



## CASE STUDY

# Unlocking the Power of Partnerships with Whole Brain® Thinking: How AND Digital and Herrmann Fast-Tracked Team and New Product Development

*“By gaining some insight into the diverse cognitive makeup of our people from using Whole Brain® Thinking, we’ve been able to tailor our business goals, operations, and educational opportunities to ensure our way of doing things remains vibrant, multifaceted, optimized, and free from perception blindness.”*

**- Paramjit Uppal**

Founder of AND Digital

How AND Digital and Herrmann used Whole Brain® Thinking to build an agile, dynamic, and strategic partnership - laying the groundwork necessary to develop a new fast-tracked product that organizations can utilize in the flow of work to leverage cognitive diversity within their teams.

This experiment in cross-organizational collaboration proved that thoughtful and engaged vendor partnerships can be cultivated by intentionally integrating Whole Brain® Thinking into the team development process.



### PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVE

*AND Digital is one of Europe’s most respected companies. Part of its success has come from its commitment to nurturing and supporting the cognitive diversity of its teams.*

empowering people with the knowledge they need to unlock the full potential of technology and approaches its client engagements with a unique model to achieve the broadest impact possible.

AND Digital has a long-standing practice of having each new recruit complete an HBDI® profile upon joining. The organization leverages employee Whole Brain® Thinking preferences to tailor business goals, operations, and educational opportunities.

Additionally, AND Digital is on a mission to close the world’s digital skills gap by



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Instead of coming to a new client and ‘telling’ them what to do, AND Digital forms high-performing teams with their clients so that they can:

- **Guide** their clients on their journey to digital greatness
- **Build** and deliver remarkable digital products together rapidly
- **Equip** their clients with the capabilities and skills to continue to deliver and excel after the engagement

Herrmann’s vision is to help organizations unlock the value of cognitive diversity at a global scale by using Whole Brain® Thinking to create a better future of work, learning and life. Like AND Digital, Herrmann encourages organizations to actively apply tools that solve the most pressing challenges for each company. Both companies share a spirit of partnership and empowerment - putting their clients and collaborators in the driver’s seat to make the best decisions for their business.

With cross-company synergy and well-aligned philosophies, it made sense for Herrmann to team up with AND Digital to tackle a new product development opportunity. The organizations committed to partnering on an aggressively-timed project that would span three months, and to use Whole Brain® Thinking to build a high-performing, cross-functional project team with representatives from each organization.

The newly formed team used HBDI® results from all key participants, as well as their team HBDI® profile, to guide their collaboration going forward. Using Whole Brain® Thinking helped inform the team’s communication, decision making, and problem solving processes from the outset.

### CHALLENGES:

*It’s difficult to get teams from the same organization to work together effectively, especially for businesses like AND Digital and Herrmann that make it a point to recruit staff from a diverse talent pool. This challenge is even more pronounced when you have two organizations – a vendor and a client – that need to work together on a project under tight timelines.*

While nurturing and investing in collaborative, diverse and inclusive teams generates huge benefits for AND Digital and Herrmann, it makes purposeful team development even more critical. When up against deadlines or balancing competing priorities, it can be difficult for vendors and clients to put team development at the center. Instead, the temptation is always to jump straight to project management, skipping over the groundwork needed to help diverse team members generate a shared appreciation for each other’s differences and figure out how to work together most effectively and inclusively.

Add to that the inherent risks that arise in any vendor/client relationship - mismatched company cultures, ambiguous rules of engagement, unclear roles and expectations, and lack of process - and you have a situation where it’s essential to get the team dynamics right.

*“HBDI® is basically a system for highlighting people’s different thinking preferences. And what’s really useful, especially as a Squad Lead, is you learn about your squad members’ thinking and preferences. And you also get to learn about yourself and your own preferences.”*

**- Alex Minssieux**  
AND Digital Squad Lead





## SOLUTIONS:

Herrmann and AND Digital teamed up to solve a core problem that both organizations could relate to:

**How can we integrate Whole Brain® Thinking into a team's flow of work, putting applications and solutions at their fingertips?**

Kicking off the project, both teams committed to putting their partnership at the centre - and to use Whole Brain® Thinking not just in the solution but as part of their collaborative process.

To ensure the partnership and the project were successful, Herrmann and AND Digital decided to apply the Whole Brain® Model not only to the application they were developing together but also to how the joint team worked together. Essentially, Whole Brain® Thinking shaped both the process and the end product - Herrmann's Stop & Think application in Microsoft Teams.

At the beginning of the engagement, the project team - comprising both AND Digital and Herrmann members - participated in a team HBDI® debrief that revealed and explored the thinking composition of the group, in addition to setting the tone, expectations and starting point for the project.

The core project team reasoned that by using the Whole Brain® Thinking methodology early in their collaboration, the team would benefit from a shared appreciation of each other's thinking preferences and gain a deeper understanding of how Whole Brain® Thinking solutions could be incorporated into Microsoft Teams. As it turned out, they were right in both cases.

## RESULTS:

*Looking back at Herrmann's partnership with AND Digital, it's clear that the use of Whole Brain® Thinking at the outset of the project contributed to the team's development and the success of this collaboration overall.*

Aside from the successful, on-time launch of the product built through this collaboration - Herrmann's Stop & Think application in Microsoft Teams - there's also quantifiable evidence of the impact on the team's development from surveys conducted at the start and end of the project.

As an indication that AND Digital saw the benefits of using Whole Brain® Thinking with their clients, they have made the team debrief a part of the standard client engagement process. They now launch every project with everyone on the team completing an HBDI® assessment and having a team debrief.

71%

In the **pre-survey**, 71% of the team members expressed feeling **good or excited** about their collaboration.

In the post-survey, 93% felt their contributions were valued or **highly valued**, and all the survey participants indicated they would like to work together again.

93%

94%

In the post-survey, 94% of team members indicated they would use Whole Brain® Thinking with **future teams** - with 81% saying they would use it **frequently or always**.

*By using all four quadrants, ANDis approach problems from different angles and come up with more creative solutions. Players in the IT industry often rely heavily on the analytical and sequential quadrants. However, by incorporating the interpersonal and imaginative quadrants, AND Digital develops more innovative solutions to improve their overall work processes. For example, by encouraging teamwork and collaboration, ANDis leverage the interpersonal quadrant to improve communication and increase productivity. Additionally, by tapping into the imaginative quadrant, they explore new technologies and approaches that helps AND Digital stay ahead of the competition. This includes experimenting with new software or hardware, exploring new coding languages, and developing new products or services. By incorporating Herrmann's Whole Brain Thinking into their work processes, employees are encouraged to think outside the box and approach problems from different angles. In conclusion, incorporating Herrmann's Whole Brain Thinking into multiple levels of the organisation helps AND Digital stay ahead of the curve and develop more innovative solutions. By leveraging all four quadrants of the brain, they approach problems from different angles and develop more creative solutions.*