

Gartner Research

Product/Service Design and Creation Primer for 2024

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Initiatives: Product/Service Design and Creation

The design and creation of a product or service requires effective product roadmap execution and strong collaboration across teams within a company. Product managers must systematically approach the definition, experience and development of valuable solutions to customer problems.

Scope

This initiative provides insights and best practices to create more effective relationships between product, design and engineering, and maximize customer value through collaboration.

Topics in this initiative include:

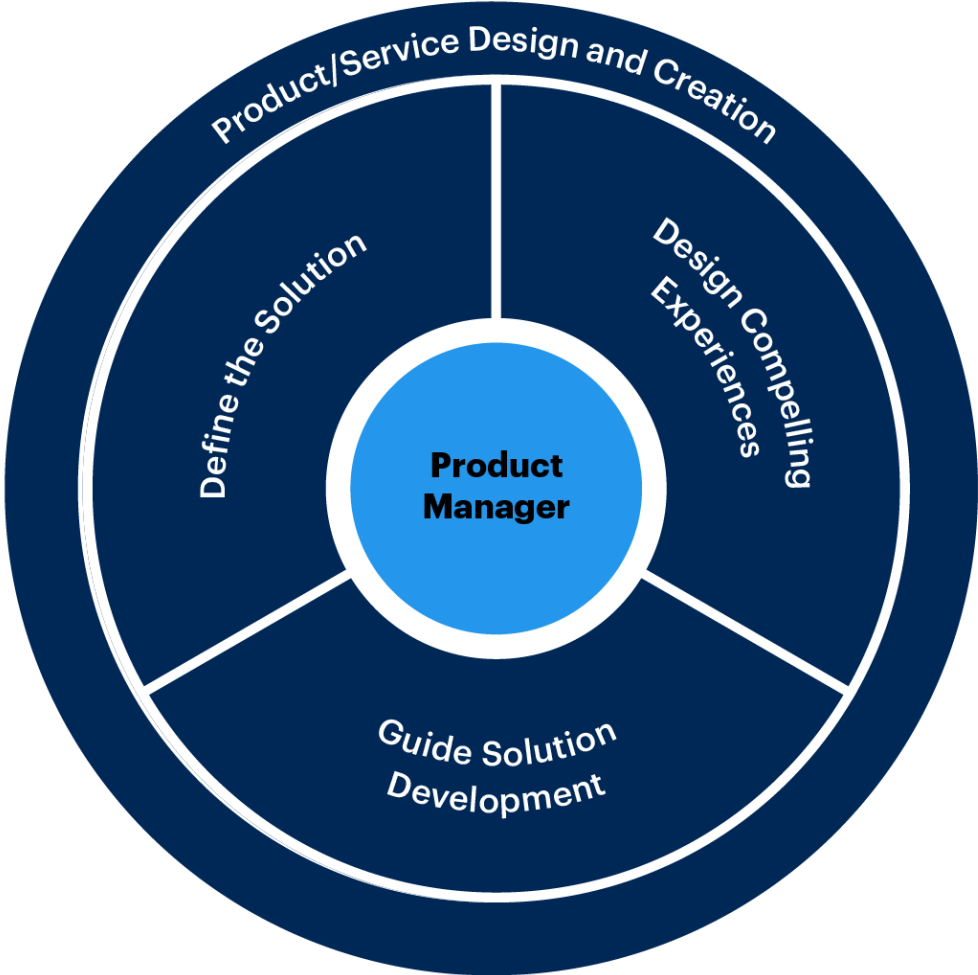
- **Define the Solution:** Translate compelling customer problems into actionable and valuable solution definitions in collaboration with design, engineering and development teams.
- **Design Compelling Experiences:** Work across the entire product experience to not only reduce buyer, customer and end-user friction and frustration but also provide enjoyable, discoverable and compelling product experiences.
- **Guide Solution Development:** Work closely with key stakeholders and strategic partners to focus efforts, increase the speed of decision making and reduce process waste in delivering new products and services to customers.

