

Ideas Scoring: Prioritizing Product Creation



The Importance of Idea Scoring

There are 8-Key Elements of the **Digital Product Lifecycle**, and it all starts with a good idea.

The first key element, Prioritization, will help you determine which products are most important to develop. The primary prioritization method is Idea scoring to determine which ideas are worth pursuing into digital products.

If it's a strong idea, it has a higher likelihood of having a successful launch. If it's weak, it needs weeded out. Idea Scoring will quickly, and effectively, determine the ideas worth moving forward through a simple points method and a cross-functional team.



Introduction to Idea Scoring

At this stage, we are evaluating all of the ideas for new digital products. The ones valued the highest will move into the Analysis & Validation phase - the next key element of the digital product lifecycle.

Factors that determine successful prioritization:

- **Sorting** ideas
- Consistent **Scoring** criteria for all ideas
- Regular **Cadence** for vetting ideas
- **Cross-functional team** of scorers



Sorting

The volume of ideas can be pretty high. We recommend a single person do a quick sorting before moving to a lightweight scoring effort by a cross-functional team. The sorting categories are:

1. Not a product idea, refer to appropriate department
2. Idea is not clear, request more detail
3. Send to review team

Submitters want to know their ideas are considered, therefore a timely response with outcome is important. This small step ensures ideas keep flowing from staff.



Scoring

For each idea submission, score it using the following five criteria to determine which products are best fit to move into the next phase. Score with a high, medium or low for each criteria, or on a scale of 1 - 10. If your company prioritizes some things more than others - adjust the weight of the criteria.

Criteria:

1. Strategic fit/alignment to the organization
2. Level of effort, efficiency of execution and capabilities
3. Impact to the organization or the bottom line
4. Time to market, how fast can the work get done
5. Probability of success

Revise the list to include criteria unique or important to your organization, but 5 - 7 is a good number. Make it work for you, just don't go overboard – deeper dives will occur for approved ideas and with actual customers. And a good idea will resurface if it was submitted in a suboptimal way and dropped at this point.



Cadence

Think fast. When it comes to fostering new ideas - there's an untouched spreadsheet somewhere in the organization housing them. And that deadpool kills idea flow. Companies with strong innovation and new product programs have a consistent review and feedback cycle.

The scoring system we recommend is purposefully lightweight, so that it can work within a 60-minute, weekly meeting. If idea volume doesn't support a weekly meeting, find the cadence that works best for your organization. We recommend at least quarterly. Make sure the meetings are held and any results are shared with the idea submitter, if not the entire company.



Cross-Functional Review Team

The final factor to successful prioritization is the makeup of your team. We find a cross-functional team, from core-business functions, can go through a list of ideas pretty quickly and make high-quality decisions.

Watchouts: This is not meant to be a massive undertaking. Cross-functional teams using their combined experience can generally make a pretty good call. Make sure results are captured and shared. Visibility as to the outcome and priority will ensure overlooked or misjudged ideas are brought back.

Contact Us

To learn more about idea scoring and digital product prioritization,
or to talk with an expert in this area:

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