Three offers SMARTY as a new vision of mobile networks

Partnering with Capgemini's Idean team, Three launches the SMARTY mobile offering to offer a digital-focused audience simpler mobile plans and improved customer service

Reaching a new mobile audience

What typically comes to mind when customers think about their choice of mobile offerings? Often, it seems to be frustration, overly complicated contracts, unfair charges, inflexibility, and exasperating customer service, all of which feed into the perception of generally being ripped off no matter what choice they make. When Three heard this feedback, the company knew that it had both a challenge and an opportunity: while UK mobile customers were generally dissatisfied with their options, this meant that there was a large segment of the highly competitive telecommunications market that could be reached if only the organization could offer something novel and deliver it in a new way.

Overview

Client: Three

Region: UK

Sector: Telecommunications

Client Challenge: Three wanted to create a new sub-brand to reach a younger, more digital customer base

Solution: In collaboration with Capgemini's Idean team, Three created SMARTY, a digital only, transparent, and easy-to-use mobile offering, complete with digital design and packaging, all designed in under six months by utilizing new digital studio ways of working

Benefits:

- +50 Net Promoter Score
- 4-star TrustPilot rating
- Simplified mobile plans
- Superior customer service

Three quickly decided that this meant more than an original marketing campaign or developing a new package. Instead, the network realized that it had a unique chance to do something truly innovative and exciting. Doing so meant finding a partner with an equal amount of enthusiasm for the innovation while offering a level of expertise that the company didn't possess at the time. In Capgemini's Idean, Three found an expert in creating solutions that could better capture the market. To do so, the partners agreed to build a Beta Business, an approach created by Capgemini's Idean to design a corporate venture that could launch faster, grow smarter, and operate more boldly, for Three's existing enterprise.

A brand built for customers

Together, the partners set about developing the business, which they named SMARTY. This meant first establishing a clear plan and set of objectives, which gave Three the chance to determine exactly what the Beta Business meant within the parent brand. After all, SMARTY wasn't just going to be another mobile business with different promotion. It needed to offer a completely new experience that would speak to an entirely new audience.

Doing so meant focusing on the complaints that people commonly raised about their mobile plans and service providers. So, the partners performed extensive customer research and co-created potential solutions along the way. Based on this input, Capgemini's Idean and Three designed SMARTY with greater flexibility, fast and clear customer service, and simplified charges so that customers got what they expected rather than being punished for using the network as intended. From day one, Three and Capgemini's Idean worked as one team to foster a culture of co-creation that drew on their complimentary expertises.

With a plan to execute upon, the partners then turned their attention to the various elements that all mobile businesses need in order to launch. However, in keeping with the new vision that inspired the creation of SMARTY, Three and Capgemini's Idean made sure to develop these with a focus on the customer experience. This meant creating a simple way to pay bills online and making it easy to buy and transfer data to a SIM card, ensuring that a new customer could quickly be up and running after deciding to make the switch to SMARTY.

As Three and Capgemini's Idean worked through this exciting journey, they found that some of their initial assumptions and expectations were proved incorrect. As a result, the partners had to remain on their toes, adjusting and pivoting in response to their growing understanding of what Three's new Beta Business would need. For example, when users turned out to be less enthused with the concept of pre-activated SIM cards than expected, the entire function was cut away, making SMARTY better suited for its intended customers.

And then, with their outline for the new business put together and adjusted by user input, Three and Capgemini's Idean got building.

Success driven by collaboration

The design, branding, billing, and network squads came together to form a single, unified, cross-functional team that worked in two-week design and build sprints to cover all of the relevant layers of the SMARTY business. Regular testing and iteration of working code was supported by products that made the entire development process faster, such as Intercom, Braintree, and PCA Predict. The project team brought all of these different pieces together to form the larger picture that would become SMARTY. Once the product was functional, SMARTY went through an alpha launch to identify and work out any remaining bugs. Just six months after getting started, the business went live and began serving UK mobile customers.

Of course, this was just the start. While the initial structure and set of offerings are critical, there are a variety of important elements to making a business successful. Being live in the market meant the joint team could test and iterate additional features, experiment with the proposition, and, most importantly, learn from live customer data. Since the launch, SMARTY and Capgemini's Idean are continually using new data and working on a variety of experiments to further refine its approach as a service provider and growing the customer base. Meanwhile, Capgemini's Idean and Three have expanded this approach to Beta Business development and partnered together to explore new opportunities.

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