# A guide to building better digital products

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# What is a digital product?

A guide to building better digital products

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CONTINUE

It feels like the word 'digital' is everywhere we turn - prefixed to this, that and the other. You've digital transformation, digital business, digital publishing, digital technology, digital optimisation, digital experiences, digital you name it...It's certainly come a long way from its original meaning of 'finger or toe'!

Hidden amongst this myriad of 'digital' however is the concept of the 'digital product'.

The formal definition of a digital product is "an intangible product that exists in digital form", which in reality tells us nothing about the true nature or value of digital products.

According to the dictionary of 'GCD' digital products are software powered products that are accessed and interacted with via a digital medium. They can take many shapes and forms - some are fully 'digital' and operate purely as a software product (think Netflix, an online video streaming service provided solely through web and apps), whereas others are physical based products which require software to function (think Ring video doorbells that operate as a physical doorbell with video and doorbell answering facilities accessible via a supporting app). Some are customer facing products like Just Eat (which operates across web and app, taking orders for takeaway deliveries), some are b2b focused like Salesforce (a cloud based CRM business product), whilst others are more internally focused digital business products like specialised custom apps to manage operations or

supplier/customer portals for providing transparency of key metrics and interactions.

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Regardless of the shape, size or user base of a digital product, they ultimately only exist to <u>deliver value</u> to their users and creators.

This 'value' can be centred around solving a problem that exists (e.g. Airbnb was created to provide a platform for travellers to find short term homestays and for homeowners to rent out their accommodation - replacing the almost impossible task of wading through Gumtree or the phone book). It can be about creating a new benefit or opportunity (e.g. TikTok, delivers micro entertainment in the form of user generated short videos via its app) and it can also be about generating business value for the creator - be that via generating new revenue (hey...Mark Zuckerberg's net worth of \$64.4b in 2022) helping

promote and sell other products / services (think Garnier Colour Match app) or even streamlining operations to reduce costs or improve productivity.

It's also not just new start ups with a revolutionary idea that are seizing upon the development of digital products; in fact many established businesses are successfully embracing the development of them to completely rethink how they engage with their customers and staff, how they operate, how they sell, what they sell and ultimately how they deliver value to their customers. **Nigel Fenwick**, VP Principal Analyst at the research and advisory firm Forrester states:

"By 2030 I predict that every successful company will be a software product company or a hybrid software and physical company."



He further states:

"Digitally advanced firms typically outpace others when it comes to revenue growth. While many firms focus digital efforts on improving customer experiences, advanced firms also look for opportunities to drive new sources of revenue from new digital products."

If Nigel Fenwick is correct, we better get moving with developing those digital products!

# What makes a *Good* digital product?

#### Not all digital products are created equally.

Some are neither great nor good. What is the secret sauce that ensures success? What makes one digital product market leading and the other nothing more than a costly endeavour? Unfortunately the answer is not black or white. There are no precise set of instructions that will absolutely guarantee a successful outcome. However, great products do not appear out of nowhere and there are many similarities that can be observed amongst those digital products that have made good, great and mighty impacts within their respective markets.

#### So what are the similarities?

It's also not just new start ups with a revolutionary idea that are seizing upon the development of digital products; in fact many established businesses are successfully embracing the development of them to completely rethink how they engage with their customers and staff, how they operate, how they sell, what they sell and ultimately how they deliver value to their customers. or car ride home. No cars available, constant dialling to get through to taxi ranks, no real expectation on when to expect the arrival of your lift, having no cash readily available to pay the fare...the list was long. The Uber app product (and overall business model) addressed these problems head on - enabling users to book a taxi by simply clicking a button in the app, allowing them to digitally pay in app (negating the need for cash) and showing the live GPS location of their driver thus keeping the customer fully updated on when they can expect their lift to arrive.

