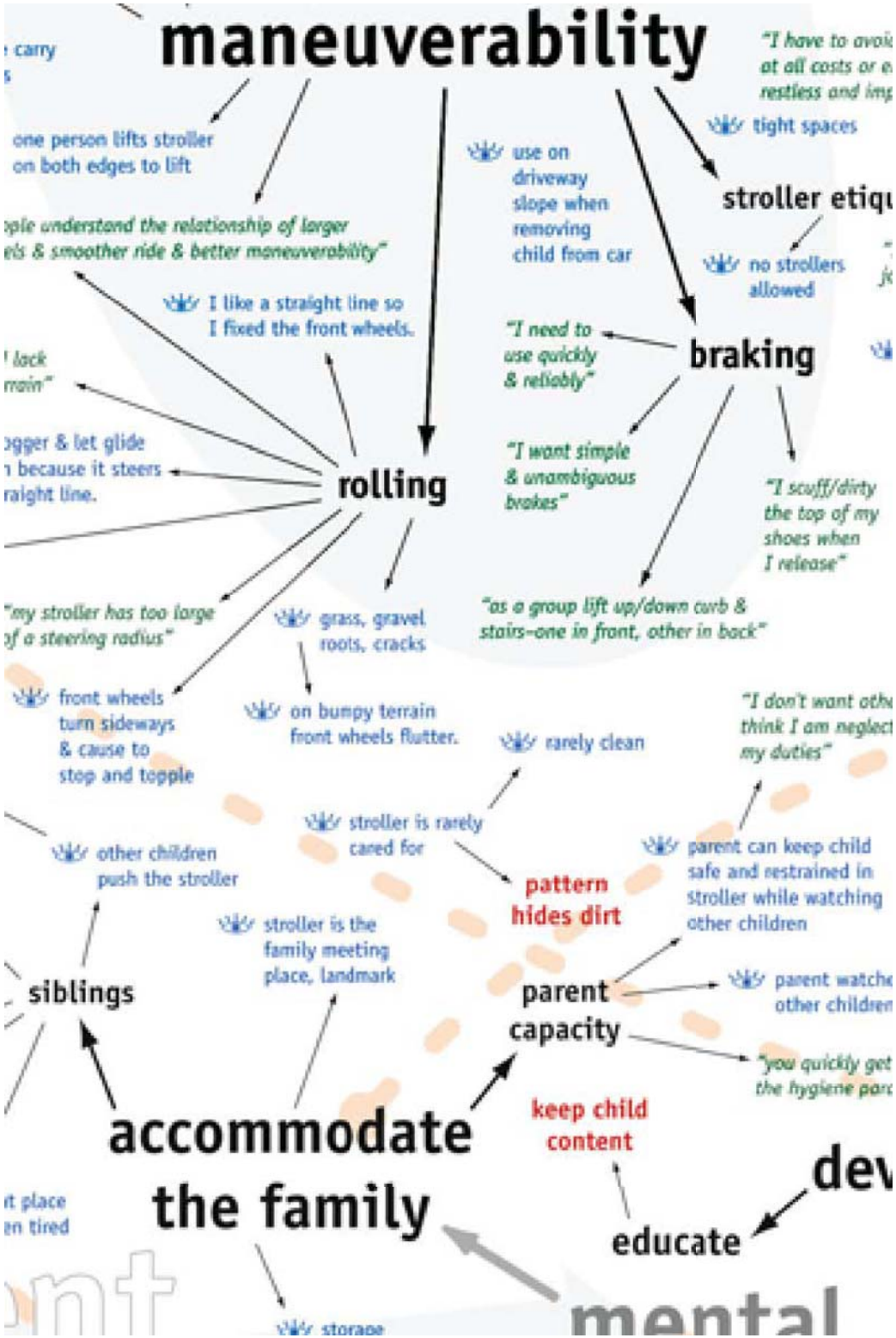
Activity Analysis

HOW: List or represent in detail all tasks, actions, objects, performers, and interactions involved in a process.

