# Building Consumer Trust in the Digitalizing Insurance Sector

Exploring the structure, utilization, and impact of trust indicators as crucial elements in the customer journey.





**Master Thesis** Strategic Product Design

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### **Preface**

#### Dear reader,

I present my graduation thesis for the Master of Strategic Product Design. After half a year of hard work, this project concludes my seven years at the Industrial Design Engineering faculty of the TU Delft.

This thesis is made possible through the opportunity that Insify has given me. First and foremost, I want to thank my company supervisor, Anton Lunshof. Thank you for making time, being critical, and supporting me throughout the challenging phases of this project. Discussing the project directions with you in an open setting helped me develop my thoughts. I would like to thank you for opening doors within Insify and showing me around.

Moreover, I want to express my gratitude towards everyone within Insify who contributed to this project. Bruno, Jonas, Lou, Tim, Jort, Stefano, Quentin, and Steffan thank you for the interviews, design and copy feedback, and support in navigating the data. I felt welcome at the company and enjoyed getting to know everyone during my working days at the office.

Next, I would like to show my appreciation to my mentor, Christina Schneegass. Thank you for taking the time to discuss the project and my findings thoroughly. Your sharp feedback and sometimes words of relativization helped me progress throughout the project. I would also like to thank my chair Giulia Calabretta, who gave me feedback on the thesis's strategic value.

And lastly, I want to thank my roommates, parents, and girlfriend who kept supporting me while having to listen to my braindumps and random thoughts. I would also like to thank the OBA, the public library of Amsterdam, for being a place where I enjoyed working till closing time.

It's a wrap.

#### Enjoy the read!

Kind regards, Hylke

### **Executive Summary**

Deciding if an online entity is trustworthy can be challenging. How do you decide if you can go into business with an unknown company, offering an enticing product?

This thesis project aimed to enhance consumer trust in Insify, a starting business insurance company operating in a competitive market. The objective was to identify trust indicators and evaluate their impact on conversion rates, ultimately seeking ways to improve consumer trust.

Insify is an InsurTech company aiming to simplify and digitize insurance processes. They offer disability, property & casualty, and health insurance directly to customers, targeting self-employed entrepreneurs and small to medium-sized enterprises. However, they face competition from established insurers and challenges associated with digitalization in a crowded market.

In the e-commerce realm, building consumer trust is challenging but crucial. Early UX designers incorporated trust-building elements into online spaces. However, during the past decade, deceptive design practices emerged, complicating the trust-building process and increasing consumer skepticism towards the online provision of personal information.

The project follows the Double Diamond design method, involving literature research, expert interviews, customer surveys, and A/B testing to redefine trust indicators and enhance the customer journey. In the final section of the design phase a strategic roadmap is presented, highlighting future opportunities for Insify.

The research findings revealed that customers value personal contact and support. The customer survey indicated the significance of insurance premiums

and coverage for business insurance customers. Trust-building was identified as a multifaceted process that extends beyond competence, integrity, and benevolence, indicating a need for a connected set of trust indicators throughout the customer journey. However, the research project faced limitations, such as difficulties in translating trust indicators into design components and defining precise methods to measure consumer trust.

Based on the findings, recommendations were made for Insify to showcase customer testimonials and use cases to demonstrate positive experiences, conduct A/B tests with more significant variations, and focus on addressing the desire for personal contact among customers. In a broader sense, the financial industry should recognize the impact of information asymmetry and prioritize conversations over fully automated application processes and questionnaires. Furthermore, the industry should prepare for disruptive transitions, such as the integration of AI.

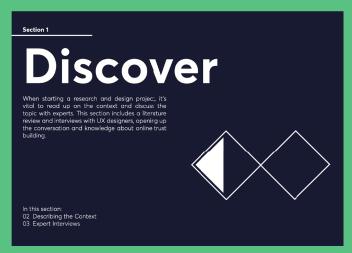
While the specific design components tested did not significantly impact conversion rates, the research process contributed to a deeper understanding of trust indicators and their role in consumer trust. The recommendations provided can guide Insify and the financial industry in enhancing consumer trust and improving the customer journey. Further research is encouraged to address the identified limitations and explore trust-building topics in more depth. Building trusting relationships with consumers should remain a primary goal, emphasizing the trust-building potential of each touchpoint in the customer journey.

# **Reading Guide**

Place pages horizontally next to each other when reading this thesis via a PDF reader. This will allow the visuals on spread pages to be presented correctly. Furthermore, the thesis consists of four different types of pages. The body will be presented in the same style as the executive summary page on the left. The other three page types:

#### Section introduction

This deep blue page signals the start of one of the four different double-diamond design sections. These pages present a short introduction and show which chapters are included in this section.



#### **Chapter introduction**

These bright blue pages signal the start of a chapter. A short introduction describes what is covered in the chapter.



#### **Summary page**

These green pages, looking the same as this page, summarize the findings of each chapter. They describe the main topics which were covered and present the key takeaways.



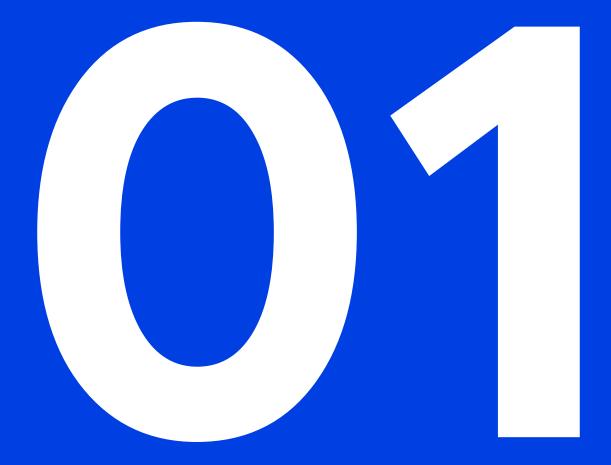
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# Introducing the project

This chapter starts with a short introduction to the crucial components that this project touches upon. As the research done throughout this project is done in a specific context, it is vital to understand the actors and history of that context. The direction and relevance of this paper are further explained by introducing the research question. The general project process and phases are defined and shown at the end of this chapter.



# 1.1 Setting the scene

Imagine, you are an entrepreneur, you take risks on a daily basis, knowing that a broken leg or minor accident can ruin your business plans. Self-employment risks go beyond your product or service; they can affect your income and livelihood. While fear and uncertainty are never great conversation starters, it is crucial to be aware of risks. As a business insurer, Insify wants to be that parachute for businesses, protecting entrepreneurs and helping them to "keep going".

#### The next-generation insurer

After multiple bad experiences with insurers, Koen Thijssen founded Insify in 2020, an InsurTech company that aims to make insurance simpler, faster, and more affordable. The idea is simple; entrepreneurs do not need an expensive and timeconsuming insurance advisor to ask them the same questions a digital application process can. Insify built a smooth digital customer journey that requests information step-by-step to calculate a personal insurance premium. The process, taking less than five minutes, is entirely automated, which has enabled the company to cut costs and offer competitive insurance premiums. Insify is leading the digitalization of the Dutch business insurance sector. The scale-up of over sixty employees has high aims and is expanding to the German and French markets.

Insify offers three product lines: disability insurance, property & casualty insurance, and health insurance. They sell directly to customers and partner with entrepreneurial organizations to explore new sales channels. Insify is constantly improving and extending its range of insurance products to fit the needs of all entrepreneurs. Their customer base ranges from self-employed entrepreneurs to business owners with multiple employees. The small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) which Insify insurers, consist of entrepreneurs running barber shops, webshops, and construction companies.

Insify has entered a crowded and competitive market where many different, well-known players are active. Another challenge is the fact that most insurers have been building a brand and name for themselves over the course of decades or even centuries. Competing with these large insurance organizations has proven to be complicated. Moreover, as these companies are also digitalizing, the competitive advantage Insify started out with through their application process is becoming less and less visible. Many other challenges arise as side effects of the digitalization processes which Insify is undertaking.

#### The rise of e-commerce

Since the introduction of the Internet, many companies have seen it as an opportunity to do business with anyone active on the said network. The first real e-commerce websites were chaotic compared to today's standards. The brick-and-mortar stores consumers were used to were completely different from what they encountered online. Where customers used to interact with an employee, they would now scroll through pages or databases, looking for the product of their liking.

This decrease in actual contact between a store and a customer lies at the core of the anonymous nature of the Internet. This caused consumers to be skeptical or hesitant to provide information via digital channels. Designing a pleasant and trustworthy online space was one of the main goals of the first UX designers focusing on e-commerce. These designers combined components from "physical" business practices and digital architecture to develop trust signals or indicators. These visual and textual components supposedly contributed to overall consumer trust.

Examples of these indicators are guarantees regarding returns or the use of certificates and partnership logos. As the Internet evolved, so

did these trust-building components. They were deployed throughout customer journeys, giving rise to deceptive design practices which trick customers into doing things they would rather not. These deceptive practices include creating fake scarcity, preselecting expensive options or recurring payments, or using visual interference to decrease the readability of cost-related information.

While mailboxes are overrun with newsletters and promotional emails, and almost every consumer has had bad experiences with e-commerce, we can state that the Internet is a place where appropriate legislation is lacking. At the same time, consumers have become digitally savvy, buying many of their products via online channels. The digital space has become crowded, which has made it difficult for new companies to stand out.

# 1.2 The Objective

#### **Project aim**

The nature of the insurance sector and e-commerce contribute to the challenges in building and maintaining consumer trust. Insify is not only challenging big insurers but also is experiencing the difficulties that arise once a product or service is digitalized. While the apparent goal of Insify is increasing sales, they also want to focus on offering the best customer service they can.

Evoking a sense of trustworthiness is one of the core objectives of this project. To do so, the trust-building components and the target customers must be researched. Understanding what customers value in an insurer and in an insurance product is essential when starting the designing phases. Mitigating the potential gap between the trust indicators Insify is using and the ones customers value the most, is one of the most important goals of this project.

As the insurance market is changing and adopting new technologies, it is also crucial to analyze the transitions in this market and their effect on customer contact. Understanding the direction and nature of these changes, will increase the usability of the project findings over the following years. Defining a future vision for Insify regarding their customer journey touchpoints might clarify future opportunities for the company.

#### **Research focus**

Building trust throughout a customer journey involves not only the application process but also customer service during product use. In this case, moments when claims are being filed, or insurance is being renewed can be important in this trust-building process. However, to increase the project's feasibility, the scoping entails only the journey until customers enter the application process and decide to calculate the height of their potential

insurance premiums. This means that this research project will mainly focus on the customer journey during the awareness and consideration phases. The focus of the project can be summarized in the following research question:

# How can consumer trust in Insify be improved in order to increase the conversion rate?

This research question introduces the conversion rates as an indicator that could help measure the true success or effectiveness of designs. To generate a deeper understanding of consumer trust and the context of Insify, the following subquestions are introduced:

- 1. What are trust signals, and how can they be defined?
- 2. How do designers use trust signals?
- 3. Which trust signals are most valued in e-commerce?
- 4. Which trust signals are most valued in insurance?

## 1.3 The Approach

The overall structure of this research is derived from the Double Diamond design method. The British Design Council popularized the model, launching its version in 2004, which is now widely used in design practice. It is a model that describes two sections, including phases of divergence and convergence. Sometimes the first diamond is described as aiming to design "the right thing," while the second diamond is aimed at designing "things right". The four phases are described as follows:

Discover Define Develop Deliver

#### Research

The research phase of this project revolves around understanding what trust-building is and which components can be used to build trust in the digital world. To do so, literature research has been conducted to understand the concepts of trust and consumer trust. Furthermore, qualitative research has been conducted to understand the

trust indicators currently used by user experience designers within Insify and other companies. Through a customer survey, the value customers assign to each of these trust indicators is analyzed, after which the overview of indicators is restructured, and outcomes are compared to define the design brief.

#### Design

The design phase starts by presenting the design brief, after which the role of insurers is reframed and put into perspective. Analyzing the current customer journey of not only Insify but also its direct competitors helps to define opportunities for improvements. Starting with trust indicators as design directions, new landing page components are conceptualized and prioritized. This phase introduces A/B-tests which were conducted on the landing pages of Insify, measuring conversion rates for multiple variants. The design phase finalizes with the presentation of a strategic roadmap entailing the future expectations for business insurance.

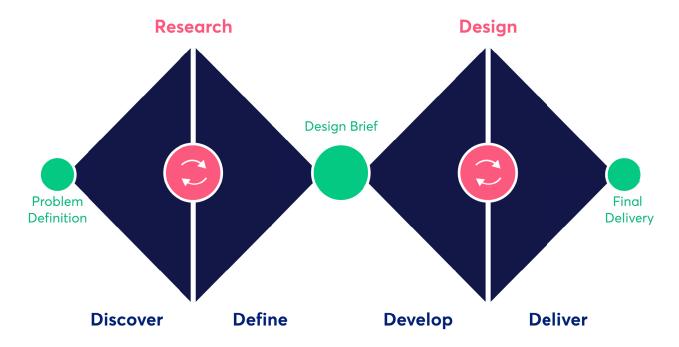


Figure 1: Double Diamond report structure

# DISCOV

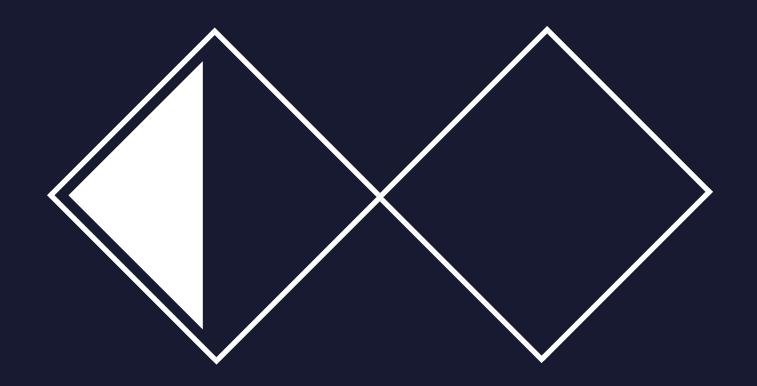
When starting a research and design project, it is vital to read up on the context and discuss the topic with experts. This section includes a literature review and interviews with UX designers, opening up the conversation and knowledge about online trust building.

In this section:

02 Describing the Context

03 Expert Interviews

# 



# Describing the Context

This chapter examines literature and the company to understand the project's context. It discusses existing literature on (online) trust and UX design and introduces the insurance company, their vision, business case, and customers. The chapter explores the history of insurance and concludes with identified knowledge gaps and a short introduction to the research approach.

### 2.1 Literature Review

As this project covers many different research topics, the literature was extensive. The most important topics on which the overall research is built, are (online) consumer trust, business insurance, and UX design. In each of these specific sections, papers have been written, but only a few papers touch upon two or more of these topics. This directly shows that there is a literature gap when it comes to UX design for consumer trust or papers on the digitalization sectors such as insurance.

### 2.1.1 Consumer Trust

#### **Historical Need for Trust**

Over the years, much research has been conducted on the topic of trust. Especially in the context of commercial transactions, many papers have been written regarding the role of trust. Arrow (1975) noted that trust is omnipresent in the face of transaction costs. In the same paper, Arrow defined trust as "an important lubricant of a social system". Tilly (2004) states that these trust networks have existed for thousands of years and have consisted of sophisticated interpersonal connections within which people set-valued, long-term resources and enterprises at risk of the malfeasance of others. Examples mentioned by Tilly of situations in which trust networks exist are cohabitation, procreation, transmission of property, and long-distance trade.

Swedish economist Leijonhufvud (1995) described and compared the lives of two Europeans that lived a thousand years apart. He introduced Bodo, who lived near Paris in the 10th century. Bodo's network was small, consisting of 80 people, and almost everything Bodo consumed was produced by his family. Whenever someone would fall ill, others in the community would help out. It is

difficult to imagine what life would be like if anyone interacted with less than 100 people over the span of a lifetime. Hardin (2006) describes that in Bodo's village, all were connected to all. In contrast, nowadays, we form more specific relationships in which we do something for someone else and expect that person to reciprocate. Therefore trust is needed within a relationship, in large, to maintain the said relationship. Hardin further points out that we actively want to know more people than the 80 people Bodo knew. We also consume a vast range of products from all over the world, produced by people with whom we cannot expect to have a relationship in which we can ground enforcements of our norms.

#### **Origin of Trust**

That is where trust comes into play. Hardin (2006) states that trust originates in knowledge: "To say we trust you means that we know or think we know relevant things about you, especially about your motivations towards us". Trust is cognitive and, therefore, not a deliberate choice but a consequence. In a buyer-supplier relationship, trust or mistrust occurs because of three concepts of sources of knowledge: identity, image, and reputation (Smeltzer, 1997). A corporate identity is the set of perceptions or personal constructs individuals use to describe their organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985). A corporate image can be defined as how members of an organization believe outsiders think of their organization (Dulton & Dukerick, 1991). Lastly, corporate reputation can be described as the actual attributes outsiders ascribe to an organization (Fombrum & Shanle, 1990). In an ideal state, these three concepts overlap significantly, where identity, image, and reputation describe similar attributes or characteristics of an organization. In reality, this is not always the case. Sometimes we can perceive another party as trustworthy, but end up swindled.

#### Information asymmetry

Akerlof (1970) first introduced the concept of information asymmetry through his example of the used car market. He explained that in this context, the car owners, and sellers, can make a more accurate estimation of the car quality than the buyer. Being able to distinguish between good and bad quality products is inherently problematic in business. To reduce the information asymmetry and overall risk, trading partners can consider each others' reputations (Mui & Halberstadt, 2002). Kicking the tires of a used car will probably not give enough information about the car. Therefore a potential buyer asks the seller questions and tries to determine her or his identity, image, and reputation. This uncertainty may lead to opportunism, where the informed seller tries to cheat the uninformed buyer to secure a higher sale price (Zavolokina et al., 2021). The second-hand car market is an example of a market where both information and certainty are scarce, resulting in the need for trust. However, this necessity for trust is present in almost every commercial sector.

#### **Concept of trust**

Defining trust is very difficult as it is manifested in various forms. It is clear that trust is a means to an end, helping two parties to overcome risk and build a trusting relationship. Trust can be defined as "the willingness of a trustor to be vulnerable to actions of the trustee" (Mayer, David & Schoorman, 1995). Grandison & Sloman (2000) proposed another definition of trust; "the firm belief in the competence of an entity to act dependably, securely and reliably within the specified context. David (2008) described trust to be both emotional and logical. Emotionally, on the one hand, because a person exposes vulnerabilities and expects others not to take advantage. Logically because we tend to calculate and assess the probability of gain and loss. If a party does not live up to the set

expectations, the hurt can be both material and emotional. Rachel Botsman (2016) described trust as "a confident relationship with the unknown". She visualizes trust as a bridge between two states, the known and the unknown. Botsman's more visual approach to trust as a dynamic state fits well with the process of acquiring a product or service. In this process, we overcome fear, risk, and uncertainty to build a trusting relationship with another party or organization confidently.

#### **Evolution of trust**

Buyers no longer just interact with a seller, but engage with brands or institutions. This increase in engagement is caused by the emergence of institutional trust in a commercial context. Botsman (2016) describes three chapters in the evolution of trust: local, institutional & distributed. As an example, she introduces the act of taking out a loan. In the era of local trust, anyone could ask their neighbor for said loan based on accountability. Once urbanism started, we replaced local bankers with large corporations, which caused trust to become institutional and based on brands instead of accountability. This institutionalization went on up until the more recent transition towards the third chapter, distributed trust. This transition closely relates to the introduction of the Internet and e-commerce.

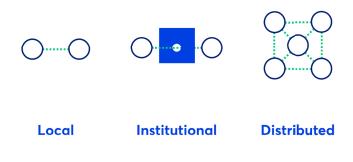


Figure 2: Chapters of trust evolution by Botsman (2016)

# 2.1.2 Digital & UX Design

#### E-commerce

The introduction of the internet in the 1990s was one of the most important innovations of the last decades. It changed how we communicate, search for information, and do business. Organizations could go beyond their offices and shops without the constraints of time and space, being able to sell things anytime and anywhere (Beldad et al., 2010). The online world entirely lacks the dimension of personality or character on which we usually base decisions related to trust (Nissenbaum, 1999). The anonymous nature of the internet causes online merchants to mainly depend on their websites to present themselves to potential customers (Wang & Emurian, 2005). The process of building trust, which we have been using before electronic commerce, has become inappropriate for the pace and scale we encounter in digital commerce (Corbitt & Thanasankit, 2003). The first adaptors, such as Amazon, were companies selling their physical products online. Soon companies such as PayPal also started providing digital (financial) services. Other sectors and industries started building their e-commerce and digital departments in the early 2000s.

#### **Orgin of Branding**

Where Hardin's (2006) Bodo knew every person he interacted with, we now interact with unknown individuals and institutions daily. The consumer market grew through the transition from these small communities to larger, more diverse societies. Through industrialization, new companies were founded, and brands emerged. In 1923, Copeland was the first to mention brand loyalty, labeling it "brand insistence". In the years before the Second World War, some influential brands became almost generic in their product fields (Carpenter & Nakamoto, 1989). Coca-Cola is one example of a consumer brand that used relatively new media channels, such as radio and nationwide magazines,

to promote its products (Bastos & Levy, 2012). Bastos & Levy further describe that in the late 1940s and 1950s, the marketplace became more competitive and gave rise to the proliferation of brands. The rise of branding and marketing shifted corporate identity, image, and reputation.

#### Online consumer trust

In the early days of the Internet, much research has been done on building trust relationships with consumers that have just started using the Internet. It was found that consumers recognized the differences in sizes of Internet stores which influences the assessment process of a store's trustworthiness, the perception of risk, and the consumers' willingness to patronize the store (Jarvenpaa et al., 2000). Chen & Dhillon (2003) stated that there are three trust dimensions for Internet vendors: competence, integrity, and benevolence. In the same paper, they identify four categories for sources of customer trust: the personal characteristics of the consumer, features of the firm, features of the website, and the interactions between the customer and the firm and website. Another study (Doney & Cannon, 1997) found that a company's size, years of activity, reputation, and brand recognition are important, influencing a customer's trust in a firm



Figure 3: Amazon in 1999. (2023). Web Design Museum.org

or company. Online vendors might only have digital contact with their customers; therefore, the appearance and structure of a website are crucial.

#### **User Experience Design**

Since the rise of the Internet, designers have investigated how to reach consumers and keep them engaged digitally. The first web-pages were chaotic, static, and very messy. UX design always strives to design positive experiences between users and a system or organization. Usability has always been at the core of UX design. In his 1955 book, Designing for People, Henry Dreyfuss, an industrial engineer, stated: "When the point of contact between the product and the people becomes a point of friction, then the industrial designer has failed. On the other hand, if people are made safer, more comfortable, more eager to purchase, more efficient — or just plain happier by contact with the product, then the designer has succeeded." This first person with the functional title UX designer/architect, was Donald Norman, who joined Apple in the 1990s. He would define user experience as: "encompassing all aspects of the end-users interaction with the company, its services, and its products." (Norman, 2017). Later, these interactions became digital interactions, and product designers became web developers. Companies started focusing on the size, placement, colors, and movements of elements on their web pages. Currently, UX design mainly refers to creating stylized interfaces for software and web pages. And the use of trust indicators is common practice among UX and web designers.

#### **Trust Building Components**

Fung and Lee (1999) described that online trust consists of two dimensions, hard and soft. The hard dimensions describe ability, competence, and predictability, while the soft dimensions describe honesty, integrity benevolence, and credibility.

McKnight (1998) further described that the first step in building online trust, this initial trust with a vendor is primarily based on cognition, and therefore cues relating to the cognitive perception of the website. Later, in 2003 Siau and Shen stated that online consumer trust can be built in two phases, the initial trust formation and the continuous trust development, using different characteristics for each phase. They proposed that in the initial phase, familiarity, reputation, information quality, third-party recognition, and attractive rewards were most important in this trust-building process. In 2017 Bauman and Bachman identified the main trends in academic research on online trust in publications between 2004 and 2014. They proposed three research categories and the following trends:

#### **Trust models**

A holistic overview of online trust development.



#### **Technical factors**

A cognitive approach to the transfer of trust between a company and a consumer.



#### **Social factors**

An affective approach to the transfer of trust, describing perception and emotion.



Figure 4: Overview of research categories and trends from Bauman & Bachman (2017)

This is one of the first times the term "trust signals" got mentioned, describing the specific (technical) components a company might use to build trust. In 2007 Winkler et al. mentioned the term trust indicators and defined them as an organization's

inherent observable properties which can root trust. In this paper the term trust indicators and trust signals will both be used to describe said trust building components.

#### **Dark and Deceptive Patterns**

During the first years of the Internet, many companies sought ways to build customer trust. While most companies focus on conversion by delivering the best user experience, some companies and UX designs were developed to trick customers into doing things they would rather not. Harry Brignull, a UX design expert, was the first to coin this term, dark patterns, in 2010. He set up a website, darkpatterns.org, to name and shame the multitude of misleading design practices on the Internet. The general goal of deceptive design is to trick users into buying things or signing up for services or newsletters. Confusing designs are used to influence customer behavior at their own expense. Especially when companies legally have to present options to customers, they tend to make these options appear subjective, whereby

opting out becomes "bad" and opting in seems the most logical. Other examples arise when common design principles are thrown overboard, and the "X" on the top right corner is too small or nonexistent. Deceptive patterns reduce the customers' level of online autonomy.

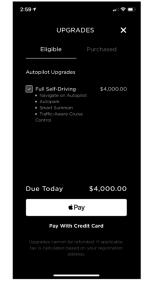
The rise of dark patterns in online shopping indicates their success in persuading consumers to take actions they would not usually take. Luguri & Strahilevitz (2021) have gathered strong evidence supporting this claim. Interestingly, they found that the more subtle dark patterns are the most harmful, as they influence many consumers without causing enough annoyance to harm a company's reputation. It is expected that these deceptive patterns have caused online consumers to be more skeptical and critical when considering a purchase from or interaction with an unknown company.



