

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE HACKATHONS

BehaviourWorks
AUSTRALIA

BRING LEADING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE RESEARCHERS IN TO REVIEW YOUR PRODUCT, SERVICE OR IDEA

'Hackathons' have been the preferred format for innovators and startups for decades.

Inspired by the format, BehaviourWorks Australia (BWA) has developed a product/service to help organisations improve their product, service or communications piece by bringing leading behaviour change researchers together to look at those materials through a behavioural lens and provide recommendations on how to make them more 'human-centric'.

WHAT ARE HACKATHONS?

BehaviourWorks' hackathons are like short, intensive 'design-sprints'. They give organisations practical advice on how to improve the product or service under consideration by integrating strategies that will increase the likelihood of the desired behaviour change.

WHO'S INVOLVED?

BehaviourWorks employs researchers from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines.

For each hackathon, a team of four to six researchers is put together based on the product/service under consideration and the relevant experience, skills and knowledge of the researcher/s.



The primary role of the hackathon team is to provide a 'fresh set of eyes' and different perspectives on the product, service or idea.

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HOW DO THEY WORK?

Prior to each workshop, the client or partner organisation sends the hackathon team relevant background information and any materials/ideas to be reviewed.

Representatives or subject matter experts from the client organisation then present the idea to the hackathon team. The researchers use this as an opportunity to ask questions and interrogate the idea so they have a good understanding of the product/service and any organisational/contextual factors.

The research team then workshop the product/service/idea in a closed session. The sessions are closed because it affords the team greater honesty and efficiency, given their common, base-level understanding of behaviour change approaches. Likewise, the merits of suggestions for interventions and features can be debated in a robust manner.

WHAT'S THE RESULT?

The hackathon team prepare a report with suggestions and recommendations on how the client can use specific behaviour change techniques to improve the saliency of the product or service.

The report notes points of agreement and disagreement between the research team as well as other contextual factors/knowledge relevant to the product or service.

DEBRIEF

In most cases, the report will answer the client's key questions. However, there are some circumstances where they may benefit from having the suggestions clarified by the team.*

WHO USES HACKATHONS?

BehaviourWorks' hackathons have been used by a wide range of government and private sector organisations.

They have frequently been used to review communications materials, standard letters and 'apps', but they can - and should - be considered for any new product idea or service innovation.

COSTS

BehaviourWorks' hackathons are provided for a fee. The fee may vary based on the type and number of products, services and materials submitted for review. Contact us (details below) for further information.

JUST THE FIRST STAGE?

Hackathons can be an important precursor to a larger project. In fact, they can be a very cost-effective way of getting some assurance that the product/service or idea is 'on the right track'. With further research by the team, that idea can be taken forward.

LIMITATIONS

BehaviourWorks acknowledges that the report's recommendations are sometimes given in a knowledge vacuum with only limited consideration of the contextual factors of the client organisation. There is no expectation, therefore, that all recommendations will be implemented. The overarching purpose of hackathons is to spark ideas on how the product or service can better incorporate behaviour change techniques.

*not all members of the original team may be available for the debrief.

To learn more about BehaviourWorks Australia's products and research services, visit www.behaviourworksaustralia.org or contact us. T: + 61 3 9905 9656 or E: behaviourworksaustralia@monash.edu

BehaviourWorks Australia is a behaviour change research enterprise within the Monash Sustainable Development Institute at Monash University.