How our Insight to Code approach helped a leading communications services provider uncover customer needs and develop new services to meet those needs.

In the highly competitive world of communications services, companies must constantly engage with their customers, offering increasingly valuable and innovative products and services. But how do they determine what their customers really want and need? And how do they efficiently translate those needs into new services?

A major communications services provider (CSP) was wrestling with this challenge in 2017, when it became interested in our “Insight to Code” approach, which combines human insights with software development application, turning insights about human needs into production-ready code in as little as eight weeks.

The CSP asked us to utilize “Insight to Code” to help identify useful services it could deploy on an enhanced home Wi-Fi router it was rolling out to customers. To conduct the initial research, we worked with ReD Associates, a Cognizant Digital Business strategic partner that uses the methods of social science to study human behavior. The ReD team observed how families in California, Texas and the metropolitan Philadelphia area used the Internet, smart phones and other devices in their daily activities.

AT A GLANCE

A leading communications services provider (CSP) engaged Cognizant and ReD Associates to analyze customer needs and help develop compelling new services that meet their human, and not just technology, needs.

OUTCOMES

• The research produced 19 new service recommendations.

• The client is implementing two new services addressing the customers’ biggest concerns – easy connectivity and “rules of the road” for how families use their devices.
They found that CSP customers rely on but don't fully understand their Internet connectivity, and don't always know how to use their “smart” devices. At the same time, they often feel isolated from other family members whose eyes are on a mobile screen.

As a result, the CSP is testing new production-ready services that will help customers connect their smart devices for them and troubleshoot connectivity issues, and set family rules for Internet usage.

DEEP RESEARCH PRODUCES NEW IDEAS

Our research examined how customers truly feel about digital devices, and where they need help in getting the most value from them. Among our findings:

- Customers depend on the Internet for work, education and social interactions. But they have little understanding of how the Internet works and how to safeguard and manage their connections.
- Customers start out excited about new devices such as smart watches, fitness monitors, smart appliances and virtual personal assistants. But they quickly abandon them because they are difficult to use and to connect to the Internet, and to one another.
- Customers often feel their digital devices isolate them from other family members who are distracted by their devices and unable to agree on how much gaming, texting, browsing and e-mail checking is acceptable.

NEW IDEAS YIELD NEW SERVICES

This research yielded 19 ideas for new services, two of which are being implemented by the client. They are:

- An application that lets families collaboratively agree on how much time each family member may spend online, with the rules monitored and enforced through the home Wi-Fi router.
- A service in which the CSP remotely connects devices such as virtual personal assistants, smart thermostats and appliances to each other and to capabilities such as the Spotify music streaming service.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Our “Insight to Code” approach ensures a process of continuous improvement. As consumers use the initial versions of these applications, our developers continually refine them in rapid sprints. There are no lengthy review cycles involving multiple participants. Instead, ongoing enhancements to the applications are driven by whether the app is meeting the needs our research identified, such as how often family members agree on “screen time” schedules and how many smart home devices they asked the CSP to connect.