CO-DESIGN QUICK START GUIDE

A starter kit for running your first co-design project, by LogMeIn.
SETTING THE STAGE

SHOULD I UTILIZE CO-DESIGN?

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the research question we’re trying to solve?
2. What other knowledge or research do we have that we can leverage to prepare an effective co-design activity?
3. Is the problem:
   • Defined enough that we can guide a participant through the exercise?
   • Open enough that the participant has room to insert their own ideas?
   • One that lends itself to visual or physical expression — can we “draw” this?

CREATE A CLEAR STATEMENT:

We are bringing in participants to work on [a specific thing].

We expect the ideas and insights from the session will help us determine [target outcome].

PITCHING CO-DESIGN TO YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

• Bring concrete examples, either an internal or external case study, of how co-design can be beneficial.
• Focus on benefits and expected outcomes (which you outlined on the left).
• Bring them along! Livestream sessions and invite them to the post-session recaps so they hear the stories and understand the artifacts.

PRO TIP

Running a pilot with an internal participant is a great way to test your script, tech setup, and start to prove the value of the co-design with minimal risk.
IMPLEMENTATION

ASSEMBLE THE DREAM TEAM

Facilitator: 
Directs the session and moves things along. (We used a researcher.)

Designer: 
Helps interpret (visually) what the participant is thinking.

Note-taker: 
Takes notes! Especially high-level observations that may be useful in a post-session debrief with stakeholders.

Logistics: 
Monitors tech, grabs post-its, supplies people with snacks, etc.

SCRIPT

10 mins  –  Team introductions and general background questions
10 mins  –  Project specific interview questions
5 mins  –  Intro to co-design and icebreaker activity
45 mins  –  Co-design activity
5 mins  –  Wrap up, closing thoughts, participant feedback

When you introduce the idea of co-design, your participant will probably say something like: "You want me to design it? I can't even draw stick figures."

Reassure them that they can rely on the designer in the room for visuals, this is not a test of their design skills, and that any input they provide is valuable to the team. The more comfortable your participant feels, the better session you’ll have.

SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

- Large drawing board or flipchart
- Markers and writing utensils
- Post-it notes
- Tape
- Drinks and snacks
- Pre-printed design artifacts (printed wireframe elements, if applicable to your project)

TECH CHECKLIST

- Document camera
- Tripod
- Room camera(s)
- Room phone or mic
- Observer room computer

PRO TIP

A blank drawing board is very intimidating – start with a frame to work within. Depending on the project, you might sketch a rough browser tab or phone to set context for your participant.
TECH SETUP DIAGRAM

This sample tech setup worked well for us, but your needs and constraints may be different. Test your setup vigorously before starting your sessions. Also, while we used GoToMeeting to share screens and cameras, other online meeting tools could work.

Document Camera
- GoToMeeting Presenter
- Shares screen via camera
- Connected to audio, Volume = 0
- Should be plugged in for battery

Room Camera(s)
- GoToMeeting Participants
- Shares webcam via camera
- Can connect to audio for extra mics, Volume = 0
- Should be plugged in for battery
- Can have as many (or few) as you like

Room Phone
- GoToMeeting Participant
- Other phones should be muted
- Generally better audio quality than phones or laptops in the room

Observer Room Computer
- GoToMeeting Organizer
- Records the meeting
- Microphone muted
- Volume up for observers to hear the discussion
- Can be connected to a TV or projector