DesignMap

Target X Company Design Maturity

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Approach & Scope

Objective

The objective of design diligence is to identify key parts of the product and/or business driven by design that are best suited for an additional near-term investment to increase product value and ultimately shareholder value.

In the following pages, we summarize our overall assessment of Target X Company generated by our team of product design experts and based on predetermined assessment criteria. We outline existing problem areas, opportunities to improve the positive impact of design on the product and company, supporting evidence and the monetary investment required to execute on the changes needed.

Approach

The steps used by our design team to inform our final assessment included:

1. **Product Audit**: We audited a demo account provided for Target X's existing product
2. **Landscape Research**: We utilized secondary resources to assess the landscape of key competitors, identified by the Target X team, from a UX design lens.
3. **Discovery Interview**: We conducted a 3 hour discovery interview with Target X C-Suite. This included: Co-Founder & Chief Scientist, CEO, and Director of Product Management
4. **Scoring:** Information gathered from both research and the discovery interview is synthesized and inputted into our scoring system (detailed on the next page) to assess the maturity in 3 areas:
   a. Outcomes & Impact
   b. People & Culture
   c. Design Strategy & Process

Definitions of Key Assessment Areas

People & Culture

Design Team
Size and makeup of design team, investment in full time resources vs. contractors, ratio of Design to Product and Engineering employees, growth plans

Collaboration & Support
Design advocacy and inclusion by company leadership, integration of design in product development processes

Design Strategy & Process

Design Strategy
Well-defined Design goals, investment in strategic design in addition to tactical design, investment in competitive research, trend spotting & foresight research

Design Process & Activities
Design-centric operating model, established design processes including UX research and user empathy

Quality & Impact

Quality of Design
Good UX (based off Nielson Norman industry standards), meets accessibility standards, consistent use of design system, modern visual design

Business Impact
Success metrics with an attribution to design such as decreased support tickets related to usability, NPS scores, new customer acquisitions and decreased churn

