

Life is too short to build something nobody wants!

PRODUCT DISCOVERY



OUTLEARN COMPETITION

BY GERARD CHIVA

Preface

Since the beginning of 21st century companies building digital products have been improving significantly their capability to continuously ship quality software, however success rate for new products and features is still depressing.

Most of new products and features fail to gain significant market acceptance, with figures ranging between 50% to 90% depending on the industry.

Overall, companies are pretty good at building stuff, but many still suck at deciding what to build. That's exactly what Product Discovery is really good at: deciding what to build. Building the right thing, for the right audience.

Many companies bet all their investment in their first contact with customers as either an [MVP](#) or a full-fledged product. But even an MVP is too expensive and too late if that's their first real encounter with customers.

There are better, faster and cheaper ways to determine what to build than just building it.

Adopting a modern product discovery mindset and a continuous product discovery practice in your product teams¹ is a huge competitive advantage. It can save your company millions in products nobody wants to use.

In the overall process of building a product, digital businesses should shift a significant load of effort towards the discovery part and reduce the load in the delivery part.

¹ By product teams I mean the team in charge of transforming a business idea, strategic goal or customer need into a product and deliver it to the market.

Product Discovery

For those of you hearing for the first time about Product Discovery, I will define it as the continuous process of learning and validating what to build.

It is essentially characterized by discovering what the market is, what needs customers have, coming up with ideas for solutions and quickly validating them with rapid prototyping.

Product Discovery is a mindset and a continuous practice of modern product teams. It's about figuring out which metrics drive a business, understanding what customer problems we can solve to improve those metrics, generating ideas for fixing those customer problems, and then validating whether or not we were correct.

All that, before building anything.

Product Discovery is an ongoing process of learning what to build by exploring the market and validating the product before building it.

Why this Book?

With this book I want to help you getting started with product discovery at your organization.

The purpose of product discovery is to outlearn your competition, so perhaps you want to read the advice that follows.

Most people get excited when they first hear about our Product Discovery framework and are eager to try it. But the framework is the least important thing, what really matters is the mentality of the people around the product team.

Experience tells me that most companies struggle to put into practice these powerful principles and techniques in their context.

That's the reason I developed the FAST method for effectively introducing Product Discovery in organizations.

This book is meant for companies developing software-based products or using software as an enabler of their product or service: market-facing B2B or B2C digital products and services, software products for internal use or embedded software.

Structure of the Book

The book begins with an introduction to the main problem that product discovery seeks to solve: the obsession with solutions and outputs as opposed to understanding the problem and measuring outcomes.

In the chapters that come afterwards I describe my product discovery framework, how to successfully get started with it to set up your own discovery process, I review the principles and practices that enable product discovery, and I end with a scorecard which will help you self-evaluate your company's product mindset.

The central and most important part of this book is a review of the product discovery framework. Including an extensive chapter on how to use *Impact Mapping* to drive your product discovery efforts.

My recommendation is that you read the book in order, but you can also start with the product discovery scorecard at the end so that you can understand what you need to change and then go back to the beginning and learn how to do it.

Enjoy!

Gerard Chiva

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About the Author



I help companies build better products and executives to build leading product organizations

GERARD CHIVA has spent the last 20 years in functions related to technology. As an engineer, manager, consultant, agile coach, team coach, executive coach and product coach.

Gerard helps digital product companies to develop successful products, combining his experience in product strategy design, product management, organizational design, *Lean*, *Lean Startup*, *Agile* and executive coaching.

He is the co-founder and managing director of [AKTIA Solutions](#), a management consulting firm that works with its clients to develop successful products quickly, innovate and organize for the 21st century.

Gerard has a very wide experience, combining professional coaching, management, consulting, engineering and entrepreneurship. He has worked in different types of industries and different roles, which gives him a broad perspective on how organizations work.

He is passionate about *Lean*, [writes](#) about innovation, product management and operational excellence. He is also a youtuber, speaker at conferences and also teaches *Lean Startup* at BAU Design School in Barcelona.

