

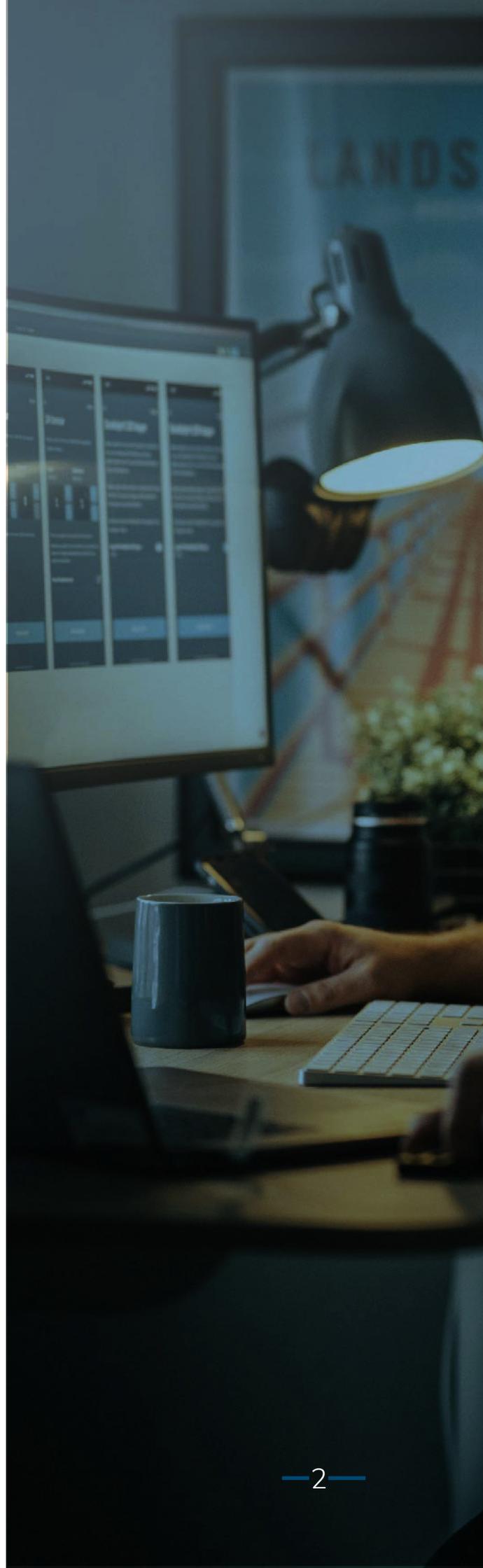
Let's make a digital product. It's easy, isn't it?

Success is within reach!

LEAWARE

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IF IT'S SO EASY, THEN WHY DO 90-95% OF DIGITAL PRODUCTS TURN OUT TO BE FLOPS?

What is the reason for products not finding their place in the market? Is it poor marketing, a poor concept, insufficient resources, or a badly matched team?

Why does it take so much time to test new ideas while building a digital product, and why is it a risky process?

According to many studies on the causes of failing to create and launch a digital product, one of the most significant reasons is the product not meeting the needs of the market and its users. The list also includes [lack of capital](#), [competition](#), [bad business model](#), and [bad timing](#).

The causes mentioned above do not come out of nowhere. They are the result of [wrong assumptions](#) and [consequently ill-advised actions](#). Overestimating the value of an idea is one such assumption. Once you have it, the business plan is created, resources are estimated, actions are planned. [Your adventure in search of luck and fortune begins](#).

You start creating new features. You care about [quality](#), [innovation](#), and [management](#). Month after month passes, the budget shrinks, the product grows, every member of the team is happy, you're doing something great, and you can't wait for the users to finally see it. What you don't realize is that only luck can help you succeed.

As you are reaching the final stage, [a series of unfortunate events begin to occur](#). You start to run out of funds, some new highly efficient competition appears, new regulations are created, or even a similar product becomes available in the stores. It turns out that your assumptions were flawed. What is worse, you have made a product of great quality and functionality, but nobody wants to use it. [You ask yourself: how could this happen?](#)

The statistics are relentless. About [95% of projects fail](#) within the first 18 months. Almost half of them fail [because of the product does not meet the needs of the user](#).

