



USER RESEARCH STRATEGY

A workshop to unlock
brand, product, and business insights

by Farah Al Chammas

My Background

1

Social science undergraduate and postgraduate training at top universities in the US and UK

2

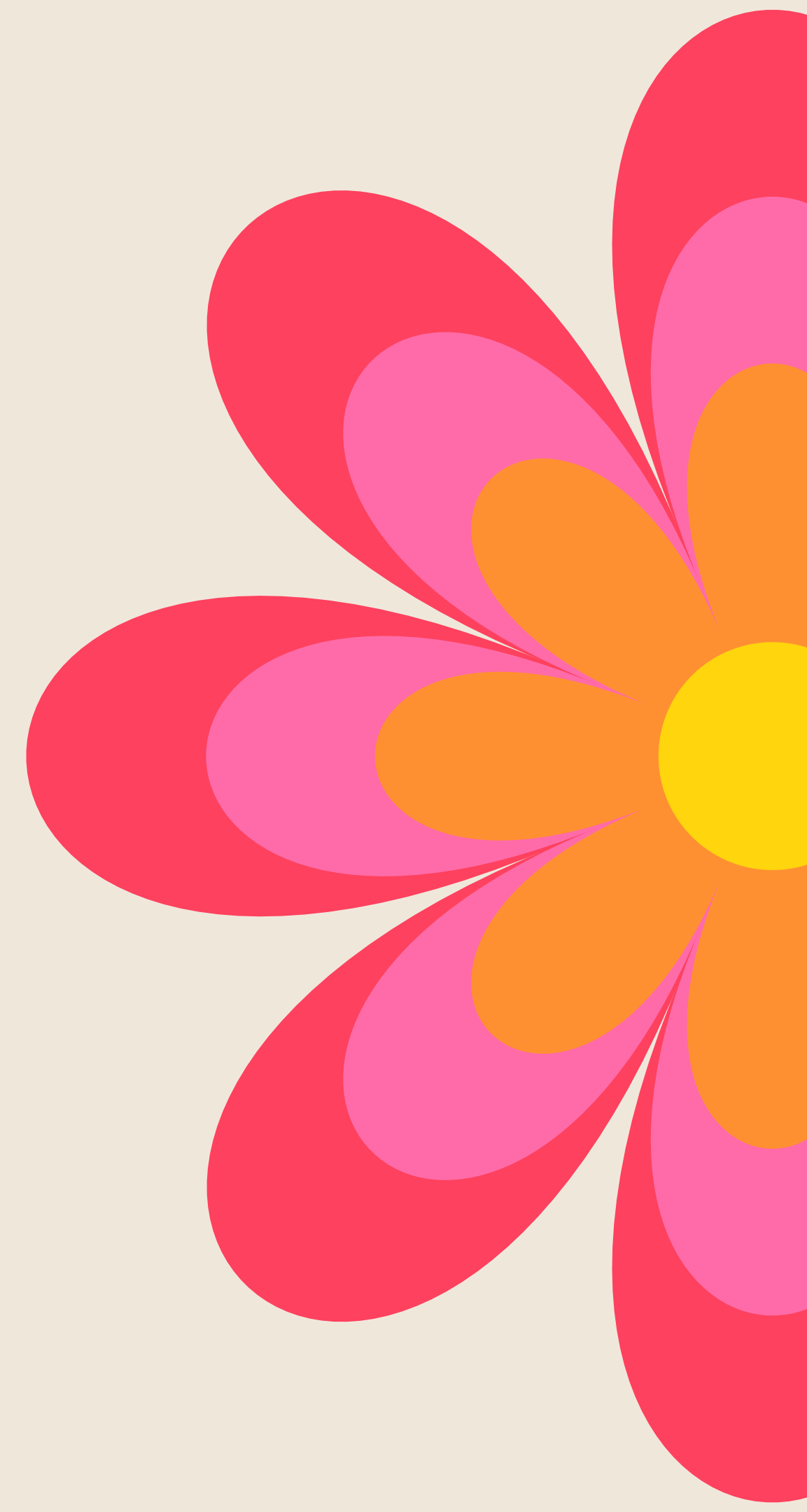
Professional experience in research strategy at an award-winning advertising firm, serving clients such as BMW, Kraft Heinz, Comcast, and more.

3

Professional experience with a boutique NYC-based user research firm, leading with unconventional storytelling-informed research methods.

4

First-hand experience launching tens of surveys for hundreds of users from 16+ countries and leading nearly 100 user interviews while building my most recent company






WHY CONDUCT USER RESEARCH?

