Yuma Mitsui

Experience Design Strategist —— Portfolio

Introduction

Belief • About • Capabilities • Experiences / Educations / Awards • Skills / Tools / Languages

Belief

Designing futures to be proud of.

心から選びたくなる未来、をつくる。



Yuma Mitsui

三井 佑馬

Experience Strategist

Tokyo, JAPAN

vwnh.98@gmail.com

Designing futures to be proud of.

心から選びたくなる未来、をつくる。

Experience Design Strategist with 10+ years of experience understanding people, uncovering opportunities, and shaping new experiences, products, and services.

Having worked in Tokyo and San Francisco, he has led projects across design research, experience strategy, service design, and innovation for clients in public transportation, mobility, consumer electronics, financial services, and technology. His work spans digital services, physical experiences, and innovation programs, with a focus on imagining new possibilities and translating them into meaningful concepts.

He brings together research, strategic thinking, and creative collaboration to move ideas from early exploration toward reality. Working closely with multidisciplinary teams of designers, engineers, and business stakeholders, he has guided projects through research, opportunity framing, concept development, prototyping, validation, and implementation planning.

Drawing on research and project experience across Japan, India, Africa, and the United States, he brings a multicultural perspective to understanding people, society, and emerging behaviors. What drives him is the opportunity to turn a deeper understanding of people into experiences that inspire, resonate, and become a meaningful part of their lives.

Design Research

Listen to the people.
Create with the people.
Delight the people.

Extensive experience in research-led design across Japan and international markets, spanning public transportation, consumer electronics, digital services, entrepreneurship programs, and startup support initiatives.

Future Visioning

Concept development, CX Vision & Principles



Design Strategy

Opportunity Definition, Roadmapping, Storytelling



Experience Design

Customer Journeys, Prototyping, User Testing



Co-Design Facilitation

Workshop Design, Project Leadership



Experiences

2023. 5 - Current
Lead Strategist
AKQA Uka Inc. [Japan]

2020. 1 - 2023. 4
Service Design Lead
btrax Japan LLC [Japan, U.S.]

2016. 2 - 2020. 2
Design Researcher
GK Industrial Design Inc. [Japan]

Educations

2015. 3
Master of Design Strategy
Kyushu University, Graduate school of Design [Japan]

2014. 9 - 2015. 2 [Exchange Program]
Product Service System Design Course
Politecnico di Milano [Italy]

2011. 3
B.A. in Environmental Information
Keio University,
Faculty of Environment and Information Studies [Japan]
* Bachelor's Degree (earned through transfer admission)

2009. 3
B.A. in Business & Commerce
Keio University,
Faculty of Business and Commerce [Japan]

Awards

Good Design Best 100
Link
Good Design Award in Japan (2019)

GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2019
BEST 100

Best Inspiration Award
Link
Issue & Design Competition (2012)

issue+design

Best Design Award
Link (IAUD)
IAUD 48 hours Design Marathon (2012)

IAUD

Research & Design Skills

Qualitative Research [JP/EN]
Ethnography | Semi-structured Interviews | Focus Group Interviews | Heuristic Research

Survey, Desk Research, Validation [JP/EN]
Quantitative Research Design | Desk Research | Concept Validation | Usability Testing

Synthesis/Analysis, Insights, Presentation [JP]
Synthesis & Analysis of Findings | Insight Extraction | Concept Development | Presentation

Experience and Brand Strategy [JP]
Persona Development | Customer Journey Mapping | OKR/KPI setting | Roadmapping

Design, Prototyping [JP/EN]
Information Architecture | Wireframing | Design Principles | UI Design

Facilitation [JP]
Workshop Design | Facilitation | Lecturing

Project Lead & Management [JP]
Project Planning | Team Management

Tools

Adobe
Illustrator | Photoshop | XD | Premiere

Google Workspace, Microsoft office

Figma, FigJam, Miro

Generative AI
Claude | ChatGPT | Gemini etc.

Languages

Japanese [Native]

English [Business]

Italian [Novice]

Featured Works

SEA PASEO・JRE GO・Globe Tracer for SUBARU・Innovation Booster for NRI

Redefining the Onboard Experience



Concept development for a Cruise Ferry, SEA PASEO

Hiroshima, Japan · 2017–2019 • Setonaikai Kisen

Shaping a CX Vision & Strategy



CX strategy and transformation playbook for JRE GO

Tokyo, Japan · 2025 • JR East

Reimagining Customer Engagement



Road trip journaling experience for Subaru of America

California, USA · 2021–2022 • SUBARU

Cultivation Design Thinking



Design Thinking training program in San Francisco

California, USA · 2021–2023 • NRI

SEA PASEO
HIROSHIMA KURE MATSUYAMA

Link | SEA PASEO

Redefining the Onboard Experience

瀬戸内海の新たな移動体験のデザイン

SEA PASEO ———— Cruise Ferry Design Inspired by “A Park for Everyone to Enjoy Traveling Across the Seto Inland Sea”

GK Design Group, Feb. 2017 – Aug. 2019 | Hiroshima, Japan

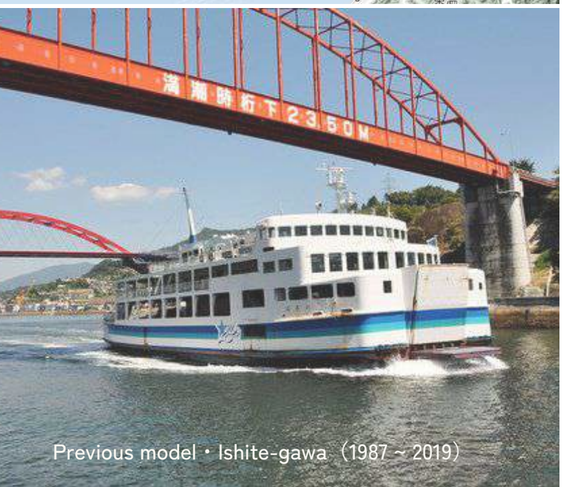


[Project Overview]

- A newly built car ferry was designed for a regular route connecting Hiroshima Port, Kure Port, and Matsuyama Port—the first new vessel on this route in nearly 30 years.
- Passenger fares, vehicle capacity, and travel time remained unchanged from the previous ferry.
- GK Design Group was responsible for the customer experience design as well as the interior and exterior design.







Previous model・Ishite-gawa（1987 ~ 2019）

Challenge

Creating a new ferry that will serve the Hiroshima–Kure–Matsuyama route for the next 30 years.

広島・呉・松山航路の、次の30年を担う新しいフェリーをつくる。

Background

- Thirty years after the launch of the existing ferry, aging facilities and declining passenger numbers created a need for renewal.
- Despite uncertainty about the route's future, employees and leadership shared a strong desire to preserve this connection across the Seto Inland Sea.
- My role was to translate the aspirations of passengers and employees into a new service concept and onboard experience.

Approach

- Planning, execution, and analysis of user research on the existing ferry service
- Design and facilitation of co-creation workshops with key stakeholders
- Development of the service concept and the zoning concept
- Support for the development of beverage offerings and original merchandise
- Naming, logo design, and brand color definition

Result

- ~10% increase in annual passenger numbers [From service launch in 2019 to September 2021]
- Good Design Award – Best 100 [2019]
  Selected for JIDA Design Museum Gold Selection, among other awards
- Ongoing release of new services driven by ferry staff
  Food & beverage menus / Merchandise / Curated tour programs
- 3,000+ Instagram posts
  #シーパセオ #SeaPaseo
- Featured extensively in national television programs and online media outlets

From

A ferry chosen for affordability, despite the time it takes
安さのために時間を犠牲にする、我慢の移動手段









石手川 Ishite-gawa (1987.3 - 2019.7)
四万十川 Shimanto-gawa (1991.6 - 2020.7)

Capacity	324 passengers / 30 cars
Gross Tonnage	699 tons
Length	61 meters
Speed	13.5 knots

To

A park on the sea, where the journey itself becomes the destination
移動そのものが目的になる、海の上の公園











SEA PASEO 01 (2019.8 -)
SEA PASEO 02 (2020.8 -)

Capacity	300 passengers / 35 cars
Gross Tonnage	902 tons
Length	61 meters
Speed	15.0 knots