#### They solve a problem worth solving

Simply put, users are not going to use a product if it does not help them achieve something. It must make a positive impact on their lives and this impact must be easily recognised by the user. It needs to provide a solution to a problem that causes them frustration or that hinders them in an important way. Take Uber as an example. The Uber app and business was started from the frustration of trying to get a taxi





### They deliver an experience or benefit that people want more of

Some digital products are designed and exist to deliver a user with an experience or a form of entertainment and the successful ones do so in a way that their users become highly engaged with them. A prime example of this is the **Candy Crush** game - loved by lots, hated by hoards, but a very successful example of an entertainment based digital product. Launched in 2012 by the gaming company King, the Candy Crush app engages its users with a game of matching candies and using a variation of goals and activities on each level. The app's success is built upon beautiful graphics, a free to play approach (*with in app purchases built in*) and the element of surprise that keeps users motivated to reach the next level. With a current user base of over 250m people, the app is still one of the highest grossing games in the app store today.

### They do it better than any alternative

Some of the most thriving digital products don't necessarily do something completely unique, but they most importantly do it better! This is what can make all the difference. A useful example to demonstrate this is Stripe - the payment processing software company established in 2010 by two Irish brothers. Their origin story is fascinating by the way (Google it if you haven't yet come across Patrick & John Collison). Stripe was developed to make accepting payments online easier. They took on Paypal and many other big providers and just did it better - they made it more simple to do, they

made it easier to integrate and they gave companies control to completely customise their online customer experiences. Used by some of the most successful online retailers and businesses (including Deliveroo, ASOS, Lyft and Shopify among many more) Stripe is currently valued around £68m.

#### PART II: WHAT MAKES A GOOD DIGITAL PRODUCT?



A guide to building better digital products

# They are $\underbrace{easy}_{use}^{\times}$ to use

This seems such an obvious point, but you would be surprised by how tricky it can be to design something in a way that users find easy and intuitive to use. Not every product designer or developer gets it right and unfortunately this has a huge impact on the potential of success for the digital product. We hate to name and shame, but Google is definitely big enough and old enough to take this one on the chin, but their Google Wave product is a prime example of a product that was poorly designed. There were many other things wrong with it, such as lack of positioning and focus, but its poor usability was still a crucial factor in its failure to take off. The platform was aiming to unify communication channels (which were fragmented between email, chat and documents) and to create a real time communication tool. The idea was so spot on and way ahead of its time, but users just didn't understand it. The product was launched fully loaded with features, gave users endless options, but the result was a complex product to use that was eventually decommissioned in 2012.

## They are enjoyable to use

PART II: WHAT MAKES A GOOD DIGITAL PRODUCT?

There is nothing worse than having a product that is really scratching an itch for you, but that is just so cumbersome to use. It's off putting and you can bet your bottom dollar that as soon as an alternative product is created, customers will move en masse. Ultimately dissatisfaction with a product creates an opportunity for new competitors, so it's important to consider the essence of enjoyment when designing a product. Your product may be addressing something relatively mundane (I'm thinking about my monthly online banking and budgeting tasks!) but it can be developed in a way that it is still enjoyable to use.

A perfect example of this is the business communication tool Slack. Slack (which I have just discovered is an acronym for 'searchable log of all communication and knowledge') was initially designed as an internal chat tool by an online gaming company, Tiny Speck. They developed it to act as a single place for sharing of knowledge and communications - supporting both real time and asynchronous messaging. There is a lot to learn from the development of this product and the journey the business has been on, but in the context of enjoyment, it is really useful to acknowledge that Slack was originally built by gaming developers, who by the very nature of their careers specialised in making digital products engaging and enjoyable to use - thus Slack became the digital product to use to make your work less boring!



#### They are reliable and available

Again it's a pretty obvious statement, but a digital product will only be successful if it is reliable and readily available to whoever needs it or wants it.