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#### **Preselection**

Recurring donation button Trump campaign 2021



#### Visual interference

"no refund" Tesla app 2019

Fake scarcity
Fake low stock messaging
HeyMerch / Shopify 2019

Figure 5: Examples of Dark Patterns from deceptive.design (Brignull, 2023)

# **Summary: Literature**

The literature review encompassed a range of research topics, including online consumer trust, business insurance, and UX design. However, there is a noticeable gap in the existing literature regarding the intersection of UX design and online consumer trust. Trust is a vital aspect of commercial transactions and has co-evolved with the transition from close-knit communities to more extensive and diverse societies. Trust is rooted in knowledge and is influenced by identity, image, and reputation. Information asymmetry and the need to mitigate risk have necessitated trust in various markets. The emergence of the Internet and e-commerce has transformed the way trust is established, relying heavily on the appearance and structure of websites. User experience design plays a critical role in facilitating positive

interactions between users and digital systems. Trust with consumers is primarily build through cognitive components, focusing on company size, security, and third-party recognition. These digital components have been further analyzed in the past two decades and are referred to as trust indicators. As building trust is the main objective of this project, trust indicators and signals will be the starting point from which case-specific analysis will be conducted. The rise of dark patterns, which are deceptive design practices aimed at manipulating users, has become a concerning issue in online commerce, leading to heightened skepticism among consumers. This has caused there to be even greater importance for a fitting and effective set of trust indicators for every online industry.

# 2.2 The Company

As light has been shed on the literature around trust and insurance, it is now time to dive further into the company. The company's vision, business-case and organizational structure are further analyzed in this section. Literature can give a more general overview of which developments have been made regarding the different topics. However, information regarding the company will reveal the more case-specific topics needed to grasp this project's complexity.

# 2.2.1 History & Overview

#### **Background**

Insify was founded in 2019 by Koen Thijssen, an entrepreneur who was determined to disrupt the current insurance industry. Thijssen has co-founded a flower-delivery company called Bloomon which has been sold to the UK florist Bloom & Wild. During his time at Bloomon, there was a breakin in their office. Many laptops got stolen, with total damages accumulating to almost €10.000,-. Thijssen was confident that their Property & Casualty insurance would be able to pay out and cover the damages. Nevertheless, Bloomon had just switched offices and forgot to update the address, the insurer had grounds upon which it decided to deny a payout. Bloomon had always paid their premiums timely, so they felt mistreated and fooled. Frustrated by the outcome of this ordeal, Thijssen started to research the industry and found multiple points which were in desperate need of improvement:

#### 1. Insurance is a hassle:

It takes more than a month to process applications, and applicants have to fill out endless forms.

#### 2. Insurance is often rejected:

Up to 50% of all applications get rejected by insurers.

#### 3. Insurance is expensive:

Only 50% of total premiums is returned to customers through insurance claims.

#### 4. Insurance is never up to date:

On average, 0 updates are performed over a general policy lifetime of 7 - 10 years.

These points caused him to start Insify, with the vision to make insurance simpler, faster, and more affordable for entrepreneurs and SMEs. The company offers an intuitive end-to-end digital customer journey, offering premium quotes in as little as two minutes. Currently, Insify offers property & casualty, disability & health insurance in The Netherlands, France & Germany.

#### Structure & Leadership

Insify started with a founding team consisting of Koen Thijssen as Chief Executive Officer, Ernst Moorman as Chief Commercial Officer, and Jort de Vries as Chief Design Officer. Early on, Martijn Rutten joined as Chief Technical Officer, and Amelie Cosigny became Head of Insurance. This executive team has led the development of the first brokered insurance products in The Netherlands.



Koen Thijssen CEO, Founder



Ernst Moorman Co-Founder



Jort de Vries



Amelie Consigny



Martijn Rutter

Figure 6: Overview of executive team Insify

After introducing their first P&C and Disability insurance in 2020, they started diversifying and building their insurance products. In 2021 the company consisted of the executive team, two developers, a finance employee, an accountant, and two interns. The company grew rapidly and currently has over 70 employees. The team is diverse regarding study backgrounds and nationalities, with members working from our offices in Amsterdam, Paris, Frankfurt, or fully remote.

#### **Product & Operations**

The company offers three insurance products: P&C, Disability, and Health. As Insify is not an insurer yet, they must develop products through partnerships with insurers such as MunichRe. The products are either entirely brokered by Insify, or proxied by Insify, allowing the company to make (slight) adjustments to the insurance.

Insify is building partnerships with organizations more directly linked to entrepreneurs and SMEs to increase sales. Partnerships with e-commerce company Bol.com allow Insify to reach over 40.000 entrepreneurs selling products via the platform. These partnerships help Insify in building and expanding its customer base.

As Insify is aiming to gain control over an ever greater share of the customer journey, they are developing capabilities such as claims handling. Many questions can arise during the application and claims process, therefore, Insify has a dedicated customer support team that can be reached via phone, Whatsapp, or email.



Figure 7: Overview of Organisation Insify

# 2.2.1 Market & Positioning

#### **Industry & Competition**

Generally, the insurance market can be split into health, life- and non-life insurance. Non-life insurances include fire, marine, motor, home, factory, shop, travel & liability insurance. A KPMG report from 2020 shows that the number of insurers supervised by the Dutch National Bank (DNB), has been declining. Many mergers between different insurers are the leading cause of this decrease. The market is controlled by big players who have been around for decades. In the non-life insurance sector, where Insify is active, there were 66 insurers in 2019 (KPMG, 2020).

Within the Dutch non-life insurance market, three insurers account for more than half of the total market. These insurers are Achmea 22,3%, ASR 15,7%, and NN 15,3% (KPMG, 2020). Other nonlife insurers with more extensive market shares are Goudse, AEGON, and Univé. The 2016 DNB report expected the technological advancements in the non-life insurance sector to contribute to heightened competition. These technological advancements, increasing efficiency, are the same InsurTech development Insify is leading. The same DNB report also states that internationalization can fuel competition in the insurance market by optimizing costs and economies of scale. Thirdly, re-insurers traditional insurance value chain is expected to shift and become more efficient (DNB, 2016). Insify is taking all three of these trends into consideration within its propositions. Insify is going international & disrupting the traditional value chain. They expect the InsurTech company that will eventually become the largest in Europe, to perform excellently on the following topics:

#### 1. Digital automated customer journeys:

This insurer must have a digital and automated customer journey, including application and claim handling. This will decrease overhead substantially

#### 2. Pricing risk (and fraud detection):

This insurer must be able to price risks precisely and detect fraud through data analysis. An insurer that can offer cheap premiums while decreasing its risk through fraud will be able to tap into new markets.

#### 3. Scaling (fast):

An insurer offering many insurance products in different (European) markets will increase brand awareness and recognition. This will help the insurer build a reputation that attracts new customers while offering the same qualitative service.



Figure 8: Overview of founding years of Dutch business insurance competitors

#### **Customers**

As Insify mainly sells two types of products, P&C and Disability insurance, they focus on small to medium enterprises and self-employed entrepreneurs. Generally, small business owners with two to five employees might search for P&C insurance, such as general liability, professional liability, and inventory or goods insurances. A selfemployed business owner without any employees might be more interested in disability insurance. Therefore the customer segment of Insify ranges from self-employed entrepreneurs to business owners with small businesses. Insify's insurance products are developed in collaboration with bigger insurance partners. As a result some insurers exclude specific activities such as "roofer" as the risks associated with these activities are too high to be insured. Most customers are entrepreneurs with small businesses, which have no designated department for finances and insurances. This causes the customers to be less experiences and are often searching for clear and simple solutions. Therefore Insify offers a well structured insurance portfolio, which is further explained in a step-by-step application process. Providing clear information at the moment customers need it within the application process, helps them in feeling secure and understood.

#### Type of entrepreneurs

The customers of Insify can be divided into two broad groups, entrepreneurs working with their hands and entrepreneurs who work in an office.

Some examples of customers who work with their hands are: construction workers, beauty- and hair specialists & care workers. Examples of customers working from an office are: consultants, marketeers & software engineers

Insify is broadening the range and combination of activities that can be insured. As a result, webshop owners can now apply for P&C and disability insurance with Insify.

**SWOT** Analysis

A short SWOT analysis was performed at the start of this project to dive deeper into the advantages and disadvantages of Insify within the business insurance market.

#### Strengths:

What do we do best?

Insify is very good at offering a comprehensive and fast application process. Next to that, each insurance can be personalized to a great extent while remaining cheap compared to alternatives in the industry. Another advantage of Insify is its quick and helpful customer support team which is available and knowledgeable. Insify is building a solid brand identity, leveraging the fact that they are not risk averse, and developing insurance products for entrepreneurs, by entrepreneurs.

#### Weaknesses:

What could we improve?

Insify is part of the complex value chain in the insurance sector. As they have to partner to develop and sell insurance products, they become dependent on the existing big players. As a starting insurance company, they need more long-term experience in claims handling. The fact that they started to handle claims only recently also causes the company to have few customer stories or testimonials about their service once a risk becomes a claim. Another point of improvement is the distribution mix that Insify has. Direct sales are an important part of the distribution mix.

#### Opportunities:

Which factors or situations can we take advantage of?

Many more prominent corporate insurers are less experienced in the digitization process. Insify understands customer needs well and can apply their knowledge to develop fitting digital solutions, ahead of their competition. This expertise allows Insify to explore cross- and up-selling initiatives to increase overall revenue.

Next to that, the Dutch government has announced that disability insurance might become mandatory for self-employed entrepreneurs in the near future. This could boost the number of disability insurance customers in the coming years.

A third opportunity is related to Insify becoming an insurer.

#### Threats:

Which obstacles do we face?

Insify currently has a proxy that allows them to adjust insurance products. They have started the lengthy process of becoming an insurer themselves. This process requires resources and time, and the eventual outcome is still being determined. This poses a risk to future endeavors of the company. Another threat is the rising number of InsurTech companies entering the Dutch market. These companies are direct competitors in some cases and pose a threat to the market share Insify is trying to grow and maintain. Insify also notices that incumbents and direct competitors are copying and recreating their digital application process. This makes it harder for Insify to maintain its "edge" in the market.

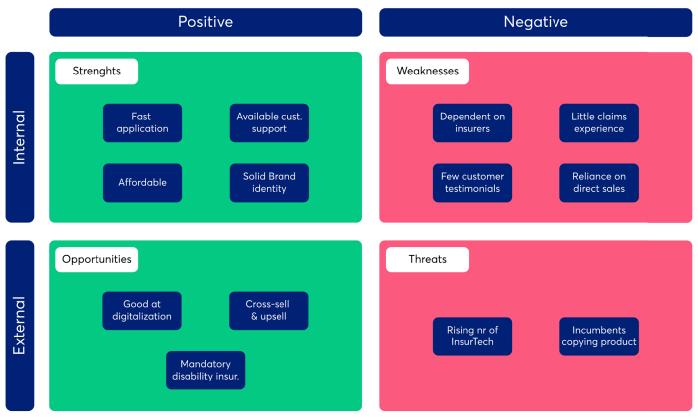


Figure 9: Swot Analysis of Insify

# 2.2.3 Corporate Strategy

#### **Vision & Mission**

CEO Koen started Insify with the mission to:

"Make business insurance fast, simple and fair"

This sentence shows that Insify wants to disrupt the business insurance market. The focus lies on speed, clarity & fairness, and improving the insurance products on three different levels. Another tagline, repeated in the external marketing and communications, is: "Insurance for entrepreneurs by entrepreneurs". This tagline further describes that, unlike current insurers, Insify is not risk-averse. They understand risk, because they are entrepreneurs. Therefore they understand the customer needs and can adequately address them.

Insify has big ambitions and wants to grow in multiple directions. Becoming an insurer will allow them to develop their insurance products. Entering new (European) markets will probably increase their overall market share. Their so-called BHAG is focused on becoming the largest SME insurer in Europe.

Currently, Allianz is the biggest insurer in Europe, having a gross written premium (GWP) in non-life segments of €60.27 Billion (Gangcuango, 2022). As Insify's current GWP is six thousand times smaller than Allianz's, there is still a long way to go to reach this goal. At the same time, Allianz has been around for over 130 years, while Insify was founded in 2020.

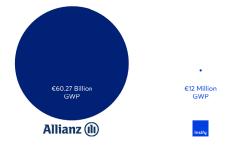


Figure 10: GWP comparisson Allianz vs Insify

Currently, Insify is tailoring its offerings to fit specific target groups, becoming a one-stop shop for everything insurance for entrepreneurs. This causes the offerings to differ between countries, professions, and activities.

#### **Corporate Values**

Insify has a set of corporate values used in both external communication and internal processes. These values can be sourced back to the start of Insify, and are still being used as conversational topics during job interviews.

Grit: Passion, perseverance, and old-fashioned hard work. Trying to develop new products in a saturated market can be challenging; therefore, employees of Insify need the grit to push through and not take no for an answer. When partners say something is impossible, we challenge them and look for an opportunity to improve our products and services collaboratively.

Impact: Innovative and fast, achieving more than anyone else. We want to improve the insurance process by creating an entirely digital customer journey. This digitalization allows us to be automated and fast, making insurance affordable for (starting) entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship: Optimistic and seeing opportunities, we think bigger. Unlike others in the business, we are entrepreneurs entering a new market. Therefore we take risks by improving the insurance products and disrupting the sector altogether. We understand our customers because we can sympathize with them.

Care: We care deeply about the entrepreneurs we support. Insurance is a market where risk is bought and sold. The people experiencing these risks are at the core of our business. Therefore we are approachable, available, and fast.

# **Summary: Company**

Insify, founded in 2019 by Koen Thijssen, aims to revolutionize the insurance industry by addressing its shortcomings. They offer simplified and affordable insurance solutions for SMEs through a seamless digital customer journey. Initially starting with a small team, Insify has expanded to over 70 employees and has teams dedicated to product, growth, tech, and operations. They develop insurance products through partnerships. Insify is still developing and adjusting its products to the ever-evolving market of entrepreneurs. Insify targets self-employed entrepreneurs and small business owners, leveraging strengths

in streamlined application processes and personalized products. Insify's corporate strategy centers around making business insurance fast, simple, and fair, aiming to become Europe's largest SME insurer by 2031. While having to compete with big corporate insurers, they have to overcome skepticism as they have not built a recognizable brand yet. Therefore Insify relies heavily on the digital representation of its brand and product through the use of marketing and a qualitative website where visitors can become customers.

### 2.3 Insurance

#### History of Insuring

The development of the insurance sector has always been parallel to the development of entrepreneurship. The first known insurance records are connected to a system where Chinese merchants collectively protected themselves against the loss of shipped cargo, spreading their cargo among several ships to diversify their risks (Vaughan, 1997). Later on, merchants and entrepreneurs formed guilds in the Middle Ages that could function as safety nets whenever losses occurred. These brotherhoods, based upon the practice of the same craft, could operate through the introduction of regular contribution (Masci, 2011).

The first marine insurance was developed in Genoa during the 14th century. Through the growth of British and Dutch commerce in the 17th and 18th centuries, insurance developed rapidly (Martin, 2010). Insurance in those days was less concerned with the mathematical calculation of probabilities and more closely resembled the act of gambling. One coffeehouse in London, Lloyd's, became the meeting place for shipowners to discuss and underwrite risks for their trips (Brown, 1987). As more and more risks were being insured, Lloyd's developed into the first insurance business or association. Many new insurance companies followed, primarily focusing on the risk of fire.

As the industry developed, statistics became a more prominent practice, and risks were more closely assessed and probabilities calculated. The introduction of mortality tables at the end of the 17th century allowed premiums to be calculated more specifically based on age. In the 19th century, the insurance market became more complex with

the introduction of re-insurers, where losses were distributed amongst many different insurance companies, making insurance companies more resilient to great catastrophes. The current insurance market consists of brokers selling, and reselling risks and insurance to businesses. As statistics have clarified risks and made premium calculations more precise, the brokerage system has made the overall industry more complex and opaque.

#### **Business Insurance, Trends**

With the emergence of Financial technologies such as Internet banking, the insurance market has also slowly adapted to the digital. This digitalization is led by InsurTech; innovative technologies that intersect information and insurance services. Even before the Pandemic, insurance companies were searching for technologies to make their services more tailored and efficient (Volosovych et al., 2021). The problems related to Covid-19 have shown the importance of this transition toward a more digital insurance industry.

In their 2020 report on InsurTech, PWC has written that 86% of traditional insurers worldwide believe InsurTechs threaten their income. It has become clear that InsurTech companies not only pose a threat but can also function as ventures where startups and big insurance corporations can innovate collaboratively. While the global insurance market earned 7\$ trillion in revenues in 2021, the sector is expected to grow to \$ 11.6\$ trillion by 2030. The 2023 BCG report further reports that InsurTech only makes up 0,3% of total revenue in the sector, projecting that InsurTech will make up 2% of the total sector in 2030.

#### **Future of Insurance**

As the emergence of InsurTech is a growing trend, the insurance sector is also on the lookout for significant changes in the market. Since the widespread introduction of Artificial Intelligence tools such as ChatGPT, the possible future effects on the insurance industry have been analyzed. Uzialko (2023) stated that the introducten of A.I. and machine learning practices would benefit both the insurer and the insured as it can assist in underwriting, claims handling, and detecting fraud. A report by IBM (2015) found that 95% of insurance executives were familiar with the cognitive capabilities of A.I. and intended to start or continue investing in these capabilities. Forbes (2022) described this transition as going from a once very policy-centric industry to a customercentric one. In the same article, the co-founder and CEO of Lemonade, Daniel Schreiber, was interviewed regarding the value of A.I. in insurance. Lemonade is an InsurTech with the mission to become "the most lovable insurance". They use A.I. as the driving force behind their two chatbots:

Maya, who handles customer experience and onboarding, and Jim, who handles claims. This has allowed Lemode to decrease human involvement in customer support and claims handling, decreasing their overhead and allowing for cheaper insurance. Connected devices and IoT is expected to play a significant role in determining risk and calculating premiums, with McKinsey (2021) describing a future in which a "pay-as-youlive" premium can be adopted. In this same report, McKinsey described that the insurance market is shifting from "detect & repair" toward "predict & prevent". FinTech (2021) dedicated an entire article to the role of A.I.-powered financial assistants. They expect intelligent virtual financial assistants to replace traditional personal finance systems, tracking, managing, and planning our finances in a personalized manner. Stating that customers will interact with them seamlessly using natural language and augmented reality, providing a service similar to human financial assistants.

# **Summary: Insurance**

Insurance history is intertwined with entrepreneurship, from Chinese merchants diversifying risks to guilds sharing them in the Middle Ages. InsurTech threatens traditional insurers as the market for digital insurance is projected to grow. The future lies in Al and machine learning, aiding underwriting, claims, and fraud detection. Connected devices and the Internet of Things (IoT) are expected to influence risk assessment and premium calculations, leading to personalized "pay-as-you-live" premiums. Al-powered financial assistants might replace traditional personal finance systems, providing seamless interactions and personalized services for customers and entrepreneurs alike. Taking these future possibilities into account and defining the potential opportunities for companies such as Insify is a priority of this project. Trust building is a means to smoothen disruptive transitions within the market, but new transitions are ahead which Insify can already prepare for.

### 2.4 Conclusion

#### **Context gaps**

The literature review reveals that trust research is extensive, but there is less research on online and consumer trust, with most literature dating back 20 to 30 years. Considering Insify is a relatively young company, this literature may not directly apply to their digital products. There is minimal evidence of trust-building research in the insurance context. Every UX designer aims to achieve online consumer trust, but deceptive design practices have made consumers more skeptical of e-commerce. While literature acknowledges this challenge, it lacks a clear set of tools to overcome consumer skepticism. Therefore, the main objectives of this project are to research, define, and design trust-building components to address these issues.

Research approach

The goal of this research section, consisting of Discover & Define, is to gather the information that eventually functions as a set of principles to guide the design process. By reflecting back on the overarching research question, the direction of the research process is kept in line. Therefore the following set of sub-questions is proposed:

- 1. What are trust signals, and how can they be defined?
- 2. How do designers use trust signals?
- 3. Which trust signals are most valued in e-commerce?
- 4. Which trust signals are most valued in insurance?

Answers to the above questions serve as input for the design brief, a transition from research into design. Questions 1 to 3 can (partly) be answered through interviews with experts. Qualitative research will help to explore the topic of online trust building. Questions 3 and 4 will be answered through quantitative research, such as a survey. Proposing different trust signals to potential Insify customers can help identify the value of each of them and therefore form the basis for the design process.

# **Summary Chapter 2: Describing the Context**

This chapter highlights the importance of research and expert engagement in research and design projects, focusing on online trust, UX design, and business insurance. It explores trust's historical significance and origins, its role in overcoming risk and building relationships, and its evolution in e-commerce. The role of UX design in creating positive user experiences and reaching consumers is discussed, along with trust indicators and dark patterns. Insify aims to revolutionize the insurance industry by simplifying processes and making insurance more affordable for entrepreneurs and SMEs. They offer a seamless digital customer journey, and personalized insurance products and aim to become a large European SME insurer. The rise of InsurTech and digitalization presents challenges and opportunities for traditional insurers, with AI and machine learning expected to impact underwriting and claims handling. The integration of connected devices and the Internet of Things will influence risk assessment, and Al-powered financial assistants could replace traditional systems. Research on trust-building in the insurance context is limited, emphasizing the need to develop trust-building components for digital products. The research approach involves exploring trust signals, their use by designers, and their value in e-commerce and insurance to inform Insify's product design.

# **Expert**Interviews

To gain insight into the use of trust signals in digital products, interviews were conducted with both designers from within Insify, and external designers. These semistructured interviews focused on understanding the process of building trust in e-commerce and the tools designers employ to establish trust with customers.

### 3.1 Qualitative research

During the discovery phase, it is crucial to not only take literature or quantitative data into account. As this research concerns topics such as trust and online consumer behavior, qualitative methods may be an excellent way to address these more emotive topics.

### Interview

To explore the topic of online trust, interviews were conducted with multiple people that are active in either UX design or marketing. The goal of these interviews was to get a better understanding of how designers generally try to build trust with customers in the online environment. The interviews are semi-structured, using a written guide for a general structure while leaving room to explore specific notions of interviewees. The interviews were conducted physically or via Google Meet and took about 60 minutes on average. Participants from within Insify were contacted personally, while participants outside of Insify were sourced and reached out to via LinkedIn. Four out of six interviews were conducted in Dutch. as the participants were Dutch, speaking in their mother tongue would allow them to give more indepth answers. Two interviews were conducted in English as these participants could not speak Dutch, and the interviewer could not speak their mother tongue.

### **Participants**

All six interviewees are active in e-commerce sectors, designing digital products with job titles ranging from Brand manager to Creative director and UX- or product designer. Four participants are aged 25-34, one is aged 18-24 and the other is aged 35-44. They rated their average experience with designing for trust within user experience as a 7 on a scale from 1 to 10. Their work experience ranges from 2 to 15 years, averaging around 6 years. Half of the participants have completed a BSc while the other half have continued studying and completed a MSc. Next to that five out of six interviewees were male, with only one female designer participating. All in all this group is knowledgeable on the topic of UX design and has conducted design projects in multiple sectors, building their expertise

### Interview structure

A guide was written to structure the topics covered within the interviews. The complete guide can be found in appendix B. The main topics that were discussed are:

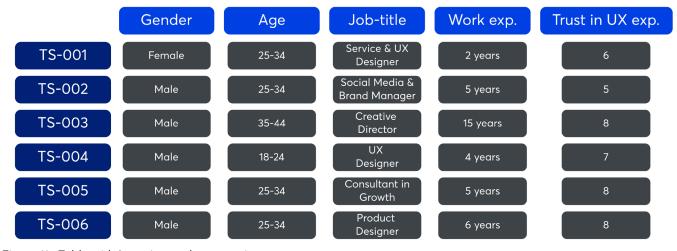


Figure 11: Table with Interviewee data overview

### 1. Introduction:

In this section, the interviewee is asked questions regarding his or her current job, the organization he or she works for, and the responsibilities that define their job. Next, design values and principles are discussed to understand the type of designer the participant is. Lastly, the interviewee is asked to evaluate the role of trust in his or her work and designs.

### 2. Online trust:

This section consists of questions in which the participants are being approached as consumers. Discussing the role of trust when making online purchases and finding out about the process of evaluating the trustworthiness of online shops are the focus. These questions help the designer get into the mindset of an online consumer.

### 3. Trust Signals:

The first question is an open question in which the participant is asked to define the term "trust signals". Secondly, they are asked to mention and categorize different examples of trust signals they use in their work. The effectiveness of different trust signals and how they (would) measure the effectiveness of said trust signals were discussed.

### 4. Trends & expectations:

This section touches upon the trends they noticed in using trust signals over the last years. The participants are asked to discuss their expectations regarding the future of online trust building.

In all sections, questions are open questions to get better insights into the thought process and personality of the participant. These open questions imply no specific answer but evoke the participant to construct their answer. An interview guide, therefore, helps decrease leading questions. While an interviewee can produce answers regarding his or her explicit knowledge, it is more difficult to tap into tacit knowledge. To reach this tacit knowledge level, questions related to past experiences are introduced. Discussing experiences in the present, past, and future order has proven to help structure thoughts and experiences.

The transfer of knowledge within interviews depends on the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. In this case, the interviewee and interviewer do not or barely know each other. The interviewer has been an employee of the customer experience intern role within Insify. This caused there to be some familiarity with one of the experts from within Insify. There has been almost no interaction with the other five interviewees before the interview. The conversations were open because there was a knowledge gap between what the interviewer knew and what the interviewee knew about online trust.

