

# How IdeaPaint can help you make ideas happen.

The behance team started experimenting with ideapaint in early 2009 as a way to boost productivity while brainstorming. We discovered that the ability to transform walls into useful space yielded benefits well beyond brainstorm sketching. Our walls became a communications medium for tracking ideas, capturing action steps, and applying some sense of order to the creative process. We became active users of ideapaint and are pleased to share some tips on how it can be used to make ideas happen.

### 1/ Out of sight, Out of mind

As we all know, ideas run aplenty in a creative team. It is easy to lose track of an idea or overarching concept without keeping it in plain sight. Even if you write it down, email it around, or file it meticulously...the idea is likely to be forgotten if it doesn't consistently catch your eye. In our office, we have started to use the high, out-of-reach spaces to post certain ideas or concepts that require ongoing thought. By doing this, innovation stays top of mind!

### 2/ An agenda area & an action area always

Whenever your team sits down for a discussion, you should always have an agenda. A simple list of the items being covered will help the meeting stay on track. In whatever room we're in, we will write on the wall a quick list of the items being covered in the conversation. As each item is discussed, we will cross it out. This keeps the Agenda 'living' in the sense that it can always be modified or preserved for later. And, with a dry-erase agenda, we save a lot of paper.

During the discussion, the facilitator might consider capturing every action step that comes up in an *Action Area* on the wall. Our team sometimes uses the bottom of the wall for storing the action steps that arise during a discussion. Action Steps should start with verbs, and it is important that they are all 'owned' by someone before the meeting is adjourned.

### 3/ The project status line

For all of your team's active projects that involve collaboration between team members, you might consider using a wall to track the status of each element. Various methods like SCRUM and others work quite well with IdeaPaint. We made a grid on one of our IdeaPaint walls using magnetic tape. We place all elements of a project that are in progress on index cards and stick them onto the grid. Then, using dry-erase markers, we will track the progress of each element through the various steps (e.g. Design, Copy, Development, Testing, etc...). By doing this, all members of the team can simply look at the wall and understand the status of each element in every project.

### 4 / The energy line

How are you spending your time? Are you focused on the right things? Amidst the everyday craziness of a creative enterprise, it is hard to keep energy in perspective. Some individuals and teams we have met with use some form of an *Energy Line* to graphically display and manage their energy allocation across projects. On your wall, you can keep a simple line starting at *Idle* and going up to *Extreme*. Then write the names of all of your major projects along the line, according to how much focus each project should get. Be realistic and make the tough decisions on what projects need to live in the *Low* or *Idle* area for a while.

Customize the system with words, colors, and design that works for you and your team.

Energy lines are most helpful when a whole team gives input and someone takes the time to keep the line updated. At its best, the energy line keeps you focused and serves as a constant reminder of how energy should be spent. At its worst, the energy line makes great office art!

### 5 / Sketch & talk for understanding

We are visual thinkers –and we think most other creative people are as well. Whenever we're trying to solve a problem or describe an idea, we'll grab a dry-erase marker and the nearest wall to sketch it out while talking. This 'sketch + talk' philosophy provides a new, visual dimension to every conversation. It exposes holes in our logic more readily and serves to engage others in the process.

### 6 / Learn from our mistakes

When you have an office party –especially when alcohol is involved– keep all permanent markers hidden in a secret place. Also, don't be conservative with where IdeaPaint can be used. As we have found, there are no limits for how walls and other surfaces can be used once they have been graced with the paint...

### 7 / Make a space for the notables & quotables

In every office, there is some area of wall that is too small for active use as a white board but is still in plain sight. Whether it is a strange corner or some space that is out of reach, you might consider covering it with IdeaPaint and then using it to capture the funny quotes or inspiring objectives that arise.