We say it time and time again at GCD, that **'performance matters'** 

In a world of abundance of choice when it comes to digital products, users will exit stage left and reject a product that consistently lets them down. Remember Twitter's 'fail whale'? A simple drawing of a whale which was served when Twitter was running slow or experiencing downtime, became displayed so frequently, that the image became synonymous with service outage and was christened the 'fail whale'. In this example Twitter turned it around, reacting swiftly to rearchitect their product to handle peaks and spikes in usage and thus minimise downtime of their business.

### In most instances, they have revenue generating potential

A digital product does not always have to have revenue generating potential - particularly if it is being developed for internal use. However most customer facing products (both B2B and B2B facing) will need to have the potential for paying customers and a sound plan to succeed as a business. And hey, if there is anything to be learned from Slack, sometimes that internal product might have an amazing commercial opportunity for use outside of your own business. In Slack's case, that opportunity is worth approx \$640m per annum.

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# Building digital products

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PART III

So now we know what a digital product is and what a good one looks like, it's onto the next big question, **how do you build a great digital product?** 

All digital products begin life as the seed of an idea, an aspiration to build something to make a difference. It is the steps taken however in bringing this idea from conception to market, that can determine whether a product succeeds or fails.

Those building blocks start with project management methodologies, the main two being agile and waterfall.



### Agile 🍾 Waterfall

Choosing the right project methodology when building a digital product is vital to its success, which makes understanding their processes and the differences between them all the more important. The main two we're going to look at being **Agile and Waterfall**, their main differences are:

- Agile is an incremental and iterative approach; Waterfall is linear and sequential
- Agile utilises sprints; Waterfall has phases
- Agile supports a product mindset with a focus on customer satisfaction; Waterfall focuses on successful product delivery
- In Agile, requirements are reviewed and selected everyday; in Waterfall, this only happens at the beginning (with the exception of handling changing requirements).
- Agile allows things to change at any time; Waterfall does not like change
- In Agile, testing and feedback loops occur throughout the sprints. In Waterfall, testing and feedback comes at the end of development.

These are just some of the differences between the two project methodologies, and as you can see Agile provides a highly collaborative, value driven process that focuses on real working software over long complex requirements, which is why it's our preferred project management methodology.



I appreciate that 'AGILE' is probably one of the most misunderstood terms in tech, but at GCD we view it as a core set of guiding principles, as opposed to a set pattern of specific meetings and activity done because they're 'agile'. Agile to us is:

- Focusing on individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Focusing on stories and user needs not detailed functional requirements
- Delivering working software as the measure of success
- Engaging in customer collaboration over contract negotiations
- Responding to change over following a plan

Agile is **NOT** something that the development team does alone. It can only work if all stakeholders are fully involved and trust the team to build the best solution they can within the project's constraints. With a methodology and a starting point, there are two other key elements that must be thoughtfully considered when building a successful digital product:



It is integral that the right people, with the right skills, with well defined roles and responsibilities are in place throughout the life cycle of the product's initial development and beyond. This, together with the adherence to a sound and suitable product development process, is where great digital products come to life.

The digital product development process

#### PART III: BUILDING DIGITAL PRODUCTS



#### **The Digital Product Team**

Behind every great digital product you will find a great product team. This team will be cross functional and multi disciplined; they will have clear roles and ownership; they may be in-house / outsourced or a mixture of both; they will take responsibility for the product direction, design, development, quality and ultimately the outcomes. These are the people who can steer the product to achieve its full potential.

When building your product team, you should consider the following roles and skills. Note that these are not necessarily individual people, but are different hats that individuals can wear at various stages of the product development life cycle.

#### Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

'Subject Matter Experts' is essentially a fancy title for those people who intimately understand the problems you are trying to solve or the opportunities you are trying to achieve with t he new product. They are individuals who have specialist knowledge or skills in a specific area and who are brought in to gain added insight into a particular space. They can be both inhouse staff or external industry experts and in some cases are also potential end users. Your SMEs are a critical component of the product development process, providing validation of ideas in the early stages and valuable feedback throughout. For example, if you were building a new product for your existing customers, you may wish to include SMEs from various departments who interact with your customers in different scenarios (including your sales team, customer support and finance etc) as well as customers themselves. Subject Matter Experts like these can question your assumptions, test your current thinking and ensure that the product has considered all angles.