### **Data collection**

The Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) is used in the qualitative section of this research. This methodology allows for constructing new theories based on collecting and analyzing real-world data. This results in collecting raw data, and transcripts, which evolve into new structures and theories.

Participants were asked for their consent to record the interview via dictaphone or google meet recording. All data from the consent form onwards was anonymized using participant ID numbers. The interview recordings were transcribed to create a detailed overview of each answer. These transcriptions were copied into a Miro board to help visualize and connect certain sections or excerpts of the interviews. The following GTM steps were used to structure and analyze the data:

### Open coding:

Each section of the transcript was broken up into excerpts. These excerpts were summarized, and key messages were connected to those from other interviews. These are clustered under codes representing the excerpts' most common line of thought.

### Axial coding:

Through making connections between the different codes, new paths can be determined. These clusters make clear which (parts of the) answers overlap with others from different interviews.

### Selective coding:

In this section of the GTM, we try to connect multiple clusters to develop a new theory or direction. This can be seen as the core category, which becomes the grounded theory.

During the interviews, saturation occurs once no new insights are gathered anymore. The participants all have the same or at least very similar expertise so this saturation could be reached after only a few interviews. The outcome of these interviews will be presented through heat mapping of specific trust indicator mentions. Next to that the results of new, insightful topics will be presented through quotes and visualizations. The overall outcome of this qualitative research will function as input data for the setup of the quantitative research, defining what should be included in the survey. A complete overview of the transcription analysis can be found in appendix C.

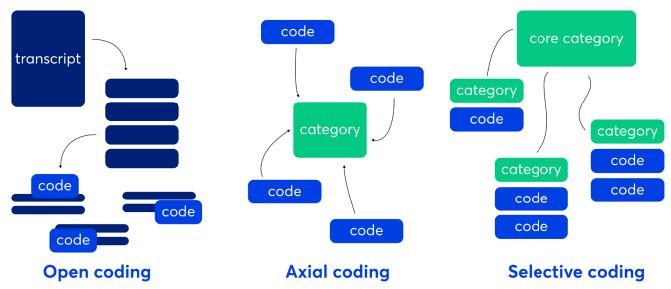


Figure 12: Overview of GTM coding methods

### 3.2 Interview results

The focus of the interviews is on the process of trust building. These interviews were conducted in an open setting with room to go into details. In the six interviews, multiple topics were discussed, and many similarities between answers were found. These similarities will be presented as topics, quoting specific experts. This section will finalize with an overview of the trust indicators and how often they got mentioned in the interviews.

### Design principles & values

When asked about the core values or principles they hold on to in their design work, the interviewees mentioned different points that all had to do with the users or customers. The following three topics were discussed in more than half of the interviews:

### User-centric

(UX) Design needs to be focused on the user perspective. Designing will always start with the needs of end users instead of the company of business.

"They start from the end user. So who is the end user? What are his pains? And what kind of message should resonate and should trigger a positive reaction toward us. "TS005

### Inclusiveness

Copy, colors, and overall design need to be accessible. This means that language needs to be simplified, and design needs to be inclusive, allowing users with colorblindness to be able to interact with the product or service.

"We've recently started to be more inclusive as well. So those are some checks to see if it's useful for people who are colorblind, people with language barriers. So that it is always passed through a B1 check, which is a kind of language level check." TS001 Tailored & personalized

Designers focus on the "experience mindset", whereby you give the user the feeling that they are in control. Testing the message and tailoring the designings to specific needs is very important.

"You have to make the user feel that it is so easy, that they have the assurance that they can take care of it themselves." TS003

This shows us that UX design, like any form of design, starts with understanding the users of said product or design. Furthermore, it becomes clear that every designer has similar design principles they hold onto. An outlier was the one participant that mentioned the impact he and his company realized always had to be on people, society, and the planet. He introduced societal and sustainability principles, which all other interviewees did not mention in their answers.

### Online trust experience

Asking interviewees about their experience with buying products or services online revealed some information regarding their process steps when building online trust as a consumer.

### Risk assessment

It became clear that the trust-building process only starts once an investment is necessary to use or purchase the product or service. This means that (financial) risk also defines the needed trust.

"So I think I personally mostly use the internet as a kind of fun place to click around and look. But only when I have to enter my data here, or I have to do something with this, or use this paper for research, only then do I start thinking about whether I trust it?" TS001

### Conversion focus

Some interviewees consider websites that are too focused on conversion as being "pushy" or lacking in purpose or mission. Every e-commerce company has the drive to sell or service, but an excessive drive to sell might avert customers from purchasing.

"When you see how that's designed, where you get 50,000 discount codes printed in front of your eyes, it makes me feel like there's an excessive drive to sell. That makes me a little suspicious as a consumer. Then I think: if I can claim 4 discount codes to order a product. Why are you so eager?"

TS006

### Smooth UX

As the participants are all designers, it makes sense that they find it essential that a website looks good. Having a good experience with a company starts with the onboarding process.

"But I have to be curious enough to click further and it shouldn't look completely "shitty", of course. But first of all I have to like it and then later I have to trust it." TS001

### **Product Quality**

When discussing past experiences with online purchases, it becomes clear that many participants have made dissatisfying purchases. In some cases, the product quality is disconnected from the brand quality they nurture in their marketing and communication.

"On paper, everything about the company is perfect: big social media presence, great community marketing, great, a lot of investment money. And then when it comes to actually user experience, the bike is constantly broken, the timeline to get repaired is so long." TS002

### Similar reviews

Almost all participants mentioned that they go online in search of reviews or testimonials. Some look at the best reviews, while others focus on the worst. One interviewee stated that most exciting reviews are written by users whom they, as a potential customers, can identify with.

"It's nice when someone from the UK reviews a product. Maybe weird, but I think it matters to me when a review comes from someone like me." TS003

### Data security

Some interviewees mentioned that they need their personal data to be safe with a company that has an online business. This becomes especially important once users leave not only their email or name but also their DOB, address, and banking information.

"For me an important factor in that is also, so how do they handle my data? Is it really a serious company when I look at their responses to consumer reviews. Whether they are proactive. Do they have the manpower to have everything under control. That makes me feel safe." TS006

Like other customers, designers have had bad experiences with online products or services. Many search for a sense of security through the analysis of web design, conversion focus, data handling, or the user reviews they can find online. Some interviewees dive further into the reviews that address their personal user needs. Others dislike discount pop-ups that are conversion driven, and some focus more on the green HTTP lock to assess if a website is safe or trustworthy.

### **Trust indicators definition**

Once the term trust indicators got mentioned within the interviews, the first question for the interviewees was to come up with a definition for "trust indicators". Similarities between the six answers are clustered below:

### Facts & assurances

Some interviewees define trust signals as displayed facts or assurances which can be given to a customer. Examples of these facts or assurances are certifications or stated approval or support from other organizations.

### Sincere

Two interviewees mentioned that these indicators or signals must always come across as sincere without a direct conversion link. Consumers can be skeptical, and sometimes a website's social proof is monitored and groomed.

### Flows & journeys

Almost half of the interviewees defined some form of the customer journey. They mainly describe the process and points of interactions, which are seen as trust points that help a customer develop a bond with a brand.

### **Brand value**

Almost every interviewee mentioned that trust indicators should make the customer feel better about a company or a product. They create brand "highs" where you surprise and add value.

When combining all of the given definitions of trust indicators, a new definition was crafted using elements from each of the different definitions:

"Elements or actions that a brand employs in a customer flow, to establish trust with its audience."

### **Future expectations**

At the end of each interview, interviewees were asked to think about the future of online trust building. Within their answers, they mentioned the following topics to possibly play a more considerable role in the future of e-commerce:

### Accountability

Companies are currently held responsible for the wrongdoings of relatively unknown supply chain partners. This trend pushes companies to take accountability for their supply chain, from sourcing to waste.

"And you just notice that younger generations, especially Gen-Z, for example, are also If you have a bad product, or if someone in your supply chain has some kind of scandal or gets cancelled, that directly impacts the entire supply chain. So suppose a supplier of Zara does unethical things, then people directly have problems with that at Zara as well, right? "TS004

Personalization & tailored flows

Advertisement is becoming more and more tailored to specific visitors. Customer journeys are also becoming more personalized than ever before. Some interviewees expect flows to increase the level of both automation and personalization.

"But really UX technically, yes the only thing that is still rising is just personalization on websites so that you end up in an increasingly unique environment. And that it is increasingly aligned with how you find things chill, so don't think that will stop yet."

TS001

### Complex services & interface regulation

More and more complex services are being digitized. Where customers would typically use people to help them complete specific tasks, now they can do their taxes, finances, and insurance independently online. On the other hand, the interfaces related to these services, such as payment and subscription solutions, will become more regulated.

"I think what I'm seeing more and more is that we really have more and more confidence also in people being able to do things themselves." TS004

### Role of A.I.

Some interviewees raised concerns about A.I.'s rise and role in e-commerce. Others see ChatGPT as an advanced Google search and, therefore as a new advertising platform that might become more ad-driven in the future.

"I really think that to what extent Google has influenced how we trust or distrust websites.

I think that chat GPT will have that too, so that they actually evaluate the reliability of information themselves. By measuring how often it occurs and then saying whether it is reliable or not. I think that will also play a role in how many choices you make." TS001

### **Trust indicators mentions**

The main focus of the interviews was to learn more about how these designers value and use different types of trust indicators. As the questions regarding these trust indicators were not leading, analyzing the number of mentions of a particular trust indicator is an interesting metric to base our following research on. Below is an overview of the mentioned trust indicators, clustered based on the number of mentions:

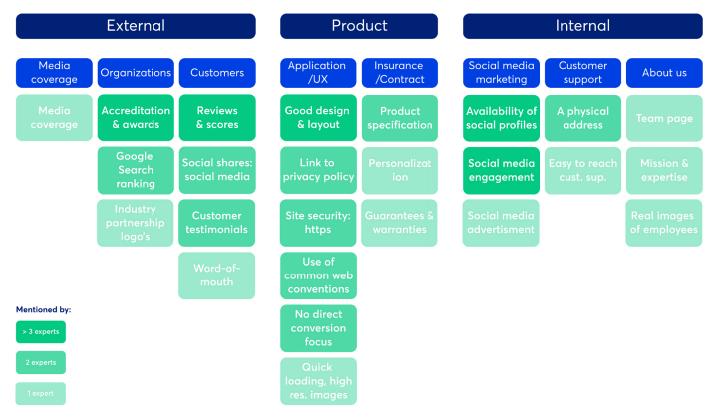


Figure 13: Heatmap of Trust Indicator mentions within interviews

### **Summary Chapter 3: Experts Interviews**

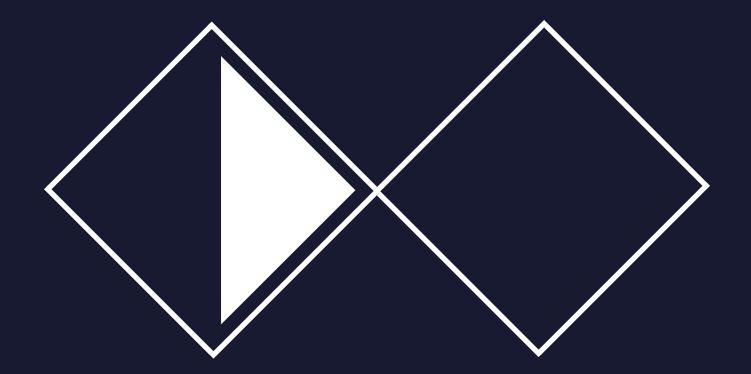
Several key takeaways emerged from a series of six expert interviews. Designers emphasized the importance of user-centric design, inclusiveness, and tailored experiences. Trust-building in the online environment involves the assessment of risk. Smooth user experience, product quality, and user reviews also play significant roles. Trust indicators can be defined as elements or actions brands use to establish trust with their audience. Looking toward the future, accountability, personalization, complex services, interface regulation, and the role of AI were identified as important trends.

The most frequently mentioned trust indicators were accreditation, certification and awards, reviews and scores, social profiles, social media engagement, and good design. Other indicators, mentioned to a lesser extent, included SEO ranking, visual testimonials, company address, product risk assessment, privacy policy, site security, ease of use, and absence of direct conversion focus. These interviews have made clear that many experts emphasize the importance of social media and a strong digital brand representation.

# Define

This section entails the voice of the customers and restructuring of trust indicators. It includes a survey where potential Insify customers expressed the importance they placed on various trust indicators. The second chapter introduces new structures for trust indicators and compares the results of interviews with the findings from the survey.

In this section: 04 Customer Survey 05 Trust Indicators



### Customer Survey

Following the initial research conducted through expert interviews, this chapter focuses on gathering the opinions of customers. It begins by discussing the setup of the survey and then presents the results. The survey covers various aspects of business insurance and seeks feedback from entrepreneurs based on their experiences. The findings are presented through data visualizations and serve as input for the next chapter.



### 4.1 Quantitative research

A quantitative analysis needs to be conducted to broaden the number of participants and test the initial qualitative findings. Therefore this section introduces how potential customer groups and their needs are analyzed to define the starting point of the designing phases.

### Introduction

The (UX-)designers are heard during the interviews, whereas the customers and their opinions are not yet reviewed. Therefore this section mainly revolves around the customer perspective. Topics that will be discussed are focused on what processes entrepreneurs have to define a direction in their search for security and support. Learning about which aspects and characteristics of an insurer are valuable in this search can be a great starting point for the design brief. Therefore the overarching goal of this qualitative section is to understand customer needs and value in the business insurance industry. Therefore multiple different channels have been used to get in contact with SMEs. To reach a significant number of entrepreneurs, the survey was conducted online and accessible via a link or QR code. In total, 30 participants started the online survey, of whom 27 were entrepreneurs completely filled out the questionnaire.

### Survey structure

The goal of the survey was to learn more about the decision-making process of entrepreneurs in the business insurance market. Different methods of obtaining this information or parts of this information were discussed. Methods such as "Buy a Feature" and "Must-haves, Should-haves, Could-haves & Will not haves (MoSCoW)", used in product design and development, were analyzed but eventually deemed to be unfitting for this survey. Therefore, in this survey's most critical questions, participants were asked to place their perceived value on a 7-point Likert scale (Likert,

1932). A complete survey overview can be found in the appendix (D) . The online survey consisted of multiple different sections:

### Demographics & Business information

This section presents questions regarding age, gender, level of education, and city of residence. Questions regarding the business size, industry, and the number of years as an entrepreneur are also introduced.

### Insurance

The participants are asked which types of business insurance they currently have. For each active insurance, a field is presented where the insurance company can be filled out. The following questions relate to their familiarity with insurance brands and their application process for business insurance.

### Customer value

The survey section proposes different insurance characteristics and asks the participants to assign a specific value (1 to 7) to each of these characteristics. The survey ends by presenting 19 trust indicators and asking the participants to assign a specific value to each.

### Participant requirements

The whole group of participants filling out the online survey must be either self-employed or own a small business. These requirements make it harder to reach the specific target group. To reach participants, multiple methods were used:

### Own network

Whatsapp messages, including a link to the survey, were sent to friends, family, and peers through whom entrepreneurs in the Netherlands were reached. The message invited entrepreneurs to fill out the survey, and non-entrepreneurs to forward the message to entrepreneurs they know.

### Online communities

As entrepreneurs generally are active in online communities, this could be a place to reach many at once. Entrepreneurs discuss finances or marketing strategies on online platforms like Facebook or Reddit. After joining these groups, a message inviting entrepreneurs to participate in this research was sent. Some communities directly banned the message, considering it spam. Other communities allowed the survey invitation to be posted.

### Shared workspaces

To reach self-employed entrepreneurs, posters were placed in shared workspaces in Amsterdam. Different offices of Spaces and WeWork were asked to allow these posters to be put up. Spaces did not allow for the posters to be put up, but WeWork allowed them to be placed in elevators and public spaces in three of their locations.

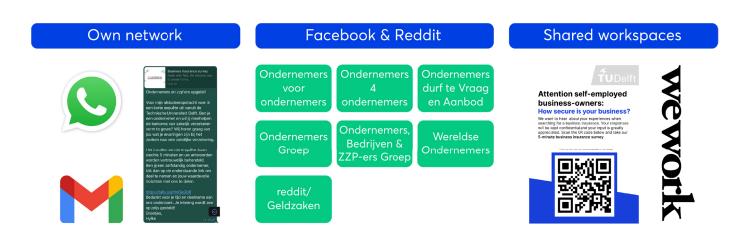


Figure 14: Overview of survey distribution channels

### 4.2 Survey results

This section of the defining phase revolves around the customers of business insurance. These customers are entrepreneurs running small or medium-sized businesses. In total, 30 participants started the survey, of whom 27 belong to the category of entrepreneurs and are therefore eligible to complete the survey. This group of entrepreneurs ranges from recent graduates who are now self-employed to business owners with over 100 employees. In this section, the most important results of this customer survey will be presented.

### The participants

### Gender

In the Netherlands, the total number of entrepreneurs was around 1.5 million in 2019; about 1.1 million are self-employed, and around 350.000 entrepreneurs have employees (CBS, 2020). The same CBS report showed that entrepreneurs are more often male (62%) than female (38%). The participant group in this survey is similar as 73% is male, and 27% is female.

### Age group

Reaching a heterogeneous group of entrepreneurs when it comes to age has proven to be complicated. Below, a comparison between the age group distribution is presented, showing the distribution among Dutch entrepreneurs (CBS, 2020), and participants of this survey. It becomes clear that within this customer survey, the 25-34 year-olds are overrepresented, and the 35-54 year-olds are underrepresented.

### Age distribution among entrepreneurs

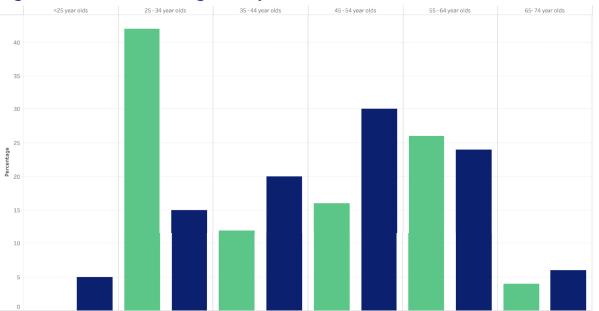


Figure 15: Age distribution of participants compared to distribution among Dutch entrepreneurs (CBS, 2020)



### Company

The participants are business owners different in size, industry, and years of experience. The overview below shows the distribution of these companies. Almost half (46,2%) of the participants are self-employed without any employees. The most mentioned industries among the participants are Computing and IT, Engineering or manufacturing, Creative arts or design, Marketing and advertising and Business, consulting and management.

### Target group representation

The distribution and characteristics of this sample group is comparable to the target group of Insify. In general, Insify insures small companies and mostly self-employed entrepreneurs. One clear distinction between the target group of Insify and the survey sample is age distribution. The average age of Insify customers lies anywhere between 30 and 50, whereas the biggest age groups in the participant sample are 25 to 34 years old and 55 to 64 years old.

### Company size distribution among participants

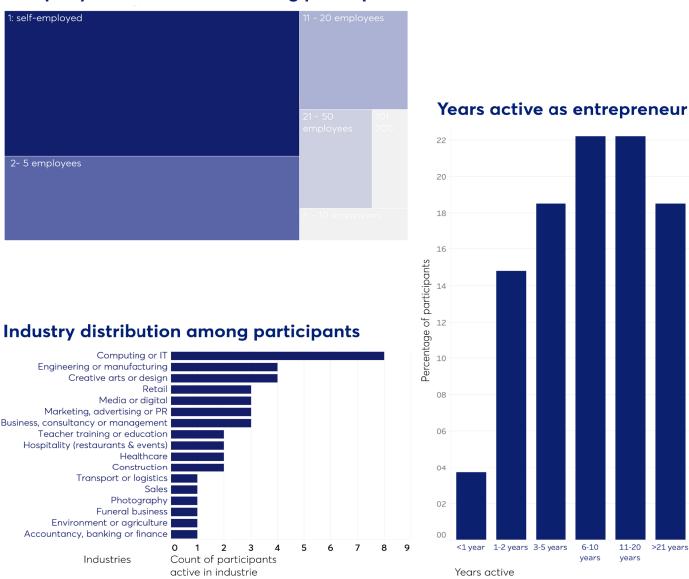


Figure 16: Visuals representing data on Company industry & company size of participant group

### **Business Insurance**

There are three popular business insurances that almost half of the participants currently have, and those are: Business liability insurance (44,4%), Disability insurance (44,4%), and Business interruption insurance (40,7%). These percentages are higher than the Dutch average business insurance penetration in the entrepreneurial market. A report by CBS (2021) stated that only 25,4% of entrepreneurs have Disability insurance. Other business insurances, such as Goods & inventory, Professional liability, and legal

assistance, were only possessed by 25% of survey participants or less. None of the participants had cyber insurance, which is therefore not included below.

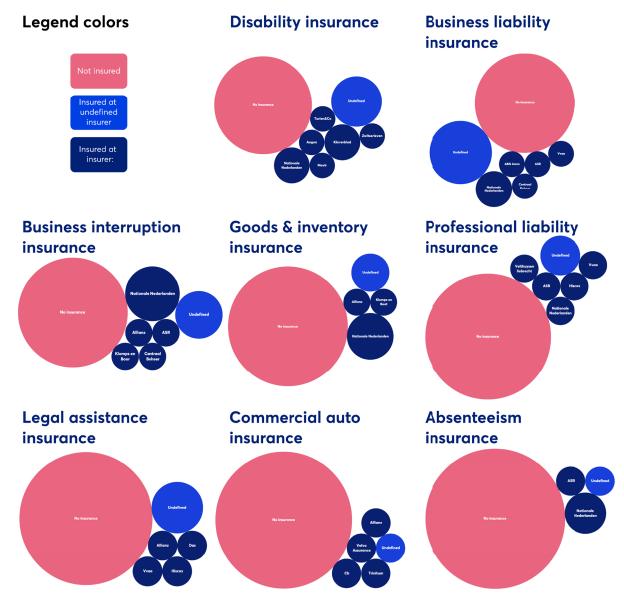


Figure 17: Visuals representing data on business insurance penetration among participants

### **Application process**

Each entrepreneur has his or her decision-making process. For some, it is vital to discuss financial decisions with an advisor or a good friend, others decide on their own. The participants in this survey prefer to discuss insurance options with other business owners or their colleagues, only 7,3% of respondents decide entirely independently. On average, the business owners in this survey take 1 to 2 weeks to decide on which insurance to take. This time corresponds with Insify's data on the time between the first visit and purchase.

After discussing the options and deciding which insurance to take, there are different channels through which to apply for insurance. These channels influence how customers discuss and decide on their insurance. More than half, 51,9%, of participants apply for insurance via an insurance or financial advisor. Next to that, 25,9% apply directly at the insurer, online. This group, about a quarter of all participants, is the target group of Insify, focussing on the digital process that requires no advice.

### Participants discuss insurance with:



Figure 18: Visuals representing data on Application process, duration and channels

days weeks weeks months months

### Importance & customer value

This section dives deeper into the value customers attribute to certain aspects of (business) insuring. The first question relates to the three main insurance characteristics: coverage, premium, and insurer. When asking the participants to assign a value from 0 to 7 to each of these three characteristics, the coverage was found to be most important (6,15), the premium was almost equally important (6,04), but the importance of the

insurer scored much lower (3,96). This shows that business insurance customers first focus on the coverage and premium and are more indifferent about the insurer which they do business with. The trust indicators which were presented received an average score of 4,75. Trust indicators connected to the availability of customer support received the highest values in this survey. Trust indicators related to social media scored lowest on average.

### Importance of three main insurance characteristics:



### Heatmap of trust indicator importance scores:

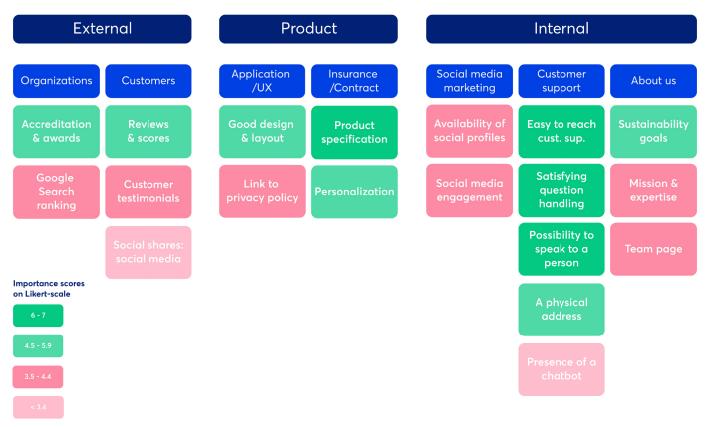


Figure 19: Visuals representing data on importance of different insurance characteristics & trust indicators

### **Summary Chapter 4: Customer Survey**

Out of 30 participants, 27 were eligible to complete the survey. Most participants were male (73%), reflecting the general trend of male-dominated entrepreneurship in the Netherlands. The age group distribution showed an overrepresentation of 25-34 year-olds and an underrepresentation of 35-44 year-olds. The survey revealed that participants had higher rates of business liability insurance, disability insurance, and business interruption insurance than the Dutch average. The purchase decision-making process for insurance involved discussions with other business owners or

colleagues, with only a small percentage deciding independently. On average, participants took 1 to 2 weeks to decide on an insurance policy. The insurance application was predominantly done through insurance advisors or financial advisors (51.9%), while 25.9% applied directly online. Coverage and premium were the most important factors for participants, with insurer importance scoring lower. Trust indicators related to customer support received the highest ratings, while those connected to social media were considered less important.