Should the unmet needs of users be identified before moving to design a solution?

Before companies [start generating ideas](#), writing complicated [business plans](#), looking for a [team](#), [resources](#), and [funds](#), they should first [identify](#) whether the user has a current need which is unsatisfied. In other words, they need to ascertain whether there is an actual [need](#) to be fulfilled. [This calls for an investigation](#).

Allow us to present:

Jobs To Be Done – a way of creating successful products.

No more luck, just facts.

“Is there a job for our customers that needs to get done but no product to get the job done?” That question is one that Clayton M. Christensen – an American economist and Professor at Harvard Business School – recommends that all executives ask themselves and is crucial in creating products and services that they want to be successful.

Everyone wants to transform their idea into reality successfully, right?

This question comes from a customer-oriented theory called Jobs To Be Done (JTBD) that Christensen popularised in his book *Competing Against Luck*. The most important thing to note when applying this theory is understanding the client’s “job” (specific goal), the challenges they face doing this job, and their motivation to “hire” a product to do this job for them. This leads companies to question whether their product is helping their users to do their jobs and solve their problems.

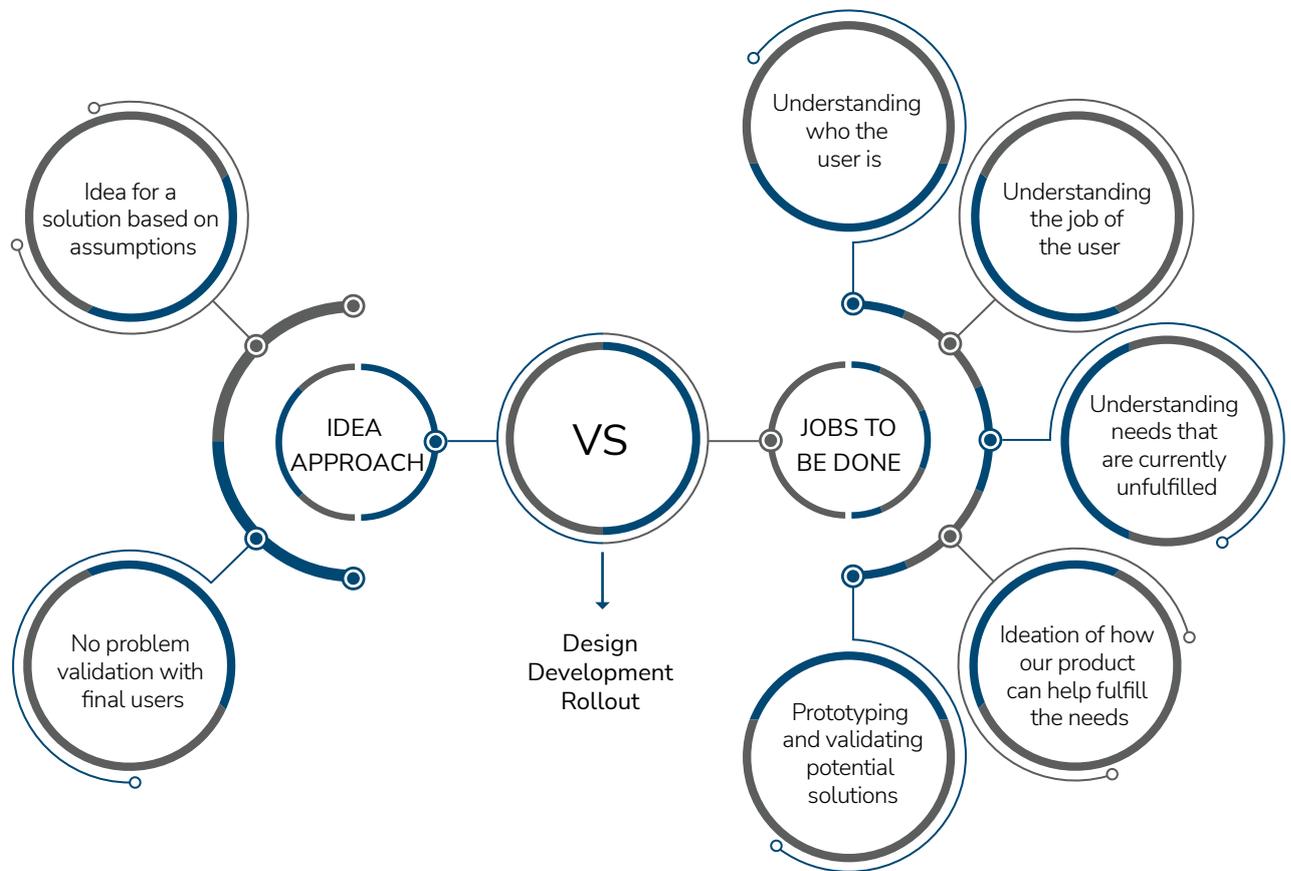
It also helps them to assess which features place the digital product above similar ones on the market. This is the only way to provide an innovative product which brings value to customers (where value means satisfying their needs).