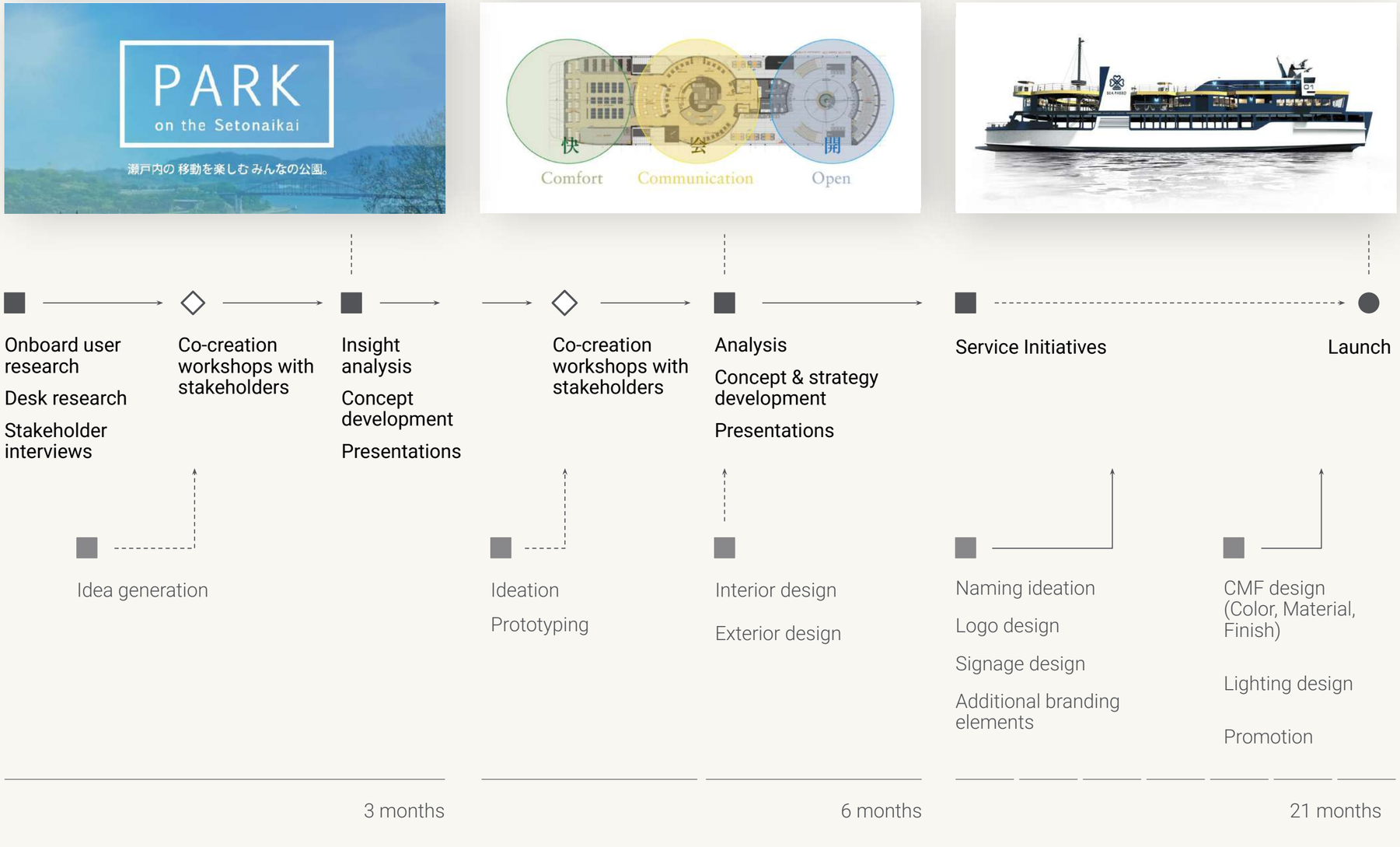
Led research and concept development

Roles and responsibilities

- Research planning, execution, and analysis
- Workshop design and facilitation
- Concept and strategy development
- Reporting and presentations
- Branding support

Other project team members

- Researcher [1x]
- Strategist [1x]
- Product Designers [3x]
- Graphic Designers [2x]
- Lighting Designer [1x]
- Producers [2x]



The journey offered little sense of personal space, leaving passengers constantly aware of others and unable to fully relax.

船上で乗客は十分なパーソナルスペースを感じられず、常に周囲の視線や存在を意識しながら、落ち着かない時間を過ごしている。

- One Ferry, Many Faces.
  One ferry must serve many different passenger needs and desires.
- Open-plan space shuts people down.
  Passengers endure silent social pressure in a single large room.
- Outdoor spaces fail to invite people in.
  The unique appeal of being at sea is not fully embraced.



Research Methodologies

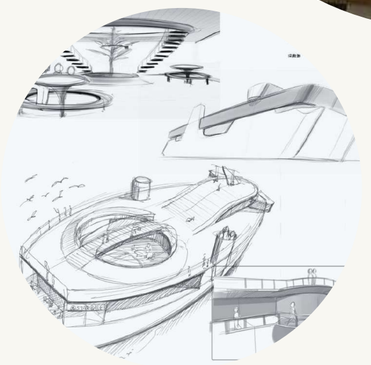
User interview (semi-structured) | Observation

Co Design workshop

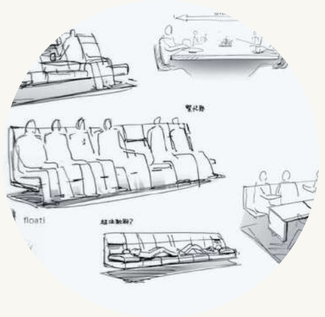


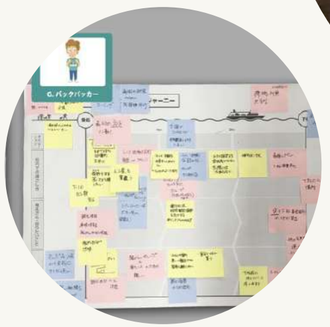












Key Question for Co-Design Workshop

How might we enable passengers to enjoy their time at sea without feeling constrained by others?

どうしたら、乗客が周囲を気にすることなく、海上で過ごす時間そのものを楽しめるだろうか？

- Format: Co-creation workshops with stakeholders
- Role: Workshop design / Facilitation / Idea visualization / Report creation

Vision Co-creation Workshop

Using insights derived from multiple research activities, my team prepared guiding questions and initial ideas to stimulate discussion and collective imagination. The workshop helped align diverse perspectives and uncover a shared vision for the future ferry experience.

Program

- Icebreaker & self-introductions
- Presentation of onboard research insights
- Introduction of initial ideas and key questions
- Group discussion: *Creating a future newspaper*
- Presentations & feedback

Service Ideation Co-creation Workshop

A workshop focused on developing concrete service ideas for the new ferry. After defining personas, participants created customer journeys and explored service concepts through discussion using physical prototypes, transforming the shared vision into tangible experiences and service opportunities.

Program

- Icebreaker & self-introductions
- Persona definition
- Introduction of prototypes
- Group discussion: *Customer journeys and initatives*
- Presentations & feedback

A park on the sea.
A journey worth spending time on.

