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REINFORCING BRAND COOPERATIVE

Holistic Thinking, Collaborative Transformation

Ramanan S V, CEO - India & South Asia, Intellect Design Arena, demystifies Design Thinking from multiple perspectives such as creativity, agility, employees, partners, software, etc:

Manoj Agrawal: If design thinking is a powerful answer to something, what is that question?

Ramanan S V: The question would be: How can we reimagine problem-solving to create meaningful solutions that seamlessly balance empathy, innovation, and scalability? For me, Design Thinking is about taking a step back and asking: "How do we deeply understand and connect with the needs of people while addressing real-world challenges in a way that drives value and impact?" It's not just about problem-solving; it's about uncovering opportunities that we didn't even realize existed and doing so with a human-centred lens. At Intellect, we have discovered that Design Thinking helps us co-create solutions that transform the way banks operate, making them more agile, efficient, and future-ready. It's the ability to answer why, what, and how - all at once, ensuring that the solution is relevant today and remains adaptable for tomorrow.

What gives design thinking the power that makes it unique?

The ability to merge empathy with innovation is what makes design thinking uniquely powerful. Design Thinking is thinking about how can we design something better! Behind anything successful, which has sustained the ever-changing market dynamics, lies a great 'Design' in its genesis. This makes it especially powerful in solving complex, ambiguous problems, enabling the creation of intuitive, scalable solutions that balance functionality, innovation, and sustainability.

Every great product or service that withstands the test of time, has a thoughtfully engineered design at its foundation. This approach is particularly powerful for addressing ambiguous and complex challenges, for creating scalable solutions that balance usability, innovation, and sustainability. Leveraging this mental model, we have built products and solutions that not only solve today's challenges, but are adaptable to future disruptions.



Design thinking for physical things like furniture, luggage, shoes, TV remote, etc., is self-evident. In what ways does design thinking improve software?

Design Thinking improves software by placing users at the center of the design process, ensuring that applications are not only functional but also intuitive and delightful to use. It begins by deeply understanding the user's needs, behaviors and pain points, and then creating solutions that resonate with real-world challenges. This empathetic approach ensures that software aligns with user expectations and provides a seamless experience, like how well-designed physical products enhance usability.

Beyond addressing explicit requirements, design thinking uncovers unstated needs, identifying opportunities for innovation that users may not articulate themselves. Mapping user journeys and workflows helps eliminate friction points, making software interactions smoother and more engaging. This focus on crafting seamless experiences transforms software into a tool that genuinely empowers its users.

Intellect's eMACH.ai exemplifies this as being the most comprehensive, composable and innovative open finance platform addressing the evolving needs of banks,

financial institutions and their customers. Design Thinking makes eMACH.ai more than a platform - it transforms into a strategic enabler for business and user success.

How can engineers use AI and ML to improve design thinking?

Engineers can use AI and ML to enhance design thinking by analyzing vast datasets to uncover patterns, predict user behavior, and identify unstated needs. These technologies enable rapid prototyping, testing, and iteration by simulating outcomes and optimising solutions. With AI-driven insights, engineers can make more informed decisions, enhancing the design's relevance and functionality.

Does design thinking improve creativity? Does creativity improve design thinking? If yes, please give an example of each at Intellect.

Design Thinking and Creativity are two peas in a pod. While design thinking creates an empathetic and exploratory framework, allowing for ideation that aligns with real-world needs, creativity enhances design thinking by bringing imaginative perspectives that challenge norms and enrich the process. Together they create a synergistic cycle that drives innovation and impactful outcomes. With Design Thinking and investment in R&D, we launched eMACH.ai. This most comprehensive, composable and innovative open finance platform enables financial institutions to build future-ready technology solutions that provide a significant global competitive edge.

In a VUCA world, what is the correlation between design thinking and agility? Give one example of how design thinking has helped Intellect be more agile.

In a VUCA world, Design Thinking and Agility are closely interwoven, creating a synergy that allows organizations to thrive amidst rapid change and uncertainty. Design Thinking, with its iterative and

user-centred approach, lays the foundation for agility by fostering adaptability, innovation, and responsiveness. It enables businesses to remain grounded in empathy and relevance, even as external conditions shift unpredictably.