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#### **Product Manager**

The Product Manager title is often used interchangeably with the title of Product Owner, which in reality causes much confusion around responsibilities. We at GCD see a distinct difference between the Owner and Manager role, with the Product Manager job sitting firmly within the software development area, working hand in glove with the solution engineering and UX design team in the development of the physical product. The PM will manage daily stand ups with the technical team, agree sprints of development work and interface regularly with the Business Ambassador and Visionary for planning and pruning of requirements and sprints of work. The role of the Product Manager sits firmly at the intersection between commercial, tech and user experience.

#### **Business Ambassador**

The Business Ambassador is a key role that can really only live 'inhouse'. We at GCD see the role of the Business Ambassador to be a key liaison between the business and the development team. They will act on behalf of the business on a day to day basis, keeping all internal company stakeholders updated on progress and acting as a single point of contact for the GCD Product Manager.

#### **Product Visionary**

Similar to the Business Ambassador, the task of a Product Visionary is most likely an in-house only role and is concerned with championing the product's vision, purpose and future. They're usually the person that's initiated or driving the product forward from the business's perspective and are also usually the ultimate owner of the product budget.



**Solution Development Team** 









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#### QA

Often overlooked, but ignored at your peril is the role of the Quality Assurance Engineer. Vital to product stability and high performance, QA & testing is essential for identifying errors before your product is launched. A new digital product has a small window of opportunity to impress new potential customers. You don't want to waste that opportunity by delivering a product that is glitchy, unreliable and leaves customers frustrated. Remember Twitter's 'Fail Whale'?

#### UX/UI Design

User experience designers are central to building great digital products. Poorly designed interfaces that don't meet the needs of the people using them have a huge impact on the happiness and productivity of those users. Unhappy customers and staff leads to frustration and friction which ultimately affects your bottom line. Embedding UX/ UI designers within product teams and empowering them to work closely with engineers ensures the whole team understands the user and works to build great experiences that help those people achieve their goals easily and without friction.

#### Software Engineering

Key to the actual building of any digital product is your Software Engineering team. The skills of the team assembled will ultimately be determined by the tech stack chosen for the product. Having a multi-disciplinary team provides a wide range of skills that can be used in all areas of the build. This pool of knowledge supports the whole team and evens out the load. It is imperative that the development team assigned to the project are well versed in the processes of new digital product development; which requires a faster pace, agility and discipline, as well as understanding agile methodology. A digital product should be built to solve the 'why', it should be built to last, to scale and to be fully adopted by its users. Having a team that understands this is key.

#### DevOps

Speed and quality are important factors in any business, but perhaps most so in the case of new digital product development. Getting your digital product to market fast accelerates business growth opportunities. The role of DevOps is critical in ensuring both speed and quality are delivered. DevOp roles have many tricks and tools up their sleeve to achieve these, including automated testing and deployment that speed up the release and delivery of features and updates during the build stage.

#### **Other key roles**

Other key roles to consider as part of the project team are security, analytics, marketing and sales.



# The Digital Product Development Process



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The concept of the product development process is a well worn path, with millions of books, articles, research papers and blog articles written around this very hot topic. Some recommend undertaking 15 steps (Waterfall), some advocate more, others less. We at GCD however have found that a truly agile development process means that a flexible structure focuses on development sprints rather than a rigid structure.

Our product development process looks a bit like this: But remember: the product development process is agile and within each of these stages there is flexibility to adapt and to constantly deliver value.

Product Design Sprint (optional)
 Project Foundation
 - Agile Development Sprints
 Cut-over
 Support



#### Why?

The product development process begins with a simple question **why?** At GCD, our approach with all projects is to get to the 'why'. We'd like to lay claim to this great concept, but it is taken straight from the book of Simon Sinek - 'Start with Why'.