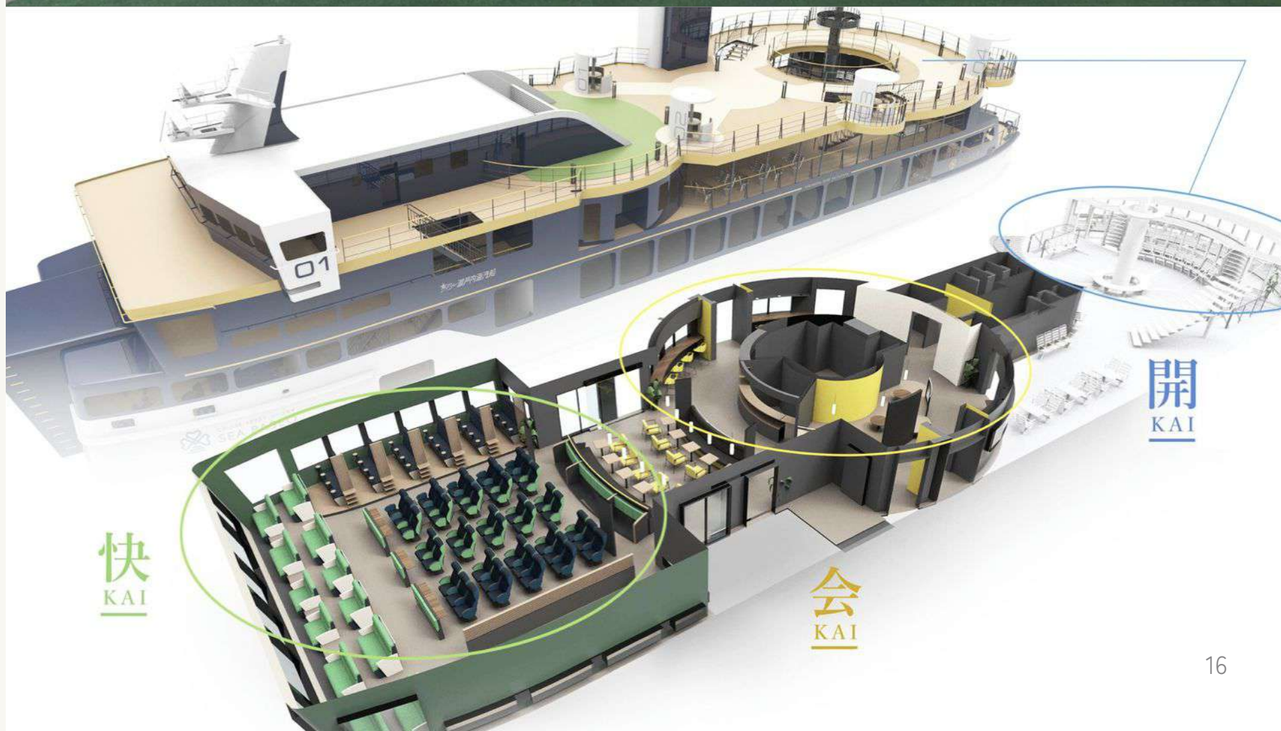
海の上の公園。おだやかな移動時間そのものを楽しむ旅へ。

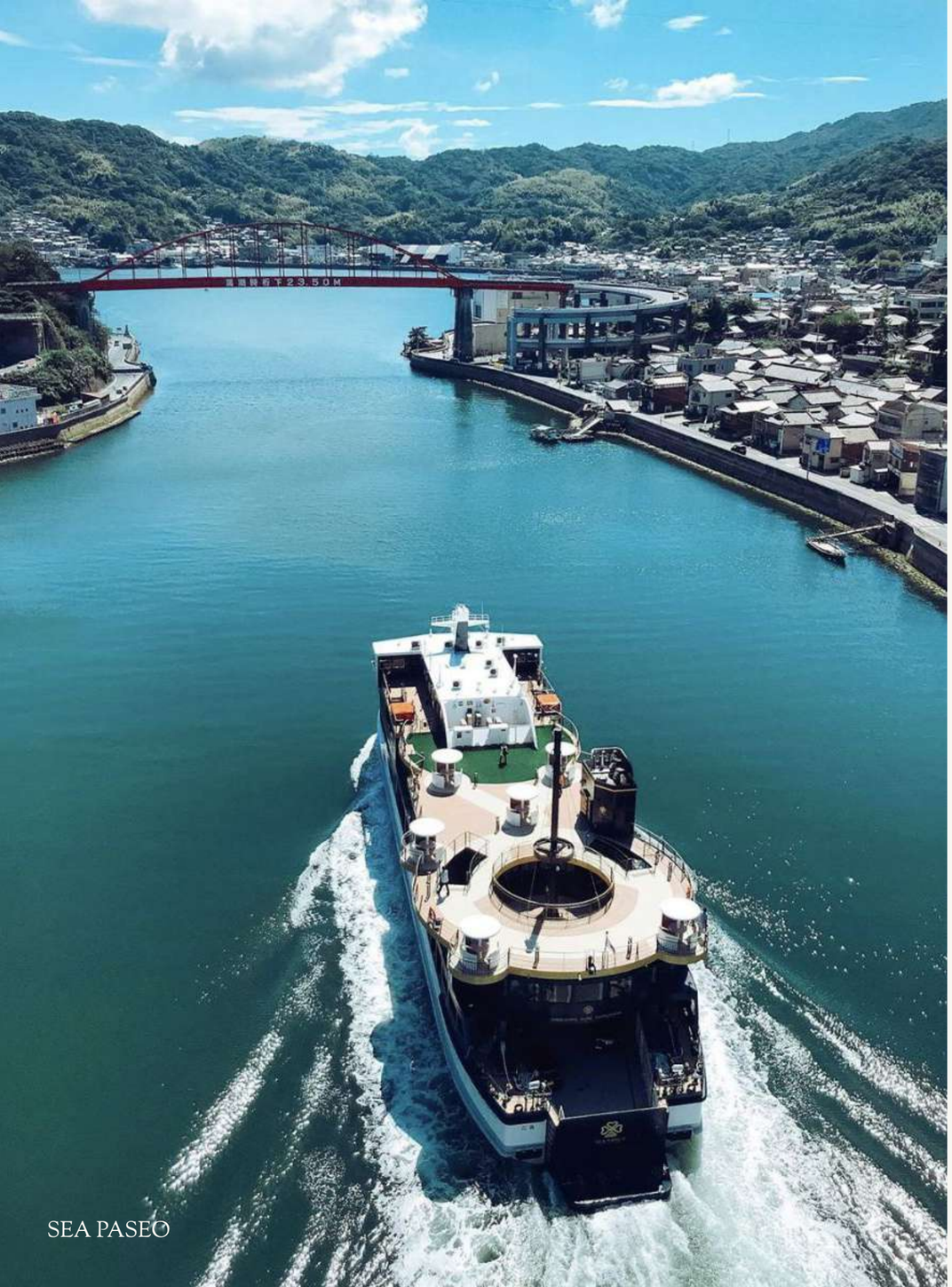


- ## The Three “KAI” Concepts
  Comfort (快)・Connection (会)・ Openness (開)
  Layouts that fit each passenger’s preferred way of spending time

- ## Seating arrangements that create a sense of psychological comfort
  Wider spacing between seats / Higher seat backs / Semi-private aft lounge areas / Gazebo-style spaces on the rooftop deck

- ## Outdoor spaces that maximize the joy of traveling by sea
  Comfortable outdoor seating / A symbolic aft courtyard and deck space representing the core concept




SEA PASEO















Awards

GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2019
BEST 100

GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2019
BEST 100

JIDA DESIGN MUSEUM
SELECTION VOL.21 SELECTED
GOLD SELECTION

JIDA Design Museum 2019
Gold Selection

シップ・オブ・ザ・イヤー2019
小型客船部門賞

Ship of the year 2019
Small Passenger Ship Award

HIROSHIMA
GOOD
DESIGN

HIROSHIMA
GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2019
Special Prize

Crafting a Future CX Vision & Strategy









CX strategy and transformation playbook for JRE GO

Tokyo, Japan · 2025

Shaping a CX Vision & Strategy

新サービス開発者の想いを束ねる CXビジョン策定と戦略ブックの制作

AKQA, Oct – Dec 2025 | Tokyo, Japan



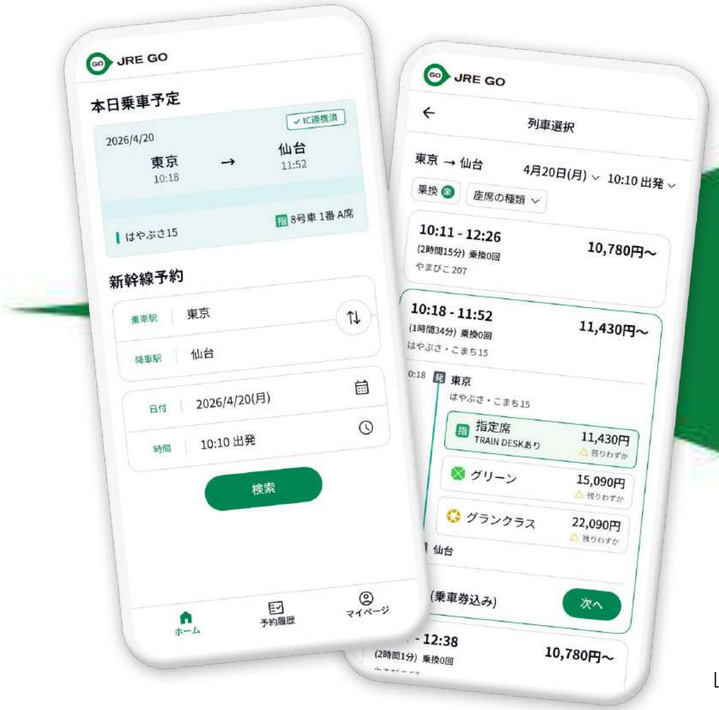
JRE GO

A new digital platform for booking and managing Shinkansen journeys.

えきねっと



JRE GO



JRE POINT Integration

Expansion to New Regions & JR Partnerships

Limited Express Ticketing

Kiosk Development

Link | JRE GO

- JRE GO is a new Shinkansen booking service from JR East, designed around the concept of "Book in as little as one minute."
- Starting with a streamlined booking experience, the service is designed to evolve over time through expanded features, regional coverage, and partnerships across the JR network.

Challenge

Define a shared vision and the path forward.

新サービスの目指す姿とその道のりを描き、チームが自信を持って意思決定できる状態をつくる。

Background

- The target customer experience for the new service, JRE GO, had not been clearly shared across the development team, resulting in stalled decision-making.
- Team members were overwhelmed by a growing volume of day-to-day development tasks. Combined with negative user feedback toward the existing service, Ekinet, this led to declining ownership, confidence, and motivation among the team.

