

SEPTEMBER 2023

PRODUCT DESIGN:  
Designing the experience



Companies are in a race to realize value as increasing digital complexity and decreasing customer satisfaction reach a crescendo. They need to scale rapidly to remain relevant in a crowded marketplace. **Customer expectations are at an all-time high, digital experiences are lagging, and brands are struggling to connect product strategy with design and delivery.** They must deliver impactful, seamless experiences across the entire customer journey to compete.

Where are companies falling short? Many have invested in complex technology that doesn't support new product design and customer experiences. Often, they have developed a solid go-to-market strategy, but the design and execution of the customer experience lag and dilute the vision. They have missed the critical juncture of meeting customers at their point of need, or they simply do not have the right tools to deliver an intuitive, easy-to-use solution.

Having a great vision isn't always enough—a truly successful product experience results from the iterative design process in which the vision and solution may need to evolve to meet user needs. The approach to design is just as important as the vision itself—and a human-centered approach can help organizations deliver winning experiences that satisfy and delight customers.

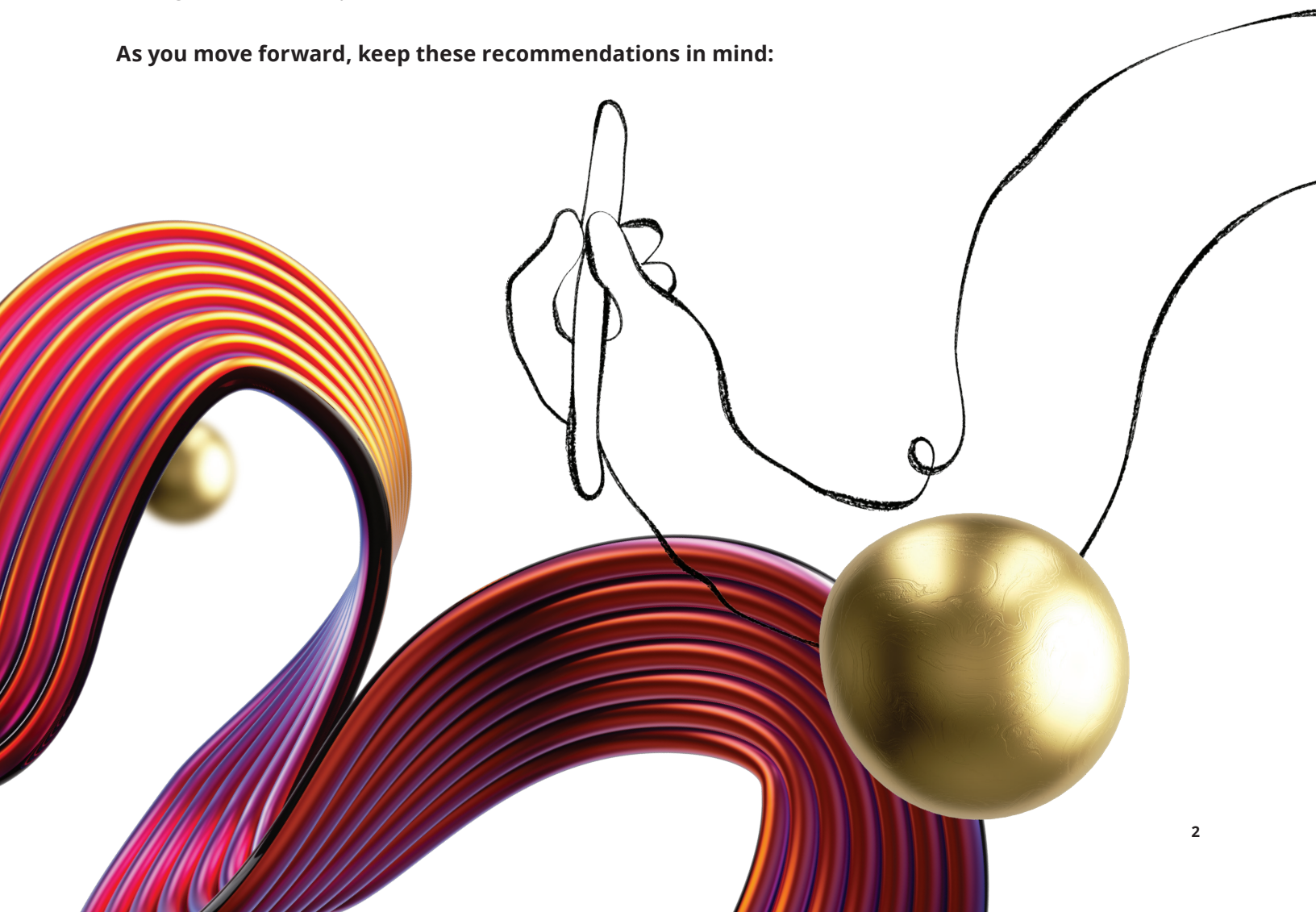


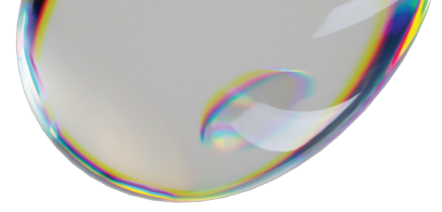
# Taking a human approach to creative and technology integration

Design is foundational to the product development journey, especially for companies who want to compete successfully. Today's designers, no longer associated only with studio or agency work, are pivotal members of the product development team who help shape how brands approach problems and how work is implemented. By integrating research and strategy, plus the principles of human-centered design, you can deliver product experiences that are streamlined, executable, and consistent, while providing a return on the technology investment.

