

DUCKER



# CASE STUDY

## Client Situation/Need:

Ducker was approached by a global supplier of specialized processing equipment and engineered solutions serving critical processing industries such as food & beverage and industrial markets. The client firmly believes that continuous innovation and delivering increased value to customers are vital to advancing competitive differentiation, business growth and success. The early stages of new product development center on the discovery of customers' unmet needs, latent needs, workarounds, and desired business outcomes leading to ideation and potential concepts to consider for development.

Ducker was engaged to build a consistent and repeatable process to implement internally, with the goal of continually feeding the pipeline with innovation ideas and concepts. By adopting a scalable and repeatable process within the client organization, customer-centric innovation and accelerated commercialization become a core competency and ultimately, lead to enhanced market and competitive positioning.

## Ducker Solution:

Ducker has extensive experience in supporting clients with their product development and innovation processes including the earlier stages of discovery and ideation. Ducker also has decades of experience studying end-use market segments and end customers served by the client, providing us with an intimate understanding of the complexities of our client's customer base and market dynamics as well as the credentials to successfully collaborate and coach the client's core team through the research, analysis and adoption process.

Ducker proposed a threefold solution. First, Ducker established a consistent and repeatable discovery research and analytical process and playbook for the client to implement with its customer facing team members. Second, we provided discovery research training for the client's team members who frequently interact and visit with end customers, so they are confident and effective in their ability to observe, assess and analyze customer needs and identify innovation opportunities. Lastly, we supported phases of customer research with on-site, collaborative visits to key customer accounts working side by side with the client's team members.



**Industrial Products Industry**



**New Product Development**



**North America**

## Issue/Opportunity/Challenge

The client holds a leading competitive position underpinned by its reputation for innovative design. To maintain its competitive edge, the client engaged Ducker to develop a New Product Development Playbook, designed to increase its innovation pipeline and accelerate commercialization of new technologies.

# Benefits/Deliverables:

Through close collaboration with client core team members, virtual training conducted by Ducker team, and in-person interviews and exploratory observational research with key client customers, Ducker delivered a New Product Development Playbook with consistent and repeatable discovery research and analytical processes.

The Playbook provided the client with a comprehensive framework and internal competencies for developing innovative ideas and concepts to continually feed the new product development pipeline.

## Observational Research Techniques

When making an in-person visit, look at your surroundings immediately and take notes

Walk Around	Workaround	Office Insights	Interactions	Photo Ops
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask if you could perform a walkaround (if this is part of their daily tech)</li> <li>Use IDI guide to probe where necessary to add to the experience as you are walking around the facility taking note of key findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Example line of questioning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I notice that... is that something you do often or a workaround? Is it something you have trouble with?"</li> <li>"I noticed you had... Is that a problem? Should the component be upright?"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe them in their office (numbers on a white board, ask questions, what metrics are they tracking)</li> <li>Note of any other visuals that prompt questions for walkout on processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask what their typical day looks like, how they are interacting with processing equipment (What types of atypical, uncommon interactions are they experiencing?)</li> <li>Note of any other interactions and how they navigate plant; how the interactions occur</li> <li>Don't be afraid to ask questions regarding anything you observe; does not need to be processing equipment related</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If permitted, take pictures of office and the equipment</li> <li>Video record employees interacting with equipment and note of any interesting findings; these will support the selection process when feeding the NPD pipeline</li> </ul>
<p><b>QUICK TIP</b> — Be sure to observe the customer's natural environment and don't hesitate to ask questions accordingly. Keep a notebook handy to capture notes, observations during the walkaround; this will keep items fresh for the interview afterward.</p>				

Redacted

This is the most important phase in the cycle of feedback

### Closing the loop with Customers

**QUICK TIP** — Use the template on the next slide; feel free to customize the letter to your preference.

## Client Outcomes:

With Ducker's support, the client adopted a proven and repeatable process by which their teams observe, understand, and address existing customer issues and drive customer-focused innovation, leading to accelerated new product development, and increased success of commercialization.

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