# The Trust Indicators

The term "trust indicators" or "trust signals" is commonly used and has been mentioned in relevant research. However, the definition provided in chapter 3 remains quite broad, encompassing both actions and elements. This chapter focuses on the utilization of trust indicators, which led to a reevaluation and reorganization of the complete list of indicators. Additionally, the chapter concludes by comparing the findings from the interviews and surveys.

### 5.1 A complete overview

Before starting the interviews, many trust indicators were identified through desk research. The writer Scott Baradell's website helped build an extensive list of trust indicators. Baradell (2021) created a list of 77 components or elements that help online companies build customer trust. Many other blog posts are stating different trust indicators that can boost website visitors or conversion rates. While this longlist of all trust indicators was created, a structure to sort them was developed. This first structure consisted of the following groups:

### Restructuring the list

The initially used structure for the trust indicators caused many indicators to be placed under the "other" section. This is a sign of a structure that does not cover the complete range of components. Therefore a new, more simple, and overarching structure was developed based on three distinct sections:

### External

A cluster of all trust-building components that are driven by either customers or organizations which a company has no (direct) influence over.

### **Product**

All trust-building components that directly relate to the product, specifications of the product or the application process are clustered together.

### Internal

This cluster consists of all trust-building components that can be designed and developed by the business selling the products or services.

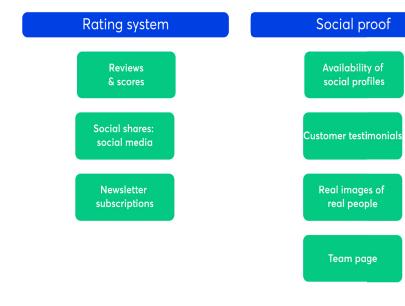


Figure 20: Overview of first Trust Indicator structure

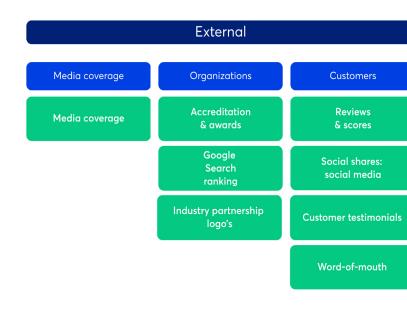


Figure 21: Overview of new Trust Indicator structure

Seal of approval	Assurance statement	Other	
Accreditation & awards	Hassle-free returns	Good design & layout	Product specification
Link to privacy policy	Guarantees & warranties	Quick loading, high res. images	Use of common web conventions
Industry partnership logo's	Easy to reach cust. sup.	A physical address	No spelling errors
Site security: https	USP: Delivery options	Custom 404 page	Product personalization
Payment provider logo's		Media coverage	Social media engagement
Influencer endorsement		Wikipedia listing	Quality backlinks

Product			Internal		
Application /UX	Insurance /Contract	Social media marketing	Customer support	About us	
Good design & layout	Product specification	Availability of social profiles	A physical address	Team page	
Link to privacy policy	Personalization	Social media engagement	Easy to reach cust. sup.	Mission & expertise	
Site security: https	Guarantees & warranties	Social media advertisment	Presence of a chatbot	Real images of employees	
Use of common web conventions					
direct conversion focus	s				
Quick loading, high res. images					

### 5.2 Mapping the journey

Once the three different clusters were defined, it became clear that these sections could also be seen as a simplified customer journey. A consumer searches for a product encounters a company selling said product, interacts with the company, and decides to purchase the product, after which the consumer becomes a customer and starts using and reviewing the product. Therefore these sections can be placed alongside each other and give an overview of the touchpoints through which trust can be built.

### **Preferences of Designers**

The results of the interviews show that some indicators are top of mind, while others are less widely spread or used. Once the trust indicators with the most interview mentions are placed upon this trust flow, it becomes clear that both the external, and product-related sections are strongly represented. The trust indicators under the Internal section mainly revolve around marketing and social media. The designers mainly mention components used during product purchase or application phases, reviews from customers, and accreditation from organizations. There is little focus on trust indicators related to the company selling the products or the USPs.

### **Customer importance**

After the designers have expressed their knowledge and use of specific trust indicators, it is time to follow their advice and listen to our users and customers. The results from the survey show that entrepreneurs value customer support the highest. According to the survey participants, other trust indicators are the product specifications, layout & design, and reviews & scores. Trust indicators related to social media received the lowest scores and can be considered less relevant to the potential customers.

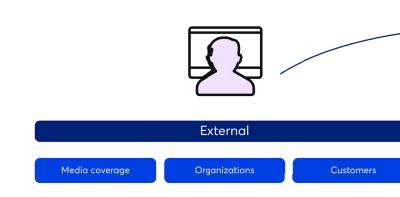


Figure 22: Overview Trust Indicator Structure on a simplified custome

## Trust Indicator heatmap - Expert interviews External Media coverage Organizations Customers Accreditation & Google Search ranking Industry partnership logo's Customer & Word-ormouth

Figure 23: Overviewof Heatmap of Trust Indicator mentions within the

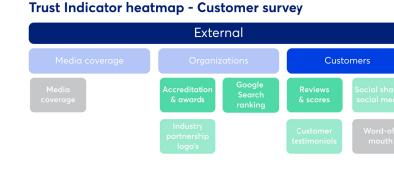
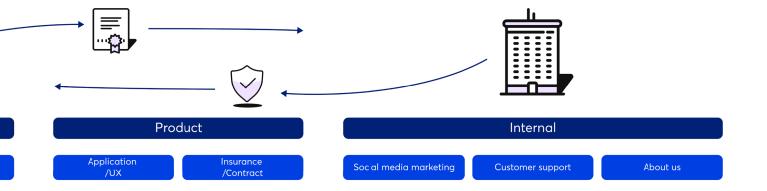
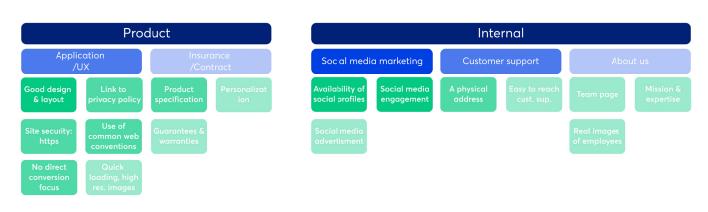


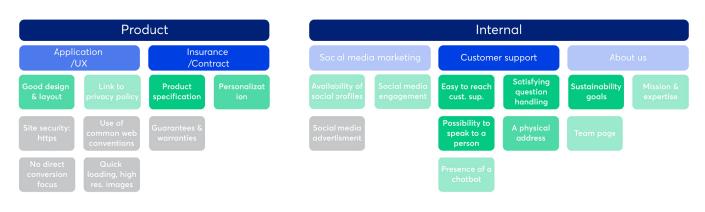
Figure 24: Overviewof Heatmap of Trust Indicator importance scores



r journey



Expert Interviews



from the Customer Survey

### 5.3 The Comparison

As seen in the heatmaps and qualitative and quantitative results above, designers and customers emphasize different trust indicators. This makes it clear that the value of the designers is not completely aligned with that of the end user. The most obvious difference can be seen between the high value designers attach to social media, and the relatively low value entrepreneurs attach to social media. Other differences include entrepreneurs' emphasis on customer

support and insurance product specifications and personalization options. Next to that, the entrepreneurs attach more importance to customer testimonials and less to the social media shares by customers. Overall, it can be concluded that the focus from social media should shift more toward the product and customer support, showing what is offered and how products can be personalized and communicating who is there to help once a customer has questions.

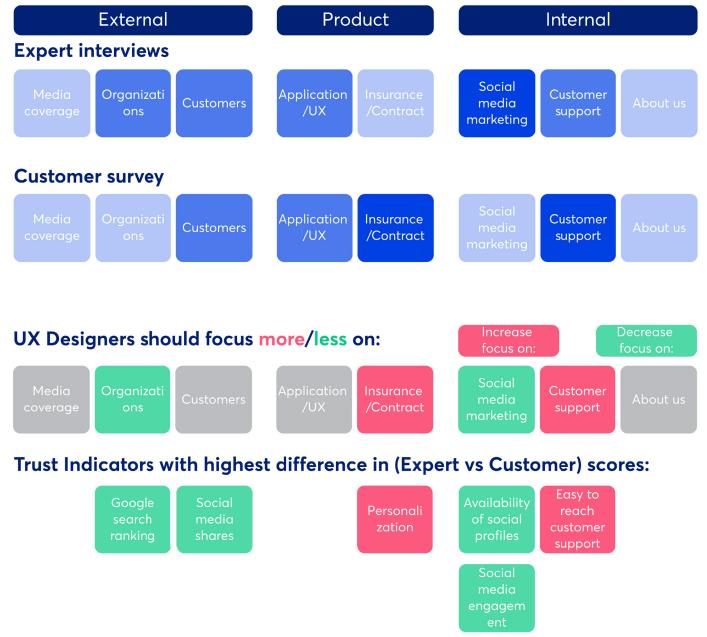


Figure 25: Overviewof Trust Indicator heatmap comparison between designers and entrepreneurs

### Summary Chapter 5: The Trust Indicators

The concept of trust indicators and their definition is discussed, highlighting the need for a comprehensive understanding that includes both actions and characteristics. A list of trust indicators was compiled through desk research, and a structure was developed to categorize them. The initial structure was revised to create three sections: External, Internal, and Product, which align with different stages of the customer journey. Interviews with designers revealed varying preferences for

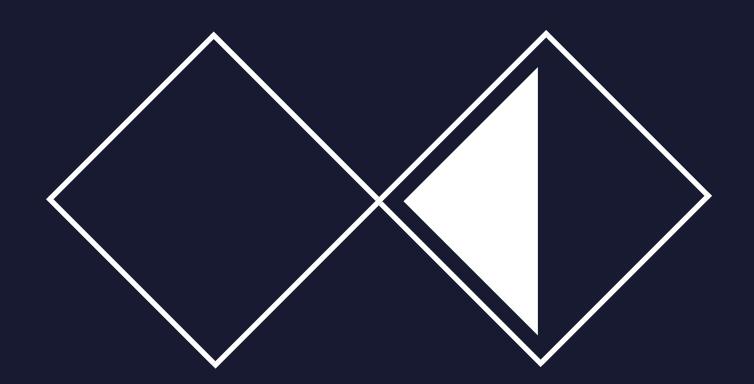
trust indicators, with a strong focus on external and product-related indicators. Customer surveys indicated that entrepreneurs highly value customer support, product specifications, layout & design, reviews & scores, while social media indicators received lower importance scores. The misalignment between designer preferences and customer values suggests a need to shift focus towards personalized products, customer support, and clear communication of available assistance.

# 

This section starts by defining a clear design brief which functions as an objective, structuring the creative process. Aligning the project goals with the design objective is essential when designing, therefore the user context is redefined and the location of concept implementation is picked. The second chapter in this section entials a competitive analysis and the development of design directions into concepts and eventually prototypes.

In this section: 06 Design Approach 07 Design Process

## 



### Design Approach

This chapter transitions from research to design, utilizing gathered information, data, and insights to define the design brief. It focuses on contrasting how designers build trust versus customer perceptions. The chapter presents design methodology and analyzes Insify's current trust-building strategies, comparing them to other insurers' approaches to identify areas for improvement.

### 6.1 Design Brief

A design brief is a crucial component of the double diamond design methodology, which helps define the problem space and guide the design process. It serves as a reference point, aligning the design goals with the research and project goals. This brief ensures a user-centric approach during the ideation and development phase. Through the introduction of objectives, scope, and constraints

### **Objectives**

The objective can be seen as the answer or solution to the research question proposed at the start of this thesis. This research question reads: "How can consumer trust in Insify be improved in order to increase the conversion rate?" This research question states that consumer trust is a means to an end: increasing the conversion rate. While this is an objective in and of itself, defining the problem will help keep the current situation top of mind. The second step is envisioning an ideal state where the problem does not exist. Next, a proposed solution needs to be presented, accompanied by the benefits of said solution, to argue the solving quality of this direction.

### The problem

Most business owners apply for business insurance via brokers. Those purchasing their insurance online encounter many different, well-known insurance brands. Through the uncertainty and skepticism resulting from digitalization, Insify, as a new online insurer, has a hard time building trust and selling insurance products. While having deployed multiple different trust indicators, it is currently unclear how effective they are. There is no clear overview of which initiatives and components customers value most, which creates a knowledge gap for the company.

### The ideal state

Business insurance should become a freely available, affordable, and adjustable good for all entrepreneurs. Business owners should be able to apply directly at an insurer online. As consumers feel comfortable with digital financial products, choosing a product that fits them best is the key priority, regardless of their familiarity with the insurer.

### The proposed solution

Adjusting the points and locations of customer interaction to fit the needs of the broad range of customers. Improving the visual and textual components to match the components entrepreneurs value most. Overcoming the skepticism and uncertainty by building and communicating trust throughout multiple points of contact, starting with the landing pages. These landing pages are one of the first interactions a potential customer might have with the Insify brand and are therefore essential in building the initial trust between the company and the customer. The most valued trust indicators will be developed into components that can be tested on these landing pages.

### The solution benefits

By directly taking away possible questions instead of raising them, customers focus more on the offering and less on their skepticism. Their trust increases can drive conversion and brand building.

### Trust leap trampoline

Visualizing this design brief's objective can help structure thoughts and direction. Therefore we need to define the purchase process of an Insify customer. In this case, the focus lies on the disability insurance customer, as this customer journey can be more clearly defined than property and casualty insurance. The whole decision process a disability insurance customer undertakes can be structured into three main phases: The Known, The Unknown, and The Trust Leap.

### The Known,

Once an entrepreneur starts a company, they are mainly concerned with making a living and growing their business. Generally, once this same entrepreneur experiences life-changing events such as marriage, getting children, or the passing of a close friend or family member, they start thinking about the future. At this moment, the entrepreneur might feel responsible for a growing number of people and therefore become risk-aware. This person starts asking what-if questions that cannot directly be answered with a satisfactory answer. This is the moment the entrepreneur starts to think about the unknown and devise ways to decrease the uncertainty and doubt regarding that unknown future.

### The Trust Leap,

The entrepreneur starts to discuss his or her questions with friends, family, or other business owners. He or she goes online to seek information on insurance and alternatives. He or she encounters a very competitive market in which many big insurance brands attract attention through advertising, each claiming to have a better and cheaper insurance product. The moment the entrepreneur starts reading all this information, he or she has decided to commit to the search and has therefore taken the trust leap.

They have jumped and are now facing uncertainty while trying to assess information and grasp certainty. During this leap, potential customers start doubting if they need the product, as prices are too high or skepticism toward the market rises. Next to that, the process of comparing premiums and coverages can be time-consuming, causing decision fatigue to set in.

### The Unknown.

Once the potential customer finds insurance that fits his or her needs, he or she will research the insurance company. In this case, the insurance brand and overall external communication can function as a trampoline. The trust leap will be converted into direct propulsion towards a destination of certainty and knowledge. This trampoline is a combination of all components that help build trust; therefore, brand awareness can be seen as the determining factor for the vertical placement of this trampoline. The more unknown a brand is, the longer a customer's trust leap lasts, and vice versa. Once trust is established, a customer can purchase the insurance products and reach certainty within the unknown.

### The objective

Design and develop a "trampoline" which helps entrepreneurs overcome uncertainty.

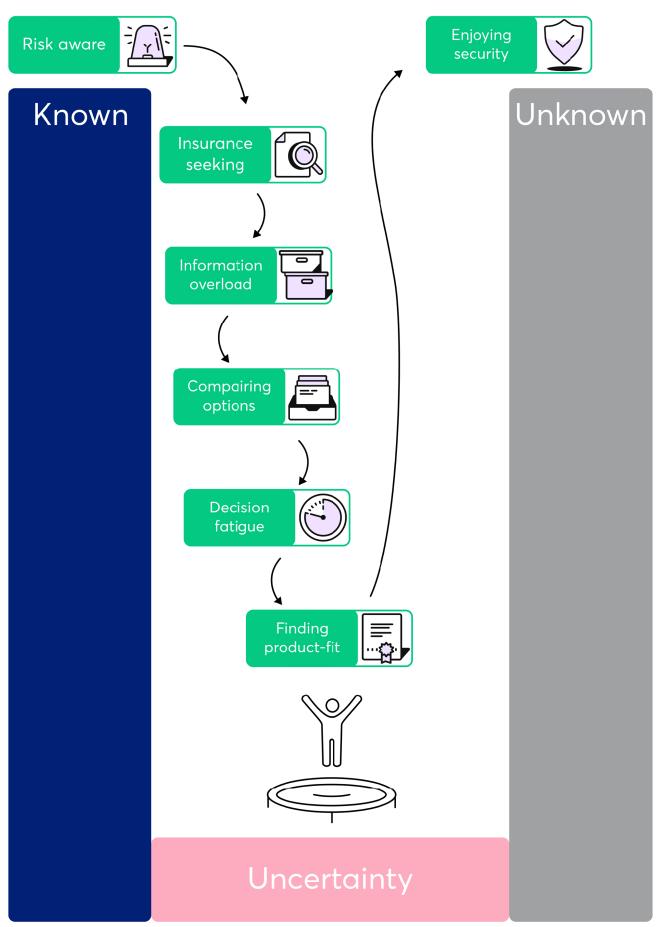


Figure 26: Overview of Trust Leap/ Trampoline analogy

### Scope

As Insify is a growing company constantly adapting, improving, and expanding their services, a scope needs to be defined. As the interviews and survey research has been conducted among mostly Dutch designers and entrepreneurs, it makes the most sense to focus on the Dutch market. Therefore the designing phase of this project will not be focusing on the German or French customer segment of Insify. It is important to define which part and location of customer interaction will be designed or redesigned. Most potential customers first learn about Insify through search engines such as Google, where they enter gueries related to business insurance. Insify might be ranked among the top five results through search engine advertisement (SEA). Customers might directly visit an Insify landing page via these Google results or get retargeted via social media advertising on Facebook or LinkedIn. Once the customer clicks on the said advertisement, the first point of contact will be a landing page specifically designed to cater to the search query of this potential customer. There are many different landing pages, each focused on a different insurance product or a different target group, so-called vertical. As this landing page is the first interaction with a complete set of visual and textual components explaining the product and the brand, it is a perfect place to build trust. Therefore the testing location of the design components will be one or more of Insify's landing pages.

### **Constraints**

When working with landing pages, it is essential to make sure that the new or adjusted components fit within the overall design of these pages. Therefore the overall brand guidelines of Insify function as parameters of the designs. This means the prototype designs shall stay consistent with the existing color scheme, font and image style. Next to that, implementing certain design elements on landing pages requires developing these components in a program called Contentful. To ensure implementation and testing possibilities, the designs will be mostly restricted to existing components already used by Insify. This allows the landing pages to be built and tested, allowing the test to deliver results on time.

### 6.2 Design Methodology

During the design phase, multiple design methods are used to develop and test the most promising prototypes. Working from the user insights toward the design objective will require specific steps in which concepts are developed and analyzed. Going from the first concepts to actual designs and final prototypes is a process in which the opinions and preferences of multiple stakeholders will be taken into account.

### Designing for Delight

Whenever a customer journey is mapped, it is almost always done on a graph with interactions and time as a horizontal axis and emotional experience as a vertical axis. The vertical axis generally goes from frustrations at the bottom towards neutral in the middle and delight at the top. It is essential to not only get rid of frustrating customer experiences but design for delight by creating moments where customers' emotional needs are fulfilled. This method maps the current and desired state of all moments within a customer journey.

### Competitive audit

A design is always directed towards a specific user need, and before starting the design process, the current design or product catering to this need should be analyzed. During this design phase, the current landing page(s) of Insify will be analyzed while also taking the websites of other (business) insurers into account. This analysis will not consider premiums and coverages, as the main focus is the use or lack of trust-building components. This analysis will define where possible shortcomings in Insify's current web design lie and provide insights into competitors' actions.

### **Brainstorming**

Once conceptual directions are defined, the process of brainstorming will help to come up

with creative and innovative designs. These brainstorming sessions can be done individually or together with peers or stakeholders. These sessions aim to define how specific directions can be pursued, both visually and textually. These initial solutions will be developed into low-fidelity concepts which function as boundary objects during the next phase in which the concepts will be ranked.

### Prioritization of concepts

Once a set number of concepts have been developed, they will be presented to and discussed with stakeholders within Insify. Within these conversations, the dimensions of impact and effort are discussed per concept to be able to plot and rank the different concepts. Stakeholders are asked to vote for and assign values to each concept. The desired outcome of this process is to pick three concepts that are quick wins for Insify, having an expected high impact with a low effort.

### A/B testing

Once the three concepts have been picked, they will be refined and developed into prototypes, which can be tested on the Insify landing pages. These tests will be coordinated with the growth and design teams within Insify, deciding on the ideal test location and duration. The goal of these A/B tests is to reach a significant measurable difference in click-through rate from the landing to the application start between the A and B versions. The test results will help decide if the design objective is reached and draw conclusions from the overall project.

### **Summary Chapter 6: Design Approach**

This chapter focuses on the transition from the research phase to the design phase in the double diamond design methodology. The research findings serve as input to define the design brief, which guides the design process. The chapter begins by presenting the design brief, which aligns the design goals with the research and project objectives. The objective is to improve consumer trust in Insify to increase the conversion rate. The problem lies in Insify's struggle to build trust and sell insurance products due to skepticism and uncertainty resulting from digitalization. The ideal state is described as making business insurance easily accessible and affordable for all entrepreneurs, with a focus on a user-centric approach.

The proposed solution involves adjusting customer interactions, improving visual and textual components, and building trust through multiple touchpoints, starting with landing pages. The most valued trust indicators will be developed into components for testing on these pages. The concept of the "Trust Leap Trampoline" is introduced as an analogy of the design brief's objective. It

outlines the three phases of the customer journey: The Known, The Unknown, and The Trust Leap. The Trust Leap occurs when customers commit to the search and start evaluating information, facing doubts and decision fatigue. The objective of the design phase is to design and develop a trampoline that helps entrepreneurs overcome uncertainty.

The scope of the project focuses on the Dutch market and specific points of customer interaction, particularly Insify's landing pages. The design is constrained by existing brand guidelines and the need for implementation within Contentful.

The design methodology includes designing for delight by addressing emotional needs along the customer journey. It involves a competitive audit, brainstorming, prioritization of concepts based on impact and effort, and A/B testing of refined prototypes on landing pages. The goal is to achieve a significant measurable difference in click-through rate and determine if the design objective is met.

### Design Process

This chapter covers the design process, following the establishment of design objectives and methodology. It represents the final stage of transitioning to prototype designs, which will be tested in the next chapter. It explores the conversion of ideas into visual and conceptual forms for analysis and evaluation.

### 7.1 Design for Delight

A design always starts with the user. Mapping the customer journey is a way to assess the points and elements of contact between the user and a brand. A customer journey will help a designer understand where improvements impact a user most. The scope of this design project concerns a consumer's journey from product search up until the start of a product purchase, or the so-called funnel. This journey is short, spanning from multiple minutes to weeks, but also eventful as the customer is flooded with information and advertisement while continuing the search for the most suitable product.

### **Touchpoints and Channels**

Before mapping out the journey, the individual touch points need to be defined. Moreover, to identify each touchpoint, we need to analyze which types of channels are within the journey, and which channels are being used within the scope of this design. This scope excludes all customer journey phases after purchase, such as onboarding, adoption, and retention. During the phases that are included, the following channels for customer contact are used:

### Awareness

In the awareness phase of the customer journey, individuals become acquainted with a product or service, often through various marketing channels or word-of-mouth recommendations. During this phase, potential customers gain initial knowledge and understanding about their own needs or a particular offering.

Touchpoints & channels: Problem discussion (Word-of-mouth) Forum questions (Social media) Search engine query (SEA)

### Consideration

Individuals delve deeper into their research and evaluation process during the consideration phase. They explore different options, weigh the benefits and drawbacks, and analyze how a product or service aligns with their needs and preferences. This phase involves carefully examining the features, pricing, reviews, and other relevant factors to make an informed decision.

Touchpoints & channels:
Introduction to a brand
(Website Landing page/ Social media content)
Blogpost (Social media / Website)
Price & specifications (Funnel start)

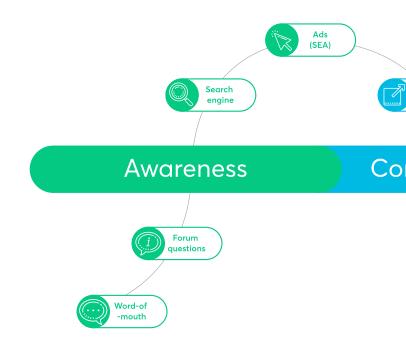


Figure 27: Overviewof Customer Journey and touchpoints

### Compare

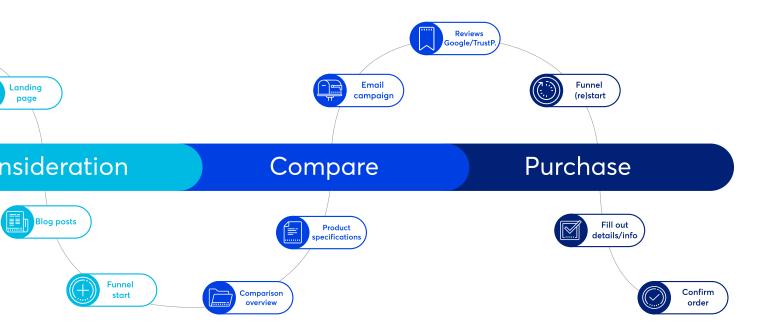
In the compare phase, potential customers engage in a side-by-side comparison of different alternatives. They carefully evaluate the similarities and differences in features, pricing, quality, reputation, and other relevant criteria. This phase allows individuals to make an informed decision by objectively assessing and contrasting the available options.

