

THE
**GARAGE
GROUP**



Enabling corporates to innovate like startups.

Mission:

*enabling corporate teams & brands
to innovate and grow like startups*





Translating Startup Tools and Methods for use in the Corporate World

Startups use unique tools and methods to dream up, develop and launch new ideas. We stay close and learn the tools and methods, and then translate and adapt them to work in the corporate world. Tools and methods like **Lean Startup**, **Design Thinking** and **Business Model Generation** are at play in the Incubators, Accelerators and Startup Competitions and Events where we teach and mentor; and where we get our hands dirty with entrepreneurs learning and applying.



Translating from the startup world to the corporate world

thegaragegroup.com

Our Clients & Expertise Areas

consumer packaged goods

food & beverage

retail

consumer healthcare

apparel

commercial service providers



P&G

Heinz

STAPLES



Crest.

MARS
petcare



**YANKEE
CANDLE**
America's best loved candle

OLAY

Oral-B

Reebok 



Weight Watchers
Smart Ones

Charmin

CLASSICO
INSPIRED ITALIAN

always

Helping companies and brands innovate and grow like startups via:



Insights via smart & scrappy market research

An entrepreneurial approach to building *Ideas*

Fast, iterative approach to *Brand Architecture*



Our Growing Team



Ann Lauer

Cofounder, Innovation & Growth Strategist

19 yrs. of innovation, research & growth strategy experience with P&G and on the supplier side. Qualitative, Quantitative Research, Idea Generation, Organization Development and Growth Strategy experience. B.A. In Journalism from the Ohio State University. Frequent speaker and writer on business model, market research innovation, and strategic leadership.



Jason Hauer

Cofounder, Innovation & Growth Strategist

Experienced entrepreneur, consultant, business builder and advisor. Idea Generation, Trends, Analogs, Qualitative, Business Model Innovation experience across multiple industries and companies. B.S. in Information Engineering from the University of Cincinnati, MBA in Marketing from Xavier University. ProductCamp and Lean Startup Circle organizer and frequent speaker and writer on customer development and business model innovation.



Keri Dooley

Innovation & Growth Strategist

Nine years of qualitative and quantitative market research experience with Procter & Gamble, including recent insight and campaign development work for the highly acclaimed #likeagirl campaign. Areas of expertise include Campaign Development, Brand Equity, Shopper Marketing, Innovation Strategy and Consumer Segmentation. B.A. in Marketing and Entrepreneurial Studies from Xavier University.



Renee Murphy

Director of Research Innovation

Digital and social media research guru. Experience in global asynchronous online projects, specializing in activities that help respondents express themselves and go beyond verbal recall. Industry experience across CPG, food/bev and wide variety of consumer and b2b segments. Expertise in designing learning against objectives that range from front-end pipeline development to prototype taste-testing and product/concept optimization.

Insights
via smart & scrappy market research

Invite Friends To Pinterest

- Amy Branham Invite
- Peter Brunner Invite
- Christine Cox Invite

Invite Friends

Find Friends

- Michaela Rawsthorn Follow
- Meredith Smith Follow
- Rebeca Arbona Follow

Social. Smart and uber-efficient social media-based ethnography.



Spruce Up Your Guest Bath

Master Bathroom - Glass shower w/ Stone Tile. Keep it light to make room look larger!

Kristy Schehr Tracy For the Home



bar ring / shashi

Pamela Lucas Hickey Girly



United States Postal Service - Re-Designing an American Institution - The Deline

Beth Wood Packaging



Grayers 'The Bob' Modern Fit Marled Crewneck Sweater available at #Nordstrom

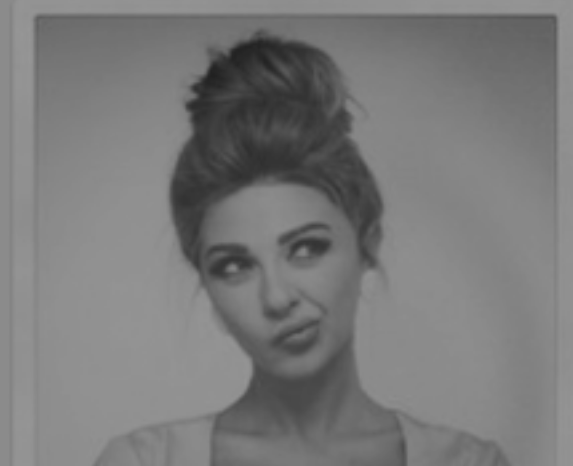
Sean Dugan-Strout Apparel

Related Pin

THE GARAGE GROUP

Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall.