WHY: This is a useful way to identify and prioritize which stakeholders to interview as well as which issues to address.

Analyzing the many activities and procedures involved in brushing teeth helped the IDEO team to understand some unanticipated needs and concerns.



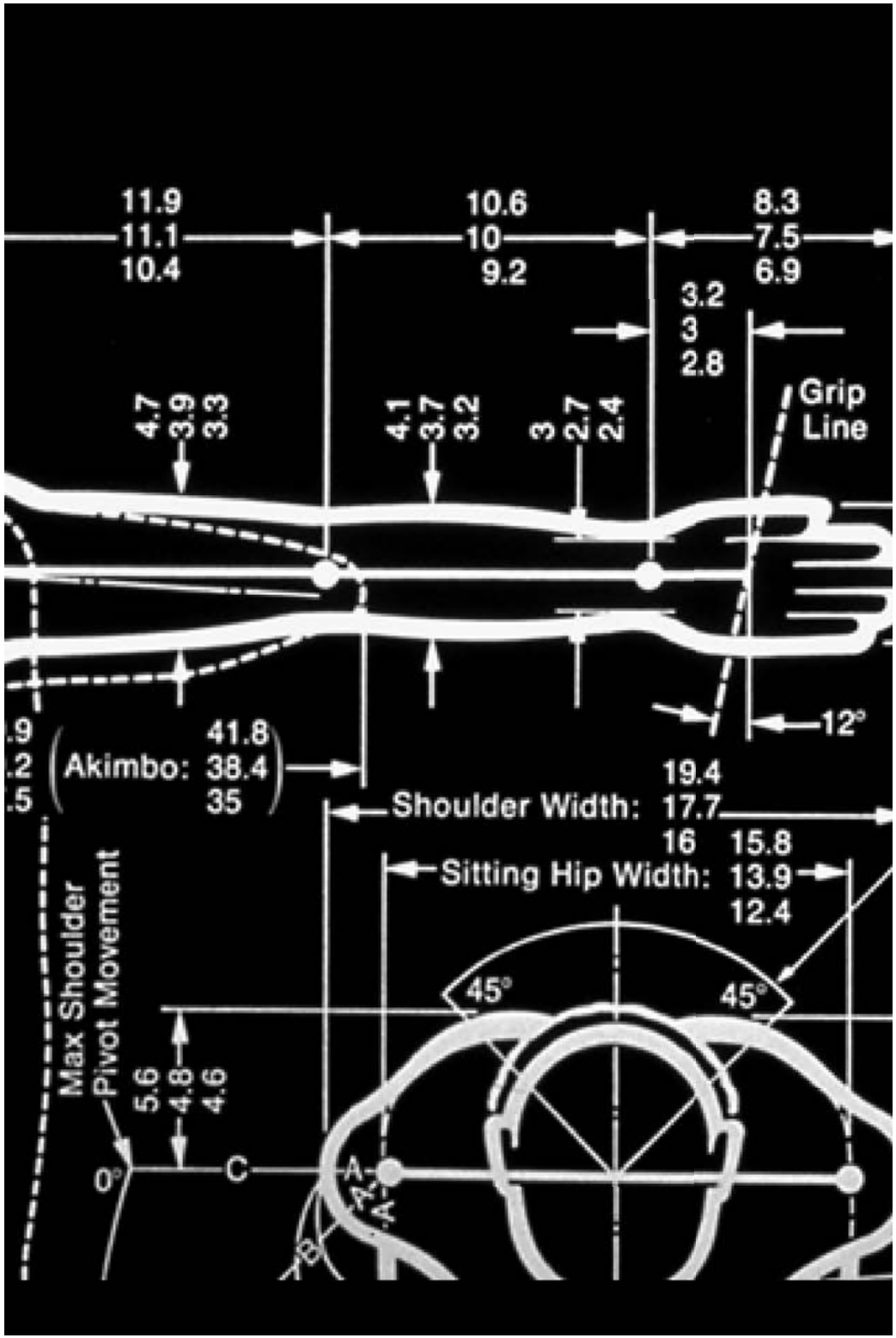
Learn Look Ask Try

Affinity Diagrams

HOW: Cluster design elements according to intuitive relationships such as similarity, dependence, proximity, etc.

