



teak research

## EVERYTHING CAN BE DESIGNED

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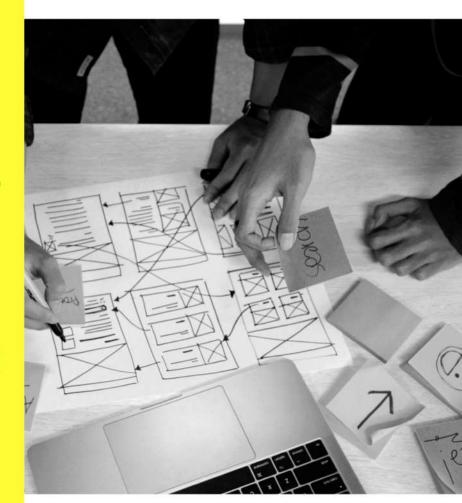


Design thinking is the method that has been utilized by both Market Researcher and Design Researcher. While they seem to use the same research method but there are also differences which will be reveal in this article.

While not every organization has designers, there's always someone doing the "designing" giving shape and form to strategy, branding, marketing, communications, products, services or systems. In this sense, everything can be designed.

There's seemingly no end to what design can do for public and private sector organizations where Design Thinking has been applied for decades across the globe by consulting agencies as well as in-house by organizations. Design Thinking has come to include several sub-disciplines under the umbrella of Design Research such as Human-Centered Design, User Research, and User Experience Research which now require specialists to apply.

WHILE MARKET
RESEARCH SEEKS
TO DETERMINE
HOW TO MARKET
A PRODUCT,
DESIGN
RESEARCH
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AND HOW TO
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Design thinking means to think like an industrial designer. Unlike a marketer who learns that any product, regardless of the consumer need, can be sold as long as the advertising is good enough, an industrial designer is taught that any consumer need can be solved with a product as long as the design is good enough.

However, this "good enough" is really subjective, which is why organizations pay for market research or marketing research. This is where the approach to research differs amongst design researchers and market researchers. While Market Research seeks to determine how to market a product, design research figures out what to design and how to design it.

The next closest thing to the Design Thinking process would probably be the process of New Product Development (NPD) where at least one or more departments of an organization are assigned to generate new ideas or innovations that are researched, developed, and tested before being sold. The two processes are almost identical, but the way they are explained is different.

In fact, market researchers and design researchers both use qualitative and quantitative research methods. They use focus groups, in-depth interviews, ethnography, and surveys. Yet, they remain two separate disciplines despite belonging to some of the same industry associations with practitioners from both disciplines working for the same organizations.

At this point, it would seem as both Market Research and Design Research were the same, but here's where they differ; while a market researcher is expected to deliver research outcomes in the form of scientific summary of results from a set of research questions and hypothesis, design researchers are asked to synthesize those research outcomes the way a management consulting agency would, with strategic insights and business implications.



For design researchers, it's not enough to conduct a scientifically grounded study. For every insight presented in a report, a design researcher must demonstrate the implications on the client's business. The design researcher must also act as a consultant to discuss how the client might use those insights to bring shape or form to its marketing or product strategy.

Even more importantly, practitioners of Design Research and Market Research have completely different backgrounds. Design researchers are usually from a multi-disciplinary background including Industrial Design or Interaction Design whereas market researchers are typically from a Marketing or Business Administration background. However, both disciplines nearly always have researchers with a background in Sociology or Anthropology.

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