

WHY CATS KNOW MORE ABOUT **PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT** THAN HUMANS

A GUIDE TO CREATING BREAKTHROUGH PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
THAT STAND OUT AS THE ONLY CHOICE FOR YOUR MARKET



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Published by LicensingLab

2033 San Elijo Avenue #220

Cardiff, CA 92007

www.LicensingLab.com

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

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Part 1

Finding success in a product that customers hate

There's an old story, or perhaps it's an urban legend, of a company that developed a new, ultra-healthy cat food full of many nutrients that are lacking in other cat foods. This was all backed up by independent research that clearly demonstrated the value of these nutrients.

Next, focus groups produced a strong, positive reaction to this improved form of cat food. The benefits were clear and who wouldn't want to greatly improve their cat's health simply by feeding it a new brand of cat food with proven health benefits?

So based on these strong indicators, the company went all in and moved to a full roll out. Their initial pre-sale advertising campaign drew massive interest. After all, what dedicated cat lover wouldn't want to improve the health and lifespan of their beloved pet?

When it came to the day of actual sales, the product flew off the shelves. Pet stores couldn't keep it in stock. People were buying it by the case.

The company's management team was ecstatic. They proved that their hunch was right and people would buy this new cat food formulation by the truck load.

Or so they thought...

Just one month later, their sales plummeted to near zero. Store shelves were packed with the food and nothing was moving. No one was re-buying this perfectly formulated cat food.

Why not?

Because the company failed to test their sales in the real world *before* rolling out this new cat food. And what real sales showed was that while cat owners loved the idea of this food because of all the health benefits...

Cats hated it!

One bite and a cat would turn and walk away. And no amount of coaxing could get them to eat more of it.

Cats couldn't stand the taste, so regardless of how beneficial it might be for their pet's health, cat owners stopped buying this food completely.

The sad part is that this never had to happen. With just a bit of real-world testing *before* moving to production, this company would have clearly understood that their new cat food was a complete bust.

One more important note. As I mentioned, this story may be completely accurate or it may be a part truth, part fable. However, the financially disastrous results are accurate for many cat food brands.

In just the past couple years, large, established brands including Purina, Whiskas, Friskies, Fancy Feast, and Hills Science diet have all experienced significant failures due to releasing “new and improved” recipes that cats refused to eat. And those failures all resulted in massive losses in revenue.

This is not an isolated incident

The greater lesson here is that products and services must always be developed with a deep understanding of what customers want and need, *plus* the experience they want to have when satisfying their wants and needs.

Certainly, pet owners wanted their cats to have improved health and live longer. But the *experience* that cats had when eating the food, was a product killer.

Unfortunately, this isn’t uncommon. I’ve lost count of how many clients I’ve worked with who launched new products or services with little customer input and no regard for the experience their customers will have when using the product or service. And every time this is done, it’s inevitable that sales suffer – or the product fails completely.

A common mistake is not engaging with your customers in the early stages of product development. And then discovering after the fact, that if your product would have weighed less, customers would gladly carry it, instead of returning it to where they bought it. Or if your software actually had fewer options for carrying out a task, rather than so many options that it becomes cumbersome and confusing, you would have been far more successful.

The critical lesson here is that the conventional approach of focusing on features, benefits, and functions are not enough when it comes to developing successful products and services. Equally, if not more important, is the *experience* your customers have in the daily use of your product or service.

The single greatest reason companies fail to create the kind of products customers value the most

One quick note on terminology. Rather repeating the phrase “products or services” over and over, which is a bit cumbersome, from here on out, I’ll use the term “products” as a reference to both. So when I use the term “products”, please understand that the same information applies to both products and services.

With that in mind, let’s take a deeper look at the single greatest reason companies are failing to create the kind of products that generate loyal customers who eagerly buy from you year after year.

You've already seen in the opening example what happens when you create products based on internal company knowledge, rather than engaging with your customers during all phases of product development. So let's spend a few minutes examining why this happens – and most importantly why it continues to happen in companies of all sizes.

The problem isn't that companies aren't trying to create new products. Most companies do engage in new product creation.

The real problem is *the lens that companies view product development through*. In practical terms, it can be summed up this way:

- Companies are *product oriented*
- Customers are *experience oriented*

Companies are analytical in the development of new products. They look at adding new features and functions they believe their customers will like. At the same time, their analysis relies heavily on doing this in the most cost-effective way.

Sound familiar? If you're honest in your assessment of how you go about developing new products, what I've just described should be right on target.

But that is not how customers think of a product. And that goes for any product – yours, mine or your competitors.

Customers actually *use* a product. They *experience* the use of it in their everyday life. And experiencing something is entirely different than creating it in a series of planning meetings.

So in order to create the kinds of products your customers will use, value the most, recommend to others and continue to buy, you need to create products that give your customers a superior outcome AND a superior experience when getting that outcome.

A glimpse at a different way to develop innovative products

When you create products in the conventional way, you overlook a critical factor that will help you understand actual customer experience – and result in the development of far more successful products.

The factor I'm referring to is recognizing that the world is constantly changing around us. And with the rapid increase in new technology, communications methods, and culture, these changes are occurring at an ever-increasing rate.

New trends are constantly popping up in the areas of technology, business, culture, entertainment, the economy, peoples' personal lives, systems and procedures, and government regulations. And all these changes deeply affect how people live their lives.

Understanding this and being fully informed about all the various changes that affect your market is a key factor in developing products that better suit your customers' wants and needs.

Most importantly, the critical details about how all these factors affect your customers – and directly determine their buying choices – can only be acquired through communicating directly with your customers.

And this is why I refer to the proprietary process I've created that's informed at every step by your customers' actual wants, desires, experiences and buying choices, as **Customer Driven Design**.

A simple change that lets you create exceptional products and services your competitors can't hope to match

Effective product development requires that you engage with and understand your customers at the deepest level possible during the earliest stages of your project. Fortunately, this is relatively easy to do and I'll give you the specifics for implementing a few simple steps that let you do this in just a minute.

However, the even better news is that there are just four essential pieces of information you need to gather from your customers that will let you create breakthrough products your competitors can't hope to match. These four essential elements you need to clearly understand are:

- What was your customer experiencing that caused them to consider your product or service in the first place?
- What other products or services did your customer use before yours and what did they like and dislike about them?
- What other products or services have your customers bought that are related to yours and what was their experience in using them?
- What would the ideal outcome and experience look and feel like that customers want to have with your new product or service?