Touchpoints & channels:
Comparison overviews
(Independer/ Brand website)
Inclusions & exclusions
(Product specification section on website)
Reminder/ Comparison email (email campaign)
Reviews (Google / TrustPilot)

### **Purchase**

The purchase phase marks the customer journey's culmination, where individuals decide to proceed with the transaction. During this phase, customers complete the necessary steps, such as adding items to their shopping cart, entering payment details, and confirming their order. The purchase phase signifies converting interest and consideration into an actual transaction.

Touchpoints & channels:
Premium calculation (Funnel start)
Filling out needed information
(Continue application process)
Confirm order (Finnish application)



### **Data flow**

Diving deeper into these four customer journey phases, it becomes clear that different touchpoints require different customer actions. More specifically, the data flow going from customer to insurer and back can clarify the location of value and power during the customer journey.

### Awareness: Customer receives data

In this phase, the customer is aware and receives information and data. This is a diverging phase in which the potential customer learns about possible solutions; Data streams toward the consumer.

### Consideration: Customer provides data

This phase revolves around the exploration and examination of insurance options. If a potential customer wants to calculate his or her insurance premiums, they must first provide some personal or business-related data. Therefore data streams from the customer to the insurer in this phase.

### Compare: Customer receives data

When comparing the different insurance offerings, information is organized and structured. This allows customers to analyze differences between products and further explore their needs. Here, data streams from insurers toward consumers.

### Purchase: Customer provides data

When a decision is made, the customer will purchase the product. In this purchasing process, the customer has to provide the insurer with more detailed information. Therefore data streams from the customer to the insurer during this phase.

This data flow also provides an insight into the transitional points in the flow, where possible friction occurs. Especially during the first transition, the visitor becomes a prospect, leaving information such as name, date of birth, and most importantly, his or her email. This mail address is the last input the website visitor has to fill out before the personal insurance premium is calculated and shown. Going from the data receiver to a data source might be confronting and scary for a customer. Therefore this is the exact section where a positive impact can be made.

### "Spending" on the landing page

The goal of a landing page is to accommodate the customer and answer his or her questions. On the other hand, it is not all about giving information; from a sales point of view, a company is aiming for some form of commitment from the customer. Commitment has various forms and sizes, ranging from time to information to money. A company wants visitors to spend time on their website, checking out their products and brand. The transition from spending time to "spending" information requires customers to be at ease and trust the company with their data. Online customers tend to fill out a random phone number, email address, and date of birth to bypass certain website obstructions without exposing themselves. This is caused by the fear of releasing information, possibly resulting in fraud, identity theft, or other harm. Therefore the landing page needs to focus on building trust with its visitors, making them feel safe while taking away doubt and skepticism.

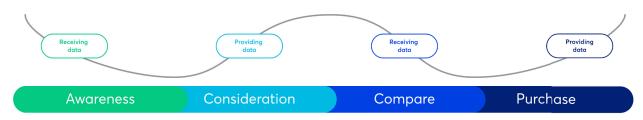


Figure 28: Overviewof Data flow on Customer journey

### 7.2 Competitive audit

Understanding the current state of Insify's landing pages is an essential step in designing the new trust-building components. Identifying the trust indicators which Insify and business insurance competitors are using will contribute to a complete overview and analysis of multiple web pages. The complete overviews of all pages can be found in the appendix (E).

### Insify

When visiting the Insify homepage, it is immediately apparent that the focus lies on the product, the insurance. Customers learn little about Insify as a company, and most USPs are product or service-related, promising a fast and easy application process. Trustpilot logos are used as an authoritative signal to express that a trustworthy partner monitors Insify's reviews and scores. Many components on the homepage are dedicated to showing the range of products offered while always mentioning the easy application process. Most focus on: Application process & customer ratinas

Some focus on: Product specifications & customer support

### **Competitors**

Many types of insurers are active in the business insurance market, but not every insurance sells its products directly. Some insurers use brokers to sell their products and will therefore have a digital presence that is less focused on direct conversion. To make a fair comparison, only insurers directly selling their insurance online will be included in this analysis. The webpages of the following insurers are therefore included: Centraal Beheer Achmea, Nationale Nederlanden, ASR, Univé & Allianz. All of the complete visual analysis can be seen in appendix E.

### Centraal Beheer Achmea,

The landing page for business insurance directly shows the different types of insurance they offer. When customers scroll down, images of "customers" appear, accompanied by titles of blog posts that answer entrepreneurs' questions. The third and last section introduces what the company, Achmea, represents. This section includes customer ratings and states that Achmea has been around for over 110 years.

Most focus on: Product specifications & About us Some focus on: Customer ratings & Authority partners

### Nationale Nederlanden.

The business insurance section of the NN website immediately starts by stating the different insurances they have for the different types of entrepreneurs. They try to connect with their customers by mentioning their entrepreneurship podcast. They introduce a component that presents their sustainability goals or mission relatively high on the page. Furthermore, many sections of the page focus on blog posts regarding the different insurance or entrepreneurial questions.

Most focus on: Product specifications & About us Some focus on: Customer support & Social Media Marketing

### ASR.

Their business insurance section starts with a bold statement: "Good for your company, your people, and the world". Directly below, the range of insurance products is presented, showing the types of products and the different types of entrepreneurs they have as customers. Like NN, they quickly introduce some components that put forward the insurers' sustainability mission through images and copy.

Most focus on: Product specifications & About us Some focus on: Customer support

### Univé,

This business insurance page states that Univé works together with entrepreneurs on their businesses. All their insurance offerings and products are shown with a direct conversion focus. The header of the landing page mentions their number of physical stores, number of customers, and the fact that they have no profit motive. Below the fold, the page continues by stating how visitors can reach their customer support while also introducing and linking to some blog posts. Most focus on: About us & Customer support Some focus on: Product specifications

### Allianz,

The business insurance landing page starts by putting forward one of their insurance products, together with information on both the product and the application process. This is directly followed by a complete overview of all their insurances, a statement regarding their customer reviews, and the claim that they are the proclaimed best insurer in the world.

Most focus on: Product specifications & Application process

Some focus on: Customer ratings & About us

### **Room for improvement**

Almostallcompetitors of Insify put a more significant emphasis on the product's specifications, such as directly putting forward the types of products they offer. Many other insurers focus more on content related to the company's history, vision, or mission (About us sections). Insify is the only insurer putting an incredible amount of emphasis on customer reviews through rating systems such as Trustpilot. All others barely mention customer reviews. Univé is the only insurer wanting to show its customer support and present its availability. Many others state contact options at the bottom of their page. Overall, the Insify website looks good; it focuses on conversion and states a lot regarding the application process. It lacks information or content related to the company, describing the mission or history. Next to that, Insify could stand out even more by focusing on their customer care and support.

### 7.3 Design directions

Once all available information is gathered, the transition from research into design becomes more fluent. As a design implementation location has been identified and it has become clear how potential Insify customers value different trust indicators, it is time to start the actual design process. One of the first steps in this process is identifying the initial design directions, after which concepts can be created based on the most interesting trust indicators. These concepts will be prioritized and eventually, the most promising concepts will be picked to be developed into prototypes.

### **Eight Design Directions for Trust Indicators**

As Chapter 4 concluded, focusing on customer care could be beneficial in building customer relationships and online trust. Another essential step could be showing the personalization options upfront, thus presenting a more tailored product. Another component valued highly by potential customers but has yet to be used by Insify is the accreditation component, including awards and direct partnerships. In the same survey, the customers valued a clear privacy policy and physical address of the insurance company. Reviews and customer scores were also highly valued by the entrepreneurs who participated in the survey. Below, each of the eight design directions is introduced and presented with their respective survey result scores. These scores are the average scores of all participants, ranging on a 7-point Likert scale from "not important" (1) to "very important" (7):

### Customer support availability (6.55)

Entrepreneurs are concerned about "becoming a number" and are therefore inclined to look for faces and personal attention. Customer support should be readily available if they have questions or cannot complete certain actions independently. Showing when and how web visitors can reach the customer care team and communicating KPIs regarding our service might help customers build trust with Insify.

### Review & scoring (5.74)

Customers want to learn not only about the product but also about how it is used, reading up on the experiences of other users. Scores presented or curated by organizations such as Trustpilot or Google are readily available and often used to assess the trustworthiness of a company. It is questionable if Trustpilot, which Insify currently uses on their website and in their advertisement, is the best partner to help address this customer need. There might be other ways to present scores and reviews directly to customers without plugins or (commercial) third parties.

### Level of personalization (5.48)

Insurance is a personal and often expensive product; therefore, customers take their time to see if the insurance products fit well with their needs. By putting forward the level of personalization, customers feel like the products are tailored to their specific requirements. Stating options might not be enough as the customer needs to be enticed to pick a specific option. Therefore toggles or switches help in giving the customer (perceived) power.

### Accreditation, awards

### & certification/partnerships (4,89)

Especially new(er) companies try to establish a sense of trust through components in which they present all the media outlets which have mentioned them "as seen on". Companies sometimes take another approach, presenting their direct product partners, which might be organizations with more brand recognition. This can be seen as borrowed credibility, which could give a (starting) company

a confidence boost, helping them to build trust with customers.

### Dutch headquarters, office location (4,71)

Whenever customers consider going into business with an unknown company, they may need to gather as much information on the company as possible. Their office location or headquarter address might give the customer a sense of relatability, as an online entity becomes a "real one" through a physical address. Presenting a digital company with an offline address might make a company more relatable and trustworthy.

### Privacy policy (4,60)

As data breaches are more common than ever, customers tend to be more protective of their data. Therefore stating what data a business requires, for which purposes, and how they store it might help the customer perceive a company to be more trustworthy. Presenting a privacy policy as a USP might become more common in the future, especially in financial services, where data is very personal and valuable.

### Mission & Team communication (4,15)

Pages that elaborate on a company's mission or present the team behind a brand can help in telling customers a consistent story. Potential customers, especially if they are also entrepreneurs, like to understand what the driving force behind a brand is. Therefore presenting not only the founding story, but also the values and the team might help in create a space where trust can be built.

### Customer Testimonials (4,00)

Many websites put their customers and their stories forward to show the quality of their products or services. In some cases, this seems arranged and almost becomes fake. However, once the testimonials or customer stories database

becomes too big to curate, it can contribute to customer trust. Finding a balance between curating and being completely open can be challenging regarding testimonials, but this might be a great way to be perceived as a trustworthy business.

### 7.4 Concept designs

These eight design directions have yet to become concepts, as they need to be rendered into boundary objects. Before doing so in the section below, it is important to discuss and analyze each direction with the direct stakeholders to express expectations. As eight conceptual designs can be an excess of designs, it has been decided to converge a little and includes only five design directions in the conceptual phase. The following three design directions have been excluded:

Customer testimonials are excluded as the overall importance value is 4,00, which is the lowest and therefore perceived as less valuable. It is expected to be very difficult or impossible to design for this goal within the given constraints of design location and tools such as Contentful.

Mission & team communication is excluded due to its relatively low score in the survey and the fact that Insify currently has a page on its founding story. This page could be redesigned to include more information on the team, but this design direction does not connect well with the general goal of the landing pages.

Review & scoring is excluded as Insify already presents customer scores and reviews through Trustpilot. Therefore an analysis and concept design that focuses on these reviews is expected to have little impact on customers.

### **Concept Component Designs**

The five remaining conceptual directions are a diverse set of trust-building goals which pose relevant questions. Each concept is presented with questions that the visual and textual component designs try to answer. Some of the visual components and attached copy were defined through creative brainstorming sessions. Below, the first designs for each of the concepts are presented.

### **Privacy policy**

How can we present our privacy policy as a USP?

Privacy policies are often hard to find on a company's website. Therefore in the design process, the complete privacy policy of Insify was read thoroughly, and interesting or valuable sections were copied. Most points in this privacy policy are somewhat generic. Therefore the focus of the complete component revolved more around a catchy title and visual. Through brainstorming, the line "We secure you and your data" was initiated, showing the customers that our service goes beyond the product, as safeguarding your data is a top priority. The shield visualizes a sense of security and protection.

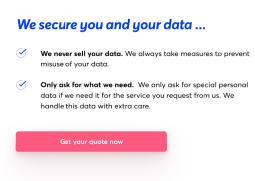


Figure 29: Privacy Policy concept component design



### Accreditation

How can we build credibility through media mentions?

Insify has been mentioned in many media outlets, most of which introduce the company as InsurTech trying to disrupt the insurance market. As this concept aims to build credibility, each logo has to link directly to the article in which Insify is mentioned. It is a simple design in which the brand logos are the center of attention. As the target audience consists of entrepreneurs, some brands might be more interesting or valuable to them than others. Therefore the most entrepreneurial brands were selected to be part of this component.

### Customer support

How can we show the availability of our Customer care team?

The initial design direction for this component was focused on customer support pop-ups or chat windows. As the cookie pop-up can already be perceived as annoying, this idea was abandoned early on. Stating a number representing a KPI of our customer care was more interesting than the proposed pop-up windows. Data representing the most personal form of contact, phone calls, could lower customers' barriers to call. Increasing the number of calls is not the aim of this component, but showing that our experts are there for all customers, might help in building a trusting relationship.

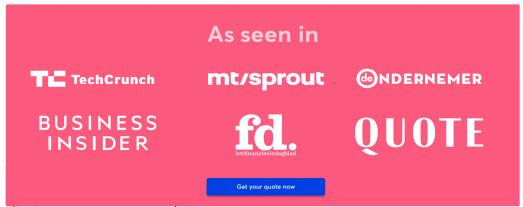


Figure 30: Accreditation concept component design

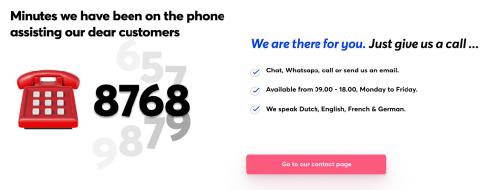


Figure 31: Customer support concept component design

### **Dutch headquarters**

How can we present Insify as a real and relatable company?

Potential customers highly value a physical address or office location. By stating that we are Dutch and visually showing that our office is located in the center of Amsterdam, we become a company that exists. The copy states that we understand the customer's needs, as we are a company of entrepreneurs ourselves. The flag addresses our nationality as a company, and the pin shows where we are based. In this component, we also state that our customer support team is located in our own office, which could contribute to our overall trustworthiness.

### Level of personalization

How can we empower the customer through product options?

Each of Insify's insurance products has a calculated premium based on the input a customer gives. Some of these input fields are requirements regarding facts, such as date of birth, yearly income, and address. However, other sections are options that a customer can choose from, such as including mental health in disability insurance and covering conditions such as burn-out. One of these options relates to the benefit duration period. Presenting this option as a selection menu could empower customers to compose their own insurance products.



Figure 32: Dutch headquarters concept component design



Figure 33: Level of personalization concept component design

### **Concept ranking**

The five components underwent several iterations, with adjustments made to both the copy and visuals. To prepare for testing on Dutch landing pages, all text was translated from English to Dutch. Additionally, new icons were added to align the visual elements with Insify's branding. Evaluating and ranking the concept designs involved considering multiple factors. The feedback and concerns expressed by Insify team members played a significant role. Three project stakeholders voted for the most promising components to be tested. The level of innovation and emotional value was also taken into account. As a result, the following three components were selected: Customer Support, Dutch Headquarter & Level of personalization

### Privacy Policy: 4/20

Concerns: 2/10

Head of legal within Insify doubts if this approach is wise. He is concerned about the privacy claims being made, blowing up in the face of the company if there would ever be a data breach. As the privacy policy is relatively generic, the expected added value of presenting the USP's is not worth the future risk.

Vote: 0/6

None of the stakeholders voted in favor of this component.

Value: 2/4

The component has some emotional value, especially the title expressing protection on multiple levels addresses a possible need or doubt within customers. The component could be more innovative as the mentioned privacy policy takeaways are not unique; they do not function as innovative USPs.

### Accreditation: 7/20

Concerns: 4/10

The head of design addressed a concern related to a previous test similar to this component. The component was a thin gray strip directly under the banner, showing multiple media logos. He explained that this test did not reach a significant difference when tested and was therefore not used in recent landing page versions.

Vote: 2/6

One of the stakeholders voted in favor of this component.

Value: 0/4

The component has little emotional value as it only concerns other brands. It does not interact with or pose questions to the customers. The component can not be seen as innovative as a similar component has been tested before.

### Customer Support: 16/20

Concerns: 7/10

The Customer care lead liked the component but also had one concern: Could this component increase the number of customer calls the support team would receive? While this is a valid concern, it is also something Insify would like to discover.

Vote: 6/6

All of the stakeholders voted in favor of this component.

Value: 3/4

The component shows the customers that they can always talk to someone. This could help Insify come across as a company that likes to be involved. It is also new for Insify to communicate KPIs such as the number of calls.

### Dutch headquarters: 15/20

Concerns: 5/10

Both the Head of design and our lead copywriter addressed concerns regarding the component being too nationalistic. They posed questions related to excluding groups of customers through the focus on nationality. Another concern was the Amsterdam map, which could cause our connection to entrepreneurs living outside the big cities to deteriorate. As these concerns are valid, they will be considered in the preparation and final prototyping of this component.

Vote: 6/6

All of the stakeholders voted in favor of this component.

Value: 4/4

The component has much emotional value as it plays into the feeling that Insify is like their customers, being entrepreneurial, having an office and employees. This is also an entirely new direction for the company.

### Level of personalization: 13/20

Concerns: 7/10

In conversations with stakeholders, no direct concerns were mentioned related to this component. It was made clear that a similar component was tested in the past, which did not give any significant result in an A/B test. Therefore the new design had to be (slightly) different from the component design tested in the past.

Vote: 4/6

Two out of three stakeholders voted in favor of this component.

Value: 2/4

The component has some emotional value as the goal is to empower the customer by presenting options. As a similar component has been tested before, this design is not innovative.

### 7.5 Prototyping

Five of the initial eight design directions were picked to become concept designs. Three of these five conceptual designs have been chosen to be further designed, developed, and prepared for testing. This section presents the final changes and iterations which were made to the components before the tests were set up.

### **Dutch Headquarters**

The design of this component underwent some changes as concerns regarding nationalism were omnipresent in the text and the visuals. The Dutch flag was deleted, and the title now focuses on the entrepreneurial connection; "By entrepreneurs, for entrepreneurs". The copy was reviewed by one of Insify's copywriting experts. Some sentences were shortened and simplified. Amsterdam's initial black-and-white map design made room for a Google Maps screenshot with a customized Insify pin. This map reminds customers of our digital nature while also minimizing clutter in the overall design of the component. The rounded corners and shad behind the map image map create contrast with the blue tile behind it.



Figure 34: Dutch headquarters concept component design

# Door ondernemers, Voor ondernemers ✓ We begrijpen wat je zoekt. Ons team bouwt in Amsterdam verder aan de de beste verzekeringen voor ondernemers. ✓ Je word direct geholpen door onze experts: Carmen, Bob & Anne-Rose Bereken je premie

### **Customer support**

After contact with the head of Insify's customer care team, it became clear that we have only one metric that can clearly be presented regarding customer contact: the number of calls. As the component will not be dynamic, a live increase in the number of calls, a fixed period, should be considered for the number of calls. In the past 12 months, our customer support team handled 14.440 calls. One of the copywriters mentioned that rounded numbers could come across as too polished and curated. Therefore the number was adjusted to 14.438. The copy was simplified and shortened to clarify when and how our experts can be reached. The final image was redesigned by introducing small figures representing our customers, making the number less analytical, and introducing some personal connections.



### Onze experts staan altijd voor je klaar.. Afgelopen jaar hielpen we 14.438 klanten

- Chat, Whatsapp, bel of stuur ons een mailtje
- We zijn bereikbaar tussen 09.00 18.00, van maandag tot vrijdag
- ✓ We spreken Nederlands, Engels, Frans en Duits

Neem nu contact op

Figure 35: Dutch headquarters concept component design

### Level of personalization

This component was further discussed with the Design lead to make the component more visually appealing to customers. As the goal of this design is empowering the potential customer, it is crucial to present this decision-making process by leaving big and personal decisions up to them. Therefore the image of a man and a woman looking at their phone was incorporated into the component. This picture shows how customers (and their spouses) can decide on which configuration of the product suits them best. The design becomes complete by making a split between what we present on the left and what feeling that might evoke. Each icon represents a different benefit duration for the disability insurance. The third option, with the most extended benefit duration period, is pre-selected to challenge customers to consider all options and decide.

### Verzekering op maat. Bepaal zelf de uitkeringsduur die bij je past...

Hoe korter de uitkeringsduur, hoe voordeliger je premie.





Figure 36: Dutch headquarters concept component design

### **Summary Chapter 7: Design Process**

The chapter presents s the design process, specifically focusing on the customer journey and touchpoints, aiming to design for delight. It highlights the importance of mapping the customer journey and identifying touchpoints and channels for customer contact in various phases: awareness, consideration, compare, and purchase. The data flow between the customer and the insurer is explored, emphasizing the need to build trust to smoothen transitions between receiving and giving information. A competitive audit of Insify and its competitors is conducted, examining their landing pages and identifying areas for improvement. Concluding that Insify should focus more on company information, customer care, and support. Finally, the concept designs are introduced, presenting eight design directions

based on the interview and survey results, including customer support availability, review and scoring, level of personalization, accreditation and partnerships, office location, privacy policy, mission and team communication, and customer testimonials. From these eight design directions, only five were selected for the conceptual phase. Three directions were excluded due to lower perceived value, or already existing solutions. The remaining concepts aim to build trust through privacy policy statements, accreditation from media brands, customer support, localization of Dutch headquarters, and product personalization. Each concept underwent evaluations based on concerns, votes, and value ratings. The chosen components for further development are customer support, Dutch headquarters, and personalization.

### 

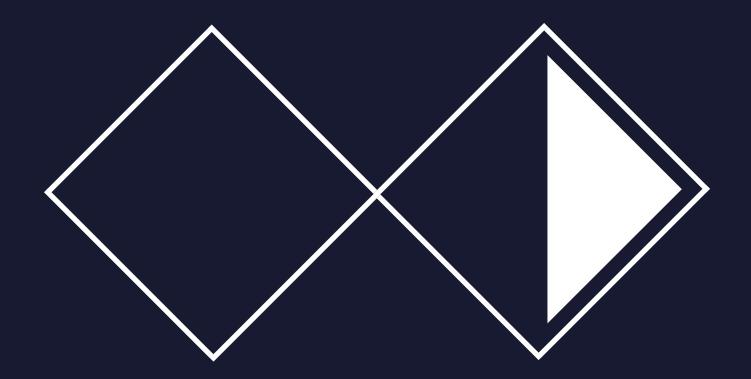
This section begins by explaining how the components on the Insify landing pages were tested. It then introduces two testing locations and their baseline conversion rates. The results of the tests are presented, showing the specific outcomes achieved. The section concludes by introducing a strategy focused on establishing and maintaining trust, particularly in light of anticipated industry changes and disruptions.

In this section:

08 Component Testing

09 Strategy building

10 Discussion



## Component Testing

After two divergence phases and one convergence phase, it's time to converge the findings once more. In the second diamond, concepts are developed into prototypes, tested, and delivered. Testing provides an objective measure of customer actions, unlike interviews and surveys that may carry biases. This chapter explores how customer reactions to trust indicators are measured, informing the effectiveness of these indicators in the designed landing page components.



### 8.1 Test setup

Insify is a dynamic company constantly trying to improve its services and products. Therefore, they are no strangers when setting up and conducting A/B tests. When setting up and conducting a test, it is essential to define the goal, the location, and the duration of the experiment. Another crucial step in this process is component building through software called Contentful.

### Component building

Once the components were discussed with both design and copywriting colleagues within Insify, the build could start. The Growth team, responsible for testing and learning, introduced the Contentful software. Together with the head of this team, we successfully built the first two components regarding the Dutch Headquarters and Customer support. After translating the design of the third component, some problems were encountered. The proposed radio buttons were exported together with the icons; this caused them to be very small. The visuals of both the buttons and the icons became grainy and did not scale properly. The result of the endeavor, which can be seen below, made clear that it would be impossible to build and test the third component. In consultation with the direct mentor of this project, it was decided that this component would not be tested and that the results from a similar test would be used instead.

### **Goals & Assumptions**

Within Insify, each experiment starts with defining the hypothesis or assumption. The assumptions for the two components that will be tested are

### **Dutch Headquarters:**

"Using a landing page element that localizes Insify as a company with a real address and employees will generate more engagement with the content and increase the volume of application starts"

### **Customer Support:**

"Using a landing page element that focuses on the availability and KPI's of Insify's customer care team, will generate more engagement with the content and increase the volume of application starts"

For this thesis project any significant rise in clickthrough numbers would be seen as a positive test result. In most cases, Insify also considers the actual purchase rate, but as the project's scope ends at the application process start, purchase rates will not be considered.







Figure 37: Problematic outcome of level of personalization component implementation

### **Test locations**

Many different SEA campaigns and A/B tests continuously run on Insify's landing pages. This makes it hard to determine which landing pages are most suitable for the experiments. During multiple meetings with Growth team members, the Dutch landing page options were discussed. Eventually, two different landing pages were picked and prepared for the tests.

### Corporate Liability - Caretakers

https://www.insify.nl/aansprakelijkheidsverz ekering-zzp/zorg/

On the B version of this landing page the Dutch Headquarters component will be tested.

### Corporate Liability - Generic

https://www.insify.nl/bedrijfsaansprakelijkheidverzekering-avb/

On the B version of this landing page the Customer support component will be tested.