Design strategy

Design process
& activities

Quality of design

Business impact

Collaboration
& support
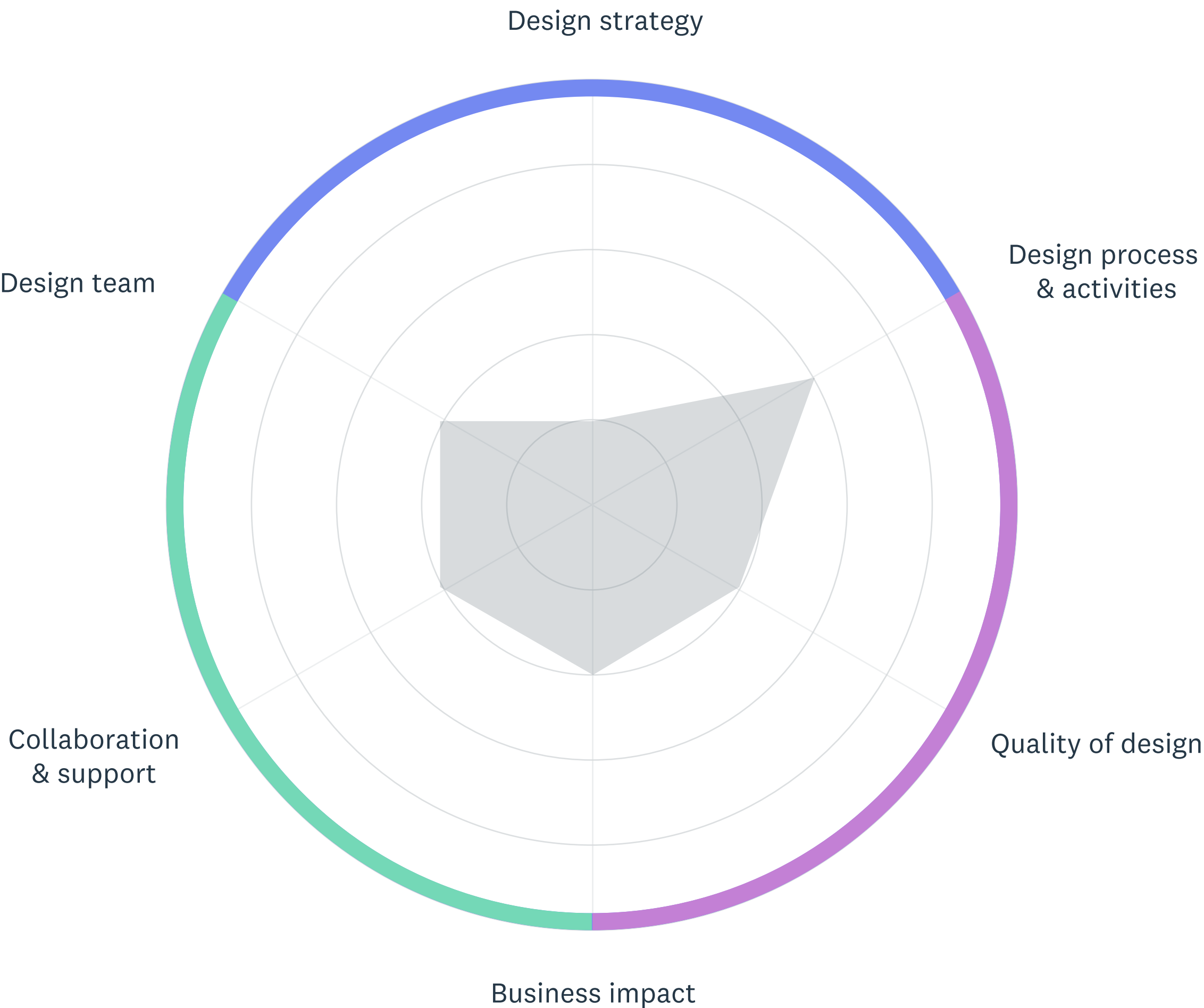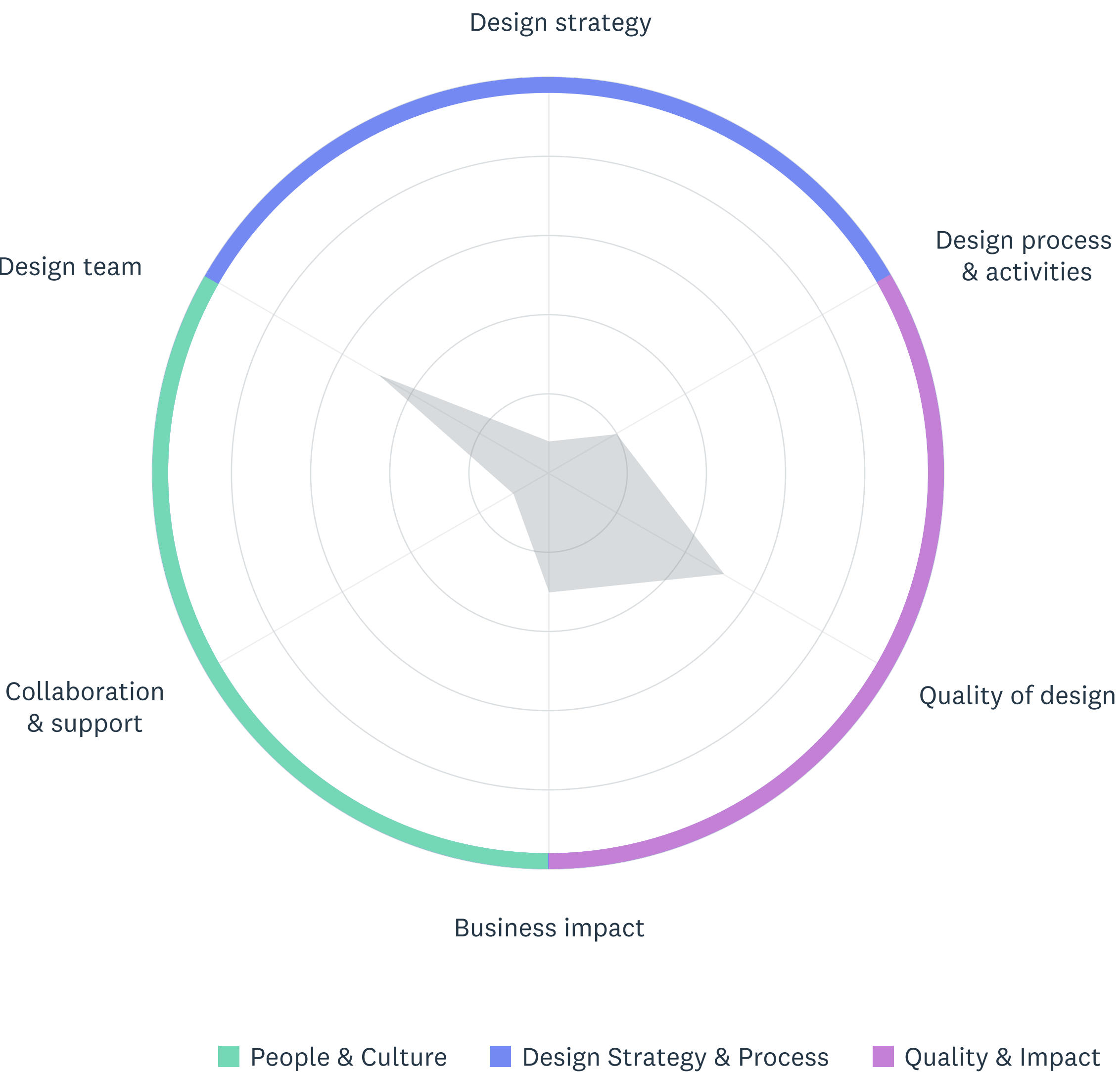
Design team