Hopefully, you can now see that your path to mastering the process of creating exceptional products and services isn't difficult at all. And in the remainder of this material, I'm going to lay out exactly how you do this.

To start, I'll give you six **Core Principles of Customer Driven Design** that embody the strategic changes needed to consistently create breakthrough products and services.

Then I'll share the 9 steps that eliminate all the hit-and-miss activities from your product development efforts that are so costly and frustrating, and let you reliably create exceptional products and services as often as you want.

So with this foundation in mind, let's dig into the details of how to use **Customer Driven Design** to create truly exceptional products and services.

Part 2

Adopting the Innovator's Outlook

Creating innovative, high-value products starts with a new outlook. An outlook rooted in the deep understanding of both your customer's desired outcome and the experience they want to have when getting that outcome, coupled with a new approach that combines the best aspects of both creative and logical thinking.

Six **Customer Driven Design Core Principles** anchor this new outlook. Let's take a look at each of these principles now.

CDD Core Principle #1

Innovative products are based on customer experience

I sometimes half-jokingly say that this should be Principles 1 to 100. That's how critical it is.

The majority of good companies don't fail due to poor management, poor marketing, or unstable economic conditions. They fail because they did not innovate new products – or upgrades to their existing products – that are superior to everything their competition is offering.

When you see a product go viral or experience exponential growth, it's because that product delivers a superior customer experience. In other words, your customer's daily life is greatly enriched by using it.

The problem is that in most companies, product development focuses almost exclusively on the product itself. The development team seeks to answer a host of questions that are primarily *about the product*.

- What improvements can be made to it?
- Why did people choose this product over another?
- What additional features would cause them to pay more for it?
- How can this be done in a way that minimizes expenses and maximizes revenue?

These kind of questions can only result in development efforts that center on the product itself. And as you've seen, that is nearly always a critical mistake.

Product development based on *customer experience* takes you in an entirely different direction. Rather than focusing on the product itself, the majority of your attention shifts to your customers with heavy emphasis on the *experience* they get by using your product in real life situations.

When you shift focus to peoples' behaviors, activities, needs, concerns and motivations, you gain a much deeper, enriched level of knowledge that results in the development of products that are far superior to your competitors. In addition, you often discover unstated needs and opportunities that lead to altogether new products you never would have considered without this detailed, enriched knowledge.

Up until now, developing products based on customer experience has most often been done intuitively. But relying on intuition leaves too much to chance.

The great news is that with a more effective, customer driven approach to product development that's presented here, you can leverage the power of actual customer experience in the development of all your new and existing products.

CDD Core Principle #2 **Innovation accelerates when you combine the best qualities of creative and logical thinking**

Your style of thinking affects every stage of the product development process. From conducting your research, evaluating possibilities, identifying problems, and selecting and testing your best new product ideas, everything is materially affected by your style of thinking.

The problem with the conventional style of product development is that it is heavily slanted toward logical thinking. While there is some consideration of the customer, the main goals are to create a product with attractive features and be able to produce it at a cost that allows for substantial profit. Risks and rewards are evaluated based on these factors.

However, every product affects customers' experiences by the way they use it in their everyday life. But logical thinking falls short when trying to address the *experience* of using a product.

In order to properly consider and address experience in the most productive way possible that yields exceptional product ideas, you need to engage a more creative form of thinking as well as logical thinking.

With the **Customer Driven Development** process, you use a new style of creative thinking while keeping logical, practical guidelines in mind at the same time. Since every step of this process considers customer experience as the core focus, the result is a more well-rounded and superior product than you'd get with just logical thinking or creative thinking on their own.

A good example to illustrate what I mean is to understand how Airbnb, the hugely successful online rental platform, was founded. At the start, Airbnb's customers were graphic artists visiting San Francisco for various trade shows. The problem their customers were facing was logical – too few hotel rooms available at too high a cost, especially for an industry where wages tend to be on the low side.

When the founders considered this problem, because they were graphic artists and the customers they wanted to serve were also graphic artists, they intuitively applied creative thinking along with logical thinking.

When they arrived at the solution – renting out part or all of the space in a private home or apartment – they instantly disrupted the market and created an altogether new form of rental experience.

Soon after, Airbnb’s founders realized their customer base was much broader in scope than just graphic designers. It was actually *anyone* looking for a less expensive, more personalized room rental experience.

This critical understanding, which could only be reached by clearly understanding both the ideal outcome their customers wanted and the experience they wanted to have when getting that outcome, resulted in Airbnb rapidly becoming a multi-billion dollar company.

As we proceed through this material, I’ll share more examples and tools for intentionally leveraging the power of combining creative and logical thinking.

CDD Core Principle #3 **Innovation takes place on the road**

If customer experience is a key driver of the product development process, then it only makes sense that you have to observe and talk with people about their experience. You also have to track their actual buying behavior to accurately discover exactly what people are buying as opposed to what you think might sell.

It isn’t enough to conduct a conventional survey or a focus group on the use of a product. Those methods are very limited in their range of response, and if they worked, companies wouldn’t continually have problems developing superior products.

So a key component of **Customer Driven Development** is to meet your customers where they live. Go to the places (physically or virtually) where they gather while using your product or service and observe their behavior. Talk to them about their lives in general and specifically how your product enhances their experience and what could be added to it to make their experience even better.

At the same time, use the wealth of customer buying history that’s available to you for free. There are many resources for doing this and I’ll cover a number of them later in this material.

This level of information required to create truly breakthrough products can’t be gathered with conventional research methods. Only *customer focused research* can provide the enriched information you need to create products that run circles around your competitors.

Customer focused research delivers a much deeper and richer level of information about features, benefits, your customers' actual experience (both good and bad) in using your product, and the history of similar products your customers have bought.

These insights are obviously more well-rounded – and extremely powerful. Plus, you'll often discover new attributes of a product, and possibly even entirely new products, you never would have thought of.

Taking these factors into consideration and creating a complete picture of the world in which your product operates can only lead to the development of higher quality products your customers will love and recommend to others.

CDD Core Principle #4 **Innovation can and should be planned**

Creativity is at the root of many innovations. But can creativity and innovation be planned?

By all means, they can!

And innovation should be planned and engaged in on a regular basis.

What prevents most companies from innovating new products more frequently is the premise that inspiration must occur organically, that it shouldn't be forced. But there's a considerable difference between forcing something and employing an innovative, proven system to stimulate and generate high quality product ideas on demand.

Planning for innovation does not in any way hinder your creativity. In fact, when done properly, just the opposite occurs. Using the systematic process you'll discover in this material, you'll soon see that inspiration and innovation can be regularly stimulated on a regular basis, any time you want.

