

# CASE STUDY

Case studies are useful tools to communicate the details and impact of your project to people who may know nothing about it. The most successful case studies provide inspiration to fellow designers and serve as learning tools that can be shared with clients, media, other designers and the public. This template walks you through what topics to cover—such as research, strategy and effectiveness—to demonstrate the value of design in a clear, compelling and accessible way.

*After filling in these details, please format all of the written and visual content in a way that communicates the story of your project in an engaging way.*

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## Project Details

Provide this information to give readers a quick overview of your project

- » **Title of Project**
  - » **One-sentence project description** (elevator pitch)
  - » **Overview of challenge.** Summarize your project in a couple of paragraphs, touching on the challenge, design approach, the outcome and any important highlights
  - » **Date(s) / Duration**
  - » **Location**
  - » **Partner(s) / Client(s)** (include short description of each along with key people)
  - » **Audience / Community / Organization being served**
  - » **Team members**
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## Design Process

We followed the general process of [Research](#), [Co-Design](#), and [Prototype](#). Many discrete activities took place within that framework, from defining the challenge to designing and testing your prototype. Provide details about how you worked through your project, of the final designs.

1. **Baseline Information**  
Outline what you knew about the design challenge at the project's start
  - » This might have included images of existing design elements, environment, user experience, etc; responses to interviews from community members or users, place-based observations and assessments, and facts that provide contextual information about the challenge. You may have accumulated this “before” information throughout your project.
2. **Research**  
Describe how you investigated the problem. Your research may have taken many forms in order to understand and assess the needs of the project, and may have included resources like:
  - » Websites, books, case studies, articles, white papers, etc
  - » Data gathering or behavioral insights
  - » Observations, interviews, sensory probes, or other user insights
  - » This description might also include various discovery phase artifacts:
    - + Sensory ethnography sketches
    - + Interviews
    - + Personas that show characters for whom the designs can be customized
    - + Principles that support the goals of this project
    - + Best Practices that emerge from research and that can serve as a foundation for design approaches and solutions
    - + Requirements that each design should follow and future needs
    - + Journey maps that show normal usages of service or product
    - + Stakeholder map that illustrates the existing relationships

### 3. Engagement

Describe how you connected with your target audience and/or the place to better understand the challenge:

- » How did you involve/integrate your partners, clients, end-users, stakeholders?
- » How did you explore the space, environment, or context that frames your design challenge?

### 4. Summarize Findings

Describe how your research and engagement informed your approach. This summary might also include various co-design phase artifacts:

- + Service, product, or communication design concepts
- + Videos or storyboards that describe the design concepts
- + Etc

### 5. Design Solution

Detail the various aspects of your final design solution and describe how the final design solution took shape. Prototyping phase artifacts that demonstrate the design might included:

- » Prototyping summary
- » Demonstration of prototype
- » Digital and/or print touchpoints:
  - + Video / Motion design
  - + Website
  - + Audio recording
  - + Posters
  - + Logo and branding guide
  - + Renderings

### 6. Strategy for Implementation

Describe what is needed to implement the design solution.

- » Blueprint that provides an overview to partners, clients, and future users
- » Service, product or design implementable requirements
- » Timeline of implementation
- » Roll-out for pilot testing
- » Roles of team-member
- » Communication strategy
- » Collateral associated with the prototype

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## Assess Impact

Describe the outcome of your project, as it compares to the baseline conditions. Why is your design effective or ineffective? Who benefited (or will benefit)? What has the reaction been from the community, partner, or client so far? To help guide your answers, consider providing both qualitative insights, quantitative data, direct and indirect results, “before and after” images, statistics, figures and facts, stories, interviews, and quotes from stakeholders. The impact could fall into one or more of these categories:

- » **Economic**: Has the design solution created new jobs, increased business, provided more services for lower cost, etc? What’s the Return on Design?
- » **Social**: Has the design changed social dynamics in the community. Has it increased interactions, networks, activities that have strengthened the social bonds?
- » **Environmental**: How has your project affected the environment: through conservation of energy, water or materials, use of recycled or sustainable materials, or alternate ways to communicate information (converting printed materials to digital materials).
- » **Health**: How has your project improved people’s health. Will it help increase physical activity and mental well-being? Help with weight-loss, better eating habits and reduction of health risk indicators?
- » **Cultural**: Have there been any new cultural, artistic and educational opportunities? Have any new cross-cultural/generational/ethnic interactions occurred?
- » **Political**: Consider how your project has or might lead to a shift in policy around the issue. Might it lead to more collaboration between designers and policy analysts or politicians? Could laws change as a result?
- » **Educational**: Did your design help to educate your target audience on the topic of your project? Did any new educational programs begin because of the design? Is your client or the end user able to use and/or adapt your designs as a tool to educate others?
- » **Another**: Has there been another kind of impact? Please explain.

# Reflections

Consider **why** your project was important, **what** tools, methods or frameworks helped you work through the project, and **how** others might get involved in this kind of project in the future.

## Why

- » Would you describe the kind of impact you want to have as social, economic, environmental, health, cultural, political/policy, some combination of these, or another kind?

## What

- » Have you developed or utilized any particular skills, methods, or toolkits/frameworks during this project? If so, how useful were they? What were their strengths and shortcomings?
- » How did you ensure that the client/partner/end user takes ownership of the final design in the end?

## How

- » How has this project changed the way you work? Is there anything you would change if you could do this over again? What would you do the same?
- » Can you think of any additional partnerships that will need to be established for a complete and successful implementation of the design at community, city, or industry levels?
- » Are there innovations that can/should be scaled up?
- » Any additional budgeting, funding, or organizational considerations?

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# Assets

Provide this essential content to help illustrate the story of your project. You can also use this content to design your case study but please provide the raw files for future use.

## 3 quotes

- » From users, partners, clients or based on interviews and/or user-testing

## 3 compelling statistics

- » Before/after; baseline conditions

## 7-10 images or illustrations of

- » Research
- » Sketches from several points/iterations during the process
- » Visual designs (print, web, environmental, motion, etc), implementation, etc

## Image requirements

- » High resolution (300 dpi), Horizontal, Color
- » Caption for image
- » Image credit (e.g., "Photo: Photographer's Name" or "Source: www. websitename.com")

## Print Files

- » Print files intended as business cards, posters, stationary, brochures, etc should be exported as "Press Quality" pdfs. If the design has imagery that bleeds off the page, please make bleeds .125 inches. Add crop marks.

## Digital Files

- » Digital files to be used for websites, facebook, etc should be created in pixels and exported at 72dpi as either jpg or png files (png if the files need to have a transparent background).

## Motion Files

- » Export your motion files to a high resolution .mov or .mp4 formats. If future editing might be needed, provide the source files along with any assets that were used for the video (fonts, images, illustrations, etc)

## Logo / Identity

- » Logo / Identity files should be customized as .ai and .png file. Provide a brief style guide that states how the identity system should and should not be used, the colors (in RGB and CMYK), typefaces (and how they are used), and any other formatting or style choices.

## Front End Web Design

- » Front End Web Design files should be made in Illustrator or Photoshop so that future website developers can measure the space between elements, assets, etc. Provide any assets as either jpg, png, or svg files depending on what their function is. If there's any special functionality of the website (or features), please provide a text file that describes those functions and has links to any plugins, codes, or references that will be needed.

## Guidelines

- » Provide any additional guidelines as your project requires.

Case Study Template  
adapted by Andrew Shea  
from various sources:

- » *Case Studies Template*, "LEAP Dialogues" (2016)
- » *Five Borroughs Farm*, Design Trust for Public Space (2014)
- » *Submit a Case Study*, AIGA's "Design for Good" initiative (2014)
- » *Making the Case: designNYC Case Study Template*, designNYC (2012)
- » *Case Study Questionnaire*, Andrew Shea's book "Designing for Social Change" (2010)