- P. Scott Fitzgerald



I can watch these playful elephant friends all day. They are so smart and so sweet!



See Inside How Things Work by Conrad Mason www.amazon.com/...

Right-sized. *Smart desk research
that delivers actionable trend understanding.*

Native. *Digital approaches to segment understanding that intersect with consumers' reality.*



Bold. *Lean, iterative consumer concept development and optimization with experienced writers.*



An entrepreneurial approach to building
Ideas

Needs. *Clearly articulate the consumer and business needs we need to solve for.*

Insights & Trends.

Curate context, find the edges and push beyond.

Analogs. *The secret sauce behind great ideas & our ideation workshops.*

Day I. *Focus + TEDx-style
inspiration modules inspire 100's of ideas.*



Canvas. *The template at the core of our ideation process that inspires robust initiatives.*

Pitches. *Teams bring their ideas to life in a way that builds momentum and breaks through barriers.*

Brand Architecture

a fast, iterative approach to brand architecture

Brand Architecture Accelerator.

Our 3-step process, built from proven approaches for dynamic, iterative development, eliminates multi-functional swirl, cuts months out of the timeline and nets robust, viable architecture models that go well beyond the shelf set.

Our Work

a few case studies

New. New brands, prototyped samples and momentum inspired by trends, analogs and entrepreneurial pitches.



What was the challenge?

Our food manufacturer client was suffering from declining business, a lack of ideas and waning morale. They needed to turn it all around with fresh relevancy on their core brands, new brands in new categories and an energized team with passion and momentum behind their innovation portfolio.

What did we do?

We dove right into the category and adjacent categories; and brought to life ingredients, food & restaurant trends and shopping trends (like the Think Dirty app pictured above). We uncovered analogs that inspired ideas from unexpected places like athletic shoes, cosmetics, airlines, smart phones, taxi services and DIY guitar lessons. We built a business model canvas and a startup atmosphere that led to fresh ideas to drive relevancy and meaningful news on the core brand, delicious prototyped samples and new brand pitches.

What were the results?

The invigorated, energized, multi-functional team created over 450 ideas and 15 new brand pitches which led to a robust innovation portfolio and the momentum needed to move it forward. We can hardly wait to buy these new products when they hit the shelves.

Thorough. A completely smart and efficient project, from identification of 4 need areas, to generation of 100s of ideas, development of 12 initiative pitches & optimization of 6 consumer concepts.



What was the challenge?

Our multi-functional client team wanted to take their home fragrance brand to the next level with a portfolio of innovative initiatives that meet consumer needs, but also that delight consumers with new experiences. They needed short, mid and longer-term ideas. They needed ideas to leverage their existing assets, and ideas they'd have to go "figure out" how to deliver. This small, nimble team needed to move quickly and smartly, and we rose to the challenge.

What did we do?

We started by mining social media for trends and insights around a key strategic focus areas to identify specific, consumer relevant needs. We then dove deep into trends around ingredients, decor and technology as well as analogs from multiple categories (including the breathable tea room example above) and brought them to life in a 2-day workshop where we enabled the team to generate hundreds of ideas. During day two of the workshop, the teams built ideas into initiatives, pitched their ideas to each other, and invested on the spot, aligning to 6 top ideas. Our team of writers, artists and researchers optimized the six ideas, working with consumers via quick, dynamic webcam interviews to deliver consumer relevant language & visuals.

What were the results?

With positive consumer response, the team created two short-term, 2 mid-term and 1 longer-term initiative proposals to take forward to management. They were able to quickly and confidently walk away from one longer term idea. And, the team is energized behind a newfound confidence in this consumer-relevant innovation process.

Fast. Three day turn around to generate 250+ product ideas for a new brand launch in Europe, leveraging analogs, a unique brand platform canvas and trends from around the world.



What was the challenge?

Our client in the beauty care CPG market wanted to launch a new brand in Germany and the UK. Intense competition and a crowded marketplace made differentiation and a strong product portfolio critical for market entry. Two potential brand positionings had been envisioned, but the product story for each needed to be constructed.

What did we do?

We pursued multiple sources of secondary data and trends to uncover ingredients, analogous business cases (like the Copenhagen wheel pictured above), packaging inspiration and product components. We brought them to life with simple, but engaging exercises and tools for the team to construct product ideas and families of product ideas to meet multiple consumer needs and deliver against unique brand positionings. Day two of our workshop enabled the core team to construct product stories for each brand positioning, choose hero products and share out and build ideas with the group President, in preparation for BASES testing.