Executive Summary

Assessment Summary

Despite the design team lacking leadership and key counterpart support, they are doing relatively well in the following areas:

- **Design team**
  the makeup and structure of the design team

- **Quality of design**
  the user experience design team is delivering

Collaboration & support from leadership and key counterparts scored very low, and it is a key area of focus for leveling up the overall maturity.

With a growth plan in place, the design team is well-positioned to increase its maturity in the coming year.

Legend:
- People & Culture
- Design Strategy & Process
- Quality & Impact

Chart labels: Design strategy, Design process & activities, Quality of design, Business impact, Collaboration & support, Design team

Mapping of Maturity Definition

We placed each score of assessment area on a scale of 1-10 and applied a definition to every 2 increments to the represent maturity level.

Design Team

| Very Low | Low | Medium | High | Very High |

Quality & Impact

Overall maturity: Low

Quality of Products & Design

Maturity: Medium

Our overall assessment of the usability is C+
Target X is in line with its competitors, with some feature enhancements.

The product looks modern, but some usability issues were present.
Examples

- Low discoverability
- Inefficient flows, interactions
- Accessibility

There is a basic component library in place, but it is underutilized.

Business Impact

Maturity: Very Low

Target X is unsure how to measure the impact of design.

They currently does not track data, that is attributable to design except for support tickets.

The leadership is aware of the issue of discoverability. Due to this, they are spending a significant amount of time acquiring enterprise clients. "Our product doesn't really sell itself."

Quality of design

Business impact

Quality & Impact

In order to move to the next maturity level...

Recommendations

Implement low-hanging fruit fixes and socialize the design system:

- Implement low-hanging fruit fixes to upcoming releases and update roadmap to reflect usability fixes that require a significant design and engineering effort.

Socialize the design system and establish a governance system:

- Socialize the design system to ensure wider adoption accross the product for a consistent user experience.
- Develop a plan for ongoing socialization and governance of the design system.

Track product success metrics attributable to design:

Collect baseline data before design updates get released to customers. We recommend starting with new customer acquisition, support tickets, and customer satisfaction.

By correcting high-impact usability issues, we would expect to see an improvement in product success metrics and significant cost savings for Target X.
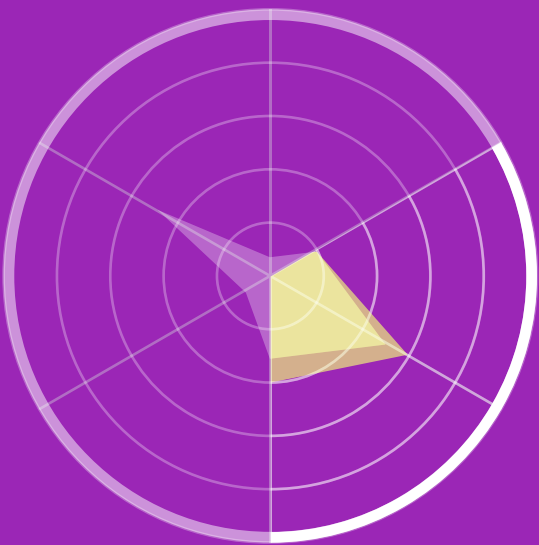
Quality of design

Business impact

The next level of maturity which Target X can reach via implementing the recommendations

People & Culture

Overall Maturity: Low

Design team

Maturity: Medium

The discovery interview illuminated that although there are dedicated design resources on the team, the team is operating reactively to the design needs and feels understaffed for the volume of design work to tackle.

Designers are primarily UI-focussed and tactical vs. strategic in approaching design tasks.