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Analysis

Figure 1: Product/Service Design and Creation Overview

Product/Service Design and Creation



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The actual work of designing and creating valuable solutions to compelling customer problems is typically not under the direct control of product managers. However, they do play a critical role in the success of their products and services. Building products with compelling customer experiences, developing differentiated products and services, and prioritizing investments to drive adoption and usage were among the top critical design and creation challenges in Gartner’s 2023 Product Management Branded Survey. ¹

Product managers must collaborate closely with user experience teams, engineers, and developers and service delivery teams to ensure that the product or service will be delivered as envisioned.

- This begins with the actual definition of the solution itself. Identifying a problem is often much easier than homing in on the optimal solution for that problem. Product managers must first iterate on the right solution to address a customer problem.
- Then, they must ensure that the specifics of that solution are well-communicated to execution teams to avoid costly and embarrassing mix-ups.
- Effective product managers must also understand the value and impact of compelling and engaging customer experiences across the entire customer journey – from initial interest through adoption all the way through to retirement. They must look outside the traditional confines of user interfaces and user experiences, and take a broader perspective on how the entire product experience delights their customers from the beginning of their relationship to the end.
- Lastly, to be successful, the product or offering team must be able to guide the technical team even without direct authority over their actions. This involves as much listening as it does talking, going through a healthy push and pull to balance customer needs with technological limitations.

Topics

This initiative helps technology providers improve the effectiveness of product or service design and creation processes by delivering insights and best practices for product managers. A critical challenge is defining the desired solution in a way that is not only useful to customers but will also drive the most differentiated value in the market. Product managers must clearly define the solution and collaborate closely with user experience and design teams, and with engineers and developers, to ensure the solution is delivered as quickly as customers can take new updates.

Our research in this area addresses the following topics:

Define the Solution

Perhaps the biggest impact that product managers can have on the product or service development process lies in how they define the solutions that they have identified as valuable. The touchstone of collaboration with design, engineering and development teams lies in this core competency. Clearly defining, prioritizing and explaining problems and the solutions proposed to solve them enables technical teams to properly leverage their expertise to deliver customer value.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How should I communicate customer problems and requirements to technical teams?
- Where are the opportunities to collaborate in bringing customer problems to life?
- What are the leading practices and trends in defining customer solutions for product or service design and creation?

Recommended Content

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- Predicts 2023: AI's Profound Impact on Products and Services
- Top Opportunities for Sustained Differentiation in the Cloud IT Services Market
- Sustainability: A Customer Priority and Provider Imperative
- Quick Answer: What Are the Top 3 Roadmap Items That Will Support API Sales?
- Exploit IoT's Opportunity to Address Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Planned Research

- Exploring why product managers should focus on establishing and supporting the distinctive competencies of their products, services and company
- Expanding the definition of “differentiation” to include hybrid approaches that combine software, services and hardware solutions
- Explaining how priorities are changing for technology providers in response to fast-moving market trends and customer needs
- Providing tools and approaches to help determine which investments should be prioritized to drive sales and usage

Design Compelling Experiences

The intensifying focus on customer experience beyond the user interface poses a fundamental challenge to how product teams drive development. Customer experience has expanded to focus on all interactions that users and buyers have throughout their customer journey with a brand. Product managers play a key role here, providing a strong fact-based voice of the customer and the market and directly driving efforts such as product-led growth.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do I reduce friction and improve the overall customer experience?
- What measures, metrics and approaches should I engage in to understand and improve the overall customer experience?
- What are the leading practices and trends in designing compelling experiences for product or service design and creation?

Recommended Content

🔒 Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- [How to Run an Effective Customer Journey Mapping Workshop](#)
- [Leverage Customer Experience Analytics to Uncover New Growth Opportunities for Your Products](#)
- [How to Leverage Agile CX to Deliver Compelling Customer Experiences](#)

- Toolkit: CX Capabilities Assessment for Product Teams
- Pragmatic Guide to Scoping and Delivering Generative AI Capabilities in Tech Product Offerings

Planned Research

- Exploring emerging trends, tools and practices to improve not only the individual user experience but also the overall product experience from engagement to retirement
- Identifying key tools and processes to collect data to inform customer and product experiences
- Identifying opportunities for product managers to learn from their peers about designing compelling product experiences

Guide Solution Development

Product managers do not build products on their own, but rather in close collaboration with developers, engineers and designers. Because this requires leadership through influence rather than direct control, product managers must insert themselves at opportune moments to ensure timeliness and the quality of the solutions being delivered. Agile development and product management approaches, coupled with strategic build/buy/partner decisions, can enable high-performing product teams to deliver demonstrable customer value with every release.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How can I effectively collaborate with technical teams running the design and creation processes for products and services?
- How do I measure the effectiveness of the design and creation process from a perspective of driving customer outcomes?
- What are the leading practices and trends in guiding solution development for product or service design and creation?

