Product Discovery

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Agenda

• Introduction
• Rules
• Prototype
• Product Discovery Team
• Product Ownership
• Defining a product
• User test
• Conclusions
Introduction

• What product discovery means?
  – The desired purpose is to create the definition of the product
  – The discovered product must be valuable, usable and feasible
  – "product discovery" is something more than collecting "requirements and design“ and putting them on a Backlog

• Main Steps of this process:
  – Coming up with the idea
  – Creating the prototype
  – Collecting feedback from users
  – Most important: learn from the experience
Rules (1)

• For the product discovery stage a Product owner must:
  – Make sure to start with a clear understanding of your objectives (the opportunity assessment).
  – Involve the lead designer and lead engineer from the very beginning of product discovery.
  – Focus on true collaboration and iteration, rather than sequential written artifacts getting tossed over the wall.
  – Get his key ideas into a prototype fast.
  – Do everything he can to identify your assumptions, get them out on the table, and figure out quickly which ones are correct and which ones aren’t.
Rules (2)

For the product discovery stage a Product owner must:

- Get his prototype in front of target customers early and often fail fast.
- Work to identify the minimal possible product.
- The discovery phase is not done until a product definition that is valuable, usable and feasible is identified.
- Keep the stakeholders updated by showing them the prototype.
- Not waste the time documenting the details for the engineers until they identified the right product.
Defining the product

• Two approaches:
  – We have an idea and we want to refine it
  – We want to come up with an idea

• If we don’t have the product’s specification
  – How will use the product?
    – Everyone
    – A narrow niche
Product Discovery Team (1)

- Three key people:
  - **Product owner**: responsible for the functionality of the product
  - **Lead designer**: responsible for usability of the product
  - **Lead developer**: responsible for the implementation

- Tip: the team should be dedicated
Product Discovery Team (2)

- They are working together, very closely.

- The truth is that the innovation usually comes from the lead developer – he knows what is possible and how to „resolve the impossible“.

- The other truth: users do not care about the technology, they care about usability.
Tips

- Some tips for a software product:
  - Make sure you have a gifted UI designer on your team
  - Make sure you have good programmers in your team
  - Make sure your team is dedicated
  - Do not outsource the project
Product Ownership

• It’s not product marketing
• It’s not project management
• Product owner:
  – He establishes what are the priorities of this product, what must be developed, and what can be left for later.
  – Deep understanding of technology, fast learner, smart, good knowledge of user experience design, deep knowledge of customers and users, close with developers, architects
Defining a product(1)

- When defining a product we must keep in mind the next questions:
  - Exactly what problem will this solve? (value proposition)
  - For whom do we solve that problem? (target market)
  - How big is the opportunity? (market size)
  - What alternatives are out there? (competitive landscape)
  - Why are we best suited to pursue this? (our differentiator)
Defining a product (2)

• When defining a product we must keep in mind the next questions:
  – Why now? (market window)
  – How will we get this product to market? (go-to-market strategy)
  – How will we measure success/make money from this product? (metrics/revenue strategy)
  – What factors are critical to success? (solution requirements)
  – Given the above, what’s the recommendation? (go or no-go)
Defining a product (3)

- Challenges:
  - Defining the purpose of the product
  - Assessing the size of the opportunity
  - Selling the product
Two Weeks Rule

• **Here is a tip for you:**

• Take the product and put it in front of customers **fast**, even before you are comfortable with it.

• Yes, we can worry that you can fail because the „product is not finished”, but the real learning comes from feedback.

• Product owners usually fall in love with the product and they will ignore the reality and feedback.

• Get the product idea in front of users fast, very fast (no more than two weeks), even paper, or slides, or... **you will learn from your users.**
Minimum Viable Product

• The smallest possible product that:
  – **Users** choose to buy
  – **Users** can figure out how to use
  – You can build and deliver fast (if users validate it)

• How can you find out if a product is viable?
  – prototypes
  – user testing
Core Competencies of a Product Organization(1)

• There are really two core components of any product organization:
  – User prototypes and user testing
  – User prototypes with split testing (live data)

• The main idea: test it quick and cheap to prove that „yes, we can”. 
Prototype

• Is a three-dimensional version of your vision

• You must use your creativity, using those skills that inspired your invention idea

• The main idea:
  you are building prototypes that aren’t real, not functional (fake data)
Prototype (2)

- The prototype provides the following advantages:
  - It enables you to test and refine the functionality of your design.
  - It makes it possible to test the performance of various materials.
  - It'll help you describe your product more effectively.
  - It will encourage others to take you more seriously.
Prototype (3)

• Benefits:
  – Very quick to build (hours or a few days)
  – Put the idea in front of the user very quickly and measure the response
  – Quick to develop, do not require developers, only designers can build them
  – Quick feedback, quick changes
User test (1)

• Answer the question: users can figure out how to use your product? (is it easy to use?)

• Usability test: the designer & engineer are watching the usability test. The product is easy to use, easy to do tasks – the benefits come fast.

• Now that they actually understand the product – (what it is, what it does) But this is the warmup.
User test (2)

• Would they use the product?
• Would they buy it?
• If not, what will it take for them to actually want to buy the product?

• But the real question should be:
  – On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely would you recommend this product to your friends/coleagues?
User test (3)

- Who should test the product?
User test (4)

• Categories
  – The Lovers = Innovators
  – The Irrationals = Early Adopters
  – The Efficients = Early Majority
  – The Laughers = Late Majority
  – The Comfortable = Laggers

• Advice: Never consider The Lovers!
User test (5)

- After user testing, there are some decisions to be made:
  - The wrong problem, adjust the product
  - The wrong aproach
  - Maybe this is the wrong customer (target) – there is somebody else in the business that actually need your help
  - Monetisation strategy
Practical example (1)

• Do you have an idea for a possible product?

• Can you make a prototype?

• Who will test your application?
Practical example (2)

- What do you think is more important (the technology or the idea)?
  - How many employees will you have?
  - How will you find them?
  - How many customers?
Conclusions

- It’s a fiendishly complicated task that requires great adaptability and creativity.

- It’s always your product’s fault for not being clear and intuitive enough.

- If you want to create the best product, you need the best people.

- Failing is not necessarily a bad thing. It’s more important to gain experience!
Questions

Questions are guaranteed in life; Answers aren't.