Leadership sees the value in design and believes in investing in it especially after hiring an agency for a strategic design engagement to establish a unified inventory experience. They have a growth plan in place to add 5-10 design resources and there a desire to have strategic design capabilities in-house.

Collaboration & Support

Maturity: Very Low

Although leadership is allocating necessary financial resources for design, there is still a lack of engagement with design by leadership in the C-suite, Product and Engineering teams:

- The design team is not often a part of cross-functional collaboration opportunities, such as strategic planning or roadmap planning.
- The design team is not seen as a strategic partner. Instead, they are utilized as executors of needs identified and prioritized by the product team.
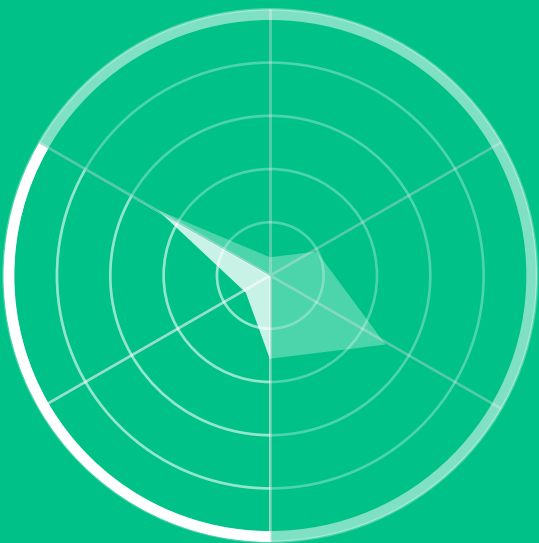
Design team

6 full-timers 1 Head of Design, 3 UXs, and 2 VDs.
Designer to Developer ratio: 1:10
Designer to PM ratio: 1: 1
Growth Plan: To add 5-10 designers

Collaboration & support

People & Culture

In order to move to the next maturity level...

Recommendations

Hire to grow the internal team:

- Add at least 1 Design Manager - It is unrealistic for the Head of Design to manage 10+ designers
- Add experienced Designer(s) who are skilled in leading strategic design design activities and bringing leadership along.
- Add 1 Researcher – Currently PMs and Head of Design are filling this role.

Foster a culture of cross-functional collaboration:

- Create co-creation opportunities between the product and design teams.
- Create a culture of collaboration and encourage Design, Product, and Engineering to recognize that they are one team. Start by having a joint standup and adopting a tool for all teams to align on goals and progress.
- Create a forum for the design team to share their work and activities to the greater org.

Consider bringing in an outside design agency:

- Having access to experienced designers who can guide the rest of the team with strategic design initiatives while hiring internally.
- Establishing a rhythm and structure for the design team to work more collaboratively with its counterparts.

Design team

Collaboration & support

The next level of maturity which Target X can reach via implementing the recommendations

Design Strategy & Process

Overall Maturity: Very Low
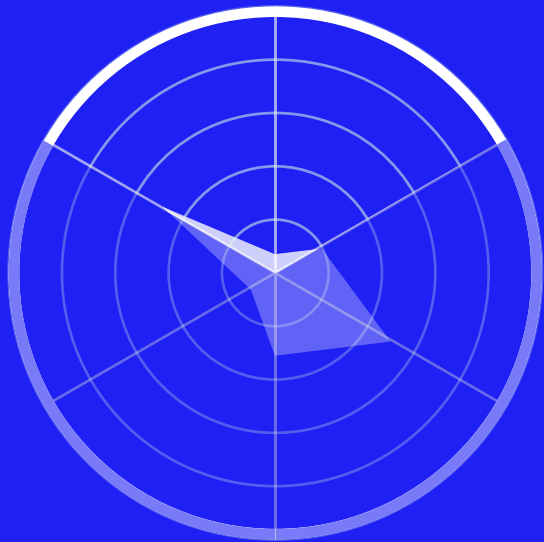
Design strategy

Maturity: Very Low

The leadership team who we interviewed is unaware of how the design team operates; This is not a true reflection of the design team. In the discovery interview, leadership mentioned that they frequently need to "triage design needs"; This indicates that the product team is not working as strategically as they could be when prioritizing and directing work allocated to the design team.

Process

Maturity: Very Low

The C-suite members we interviewed are not aware of any design processes or user-centered activities outside the user research their Head of Design has been conducting.

Design strategy

Process & activities

Design Strategy & Process

In order to move to the next maturity level...

