

Problem Definition Exercise

What is the key issue or interest you are trying to address?

As a business person and designer, what I enjoy most is the process. I love being able to be involved in each step of creating a product/project and seeing it come to life, from start to finish.

In my previous internship experience, I've seen that design agencies have two areas of the business — large returning clients and small start ups. However, the process between designer and client for these projects is riddled with challenging problems.

This is not only from my own experience, but also talking to other freelance designers.

Who is it a problem for and why is it important?

Freelancers aged 26-56
Their clients are start up organizations looking for freelance designers to build their brand.

Some points of frustration that they feel about the process include the need to faster communication with a client, understanding what the client wants without guessing, and involving the client with the creative process to ultimately have high transparency and ease. From a business perspective, they strive for a high turnover rate. There is a struggle to have complete integration from start to finish.

What social/cultural factors shape this problem?

More recently, freelancing has become a huge population of designers. I've often encountered artists who say, "I want creative freedom and I am unable to get that in a corporate environment because you are given one task to execute."

In the wake of COVID-19, working from home has become somewhat of a norm, with companies changing their policies to allow employees to work from home. This permanent change will not be going away when COVID-19 is eradicated.

Therefore, we need to be able to catch up with the situation of COVID-19 work from home and the desire of people who freelance.

What is the historical context?

Many design industries lack improvements in technology, from collaboration to client involvement.

Fashion houses still use printed tech packs that aren't matching, multiple different systems to keep track, and paper notes that get lost. Design agencies are the same — they are so used to one process of creating a project, that they don't opt for an easier solution.

There is a long history of trying to "scientise" design and its process since the 60s. Designers know to ask the right questions.

Can you think of this problem in a different way? Can you reframe it?

Not only the freelance perspective, but also the client perspective