
Live Prototyping

A live prototype is a chance to run your solution for a couple weeks out in the real world. Though you've been getting feedback from the people you're designing for all along, a live prototype is one of the most powerful ways to test your solution in the marketplace. Until now, your prototypes have been rough, and they've done only enough to convey the idea you wanted to test. A live prototype, however, gives you a chance to stress test your solution in real-world conditions. It can run from a few days to a few weeks, and is a chance to learn how your solution works in practice. Live prototypes are all about understanding the feasibility and viability of your idea.

STEPS:

1. The first thing to do is to determine what it is you want to test in your live prototype. It could be the way that people find out about your solution or how your service will run or how your distribution model works. For example, will you be running a business out of a kiosk for a week to test a channel strategy?
2. Once you've decided on what you're testing, sort out the logistics of your live prototype. Do you need a physical space, additional staff, uniforms, a permit, or anything else?
3. If you have the capacity, think about running a few live prototypes at once. This will allow you to test a variety of ideas quickly, and see how they work together, which may also be important.
4. Never stop iterating. If something went wrong on Day 1, try a new approach on Day 2. Live prototypes are all about learning quickly iterating on the fly, and pushing your solution closer and closer to the real thing.
5. As always, capture feedback from the people you're designing for.