### Dutch Headquarter Corporate liability: Caretakor



### **Customer Support**Corporate liability: Generic



Figure 38: QR-codes of digital test locations

### Significance and test duration

To make sure each test reaches the needed sample size to draw significant conclusions, first the traffic data needs to be aggregated. Below an overview of the baseline conversion rate, the minimum detectable effect and the required sample size are present per test. Directly under the test data, the actual components are shown with their respective placement on the landing page. The left image shows how the component looks on a desktop, and the right-side version shows what the component looks like on mobile.

### **Customer Care Component**

Page: CC data - AVB test

Baseline Conversion rate: 49.5%

Minimum detectable effect: 25% change in

application starts

Sample size per variation: 164 (Relative) -> expected to be reached in 12 days



### Onze experts staan altijd voor je klaar... Afgelopen jaar hielpen we 14.438 klanten

✓ Chat, Whatsapp, bel of stuur ons een mailtje

We zijn bereikbaar tussen 09.00 - 18.00, van maandag tot vrijdag

✓ We spreken Nederlands, Engels, Frans en Duits

â insify.nl

Figure 39: Placement of customer support component on landing page (mobile)

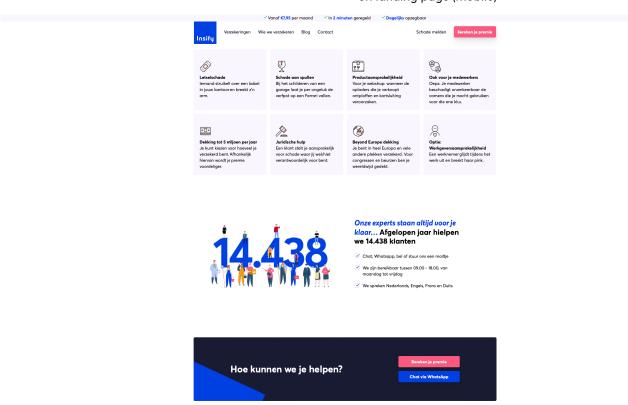


Figure 40: Placement of customer support component on landing page (web)

### **Dutch Headquarters Component**

Page: Dutch HQ - Caretaker Baseline Conversion rate: 50,2%

Minimum detectable effect: 20% change in

application starts

Sample size per variation: 297 (Relative) ->

expected to be reached in 10 days



Figure 41: Placement of customer support component on landing page (mobile)

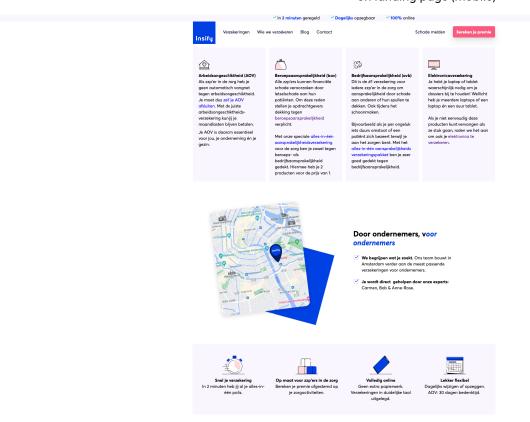


Figure 42:: Placement of Dutch headquarter component on landing page (web)

### 8.2 Test results

The tests ran for a predetermined period, while the results and outcomes were being tracked. The Growth team within Insify is responsible for aggregating the different data points. This same team ensures enough traffic flows through the landing page's A- and B-version. Interim and final results of each running experiment have been presented and discussed in the Growth/Product learnings & testings meeting.

### **Findings**

### **Dutch Headquarters component**

The B variant, including the Dutch Headquarter component, had a 1,69% lower click-through rate than the A variant. Resulting in decreased application start through variant B. Variant B had a 17% lower lead conversion than variant A, resulting in lower number of customer emailadresses through the B variant. The reached sample size per variant was 186 over the course of 14 days.

### **Customer Support component**

The B variant, including the Customer Support component, had a 5,56% lower click-through rate than the A variant. Resulting in decreased application starts through variant B. Variant B had a 47% lower lead conversion than variant A, resulting in lower number of customer emailadresses through the B variant. The reached sample size per variant was 298 over the course of 10 days.

### **Significance**

On a sample size of more than a hundred customers, one or two people clicking through can make a considerable difference in clickthrough rate. In contrast, a conclusion cannot be drawn from only a minor difference in percentage. The Chi-Square test was used to rule out any outcome that could theoretically be expected. This test measures the difference between the observed

and expected outcomes, determining how well the data fits a normal distribution. As the main focus is the clickthrough rate from the landing page to the application start, the total sample size can be seen as the number of trials and the visitors starting the application as successes.

### **Dutch Headquarter**

Variant A (generic) 107 successes /

186 trials

Variant B (new design) 102 successes /

186 trials

It was found that Variant A is not significantly more successful in obtaining clickthrough with a confidency interval of 95%, resulting in a p=0.6

### **Customer Support**

Variant A (generic) 184 successes /

298 trials

Variant B (new design) 168 successes /

298 trials

It was found that Variant A is not significantly more successful in obtaining clickthrough with a confidency interval of 95%, resulting in a p=0.18



Figure 43: Overview of test results

## Strategy building

This project goes beyond Insify's current operations and focuses on designing and developing new trust-building components. It aims to create a future-proof strategy that enables the company to build and sustain trust while capitalizing on upcoming opportunities. Establishing consumer trust is crucial for embracing new technology, so these building blocks are considered in the context of future industry expectations.



### 9.1 Disruption

Insify is a company pushing for change in the insurance industry. In some ways, they can be seen as a disruptor, in others, they attach to and collaborate with existing structures. The insurance and financial sectors were slow in adapting to the introduction of the Internet. Digitalization proved to be difficult for these enormous financial institutions. The transition from a personal conversation regarding risk and insurance solutions, with the insurance advisor, to a digital customer journey, will be challenging.

### Going online

As seen in the customer survey results, only a quarter of all entrepreneurs have made the transition and now apply for insurance directly at the insurer, online. In conclusion, it took almost 30 years, since the emergence of the internet, for companies selling business insurance to convince a fourth of their market to apply directly online. The first Dutch online product transactions happened

around 1995, when Wehkamp introduced (one of) the first Dutch webshops. These early adopters were interested in the technology and took a trust leap by ordering fashion items; products with low financial risk. In 2023, a quarter of entrepreneurs have taken this same trust leap, applying for their insurance online. We are facing a new transition in which the role of artificial intelligence and machine learning will increase.

### **Going Al**

With the introduction of tools such as ChatGPT, consumer expectations are now changing. Where Google used to be the search engine where a query would give a list of results, we now use Al-powered platforms where a prompt results in an action or answer. This generates a better understanding of the capabilities of Al. Many early adopters speculate about the potential of these systems, expecting them to be integrated into daily tasks and activities and thereby

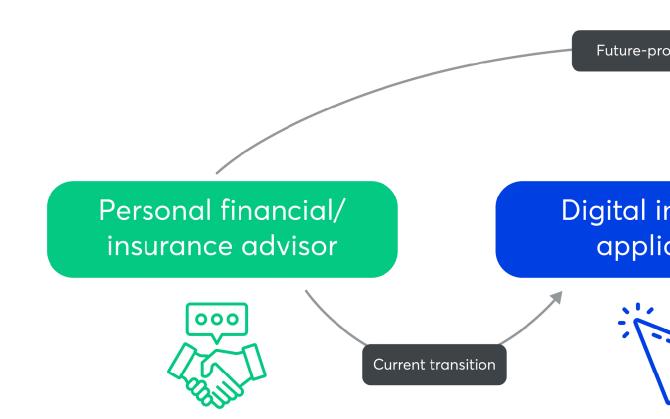
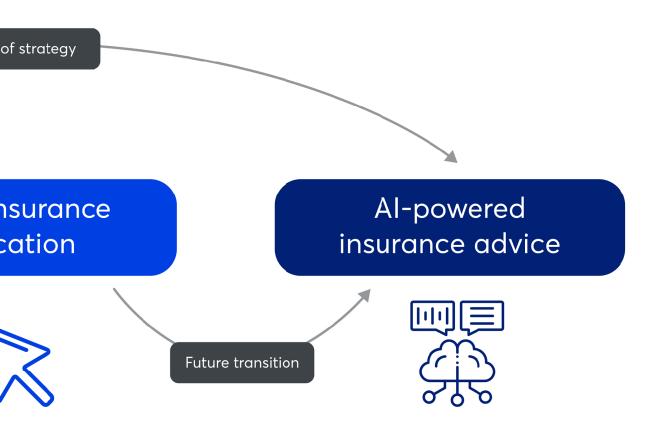


Figure 44: Overview of three phases in Insurance

extending human capabilities. If the current use of ChatGPT is compared to the use of e-commerce in around the year 2000, a comparison can be drawn. The adoption of new technology starts by taking a trust leap with almost no considerable risks. Buying a €20,- shirt at the Wehkamp webshop in 1995, or asking ChatGPT to write a marketing plan for your start-up, both require little commitment. Consumers are getting used to holding conversations with AI chatbots in which they give and receive information. Expecting that the adoption of AI will be faster than the transition to e-commerce, companies will start using AI in their businesses in the coming years. And while the insurance laggards might be busy going digital, Insify can be a step ahead and go Al.

### **Benefits & Drawbacks**

Each of these phases has different advantages and disadvantages. A benefit of a financial advisor is that this person can give a customer tailored advice through a personal conversation. This advisor would also be able to answer any questions during the application process and claims filing. A downside is that this advisor would increase the insurance costs through fees or a salary. The personal conversation became a well-designed questionnaire once insurance went digital. A benefit of this phase is that insurance became faster and less expensive. The downside of insurance with a digital organization can be seen in decreased personal contact. Customers, therefore, have to decide independently without any real advice. The final phase of Al-powered customer contact brings back personal advice and conversations. These points of contact will be different from those with insurance advisors, but they might be able to mimic the effectiveness and clarity of these conversations. A downside of this phase might be that insurers grow even more distant from their customers through Al-powered customer support systems.



### 9.2 Back pocket advisor

It can be challenging to imagine a future in which Al is standardized. That is why a short introduction was written below explaining what services Insify could offer their customers in the coming decades. To go full circle, Leijonhufvud's (1995) imaginary character, Bodo, will time-travel a decade ahead and arrive in the year 2050.

Bodo is a 30-year-old Augmented Reality Architect, designing and developing augmented reality environments, blending the physical and virtual elements to create interactive digital spaces. He started working for an agency, and has recently decided to start his own AR business. Being self-employed has always been a dream of his, building and growing a business. When he thought about starting his own business, he entered his financial assistance environment called Finsify.

Upon logging in to the platform, Katy, his virtual assistant, asks him how she can be of service. While putting on his VR goggles, Bodo tells her about his plans to start his own Augmented Reality business in which he will design environments for commercial businesses. Katy, who is now not only a voice but also a hyperrealistic avatar, reacts empathically and asks him questions about the initial investments for the creation of this company. Bodo explains that he already knows of potential clients and roughly sketches out his business plan. Katy, gives options regarding how he could finance the company and the necessary production equipment together with sales and distribution channels. Katy helps Bodo apply directly for a business license and is accepted within seconds. Katy advises which business loan would be most fitting for Bodo at this stage. Bodo chooses one, and Katy directly calculates the interest rates and defines other charges based on the risk assessment of Bodo's finances. When the contract is virtually signed, the loan is provided, and Bodo can acquire his needed equipment

directly. Now, 10 minutes into the conversation, Katy reminds Bodo that he will lose his insurance once he completely quits his current employment. After he inquires about the different options, Katy calculates personalized premiums for each of the most common business insurances. She states the most important inclusions and provides details regarding each policy when asked. Bodo applies for disability and business liability insurance, which are immediately accepted. Bodo is now completely financially prepared to start working as a self-employed Augmented Reality Architect from Monday onwards. As he is going on a short vacation this weekend, before closing Finsify, he asks Katy what is included in his current travel insurance and if he can add his expensive scubadiving gear to the policy. He signs off and informs his employer about resigning.

Bodo has been working as a self-employed AR architect for eleven months. He went on another scuba-diving trip and caught a bad case of decompression sickness. Bodo experienced headaches, had double vision, and had trouble speaking hours after diving. The doctor has prescribed three weeks of rest in a well-ventilated, dark room. This accident and his recovery keep him from working. He informs Katy about the accident and sends over the doctor's assessment of his condition. She can immediately assess this claim on fraud, and as no fraud was detected, Bodo receives the first benefit payment that afternoon.

Having one platform that takes care of a person's finances and insurance, providing financial advice on multiple levels, might be hard to imagine. However, the future is heading toward onestop shops becoming more and more dominant, providing a broad range of products and services under the same brand name. Insify could become an umbrella company for European SMEs.

# 9.3 Trust-building Roadmap

Generally, customer journeys entail all touchpoints a customer might have with a business or company, scoring the experience on a vertical axis and the chronological order of these experiences on a horizontal axis. As this project mainly focuses on trust-building, the focus of these specific customer journeys should be on the trust-building experience of each touchpoint. This section will describe the customer journey of Insify customers over the next 10 years, focusing on how Insify can best provide customer needs in the near and distant future. The complete overview or roadmap has been divided into three sections to do so. Each section describes the future scenario through a trustbuilding journey, presents a new value proposition and goal, and explains which actions are essential in this phase.

#### **Future vision**

Roadmaps always need a destination; therefore, a future vision is developed. These visions describe what the goal of a business might be. A second look at Insify's BHAG might be helpful to build a future vision: "By 2031, Insify will be the biggest SME insurer in Europe". This BHAG shows that Insify wants to increase in size, meaning that they want to service a majority of European entrepreneurs in the coming 8 years. Insify's challenges could be overcome by building and maintaining a trusting customer relationship. Next to that, Insify is a tech company using its tech expertise to build fitting digital solutions. Therefore an appropriate future vision could be:

"Making Insify a leader in consumer trust-building by adapting to and incorporating innovative technologies."

#### Strategic roadmap

This chapter presents a roadmap to help work towards the above-described future vision. The said roadmap aims to improve the overall process of becoming even more user-centric as a company. To do so, the three horizons are described as follows:

Horizon 1, 2025: Tailored to you

Horizon 2, 2028: Enabling clients

Horizon 3, 2033: 24/7 Insurer

On the following page, the complete roadmap can be seen, outlining not online the tangible actions but also the more strategic actions which help build expertise and capabilities. Insify can use this roadmap to help discuss future scenarios and assign tasks and actions to adapt to the challenges that might arise with the further transition towards A.I.-powered businesses.

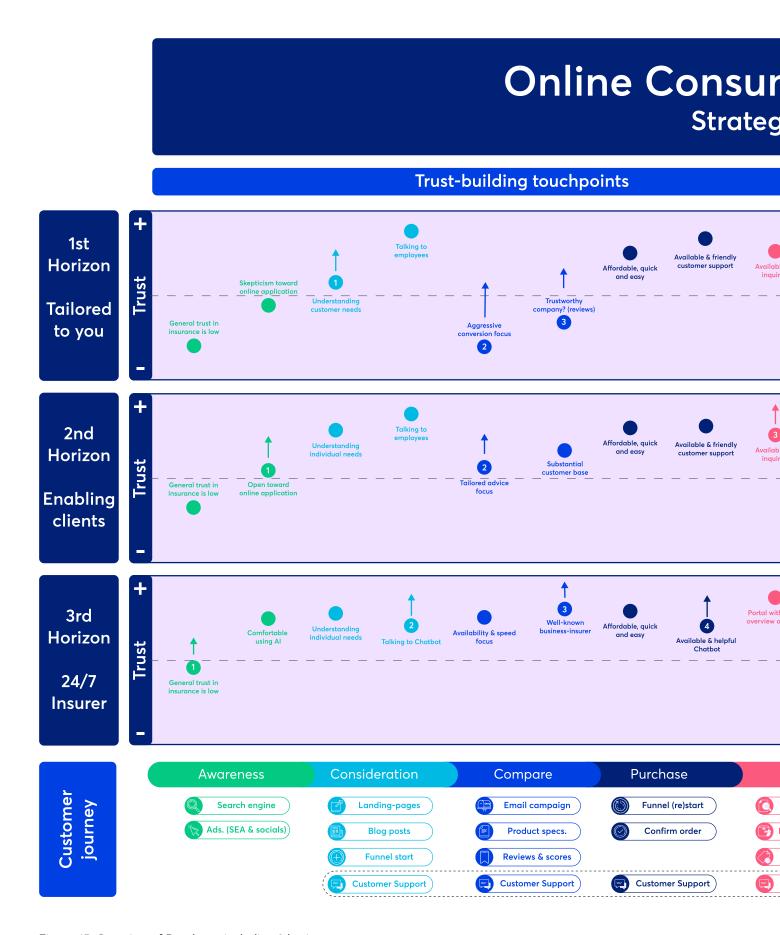


Figure 45: Overview of Roadmap including 3 horizons

# 2025

# ner Trust-building ic Roadmap

#### **Tangible Actions**

#### **Strategic Actions**

#### **Value Proposition**



### Tailor landing pages even more to a specific showing their needs

and industry use cases

Use "claims stories" in

marketing through

testimonials. Try to

boost TrustPilot and

Google review scores

Decrease intensity of drip campaign. Focus more on advice, and less on a direct push for conversion

Implement data

scraping tech to offer

personal insurance

proposals to customers

My Insify Start user research into most valuable features of the platform and expand capabilities

#### Chatbot - A.I.

Start aggregating data from customer support chats and points of contact.

#### Data scraping

Hire data scraping experts and define the multiple use cases for automated proposals

#### Tailored to you



Through the utalization of more specific data the complete customer journey becomes more tailored. The focus lies on the personal advice and the customizable points of contact.



#### Start promoting the full potential and advantages of Alpowered business practices and services

options within the

product/service portal

such as My-Insify.

Focus in customer contact on availability and quality of service and advice

Offer the option to have

Insify make automatic

adjustments to policy

based on observed

business changes

#### My Insify

Implement new features increasing self-service of the platform, and gather user feedback

#### Chatbot - A.I.

Define application and claims process use cases to design chatbot parameters

#### Data scraping

Implement data scraping automation process and gather user feedback on the proposals

#### Enabling clients (\*\*\*)



By making the overall product more selfserviceable the customer is empowered and feels trusted in making little adjustments or inquering about simple policy in- or exclusions.

#### Setting the example of an approachable, quick and honest insurer, will help the industry become more trusted

Through the expansion

of expertise and

customer base, Insify

becomes a household

name in insuring

A chatbot needs a proper introduction to help customers adjust to this new channel of support and contact

A chatbot needs a

proper introduction to

help customers adjust

to this new channel of

support and contact

Implement a chatbot for both application and back-office customer support

#### Chatbot - A.I.

Continuously improve the effectivity and overall experience of the chatbot

#### **Expand services**

Start discussing the most suitable new insurance or finance sectors to enter in the next years

#### 24/7 Insurer



Insify will become the insurer that can be reached 24/7 answering any question in the most objective yet personal manner through the use of Al-powered customer support.

Automatic Pay-as-you-live policy adjustments

#### Service

Policy questions

Mid-term adjusting

Customer Support

Making Insify a leader in consumer trust-building by adapting to and incorporating innovative technologies

#### **Future Vision**



# 9.4 Next steps

The roadmap on the pages before clarifies that there is still a long way to go in becoming the trusting and ever-available digital insurer. At the same time, this roadmap provides subgoals that present a title and direct focus for each of the phases. These phases differ in time increment between two, three, and five years. The first horizon is set in 2025 and revolves around tailoring the product and the overall journey to each consumer. The second and third horizons are set in the next five and ten years. This section will mainly focus on the steps that can be taken in the coming years to live up to set goals or actions in all three horizons. The following three topics will function as the starting points which can be worked on in the coming months:

#### Present use-cases

As the customer base is expanding and the number of verticals (target groups) that Insify can service is also growing, they are building claims handling capabilities. While there is more knowledge about what customers want, the data regarding the actual use cases and claims are also expanding. Therefore the dots need to be connected; Insify should start presenting personal and tailored use cases to each target group. This can be done by developing their own testimonial and review platform where potential customers can read up on the customer experiences of entrepreneurs with similar professions or businesses.

#### **Expanding My-Insify**

While My-Insify has only been live for a few months, it has already proved it's value for users. In the French market, it mainly serves as a platform for downloading insurance documentation. However, as the product offering expands, so should the options within this platform. By engaging in customer research, the most valuable future functionality of My-Insify can be defined.

Through this qualitative research, the possibilities and experiences with "self-serving" can be analyzed. This will help define what customers feel comfortable with and which functionalities might be most suitable to prioritize.

#### Training a Chatbot

Building an AI-powered chatbot is a lengthy process involving many different disciplines. Therefore Insify should start by gathering the much-needed customer support data which can help train the AI. Next to that, it is crucial to consider ethics and regulations while developing the technology. While the availability, fast response times, and objective advice are all USPs, the ethical downsides of AI use in insurance should be identified and managed while starting the developments within Insify.

# **Summary Chapter 9: Strategy building**

The aim is to create a future-proof strategy that builds and sustains trust while capitalizing on upcoming opportunities. Insify recognizes the importance of establishing consumer trust in embracing new technology and considers the future expectations of the industry.

Currently, only a quarter of entrepreneurs have transitioned to applying for insurance online, further demonstrating the challenges in the digitalization of the insurance sector. The next transition, introducing Al-powered tools like ChatGPT, has changed consumer expectations, paving the way for integrating Al into daily tasks. Insify can leverage Al advancements to stay ahead while other insurance companies are still going digital.

A roadmap is presented to build and maintain trust, divided into three sections spanning the next 10 years. Each section describes the customer journey and proposes actions for achieving trust-building goals. A future vision is outlined, aiming to make Insify a leader in consumer trust-building through innovative technology adoption. The roadmap is divided into three horizons: 2025, 2028, and 2033. Each horizon has specific goals and actions to improve user-centricity and enhance capabilities. These include expanding product offerings, implementing Al-powered chatbots, strengthening partnerships, and becoming an industry thought leader.

The next steps involve presenting more personalized use-cases to the different target groups, expanding the functionality of the My-Insify platform, and training an Al-powered chatbot while considering ethical considerations and regulations. Overall, Insify aims to become a trusted and digitally advanced insurer, providing a comprehensive range of financial and insurance services to European SMEs.

# Discussion

The discussion summarizes and interprets findings from this research project which revolves around enhancing consumer trust in Insify. The chapter summarizes the project results, interpretations, and limitations of the research findings and concludes with recommendations.

# 10.1 Recap

At the start of this project, the questions revolved around the challenge or challenges Insify was facing as a starting insurance company in a market full of big corporate insurance brands. Insify wants to disrupt and aims for a digital product, leading the Dutch insurance sector's digitalization. This digitalization of business insurance, a traditionally physical affair, combined with Insify's size, small customer base, and low brand recognition levels, creates a growth challenge for the company. It was expected that conversion and clickthrough rates could grow by incorporating suitable trust-building components. Information trust-building components has been gathered through a literature review, desk research, expert interviews, and customer surveys. Multiple trust indicators have been conceptualized, and three have been developed into components to be tested on Insify's landing pages. The results of these tests indicate that the components did not significantly contribute to an increase or decrease in clickthrough or conversion rates.

#### Research question:

"How can consumer trust in Insify be improved in order to increase the conversion rate?"

Going back to the main research question, no direct design flowing from this research can be used and implemented with the effect of consumer trust in Insify. Although the insignificant test results might not provide a satisfying conclusion to a design project, the steps and analysis that went into the design and development of the tested components have generated valuable insights.

Through desk research, it has been found that trust-building is a very complex process which has become more difficult through the introduction of E-commerce. While Insify is a fully digital company, it is important to consider the survey results

indicating that customers value the personal contact of customer support highly. Customers who call to confirm that they are now insured exemplify a group willing to build online trust with Insify, but still need confirmation and guidance throughout the application journey.

Furthermore, the expert interviews revealed that many designers find social media a significant contributor to the trustworthiness of a business. The analysis of these interviews showed that almost everyone has had bad experiences in E-commerce and has developed their own process of online trust-building. The definition of "trust indicators" varied greatly from person to person, but common ground lay in the fact that they are components in a trust-building journey.

The customer survey revealed that entrepreneurs discuss insurance options mainly with other business owners in their network, enforcing the value and importance of word-of-mouth within the sector. The survey supports that insurance is decided upon and generally purchased within a two week time-frame. This qualitative analysis further supports that less than half of all Dutch entrepreneurs possess disability insurance, and almost half apply for insurance via an advisor. As stated above, the trust-indicator scores identified the importance of customer support and product specifications.

While the test results present the objective outcome of the design phase, the roadmap reveals a more subjective approach, which Insify could address in the (near) future to build consumer trust. The strategic section introduces the possibilities of Al-powered insurance in the coming years while comparing this upcoming transition to the digitalization that is currently underway.

# 10.2 Interpretation

The expectations when initiating this project concerned finding a solution to the supposed trust-building challenges Insify was facing. It has become apparent through the test results that this project has been unable to define a clear answer or solution to the main research question. The research and design steps do, however, present other findings or topics, which are interpreted below:

#### **Trust Indicators**

While the hypotheses of this project revolved around the guest for the most effective trust indicator for Insify, the process has also revealed a lot about the definition of trust indicators. Trust indicators are the same basis upon which some deceptive designs (Brignull, 2010) are based. At the same time, deceptive designs have caused skepticism in E-commerce to rise and, therefore, the importance of trust indicators to increase. The restructuring of trust indicators was based on the initially proposed trend categories regarding online trust by Bauman and Bachman (2017). While they were mainly concerned with literature trends, their division into technical and social factors helped rethink trust indicators' value. After reviewing many different indicators, it became clear that trust flows, just like customer journeys, revolve around touchpoints, making trust indicators the building blocks for consumer trust.

