

Pattern-finding

USING A DETECTIVE BOARD

Painstorming is the cornerstone of Sales Safari and the 30x500 system for making products that sell. You've learned, practiced, refined & gathered a lot of powerful notes.

Now that you've got all that valuable data... what do you DO with it?

There's a trick to finding patterns that point to potential products... and you're about to learn how.

A **Detective Board** is our term for that crime show cliché: A big whiteboard covered in scraps of paper reflecting the facets and facts of the investigation, typically with a map and strings to connect and place those smaller details in context.

In fiction, it's a prop — but in real life, it's a superpower.

Your Safari Detective Board won't solve a mystery... but it'll give you the:

1. perspective
2. context
3. physical “handholds”

You need to wrap your mind around what you've learned and *play* with it, sort and recombine your findings in new ways, and spot underlying pain patterns you wouldn't otherwise see because you're *too close*.

And when it comes time to outline and scope your actual product?

The board is a power tool!



Alex Hillman and me using the detective board method to create the very first 30x500, circa 2010

What the Safari Detective Board (SDB) gives you

First, of course, you'll get that big picture view you need — and it'll help you uncover patterns and escape the “Oasis Trap,” aka getting stuck on the first “good idea” that you see.

Then, the more you work with the SDB, the more you'll internalize how your audience works, what they need & want, to generate endless ideas for content, marketing, and products — and you can even use those cards to define, design, outline, and track the progress of your product itself.



Make your own SDB

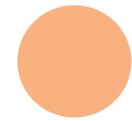
externalize & play with your Safari notes

Creating your first Safari Detective Board is a little bit time consuming, but it's not difficult!

Here's how:

1. Buy some index cards or, if you have a big wall space, sticky notes (magnets for a board)
2. Go through your Safari notes, and gather pain points — especially vivid or repeated ones — from across multiple sessions
3. Write one pain point per card
4. Lay out your cards or stickies in different ways — see them through different *lenses* — and make note of what pops out
5. Wait, let them marinate, and repeat the process

Make your reorganizing and studying as easy and fast as you can, and don't forget to take photos to document your groupings!



Pattern-finding

● Using Lenses & Themes

There are nearly infinite ways to arrange & make meaning from your pain cards, here are four major lenses to get you started:

- ❑ Group by the **FEELING** your audience is experiencing such as doubt, anxiety, annoyance, loss, embarrassment, avoidance, etc.
- ❑ Group by the **CAUSE** of the pain
protip: sometimes there's a difference between the actual cause, and the cause the audience blames!
- ❑ Group by the broader **TOPIC** pains fall into such as “style” vs “structure,” or a specific tool
- ❑ Order pain by the **STAGE** in the user journey where it occurs people in later steps may have struggles, feelings, and questions they didn't have in earlier stages