CDD Core Principle #5 **Innovation is non-linear**

The process of innovation can be planned and scheduled because it is systematic. But at the same time, it is non-linear and doesn't always proceed in a straight line.

This makes perfect sense when you think about how your brain works. Often you'll identify a problem or opportunity, think about it, research it, talk to other people about it, and even begin to formulate ideas for solving or capitalizing on it.

Then, when you're seemingly doing nothing of major importance – driving in your car, taking a shower, playing golf, walking the dog – a brilliant solution pops into your mind, fully formed. That's because when you feed your brain information, even though you aren't working

on it consciously, your unconscious mind is working on it in the background while you're busy with other things.

Because you'll be gathering information in many different areas using many different methods, your brain will regularly be serving up "Aha!" moments. Each of these breakthroughs has the potential to pull you in a totally different direction, or at least to modify your direction to various degrees.

For this reason, the innovation process will always be non-linear, based on the way our miraculous brains do their best work.

CDD Core Principle #6
The greatest shortcut to creating high-value products
is customer buying history

One of the most popular ways that many experts recommend for creating products is to ask your customers what they want and then create it. But if you've ever used this method to survey your customers and created a product based on the results, you know that it often sells poorly or fails completely.

So why does this happen? Especially when people are actually trying to help you when they respond to your survey?

There are three reasons...

FIRST – Many people don't necessarily know what they want. They know what *problem* they want to solve or what *goal* they want to achieve, but they don't know how to get there.

And they're actually looking for *guidance from you*. So they aren't a great source for helping you decide which products or services to create and sell.

SECOND – When you conduct surveys, many people tell you what they think you want to hear.

That's just human nature. People actually want to be helpful when they do this. But it means that a lot of your results are highly inaccurate.

THIRD – People rarely give you the full story. They leave out many details but think they're giving you a complete answer.

Even open-ended question formats don't deliver the results you want. That's because they put all the burden of answering each question on the person taking the survey, when far superior results could be produced with the proper prompting.

But getting that prompting right, which you'll get an introduction to in this material, is an art in itself. And few businesses have even an inkling on how to do this.

Because of these three factors, you end up making decisions based on *inaccurate information*. And that's why a product or service that looked so promising ends up falling flat on its face.

Now, with the **Customer Driven Development** approach, we use something completely different from asking your customers what they want. Instead of relying only on customers' opinions, which are always sketchy, we focus a much greater portion of our attention on the *experiences* customers have with a product and the *history of what these customers and others like them have already bought*.

This new form of research fills in all the gaps, because the experiences your customers share, along with the documented records of what people have already bought, are always completely accurate. And this customer experience and history of what your customers and other people like them have actually bought give you the broadest possible set of data for creating products your competitors can't hope to match.

Part 3

The 9 Steps of Customer Driven Design

The **Customer Driven Design** process is made up of 9 steps. This 9-step process is very flexible and can be applied to just about any situation and on any scale. It can be used to create entirely new industry disrupters like the example I gave you of Airbnb. Or you can choose to use it to create massive new value in more conventional products.

Plus, the process can also be used to improve existing products by adding customer-driven features or functionality that turn a good product into a great product.

You can go as big or as small as you want. It's totally up to you. Either way, the process is identical.

With this understanding, let me give you a complete tour of the entire 9-step process. What you're about to discover is an easily repeatable, highly enjoyable process you can use to generate innovative ideas for products and services that have massive appeal and massive value.

Step 1: Define your customers and your goal

A cornerstone principle of **Customer Driven Design** is that *all product development always starts with your customers*. Instead of starting from the standpoint of "What kind of product would the most people be interested in", it begins with "who is our market and what are they most interested in".

While this may appear to be similar to the conventional product development approach, it's actually very different. First, it starts without a preconceived idea of any solution

When you use the conventional approach of trying to identify a product that the most people would be interested in, you've boxed yourself in from the start. But when you start by identifying the *interests* of your customers, both known and unknown interests unrelated to any product, you open up the possibility of identifying completely new and much higher-value products and services.

So the single most critical key to effective product development is that it must be *customer driven* – and not from the standpoint of just giving this lip service like most companies do. You actually have to connect with your customers, talk with them individually and in user groups. Get to know your customers, their unsatisfied needs, their hopes, their dreams.

This requires a real investment of time. Only by connecting directly with your customers, both on a 1-to-1 basis and in groups, can you truly begin to identify themes, needs, dreams and frustrations at a deep level that you can't get any other way.

By doing this, you might discover that while you thought your ideal customer had a certain set of attributes and behavior, the attributes and behaviors they actually have are much different than what you assumed. No other form of customer research can come even close to revealing the level of real life detail you'll gain this way.

This simple effort alone will put you miles ahead of your competition in creating an incredibly accurate ideal customer profile. And this profile is the first piece in a true foundation for creating products your competitors can't hope to match.

Once you've gathered this information, create your ideal customer profile. It should include attributes like gender, age range, profession, likes, dislikes, geographic region, things they are passionate about, and things they avoid at all cost.

Defining your goal

Starting out, you probably had a good idea of what your goal would be for your product – what type of product you want to develop. But now that you've gained a deeper knowledge of the real needs of real customers who use your product, your goal can be defined more accurately.

So now is the proper time to initially define your product. With this in mind, here's the key to properly defining your product in a way that will benefit you the most:

Isolate either a specific problem your ideal customer wants to solve or a specific opportunity they want to take advantage of

These can be existing problems and opportunities or future problems and opportunities you can act on now to gain a strong advantage over your competition. Let's use the toy industry as an example, since that's one of a number of industries I specialize in.

We'll start with identifying problems first. Three of the problems that face toy companies (my customers) these days include:

Problem #1 – Significantly diminished distribution since Toys-R-Us went bankrupt in 2017 and no one has stepped in to fill this gap.

Problem #2 – The challenges of stimulating children's interest in physical toys when electronic entertainment is ubiquitous, mesmerizing, and easy for a parent to stick in front of their child.

Problem #3 – Keeping informed of the constant rise and fall of various celebrities – both real and imagined versions, as branding toys with the images of a hot celebrity can create a windfall. But since this type of branding is often limited to one company in any given category, if you miss identifying the next rising star, it could result in the loss of tens or hundreds of millions of dollars in sales.

Next, let's look at the opportunities in the toy industry. Examples of three of the opportunities toy companies could take advantage of include:

Opportunity #1 – Integrating new technologies into existing or new toys in order to add features that haven't been available before.

