Nimble Bee: the co-creating community

Assistance in solving R&D design challenges with an international community of young potentials.

Contact

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Main actors

- Universities (Professors and students)
- Sponsor
- Customers
- Toluna (Consumer panel)
- CogniStreamer (Nimble Bee host)

The Nimble Bee project is an example of co-creation on multiple levels. First of all, the students work on a design challenge of a sponsor. The sponsor gives feedback on the designs and the students should take this into account when refining for the submission deadline at the end of the first round. The co-creation occurs also during the second round: the consumer feedback round. The consumers tell the students what they like/dislike or how the design can be improved. After that, students can ask questions to the consumers during a Q&A-session. With this information, together with the sponsor's jury feedback, they can redesign their idea for the final submission deadline. So for this consumer phase, there is a cooperation with end-users. The overall objectives are different according to the actors.

- The universities get the chance to work on a real case from an existing company. They gather real life experience with feedback from international companies and end-users.
- For the sponsor, the objective is to get a load of new, fresh ideas from different parts of the world, in a fast, efficient and effective way.
- For CogniStreamer, Nimble Bee profiles us as an experienced provider in design crowdsourcing and facilitates a fully managed co-creation program.

Process Main Stages

STAGE 1 – ONBOARDING
The search for participating schools starts, once a brief abstract of the challenge is drawn up. An email is sent out to a list of global universities, followed by personal calls to the respective professors. The professors decide whether the challenge fits their curriculum or not and if the timeline matches the duration of the semester. When they decide to participate in the competition, we ask them to send a list of the participating students. With these data, we can make every student a profile on the platform. Once the private drawing boards and the official challenge are ready and the full brief is on the platform, we can send out an invitation to the participating students.

STAGE 2 – STUDENT IDEATION
The students receive an invite to the platform. There, they can read the full brief of the challenge. To be able to read the full brief, the students have to sign the Terms & Conditions via a click-wrap agreement on the login page of the portal. It might happen that not everything is clear to them. Therefore, we host a webinar (about two weeks after the launch of the competition). During the webinar, the sponsor explains the challenge and the students get the opportunity to ask questions they might have. After that the Nimble Bee consultants explain the Nimble Bee process. Then the students can start the ideation process. They can work individually or in group on their designs.

STAGE 3 – IDEA REFINEMENT
Halfway through the first round, the students can upload their designs in the 'Private Drawing Board' of their school. They get feedback from the sponsor on the 'Deadline for Feedback' and can redesign their idea if necessary. On the 'Final Submission Deadline for Ideas', the students need to submit their final designs in the 'Official Challenge' on the platform. The company jury of the sponsor reviews every design based on a few criteria and decides which designs go to the second round. (The second round is only for the finalists)

STAGE 4: CONSUMER FEEDBACK ROUND

The designs which were chosen as finalists (usually 10 designs) get the chance to present their ideas to a consumer panel. The consumers comment on the ideas and tell the designers what they like/dislike about the designs. In a second phase, the students can start the conversation and ask the consumers questions about the designs or specific habits regarding the product they are designing. During the feedback round, the students also get feedback from the sponsor's jury at the end of stage 3. With this information, they can redesign their idea which they have to submit on the 'Final Design Submission Deadline for Finalists'.

STAGE 5: WINNER SELECTION

The 10 final designs get reviewed once more by the company jury of the sponsor. The jury chooses the three winning designs and the Nimble Bee team makes the announcement to the professors and the students. After that, we start the communication for the certificates of participation and the administration to pay the prize money.

Touchpoints & Bottlenecks

TOUCHPOINT 1 – SPONSOR MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS

The sponsor has a few meetings with the Nimble Bee consultants. During these meetings, a brief abstract is drawn up and the elements for the full brief are discussed. Once the competition has started, the sponsor needs to prepare a presentation for the webinar. During this online meeting, CogniStreamer and the sponsor explain the process and the full brief in detail. After the presentation, the students get the chance to ask questions. Another touchpoint is when the deadline for feedback is reached. The sponsor takes a look at the designs in the private drawing boards of the school and gives feedback on the. Once the final submissions are in, the jury team of the sponsor reviews the designs and selects the 10 best ideas. They also pick the 3 winning designs.

TOUCHPOINT 2 – MAILINGS TO PROFESSORS

The professors are approached via an email with a link to the brief abstract. If they are interested in the competition they receive more information about the competition, timeline, challenge, etc. To be able to make a profile for the students on the platform, CogniStreamer needs to receive a list with the names and email addresses of the participating students. The Nimble Bee consultants communicate the date of the Webinar to the professors. They decide if they join the online meeting with the class or if the students join individually. After that, the professors are kept informed of the finalist and winner announcement via an email.

TOUCHPOINT 3 – MAILINGS TO STUDENTS

The Nimble Bee experience starts for the students with an invitation to the platform. The students receive their username and password via email and with this data they can log in on the Nimble Bee platform. During the competition they get emails when a milestone is getting closer. The students get the chance to ask their questions directly to the sponsor during a webinar. They also receive emails with the announcement of the finalists and the winners. In addition, the students are approached via several posts on social media. Once the winners are known, the students receive an email with a link to request a certificate. The Nimble Bee consultants create a personal certificate for every participant and send it to the student via email. The winners also need to sign documents via email to receive their prize money.

TOUCHPOINT 4 – CONSUMERS ON THE NIMBLE BEE PLATFORM

The Nimble Bee consultants work with Toluna to find suitable consumers that meet the target group. These consumers receive an invitation to the platform with their username and password and an explanation of what is expected from them. They can comment on the ideas via the comment function on the platform and answer questions of designers in the Q&A section. Once the finalists upload their final design, the consumers give one more time feedback.

Success Factors / Barriers

SUCCESS FACTORS

One of the success factors is the fact that it is held online. This implies that students from all over the world can participate in the competition. Which means that the sponsor gets different visions from different parts of the world. Another success factor is the online iteration between the students and the sponsor. For the students it is educative to work with/for a big company. For the company it might be refreshing to see all the innovative ideas of the students. Besides the feedback from the sponsor, the student also gets consumer feedback. During the second round, the consumers will comment on the designs of the finalists. The consumers tell the designer what they like/dislike and how the design might be improved. After the comments, the students can ask questions.

BARRIERS

A first barrier is definitely the embedment into the curriculum. The Nimble Bee team decided that the competition should be embedded into the curriculum and that the professor should be a mentor who guides the students. This leads to more qualitative designs. Because of this, it is hard to engage the universities to join in our Nimble Bee competition. The standard legal framework which is the same for all schools, may also be a barrier. This implies that we can not allow adjustments for specific schools.

Conclusion

DO

- Keep the brief as wide as possible
- The sponsor provides enough context to the students and that the framework within which the design should function is outlined well
- Create a visual platform
- Have good communication and moderation

DON'T

- Send out 1 bulk email to the universities
- Change the competition model and the timeline Ad Hoc
- Put too much effort in small groups
- Give people too much information (it can lead to uncertainties)

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