What were the results?

Two well thought through brand positionings, including complete product portfolios and hero products ready to be passed onto a concept writer for final preparation for BASES testing. In addition, the team left with 250+ additional product ideas to be leveraged on future initiatives on the new brand, and even some that can be applied to other brands in the clients' portfolio.

Big. Companies coming together to combine assets in new ways to meet market trends and build sales, inspired by analogs and energized by a collaborative pitch competition.



What was the challenge?

Leaders from a major retailer and leading CPG manufacturer were tasked with growing volume and profit for both organizations by leveraging existing assets in new ways. They needed to build platforms for product assortment, commercial innovation, merchandising and campaigns and build their relationship at the same time.

What did we do?

With only 6 business days prep time, we scoured our sources for trends in the clients' categories and categories that influence sales of the product assortment (like the co-working example pictured above). We brought analogs to life from the tech world, new business models around collaborative consumption, retail and ecommerce business models from other categories. During the fast paced, 1-day workshop, custom designed templates and exercises spawned hundreds of initial ideas and 12 platform level ideas that were presented back to the team in a lively pitch competition.

What were the results?

Twelve platform level ideas were added to the master plan and projected to close the \$650 Million volume challenge. And, an energized, galvanized leadership team emerged with a new commitment to partnership and collaborative, mutually beneficial volume growth.

Fresh. Experiential analogs, guest presenters and creative exercises led to over \$500M worth of new product ideas, and a long list of additional ideas which continues to feed the pipeline, two years later.



What was the challenge?

Our skin care CPG client had extremely aggressive growth goals for their North American business. Their master plan had short-term, mid-term, and long-term gaps. They needed a pipeline of product innovation ideas to guide R&D and marketing for the next several years.

What did we do?

This project, which we named "Bloom" was truly an experiential exercise. From the venue (a historic mansion), to the themed food, to the exercises and inspiration, we immersed participants in a beautiful experience, which delivered against each of the need areas we had jointly identified as our focus for the workshop. Participants experimented with texture, feel and scent. Henna tattoo artists and a renown botanist inspired the team with analogs and stories. Custom designed templates and activities enabled participants to generate hundreds of ideas in a way that was high energy and momentum building.

What were the results?

The team generated over 400 ideas and culled them down to the top several ideas to place on the master plan. Those represented, by their projections, \$500M worth of new initiatives aligned to move forward. Remaining ideas were databased and the team continues to access and leverage the ideas, even two years later.

Smart. “Right-sized” desk research to illuminate category, technology, consumer and product trends to enable a CPG category leading brand to influence retail partners and plan product and marketing innovation.



What was the challenge?

Our CPG brand team client needed an updated look at trends that might impact their business. They wanted to be able to influence key retail partners and inspire proactive plans for product and marketing innovation. Previous updates were costly and/or time consuming. The team needed to move fast, had a limited budget, but wanted sales-ready materials they could share internally and externally.

What did we do?

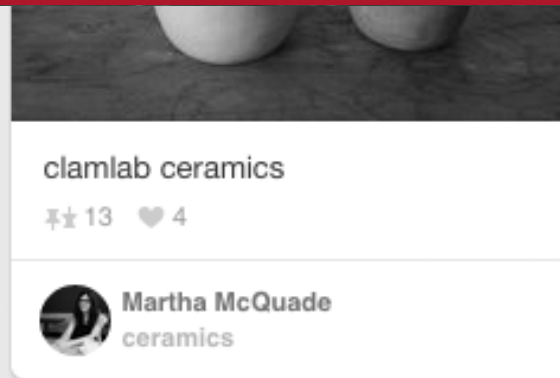
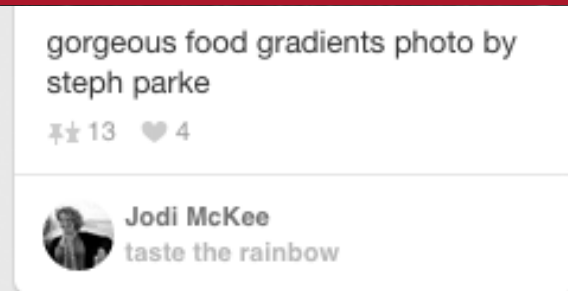
Working across several publicly available data sources, we collected, triangulated and strategically assessed trends, data, inputs, thought leader perspectives, graphs, charts, forecasts, commentaries and reports. We identified and codified the top ten trends, and then brought them to life with clear, compelling data, in-market examples (similar to the connected device example above) and an engaging, modular report format that enabled the client to apply and reapply trends individually or as a whole. As a bonus, we threw in a few less obvious trends to watch for longer term impact.