A human-centered approach to product design helps organizations get to the root of user challenges, develop solutions that solve human needs, and enable better change management and adoption.

**As you move forward, keep these recommendations in mind:**





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## Focus on human experience

Some organizations believe that a human-centered approach to design only applies to the user interface (UI) and not the entire experience. This assumption would be a disservice to both your product team and the customer. Product design isn't only about creating an interface that is visually appealing. Human-centered design considers how the solution works, how the user interacts with it, and how the flow and sequence of events unfolds.

The most impactful product and experience designers take a holistic view of the digital

product—not just the user interface—and consider every human touchpoint along the customer's journey. They are data, design, and impact driven. Human-centered design requires keen listening skills and empathy to find the customers' unarticulated needs, plus the ability to apply that insight to creative problem-solving and strong relationship-building. Experienced designers bring the skills to understand and bridge the connection between what solution is needed, how it is pulled together, and how it shapes the customer experience, time after time.

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## Engage design early in the process

While most companies begin their product journey by developing a vision and product strategy, few realize that design is integral for a successful approach to product experience and delivery. Generative research helps designers find the right problem to solve as they seek a deeper understanding of the users as complex humans and their pain points, motivations, and mindset. Applying this insight during the design process often reshapes the understanding of the problem and its intended product value proposition.

