MAJORCLARITY
Designing Student-Centered Career Pathways that Drive Business Growth
How can a company's design process expand its customer base?

With well over a million students across 23 states, MajorClarity wanted to continue expanding the reach of its unique career and college readiness platform. Designed to offer middle and high school students an interactive learning experience, MajorClarity uses simulations to let students "test drive" different career pathways. In 2020, the company started considering how boosting their design process and adding new pathways could help more students and schools recognize the value of their unique approach to career exploration.

Addressing Customers’ Design Needs

MajorClarity needed a way to
• discover the information students actually want/need to know to make an informed decision about pursuing a certain career.
• understand students’ preconceived notions about different careers, and offer learning experiences to dispel those misconceptions.
• illustrate the product’s value and show why administrators and teachers should use MajorClarity in their schools and classrooms.

Growing MajorClarity’s High-Impact Content Library

MajorClarity partnered with WGU Labs (Labs), utilizing a user-centered design approach to create three new career pathways. This collaboration would allow MajorClarity to surface students’ needs and address them directly in each pathway, extending the product’s appeal to customers.

PATHWAY SELECTION

The MajorClarity and Labs teams engaged in a data-informed brainstorming session, bringing together feedback from students, administrators, teachers, and labor market data to select topics that would resonate with the expressed needs of each customer segment. This process helped MajorClarity prioritize topics to develop, presenting them with a customer-focused technique for selecting the most in-demand pathways.

AUTHENTIC CAREER TEST DRIVES

To build trust and credibility with the schools who would buy MajorClarity’s product, Labs designers interviewed subject matter experts (SME) to develop each pathway, and then tested the content with students. Combining SME insights with the student voice allowed MajorClarity and Labs to craft authentic career test drives that deliberately challenged students’ preconceived notions about different careers. This user-centered approach would offer customers engaging, student-centered learning experiences.
Three New Career Pathways

TEACHING PATHWAY

Students step behind the teacher’s desk and learn that teaching is about much more than just planning and delivering lessons. From crafting activities to fit learners’ needs to reading body language to solve classroom challenges, students get a taste of what it takes to be an effective teacher.

ENTREPRENEUR PATHWAY

Being an entrepreneur is about much more than starting a business—it’s about problem solving and persistence. In this simulation, students learn to think like an entrepreneur as they engage in the entrepreneurial process, building a business from an initial idea and tackling setbacks along the way.

MEDICAL SERVICES PATHWAY

Following a patient’s clinic visit from start to finish, students meet different members of a medical team. As students take on different medical roles and practice their daily tasks, they learn that many roles contribute to a patient’s overall health, while also considering which health careers best fit their interests.
OUTCOMES

Business Development
The new pathways resonate with educators, especially the Teaching pathway, which MajorClarity uses for their sales demos. School Administrators can assess how closely the pathway aligns with teaching experience and envision how students might approach the interaction. From this, administrators have a stronger trust in the efficacy of other pathways, and can be more confident when deciding to procure the system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Ratings (2020-21 School Year)</th>
<th>Number of Ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>3,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services</td>
<td>9,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>7,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>20,550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Engagement and Response
Teachers are not the only ones responding to the new pathways. In the 2020-2021 school year alone, students explored and rated the three new pathways over 20,550 times. The number of ratings indicate that many students are thoughtfully reflecting on if a particular career would be a good fit for them. MajorClarity utilizes these ratings to suggest related careers to students and to understand if they are achieving their mission of helping students explore careers that align with their academic choices.

Product Feature Improvements
Along with the three new pathways, the partnership with Labs gave MajorClarity additional benefits. After listening to students’, designers added elements that helped MajorClarity see the platform with fresh eyes, for example, asking students to reflect on their reactions before scoring their fit with the pathway, to gauge their response deeper than as a gut reaction, and including a digital notebook that persists through their education so they can take and compare notes after they experience new pathways.

For future pathways, MajorClarity adapted the Labs process to use a deliberate, student-centric design framework. As they expand their topics, they can rely on the framework to get through tricky design issues and create more relevant pathways that empower students.

Testimonial
Working with WGU Labs was a great experience - their team and expertise were able to not only develop high quality career exploration test-drives in critical pathways, but also build out a new framework and approach for how to develop future test-drives and improve the overall experience and value for students.

—Joe Belsterling, Founder and CEO of MajorClarity