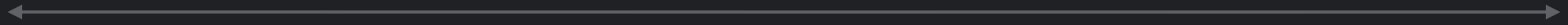
Product development methodology

How MedBridge decides what to build, and how much

Sean Coon | Product Design



Four principles behind every product decision

01

Market sensitive

Every product starts as a market decision: build new, reboot, or iterate.

02

Situationally flexible

Market context sets how much to invest, from minimum viable to maximum value.

03

Feedback driven

Buyers and users shape the product at defined touchpoints.

04

Highly collaborative

Product, design, development, and experts work from one shared process.

Market sensitive

Every product starts as a market decision

The product owner of each vertical constantly reviews

- The market
- Sales requests
- Account management feedback
- Buyer feedback
- User research findings

→

to judge the degree of opportunity and risk, and choose one of three paths

- **Pursue a new product**
- **Reboot an existing approach**
- **Iterate features in market**

Market sensitive

From hypothesis to an approach to market

For anything larger than a feature addition or iteration.

1

Qualify

The product owner qualifies a new product

2

Frame

Details its market position and initial hypothesis

3

Present

Seeks executive buy-in on the product vision

4

Plan

Crafts an approach: process, resources, timeline, budget, marketing

5

Place

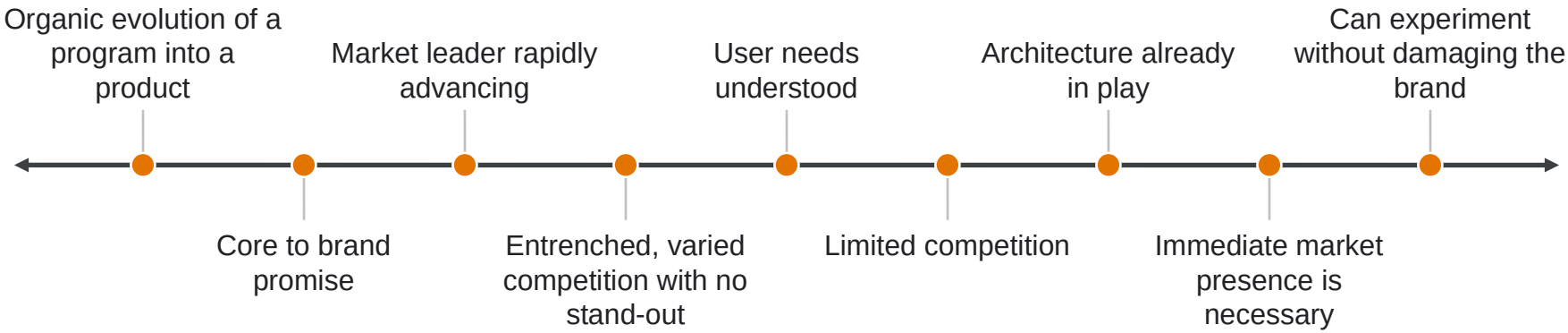
Executives confirm where it sits between minimum viable and maximum value

Market sensitive

Market context sets where a product sits

Investment in research, design, and development follows the placement.

← **Maximum value product** **Minimum viable product** →



Market sensitive

What each end of the continuum means

Maximum value product

- Greater investment in buyer and user research, to avoid misunderstanding problems or damaging the brand
- A feature set driven by research, parity with competitors, and innovation toward differentiators
- Design hones in on the most important user problems, maximizing the value and polish of key features
- Investment in the right development and architecture, not just the current implementation model

Minimum viable product

- Room to evolve in market through user experiments, without risk to brand position and promise
- A highly specific feature set reflecting core hypotheses about user needs and market viability
- Measured user research, to qualify initial buyer and market research and understand user needs
- Measured development, able to ship on the timeline of the market or user experiment

Situationally flexible

Scenario one: outcomes tracking

A hypothetical, placed near the maximum value end.