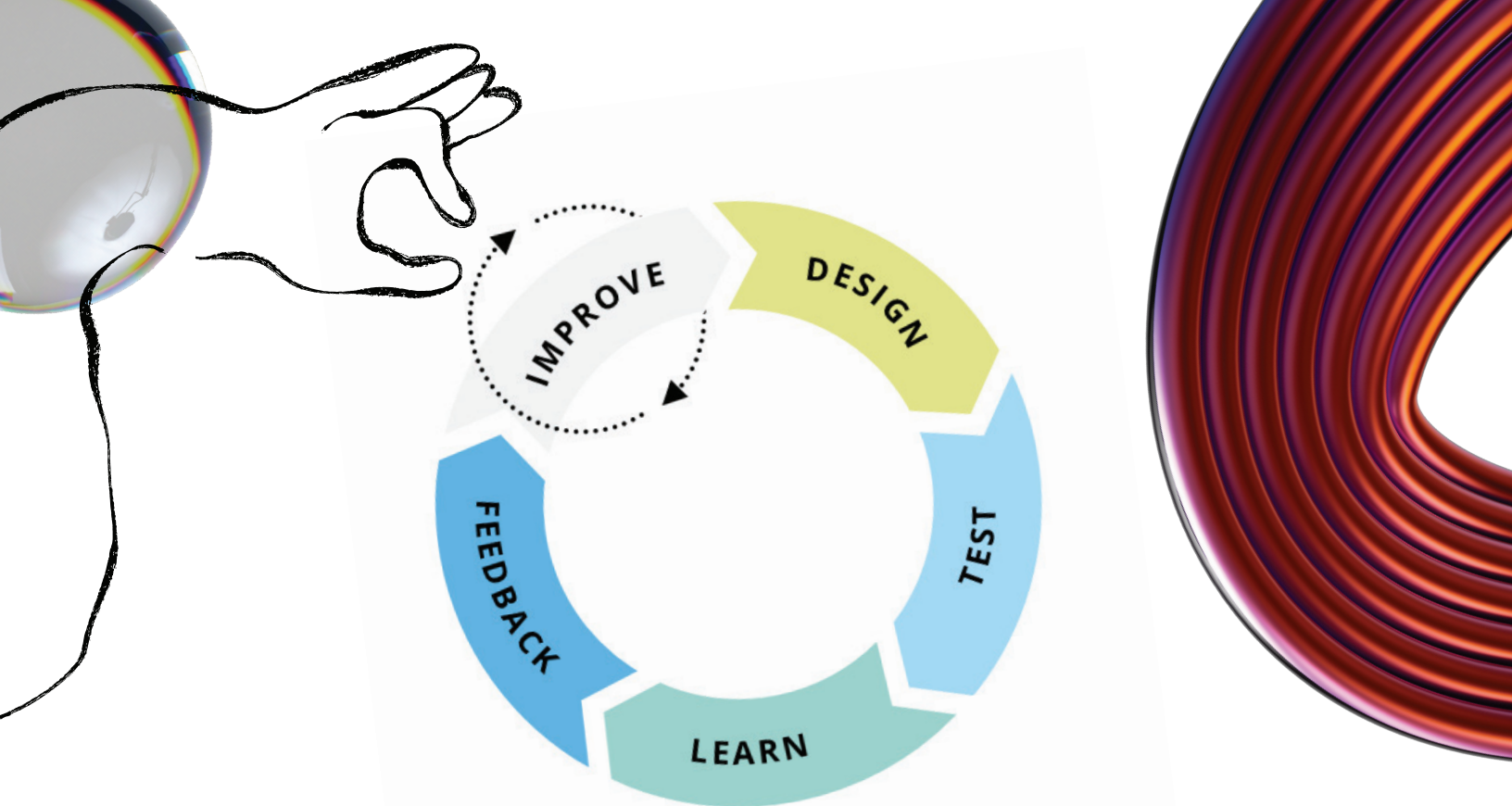
This understanding informs the development of the overarching experience and how the product fits within that experience. The customer experience may include a digital medium (an app or website,) but it also includes the entirety of

events leading up to that gateway—offline events such as visiting a retail store, a phone call with the support team, or other physical aspects of the customer journey.

Design is where the experience strategy is built and where experience principles are outlined to ensure that all the subsequent work aligns to the initial vision. Creating remarkable digital experiences and products requires accountability and a commitment to connecting the dots across the organization. The team must be committed to fulfilling their brand's values, goals, and focus on the experience—not just the technology—and how it delivers their brand promise throughout the entire customer experience.





