

Identifying customer segments for a device to treat chronic tinnitus

The one where I used photovoice to define jobs-to-be-done



The Problem > My Approach > Outcome

An startup developing a medical device for the treatment of chronic tinnitus wanted to answer the following questions:

“How do different customers experience chronic tinnitus? How does the device fit into different customers daily routines?”

Scenario

- The start-up’s design team wanted to understand their customers more deeply to help them prioritize features for the upcoming version of the product.
- Tinnitus is an ‘invisible’ condition and assessing its impact on patients lives can be particularly challenging.

Task

- To engage with current customers to deeply understand their **experience** of the condition.
- To create **personas** and identify **jobs-to-be-done** for different customer segments.

The Problem > My Approach > Outcome

Methods

- We adapted a method called [photovoice](#) to gain insight into the experience of people suffering from chronic tinnitus.
- During one week, existing customers took **photos** of situations where they thought about their condition, including both positive and negative moments.
- We conducted interviews to dive deep into their **needs, motivations, desires, coping strategies and device usage behaviors.**



Listening to white noise and liking it.



Driving the bus for work gives me some respite from the tinnitus. When I've turned off the engine it's there again.



Twilight,, and the birds are gradually becoming silent,,tinnitus gradually becoming louder.



Music 🎧 listening 🎹 and playing can help on bad days.

The Problem > My Approach > Outcome

Sam the Sleeper



Sam wants to get a good night's sleep so he can tackle the day ahead

Back Story

Sam developed tinnitus about 3 years ago. It seems to occur randomly.

Maddie the Private Masker



"I feel like my full of electricity"



Maddie doesn't want to wake up to the sound of tinnitus.

Back Story

Age: 48 years old
Lives: Naas, Co. Kil
Tech comfort: High
Occupation: Senior

Tinnitus Perception
Loudness
Annoyance

Tinnitus Character
MML
THI
TFI
STAI

Improvement Goal
Loudness
Pitch
Concentration
Sleep
Stress

Age: 46 years old
Lives: Ringsend, Dublin
Tech comfort: Medium
Occupation: PR/ Events M

Tinnitus Perception
Loudness
Annoyance

Tinnitus Characteristics
MML
THI
TFI
STAI

Improvement Goals
Loudness
Pitch
Concentration
Sleep
Stress

Michael the Public Masker



Michael wants to mask his tinnitus during the day when he is at work.

Back Story

Michael works in a busy bar where he works long evenings. He loves music and entertaining. He plays the drums and is married to Genevieve. He developed tinnitus 3 years ago. He gradually realized it was there. He is not sure what caused it, maybe it was exposure to loud sounds at the bar where he works or perhaps it was the drumming. His tinnitus sounds like a hissing noise. He needs routine and structure in his life.

Motivations

When working at the bar, Michael wants to mask his tinnitus so she can hear his customers and colleagues.

He wants to mask the tinnitus to avoid becoming overly stressed.

He wants to limit the level of noise he is exposed to at work so he can prevent his tinnitus from getting worse and affecting his ability to sleep later that night.

When following a conversation, he wants to mask the tinnitus so he can fully focus on what is being said.

When not out entertaining, he wants to avoid the tinnitus so he can interact with his friends and family and feel invigorated.

Frustrations

- Being perceived by others as weak / ill
- Having no solutions for masking his tinnitus when in public
- Missing part of a conversation and having to ask people to repeat themselves
- Not being able to focus on his work

Ideal Experience

Needs a low maintenance, easy-to-use device
Not seem to compare himself with other people with tinnitus
Needs reassurance that he is doing well
Needs to be able to spread treatment time throughout the day
Wants to do other activities while using the device



"Sometimes my tinnitus me want to do this!"

"These escalators reflect the constant cycle of tinnitus in my head but unlike tinnitus you can hit the stop button"



"This is the bedroom. I spend most of the morning looking at it in the morning sleep because"



"Sometimes my tinnitus me want to do this!"

Outcome

- Three customer **personas** were identified with distinct **jobs-to-be-done**.
- Outputs were discussed with the client's design, product and engineering teams to guide **feature prioritization** for the upcoming version of the product.
- The design team reported that being involved in the data analysis helped them **empathize** with their customers in a much deeper level than ever before.