Recommendations

Increase the ratio of Designers to Engineer and hire a strategic Design Lead

- Add more designers to increase the design team's capacity to work more proactively and strategically.
- A strong design lead can establish goals for the design team that align with the larger roadmap established for Target X - This is a key to bringing design strategy into practice.

Mature design processes to elevate impact of design on product and business success:

- If the design team does not have a process in place, we recommend starting with a simple process that the team is comfortable with. Build in quarterly retrospectives - to learn what's working and what's not, and to adjust the process as you scale the design team and the design practice.
- If the team already has an established process, consider building in quarterly retrospectives to create shared learning moments and a way identify areas to continually improve and elevate the impact of design on product and business success.
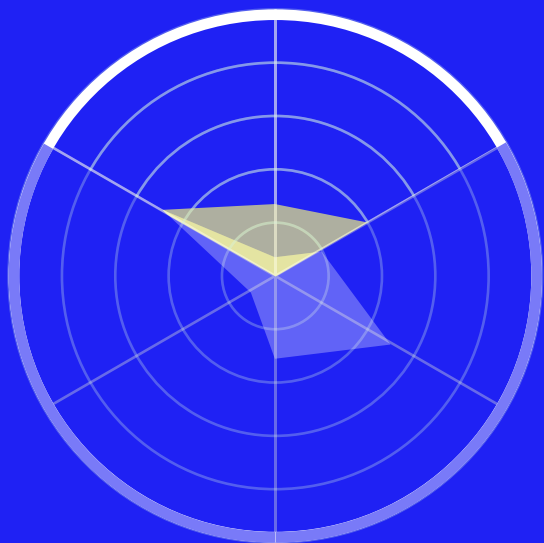
Design strategy

Process & activities

The next level of maturity which Target X can reach via implementing the recommendations
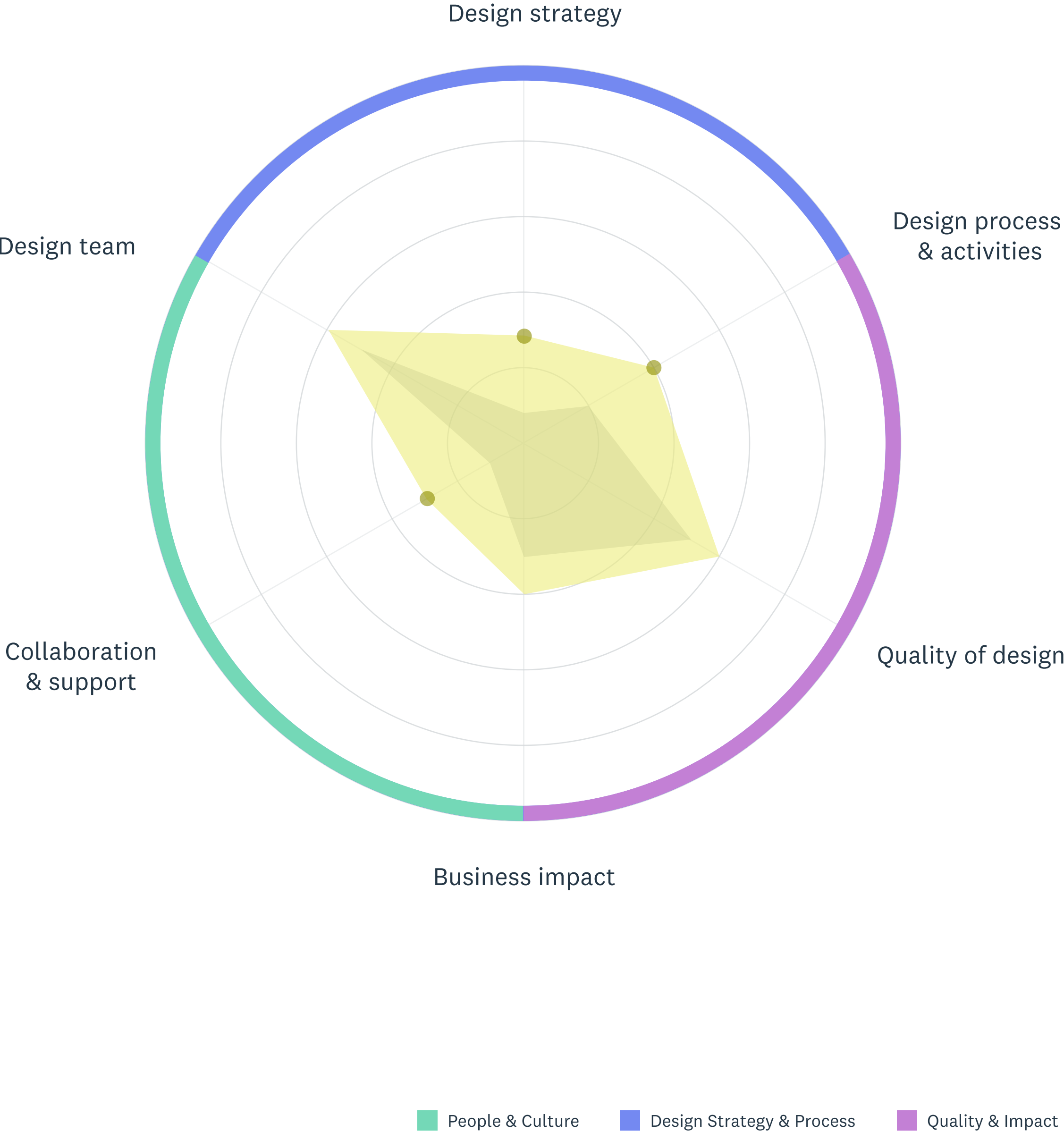
Hiring Needs

