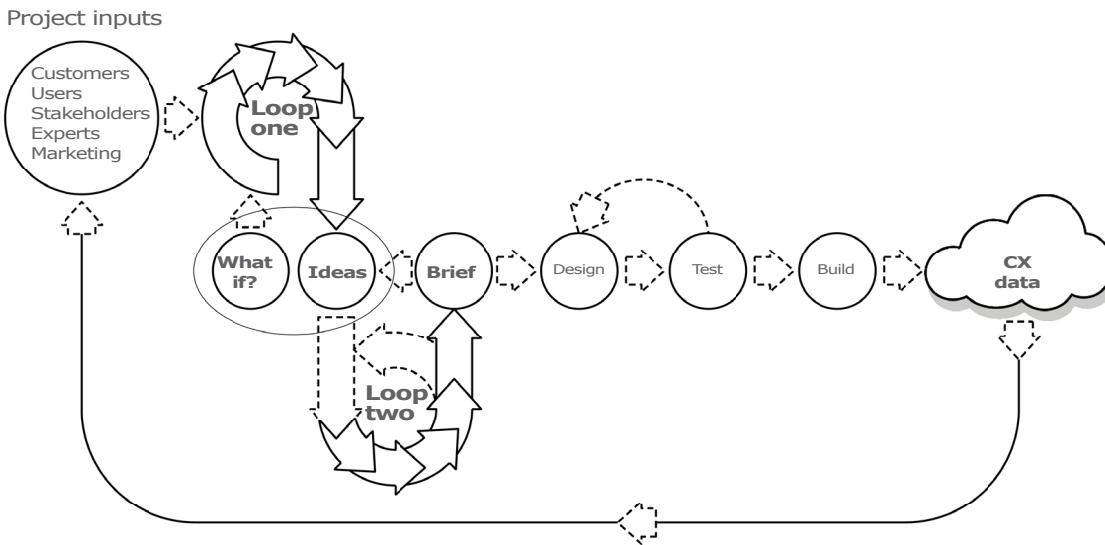
In the second loop, this report is held up for scrutiny and questions are asked to verify meaning and intention, in order to guide the development of the interrogation.

Phase two: Make sense, summarise, validate, test

1. Drill down
2. Query
3. Clarify
4. Reiterate
5. Evaluate
6. Validate
7. Understand



Briefing beyond the building



Once revealed to a group whose prior perspectives – and possibly, even its members – were previously unknown to each other, it is to elicit comment by sparking new and unexpected insights to build upon what is known collectively by its participants.

It is to summarise, and, through reiteration and clarification, create a platform for subsequent interrogation, in plain English.

In professional media production, rule number one is that every writer needs a second reader to check facts and to ensure what is written can be understood.

Unchecked, imprecisely written material, possibly in great volume, is of no help to anyone. Making complete, concise sense is critical if decisions are to be made.

What is the post-Facebook connected intellect?

Previously, it used to be hard, if not impossible, to capture and transform into usable information the knowledge and insights of those across an organisation.

Yet, as our familiarity with using the social internet grows, we have reached an age of unprecedented opportunity in making the best use of intelligence across web-connected communities and businesses.

Although it is still a force unrecognised, unexamined and therefore unorganised in most organisations, through near-ubiquitous familiarity with Facebook and others, we've now arrived at "peak social internet literacy."

This entirely naturally occurring capacity's practical applications are also easily demonstrated, as we have reached the point at which every employee in every business knows how to use social media to write online, upload and share material and to make comments about those items uploaded by others.

And when such communications are in writing and captured by the mirroring, private, internal Facebook-like or networked, document-sharing technologies now available within every business, workplace knowledge, insight and learning that was once out of reach is no longer beyond management's grasp.

It also has access to a bottomless, renewable resource – an inexhaustible source for possible business and customer experience-improving investigation – whose creativity may be limited only by its imagination.

And, through it, we can build a far superior understanding with which to manage, investigate and experiment.

The professional challenge now lies in inquiring, making sense of and feeding back to this group with diverse opinions what its members know and can contribute to understanding how to create superior property and purchasing processes.

Property's future will be built inside the minds of customers

From a "knowledge architecture" point of view, any property creates an opportunity to build a better understanding of uses and users, in order to develop new understanding of how to satisfy its target audience's need, and therefore how to attract others like it.

By removing guessing and, as illustrated, "briefing beyond the building" to reduce risk and to understand customers better to get closer to them simply makes good business sense.

Briefing by tapping into the available connected intellect enables property providers to climb inside the minds of "knowledge communities" to develop the most appropriate and best-fitting combinations of products and services.

Showing commitment to the buyer or user relationship by demonstrating an intention to uphold product and service quality – however the customer perceives it – is straightforward QA, and makes simply for smarter marketing.

Get closer to customers to reduce risk

We believe briefing via the connected intellect has a big future because, at minimum, it simply adapts long-standing qualitative market research practices to the emerging needs and idiosyncrasies of property customers.

Property, like all other businesses touched by the internet, is now also becoming an information business, and feeding customer experience (CX) data upstream into the planning mix now offers the most direct, economic and least risky route to sustained feedback, focused customer and user-community happiness.

Simply, those who can learn to use it well are likely also to benefit from the distinctive branding, reputational differentiation and business growth that can be won by being seen to engage thoughtfully and appropriately with long-term customers.