To fully answer this question we encourage clients to consider a stage before the Project Foundation stage, we call it a

Product Design Sprint.

#### What is a Product Design Sprint?

This phase focuses on establishing the product's feasibility and getting to the **"why"** of the project. A product design sprint is a short design phase that will help align your team around the common problem, it's highly collaborative and explorative.

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The term "design sprint" was originally pioneered by the team at Google, it uses design thinking to get buy-in and consensus from your team, get them aligned around a common vision.

Design sprints are an excellent tool to help shape projects and products that are looser into something more tangible that can deliver real business value. We have tweaked the Google approach to bring in user research, technical requirement prioritisation and prototyping to dovetail nicely into agile software development projects. By the end of a **product design sprint** you'll have a set of prioritised requirements, high level objectives and, if required, a prototype to help test how a solution might work.

#### Research

We aren't huge proponents of massive research projects (it's not exactly Agile) however

#### starting a development project with no research can be a recipe for disaster.

In a product design sprint, we focus on 'just enough research' and blend market research and user research exercises together into an initial phase that provides enough validation to give us confidence in our approach. The only sure way to design a great user experience is to involve those users in the project. During a product design sprint this means learning more about our target audience through tried and tested UX research methods. Surveys, interviews, focus groups and usability testing are all methods we use to find out more about the goals, behaviours and pain points of your users.







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#### Prototyping and validating

Prototyping early and cheaply is the aim of the game here. A great prototype can enable you to test your assumptions quickly and at little cost, de-risking your project from the outset. Prototypes can come in many shapes and forms and are not always the full fledged simulation you would expect. They can take the form of:

#### Technical feasibility prototypes

In this scenario, the role of the prototyping is to test out whether a proposed approach is technically feasible and to ascertain the level of technical risk within the project. It often involves writing a limited amount of code to practically test an implementation or working code in action.

#### Low fidelity prototypes

Often taking the form of lightweight, interactive wireframes, low fidelity prototypes are incredibly useful tools for testing out workflows, user journeys and for identifying potential usability problems.

#### High fidelity prototypes

High fidelity prototypes are probably most akin to what you expect when you think about the concept of a prototype. They are realistically designed simulations of your proposed product (or parts/ areas of said product) and are powerful tools for communicating the product's vision. They enable stakeholders to visualise, in physical terms, the concept of the solution and can be used to test product market fit at an early stage of the project.



However, if the outcomes and objectives are more certain a product design sprint isn't a requirement and whilst it provides much added value, Project Foundation is the first stage of the product development process for all.

#### Project Foundation

The objective here is to make sure the project is feasible and that everyone is aligned as to the problem it is trying to solve or the value it is going to provide. It is also used to establish a prioritised list of requirements and key success metrics. If you have completed a product design sprint then this will be a quicker step in the process.

Product Foundation is a period of discovery, learning and definition that consists of on-site visits, requirements workshops/ meetings that validate an agreed PRL (prioritised requirements list containing no more than 100 user stories). It starts with that number one question - **why?** And establishes:

- Why are we doing this?
- What value will it drive?
- What problems are we solving?

#### Why is it important?

This critical phase builds a design system and defines the shape of the overall project and how development is going to be broken down.

#### **Product OKRs**

Once the key questions have been answered, a very useful approach we have employed to help formulate and codify a product or company's 'why' is the goal setting framework of **product OKRs** which stands for 'Objectives and Key Results'.

Good enough for Google and Amazon, the approach involves the definition of an ambitious objective(s), alongside a series of measurable key results which determine whether the objective has been achieved or not. The key principle here is that you now have a defined focus of achievement, which can be used throughout the product development process for determining priorities and keeping everything concentrated on ensuring the final product and business objectives are met. With the 'why' and the OKRs established, the process of product shaping and ideation can commence. The goal is not to define the product or project in very specific detail, instead using an agile approach it begins to give it some shape that will enable you to get a good estimation and feel for the realistic timelines (and associated costs) for the development of the project.