Product Market Fit is when a product solves a problem at scale.

In order to reach PMF, a company must learn enough about its target users to understand their specific problems and design and communicate the right solution accordingly.

Tip: If you've set out to solve a problem, you most likely have a hunch about the solution. Allow that hunch to inspire, not inform your research.





TYPES OF RESEARCH:

QUANITATIVE

secondary research, primary surveys

QUALITATIVE

interviews, participant observation, product testing



Quantitative Research pt. 1

Statistical Analyses from the Internet

- When finding studies online:
 - look for articles published in online libraries
 - assess study conductor's qualifications
 - use your own critical thinking to discern validity of results (ex. did something major change in the world since the study was published that would lead to new results today?)
 - look for sample size $>$ or $=$ 30, ideally \sim 100

Quantitative Research pt. 2

Surveys

- When publishing your own surveys:
 - write no more than 20 questions, unless it's a paid survey
 - mix multiple choice and short answer questions
 - start with basic demographic questions to establish an understanding of your user base (ex. age, gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, years of study, occupation, salary, etc.)
 - ask broad questions regarding how the users experience the problem you're solving, where they find solutions, what solutions they are using, how they're experiencing these solutions and what they'd change about them
 - publish your surveys on official research platforms (ex. respondent.io) or other platforms where they'd be discovered by your potential target user

Qualitative Research pt. 1

User Interviews

Exploratory: when looking for solutions to a given problem

- schedule 15-30 min interviews
- ask open-ended questions
- prepare questions ahead but be flexible and let the conversation flow organically
- never reveal your solution or hunch of a solution. Instead of "would you ever use this?", ask "how are you currently solving this problem?"
- let the user dominate the conversation

For Validation: to validate a specific solution in a market

- conduct these interviews with the users who had a lot to say during the exploratory phase of research. Users love it when you say: "We took your feedback and created a product that we'd love to review together."
- get NDAs signed if you're revealing sensitive product info!

Qualitative Research pt. 2

Participant Observation

- hang out where your users hang out
 - social media platforms and forums
 - IRL locations (coffee shops, university spaces, pharmacies, etc -- this depends on what you're looking for)
- observe the dynamics
 - what are your users experiencing in this given environment?
 - who are the key players in this environment?
- look for tension
 - where do you sense discomfort/challenges?
- identify active users and invite them to set up conversations
 - who's the most vocal on your topic?
 - who's the most invested in solving what you're solving?

PRO-TIP 1

Be subtle

Don't necessarily advertise what you're doing as a "user interview." Instead, you can say something along the lines of "I'm looking to have conversations with people who are XYZ."



PRO-TIP 2

Look in non-obvious space.

Think about who your users are in real life and where they hang out. Then go there. Use the products they use. Put yourself in their shoes!

Hinge

PRO-TIP 5

Create the right environment for an interview.

Ask for help from a team member with note-taking or record the conversation in order to allow for active listening. Often times, users share clues for what you need to be asking about.



Fireflies

WHAT NEXT?

- 1 compile your notes, observations, and collected data.
- 2 look for patterns & identify potential errors or response bias.
- 3 solidify key insights.
- 4 ideate potential solutions from your insights & build an MVP (an actual pilot program or simple mockup of a prototype).
- 5 return for more user interview to test and validate your MVP and iterate on your creation.

The background features a vibrant, abstract pattern of wavy, organic shapes in shades of orange and pink. These shapes are layered and curved, creating a sense of movement and depth. The colors are bright and saturated, set against a light, off-white background. The overall aesthetic is modern and energetic.

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**

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THANK YOU!

Now, let's workshop some of your own product cases together!

Question Bank

the following are generic questions that you can customize to any research study

Demographic, behavioral, and psychographic questions:

- Where do they live?
- What do they consumer (eat, drink, wear, read, watch, listen to, etc.)?
- Do they have a routine? What is it like?
- What motivates them?
- What goals are they moving towards?
- What are their desires in life?
- How do they relate to the world around?
- What beliefs do they hold/share?

Understanding their problem:

- What is their real challenge/problem in relation to your company/what you're building?
- What are the direct/indirect causes of this problem?
- What are the consequences of this challenge?
- How does this challenge impact them directly and indirectly?
- What words do they use when describing this problem?
- What feelings do they have when experiencing this problem?
- At what point are they unable to tolerate the problem?

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Finding a solution:

- Where is the user searching for a solution?
- What solution(s) do they need to address this problem?
- What solution(s) are they trying/have they tried?
- Which existing solutions do they love/hate and why?
- How can you product differentiate and innovate to solve the user's problem ?