Opportunity #2 – Creating ways to re-engage children with existing toys. After all, if you can achieve this, you have little or no costs for new tooling, manufacturing, distribution, or difficulty getting shelf space.

Opportunity #3 – Transporting trends from a different industry to the toy industry. For example, one very smart company, MGA Entertainment, noticed the millions of online views that box opening videos get for various toys.

So they used that knowledge to create a toy, called LOL Surprise, that incorporates box opening into the toy itself. As a result, they had the number one best-selling toy for the Christmas season of 2017 and 2018, selling over \$70 million worth of that toy in just a few weeks each year.

These are just a few examples of the kind of *customer driven* problems and opportunities you could use to initially define your product. And while the examples I just gave you are for the toy industry, you can easily see how this simple process can be applied to any industry.

One final, important point on initially defining your product. Unlike other business planning tools, which are logic driven and look to create a fixed solution, the product definition you create at this stage should be fluid. Think of it as a rough sketch of your end product.

That's because once you begin to gather more detailed research, you're likely to find that many aspects of your product change. These changes can range from a minor adjustment to certain features to a complete redefinition of your product. Or replacing your initial product with a completely different and more beneficial product.

So at this early stage, keep in mind that your product definition is simply a rough definition and it is not set in stone.

Step 2: Gather Deep Customer Intelligence, using a Sideways Survey

This step begins the crucial process of collecting a very different form of customer intelligence. Instead of focusing on features and functions like conventional surveys do at this stage, you need to deeply understand what motivates your customers – and how and why they make their buying choices.

This can only be done through asking a more indirect form of questions. Questions that come at the answers by using a different angle than you normally see.

In order to accomplish this, I've developed a tool I call the **Sideways Survey**. The purpose of the **Sideways Survey** is to collect a deep level of Customer Intelligence on two major areas that set your research (and the resulting products) apart from all other forms of research.

The **FIRST** major area is **Direct Customer Experience**, as reported to you directly by your customers. You'll see exactly how your questions are formulated on your short survey in just a minute.

And I want to remind you that the reason this information is critical to creating superior products is that companies design a product based on **features and functions** they think their market will find appealing – but customers judge your product by their **experience** when using it.

If you've ever used a kitchen device and said, "This is so odd. Why didn't they move the handle just half an inch to the left, so it doesn't rub against your thumb all the time?", then you understand the critical difference between the way companies design a product and the way customers *experience* using that product.

The **SECOND** major area you want to research is which products your customers are already buying – and which they're buying most frequently. Then, you'll evaluate the top sellers to see if any of their features could be incorporated into your new product – or if some feature triggers an idea for an altogether new use or new product.

Using the Sideways Survey to determine your customers' true experience and exactly what your customers are buying

So now your task is to find out from your customers the two primary factors we've been discussing.

The first factor is **Customer Experience**. What were your customers experiencing that caused them to consider purchasing your product? And what has their experience been with using your product? Both of these are critical attributes that will help you create products that are superior to anything your competitors offer.

The second factor is discovering the exact products and services your customers buy most frequently in order to fully achieve their goal.

But remember, conventional surveys don't work very well for this. They are one-dimensional and prone to biased answers.

That's why so many products that are developed based on asking your customers what they want, turn out to be total flops. So instead of asking your customers what they want, the **Sideways Survey** is specifically designed to measure what they are experiencing and actually buying.

The actual experience a customer has along with the history of what they have recently bought are always far more accurate identifiers of what they will buy more of and what features and functions they value most.

Unlike conventional surveys that get predictable, bland answers, the **Sideways Survey** doesn't ask people what they want or what they think of a list of options presented to them. Instead, it uses *just a few questions*.

All of the questions you'll use are written in a social media style. These mimic a common style of questions you see on social media every day, that people have a strong tendency to interact with.

Because they feel so friendly and familiar, the **Sideways Survey** questions generate a high level of engagement and maximize the number of responses you get. Most importantly, they reveal the *real-life experiences your customers have and the exact products and services* your customers are buying right now.

With the results you get from these questions, you'll gain a much deeper understanding of what experiences, outcomes, features, and functions matter most to your customers. This deep level of knowledge will trigger new ideas for your product and possibly even generate a number of altogether new product ideas.

Creating your Sideways Survey questions

So what exactly does a set of **Sideways Survey** questions look like? It depends on what type of product you want to develop and what goal it helps your customers achieve.

But let me give you a real-life example here. This example gives you a great foundation to start out with and as you get more experience, you can start crafting other questions of your own. Just keep in mind that the goal is to identify exactly what your customers are experiencing and what they're already buying and you can't go wrong.

For our example, here are the questions I created that will give you a deeper understanding of how **Sideways Survey** questions are structured. And more importantly, why they produce such accurate results.

These are the four questions I developed for a client of mine who sells software for creating graphics to the business market. For this project they were looking to refresh one of their current graphics products and for ideas for new products, given the ever-increasing changes and improvements in technology.

Sideways Survey Question 1: What were you experiencing right before you bought this software?

(It could be poor results from other graphics software – or a specific need you were feeling intensely)

Sideways Survey Question 2: What single component or function of this software would make you NOT buy it if it was missing?

Sideways Survey Question 3: If you could change one thing about this software, what would it be?

Sideways Survey Question 4: What other products or services have you bought to help you create better graphics?

As you can see, the structure and content of these questions is very different than what you normally see in conventional surveys. And there are a number of important points about how these questions are designed.

FIRST – they don’t ask people what they think they would buy. Instead, they are designed to generate clear, specific answers about *what your customers experience and what else they have already bought*.

You’ll also notice that the first three questions all focus on *customer experience*. And only the final question is devoted to actual customer buying history.

Then, in Step 3, we’ll use the answers to this final question as input for greatly expanding your knowledge of a wide range of related products and services your customers have actually bought – along with which of those they value the most.

SECOND – these questions are posed in a natural, “social media” style. You’ll frequently see questions posted on social media that ask:

“What’s the best graphics package that’s easy to use?”

“What’s the best graphics package for my staff other than Adobe products?”

“What’s your experience been with the update to ABC Software. Is it worth updating?”

This style of questions always generate a lot of engagement, answers and opinions. And that’s exactly what you’re looking for.

Also, I rarely ask more than four questions in a **Sideways Survey**. And sometimes, I’ll use just two or three if some of these aren’t relevant to the product you want to develop or improve.

I do this for two reasons. First, you don’t want people to rush through their answers. So give them room to think before they answer.