Recommended Content

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- Your Engineering Estimates Are Wrong – But They Are Not Useless

- [Product Management Must Take Back the Role of Product Owner](#)
- [Quick Answer: How Do Technology Services Providers Differentiate Between the Product Manager and the Product Owner?](#)
- [Tool: Product Owner Job Description for Technology and Service Providers](#)
- [Quick Answer: How to Convert Sustainability Opportunities Into Market-Facing Offerings](#)

Planned Research

- [Best practices on how product managers can influence their organizations to become more agile](#)
- [Guidance on how product managers can decide whether to build, buy, partner with or acquire desired new product capabilities](#)
- [A review of what product managers can learn from their peers about prototyping and early problem or solution validation](#)

Suggested First Steps

- [Gartner's Tech Growth & Innovation Conference](#)

Essential Reading

- [Ignition Guide to Building Compelling Product Experience as a Product Manager](#)
- [Ignition Guide to Building a Customer Journey Map as a Product Manager](#)
- [Project to Product Is an Essential Transformation for Product Managers](#)
- [The Agile Product Manager](#)
- [Addressing Buyer Needs Is the Key to Product Differentiation](#)
- [Product Manager Insight: Enterprise Product Users Demand Consumerlike Experiences](#)
- [Market Guide for Product Analytics for Technology and Service Providers](#)

Evidence

This initiative as well as the associated initiatives — product/service discovery and validation, product/service introduction and delivery, product/service evolution and management, and product/service organization and leadership — have been developed leveraging multiple Gartner information and insight sources, including:

- A dedicated survey of product managers to identify their critical initiatives, priorities and challenges (the 2023 Gartner Product Management Branded Survey)
- Published and researched insights around general product management and specific technology areas
- Engagements with hardware, software and service technology vendors, and end users

¹ **2023 Gartner Product Management Branded Survey.** This survey was conducted to understand the needs, challenges and key initiatives of people in product management roles from June through August 2023. In total, 283 respondents were interviewed across the U.S. (n = 83), Canada (n = 35), the U.K. (n = 31), Germany (n = 28), China (n = 27), France (n = 25), India (n = 23), Australia (n = 18) and Hong Kong (n = 14). Small base sizes of fewer than 30 respondents should be interpreted with caution. To enable key trends to be compared and contrasted, we established quotas on key organizational and respondent characteristics. Qualifying organizations operate in high-tech industries (cloud services; software; communications equipment; carriers; devices and computer infrastructure; technology and business services; and semiconductors) with anticipated enterprisewide annual revenue for 2023 of more than \$50 million or equivalent. Qualified participants have the title of director or equivalent and above with product development/engineering or product management as their primary job function/department.

Disclaimer: The results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

Document Revision History

Product/Service Design and Creation Primer for 2023 - 2 February 2023

Product Development Primer for 2022 - 4 February 2022

Product Development Primer for 2021 - 1 February 2021

Product Development Primer for 2020 - 17 January 2020

Product Development Primer for 2019 - 2 January 2019

Product Development Primer for 2019 - 2 January 2019

Product Development Primer for 2018 - 23 May 2018

Related Priorities

Initiative Name	Description
Product/Service Organization and Leadership	This initiative helps innovate product/service management practices, build efficient teams and modern skills, drive cross-department collaboration, and select the right product management toolsets.
Product/Service Discovery and Validation	This initiative can help develop product and service offering plans and strategies based on best practices and insights for assessing customers' needs, market trends and competitive positions.
Product/Service Introduction and Delivery	Introduction and delivery focuses on making products and services available to customers. Continuous delivery models, product-led growth and buyer behaviors impact product introduction and delivery.
Product/Service Evolution and Management	The product/service evolution and management initiative helps clients understand those activities that are essential to maintaining and growing a product after it has been launched into a market.

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eBook

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