Jobs to be done in software development: From theory to practice

The JTBD approach differs from the “classic” approach to developing a software project. The classic approach usually starts with an idea before going through scoping and development. Testing, validating, and launching are subsequent stages of the approach.

JTBD theory highlights that the classic approach isn’t a good model for building software products. The first and most important step to start with is uncovering the needs of users, rather than creating ideas. The time for ideas will come later after the needs of users have been clearly identified. The success of every business stems from understanding their users’ needs well. Gathering this data minimises the risk of creating a product that users won’t use.

IDEA APPROACH VS JOBS TO BE DONE APPROACH IN SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT



The JTBD approach helps to make the result of your innovation predictable. You can predict how your users will behave, and what features you need to develop in order to satisfy the users' needs.

Christensen wrote "When we buy a product, we essentially 'hire' something to get a job done. If it does the job well, when we are confronted with the same job, we hire that same product again. And if the product does a crummy job, we 'fire' it and look around for something else we might hire to solve the problem."

(Clayton M. Christensen, *Competing Against Luck*).

EXAMPLE

Most adults will remember devices such as portable CD players or MP3 players. Why were they replaced by solutions such as Spotify? After all, they were very popular and used by millions of people around the world.

Have you wondered how to make your new digital product, like Spotify, successful? Great products are built around solving problems, so before focusing on building your product and designing the solution, focus on the users' needs and challenges. Look at the process you should go through and think about creating a software solution for your business. If done properly, you will be able to create value for your users.

HOW DOES JTBD IMPROVE THE UNMET NEED DISCOVERY PROCESS?

Think about your users first. Translate their needs into features to help them solve their problems in the most efficient way. Follow the steps below.

PRODUCT DISCOVERY PROCESS

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Who is the user of your product?	What is the main job they need to have done?	What stages does the user's jobs consist of?	What unmet needs are not addressed by other solutions?	Verify your idea and discover the problem you need to resolve.	Design your solution
➔	➔	➔	➔	➔	✔

1. Who is the user of your product?

Before you discover a job that you want your digital product to address, you need to have a well defined target group.

EXAMPLE

If Spotify had targeted audiophiles whose most important need was using stereo equipment to achieve the highest quality sound, Spotify wouldn't have become successful. Instead, they targeted audiophiles who listened to music on-the-go.

2. What is the main job they need to get done?

Identify, define, and describe it.

Before you start focusing on your product, focus on your customers (who will become the product's users). Identify their needs and problems. At this stage, focus on problem solving rather than creating features.

EXAMPLE

For Spotify, the main need of their users was listening to music on-the-go. Usually, the need itself does not change, but the way needs are met change through advancing technology. That's how music technology transitioned from portable music players to cloud-based solutions like Spotify, Deezer, and Apple Music.

3. What are the stages of the users' job?

How do they prepare to get the job done? What do they do before it starts? How do they act while doing it? When can they say the job is done?

Divide the job that your users do into stages and assess whether your solution can help them at every stage. It's also very important to understand the emotional aspect of the job. How does the user want to be perceived by others? What emotions and aspirations drive them before, during, and after "the job"?

Once you've determined what job you want to help your users with and what steps it consists of, then consider whether your product will help them do the job more efficiently than the solutions they're currently using.