Second, you don’t want to take too much of your customers’ time. People are always happy to answer a few questions, but if you give them a long list of 10 or more questions, a high percentage of customers will bail on you.

Start making a list of your product ideas

As you review the results of your **Sideways Survey**, you'll start to get a wealth of strong ideas for creating your product. At this point, just start a list to capture all your ideas.

But don't do anything more than starting your list.

To go all in on a product idea at this early stage, regardless of how promising it may appear to be, is a huge mistake. As you proceed through the complete process, that great idea is likely to be modified, making it even greater. Or you may discover another product idea that is of such high quality, your earlier ideas are no longer useful.

Step 3: Research your customers' expanded buying history

Circling back to the core principle that drives **Customer Driven Design**, in Step 1, I told you that: *all product development always starts with your customers.*

But more accurately, customer wants, needs and behavior, and experience inform *every step* of an effective product development process, not just the start. So in this Step, we're really going to ramp things up and conduct research in a way that you've never seen before. A way that is far more accurate and substantially more productive than traditional research.

Plus, unlike traditional product research that is primarily done through focus groups of paid participants who have little or no knowledge of your type of product, ALL of our research is conducted with the actual people in your market and their real-life use of your product.

If this sounds like it might be complicated or expensive, let me assure you that it isn't. You see, what we're going to use for our research is actual **Customer Buying Behavior**. You're going to develop ideas for your product using the actual history of what people are already buying.

Why? Because the best predictor of what people will eagerly buy more of is what they're already buying.

In fact, this concept is so critical to creating products your competitors can't hope to match that I'm going to repeat it again:

*The best predictor of what people will eagerly buy more of
is what they're already buying*

So where do you find the documented **Customer Buying Behavior** of people in your market? By looking at the products and services that they are already buying and are extremely happy with.

For products, this information is readily available by browsing best-selling products on Amazon.com, WalMart.com, and Google Shopping. Yelp and other review sites are valuable sources of this information as well.

For services, look at the threads on user group discussion lists that generate the strongest interest. Pay specific attention to the strongest likes and dislikes that users talk most about. Surprisingly, Yelp and other rating services can provide a wealth of information for services as well.

For both products and services, the forums for industry trade associations are also a rich source of customer buying choices, customer preferences, and customer complaints.

Plus, for both products and services, a simple search of “best selling (whatever your product or service is)” on Google will often return a ton of valuable information.

Collect as much information as possible at this stage. Don’t filter anything out at this point as long as it’s relevant – just collect, collect, collect.

You’re looking to identify those products and services your customers bought and highly praise. And those that they bought that they would not buy again. Both give you valuable insights into the features and functions your customers value the most *plus* the ideal experience they want to have.

As you proceed through this Step, you’re likely to come up with many more excellent product ideas. But for now, it’s too early to commit to any idea. Just add them to your growing list and move on to the next step.

Step 4: Enhance your research with the proper AI prompts

Let me begin this Step by making it clear that I would never rely on Artificial Intelligence on its own to develop any product or service. Because truly effective product development requires original, creative thinking, it can only be achieved through your own personal effort.

However, where AI can make a great contribution to the product development process is by using it to *enhance* the research and any ideas you’ve already come up with. And when used properly, it can make significant contributions to stimulating new ideas for developing a breakthrough product.

This is why in the **Customer Driven Design** process, the use of AI is only introduced *after* you’ve developed a strong foundation of customer originated ideas. At this point, we are now ready to enhance and improve the ideas you’ve created. And to potentially spark even more new insights and ideas.

All it takes is feeding your AI tool of choice the information you’ve collected and asking it for recommendations by making requests known as “prompts”.

Which AI tool should you use?

There are dozens, if not hundreds of AI tools available for research. Many specialize in one form of research, such as scientific or literary research.

However, for the type of market research that we'll be doing, the two best AI tools I've found are ChatGPT and Perplexity.ai. Both work equally well and offer free and paid versions. Currently, I'm using the paid version of ChatGPT for my own research, which costs about \$15 per month.

That could change in the near future if the next release of Perplexity offers deeper, more accurate research or if a new AI research tool comes along with superior features. But there's no need to spend any time worrying about which AI to use. Both ChatGPT and Perplexity perform extremely well for market research and that isn't likely to change. So just use whichever one you prefer.

So let's move on and I'll demonstrate how to use the AI tool of your choice to enhance your research for your product development projects.

Three steps for using AI to enhance your product development ideas

Using the AI tool of your choice to generate high-quality, enhanced ideas for your product development projects is relatively easy. It consists of just three steps:

Step 1 – Feed AI your base information

Step 2 – Issue your initial prompt

Step 3 – Stack on additional prompts to generate deeper levels of information

So let's look at the details for each of these steps.

Step 1 – Feed AI your base information

In order for AI to respond to your prompts with the highest quality results, it's important to feed it a base of information to use as a starting point. While you could just start prompting without base information, feeding AI a foundation to start with will always produce better results. And since it takes very little to do this – and you already have that base information from your research in the previous Steps – your first step here will always be to feed your AI this base information.

In the **Sideways Survey** that was conducted for a graphics software package in Step 2, one of the components you identified is other graphics packages your customer have actually bought.

Next, when you continue the research process I gave you in **Step 3** to expand your knowledge of your customers' buying history, you'll find a long list of other software and training products your customers rate highly for creating graphics.

The list of products you've built in these two Steps will make up the base information that we're going to feed into your AI tool. This is done by uploading your list of products into your AI tool and asking it to educate itself on all the details of each of these products. Remarkably, any AI tool can accomplish this task in just a minute or two.

Step 2 – Issue your initial prompt

A prompt is simply a question you ask AI to answer or a command you give it to produce a specific result. So now that we've loaded your base information into your AI tool, we're ready to issue your first prompt.

For this initial prompt, we're going to ask your AI to provide a deeper level of enhanced information, based on the information we've just primed it with. Here's what our first prompt will look like:

Using the information you've just read, please give me a comprehensive list of any additional highly rated software, graphics packages, tools for creating quality graphics, or tools for improving graphics that aren't included in the information I provided you. All items you list must be highly rated by actual customers rather than by industry reviewers.

You'll notice that I've referenced the base information I want to use – the list of products I uploaded into the AI – in my prompt request. That request is asking AI to use this base information to create a comprehensive list of other highly rated graphics packages and tools in addition to what I already have. And I've explicitly told the AI that everything it adds must be highly rated *according to actual customers*.

There are three important points to notice about this prompt.