Approach

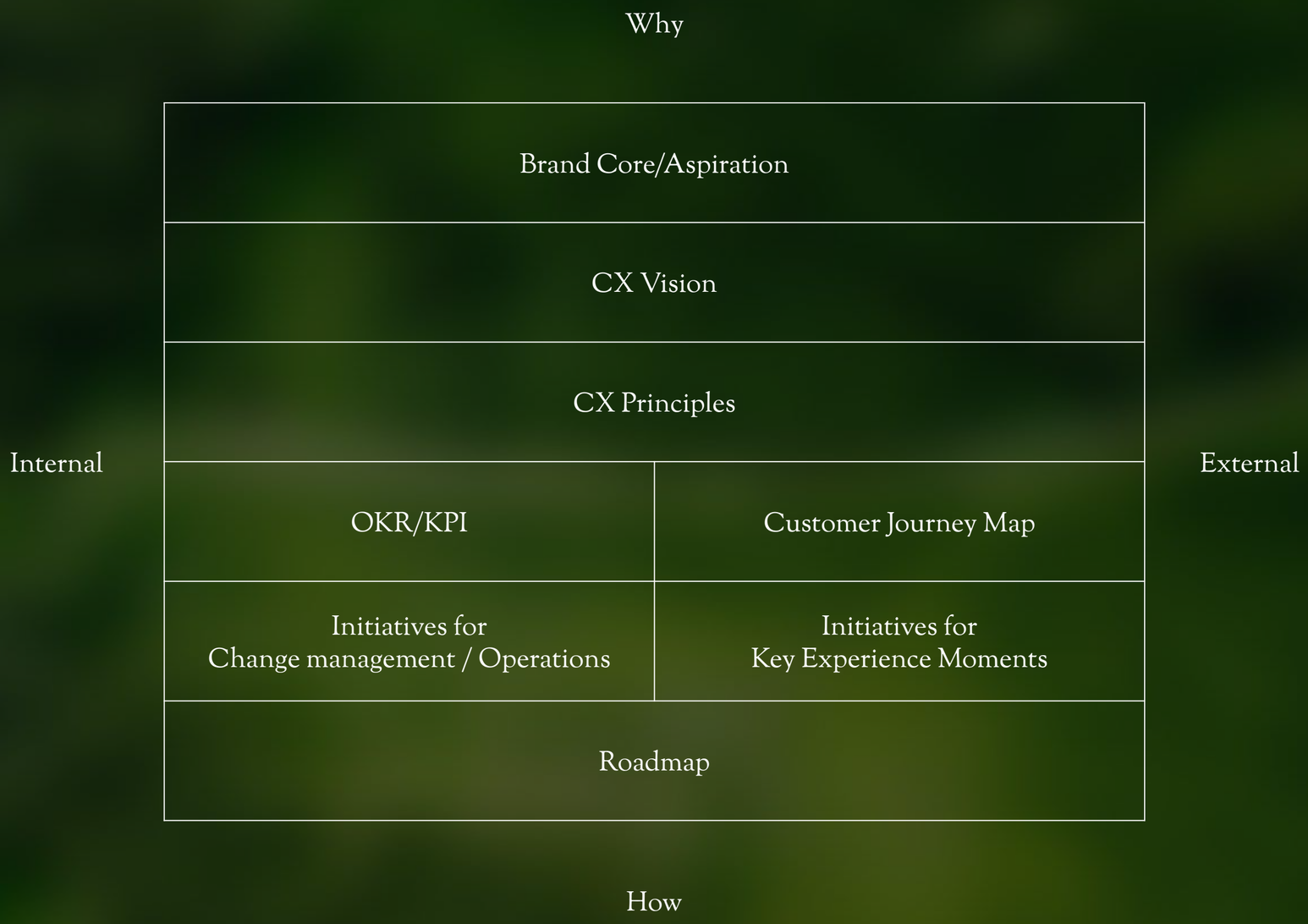
- Discovery interviews and project planning with key stakeholders
- Design and facilitation of collaborative workshops
- Exploration of team values, aspirations, and underlying motivations
- Translation of shared intent into a CX vision
- Development of CX principles, strategic roadmap, and initiatives
- Playbook design and production

Result

- Defined the CX vision, “GO YOUR WAY,” and codified it into a playbook shared across teams
- Workshop satisfaction score: 6.2 / 7
- Secured follow-on support opportunities from the client

CX Transformation Framework

Connecting Vision to Execution



Deliverables



Project Setup & Alignment

- Project Objectives
- Business Goals
- Customer Insights

Insight Discovery & Workshop Design

Co-Design Workshop [2x]

1 CX Vision & Principles

2 Initiatives & Roadmap

Synthesis & Vision Shaping

Create CX Playbook

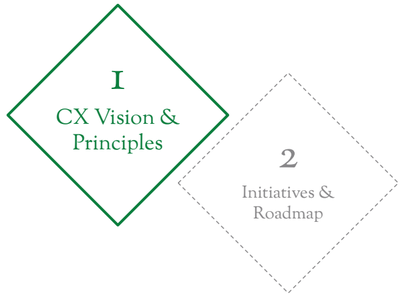
CX Playbook

From Shared Intent to Shared Direction

Through a series of workshops, we explored the aspirations, values, and perspectives of the development team. From these conversations, we uncovered a shared intent: Enabling travelers to journey more freely and confidently.

We translated this intent into the CX vision, “GO YOUR WAY,” articulating a clear north star for the team. Supported by a set of guiding principles, the vision provided a shared direction for everyday decisions and future development.

Co-Design Workshop



Discover

Surface and visualize team aspirations, values, and perspectives.



Synthesis

Identify patterns and uncover shared intent.



Shape

Translate insights into a CX vision and experience principles.



Refine

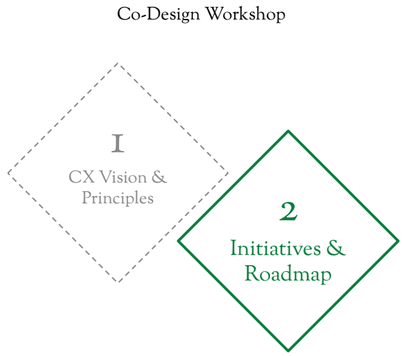
Iterate, align, and build consensus through discussion.



From Vision to a Clear Path Forward

Starting from the CX vision, we generated ideas for future experiences and services. Initiatives were prioritized based on alignment with the brand core and mid-term business strategy, helping define the experiences that would bring the vision to life.

To make progress tangible, we mapped the journey across three horizons—Now, Next, and Future—creating a roadmap that enabled the team to move forward with confidence, even when the complete picture had yet to emerge.



Ideate

Generate ideas to bring the vision to life.



Prioritize

Select initiatives based on strategic and brand alignment.



Visualize

Translate priority initiatives into tangible experiences.



Roadmap

Define the path, priorities, and phases for realization.



Igniting Shared Ownership

In response to the client's goal of helping service developers feel greater ownership and motivation, we designed a pair of half-day participatory workshops as the core engagement activity.

I led the overall program design and facilitation, guiding discussions and helping participants shape the future together. The workshops received an overall satisfaction score of 6.2 out of 7.

Workshop 1

CX Vision & Principles

[3 hour・30 participants]

Workshop 2

Initiatives & Roadmap

[2.5 hour・30 participants]









“Before the workshop, I was focused on getting through development. Afterward, I could clearly imagine the future we were building—and it became something I genuinely wanted to make happen.”

From Uncertainty to Momentum

By uncovering a shared intent and translating it into a clear direction, the project helped the team move forward with greater confidence and alignment.

From

- Different views of the future
- Unclear decision-making criteria
- Difficulty aligning stakeholders
- Feeling overwhelmed by development

To

- Shared CX Vision: GO YOUR WAY
- Principles for decision-making
- Alignment across teams
- Confidence in the future being built





Reimagining Customer Engagement





Road trip journaling experience for Subaru of America

California, USA · 2021–2022



Reimagining Customer Engagement

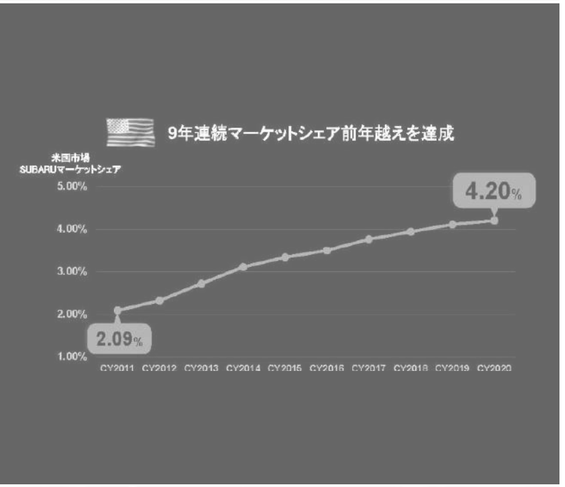
ブランドコアを起点にした新たなサービスコンセプトの開発支援

Globe Tracer ——— A road trip journaling app that turns driving routes into stories worth revisiting.

btrax, Inc., Feb. 2021 – Sep. 2022 | California, U.S.