A good starting point in shaping is to take what we refer to as the 10,000 ft view of the project so you can see its full scale and boundaries. At this level you are not concerned with the minutiae of detail, but rather with the scale and constraints that exist. This viewpoint helps you chunk the project into distinct areas of purpose (commonly referred to as epics) each of which can then be taken in turn and analysed in greater detail throughout the build. We are huge fans of design thinking and employ a number of useful exercises like 'The Business Model Canvas', 'The Lean Canvas', 'Journey Mapping', 'Impact VS Effort' and many more. But good old fashioned chatting with potential and current customers and users, interviews with stakeholders and domain experts and competitor / market analysis are always a solid approach.



#### Prioritised Requirements List & MoSCoW

The 'prioritised requirements list' is essentially a list of user stories which describe what the product needs to do and why, which together will make up the overall product. The idea is that these individual stories should be grouped together by area of concern and collectively form 'epics'. Each epic should then deliver an overall piece of valuable functionality within the product. From our experience at GCD we utilise a rule of thumb that for each project there should be no more than 10 epics and up to a maximum of 100 user stories included. This ensures that the right level of abstraction is maintained and the team can easily rationalise the whole project.

A key part in the creation of this list of requirements is the process of prioritisation - a long list is not useful without a sense of priority of importance after all. We would strongly advocate for the use of the MoSCoW methodology (a much more succinct way of saying 'must have, should have, could have and won't have'). Each piece of functionality should be prioritised and categorised as either 'must, should, could or won't'. It's a great way to determine what's truly important. A minimum viable product (MVP) is what matters here and wading out the won't haves can help achieve this. A MVP doesn't just mean it works, it means it usable and solves the fundamental problem. It's important to state that 'won't haves' don't mean 'never' they simply mean not right now, but should remain on the PRL for future evaluation.

The ultimate goal of the product development process is to bring to market a product that will deliver value to its potential customers and creators. I'll repeat it for emphasis... **the goal is VALUE delivery!** This focus of delivering value should be at the forefront of all activity and should act as a benchmark against which decisions are made and outcomes evaluated.

#### **Agile Development Sprints**

The development and engineering process for creating new digital products needs to be fundamentally agile in its approach.

A solid shape to a project, with a well pruned and prioritised requirements list is the perfect place to start. With a blueprint for a plan, the development team can begin the build, operating in cycles (sprints) of work targeting prioritised features and epic delivery, with a team goal of delivering working functionality regularly and often. But remember with an agile approach each sprint must be flexible and should follow a loose structure of building.

To keep product development sprints on track and agile, we have a set of principles we stick to, they are:

- Embrace change
- Collaboration/Collaborative
   Designs
- Get to working software quickly
- Get it in the hands of users and respond to feedback
- Iteration
- Constantly deliver value throughout the sprint
- Communication and collaboration over lengthy specification



### Product development sprints last between 2-4 weeks

and focus on delivering against the PRL and MoSCoW analysis. The key principle is to accept that change will happen and an agile approach allows for it to happen, which is why it's important to have client involvement on a regular basis and for daily team stand ups to take place.

With that in mind, here's what a rough outline of what each product development sprint looks like:

- Sprint planning breaking down the stories into smaller deliverables
- Daily stand ups
- Continuous deployment
- Small chunks of functionality rather large deployments

- QA throughout from day 1
- Test and tweak throughout
- Get it into the hands of users to gain insight and feedback
- Regular communication with clients avoids surprises and feedback is given continuously
- Demos not a big reveal after 3 months
- Retrospectives

The number of sprints depends on the complexity of the project and any changing requirements as development progresses. But it should be a rinse and repeat until you approach the final stages in the Product Development Process - the cut-over and support. These should be relatively simple thanks to the agile project methodology.