What were the results?

The result has been countless application of trends (and the visual and text materials) across sales presentations, initiative proposals, research reports, and “state of the market” presentations for internal audiences as well as with external vendors and customers. And, our client is thrilled, as she is seen as smart, efficient, thorough, forward thinking and well-informed.

Social.

Smart and uber-efficient social media based ethnography enabled an aisle re-design with competitive advantage for a CPG brand and won the favor of a key retail partner.



Can't remember if I have pinned this before: 55 Cozy Small Bathroom Ideas Via Cuded



What was the challenge?

Our CPG brand team client wanted to provide insight for a key retail partner to help re-design the aisle for their portfolio of brands and products in a large category. The retailer had a few initial ideas about how to architect the aisle, as did the brand team, but collectively, they needed to get some consumer insight to drive both relevancy and differentiation. The desire was to make the aisle more shoppable and consumer friendly, in a way that drives regimen usage.

What did we do?

For this low budget, fast turn-around project, we leveraged the power of social media to mine insights about how consumers shop, talk about and use products in the category. We explored consumer language and performed an ethnography across pinterest, facebook, forums and blogs. We compared the learning with analogs from other categories and aisles to create 5 consumer-relevant "formats" for the new aisle, recommending one relevant, differentiated stand-out option that was consistent with the equity of the retailer and channel.

What were the results?

The retailer and client team confidently moved forward to implement an aisle re-design, based on the recommendation from this smart, efficient research. The recommended re-design represents a \$2Million distribution opportunity for the brand team. The client team's ability to share data and direct input from the consumer provided a competitive advantage in their vision of the store of the future, which the retail business partner successfully sold to his internal management for expansion. And, the brand team was able to open up a (previously closed) door to a semi-annual mod reset partnership with this retailer.



Native. Leveraging tools consumers use every day to learn quickly, easily & efficiently about purchase habits, brand opinions and why they switch between a handful of brands in a highly competitive category.

What was the challenge?

Our CPG brand team client had a few hypotheses about why one sub-line of their Mega-brand product was declining. A few of their other products were growing, but not at the same rate that the problem product was declining. So, they needed to understand what was really happening in order to decide the right course of action.

What did we do?

For just \$10K and over the course of a few days, we met consumers right where they interact and communicate every day...email. Open-ended questions targeted at users who had purchase the sub-line, and then moved on to other products, revealed better insight than a quantitative survey or focus group. Face-time interviews with a sub-set of consumers filled in some extra detail. Incentives were low, response rates were near perfect, and consumer answers were thorough, authentic and insightful. We created a real-time access spreadsheet of verbatims allowed the client team to follow along as responses came in. The approach was simple, pragmatic and personal.

What were the results?

The team was able to confirm a few hypotheses, refute a few others and uncover insight to help drive a recommendation forward about how best to leverage the product in question, as well as the products in the rest of the portfolio. And, they learned a good deal about the impact of high levels of in-store and price promotion, consumer perceived low levels of differentiation, and high levels of at-shelf confusion across products in the line-up. Consumer verbatims were needed influence for differentiation efforts.

Enabling. Two days of engaging teaching and practice to equip and enable an analytics team to innovate more effectively and efficiently, and set a standard for the rest of their organization.



What was the challenge?

Our client was a high energy analytics team with no shortage of ideas for ways they could be innovating to meet end customers' needs. The challenge they faced? Most of their ideas require a new business model for the organization they work in, and internal stakeholders are busy with competing priorities. End customers were a few layers removed from day to day access for the analytics team, and seemed unreachable. Previous "training" workshops were dry and generic.

What did we do?

Across two days, we taught our Immersive Idea Development Process and Building Customer Empathy to Enable Innovation within B2B Companies to this high energy, but initially skeptical analytics team. We integrated a real innovation opportunity to apply the teaching to a real, live challenge and enable the team to build skills and make progress on their project.

What were the results?

The team was unanimously surprised and empowered by learning about the importance and practice of empathy building both with internal stakeholders and external end customers. They practiced and applied skills and built a plan for developing their initiative through the Immersive Idea Development process. And, they identified ways to apply what they learned more broadly through personal action plans. The organization has plan to extend this teaching to other functions and teams.



Connect to learn more:

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