- Globe Tracer is a mobile app that automatically records driving routes, travel time, and trip history during road trips.
- Users earn badges by reaching mileage milestones and discovering new routes, encouraging continued exploration. Photos added along the journey can be replayed as map-based slideshows, while trip records can be easily shared with friends via QR codes.







Challenge

Design a new service that strengthens customer engagement with SUBARU beyond vehicle ownership and driving experiences.

車両以外の接点で、SUBARU社と顧客のエンゲージメントを深める新サービスをつくる。

Background

- The automotive industry is undergoing significant transformation driven by trends such as CASE (Connected, Autonomous, Shared, and Electric).
- While SUBARU enjoys strong brand loyalty in the U.S. market today, the company recognized the need to explore new ways of creating value beyond its existing business in order to remain relevant and meaningful to future generations of customers.
- This raised a key question: Could SUBARU deepen its relationship with customers through experiences beyond the vehicle itself while staying true to its brand values?
- To address this challenge, we supported the project as a design partner and facilitator, bringing expertise in both U.S. consumer research and new service development.

Approach & Result

- Defined and articulated the core values of the SUBARU brand
- Conducted user research and competitive analysis in the U.S. market
- Generated and evaluated new service concepts
- Designed and tested prototypes and MVPs
- Planned and facilitated stakeholder workshops throughout the project
- Showcased the concept through public exhibitions and events

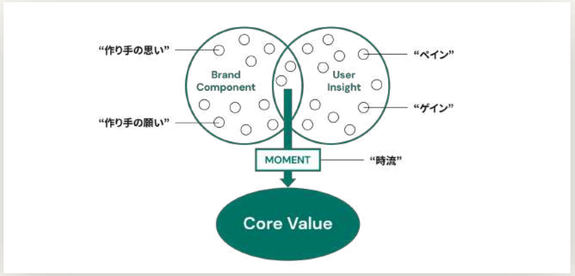
Led research, service concept development, and facilitation

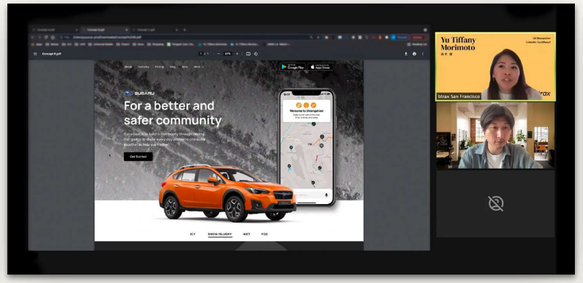
Roles and responsibilities

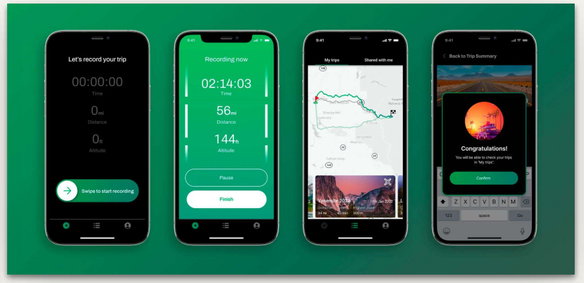
- Project planning, management, and stakeholder alignment
- User research planning, execution, and analysis
- Workshop design and facilitation
- Service UI design and landing page design support
- Report development and executive presentations

Other project team members

- UX Researcher ×1
- UI Designers ×2
- Brand Designer ×1
- Producers ×2







Research

Review and synthesis of existing research

Brand core definition workshop

Analysis and reporting of user interview findings

Service ideation workshop

User interviews

Analysis and reporting of findings

Concept and MVP design workshop

User testing (Round 1)

Analysis of findings

User testing (Round 2)

Analysis of findings

Design

Development of sacrificial concepts

Landing page and UI design

Wireframing, UI design, and MVP development

MVP iteration (Round 1)

UI refinement

MVP iteration (Round 2)

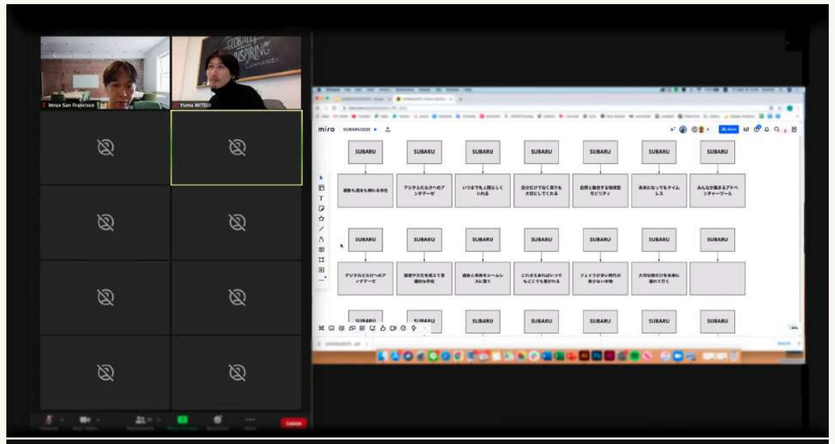
Final UI refinement

Total 20 months

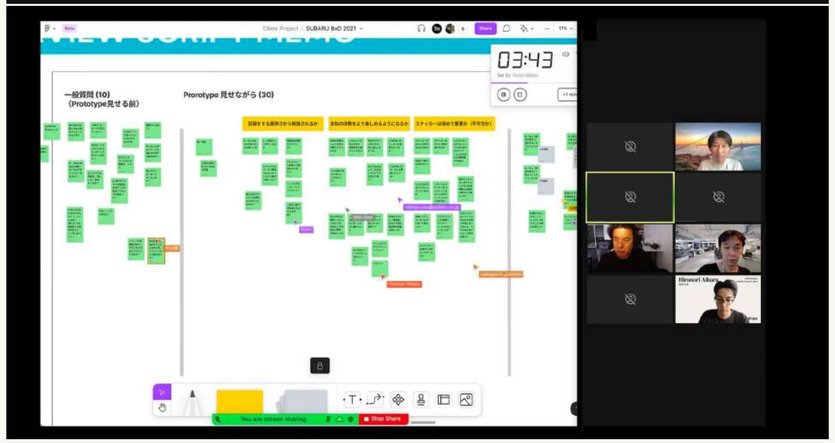
4 months

4 months

12 months







Led the project by uncovering user insights, framing opportunities, and facilitating collaborative discussions that helped the team generate and refine new service ideas.

Engagement	Conducted a series of co-creation workshops with a cross-functional project team formed jointly with the client.
Responsibilities	WS design and facilitation, idea visualization (wireframes and UI concepts), synthesis, reporting, and presentations.

Brand Core Definition Workshop

A workshop designed to articulate the core values that make SUBARU uniquely SUBARU. Drawing on insights from prior research and the aspirations of project members, the team defined four key brand principles that would guide subsequent concept development.

Program

- Icebreaker & introductions
- Research insight sharing
- Mind mapping
- “On-brand / Off-brand” exploration
- Brand core ideation
- Voting and convergence discussion

Service Ideation Workshop

The defined brand core was translated into a set of design questions that inspired service ideation. Through two rounds of discussion and refinement, the team converged on three concepts, which were subsequently visualized as landing pages and app concepts for user evaluation.

Program

- Introduction to the brand core and opportunity areas
- Idea generation (homework)
- Feedback and discussion
- Idea refinement (homework)
- Concept pitches
- Landing page and app wireframing

