Week 48, November 23, 2015
There’s a popular notion in tech lore of the lone genius who’s struck by a lightning bolt of inspiration and out pops a brilliant product idea, fully formed and crystal clear. Sure, that might happen sometimes, but it’s never happened to me and quite frankly, in my experience, it’s not the best way to start a viable business. The concept for the Narrative Clip, a wearable camera I developed, came from a highly structured, peer-reviewed process that I hope can inspire other designers and entrepreneurs. Here’s what that process looked like.

In the spring of 2011, I was ramping down from my position as CEO of Twingly, a blog aggregator, and I was looking to return to something more exploratory and unknown. I wanted to be more creative in my everyday life, so I set out to find something new. Before I started the process, I knew I wanted to be more creative in my everyday life, so I set out to find something new. Before I started the process, I knew that I wanted to make a consumer-facing product, and that I was interested in more of a service model than a one-off sale.

1. Relentless Brainstorming
I started off with a brainstorming session. I locked myself in a room and just started throwing out ideas. A lot of people have one or two ideas that they really like, and they get stuck on them. But you have to move past them. The valuable part of this process comes after about 40 ideas, when you’re completely drained. You think you’ve got it all out, and at a certain point you become unrestricted by your biases, and you start seeing things differently.

2. Guided Culling
The next day, you come back with fresh eyes, you’re feeling better, and you’re ready to actually step back and look at what’s there. A LOT of it was bad—there was an idea for a snow shovel with your initials so you can brand your territory by smashing them when you’re done shoveling, and a weight loss video game where obesity is caused by evil spirits. But there was also an idea for a TV channel that broadcasts live feeds of video games like Twitch. After going through everything, I started loosely grouping the ideas; there were ideas around crowdfunding, 3-D printing, hardware, and data visualization. I then went through everything one-by-one looking at each through different lenses. I took each idea and thought about how it’d work in a consumer model vs. B2B, subscription vs. perpetual, and so on.

3. Seeing What Sticks
After I narrowed down the list, I immediately started talking to other people to get their opinions. I strongly believe in not keeping your ideas secret. I think you need to pitch 100 people before you can feel confident that you have a good idea, and you know how to make other people excited about it. I relied heavily on people around me being honest about what they thought.

4. Gut Check
When it came down to the idea that would eventually become Narrative, I struggled. I really believed in the product and what it could mean to people. I wanted to make a camera that could be unobtrusive and capture what life was really like, as opposed to just special occasions. At this point I had lost both of my parents, and when they passed, a lot of memories were lost as well. The photographs that remained were of moments that felt precious enough to document at the time, but nothing in-between; the everyday stuff is gone.

I did a lot of research around wearable cameras and looked at the work of Steve Mann at MIT and Gordon Bell’s work at Microsoft, and concluded that the camera would have to be at least 2 inches by 2 inches. I honestly didn’t think it was enough to wear all the time. I was about to strike if off the list when I discovered the Eye-Fi SD card and it completely blew my mind. The Eye-Fi is the size of an SD card, but is a Wi-Fi transmitter as well as a memory card. I concluded that if the Eye-Fi is possible, my camera would be, as well.

Conclusion
The idea that eventually became the Narrative Clip was not a gift from a muse, but more like the prize at the end of a long boxing match. The idea had to distinguish itself from a large crowd, survive multiple business model lenses, external criticism, and technical feasibility battles. This process led to a product that I’m very proud of, and now we’re about to launch the second generation product. The precise steps might not work for everyone. But if you’re sitting around waiting for a thunderclap of inspiration, you could do worse than to lock yourself in a room and start lobbing ideas at the wall.

Where Ideas Actually Come From
Written by Martin Killstrom
http://www.fastcodesign.com/3053694/where-ideas-actually-come-from

A thunderbolt of inspiration? Try again.
One entrepreneur describes the long slog that led to his big idea.
A dancing, carbohydrate-eating monster. Yup, that sounds right.

I was left-handed as a kid then one day decided to be right-handed and I haven’t looked back since.

Hmm... well an interesting fact from my state in the USA is that Hass avocados (which are amazing and delicious and should be in every meal) all came from a single tree in California. So... you’re welcome.

I love working in cafes, so when I’m not in a cafe environment, the silence can be deafening. In comes www.coffitivity.com, which replicates the sounds of a bustling cafe straight to you. Choose your track from options like ‘Morning Murmur’ or ‘University Undertones.’

I recently came across Iris Van Herpen, who integrates fashion with structured materials and technology in a beautifully sculptural and interactive way, like garments that are electronic instruments or created from umbrella parts.

Cutest food item I’ve come across are cat-shaped marshmallows from Yawahada Marshmallow Shop. If you need an infusion of adorable in your life, order a box and plop a kitty into your coffee, milk, wine, soda, whatever... #nojudgement ;)

Nominated for the next issue:
Chris Zobl from ixD 1
From 1941 to 1978 Charles and Ray Eames, a husband-and-wife team, brought unique talents to their partnership. He was an architect by training, she was a painter and sculptor. Together they are considered America’s most important and influential designers, whose work helped, literally, shape the second half of the 20th century and remains culturally vital and commercially popular today. They are, perhaps, best remembered for their mid-century modern furniture, built from novel materials like molded plywood, fiberglass-reinforced plastic, bent metal wire and aluminum – offering consumers beautiful, functional, yet inexpensive products. Revered for their designs and fascinating as individuals, Charles and Ray have risen to iconic status in American culture. But their influence on significant events and movements in American life – from the development of modernism, to the rise of the computer age – has been less widely understood. Charles and Ray Eames are now profiled in American Masters – Charles & Ray Eames: The Architect and the Painter, a film by Jason Cohn and Bill Jersey. Narrated by James Franco.

**Inspiration**

**These Beautiful “Mental Maps” Of Cities Help Your Brain Regain What It Has Lost To GPS**

The more we drive with GPS—or walk down the sidewalk staring at directions on a smartphone—the less we’re able to navigate on our own. Relying on navigational tech might even make the hippocampus, the part of our brain that handles memory, shrink a little. A set of maps from designer Archie Archambault might help us rebuild the mental maps of cities that we’re starting to lose. Instead of a literal grid of streets, he maps out neighborhoods and the basic parts of a city the way someone who lives there might think of it, or at least the way they probably did before Google Maps existed.


**Events**

**Umeå European Film Festival 2015**

Dates: 24 November - 29 November

Website: UEFFSE

Umeå European Film Festival 2015 will take place from 24-29 November. The festival offers a wide program focusing on European film, a program to highlight films from and about different European countries. We see the European profile as an umbrella under which different understandings of what European film and cinema is, being housed and presented. Recurrence in the festival program is the Insights. Every year we look to the film and cinema life in the two countries that for the year holds the European capitals of culture. Through this insight we present film and film culture from two countries, 2015 Czech Republic Plzen and Belgium with Mons, is the subject to this insight.

**Thomas Di Levi**

Tuesday 24 November

12:10-12:50

Ljusgården atrium, Teacher Education Building

It’s been about 50 years since many observed a strange phenomenon of light in the skies above Gävle, the same night that Thomas Di Levi was born in the Swedish city. One of Sweden’s most highly acclaimed singer songwriters with many hit songs. He is now performing on tour with his acoustic guitar. A can’t miss Culture on Campus event!
UID GAMES

NOVEMBER 27, 18:00-22:00

TEST YOUR SKILLS AT

FLIP CUP
PING PONG
BEER PONG
FOOSBALL

ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE PUB GO TO A NEW PING PONG TABLE