#### **Cut-over**

This phase sees a transition period when the product is "cutover" to the client. To get to here, the product should be designed, built and tested and ready to enter the real world, into the hands of users. The Cut-Over is an important step, as the product will have lived in a development bubble to this point, albeit with regular client feedback along the way.

Thanks to using an agile methodology this should be relatively painless as the client has been involved from the outset. However, it is an important stage for predefining the date when processes or new ways of working will begin. It is a time of training, any remaining change requests (although these should be at a minimum thanks to the agile process) and ensuring relevant data is migrated. If there is an in-house development team, they would have been working in the sprints so should have a thorough understanding of the product but this is the opportunity to make sure the entire team is confident and up to speed before "Go Live".

Value is still at the forefront of the process even now, how these final steps are approached can depend on if the product is replacing an existing product or if it's entirely new. With adding value in mind, it's important to ensure the differing needs are met during the handover phase.

#### Support

Once the product has been built, the process doesn't end there. The "final" part of the process in building a great digital product, is supporting it as it enters the real world. Regular contact with the client continues as the product goes live, and after initial launch, it enters a period of **'hypercare'**, where the product is closely monitored for a 3 month period. Should any issues arise, the original Software Engineering Team as well as Support Engineers will be on hand to provide direct support.

A digital product, whether it's completely new or replacing an existing product is always going to present change for the business and users. Hypercare provides the opportunity to ensure the product is working as it should, that it is resolving the issues it set out to solve and is fitting smoothly into existing systems and processes.

It's a proactive opportunity to train end users, iron out any issues and identify any opportunities for improvement as building a great digital product doesn't simply end with Go Live. A great digital product should continue to evolve, update and generate value.

Ongoing pro-active support is equally as important in the long term, from monitoring servers, to providing security patching and responding to queries that arise, it all works to keep your digital product doing what it should. Having ongoing development support is also important to have, as our experience has taught us, there are always some minor changes needed after go-live due to change in business processes or new business requirements, so having that support ensures a seamless experience.



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#### Conclusion

Whilst a great digital product continues to grow and develop, this Blueprint is coming to an end. If you remember anything from this guide, make sure it is these key points:

- Always ask Why?
- Does your digital product solve a problem worth solving?
- Is it easy and enjoyable to use?
- What **value** does it provide?
- Choose a project management methodology, like Agile, that favours value.

How that digital product is built and delivered plays a large part in its success, which is why project management should be focused on **value**. For us, using an Agile approach has been the best way to deliver what the client needs, on time and on budget, with value at its core.

There are huge benefits to be had when building a digital product, for the company, for the users, for the customers.

When a digital product doesn't meet the needs of its users, or solve the problem it set out to, it can have a huge impact. It is wasted development time and not to mention budget, it impacts productivity and profitability. Look at Avon, the beauty products brand, in 2013, they pulled the plug on a \$125 million software overhaul, after a pilot of the system in Canada revealed that iPad rollout was too difficult to use, and many sales reps began to quit the company.



95%

In the 2019 State of Happiness Report, G2 discovered more than half of employees were unhappy at work thanks to the software they were using, with 95% stating they would be more satisfied at work if they had better software tools. It isn't a one time deal, the key thing to remember is that to build a great digital product it is an on-going process that requires constant monitoring, thinking about how the product can continue to provide value and adjusting.

of employees would be more satisfied at work if they had better software tools\*

Building a great digital product isn't easy, if it was there wouldn't be a need for this Blueprint and we would all be booking seats on the next flight to space. But when the hard work is put in and the focus on the right things, it is achievable. A great digital product will bring value to your business, your staff and users. Gireat digital projects are always growing.

"Think of digital transformation less as a technology project to be finished than as a state of perpetual agility, always ready to evolve for whatever customers want next, and you'll be pointed down the right path."



**Amit Zavery**, VP and Head of Platform, Google Cloud

\* 2019 State of Happiness in software report

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