MVP Design Workshop

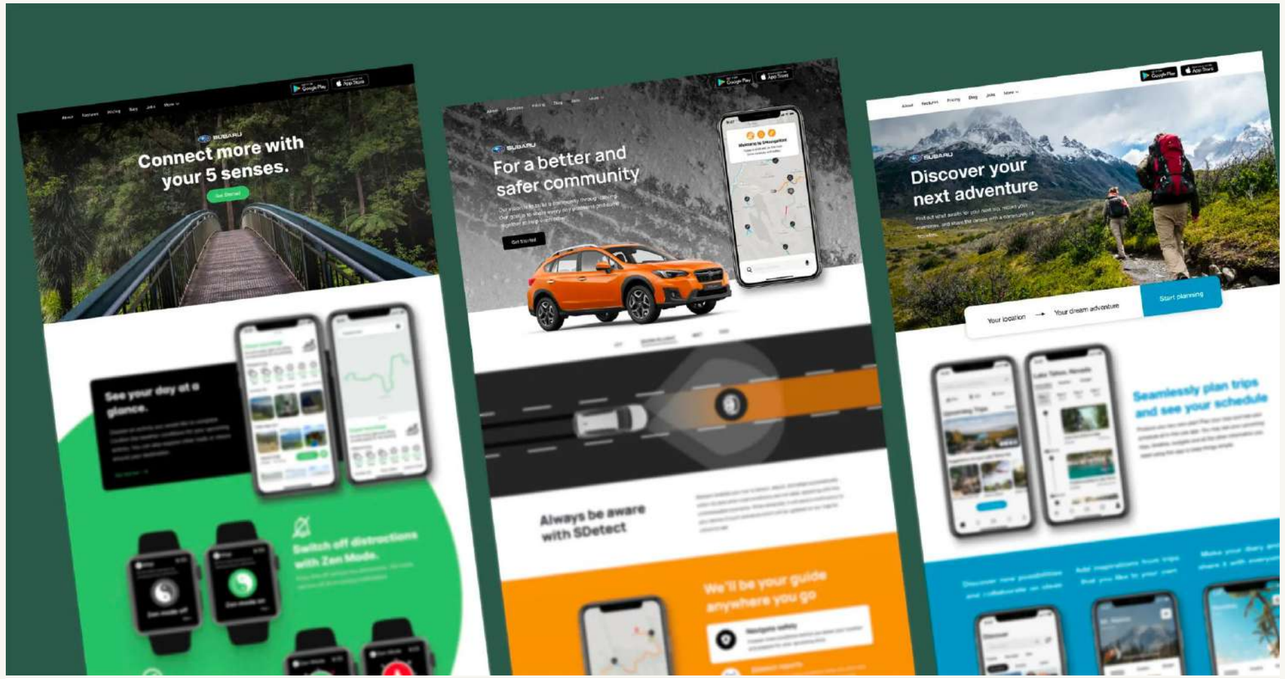
A workshop focused on defining the MVP for the concept that received the strongest user feedback. The team explored three stages of service evolution and identified the core experiences and features required for an initial release. Insights from user testing informed the development of a beta version of the application.

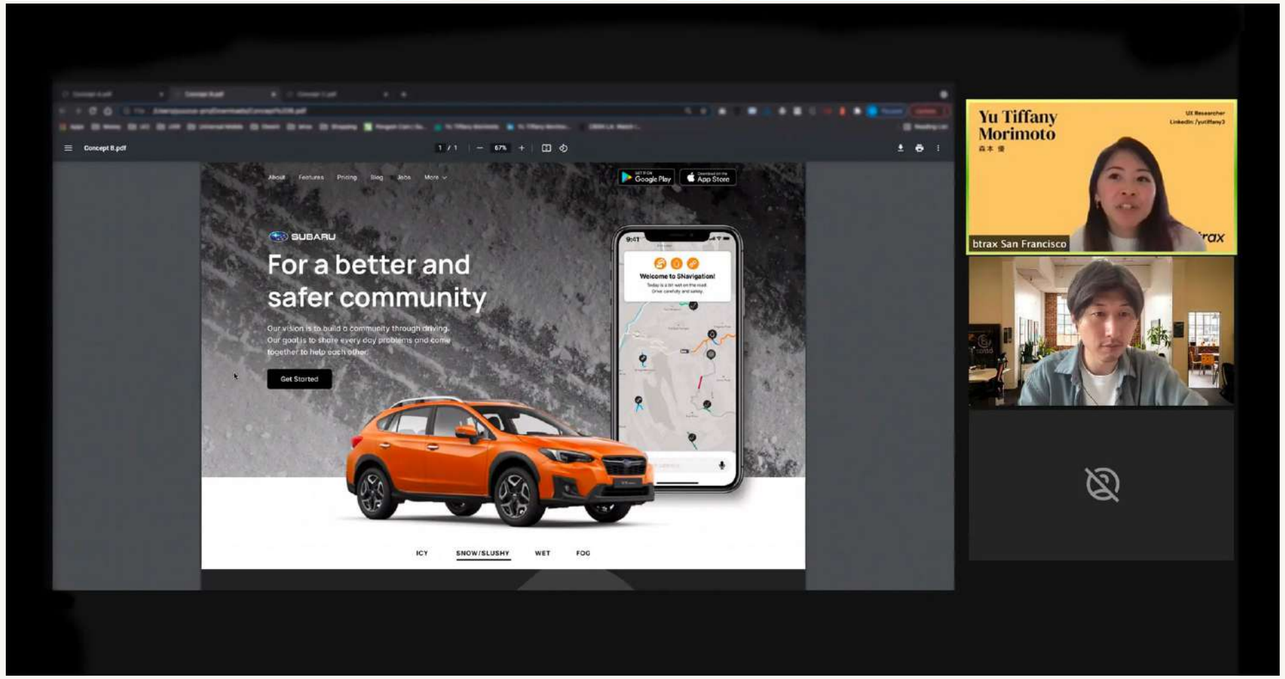
Program

- MVP benchmark review
- User journey design
- Prioritization
- Definition of MVP experience and feature requirements
- User testing planning

Reliving past journeys deepens the experience.

記録を振り返る追体験が、車と出かける体験を特別なものに変えてくれる。





- **User value “exploration of experience”.**
  Users find the greatest value in a service that helps them revisit and emotionally re-experience past road trips—strengthening both motivation and the sense of “SUBARU-ness.”

They want to:

- **Spark conversations with close friends**
  Share and revisit trip memories together, using them as a trigger for dialogue & storytelling.
- **Reconnect with experiences through physical and visual cues**
  Photos, videos, and stickers act as anchors that deepen emotional recall and enhance the sense of re-experiencing the journey.

Research Methodologies

User interview (semi-structured), Validation of MVP

Built and tested an MVP with U.S. users in real-life contexts, iterating on the UI/UX based on continuous feedback.

MVP Design Process

1. Starting from the concept defined in workshops, we collaborated with UI designers to create an interactive prototype using Figma.
2. We conducted concept validation interviews with 5 users in the U.S. market.
3. In collaboration with an external vendor, we developed a beta application and launched it in a TestFlight environment, enabling real user interactions.
4. The beta version was distributed to 5 users in the U.S., who used the service in their daily lives. After usage, we conducted in-depth interviews to collect feedback and insights.
5. All feedback and team observations were consolidated and discussed collaboratively, leading to iterative UI/UX improvements.
6. The cycle of user testing and refinement was repeated twice to further refine and enhance the experience.



- Globe Tracer is a mobile app that automatically records driving routes, travel time, and trip history during road trips.
- Users earn badges by reaching mileage milestones and discovering new routes, encouraging continued exploration. Photos added along the journey can be replayed as map-based slideshows, while trip records can be easily shared with friends via QR codes.







Cultivation Design Thinking



Design Thinking training program in San Francisco

California, USA · 2021–2023

Cultivation Design Thinking —— *“Innovation Booster Program”*

デザイン思考のマインドセットを体感しながら習得する研修プログラム ー “イノベーションブースター”

btrax, Inc., 2021 – 2023 | California, U.S.



Innovation Booster Program for NRI

- A 10-week immersive program in San Francisco for business and engineering professionals from a leading Japanese IT services company.
- As a facilitator, I guided participants through the design thinking process, helping them develop new mindsets and create user-centered service concepts.









Challenge

Design and deliver a 10-week design thinking immersion program in San Francisco.

10週間でデザイン思考のマインドセット習得を目指す、サンフランシスコ滞在型の研修を設計・運営する。

Activities

- Program design and overall facilitation
- Lectures on design thinking and UX design
- Support for field and user research in the local context
- Facilitation of team discussions
- Support for UI/UX prototyping and pitch deck development
- Planning and facilitation of pitch events
- Facilitation of reflection and review sessions

Result

- Strengthened participants' understanding of design thinking and West Coast startup culture
- All teams successfully developed and pitched new service concepts grounded in user needs
- Formation of voluntary teams pursuing new business creation initiatives after the program in Japan
- Program continued biannually beyond the initial year, with approximately 8 participants per cohort

Moments from Innovation Booster Program



Led the design and delivery of an immersive design thinking program.

