

JOBS TO BE DONE ANALYSIS

A bay-area technology company was in the process of developing new customer-facing hardware, and approached Strop to generate insights to (1) understand the current need for the new product among relevant consumers, (2) identify the most critical product features to prioritize, and (3) shape the value proposition to guide positioning within the marketplace.

To provide these insights, Strop executed a jobs-to-be-done analysis (JTBD). Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen articulated the jobs-to-be-done (JTBD) concept in a Sloan Management Review article as follows: "Most companies segment their markets by customer demographics or product characteristics and differentiate their offerings by adding features and functions. But the consumer has a different view of the marketplace. Consumers simply have a job to be done and is seeking to 'hire' the best product or service to do it."

By understanding the "jobs" that consumers want to do, a company gains a unique view of the marketplace - and can delineate and nourish a viable growth and positioning strategy. Those "jobs" for which a solution does not currently exist suggest a great opportunity for innovation and competitive differentiation.

The JTBD analysis examines the functional aspects of a given industry, product, or service across two key variables: (a) its importance to a customer and (b) its frustration to a customer. Those features, benefits, and products that capture high importance - and high frustration - are those most interesting to innovate and offer.

Strop Insights designed a study in which customers evaluated dozens of job statements related to a product's potential purposes and solutions. Key components of a job statement are an action verb, the object of the action, and clarification of the context in which the job is performed. "Use my device all day without needing to re-charge" is an example of a job statement.

Analyses revealed a set of job statements which, if included in the new product, could solve their most frustrating challenges!

The output is highly engaging because one chart of "mapped" job statements allows for the quick sort of those product features most compelling to pursue from an innovation perspective, most suited for commercial success, and most unique and interesting for customers. Each point on this chart represents a needs statement - with the two colors representing this client's two most meaningful segments (buyers and users). Those points higher on both the x- and y-axes suggest those most intriguing.

This output was extraordinarily valuable to the client - allowing for the prioritization of innovation efforts, a value proposition tailored to customer needs (rather than customer demographic or psychographic characteristics), and a set of features with the broadest reach and opportunity. The commercial success of the hardware among both relevant constituents (buyers and users) highlights the faculty of a JTBD analysis.

