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101 Design Ingredients to Solve Big Tech Problems

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101 Design Ingredients to Solve Big Tech Problems



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*This book is dedicated to the memory
of our beloved son Joseph Christopher
Chen, who had the most perfect heart.*

March 7–April 14, 1997

Introduction

Technology and business teams continue to deliver products and services to solve bigger and bigger real-world issues. It doesn't really matter whether you're in the design, television, music, Internet, publishing, consultancy, software, marketing, finance, healthcare, or some other industry—many of the big problems facing teams today are the same. How do we innovate? How do we work better as a team? What problems are we meant to be solving? How do we keep our customers happy?

101 Design Ingredients is more than a book. It's a lightweight, supereasy-to-digest problem-solving toolset. You'll learn how to apply to your projects insights from leaders in the design-thinking, agile, lean-startup, product, entertainment, and business-strategy worlds. Your team isn't facing anything today that hasn't already been tackled before. This book will help you and your team work together to better understand problems so you can come up with solutions quickly, easily, and confidently.

Let's face it: we could all use a little more time to get things right, but we often don't get it. Sometimes all you need is a quick flash of inspiration to get you through your project. I wrote *101 Design Ingredients* to help you get re-inspired. Use it when you need a boost to keep you going. Start from the beginning to kick-start a project, inject some creativity when you're stuck in a rut, or pick up speed near the end to finish strong. It doesn't matter where you are in your project or what problem you're facing—there's always a solution.

You'll never again think twice about tackling problems, and you'll work well together with your team to solve them.

Who This Book Is For

If you've ever worked on a project where changing customer needs, business goals, and market requirements play a vital part in defining success, this book is for you. No matter whether you're a designer, developer, project manager, business stakeholder, startup founder, product owner, business analyst, usability researcher, branding expert, or marketing or sales staff, this book will give you practical advice to challenge and help you work as part of a team to solve problems.

The ingredients and recipes in this book will help you, whether you're a beginner starting out on your first technology project or a seasoned professional who has been tackling the same big problems for years and needs a fresh approach.

How To Read This Book

101 Design Ingredients is a quick-reference guide that tech teams can use to identify and solve problems fast. It's perfect for your morning commute, a quick read before going to bed, or even an elevator ride. The bite-sized ingredients and recipes are easily consumable in short periods of time. Glance down the list of ingredients and apply the useful hints and tips to solve your biggest problems immediately. It's really that easy.

If your team and your business find it hard to just identify the right problems, *101 Design Ingredients* will help you prioritize and then will act as a catalyst, each ingredient providing simple, practical advice you can start using at any point in a project.

The first four sections of the book correspond to the four stages of a project: Ingredients to Get You Started, Ingredients to Keep You Going, Ingredients to Help You Cross the Finish Line, and Ingredients to Get More of What You Want. You can start with the stage of the project that you're in now, or dive straight into any ingredient that strikes your fancy.

In part V you'll see ten real-world case studies of how companies combined the ingredients to create their own recipes for success, and you'll learn how to apply the ingredients to meet your own specific needs in a matter of minutes.

Online Resources

This book is an open invitation for teams and individuals to connect to discuss shared problems. There are many ways to do that.

This book has its own page on the Pragmatic Bookshelf website: <http://pragprog.com/titles/ec101di>. Feel free to ask me questions about the book, discuss problems, and share case studies on the discussion forum. If you find any mistakes in the book, please report them on the errata page so we can address them as soon as possible.

Additionally, be sure to visit this book's website,¹ to find, create, and share even more ingredients and recipes. Follow us on Twitter at @101DI and on Facebook at 101 Design Ingredients.^{2,3}

I hope you enjoy experimenting with the ingredients and solving problems both at work and in your personal life.

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