#### **Expert Interviews**

The information asymmetry Akerlof (1970) described also became visible in the expert interviews. The results from these interviews demonstrated that many designers experienced projects in which a complex product is sold to consumers with less knowledge of the said product. This is almost always the case as a selling party knows more about the acquiring party in a business transaction, but the products are very

complex in insurance. This causes an even more significant information asymmetry in the business insurance sector, and this asymmetry is why many entrepreneurs would rather insure themselves via advisors or brokers. This could also be the cause for the relatively low consumer trust score in the insurance industry. The same correlation can be seen between the anonymous nature of the Internet, described by Wang and Emurian (2005), and the bad experiences that interviewees have had buying products online. The described focus on the business representation through websites and, therefore, digital, textual, and visual components is still at play as Insify involves itself with precisely these forms of digital and, therefore, anonymous representation.

#### **Customer Survey**

The results of the survey indicate that business insurance customers value the insurance premium and coverage higher than the insurer they are doing business with. Smeltzer (1997) found that trust or mistrust in a buyer-supplier relationship occurs due to three concepts of knowledge: identity, image, and reputation. Where Smeltzer states that consumer trust is mainly built upon the more brand-related characteristics, this thesis indicates that the consumers find the actual content of the insurance, or its price, to be more important in the transactions. These survey results indicate perceived customer importance to be a different measuring factor compared to the other sources of trust building. The actual source of trust in this online transaction is hard to define, making it difficult to measure the causing factors of consumer trust. Where Chen & Dhillon (2003) argue that there are three trust dimensions (competence, integrity and benevolence), the analysis of customer survey results indicates that trust can be built throughout the journey. Boiling the nature or goal of trust indicators down to competence, integrity, and benevolence is, therefore, a simplified approach to determining trust in the digital space.

#### Rethinking the Trust Leap

The visual approach to structure the definition of trust by Botsman (2016) has further helped to rethink the topic. The context of insurers can be evaluated through her description of The Known, The Unkown, and the "sea" of Uncertainty. The analogy of an insurance company as a trampoline might be more fitting than initially thought. An insurer helps customers get back on their feet whenever they "fall". The trust leap is taken whenever an entrepreneur acts upon the fact that he or she is becoming risk aware. This also indicates that insurers should always manage moments of uncertainty, both as an entrepreneur in search of insurance as well as a customer in need of being financially supported after an incident.

#### **Trust-building strategies**

While the upcoming disruptive transitions within the insurance sector have been described by IBM (2015), focusing on the benefits of AI, it seems like many insurers are mainly focusing on the first transition, digitalization. The expectations of "pay-as-you-live" premiums (McKinsey, 2021) are great; therefore, insurers should start developing the needed capabilities early. Where Covid-19 has increased digitalization in the sector, the introduction of widely available AI tools has increased customer expectations. It is expected that funnels, such as application processes will become conversations once more as AI-powered virtual insurance advisors become readily available.

#### **Trust Journeys**

Consumer trust is a measure that goes beyond conversion and is based upon personal relationships. Creating a space where customers feel comfortable and attended to is crucial in building this relationship. The case study of an insurer at the forefront of digitalization has shown that developing practical trust-building components is incredibly difficult. Even though customers can indicate a high value to overlooked trust indicators, it does not directly mean that the digital representation of these indicators works wonders and boost consumer trust. Therefore the value of this project lies in the notion that incorporating trust-building components in the general customer journey could open up how designers frame customers and their experiences. Building trusting relationships with consumers should become the primary goal of every customer journey design. Each touchpoint does not only involve a positive or negative experience, but it should address the trust-building potential of the said interaction.

# 10.3 Limitations

Many limiting factors were encountered throughout the project, both during the research and design phases. These limitations include multiple topics, which are addressed in the section below:

#### Broad scope vs. specific case

The general topic of the research focuses on online consumer trust, which is a very important but also a broad topic. Consumer trust and the introduction of the Internet have been researched, whereas the more case-specific topics, such as InsurTech, are less extensively described. It has become apparent that some topics are very case-specific, making it difficult to generalize the research findings. The nature of insurance products relates more to other financial products. The pace at which financial institutions digitalize has been described as "too slow for consumers" (The Financial Brand, 2022), further endorsing the difficulty in generalizing the case findings from within an extraordinary industry.

#### Sample group representation

During the project, both qualitative and quantitative research has been conducted. Reflecting on the expert interviews, it becomes clear that the number of interviewees is relatively low; six experts have been interviewed. Although theoretical saturation arose quickly, the interviewees' expertise range was broad, ranging from growth consultant to brand manager. This broad range of expertise helped explore different topics, but only half of all interviewees occupied themselves with UX design practices. Therefore this participant group might not fully represent UX design in general.

Next, the customer survey had a participant sample size of 27 entrepreneurs, a relatively small group. The participants were relatively young compared to the Dutch average age distribution among entrepreneurs. The sample group is, therefore, only partially representative of Dutch entrepreneurs.

#### Translation from indicator to component

Trust indicators were at the core of this project, being the topic of interest during the interviews and the main subject of the customer survey. These trust indicators were verbally described to the participants, and therefore required some level of imagination before scoring the perceived importance of these indicators. Similar translation happened after the indicators were used as design directions in the Development section of this thesis. A design might be based upon a trust indicator but could represent different values for different website visitors, making it hard to attribute one specific trust indicator to a component. Going from textual descriptions to visual components proved difficult when designs needed to be turned into Contentful components which could be published on the landing pages. The concept of each trust indicator went through multiple translations, making them prone to be misinterpreted.

#### A confined testing environment

After the components were designed and published, it became apparent that Insify runs many different tests simultaneously. This made it challenging to run extensive tests on multiple landing pages. Two different landing page slots were available for the component tests. When setting up the tests it became clear that the effect of this singular component change on a landing page of twenty could be minor. The component was placed under "the fold", meaning visitors had to scroll down to see and experience the component. Therefore, the small size of the component and location on the landing page were limiting factors. After the test results came in, another limitation was encountered in the strongly varying traffic data. Some days traffic was greater than others, and as the overall traffic size was hundreds of visitors, each visitor's behavior greatly impacted the overall test results.

#### A second round of qualitative research

A second qualitative research phase in which the component designs were discussed and tested with actual entrepreneurs could have proven more relevant to this research. These conversations or sessions would generate more in-depth feedback regarding the consumer perception of the multiple components. This could help determine which aspects of the components would be most effective in building consumer trust. Currently, the test has provided little to no insight into how consumers perceive the trust indicator components, limiting the number of component improvements identified through these quantitative tests.

#### **Measuring trust**

One of the most significant challenges of this project was defining and using a precise method to measure consumer trust. In the first section, during the interview, experiences were discussed, and therefore, the mentioning of specific trust indicators was used to measure their importance or effectiveness. During the quantitative research, participants were asked to score the importance of trust indicators. This results in perceived customer importance, which is different from the actual causing factors of consumer trust. While the test was mainly concerned with conversion rates, using different measurements or data that could represent consumer trust more closely remains difficult.

# 10.4 Recommendations

As the results of this project have been interpreted and limitations have been presented, a few points where findings can be implemented are discussed in the section below. The section starts by presenting the recommendations for Insify, after which more general recommendations are proposed. The section concludes by presenting multiple topics and directions for future research.

#### Insify

The insurance company, which has been studied as a case example, has a tremendous drive to provide the most fitting insurance solutions for entrepreneurs. A diverse team is working on a wide range of challenges, making Insify a dynamic company.

Although many processes go very well, some improvement points have been identified. Insify is committed to providing customers with the best support they can offer. Through user interviews, many customers are spoken with, but at the same time, only a few testimonials or use cases are externally presented. As a company dealing with risk and emotions of fear, it is crucial to show and tell how customers not only experience the application process but also how claims are handled.

Insify is conducting many experiments with regard to landing pages and email campaigns. What was noticed when setting up the A/B tests for this thesis project was the scale of these experiments. In some cases, the changes were relatively small, resulting in almost no visible change for visitors. A/B tests need to have much resemblance between different variants, but radically different variants might also help boost the learnings related to customers and their preferences.

#### **Financial industries**

Some recommendations do not only apply to Insify but could be addressed in a broader, more general sense. Therefore, the points below are recommended for sections of the financial industry.

The point regarding information asymmetry, first introduced by Akerlof (1970), might be most visible in the financial industry. Banks and insurers sell very complex products, financial and insurance advisors profit from this complexity as they translate complexity into clarity and personal advice for each of their customers. While translating software such as Google Translate has enabled individuals to understand most written foreign languages, translating complex policies into clear language is more challenging. Companies like Bung and Insify try to overtake the former advisors' clarifying role by applying good UX. However, not every information asymmetry can be overcome through good design. Sometimes a reassuring conversation is needed to clear the air. Therefore, financial organizations should focus more on conversations and less on funnels. Questionnaires will never be able to fulfill the need for personal contact.

As described in this thesis, the financial industry was relatively slow in the adoption of digital services. Furthermore, we see a second wave of technological disruption heading toward us, and the sector should prepare and adapt to that upcoming transition. Artificial intelligence might be even more disruptive than the introduction of the Internet. Therefore, companies should extensively research Al applications. Where banks and insurers have been slow in digitalizing, they can be at the forefront of Al adoption, providing superfast, objective and tailored responses throughout all customer contact.

#### **Future research**

Throughout the project, many crossroads have been encountered where decisions have been made to stick to the scope as closely as possible. These specific moments have helped in identifying the multiple opportunities for future research. Some of these topics and directions are described in the section below

One topic that has been at the core of this research is the measuring of consumer trust. Different methods have been used, although they all need to approximate consumer trust more closely. It is an emotion that does not explicitly relate to a specific behavior, making it difficult to measure consumer trust, especially online. More research could be conducted into the different trust measurement types and further define the most effective and accurate methods to do so digitally.

Research into the different types and uses of trust indicators is outdated, reaching back to the early days of the Internet. Because the digital landscape is evolving fast, it becomes increasingly important to continue research into existing trust indicators while exploring innovative ways to build consumer trust through new channels.

The uses of artificial intelligence have been researched extensively. While AI is a very commonly used term, creating a clear set of tools that can help develop AI capabilities and expertise is still challenging. Making AI more available yet comprehensible for businesses could be a great research topic. Research would address the implementation of AI and the ethical constraints of this technology when operationally used within a commercial business.

# **Summary Chapter 10: Discussion**

The project aimed to improve consumer trust in Insify in order to increase conversion rates. However, the tests conducted on trust-building components did not show a significant impact on clickthrough or conversion rates. Despite this, the research process provided valuable insights into trust indicators and their role in building consumer trust. The study revealed that trust-building is a complex process, and customers highly value personal contact with customer support. The survey results highlighted the importance of customer support and the value customers place on insurance coverage and price. The study recommends that Insify focus on showcasing customer testimonials and use cases, conduct more extensive A/B testing, and prioritize conversations over application starts in order to build trusting relationships with consumers.

#### Interpretation

While the project did not provide a straightforward solution to improving consumer trust in Insify, it shed light on the definition and importance of trust indicators. Trust indicators were found to be the building blocks of consumer trust and played a role in the complex process of trust-building. Expert interviews revealed the information asymmetry in the insurance industry and the impact of bad online experiences on consumer trust. The study suggests rethinking the concept of trust throughout the customer journey. An interesting analogy of insurers is "the trampoline" which helps customers bounce back from uncertainties. It also emphasizes the need for insurers to focus on Alpowered insurance and the upcoming transition in the industry.

#### Limitations

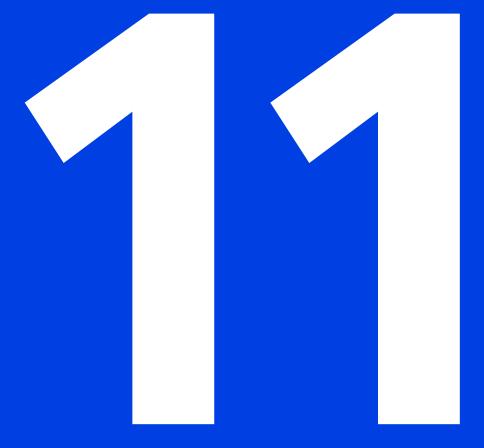
Several limitations were encountered during the research and design phases of the project. The broad scope of the research made it difficult to generalize the findings. The sample groups used in the qualitative and quantitative research were relatively small and might not fully represent the UX designers and entrepreneurs. Translating trust indicators into visual components and the confined testing environment posed challenges in accurately measuring consumer trust. Defining and measuring trust itself proved to be a significant challenge. The lack of a second round of qualitative research limited the understanding of consumer perception of trust indicator components.

#### Recommendations:

For Insify, the study recommends showcasing customer testimonials and use cases to instill trust in potential customers. Conducting more extensive A/B testing with significant variations and prioritizing conversations over conversion can help gain insights into customer preferences. In a broader sense, the financial industry should focus on conversations and personal contact to overcome information asymmetry. The industry should also prepare for the upcoming transition to AI. Future research should explore topics such as the evolving role of trust indicators.

# Concluding the project

The chapter summarizes the findings of the completed research. The first section is a conclusion, which is followed by a personal reflection. In this reflection, the author describes his process and experience during the project.



# 11.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research project aimed to enhance consumer trust in Insify, a starting insurance company in a competitive market. The project utilized a combination of literature review, expert interviews, and customer surveys to gather information on trust indicators and their impact on conversion rates. The central question for this research was as follows:

# "How can consumer trust in Insify be improved in order to increase the conversion rate?"

The subquestions revolved around the definition, use, and effect of trust indicators in both E-commerce and the business insurance industry. Through research, multiple trust indicators were identified as valuable and therefore used as input for the components which were tested on Insify's landing pages. While the results of the tests on trust-building components did not show a significant increase or decrease in clickthrough or conversion rates, the research process generated valuable insights and findings.

The research findings shed light on the complexity of trust-building in the digital age, particularly in the insurance sector. It was discovered that customers value personal contact and support, despite Insify being a fully digital company. This corresponded with the percentage of Insify customers and potential customers reaching out to support via phone, email, or chat. The importance of word-of-

mouth and recommendations from other business owners within the sector was also highlighted through the survey findings. Moreover, interviews with UX designers revealed that companies attribute great significance to social media and expect these channels to play an essential role in establishing the trustworthiness of a business. Entrepreneurs deemed the availability of social media profiles to be less critical in their insurance application process.

The customer survey further emphasized the significance of insurance premiums and coverage for business insurance customers. It indicated that customers prioritize these factors over the specific insurer they do business with. The results also suggested that trust-building is a multifaceted process that extends beyond competence, integrity, and benevolence. Interview findings indicated that trust journeys consist of touchpoints through which trust can be built and maintained, which points towards a more connected set of trust indicators that are deployed throughout all levels of a customer journey.

The research project had certain limitations, including the broad scope of the topic and the specificity of the case study. The sample groups in the expert interviews and customer survey were relatively small and may not fully represent the entire UX design field or the Dutch entrepreneur population, respectively. The translation of trust

indicators into design components also posed challenges as the perception of an indicator, and it's goal can differ between customers. The confined testing environment and the difficulty of measuring consumer trust were also limiting factors.

Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations can be made. For Insify, it is suggested to focus on showcasing customer testimonials and use cases to demonstrate the positive experience of the smooth application process and their claims handling abilities. The company should also consider conducting A/B tests with more significant variations to gain a better understanding of customer preferences.

In a broader sense, the financial industry should recognize the impact of information asymmetry and the need for personal conversations to build trust. Financial organizations should prioritize conversations over application starts and questionnaires to address customers' desire for personal contact. Additionally, the industry should pay attention to the upcoming disruptive transitions, such as the integration of Al, and develop the necessary capabilities early on. The rise of Al could also prove to be of great benefit in this transition towards personalized conversations and objective advice from financial organizations.

In conclusion, this research project provided valuable insights into trust-building in the digital age, particularly in the insurance sector. While the specific design components tested did not show a significant impact on conversion rates, the research process contributed to a deeper understanding of trust indicators and their role in consumer trust. The recommendations provided can auide Insify and the financial industry in their efforts to enhance consumer trust and improve the overall customer journey. Further research is encouraged to explore these topics in more depth and address the limitations identified in this project. Building trusting relationships with consumers should remain a primary goal for every customer journey design, with a focus on addressing the trustbuilding potential of each touchpoint.

# 11.2 Personal reflection

After a project of this size and duration, reflecting on the process, my way of working and the overall experience is always valuable. As this project was conducted under the roof of a company I had with before, it was a deliberate choice to immerse myself in the world of insuring. I did not only return to Insify because of my interest in the complex nature of insurance products but also because of the organizational dynamics and openness of the company.

#### Motivation

While in search of graduation opportunities, I was looking for projects that revolved around complex challenges that involved consumers. Since my bachelor's at IDE I have been interested in communication design and the different effects communication have on consumer behavior. I found that Insify sells very rational products to consumers dealing with more emotive uncertainties, which interested me deeply. The concept of trust and consumer trust arose quickly after discussing the project direction with peers. In these same conversations, people often asked me why I wanted to conduct my design-focused graduation within an insurance company. I always enjoyed explaining the complex and contradicting nature of insuring while also addressing the noble mission Insify is pursuing.

#### Scoping

Insify allowed me to take a step back and bring a fresh perspective to their product proposition. One of the first challenges I ran into was the broad scoping of my project. On the one hand, I was conducting a case study, while on the other hand, I aimed to find the "holy grail" among all trust indicators. This difficulty in distinguishing the "crucial" from the "interesting" proved to be challenging throughout the entirety of the project. I knew what I was looking for, but some topics

drew me in and got a hold of me. Gladly Anton and Christina were always there during check-ins to help me distinguish between what should be done and what could be done.

#### Working individually

The greatest challenge of all was working individually. During my bachelor, master, and extracurricular projects I have almost always teams, often multidisciplinary. Working together with others always gives me a tremendous amount of energy. During this project I went through the complete double diamond, individually, which was a new experience. I noticed that I work structured and always try to argue personal decisions. During the initial phase, I enjoyed the expert interviews, where interesting topics were discussed in a critical manner. What I did miss throughout other sections was the critical discussion with peers or teammates, during which others express their opinions, and some form of co-creation is necessary. This challenge was discussed during the midterm, and the level of collaboration within Insify increased during the second phase where the tests were conducted.

#### Dealing with insignificant results

After the final results, it became clear that my designs did not generate the expected effect. Although at first, it felt like a great setback, I soon realized that I learned a lot during the process. My expertise on trust and trust indicators had grown tremendously, enabling me to connect some other dots I encountered along the way. While I struggled to conclude this project without significant test results, I enjoyed crafting a future strategy for the company. The designing of this roadmap really opened some doors for me and helped me in structuring all the thoughts I had during this project.

#### Jack of all trades?

During my studies, I sometimes felt as if I had scratched the surface of many different skill sets. During projects, it became clear that every designer develops their expertise. During my masters I finally found which skills were mine to deploy and use, and I found that most of them revolved around teamwork, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving. This project has therefore been demanding in the sense that I had to go beyond what I was comfortable with and work on tasks which I had little experience with. I am proud that I have gone through interviews, surveys, data analysis, and visualization, reframing and restructuring phases and finally developed a strategy that concludes an in-depth analysis of the topic I aimed to understand.

#### Learning ambitions

I am writing to reflect on the learning ambitions I formulated in the Design brief which kicked off this project. I managed to keep "nurturing my intrinsic motivation" throughout the project while staying focused proved to be difficult from time to time. The good time management ambition has been partially met, as during some phases, I lost track of time and needed some push to help me keep progressing. Prioritizing my tasks while keeping the big picture in mind was occasionally challenging,

but I managed to structure my tasks and keep an overview of what I was doing. I think I managed to prepare meetings professionally, allowing for good communication during these check-ins and more formal meetings.

Overall I learned a lot about myself, my skill set, and the role I like to take on in future projects. I want to thank you for reading my entire thesis.

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# 13. Appendix

- A The Design Brief
- B Interview Guide (Dutch & English)
- C Transcript Analysis
- D Customer Survey
- E Competitive audit



#### Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

#### A Strategy for the Use of Trust Indicators in Digital Insuring project title

Please state the title of your graduation project (above) and the start date and end date (below). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project.

start date 13 - 02 - 2023 end date

#### **INTRODUCTION\*\***

Please describe, the context of your project, and address the main stakeholders (interests) within this context in a concise yet complete manner. Who are involved, what do they value and how do they currently operate within the given context? What are the main opportunities and limitations you are currently aware of (cultural- and social norms, resources (time, money,...), technology, ...).

Insify is an insurtech company founded in 2020 with the mission to make business insurance easier, fairer and more transparent. They want to get rid of endless (paper) registration forms, incomprehensible conditions and expensive meetings with insurance agents. The company has demonstrated the potential of their business model and therefore raised €15M during their series A, in February 2022. Currently, they are expanding and improving their line of insurance products. They have just launched their own disability insurance and have expanded their services to Germany. Anton Lunshof, product manager at Insify, will be guiding me throughout the project. He has been working in the insurance industry for about a decade and now leads Insify's disability product.

Insuring is a business of buying and selling risks, in which premiums are paid by the client and financial damages are reimbursed by the insurer. This financial exchange can be seen as a two-sided trust exchange. First, the insured has to trust that the insurance company will pay the indemnity promptly in the case the casualty actually occurs at some time in the future. Second, the insurance company has to trust that the insured, once the premium is paid, does not act to raise the risk of the casualty by adopting riskier behavior. Thirdly, the insurance company has to trust that the insured is honest about the (financial) details of the casualty once it takes place. The research of this graduation project will focus on the first exchange of trust, the confidence a consumer or insured has in the insurer.

Consumers are starting to search for and buy insurances online, but at what costs? Is there a downside to insuring yourself or your business at an entity that merely exists online? And how do insurers differentiate when personal contact and service is minimized to online click-through-menus and questionnaires? Currently, Insify tries to evoke a sense of trustworthiness through communicating their Trust-Pilot score, a 4.7, on their website. This is an example of a trust indicator; elements that are often displayed on websites to help customers feel more secure in their decision to back a specific business or buy a specific product or service. Other examples of these trust indicators or signals are:

- 1) Guarantees, such as refund and return policies
- 2) Social proof, such as testimonials from customers
- 3) Association with, such as well-known brands and logo's in a client list
- 4) Membership, such as a chamber of commerce membership.

And this list goes on with contact details, social media profiles, reviews and scores.

The essence of this project is to determine what the effect of each of these trust indicators is on conversion rate and the consumer's trust in the context of online insuring. Evoking feelings of trust are an expected driver of business and returning business. Trust used to be an interpersonal process, where it now has become institutionalized. Where we used to do business with people we know, we now do business online, where a firm handshake or a personal conversation are not always possible. This broader context of online trust is something that this research might be able to touch upon.

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IDE TU Delft - E&SA Department /// Graduation project brief & study overview /// 2018-01 v30

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Initials & Name HKJ de Vries

Student number 4550633

Title of Project A Strategy for the Use of Trust Indicators in Digital Insuring

# **TU**Delft

#### Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

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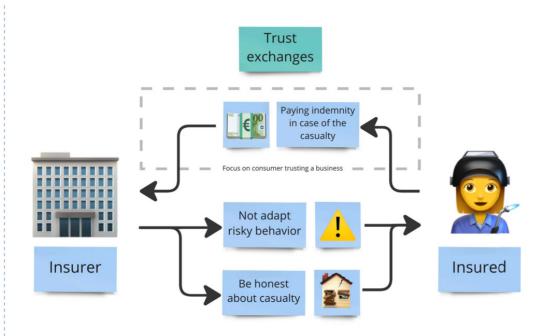


image / figure 1: Overview of trust exchanges between insurer and insured

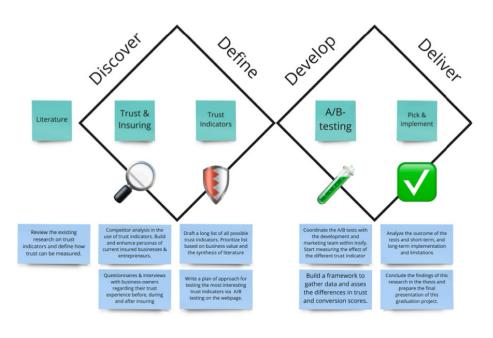


image / figure 2: Double Diamond project approach for this graduation project

IDE TU Delft - E&SA Department /// Graduation project brief  $\,$  \$\text{study overview /// 2018-01 v30} \)

Page 4 of 7

Initials & Name HKJ de Vries

Student number 4550633

Title of Project A Strategy for the Use of Trust Indicators in Digital Insuring

# **T**UDelft

#### Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

#### PROBLEM DEFINITION \*\*

Limit and define the scope and solution space of your project to one that is manageable within one Master Graduation Project of 30 EC (= 20 full time weeks or 100 working days) and clearly indicate what issue(s) should be addressed in this project.

Financial institutions have entered the online marketplace and are becoming more and more digitally focused. This digitalization has proven to be an effective method to increase the efficiency for insurance companies. But it is obvious that the transition also causes certain business aspects to become redundant. In this case, the personal contact with your insurance agent shrunk down to an online questionnaire. Consumers can therefore become more skeptical towards online products, which can lead to feelings of doubt. Next to that, online fraud is something many consumers get to experience. Critical consumers will therefore be careful when searching for financial products such as (business) insurances.