Roles and responsibilities

- Program design and delivery (including client alignment and guest coordination)
- Lectures on design thinking and UX
- Facilitation of workshops, discussions, and reviews
- Support for field and user research activities
- Guidance on UI/UX prototyping and pitch deck development
- Review of all deliverables and mentoring of assistants

Project team

- Service Designer x1
- UX Researchers x1
- UI Designers x2
- Guest Lecturers x2

Academy Phase

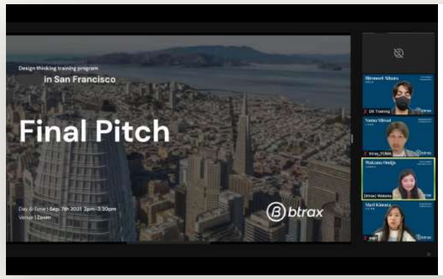
Facilitator-led learning and exploration phase

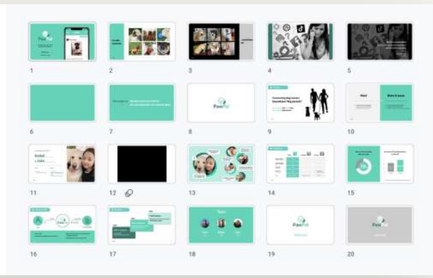




Lab Phase

Participant-driven execution and refinement phase





	Orientation	Field research	Synthesis	Ideation and concept development	Mid-program pitch	Brand strategy	User testing	Final pitch	Reflection
Menu	Lectures Pair work	Theme setting User research	Problem definition			UI/UX prototyping			Graduation ceremony
Work, Methods	Icebreaker Goal setting Lectures and Q&A sessions	Field research support Interview planning and execution Interpretation support	Empathy map Persona Journey map PoV	How might we Brainstorming Concept development Storyboard	Pitch deck development Final pitch event planning and facilitation Feedback synthesis	Concept refinement and branding Service logo design UI prototyping (Figma)	Interview script design and user recruitment Interpretation support	Pitch deck development and storytelling refinement Final pitch event planning and facilitation Feedback synthesis	Program reflection and action planning

Total 10 weeks

5 weeks

1 week interval

4 weeks

Believe in people's potential. Create space for experimentation and failure.

人の可能性を信じること。
失敗を受け入れながら、共に考え続けること。

- ## Creativity grows through challenge.
  A supportive environment encourages people to step beyond their comfort zones and explore new possibilities.

- ## Confidence grows through small wins.
  Progress becomes sustainable when people experience success through action and iteration.

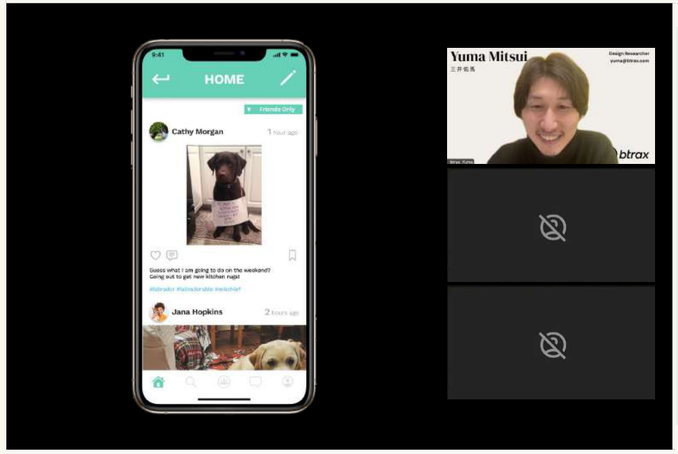
- ## Making learning visible accelerates learning.
  Reflection and feedback help transform experiences into lasting capabilities.

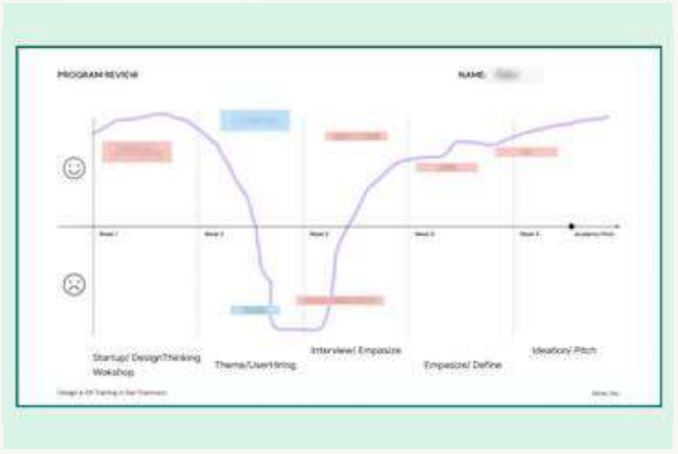
Most participants began the program with little exposure to design thinking.
Within ten weeks, I witnessed remarkable growth in their confidence, mindset, and ability to create.
Watching that transformation unfold has been one of the most rewarding aspects of this work.











Other Works

Market Research and Web Strategy for Prudential Life Insurance

Commissioned by the AKQA Atlanta team to research and analyze the Japanese market as part of a broader project to update Prudential's web experience in the U.S. Led the research and strategy work, driving research design and insight development alongside UX designers.

Through customer interviews and competitive analysis, identified that in the Japanese insurance market, decision-making is shaped less by product comparison and more by trust in a personal advisor. Also surfaced a key barrier: foreign insurance brands tend to be perceived as “stiff and masculine," creating a psychological resistance to digital engagement.

On the web side, high-quality content was not reaching users effectively due to poor information architecture, and inadequate crisis communication following fraud-related coverage was eroding brand trust. Synthesizing thes, proposed repositioning the website — not as a place to understand products, but as a touchpoint for building trust with life planners — and outlined a design approach aimed at making visitors think “I'd like to meet them.”

Final findings were presented directly to a team including a Vice President at Prudential's U.S. headquarters. Sharing cultural context and consumer insights specific to the Japanese market, the response was: “This was very insightful and helped us clearly understand the differences between Japan and the U.S. We'd like to use this as a reference for our strategy going forward." The team expressed interest in ongoing collaboration.

Client	· Prudential Life Insurance (commissioned by AKQA Atlanta, U.S.)
Year	· Apr – May 2026
Target market	· Japan
Roles and responsibilities:	· Research & Strategy Lead · Market research, insight synthesis, strategic direction



Research and Concept Development for a Customer Experience Hub at a Leading System Integrator

To help define the direction for a customer-facing experience hub CTC was planning, designed and led interviews with 12 senior IT decision-makers and contacts in departments CTC hadn't yet worked with. Led the overall project design and analysis, sharing interview facilitation with a colleague.

Three key insights came out of the research: customers want a partner who can support them across understanding, vision, and execution; they're looking for the push to go beyond what they already know; and they want dedicated time and space — away from their daily work — to think seriously about the future.

These were brought together into the concept: “Future Gym — A place to explore, create, gather, and challenge toward the future we want to build." The concept was adopted by the client and used in an executive presentation. The client team is currently working through internal steps to move toward building the facility.



Client	· ITOCHU Techno-Solutions Corporation (CTC)
Year	· Sep – Oct 2025
Target market	· Japan
Roles and responsibilities:	· Research & Concept Lead · Interview, analysis, concept development

Innovation Workshops for Business Transformation at a Leading Mobility Company

Toyota's IT division came to us with a clear goal: 'Change the way our people see their work' and 'Break down silos and get people thinking differently.' Designed and ran a two-day workshop (half-day × 2, 30 participants) in person.

The program combined scenario planning and design thinking to help participants step back from daily routines and explore future possibilities — ending with selecting and visualizing ideas that could realistically be implemented. Led the program as project lead and head facilitator, directing table facilitators.

Participants shared: “We practiced a kind of thinking we never do normally,” “I connected with people from departments I'd never met,” and “This rarely happens at Toyota.” Overall satisfaction averaged 6.78 out of 7. The strongest ideas are now moving toward prototyping.

Client	· Toyota Motor Corporation
Year	· Apr – May 2025
Target market	· Japan
Roles and responsibilities:	· Project Lead · Workshop design, lead facilitation

