



# The transformation of Banco Montepio's interaction and communication platforms



Banco Montepio is the oldest financial institution in Portugal and holds a unique position in the national financial panorama due to its origin and mutual base. Banco Montepio is known for being a savings-oriented institution and for providing universal financial services to private customers, the business sector, social economic institutions and social entrepreneurs.

Banco Montepio is part of the Montepio Group, and Mutualist Association is its parent company.

## The Challenge

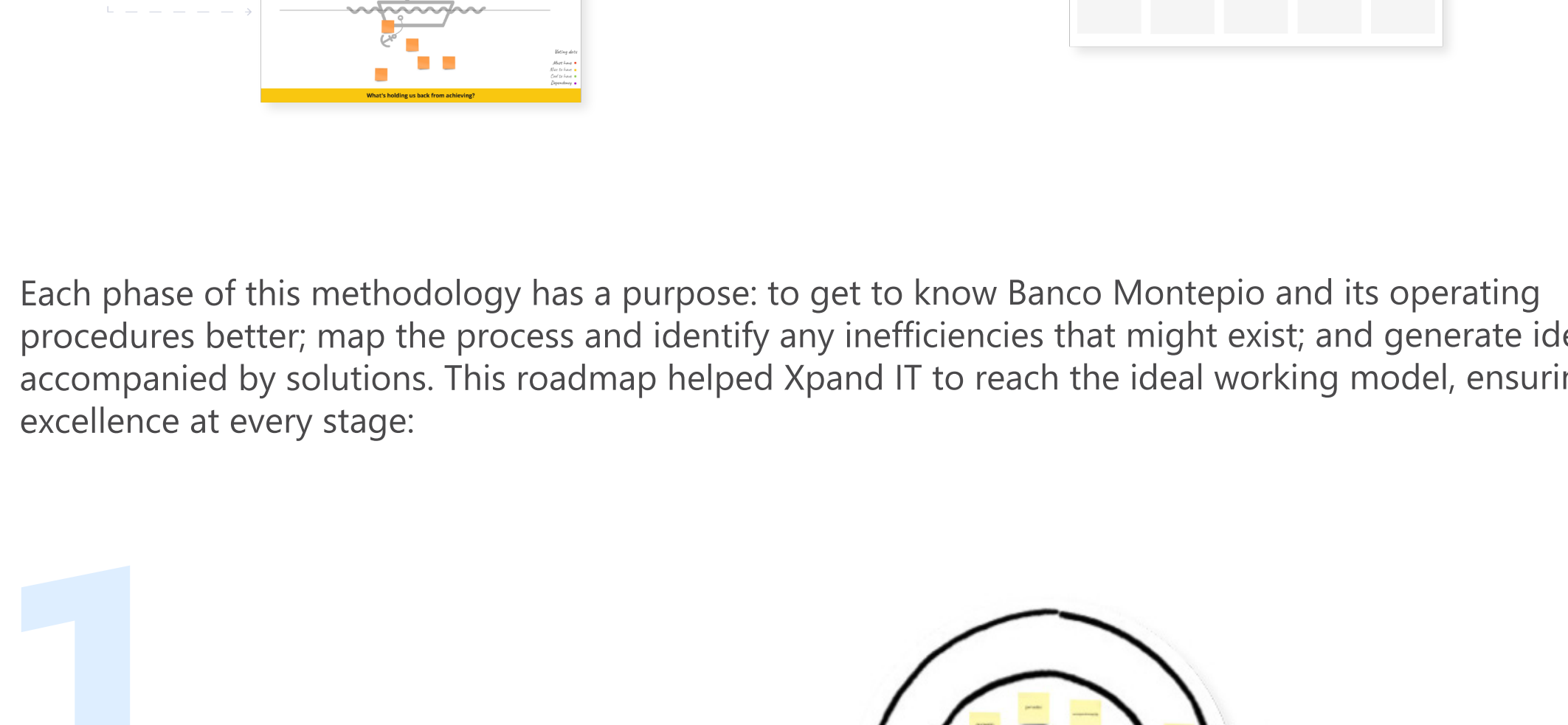
Banco Montepio is a historic Portuguese institution, a symbol of trust and closeness with its customers. With the growing demand for digital channels, and the need to continue to stay close to its customers, the bank is renewing its various interaction and communication platforms.