Point #1 – It's simple. While you can make your prompts as detailed and complex as you'd like, I find that the best results are produced by keeping your prompts thorough, but clear and simple. Give your AI as much information as needed, but no more.

Point #2 – It's stated using our most critical factor, your customer's viewpoint. The final four words of this prompt, "according to actual customers", focuses the AI on the approach you want it to use when compiling and delivering your results. Being specific in this way helps make sure the results you get are as accurate and valuable as possible.

Point #3 – It's polite! You'll notice that I used the words "please give me" when structuring this prompt. It's been my experience, and I've been told the same by a number of AI experts, that a polite prompt generates the best, most extensive results. While I can't give you

conclusive proof that this is true, “please” is just one additional word, so it can’t hurt to include it.

The results of your initial prompt

Once you’ve issued your prompt, your results will be returned in about 5 seconds. How amazing is that!

However, while this is great, we are NOT going to jump online and start researching the good and bad points of each of the products on the list your AI has just returned. Instead, we’ll have our AI do that research for us.

Step 3 – Stack on additional prompts to generate deeper levels of information

Prompt Stacking is the process of issuing a series of prompts where each prompt builds upon the results of your prior prompts.

One of the best features of any AI tool is that it remembers the results of all your prompts. So you can leverage its memory to refine and expand your prompts, with the results of each additional prompt creating more and more valuable information.

There’s no fixed limit as to how many prompts you can or should issue. Your goal is to issue enough prompts to generate a thorough, high-value set of research. I usually find that this requires from 3 to 5 prompts, but it can sometimes require a few more. Once you start using AI for this type of research, you’ll quickly learn to intuitively know when your research is complete.

For the sake of example, let’s look at three additional prompts you might issue to create a powerful collection of research you can use to create your product. As you’ll see, the object of the additional prompts you issue is to gain real, usable details for improving your product development efforts.

Stacked Prompt #2

For our second prompt in this stack, we’re going to issue this request to our AI:

Using the list you just returned, please list all the best attributes of each of these resources, as reported by their customers

Look familiar? Of course it does!

This prompt is short, to the point, clear, and makes your request in a polite way. And it “feeds” your AI the *information base* you want it to use in producing its results.

Once you send this request to your AI, because it remembers the results of your prior prompts and it already has the data on all these resources stored in its memory, the results you'll get are returned in just seconds. Literally a few seconds!

You couldn't possibly do any meaningful research on your own in just a few seconds, but the results returned based on this type of prompt are pure gold. These results do a number of great things for you.

FIRST – you'll begin to see a number similar ideas recurring for many of the attributes of each resource for creating graphics (or whatever you're researching). These attributes that repeat frequently show you that they are highly valued by *paying customers*.

So be sure to add these attributes to your list of ideas. And you may want to create a special category for your two or three most repeated attributes, so you remember that they are of the highest value.

SECOND – you'll see some attributes that are new and you hadn't considered. Be sure to add these new ideas to your list.

THIRD – many of these repeated ideas and new ideas will spark additional ideas of your own. So you know what to do – add them to your growing list!

Stacked Prompt #3

For our third prompt in this stack, we're going to issue this request to our AI:

Now, using the same list you just created, please list all the most disliked attributes of these resources, as reported by their customers

Sounds very familiar, right?

Short, tight, polite, and it provides your AI with the *information base* to use.

Here again, because AI stores your previous results and uses its massive memory, the results to this prompt are returned in just a few seconds. Astounding!

Some of the ideas returned here that you'll want to include on your research list are complaints about packages, tools, features, difficulty of use, poor instructions, slow response time, and anything else that stands out to you when you review this list.

Stacked Prompt #4

Now we're ready to step things up to the next level. Using the information we've collected so far, we're going to ask our AI to actually create a potential product!

Here's the next prompt in our stack that we'll use to do this:

In your opinion, based on the attributes you've listed, what combination of the best attributes minus the worst attributes would produce an ideal graphics software package or improved graphics software tool?

Once you issue this prompt and see the results, you'll almost always be amazed by the richness of features and details. Not only will your AI create new products, new tools, and new improvements, but the depth of detail it will give you is impressive.

However, does this mean that you're done generating ideas and now you're ready to start creating your graphics software? Not at all.

What this AI enhanced research gives you is a glimpse of what an excellent graphics software package or tool might look like. Most importantly, this view is created through the lens of what paying customers liked and disliked the most about a variety of highly rated related products.

The key point to remember is that running this prompt stack has *enhances* the ideas you already have. It adds to them, helps you note others to be sure to avoid, and sparks a wealth of new ideas. But this is only the next step in the complete process and not the end of the process.

Now, the research stage is complete. And we're ready to move on to a new way to combine the best aspects of both creative and logical thinking to create breakthrough products your competitors can't hope to match.

So let's move on to the next Step where we'll begin to do exactly that!

Adding to your list of product ideas

As you go through this process of using AI to enhance your product ideas, you're going to get a ton of new ideas. Each prompt on its own may trigger a huge wave of new ideas.

You know what to do with those ideas at this point. Just add them to your growing list, but don't do anything further with them yet.

Step 5: Create new product ideas

One of the big problems that significantly limits most people's product development efforts is not that they aren't doing enough thinking. It's that they aren't doing *the right type of thinking*.

In this step, we're going to take a giant leap forward with a new style of thinking for developing high-value ideas. Here's the key principle that drives this step:

The better the quality and range of questions you ask, the higher the quality of your ideas will be

For most people, the product development process focuses on just three questions:

- What functions and features does this product need to be better than our competitors' products?
- What do we need to do to correct the problem that's occurring with this product?
- How do we do this in the most cost-effective way?

But here's the problem with these questions. Do you really think these questions will produce an exceptional product your competitors can't hope to match?

Of course not!

All they will produce is the same old mundane type of product ideas you've settled for in the past. To overcome this, you need a wide-ranging set of questions designed to generate dozens, and even hundreds, of ideas.

Now, it will turn out that some of these ideas won't be useful. They will either be too extravagant, too frivolous, or too expensive to produce.

At the same time, many of these ideas will be of the highest value possible. Ideas that will give you a powerful competitive advantage that lets you capture and keep greater market share. Ideas that you couldn't generate any other way.

When I run my complete **Customer Driven Design** process with clients, I actually use 31 idea stimulating questions. The complete application of all 31 questions would take a few hours to thoroughly demonstrate.

We obviously don't have time to cover all of them here, but since our goal is to understand the value of *better questions* in producing better ideas, let me show you exactly how this works.

