

In 2013, Philip Krim, Jeff Chapin, Luke Sherman, Gabriel Flateman, and Neil Parikh met at a coworking space in New York City. They got to talking about sleep, partly because sleep seemed to be on people's minds and partly because they kept seeing people fall asleep in beanbag chairs. Designing the Mattress and the Redesigning of the Mattress Buying Process At this point the group moved forward on two fronts: Designing the Casper mattress and redesigning the mattress buying process and the experience resulting from it. The tagline for the company, as mentioned earlier, was "One Perfect Mattress." The founders say the tagline, and what it implies, directed their efforts in both areas. Designing the Casper Mattress The design of the mattress was informed by the earlier interviews. One thing the interviews revealed is that people don't actually want the variety of choices that are offered to them. If you think about hotels, for example, most have a single mattress that the majority of guests are happy with. So they decided to remove the complication of choice and build a single mattress. To be successful, they knew the mattress had to meet two tests: it had to be comfortable for everyone and the aesthetics had to be acceptable to everyone. They built prototypes to show potential users, testing different materials and different levels of firmness. They even built several king and queen-sized mattresses that had different levels of firmness on each side of the mattress so the user could compare the levels of firmness side-by-side. Through the testing they were able to arrive at a mattress design that would be stylish yet simple. It would dress up a room, but that most people liked. They then built prototypes of this that would not clash with the decor or furniture. They tested them again with a group of beta testers. The nearby table sums up Casper's redesign of the mattress buying experience. Redesigning the Mattress Buying Experience Casper's Redesign of the Mattress Buying Experience What People Don't Like about the experience. Through earlier customer interviews and their own experiences, they knew that there were at least five things people didn't like about the mattress buying experience: too many choices, too many prices, too many salespeople, too much buyer's remorse, and mattresses that are difficult to handle and tagline is "One Perfect Mattress." If you'd like to see one of the videos, go to YouTube and type in "Casper mattress unboxing." You'll find many examples to pick from. Finally, Casper did conventional advertising and PR. Along with these factors, Casper's approach worked. Its big bet—that people would accept the fact that it sold a single mattress and would buy mattresses online—resonated. The company reportedly sold \$30 million worth of mattresses in its first 14 months. Other estimates report sales of \$100 million in 2015 and \$200 million in 2016. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead From the beginning, Casper saw itself as a sleep products company rather than a mattress company. As soon as it launched, it started prototyping and testing additional sleep-related products. It added pillows and sheets in early 2016. True to form, it offers a single pillow, priced at \$75. The Casper pillow, like the mattress, has a 100 night guarantee. There are also limited choices for the sheets. In late summer 2016, Casper launched its fourth product—The Casper Dog Mattress. According to Casper, the company spent 11 months conducting canine sleep studies, consulting with dog psychologists and building prototypes. The result is a dog mattress that sells for \$125 and promises "to create a sleep environment that caters to dogs' natural behaviors." The dog mattress reflects the

somewhat whimsical nature of Casper and its founders. Second, about half the people who bought a Casper mattress talked to someone in-house, via the toll free number displayed prominently on the company's website. They would ask questions like "Do I need a box spring?" (No). Casper used the occasions to learn about its customers, and kept in touch. Third, a trend started early on, which wasn't planned, of people posting Casper mattress "unboxing" videos online. Casper would sell a single mattress