The challenge the bank posed to Xpand IT was the creation and renewal of all of its 360 customer contact points, ensuring consistency between them and promoting the emotional connection between its users and these digital channels.

## The Xpand IT Solution

The Xpand IT team used internal design thinking methodology to come up with a solution. This methodology seeks to promote innovation and create relevant competitive advantages. The 3 pillars of design thinking methodology are **Understand, Explore and Materialise** – 3 steps accomplished by a close partnership between Xpand IT and Montepio throughout the whole process. This partnership translated into:

- Workshops that allowed managing expectations and arriving at a value proposal for each challenge;
- Cross-flow journeys to simplify the acquisition of new customers and the automation of internal processes;
- Integration and prioritisation of solutions in the face of direct, indirect and intersecting competitive forces;
- Discovering and creating opportunities with younger audiences;
- Customisation and adaptation of content for its customers.



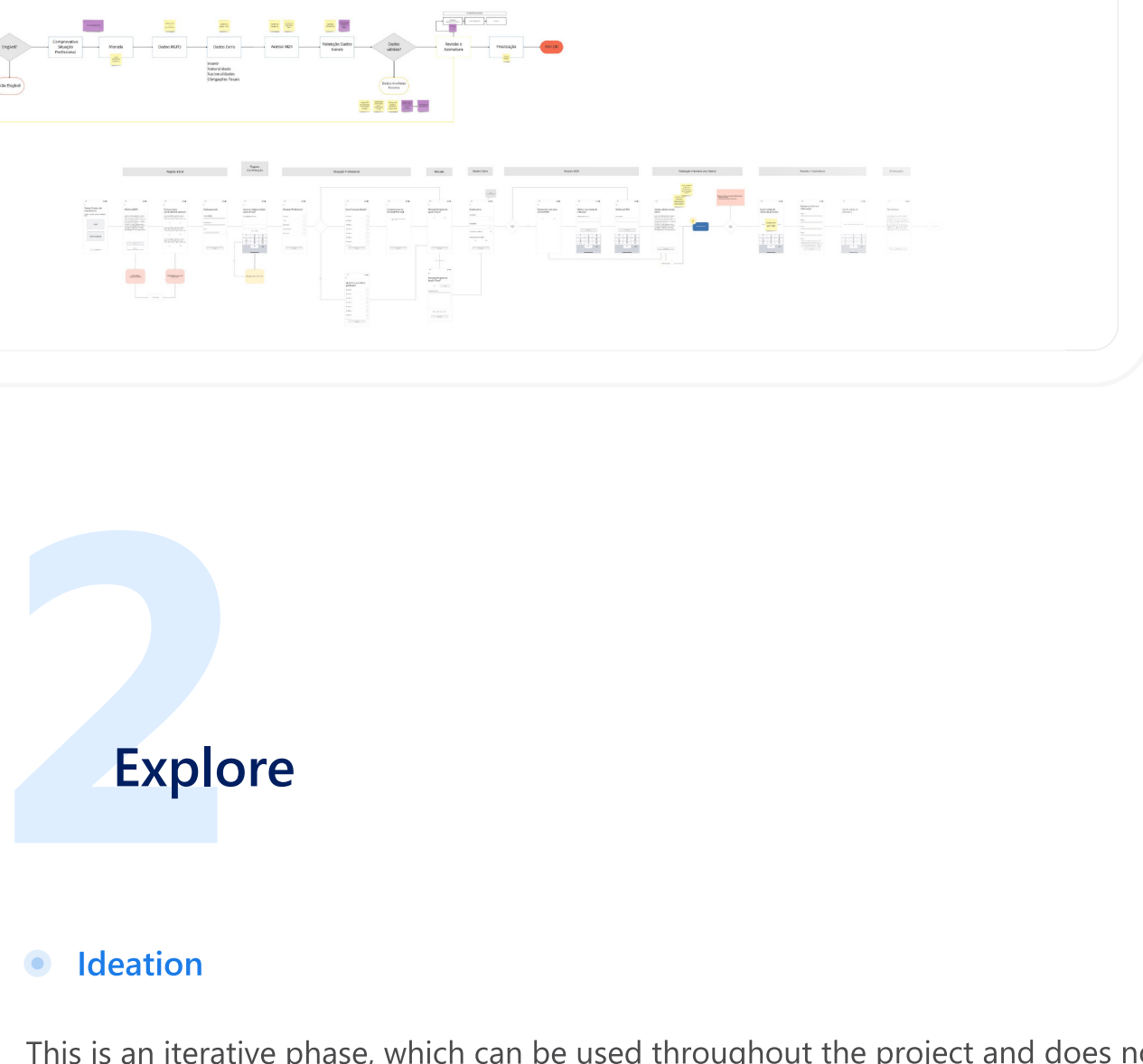
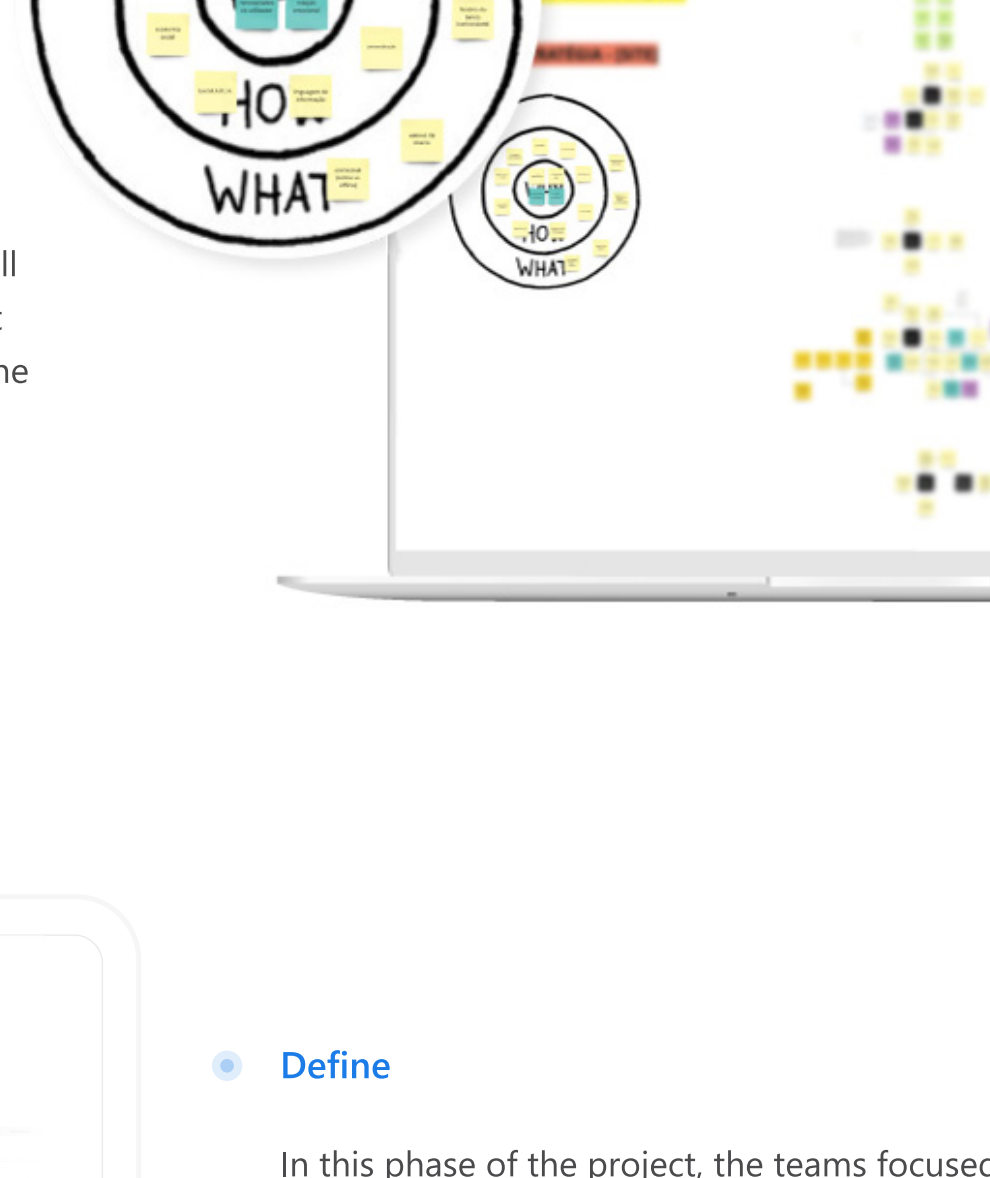
Each phase of this methodology has a purpose: to get to know Banco Montepio and its operating procedures better; map the process and identify any inefficiencies that might exist; and generate ideas, accompanied by solutions. This roadmap helped Xpand IT to reach the ideal working model, ensuring excellence at every stage:

# 1 Understand

**Empathise**

One of the most important phases is the project start-up, where all the information needed for the following steps is gathered. It is at this stage that the Xpand IT UX team **empathised** not only with the project users, but above all with the client, to understand and outline the way forward.

This phase provided answers and opportunities based on observation and brainstorming between all parties.

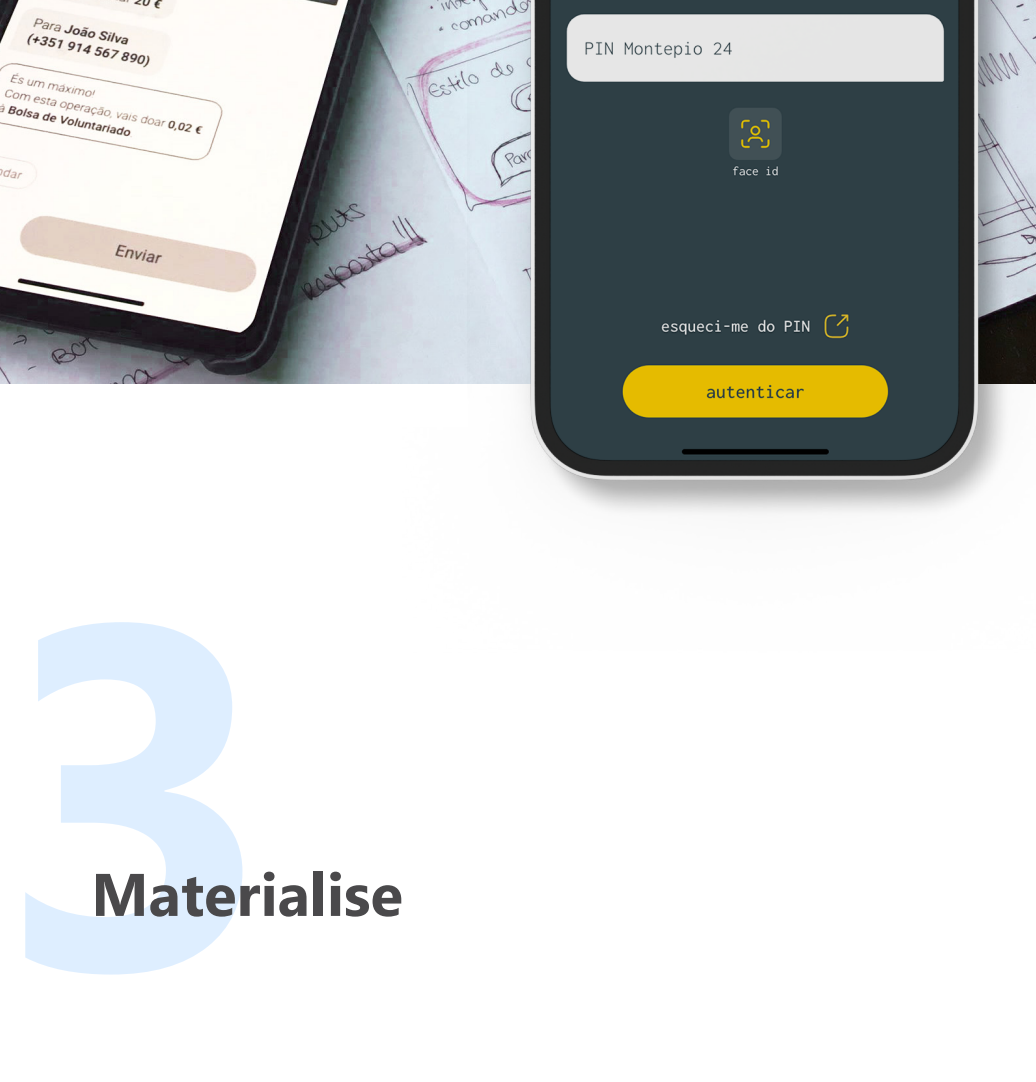
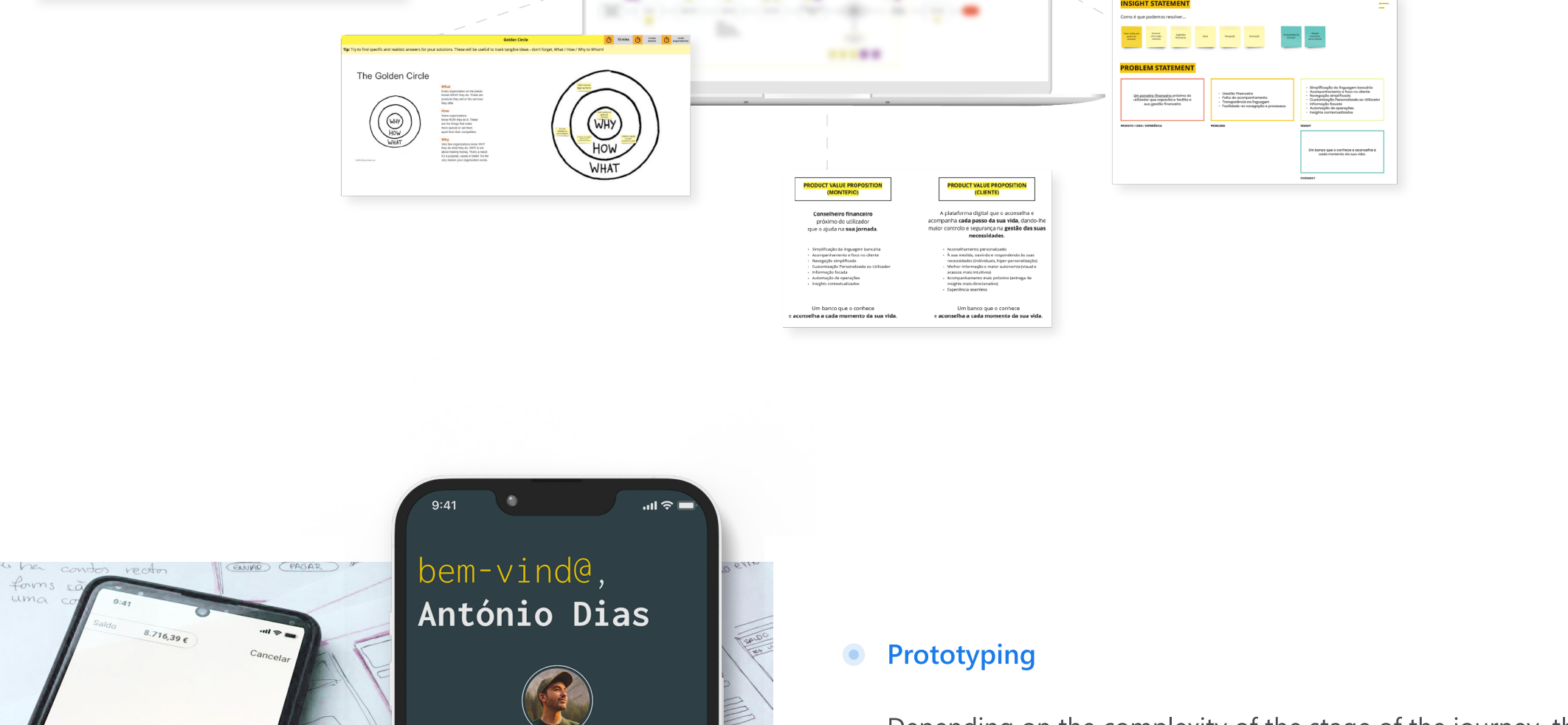


