Discovery workshop
Zimmerman's Country Furniture

Problem

Clients

What are the problems we're trying to solve?

	Identified problems	Impact	Implications
1	Limited Brand Awareness and Market Reach	- Difficulty attracting new customers - Lower sales volume	- Reduced profitability - Inability to compete with larger retailers
2	Difficulty Finding Unique Products	- Customers struggle to find unique, handcrafted furniture - Limited selection compared to mass retailers	- Customer frustration - Lost sales opportunities
3	Lack of Transparency in Customization Process	- Customers unsure of customization options and costs - Difficulty visualizing final product	- Reduced customer confidence - Missed sales due to confusion

Business

What are the problems we're trying to solve?

	Identified problems	Impact	Implications
1	Inefficient Marketing Efforts	- Wasting budget on ineffective marketing channels - Difficulty measuring ROI of marketing campaigns	- Limited return on investment - Inability to target the right audience
2	Difficulty Managing Online Presence	- Inconsistent brand image across online platforms - Limited ability to showcase products and services online	- Lost sales opportunities - Poor customer experience
3	Inefficient Inventory Management	- Difficulty tracking stock levels and managing production - Risk of stockouts or overstocking	- Lost sales - Reduced profitability

What we know and what we don't know

What we know

What do we believe is certain about this situation?

Zimmerman's Country Furniture is a mid-sized furniture retailer located in Bedford, Pennsylvania.	They specialize in handcrafted, high-quality furniture with a focus on customization.	Their estimated annual revenue is $10 million.
They likely have 50-100 employees.	A major challenge they face is limited brand awareness and market reach due to competing with larger furniture chains and online retailers.	Zimmerman's Country Furniture offers unique and personalized furniture options that larger retailers cannot match.
Their customers value quality craftsmanship and may be willing to pay a premium for custom-made pieces.	They likely have a strong reputation in the local community but struggle to reach a wider audience.	

What we don't know

What aspects of this situation are we not certain about?

The details of their current online presence (website, social media presence, etc.).	The software and technologies they currently use to manage their business operations (inventory, customer data, etc.).	How might we use technology to create a seamless online shopping experience that allows customers to browse, customize, and purchase furniture easily

Context and limitations

Context

What additional context should we consider?

Strong reputation for quality and craftsmanship within the local community.	Stakeholders influence decision-making and create a unique company culture.	There is a growing trend towards sustainable furniture production
The company likely has a team of skilled craftspeople who take pride in their work.	Expertise is a valuable asset that distinguishes them from mass furniture retailers.	The sales staff plays a crucial role in the customer experience, providing guidance and expertise during the furniture selection process.
Some of their materials from local suppliers, which can contribute to the community and reduce their environmental footprint.	Furniture delivery is currently limited to the local area surrounding Bedford due to logistical constraints.	While they may have a strong reputation locally, they face competition from larger online furniture retailers who offer a wider selection and potentially lower prices.
Small and mid-sized furniture retailers can be more vulnerable to supply chain disruptions than larger companies.		

Limitations

What decisions and limitations should we consider?

High-quality product photography is essential for online furniture sales, and Zimmerman's does not have the resources to produce professional photos.	Accurately representing the wide range of customization options offered by Zimmerman's could be challenging on a website.	Setting up a secure payment system for online transactions can incur fees.
Shipping large furniture pieces can be expensive, and Zimmerman's may need to factor in these costs when developing their online pricing strategy.	Managing online returns and refunds for custom-made furniture is complex and potentially costly.	Without the in-store experience of seeing and feeling the furniture, there's a risk of online customers being dissatisfied with their purchases.
Implementing an e-commerce solution may require integrating with existing systems for inventory management and customer data, which can be a technical challenge.		

Expectations and metrics

Expected results

How can we visualize a better future for our clients?

	Results	Why is it important	How can we know we succeeded?
1	Increased Brand Awareness & Website Traffic	A wider online presence attracts new customers who may not have been aware of Zimmerman's Country Furniture previously.	Track website traffic metrics like unique visitors, page views, and referral sources. Monitor brand mentions on social media and online reviews.
2	Improved Customer Experience	A user-friendly platform allows customers to browse furniture, customize pieces, and make purchases easily, even if they cannot visit the physical store.	Positive customer feedback on the website and social media. Increased conversion rates (percentage of visitors who make a purchase). Reduced shopping cart abandonment rates.
3	Increased Sales and Revenue	A seamless online platform opens a new sales channel and allows Zimmerman's to reach a wider audience.	Track online sales figures and revenue growth. Monitor average order value.
4	Enhanced Brand Reputation	A positive online experience strengthens Zimmerman's reputation for quality, craftsmanship, and customer service.	Positive customer reviews and online ratings. Increased brand mentions on social media.
5	Improved Operational Efficiency	An e-commerce platform can streamline order processing, inventory management, and customer communication.	Reduced order fulfillment errors. Improved inventory turnover. More efficient allocation of staff resources.

How might we

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Transform the identified problems into how might we questions

How might we leverage social media advertising	How might we develop a user-friendly platform with product discovery	How might we create a personalized customer portal that offers past purchase history, custom order tracking, and design inspiration, fostering customer engagement and loyalty?	How might we implement a transparent lighting customization tool that allows real-time visualization of finishes, fabrics, and configurations, along with instant quotes based on chosen options, to streamline the customization process?	How might we develop a data-driven marketing approach that utilizes a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform to personalize marketing campaigns, track the effectiveness of those campaigns, and optimize budget allocation?
How might we partner with local businesses or influencers who cater to a similar audience to gain exposure and promote Zimmerman's products within the local community?	How might we utilize a cloud-based inventory management system to track stock levels in real-time, optimize production planning, and reduce the risk of stockouts or overstocking, improving operational efficiency?			

Ideas

What are the main ideas on how we can solve these questions?

High-quality product photography and detailed descriptions of their furniture and customization options.	Allow customers to browse, customize, and purchase furniture directly through the website.	Offer virtual consultations. Utilize video conferencing tools to provide remote consultations where customers can discuss their needs and receive personalized advice from Zimmerman's design team.	Develop blog posts, videos, or social media content that showcases the craftsmanship behind their furniture and educates customers about different styles and materials.	Collaborate with local interior designers who can recommend Zimmerman's furniture to their clients.
Host workshops on topics like furniture care, DIY upholstery, or design trends, attracting potential customers and establishing Zimmerman's expertise.	Encourage existing customers to refer friends and family by offering them incentives, such as discounts or store credit.			