Group pains by **FEELING**

FEAR/ANXIETY



UNCERTAINTY



FRUSTRATION



AVOIDANCE



BOREDOM



FATIGUE



LOSS



CONFUSION



DISAPPOINTMENT



Group pains by **CAUSE**

LACK OF SKILL



LACK OF KNOWLEDGE



LACK OF FOCUS



LACK OF SUPPORT



LACK OF EXPERIENCE



LACK OF ACCESS



POOR TOOLS



POOR MATERIALS

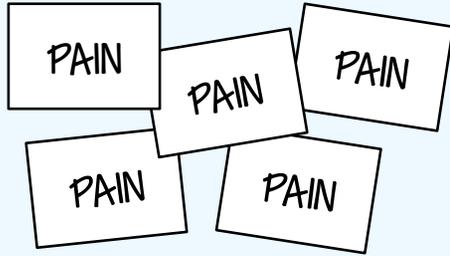


OTHER PEOPLE

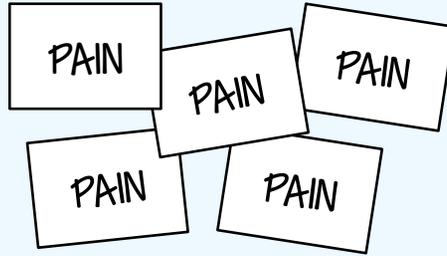


Group pains by **TOPIC/CATEGORY**

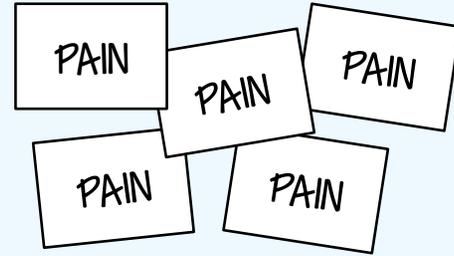
LAYOUT/FLOW



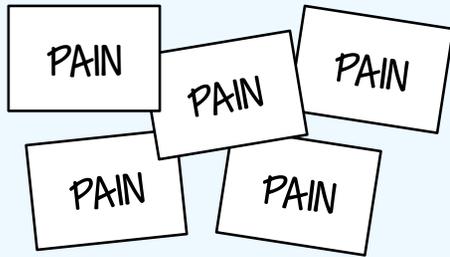
STYLE



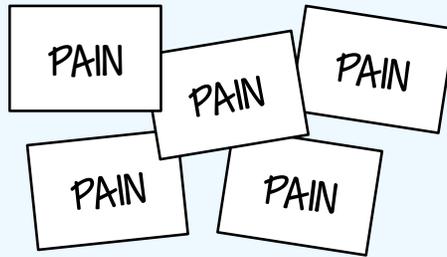
COLORS



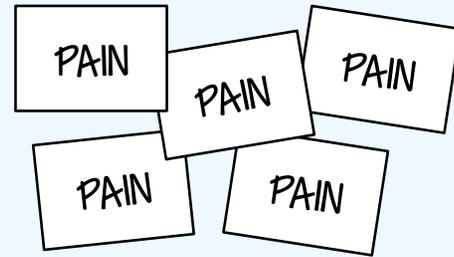
UPHOLSTERY



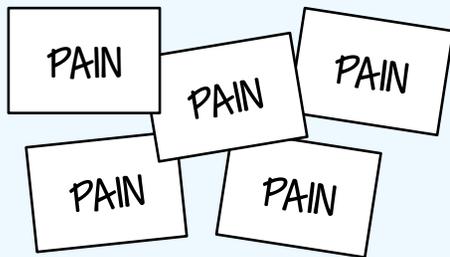
STORAGE



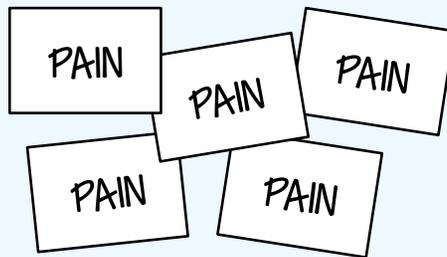
LIGHTING



RUGS



ACCESSORIES



STYLING

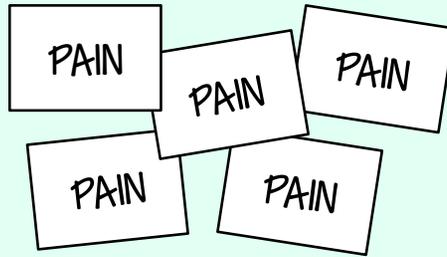


Group pains by **STAGE**

RESEARCH



BRAINSTORMING



CHOOSING



MARKETING



CREATING



FINISHING



PRICING



LAUNCHING



MOMENTUM



ANALYZE YOUR BOARD

what patterns do you see emerging?

- A** What are the most common moods?
- B** What are the big causes? What does your audience think are the causes?
- C** What does your audience care more about... experience or results? Style or substance? Praise or success?
- D** What stages are most difficult? Least difficult?
- E** What topics are most ignored? Or most argued over?
- F** What's missing?
- G** How are things connected? How could they be?

Create infinite ideas!

by surfacing the themes, patterns, rules, & connections

This isn't a hard and fast process that gives you a definitive result — it's an *experience*, a tool you can use to help load the operating system that is your audience's world into *your* brain, so you can interface with them in a way that makes the most sense and creates the most impact.

You can use the Safari Detective Board technique over & over... any time you need to juice your ol' creative engine.

Whenever you need to...

1. Pick a theme or topic or crispy detail for your content marketing, whether it's epic blog posts or tiny tweets
2. Design graphics, downloadables, freebies and tiny products
3. Outline and scope a larger product
4. Design the experience around the product — your site, sales copy, cart flow, onboarding, support, additional features, upsells, downsells, etc.



Pattern-finding

Bundle pains to Create Outcomes (aka product)