4. Challenges and unmet needs not addressed by other solutions

Will users be able to do their jobs easier and faster with your solution? What is your unique value proposition, the unique selling point? Why is your solution better than others? Do users have any alternatives on the market?

Try to find which solutions the users currently use to do their job. Do they still struggle with some parts of the job? Do they like or dislike the way other products help them? Analyse and evaluate how they try to manage these challenges.

At this stage you can discover some users' needs that are unmet. It is possible that they have yet to be satisfied by other digital products. Use this advantage wisely and think well how you can meet those needs with your solution.

5. Verifying

Now it's time to verify your idea. Can your product solve customers' problems to satisfy their needs? Have you found problems that your potential users face on a regular basis? Don't design the solution or choose crucial functionalities for the first version of your product until you have this information.

6. Start working on potential solutions

The process of designing your solution can now start. With all the knowledge you have gathered, you are embarking on a path leading you to a successful product.



THE RIGHT TRACK: OUR EXAMPLES

What characterises innovative products is that they are not a collection of multiple different functionalities. They focus on one or two user jobs, particularly at the beginning, in order to meet the needs that have not been met so far.

Using JTBD and our discovery process called the “box” method, we help start-ups discover their users’ real problems. We help companies focus on these issues and choose the right functionalities for the first versions of their software solutions. The result is that the users get value from the product.

1. Runeasi – helping the world to run safely

Runeasi is a KU Leuven (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium) sports tech spin-off. Their mission is to make the world run better and to help people enjoy pain-free running by leveraging scientific research in biomechanics and artificial intelligence (AI).

It is the first scientifically validated wearable technology that combines biomechanics and AI to introduce an innovative way to look at running. Runeasi wanted to make a mobile application working with a sensor and to test the solution with physiotherapists and their patients. They came to us with a list of many features to implement and asked for an estimation.

At Leaware, we helped Runeasi define the main purpose for using the first version of an application and choose the most important functionalities, while maintaining a minimal budget. Together, using JTBD we created a successful product that grows and expands in the market, bringing value to their users.

2. Trooper.be – a way from 5-8,500

Trooper.be is a Belgian platform that allows users to financially support non-profit organisations through online purchases of everyday items. Trooper.be was a start-up which appeared on the market in 2016.

Initially, Trooper.be had five registered associations. Founders of the platform knew that the concept was great, but had amateur technical solutions, no experience, and no tools to make it successful, and were unable to develop and scale the platform. Scalability, enabling new organisations to register, and raising funds were challenge at this stage. Thanks to experts at Leaware, Trooper.be’s website was transformed into an attractive and efficient platform, which focused on users’ needs. Right now, Trooper.be is one of the biggest platforms in Belgium, containing:

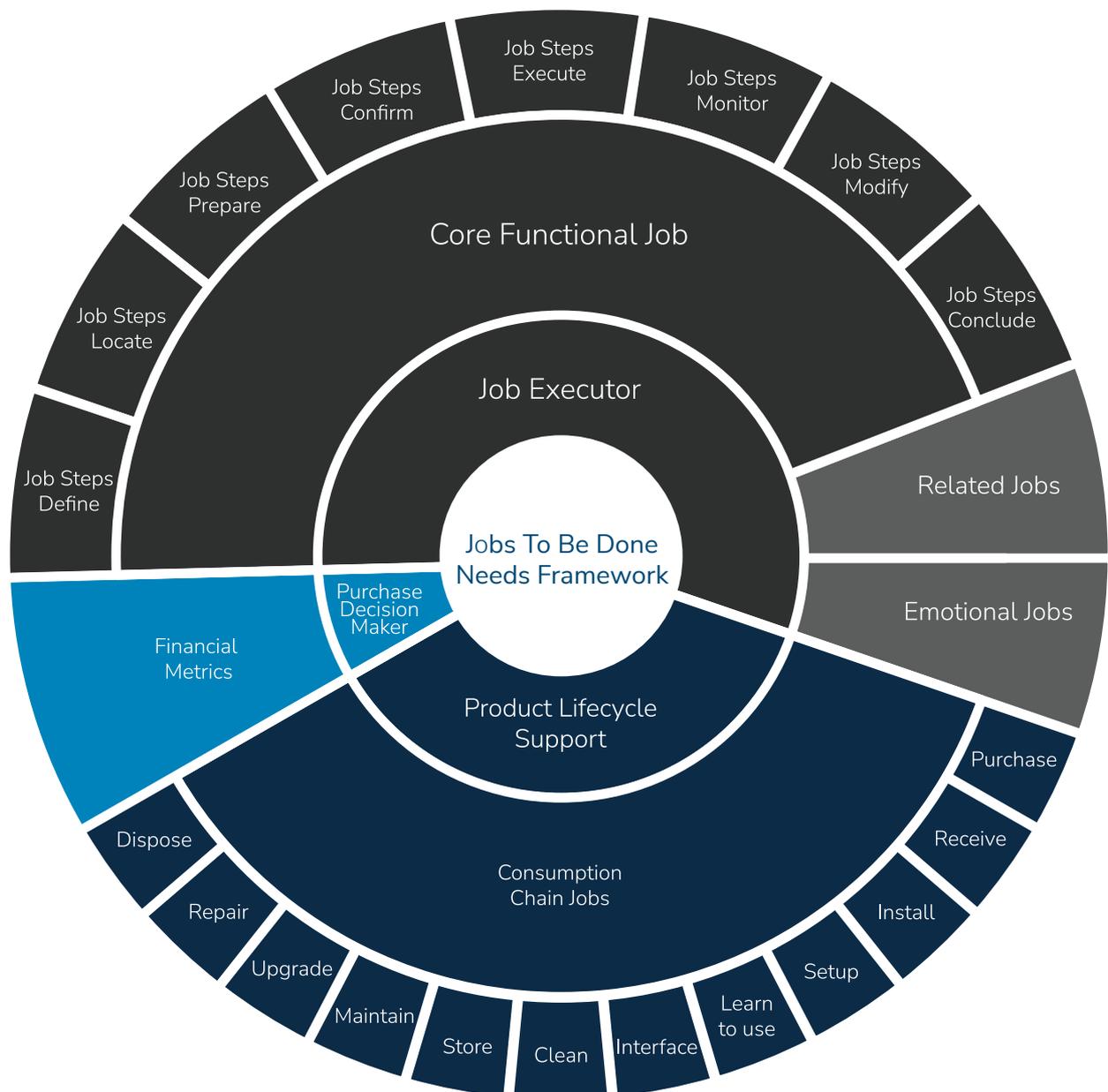
- 8,500 registered associations and organisations
- 1,000 online shops in co-operation
- 500,000 users

3. Beautybox – the best beauty services in a few clicks

Beautybox is a mobile application that allows users to search and arrange beauty services in a selected location and connect service providers with their clients.

The creators of Beautybox wanted to help providers and freelancers (especially those who are new on the market) to build their own brand, find clients locally, manage their calendars, and grow their businesses.

Leaware experts helped them understand that they should divide beauty providers into two target groups based on their status and needs. At the beginning, it was crucial to find an area on the market to focus on. Functionalities of the product were developed to meet the users' needs and solve the problems of two groups of providers.



Sources on Jobs to be done

TESTIMONIALS



I think Leaware offers much more than just extra developers. They think along, they quickly understood our problem domain and helped us to prioritise coming up with a product that maximises the value for our end users while respecting our budget.

Tim Op De Beéck | CTO



Thanks to the assistance of the Leaware team, the company was able to set up a CMS team that helped reduce the required maintenance for their developers by as much as 60%. This will allow the company to focus their efforts more on improving the platform for the customers. The flexibility of the team and the way they are open for feedback is impressive.

Arne Van loo | Digital Lead



Leaware not only performs required tasks, but also presents a very comprehensive knowledge about our business. They have not only been an outsourced company, but have been involved in the decision-making process with a great value added for the entire project.

Nuno Monsanto | CEO

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Since 2010, LEAWARE has been helping start-ups and already established companies build and develop their digital solutions, making them grow, boost their businesses, and succeed.

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We build the right software.
We build the software right.

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