At this point, you should have a long starter list of ideas you created from the previous Steps. Using this list, and more importantly, the in-depth knowledge you've gained of your customers (the outcome and experience they want) and the products they buy and value the most, you're going to ask yourself a wider range of questions to generate a wider range of potential product ideas.

As with all brainstorming, you want to eliminate any criticism of ideas during this initial stage. The idea is to create as many ideas and idea fragments as possible.

Good ideas, bad ideas, crazy ideas, stupid ideas, ideas that have no hope of working, ideas that look like sure winners at first glance, ideas that will open up or change entire industries, ideas that will rock the world – *every type of idea possible*.

Start by reviewing every idea and all the knowledge you’ve gained up to this point. This will “prime the pump” for effective idea creation. It should only take 5 to 10 minutes.

Now it’s time to start creating a much deeper, enriched list of product ideas. As I’ve mentioned, my complete process uses 31 idea stimulating questions to elicit great ideas. So let me share a couple of them that are particularly effective to give you some insight into how they work.

One of my favorites is a pair of questions called **Good Cop/Bad Cop**. Here’s what it looks like:

Good Cop: What would be the *best* (or largest, or grandest) idea possible for achieving this goal or solving this problem?

Bad Cop: What would be the *worst* idea possible for achieving this goal or solving this problem?

These two questions work in concert with the in-depth research you’ve conducted to create a wealth of great ideas. Often, the biggest, grandest ideas you generate this way will need to be pared down to some degree. But the important point is that they give you a much more expansive range of ideas to work with.

On the other hand, the worst ideas you conjure up can still be incredibly useful. A few may contain a kernel of an idea that could be modified to give your product benefits you wouldn’t have seen any other way.

For example, one time when I was working with a client, we had a team of nine people from various departments in the company taking part in an idea generating session. While we generated a number of highly valuable product ideas, we really struck gold with the **Bad Cop** question:

What would be the worst idea possible for achieving this goal or solving this problem?

Let me tell you there were a ton of answers, many of them absolutely hilarious. And at some point, a programmer on the client’s web development team blurted out, “Give it away for free!”

Somehow, something clicked with this that motivated me to ask, “Have you ever given away any of this as a free trial?”

The answer was “No”.

I then dug a bit deeper and asked, “Would it be possible to give a portion of the product away for free to demonstrate how well it works?”

It turned out that this could be done fairly easily. A few smaller portions of the product were identified and then the team selected the one that did the best job of demonstrating the capabilities of the full product.

However, instead of giving this portion away for free, we decided to charge a nominal fee, about \$15. This was done to more accurately qualify each prospect, eliminating the tire kickers and keeping only those prospects who were truly interested in the product.

In addition to the product sample, there was a printed insert with a short description of the complete product along with the offer of a great discount to purchase it now. With this new direction, my client’s team was really excited. They felt that this new idea they generated was going to be a winner – and that they never would have come up with it without using this process.

Also, because this portion of the product already existed as a component of the complete product, the entire packaging and new offer were ready to test in just two weeks. And to say I was surprised by the results at the end of the test period would be an understatement.

The client told me that this restructured version of their product outsold their previous best efforts by more than 410%. Not too shabby for one “bad” idea!

What this demonstrates is precisely what I stated at the beginning of this Step. If you want to create superior products or product improvements, you have to ask better questions.

Step 6: Refine your new product Ideas

In Step 5, you created a long list of ideas. In doing this, the focus was on quantity – creating a blizzard of as many ideas as possible. There was no censoring of ideas and no criticism at that stage.

Now we’re going to shift gears to focus on idea quality. You’ll review your ideas, modify some, improve others, and send many to the trash. And you’ll also rearrange and refine promising ideas to make them even better.

This is both a creative phase and logical phase at the same time. The result is that only the highest quality ideas get improved, accepted, and moved forward.

The first thing to do is eliminate any ideas that obviously won’t work or aren’t viable. An idea might be too frivolous. It might be too complex. It might be mundane.

It might cost too much to implement. Or it might take an inordinately long time to implement. Bottom line, any idea that's clearly of low quality is immediately eliminated.

Next, of the ideas that are left, you'll determine which are your best ideas. There are many considerations that go into judging the merits of a product idea. Some of these include:

- How closely does it match what your customers most want and need?
- Would it create a massive wave of word-of-mouth with your customers?
- Would your competitors feel like they're losing ground when you release this?
- How much will it cost to achieve?
- How quickly can it be implemented?
- How much profit potential does it have?
- Are there any legal considerations?
- Are there significant back-end opportunities built into this?

These are just some of the points to consider, but it's a good starting list. Using this process, you keep going through your list of ideas, drilling down until you're left with a very short list of your highest quality, highest value ideas.

The idea is to do this in multiple iterations, paring down your list of product ideas each time. When you've completed this paring process, you should have no more than 3 to 5 ideas remaining on your list.

Step 7: Evaluate and select your single best product idea

Now that you've narrowed your choices down to the 3 to 5 highest value ideas, it's time to pick the best of the best!

At this point, you must decide which of the remaining product ideas is the single most valuable idea to carry you to your business goal.

I want to emphasize here that you must pick *just one idea*.

No matter how great all your ideas may seem, you have to reduce your list to a single, breakthrough product idea.

Here's why. If you really want to succeed, you're going to have to rally all your efforts around a single new product idea. You're going to have to focus every last ounce of energy and enthusiasm on fully developing and launching your product.

You simply can't do everything that's needed to succeed at carrying out two or three monster ideas at the same time. I'm sorry to say, but if you try to carry out three breakthrough ideas at the same time, you're certain to become a three-time loser.

So accept that you have to choose just one of your gems to work on for now. You can identify your single best product idea by using the following formula.

How to evaluate your best ideas and pick the single most valuable idea of them all

How do you go about picking just one product idea from your remaining list of blockbuster ideas? How do you determine which one is most likely to meet or exceed your goal?

Here are six questions to ask to help you make your decision:

- Which idea does the best job of over-delivering on your customers' wants and needs?
- Which idea is the best fit with what you're currently doing and where you want to be?
- Is this idea realistic to devote one year to? Can it actually be developed and implemented during a one-year time period?
- Am I passionate about this idea?
- How much do I stand to gain if I succeed with this product?
- What's the most I could lose if I don't succeed with this product? Can I bear that loss if it actually happens?

It can be a long road to bringing a new product idea to market. Answering these questions and selecting your single best product idea makes sure you have the best fit possible, so you and your team will stay committed and enthusiastic throughout the entire implementation process.