WHY: This method is a useful way to identify connections between issues and reveal innovation opportunities.

Clustering the elements related to transporting the family helped the IDEO team to discover some significant opportunities for stroller design.



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Anthropometric Analysis

HOW: Use human population measurement data to check the coverage and suitability of the design solution for the target user group.

WHY: This helps to identify a representative group of people for testing design concepts and evaluating the general usability of product details.

Selecting individuals with hand sizes representative of the population to test prototypes helped IDEO design a computer mouse suitable for general use.

[Chris]

"I wouldn't be caught dead using moisturiser"

"I never buy after shave...I get it for Christmas"

"I read men's magazines sometimes, but I'd never buy one"

"I only really take vitamin C when I've got a cold"

"keeping fit isn't that important to me"

Character Profiles

HOW: Based on observations of real people, develop character profiles to represent archetypes and the details of their behavior or lifestyles.

WHY: This is a useful way to bring a typical customer to life and to communicate the value of different concepts to various target groups.

In order to understand different types of customers and how to target them, IDEO developed four characters for a pharmacy wanting to reach the male beauty-product market.

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Cognitive Task Analysis

HOW: List and summarize all of a user's sensory inputs, decision points, and actions.

WHY: This is good for understanding users' perceptual, attentional, and informational needs and to identify bottlenecks where errors may occur.

Cognitive task analysis helped the IDEO team understand the proximity and disorientation problems that remote-vehicle operators suffered due to the design of their controls.

Competitive Product Survey

HOW: Collect, compare, and conduct evaluations of the product's competition.

WHY: This is a useful way to establish functional requirements, performance standards, and other benchmarks.

Developing a new soft drink, the IDEO design team surveyed the competition for functionality and form factors.

Cross-Cultural Comparisons

HOW: Use personal or published accounts to reveal differences in behaviors and artifacts between national or other cultural groups.

WHY: This helps teams to understand various cultural factors and the implications for their projects when designing for unfamiliar or global markets.

In designing a messaging device for an international market, IDEO compared communication methods across cultures.