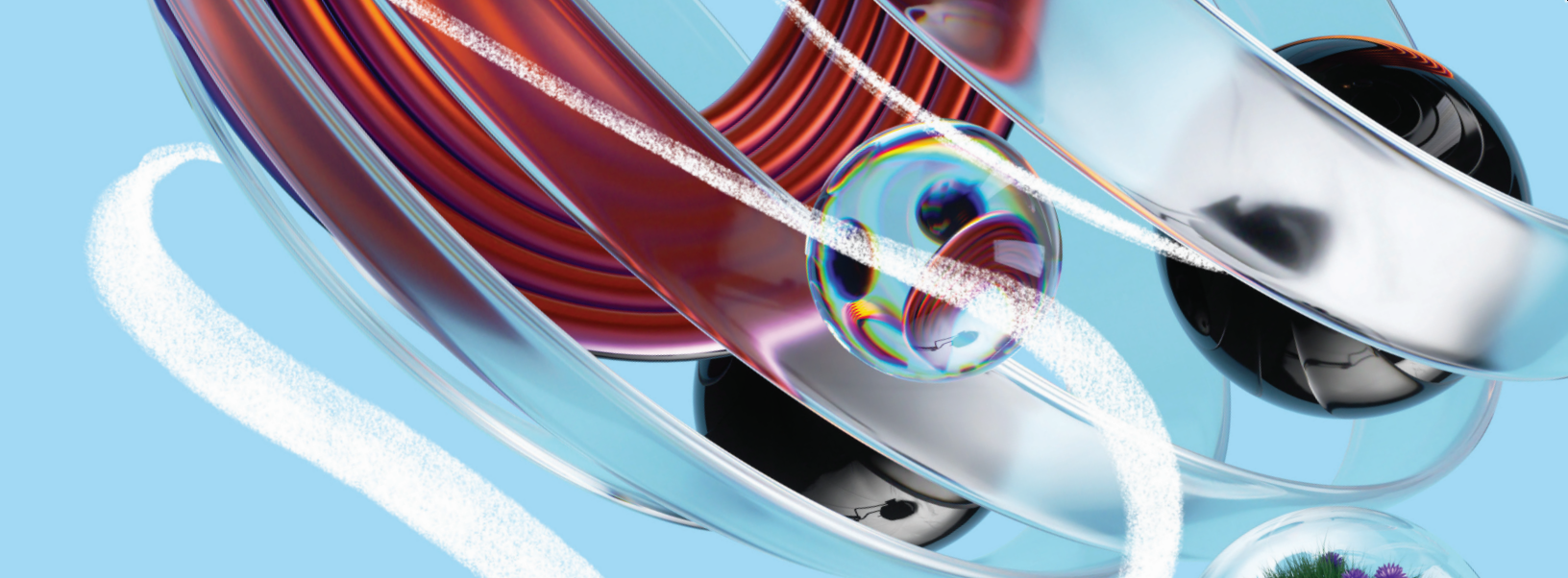


## Iteratively design, test, and learn

Many companies think of the vision being the most important piece in a product journey, but the approach to executing the vision is equally important. This includes both getting the solution right by first understanding the problem, and iteratively improving the design to meet user needs and business goals.

Success relies on a cycle of designing the solution/prototype, testing it, learning from the tests, getting user feedback, and continuously improving the solution. Designers, product managers, engineers, and business stakeholders should closely collaborate throughout the design process to ideate, conceptualize, challenge, and evolve the vision and solution as needed. It can also help

users feel more involved in the process, and they may be more likely to adopt the finished product. Research should be a component of the ongoing product strategy and design cycle. As a result, you can better understand user needs and gather insights that will lead to ongoing refinement—and, ultimately, more powerful, resonant digital experiences.



# How will you design experiences that delight customers?

Product experiences that satisfy customers and provide a high return on investment come to life with a human-centered approach to design. Engaging design early in the process, focusing on the human experience, and using ongoing research to understand user needs can lead to products—and business outcomes—that delight.

## Get in touch

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