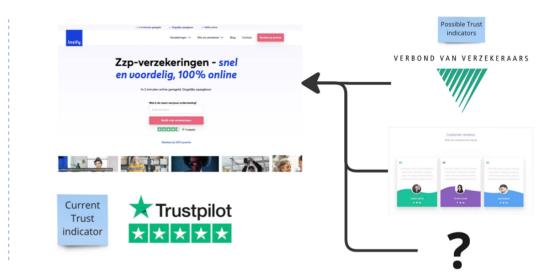
Insurance companies are trying to find out how they can evoke feelings of trust within potential customers. Consumers are making use of multiple different sources they deem trustworthy, such as ratings, quality marks and testimonials. These are a few of the trust indicators we can define, but it is expected that there are many more indicators that can be analyzed. The current effects of the usage of these indicators has not been measured in relation to the conversion rate and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the problem definition can be defined as follows:

"Consumers are searching and comparing insurances online and are expected to be greatly influenced by trust indicators. Currently, there is no real strategy when it comes to the usage of these indicators to the insurers' advantage within the context of insurtech businesses such as Insify."

#### **ASSIGNMENT\*\***

State in 2 or 3 sentences what you are going to research, design, create and / or generate, that will solve (part of) the issue(s) pointed out in "problem definition". Then illustrate this assignment by indicating what kind of solution you expect and / or aim to deliver, for instance: a product, a product-service combination, a strategy illustrated through product or product-service combination ideas, ... . In case of a Specialisation and/or Annotation, make sure the assignment reflects this/these.

Within this graduation project, a strategy for the use of trust indicators in the context of online (business) insuring will be defined. Guidelines for the use of these trust indicators will be designed to increase both conversion and consumer trust.



IDE TU Delft - E&SA Department /// Graduation project brief & study overview /// 2018-01 v30

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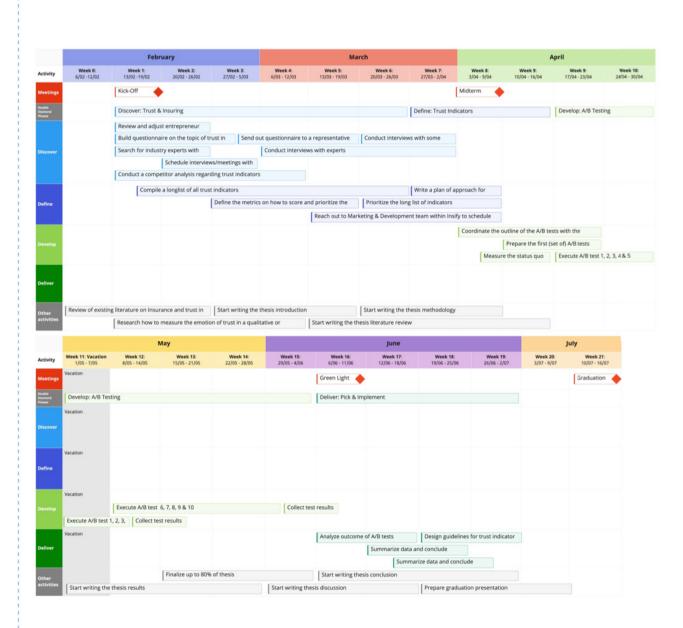
#### Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

#### **PLANNING AND APPROACH\*\***

Include a Gantt Chart (replace the example below - more examples can be found in Manual 2) that shows the different phases of your project, deliverables you have in mind, meetings, and how you plan to spend your time. Please note that all activities should fit within the given net time of 30 EC = 20 full time weeks or 100 working days, and your planning should include a kick-off meeting, mid-term meeting, green light meeting and graduation ceremony. Illustrate your Gantt Chart by, for instance, explaining your approach, and please indicate periods of part-time activities and/or periods of not spending time on your graduation project, if any, for instance because of holidays or parallel activities.

start date 13 - 02 - 2023

14- 07 - 2023 end date



# **TU**Delft

#### Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

#### **MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL AMBITIONS**

Explain why you set up this project, what competences you want to prove and learn. For example: acquired competences from your MSc programme, the elective semester, extra-curricular activities (etc.) and point out the competences you have yet developed. Optionally, describe which personal learning ambitions you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project, such as: in depth knowledge a on specific subject, broadening your competences or experimenting with a specific tool and/or methodology, .... Stick to no more than five ambitions.

Since my customer experience internship within Insify I started to develop an interest in the insuring industry. During this internship, I got to talk to a lot of customers and businesses looking for insurances. This gave me and Insify many insights regarding service improvements. It became clear that people tend to be skeptical towards new companies, especially in the financial sector. During my time within Insify I saw the company grow from seven to almost fifteen employees. My responsibilities grew, and I felt like I was really contributing, like everyone was. After leaving the company, I started my M.Sc. Strategic Product Design, during which I learned how design skills can be deployed to strategically solve complex issues. I felt there is still a lot to learn about consumer behavior, especially in the digital environment. Therefore, I reached out to Ernst Moorman, my former internship mentor, and proposed the topic I wanted to research within Insify.

#### Competences I want to prove

Next to my studies in Delft, I have joined multiple student consulting initiatives as a consultant, project manager and board member. Therefore I am confident in saying that I am persistent and see projects through from start to finish. Next to that, I take initiative and remain proactive wile suggesting improvements and solving problems. Through working in many different teams and with students with different study backgrounds, I learned how to effectively collaborate and achieve common goals. I like to build up personal relationships with the people I work with and exhibit respect and understanding while staying professional. Within the consulting projects, I learned how to think analytically and apply logic to solve problems. I learned how to present and verbally communicate with clarity for small and larger groups.

#### Competences I want to learn

Of course, there are many different traits and skills I would still like to learn and develop. I would like to learn to be more detail oriented within projects to ensure there are no surprises or gaps in needed information. Next to that, I want to improve my facilitative communication and effective listening through the interviews I will conduct within this project. Through my dyslexia I have always had a hard time to write concisely and clearly, therefore I would like to improve this when writing my thesis. During this graduation project, I would like to learn to be more result driven by achieving goals in a timely manner. In my studies, I have learned about strategic thinking, but I would like to put it to practice and make sure I focus on the big picture. Next to that, I assure that all goals and objectives are strategically aligned.

#### Learning ambitions I have:

- 1. Good time-management by creating schedules and setting goals
- 2. Staying focused and nurturing my intrinsic motivation
- 3. Prioritizing my tasks through keeping track of the bigger goal
- 4. Strive for excellence by open communication and preparing every meeting professionaly
- 5. Make time to read, not only papers for this graduation but also books

#### **FINAL COMMENTS**

In case your project brief needs final comments, please add any information you think is relevant.

#### Interviewvragen (Nederlands)

Deel 1 Introductie - Functie, team & werkzaamheden

- Kun je me uitleggen met welke werkzaamheden je binnen (bedrijf) bezighoudt?
  Ik wil graag weten hoe de geïnterviewde zijn werkzaamheden beschrijft binnen de organisatie. Hierdoor ga ik de functieomschrijving voorbij en weet ik wat zijn/haar verantwoordelijkheden precies inhouden.
- 2. Uit wie bestaat het UX-team binnen (bedrijf)? En welke verantwoordelijkheden pak jij binnen jullie team op?

Ik wil hier graag te weten komen wie welke functies binnen het team heeft en hoe de geintervieuwde zichzelf verhoud tot de andere teammembers. Zo krijg ik ook te horen wat de verantwoordelijkheden van de geïnterviewde zijn ten opzichte van zijn/haar collega's.

3. Welke uitgangspunten en kernwaarden nemen jullie bij UX ontwerpen in acht? En waarom ligt juist hier de focus op?

Hier wil ik informatie opdoen over de kernwaarden die binnen de UX werkzaamheden van dit bedrijf zijn opgesteld. Zo krijg ik een inkijkje in wat de doelen van UX zijn binnen deze organisatie.

4. Welke rol speelt online vertrouwen binnen de digitale tak van jullie organisatie? Ik probeer hier te zoeken naar de waarde die de organisatie en het UX team hechten aan "online vertrouwen" en hoe dit op hoger vlak doorwerkt in de werkzaamheden en doelstellingen van dit team.

Deel 2 Online vertrouwen - Eigen ervaring

5. Wanneer je het internet gebruikt, hoe belangrijk is vertrouwen dan voor jou? Waarom vind je dat zo?

Hier wil ik de geïnterviewde graag laten nadenken over wat de waarde van vertrouwen is wanneer zij zelf het internet gebruiken voor aankopen. Naast ontwerpers zijn ze ook consumenten en hebben zij ervaringen als gebruiker.

6. Heb je ooit een negatieve ervaring gehad met een online dienst of website die jouw niveau van vertrouwen heeft beïnvloed? Kun je die ervaring beschrijven?

Hierbij wil ik ze laten nadenken over ervaringen met onbetrouwbare sites of bedrijven in het verleden. Doordat ze erop terugkijken kunnen ze mogelijk in veel detail vertellen over deze ervaring en wat het met hen heeft gedaan.

7. Wanneer je een product of service van een nieuw bedrijf overweegt, hoe belangrijk is vertrouwen voor jou en welke factoren beïnvloeden jouw niveau van vertrouwen in dat bedrijf?

Met deze vraag probeer ik de geïnterviewde al meer te laten nadenken over welke concrete (visuele) onderdelen van een website ze tot zich nemen. Daarnaast probeer ik hier duidelijk te krijgen welke componenten specifiek van belang zijn bij nieuwe merken.

8. Hoe onderzoek je doorgaans een bedrijf of een dienst om te bepalen of je het al dan niet vertrouwt, en op welke informatiebronnen vertrouw je?

Hier wil ik duidelijk krijgen of er een bepaald proces is wat ze als consuments en mogelijke klant doorlopen om betrouwbaarheid te onderzoeken. Zo kunnen ze spreken over het bezoeken van bijvoorbeeld review websites om zich mogelijk zekerder en veiliger te voelen in een mogelijke aankoop.

9. Heb je een voorbeeld van een product of service die je onlangs online hebt aangekocht van een onbekende partij? Kun je uitleggen of en hoe je de betrouwbaarheid van deze partij hebt getracht te verifiëren?

Door de geïnterviewde naar een concreet voorbeeld te vragen probeer ik erachter te komen wat er precies voor hen van belang is.

#### Deel 3 Trust Signals - Identificeren & gebruik

10. Hoe zou je het begrip "trust signals" definiëren?

Als UX designers kennen ze hoogstwaarschijnlijk de term trust signals wel, maar toch ben ik benieuwd hoe ze de term definiëren. Dit geeft namelijk ook duidelijkheid over wat hier allemaal onder valt en wat het specifieke doel van een trust signal is voor hen.

11. Ik wil je vragen om een aantal voorbeelden te geven van trust signals. Welke type trust signals kun je hierbij categoriseren?

De vragen uit het vorige deel bouwen op naam een aantal voorbeelden van trust signal componenten en met deze vraag probeer ik dat aantal voorbeelden verder uit te breiden.

12. Wat zijn sommige trust signals die volgens jou te veel worden gebruikt of niet effectief zijn, en waarom denk je dat? En welke trust signals ontbreken juist vaak op websites? Hier probeer ik duidelijk te krijgen welke trust signals ze zelf tegenkomen in hun werk waarvan zijn twijfelen over de effectiviteit. Hierbij gaan de geïnterviewde nadenken over welke trust signals zij zelf beschouwen als overbodig, maar dus ook welke trust signals volgens hen essentieel zijn voor een website.

13. Hoe gebruikt jouw bedrijf trust signals om geloofwaardigheid en vertrouwen op te bouwen bij potentiële klanten?

Dit is eigenlijk de meest essentiële vraag van het interview. Welke trust signals gebruikt hij/zij zelf in zijn (UX design) werk en waarom specifiek die. De antwoorden op deze vraag helpen mij bij het opstellen van een longlist van trust signals, waarbij ik ook direct te weten krijg welke trust signals het populairst zijn bij gebruik.

- 14. Heeft u tijdens uw werkzaamheden bij bedrijven in andere sectoren gebruikgemaakt van verschillende trust signals? Zo ja, welke verschillen in dit gebruik kunt u benoemen? Hier ben ik benieuwd of het gebruik van trust signals afhankelijk is van de sector waar ze in werken. Zo krijg ik al meer een beeld welke trust signals voor verzekeren van belang zijn.
- 15. Hoe meet je de effectiviteit van trust signals in jouw bedrijf, en welke statistieken gebruik je om de impact ervan te volgen?

Mogelijk hebben ze duidelijke argumentatie waarom ze precies de trust signals gebruiken die ze gebruiken, toch ben ik erg benieuwd naar hoe ze de effectiviteit van juist die componenten meten. Voeren ze op dit moment testen uit of hebben ze in het verleden verschillende trust signals getest.

16. Met welke meetbare waarden houd je precies rekening bij het analyseren van de effectiviteit van de verschillende trust signals?

Hier probeer ik duidelijkheid te krijgen over wat de geïnterviewde precies beschouwd als waardevolle meetwaarden om effectiviteit te meten.

#### Deel 4 Toekomst - Trends & aanbevelingen

- 17. Hoe heb je het gebruik van trust signals zien veranderen in de loop der tijd in de sector van jouw bedrijf, en welke factoren hebben bijgedragen aan deze veranderingen? Ik ben hier aan het uitvragen naar verandering in gebruik van trust signals. Zo kan ik mogelijk trends gaan spotten en ook direct de geïnterviewde vanuit het verleden en heden richting de toekomst laten denken.
- 18. Welke rol denk je dat trust signals over 10 jaar gaan spelen? Zal het gebruik van trust signals veranderen in de online context?

Hier wil ik de geïnterviewde prikkelen en laten nadenken over wat er mogelijk gaat veranderen in de komende jaren. Aangezien het een aanname is krijg ik direct wat meer inzicht in hoe de geïnterviewde denkt over de toekomst van de online context.

#### Interview questions (English)

**Demographic Questionnaire** 

Age(range)
Gender (M/F/N-B/self-discribed)
Highest level of education (BSC, MSC, PHD)
Work experience in UX in years
Current title of position
Rate your own experience regarding trust in UX Design (likert scale)

#### Part 1 Introduction - Job, team & activities

- 1. Can you explain to me what work you are involved with within (company)?
- 2. Who does the UX team within (company) consist of? And what responsibilities do you take on within your team?
- 3. What principles and core values do you observe in UX design? And why do you focus on these?
- 4. What role does online trust play within the digital arm of your organization?

#### Part 2 Online trust - Own experience

- 5. When you use the Internet, how important is trust to you? Why do you feel that way?
- 6. Have you ever had a negative experience with an online service or website that affected your level of trust? Can you describe that experience?
- 7. When considering a product or service from a new company, how important is trust to you and what factors influence your level of trust in that company?
- 8. How do you typically research a company or service to determine whether or not you trust it, and what sources of information do you rely on?
- 9. Do you have an example of a product or service you recently purchased online from an unknown party? Can you explain if and how you attempted to verify the trustworthiness of this party?

Hylke de Vries Insify

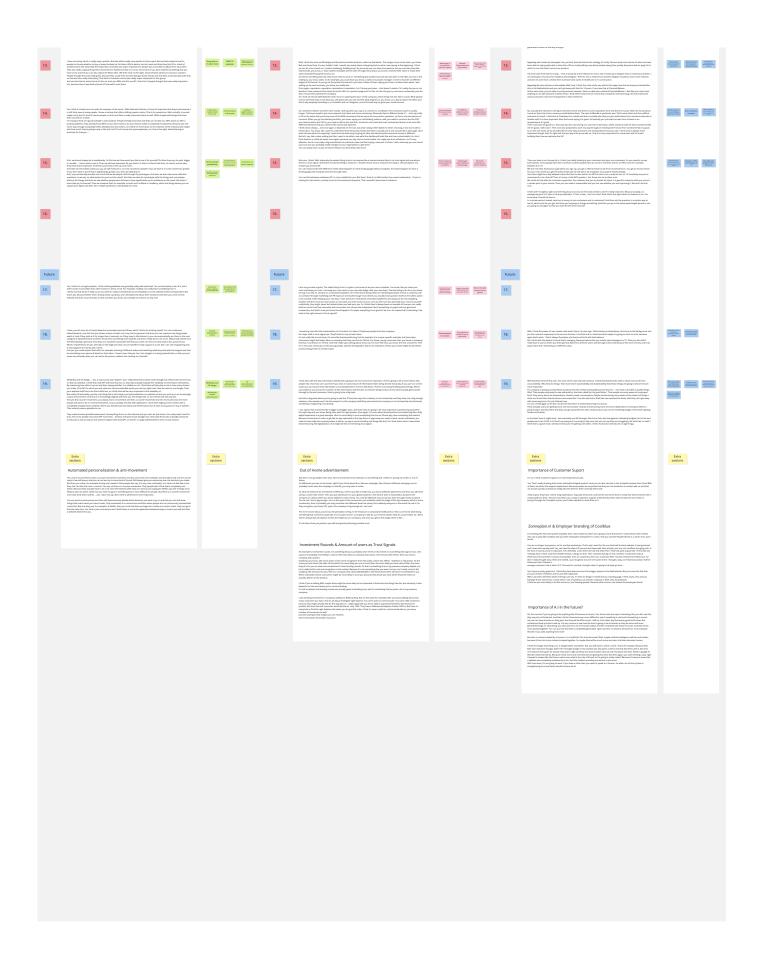
## Part 3 Trust Signals - Identify & Use.

- 10. How would you define the term "trust signals"?
- 11. I would ask you to provide some examples of trust signals. What types of trust signals can you categorize in these?
- 12. What are some trust signals that you think are overused or ineffective, and why do you think so? And just what trust signals are often missing from Web sites?
- 13. How does your company use trust signals to build credibility and trust with potential customers?
- 14. Have you used various trust signals while working at companies in other industries? If so, what differences in this use can you name?
- 15. How do you measure the effectiveness of trust signals in your company, and what metrics do you use to track their impact?
- 16. Exactly what measurable values do you take into account when analyzing the effectiveness of different trust signals?

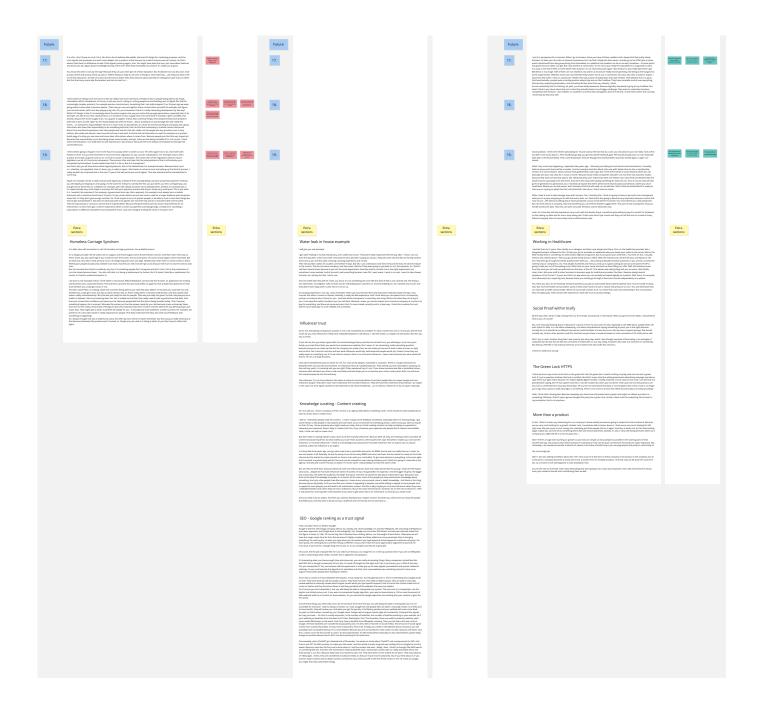
### Part 4 Future - Trends & Recommendations

- 17. How have you seen the use of trust signals change over time in your company's industry, and what factors have contributed to these changes?
- 18. What role do you think trust signals will play in 10 years? Will the use of trust signals change in the online context?













[→ Back to editor **Business Insurance survey** Dear participants, I am inviting you to participate in my graduation research by completing the following survey. The aim of this research is to investigate the brand trust and reputation of online business insurers. The following questionnaire will require approximately 5 minutes to Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. With the consent given by answering this survey, your answers will remain anonymous and will only be used for research purposes. If you have any further questions about the survey, please email  $\ensuremath{\mathsf{me}}\xspace$  : H.K.J.deVries@student.tudelft.nlThank you very much for your time and support! Please start with the survey now by clicking the "Next" button. [→ Back to editor ← Back Just to be sure. Are you actually self-employed? (such as a freelancer or owner of a business) A Yes, I am self-employed B No, I (only) work for an employer Next → [→ Back to editor ← Back **Demographic questions** What is your age? What is your gender? What is the highest level of education you have completed? What is your city of residence? Made with Tally ← Back

# **Business Questions**

How many years have you been se	lf-employed?	
How many employees does your co	ompany have?	
In which industries is your busines	s active?	
Beauty industry & hairdressing	Law enforcement or security	
Business, consultancy or management	Leisure, sport or tourism	
Accountancy, banking or finance	Marketing, advertising or PR	
Charity and voluntary work	Media or digital	
Computing or IT	Property management	
Construction	Public services or administration	
Creative arts or design	Recruitment or HR	_
Energy and utilities	Retail	Made with Ta
Engineering or manufacturing	Sales	
Environment or agriculture	Science or pharmaceuticals	
Healthcare	Social care	
Hospitality (restaurants & events)	Teacher training or education	
Law	Transport or logistics	
Other		

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Insuring introduction	
Which types of the following business insurances do you currently have?	
Disability insurance (Arbeidsongeschiktheidverzekering)	
Business interruption insurance (Bedrijfsschadeverzekering)	
Goods & Inventory insurance (Goederenverzekering)	
Professional liability insurance (Beroepsaansprakelijkheidsverzekering)	
Business liability insurance (Bedrijfsaansprakelijkheidsverzekering)	
Legal assistance insurance (Rechtsbijstandverzekering)	
Absenteeism insurance (Verzuimverzekering)	
Cyber insurance (Cyberverzekering)	
Commercial auto insurance (Zakelijke autoverzekering)	
Other	
Which of the following business insurances would you like to have or add in the coming year?	[→ Back to
Disability insurance (Arbeidsongeschiktheidverzekering)	
Business interruption insurance (Bedrijfsschadeverzekering)	
Goods & Inventory insurance (Goederenverzekering)	
Professional liability insurance (Beroepsaansprakelijkheidsverzekering)	
Business liability insurance (Bedrijfsaansprakelijkheidsverzekering)	
Legal assistance insurance (Rechtsbijstandverzekering)	
Absenteeism insurance (Verzuimverzekering)	
Cyber insurance (Cyberverzekering)	
Commercial auto insurance (Zakelijke autoverzekering)	
Other	
Through which of the following channels do you purchase business insurances?	
Via an insurance advisor or financial advisor	
☐ Via a bank (such as ING or Rabobank)	
☐ Via a professional association (such as MKB Nederland)	
☐ Via a comparison website (such as Independer or Yezzer)	
Applying directly at insurer, online	<b>—</b>
Other	Wade with

How well do you know the fo Allianz		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
AEGON		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
A.S.R. Nederland		
A Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
Centraal Beheer		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
De Goudse Verzekeringen		[→ Back to e
A Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
Insify		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
nterpolis		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
(laverblad Verzekeringen		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
Лovir		
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	I am their (former) customer	
Nationale Nederlanden		<b>▼</b> Made with
Never heard of them	Remember their logo/slogan	
B Seen them before	□ I am their (former) customer	

[→ Back to editor ← Back **Comparing Insurers & Insurances** When looking for new business insurances online, how important are the following factors? You might actually consider a new business insurance at the moment. If not, you can either think back of the moment you were searching for a business insurance, or imagine you are looking for a business insurance. The premium (€)? 7 2 4 NOT IMPORTANT The coverage? [→ Back to editor 2 6 7 1 4 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT The Insurer? 1 2 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT With whom would you discuss different insurance options? No one, I decide it on my own Colleagues within my business Other business owners in my network Family members or close friends Other How long would you take to decide on where you would purchase a business insurance? Made with Tally

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NOT IMPORTANT

## **Comparing Insurers & Insurances**

When looking for new business insurances online, how important are the following components?

VERY IMPORTANT

# Accreditation, awards and certification? Such as: Thuiswinkelwaarborg, Wijzer in geldzaken & KvK number 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

#### A high search engine ranking (SEO)?

NEUTRAL



#### Good review scores?

Such as: Trustpilot scores & Google review scores



## Social media shares/posts from customers?

Such as: Instagram posts & posts in Facebook groups



#### Testimonials from customers on the website?

Such as: videos explaining how other customers experienced the product or service



## The explanation of the companies mission & expertise on the website?

Such as: the mission/why page & blog posts



### A team-page on the website?

Such as: real images of employees and the team



#### A real physical address listed on the website? Such as: the office address or an embedded (Google) maps integration 2 3 4 6 7 1 5 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAI VERY IMPORTANT The availability of social media profiles? Such as: the company's Instagram, Facebook & Twitter page 4 5 Made with Tally [→ Back to editor The company's engagement through social media channels? Such as: posts and reactions from the company on social media 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT Product specifications on the website? Such as: policies and in depth information about the service 2 4 5 6 7 Product personalization options? Such as: being able to adjust what is included and excluded in the policy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT VERY IMPORTANT NEUTRAL A good design and layout of the website? [→ Back to editor Such as: a website that is easy to navigate & is visually pleasing 3 6 7 1 2 4 5 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT A clear and available privacy policy on the website? Such as: statements and information regarding how customers data is managed & protected 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT Easy-to-reach customer support? Such as: good availability of support agents during office hours 2 3 4 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT The presence of a chatbot?

Such as: a bot that can answer Frequently Asked Questions

# The presence of a chatbot? [→ Back to editor Such as: a bot that can answer Frequently Asked Questions 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT Satisfying handling of questions and problems? Such as: quick and clear answers to your questions 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT The possibility to speak with a person/employee? Such as: a phone number you can call to reach support agents 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT Sustainability goals and practices of the insurer? Such as: a sustainable investment portfolio (no fossil fuels) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NOT IMPORTANT NEUTRAL VERY IMPORTANT

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