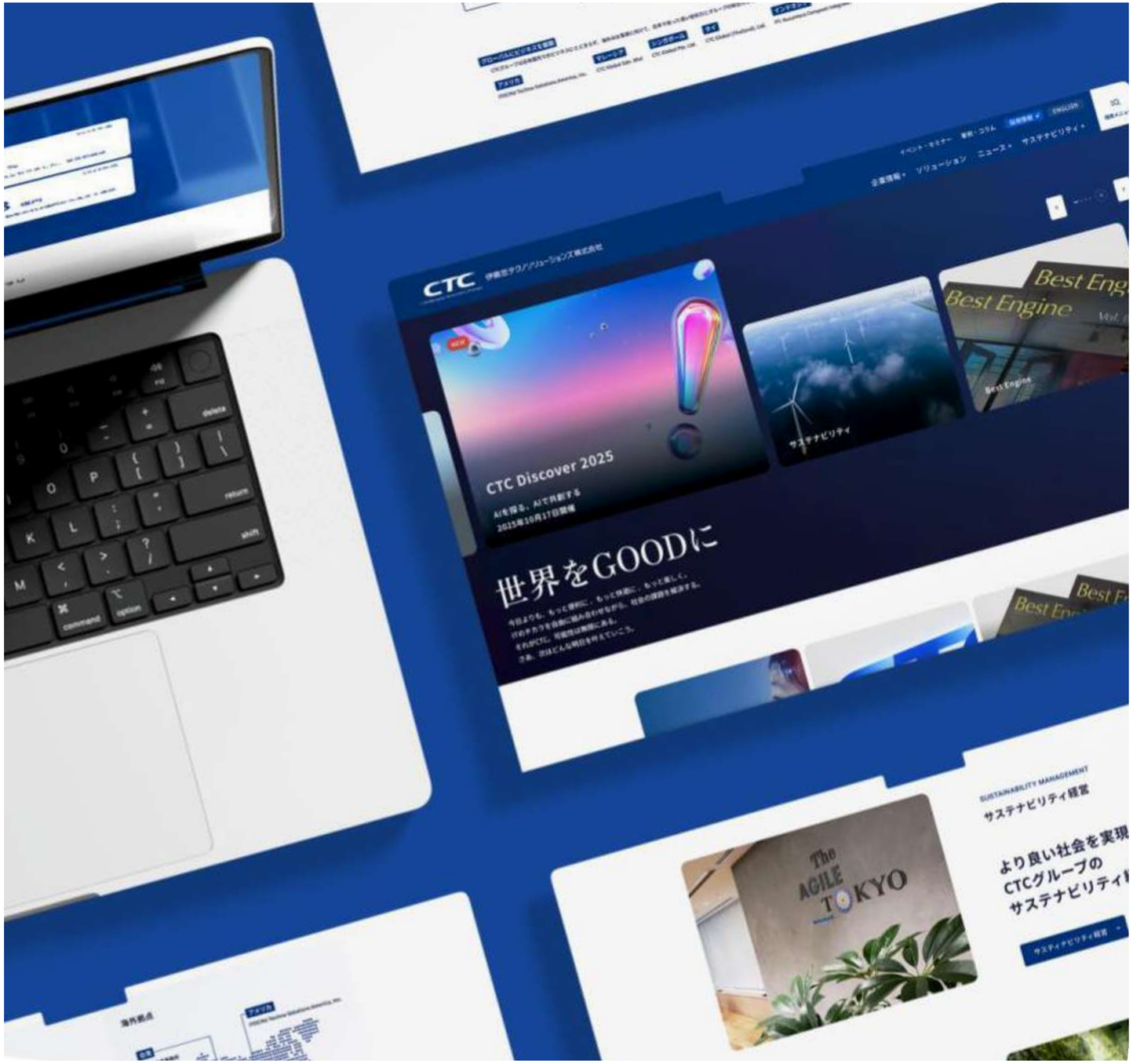


Corporate Website Renewal: Strategy and Experience Design for a Leading System Integrator

Served as Strategy Lead for the corporate website redesign of CTC, undertaken as part of the company's branding initiative to become a top-tier player in Japan's IT services industry. Drawing on web analytics, visitor behavior data, competitive benchmarking, and research into emerging digital experiences, I defined key personas and led the development of the site's strategic role, user journeys, and information architecture in alignment with the brand strategy.

Over a six-month engagement, I facilitated stakeholder discussions, aligned project direction, and built consensus across teams. The strategic framework developed during the project was adopted for executive review, while the proposed information architecture and wireframes were approved without major revisions and successfully handed off to the design team. The redesigned website launched in spring 2026.

Client	· ITOCHU Techno-Solutions Corporation (CTC)
Year	· May – Oct 2025
Target market	· Japan
Roles and responsibilities:	· Research & UX Design Lead · Data analysis, Target segmentation, IA, Wireframe design

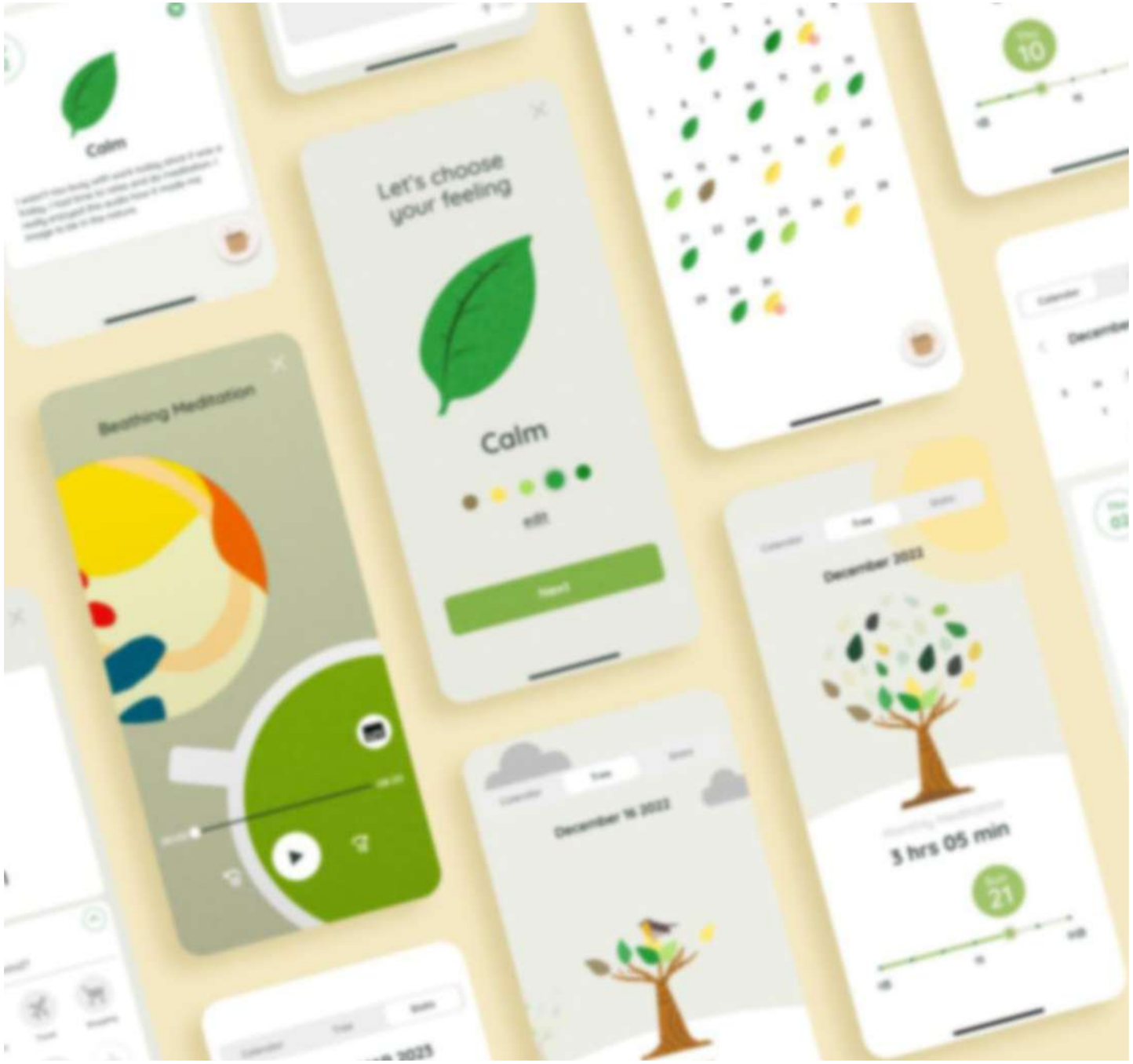


Designing a Mindfulness App That Feels Like a Trusted Friend

For a new meditation service for the U.S. market, developed by a Japanese food company, I led the UI/UX design and user testing. The concept combined matcha consumption with audio-guided meditation to help beginners build mindful daily rituals.

Working closely with the client through co-creation workshops, we conducted local user research and iteratively tested both the service concept and interface. The design focused on making the role of matcha easy to understand, simplifying post-meditation reflection, and creating a rewarding experience around personal progress. The goal was to create an experience that felt approachable, supportive, and as comforting as a close friend.

Client	· Otsuka Holdings, Japan
Year	· Feb 2022 – Mar 2023
Target market	· USA
Roles and responsibilities:	· Project Lead, Design Direction · User testing, UI/UX design, Design sprint workshop facilitation



New Kitchen Appliance Concept Inspired by Ethnographic Research in India

To support SAMSUNG India in developing a new refrigerator concept for the Indian market, designed and conducted ethnographic research in local homes. Through extended observation of how families managed food at home, witnessed a telling moment: a family had left warmed curd on top of the refrigerator to cool down, only to have a stray cat come by and lick it. From this, drew out a distinctly Indian insight: “There are things we want to store at room temperature" and “We want to keep our food in good condition without anything getting in the way."

Built on this insight to develop the concept “Curd Maestro" — a refrigerator designed to help users make perfect curd at home. The concept was developed into a flagship product for the Indian market and launched in 2020.

Client	· SAMSUNG India
Year	· Sep – Nov 2017 (Research and concept development)
Target market	· India
Roles and responsibilities:	· Research Lead · Field research and analysis, concept development



Thank you