Breaking down complex problems into manageable parts and continuously refining solutions helps organizations respond to emerging challenges and opportunities with speed and precision. Agility, on the other hand, amplifies the impact of design thinking by promoting cross-functional collaboration and iterative execution. Together, they empower organizations to pivot quickly, experiment fearlessly, and adapt effectively to new realities, making them resilient in the face of volatility and ambiguity. This blend of design thinking and agility is not just about reacting to change; it's about anticipating it, staying ahead, and creating value.

Tell us more about the correlation between design thinking and eMACH.ai?

Design Thinking allows us to connect the Business, Technology and Operations of a bank uniquely and engineer solutions that drive unprecedented value, aiding a collaborative experience and enhancing business agility. Design Thinking ensures solutions align with real-world challenges by encouraging iterative processes, rapid prototyping, and adaptability to evolving needs. This empowers Intellect to deliver solutions that align with both customer expectations and emerging market trends. With eMACH.ai, we broke down the complex banking ecosystem into modular components - financial events, microservices, APIs, cloud, headless architecture, and AI. Once we broke down the complex banking ecosystem, we zipcoded 386 microservices, 2015 APIs and 650 events. This composability allowed global banks and financial institutions to rapidly adapt to regional needs and regulatory demands while maintaining a consistent framework.

Does design thinking impact employees in any way? If yes, give one example at Intellect.

The Design Thinking culture fostered at Intellect encourages team members to approach problem-solving with empathy and a user-first mindset. Design Thinking

has transformed from a core iterative process to a rule book for all our products and is at the core of our employees' approach. Design Thinking has inspired us to create this one-of-its-kind experience zone – 8012 FinTech Design Center, the World's first Transformation Center dedicated to Design Thinking Principles, in Chennai.

As part of the 10th anniversary of the 8012 Fintech Design Center in 2023, we hosted the 72-hour DESIGN-ATHON Challenge. This exciting event brought together 27 diverse teams of associates from around the world, each eager to showcase their innovative skills and creativity. Over the course of 3 intense days, participants collaborated to develop smart solutions using Design Thinking and addressed a variety of challenging problem statements.

Design thinking for a product is understandable. What is the impact of design thinking on an enterprise? On Intellect?

Design thinking transforms an enterprise by embedding a mindset that prioritizes empathy, collaboration, and innovation at every level. It reshapes the way organizations perceive and solve challenges, fostering an environment where the focus shifts from merely delivering products to creating meaningful, user-centric experiences. Design Thinking aligns business objectives with user needs, to not only address immediate challenges but also anticipate future trends, driving sustainable growth and adaptability.

At Intellect, Design Thinking has become the bedrock of our approach to innovation and enterprise transformation. It influences every aspect of our operations, from how we engage with customers to how we develop and deliver solutions. By fostering a culture of empathy, we ensure that every product we create is deeply aligned with the expectations and aspirations of our customers. Through iterative processes and cross-functional collaboration, we've cultivated an ecosystem that thrives on continuous improvement and adaptability.

This commitment to Design Thinking has allowed Intellect to stay ahead of industry trends, consistently delivering value-driven, future-ready financial platforms. It

empowers us to view challenges as opportunities for co-creation and innovation, transforming customer relationships into partnerships and elevating our position as a leader in the financial technology space.

How has design thinking changed the relationship between Intellect and its customers?

Design thinking has fundamentally transformed the way Intellect engages with its customers, evolving our relationships from transactional interactions into dynamic and collaborative partnerships. Adopting a customer-first mindset helps us move away from the traditional model of delivering pre-defined, one-size-fits-all solutions. Instead, we actively involve our customers in the creation process, aligning with their unique challenges, goals, and aspirations. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of shared ownership and ensures that the solutions we design are not only tailored to their immediate needs, but also equipped to adapt to future demands.

A shining example of this transformation is our 8012 FinTech Design Center, an innovative space where co-creation comes to life. At this center, customers actively engage with our teams, participating in every step of the design journey - from ideation to prototyping to final delivery. This hands-on collaboration ensures that the solutions we build are not just aligned with expectations but go beyond them, offering unparalleled value and innovation.

How does design thinking impact the relationship between Intellect and its partners?

Design thinking has deepened Intellect's relationship with its partners by fostering collaboration and aligning solutions with mutual goals. By emphasising empathy and a user-first approach, design thinking ensures that solutions are co-created to address both stated and unstated needs. This has built trust and strengthened partnerships.

manoj@bankingfrontiers.com