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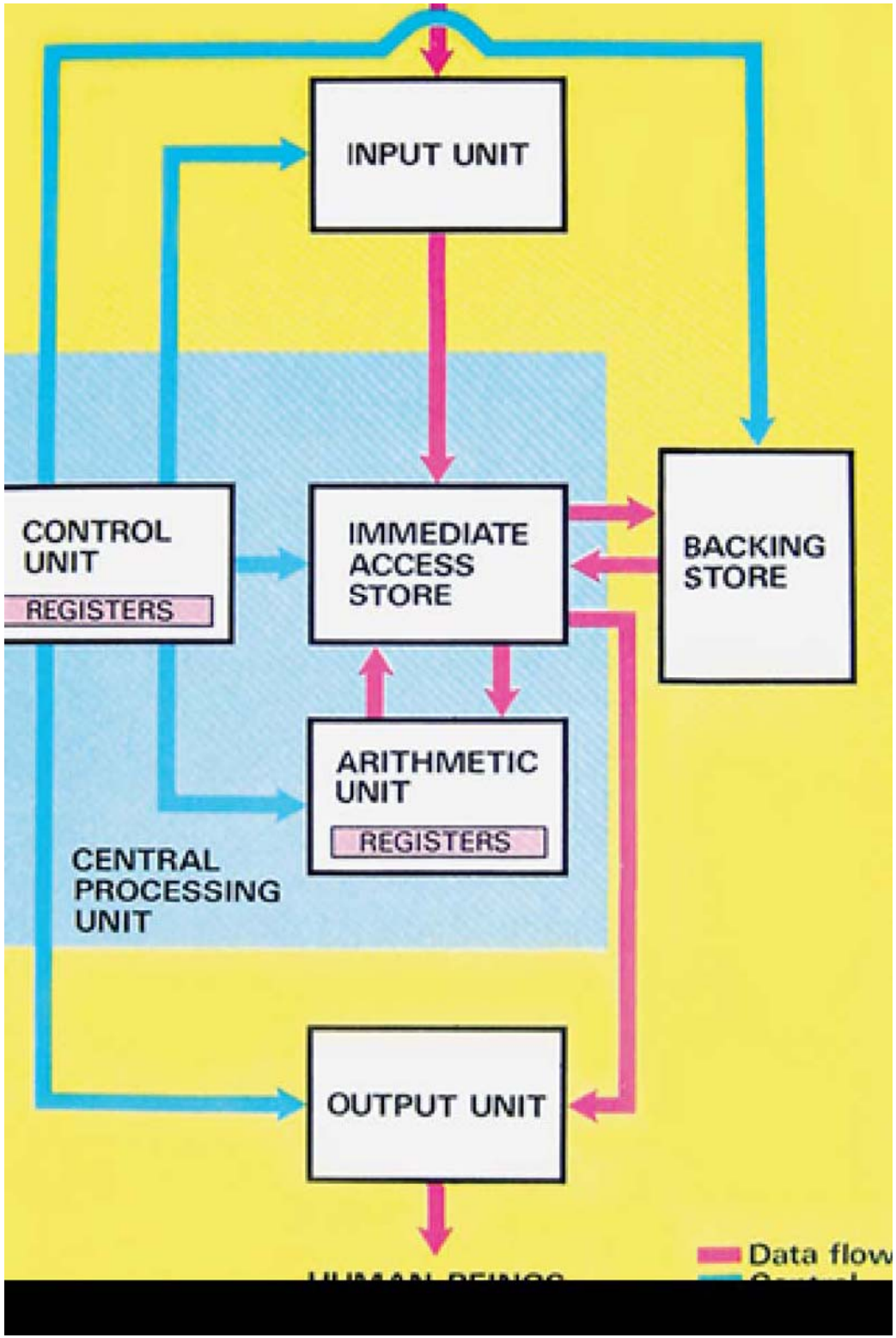
Error Analysis

HOW: List all the things that can go wrong when using a product and determine the various possible causes.

WHY: This is a good way to understand how design features mitigate or contribute to inevitable human errors and other failures.

The IDEO team used error analysis on a remote control concept in order to maximize the functionality of each button's size, shape, and texture.



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Flow Analysis

HOW: Represent the flow of information or activity through all phases of a system or process.

WHY: This is useful for identifying bottlenecks and opportunities for functional alternatives.