# 2 Explore

**Ideation**

This is an iterative phase, which can be used throughout the project and does not have to be attached to any stage. When ideating, the team **generate, experiment and contrast** ideas that make it possible to explore innovative paths, adding value to the proposed solution.

We used tools such as ideation workshops (tailored to the project), internal brainstorming in a "Golden Circle – How, What, Why and to Whom" format, schematisation and the construction of live mock-ups with the client, **facilitating and managing the expectations of all the participants involved.**

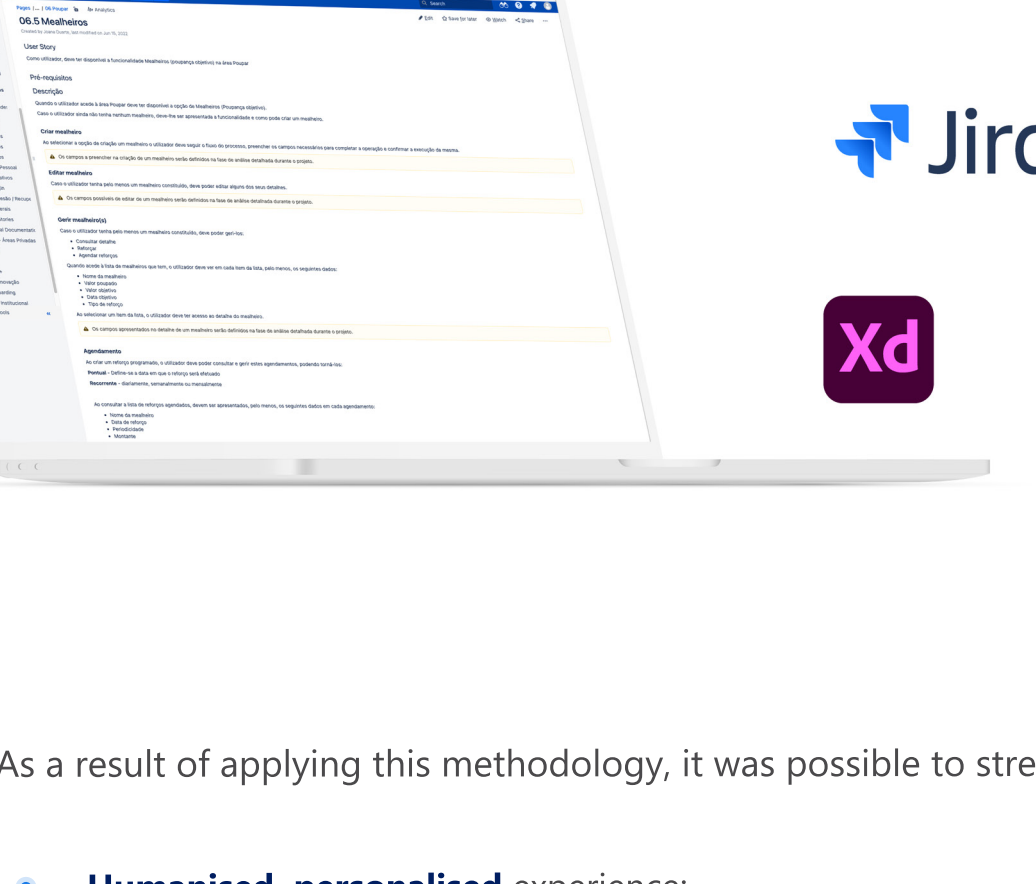


# 3 Materialise

**Testing**

User feedback is critical to be able to achieve the best possible solution – Moderate and Non-Moderate **Usability Tests** were performed with Banco Montepio, which Xpand IT's UX team analysed and interpreted. The adoption of such tests made the chosen path clear for the solutions worked out and made it easier to make informed decisions. The tests turned the result into an important value proposition.

- Testes Moderados**  
Composto pela Moderador, Analista e User Tester.
- Testes Não-Moderados**  
Gera-se a partir de uma plataforma para o efeito: [UserTesting](#)



**Implementation**

During the implementation phase of the solution, a **context debrief** and **knowledge transfer** was facilitated by inter-team sessions through the documentation of all the previous steps, and validated by the bank at the close of each sprint.

To ensure that experience and technology would run side by side in production, **UX Quality Assurance** was implemented along with Development QA.

This partnership ensured greater comfort and trust between Xpand IT and Banco Montepio by ensuring an excellent deliverable.

- Humanised, personalised** experience;
- Customer-centricity** as a supply focus;
- Conversational** context;
- Clarity** of information;
- Translation of terms** into the client's language;
- Hybrid reality** – seamless multi-channel;
- Paradigm shift** in customer/user behaviour.

This recognition of added value as well as investment in partnership and trust have turned Xpand IT into a reference company for Banco Montepio.

## Tools and Frameworks

- Workshops**  