- Mid-term market pressures are pushing customers to require outcomes tracking
- Several players offer varying functionality, with no clear leader in our industry
- Outcomes is core to our brand promise, Improve Patient Lives, so the market and users must be researched thoroughly

Product
Start with administration, management, and reporting, each addressed alone but designed to work together

Design
Research every role in the outcomes ecosystem, then iterate on their explicit needs across all areas

Development
Investigate task delivery logic, comparisons across outcome data, and progress algorithms; invest in the right implementation model



Situationally flexible

Scenario two: telehealth

A hypothetical, placed toward the minimum viable end.

- With no dominant leader eating into market share, the first release could be an experiment
- It could focus on one scenario, such as patients scheduling a call with their therapist
- Invest in experience and architecture, with limited features and breadth, as with MedBridge GO

Product
A limited feature set, driven by a specific hypothesis, to reach market quickly

Design
Less generative research, more investment in execution

Development
Lean on existing services, such as Skype instead of custom video conferencing



Situationally flexible

Choose the approach, and the process flexes to match

Variables that decide the approach

- Timing
- Risk to brand
- Buyer needs
- Current architecture
- Market positioning
- Budget

→

What flexes to meet it

- The process
- Deliverables
- Feedback loops

Feedback driven

Feedback shapes the product at key touchpoints

Buyers get explicit channels for input and validation. Users shape the product's usefulness and experience.

New product to market or a complete reboot

1. Understand buyer needs
2. Establish a hypothesis
3. Research user needs; model design personas
4. Map context scenarios and journey maps
5. Qualify the approach with the buyer group
6. Usability test; review with buyers

Existing product in market iterating features

1. Assess actual usage against hypotheses
2. Review feedback from the buyer group
3. Gauge future viability of investment
4. Iterate features, reboot, or freeze
5. Roadmap the approach; communicate with buyers

Feedback driven

New product: research and validation

Strategize

Generative research to turn user needs and goals into product features. Vet the findings with a follow-up survey of a broader user group, and use journey maps to show buyers the product vision.

User research

Ethnographic studies, user interviews, email surveys

Buyer validation

A journey map of the user's experience over time

Execute

User and buyer reviews of low- and high-fidelity prototypes. Iterate on findings before release or during a pilot, beta, or full release, and expose the work to buyers to qualify viability.

User research

Card sorting, guerrilla usability, click studies, remote usability

Buyer validation

Low- and high-fidelity prototypes of the experience

Feedback driven

Existing product: assessment and iteration

Assess

Measure usage in market against KPIs and interaction model hypotheses. Gauge performance against competitors. Synthesize qualitative and quantitative findings.

User research

A/B testing, usability benchmarks, analytics, remote usability, intercept surveys, ethnography, contextual inquiry, email surveys, buyer interviews

Strategize

Choose the approach based on performance and usage. Adjust the hypothesis as needed. Roadmap short-term feature additions or iterations, or reboot major functionality.

Buyer presentation

Performance across organizations, organization-specific statistics, and the short-term feature roadmap

Highly collaborative

From hypothesis to design

Product owner (PO), product design (PD), development (DEV), and subject matter experts (SMEs).

1 PO

Set the hypothesis

The problems to solve and a position on the solution, from market and buyer research, sales, account management, and user research

2 PO

Name the owners

The internal business owner who signs off on direction, and a team of SMEs for consultation

3 PD + DEV

Map the journey

Design maps how each persona uses the product over time while development explores architecture

4 PO + PD

Gain momentum

The journey map is approved internally and qualified with buyers; the PO writes epics and stories, and design begins

Highly collaborative

From design to market

Collaboration between PO, PD, DEV, and SMEs ramps up.

5 PD

Iterate the design

From key-path sketches to full wireframes to prototypes, lo-fi InVision click-throughs to functional hi-fi

6 PD

Specify it

Once the experience is greenlit, redlines specify its visual and interactive components for development

7 PD

Review the build

Design Review I at the end of each sprint checks the front end against specs; Design Review II, before shipping, reviews the full experience

8 PO

Support sales

All prototypes and screen assets are available for custom demos with the sales team

Product development methodology

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Situationally flexible — Market context sets how much to invest.

Feedback driven — Buyers and users shape the product at defined touchpoints.

Highly collaborative — Everyone works from one shared process.