What to do with your remaining ideas

One last thing. Don't throw out your other breakthrough product ideas. Save them and see if you might use them later.

But always get your breakthrough product fully developed and launched before starting work on any other ideas.

Step 8: Prototype your best product idea

Now that you've selected your single best idea, it's time to test it in the real world. Testing interest in your new product is a critical. At the same time, this is one of the most commonly overlooked stages.

Just think about those cat food failures. Had any of those companies bothered to test with their real customers – the cats who actually eat their food – they would have saved a tremendous amount of wasted time, effort, and money.

Just like those cat food companies, far too many companies jump directly into a full roll out. But as you've seen, rolling out a product prematurely can be a costly, time-consuming mistake. So I always recommend developing a *rough prototype* to test your best product idea.

Creating a rough prototype is the key that will save you a substantial amount of time and money. There's no need to create a fully functioning version of your product in order to test the market. That just creates significant, unneeded expense.

Plus, the time required to create a fully functional version of your product delays determining whether or not the market is truly interested in it. And all that time and money will be lost if your product turns out to have much less appeal than you thought it would.

So let's look at three ways to create your prototype. All are quick and inexpensive.

For a **physical product**, a rough prototype can be as simple as a detailed sketch for a simple product or a short animation to demonstrate the functions of a more complex product. Those are the primary methods I personally use.

For a **training program** or a **service**, your rough prototype can be a colorful, mocked up cover and a description of the features of the training program or service.

For **software**, a short demo of the entire system or even just a few key functions makes an excellent prototype.

So there's never any need to build out the full product, a complete web site, and all the other factors that go into launching the completed version of a product. A rough prototype gives you everything you need to fully test your product's appeal.

And this goes hand-in-hand with the final Step in the process. So let's take a look at that final step now.

Step 9: Test your prototype and finalize your solution

In Step 1 of this process, I emphasized that the single most critical key to effective product development is that it must be *customer driven*. And that means that you have to connect with

your customers, talking with them individually and in user groups, and using surveys that go well beyond the surface. The object of all this is to get to know your customers at a much deeper level – their unsatisfied needs, their hopes, their dreams, the experiences they’ve had, and the kind of experience they want to have.

Why? First, because that’s where the real breakthroughs are to be found. Customers actually use and *experience* your product on a daily basis. So it’s only natural that they can tell you much more about what they love and what’s missing from your product than your staff can.

Second, because no one else does this, getting in-depth, first-hand knowledge from your customers gives you the ability to create products your competitors can’t hope to match. Which means you can capture far greater market share and generate a large group of raving, repeat customers in a world where customer loyalty is difficult to find.

So it’s only natural that this final Step is also *customer driven*. In keeping with this practice, the guiding principle for all testing of product ideas is that all tests should be conducted as *real world tests*. Meaning that all testing must be conducted as initiatives to make real sales to real customers.

Nothing else can compare to attempting to make real sales to real customers. Nothing else can possibly equal the feedback you gain from doing this.

Here’s why. Focus groups, one of the most commonly used methods of conventional testing, are a complete waste of time and almost always create false positives in your results. These groups are made up of people with time on their hands who are paid minimum wage to review a wide range of products over a period of a few days.

The problem is that very few, if any, of these people come from the actual customer base for your product. So whatever results you get will be inaccurate at best.

Another popular form of testing is displaying your product at trade shows. There are a number of significant problems with doing this.

First, it makes no sense to broadcast your breakthrough idea to your competitors at this early stage. Second, you have no control over who attends a trade show and you have to rely on the show’s demographic description of their attendees.

These demographics are always incomplete at best. So you’re really doing nothing more than shooting in the dark. And in most cases, very few trade show attendees will be your actual customers.

Real World Testing 101

There are many ways to conduct real world testing in order to gain accurate feedback on the popularity of your new product. Here are just a few of them – all using the rough prototype you created in the previous Step.

For a **physical product**, the easiest way to test is to send your email list a First Movers Discount offer. You create your copy and use the illustration of your product to offer a nice discount on a pre-production basis.

Think Elon Musk and Tesla – he uses this approach with all new Tesla models. People are shown a mock-up of the car and a description of its features and benefits. They can then put down a pre-production deposit to reserve one of these cars when it goes into production.

For a **training program** or a **service**, testing is almost identical to testing a physical product. However, you can provide a deeper level of engagement by offering a segment of your training or a portion of your service, along with a First Movers Discount. This gives you the ability to get feedback on your actual training or service as well as generating sales.

Testing **software** in a real world environment can get a bit more tricky. One option is to use screen shots and a detailed description of your software's functions in your sales material.

Another option is to create a simulated demo of some or all of the functions of your software. This can easily be done with mocked up screen shots to create a short video.

When it comes to testing a new product, always remember that the only results that really count are *actual sales of that product*. Without these results and feedback, you can't properly determine whether or not to step up to full production mode.

Actual sales are the only true test of a product's viability. No survey, poll or focus group testing can even come close to the results your market tells you through real world sales.

Wrap up

I hope you've enjoyed learning about **Customer Driven Design** and see how it will help you develop higher quality products and services. Higher quality from the standpoint of doing the best job possible of helping your customers achieve their most important goals or solve their most damaging problems – all while having a great experience when doing it.

After all, if your products succeed at being of greater value to your customers in the ways they tell you they need the most, you can't help but increase your sales, your referrals, and a much greater level of customer loyalty. Not too bad for something as simple as paying attention to what your customers and your market tell you.

All you have to do is listen.

About Bob Serling



Bob Serling is a 35-year product development, licensing, and marketing veteran and the founder of LicensingLab. His innovative take on product development, licensing, and marketing has helped thousands of businesses and entrepreneurs produce exceptional results.

Bob has been the monthly marketing columnist for Success Magazine... invented a skateboard toy featuring Tony Hawk's branding that was sold in toy stores, department stores and websites all over the world... co-created and licensed advanced assessment software currently being used by many Fortune 500 companies... created a one-and-a-half page prospecting letter for a client that landed an agreement for a \$25 million project by being sent to just one prospect – then licensed that same letter to 14 different industries... and much more.

He's perhaps best known for having pioneered his proprietary process of customer-driven product development, the **Customer Driven Framework**. This proprietary method shifts the focus from company determined "functions, features and benefits" to using actual customer experience and buying history to develop exceptional products that give you a powerful competitive advantage.

Bob offers a range of product development and product improvement solutions to fit any company's budget. To schedule a short call by Zoom and have Bob help you identify the most profitable options for developing or improving your product, just send an email to:

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