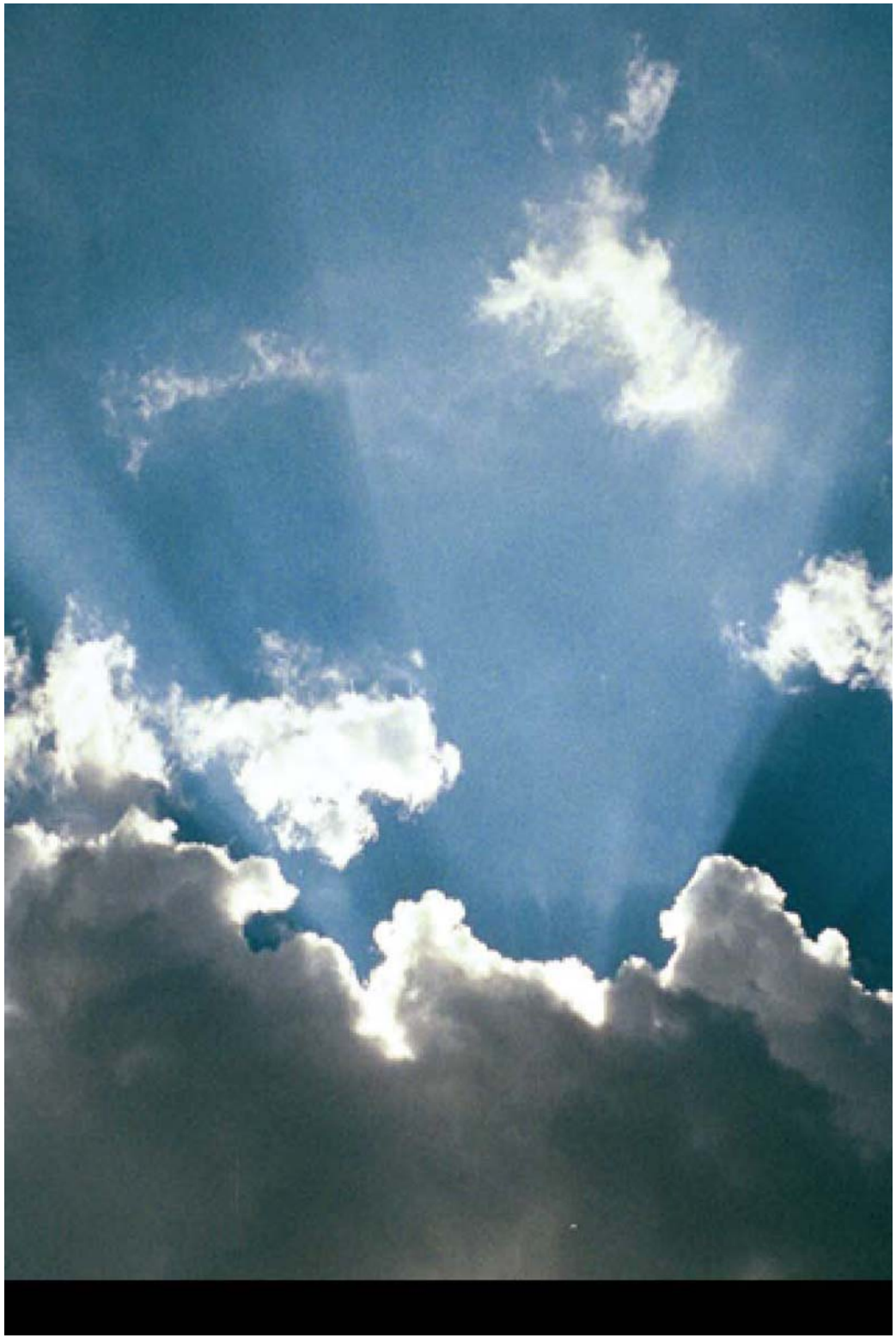
Designing an online advice website, flow analysis helped the IDEO team to design a more seamless experience navigating the site.

Historical Analysis

HOW: Compare features of an industry, organization, group, market segment, or practice through various stages of development.

WHY: This method helps to identify trends and cycles of product use and customer behavior and to project those patterns into the future.

A historical view of changes in chair design helped IDEO to define a common language and reference points for the client and the team.



Long-Range Forecasts

HOW: Write up prose scenarios that describe how social and/or technological trends might influence people's behavior and the use of a product, service, or environment.

WHY: Predicting changes in behavior, industry, or technology can help clients to understand the implications of design decisions.

In an effort to describe how changes in work behavior might affect design strategy, the IDEO team wrote up forecasts to consider future circumstances or contexts in office spaces.

Secondary Research

HOW: Review published articles, papers, and other pertinent documents to develop an informed point of view on the design issues.

WHY: This is a useful way to ground observations and to develop a point of view on the state of the art.

Understanding emergent social and technological trends helped an IDEO team to produce more relevant PDA concepts.