Given the design team's planned growth, and having experience working with outside design consultancy, improving the maturity to the next level (shown in yellow) can be achieved without further financial investments.

If the growth plan was not factored into the budget for the year we expect the following investment is necessary to improve:

- Culture change
- Process development
- Strategy

Add at least one Design Manager when adding more designers to the team.   **$150k**

Add at least 2 experienced designers (Lead UX or Senior Designer level) who is skilled in leading strategic design project and activities, and can be collaborators to the Head of Design and Product leaders.   **$ 300k**

Add one researcher to the team.   **$ 150k**

Total   Minimum annual recurring cost   **$600k**

Design strategy

Design process & activities

Design team

Quality of design

Collaboration & support

Business impact

People & Culture   Design Strategy & Process   Quality & Impact

Near Term Investment Needs

Priority	Category	Projects	Resources	Time	Investment
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Audit cross-app inconsistencies** and **develop design system** to work across both applications	Internal Resources (Senior Designer)	1 month	$10K
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Address low discoverability** by Implementing search functionality and new IA based on user mental model	Internal Resource (UX Designer)	1 month	$10K
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Address Inefficient flows & interactions** by redesigning risks, object details and the relationship between the two	Internal Resource (UX Designer)	1 month	$10K
High	People & Culture, Design Strategy & Process	**Address responsiveness** by defining components at different breakpoints	Internal Resource (UX Designer)	1 month	$10K
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Training / Coaching** new hires	Internal Resources (Design Manager)	6 months	$10K
Minimum Cost					**$40K**

* The recommended investments above have been selected as priorities for the next 12 months.
Long term investments are categorized as investments to consider after these priority areas are executed on.

Long Term Investment Needs

Priority	Category	Projects	Resources	Time	Investment
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Product Audit / Heuristic Evaluation** to identify issues in product usability	Internal Resources (Senior Designer)	1 month	$10K
Medium	Outcomes & Impact	**Product concept ideation** and **concept testing**	Internal Resources (Senior Designer, Researcher)	1 month	$20K
Medium	Outcomes & Impact	**Protyping** prioritized concepts using the design system and **usability testing**	Internal Resources (Designer, Researcher)	1 month	$20K
High	Outcomes & Impact	**Maintain design system** and **socialize** with product teams to ensure adoption across all product areas. Create a plan for ongoing socialization and governance of the design system.	Internal Resources (Senior Visual Designer)	Ongoing	$10K
Medium	People & Culture, Design Strategy & Process	**Visiontype:** Prototype the future-state to align cross-functional teams and leadership around product vision **Create foundational design assets** (i.e. concept models, system maps, customer journey maps) to help leadership and product teams articulate the current state of the product and identify gaps.	Product Strategy & Design Agency + Internal Lead/Senior Designer	3 months	$375 *one time cost
Medium	People & Culture, Design Strategy & Process	Design facilitates a **roadmapping exercise** using visiontype to create future plan	Product Strategy & Design Agency	1 month	$125K *one time cost
Low	Outcomes & Impact	**Accessibility**	Accessibility Experts - Outside Agency	1 month	$125K *one time cost
Total Cost					**$685K**

<u>Get in touch</u> for a briefing on Design Diligence