The Xpand IT team believes that workshops are a good tool for the ideation and facilitation of iterations, both internally and with the client – it allows us to arrive at solutions better and faster, ensuring the management of expectations of all involved.
- Strategy/Rational**  
The introduction of the "know how to think" phase before execution allows teams to decide in a sustained and coherent manner, and is a guiding principle for the whole project.
- Documentation**  
Excellent documentation equals excellent management of the time and expectations of both the teams and the client – a transversal, structured documentation does not require translation for anyone who consults it. Xpand IT has developed a template that fits all teams, allowing simple, direct, contextualised understanding of project documentation.
- Design System**  
Along with project documentation, Xpand IT's UX team always follows a design system that covers all the relevant components and their respective behaviours and variants, associated with the development of the experience, serving as a playbook for all the teams involved.
- Agile**  
Xpand IT promotes the Agile methodology as a way of empowering teams and projects for a pragmatic mindset and orientation – day-to-day teamwork is enhanced with continuous alignment, planning and retrospective work, and the prioritisation of tasks according to the needs and flexibility that each project requires.

## Benefits achieved

- Continuous ideation and iteration to manage the project and expectations;
- More effective identification of problems and solutions;
- A focus on the user that allows the discovery of opportunities;
- Responses and feedback from users as well as the customer;
- Insights contextualised to the design phase;
- Automation of processes and experience flows, combined with technology.

The continuous evolution of our interaction platforms and our journeys is a critical process for continuing to provide the best response to increasingly sophisticated and demanding customers, and to create an increasingly effective and efficient bank. We believe that our partnership with Xpand IT and its methodology and experience is the right formula to achieve this ambition.

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at Banco Montepio