

# Lean Product Principles in B2B

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**Driving towards evidence-based decisions using Product Science**

Presenters

[Holly Hester-Reilly](#), Product Management Trainer & Consultant



# Agenda

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1. Introductions
2. Making the Case for Continuous Discovery
3. Planning Your Discovery Approach
4. Diving into Discovery Research
5. Using Synthesized Results to Drive Impact



**Holly Hester-Reilly**

**Doing**



Training, Coaching, and Consulting on Product Discovery and Experimentation



Host of podcast on the science of high-growth product teams, companies, and businesses



Adjunct Professor, Stern

Technology Product Management

**Done**



BS & MS in Chemical Engineering

4 yrs of scientific research, including a journal article



15 years in tech startups

5 years early stage  
5 years high-growth companies  
5 years consulting and training



Unilever



YOURBASE



wirecutter  
A New York Times Company



Clients include startups, high-growth tech companies, and enterprises



# Making the Case for Continuous Discovery







“

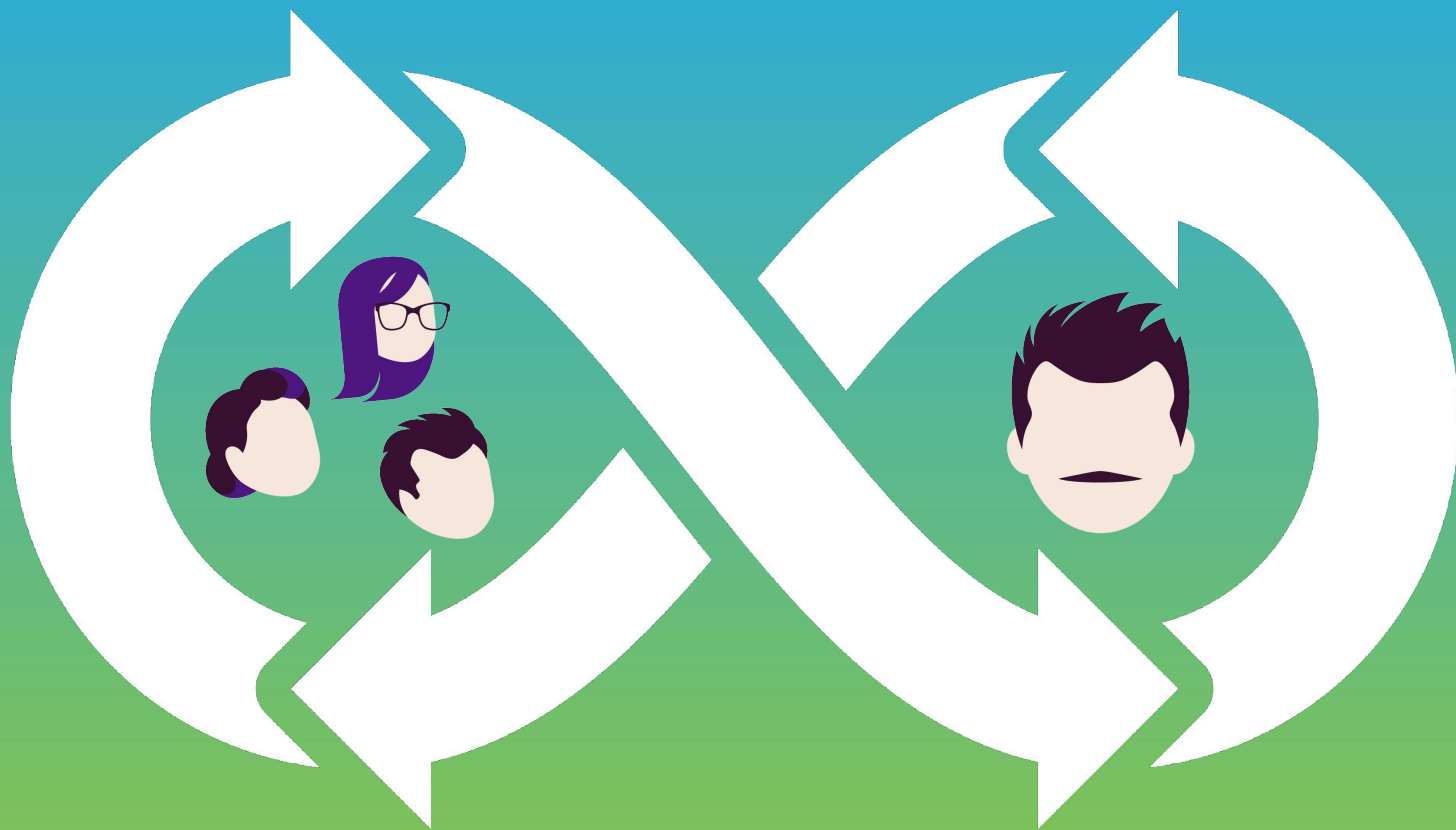
Rather than a “Product Discovery Phase” where we come up with several weeks of validated product backlog items and deliver them to engineering, I encourage teams to do continuous product discovery – where we are constantly identifying, validating and describing new product backlog items.

”

**MARTY CAGAN**

**FOUNDER, SILICON VALLEY PRODUCT GROUP**











# SALES TEAM



Marketing  
Driven

YES

I like it!





# View Research as a Continuous Process

## How do you make space for more discovery?

### Talk about the value.

- You want to build a product people will love.
- Research is cheaper than building a product.
- The most successful tech teams are the ones that pivot quickly.

### Start small and show the value.

- A one question intercept quiz.
- An informal user interview.
- Gathering data from existing sources.

### Prioritize the riskiest questions for research.

# Talk About The Risks

# Stakeholders in B2B



Marketing

Sales

Customer Success

Support

Client Relationship Management

Operations

Legal

Security



# Pre-Mortem Part 1

**Brainstorm ways that this initiative might fail.**

- Usability Failure: What are the trickiest parts to design?
- Feasibility Failure: What is least understood about how to build this?
- Value Failure: Even if we built everything we envision, why would users/buyers not buy this?
- Viability Failure: Why might this not meet the business goals?
- Ethics Failure: Why might this be ethically risky?

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→ One idea per sticky note

→ Take 8 minutes to write as many ideas as you can

→ Indicate type with color

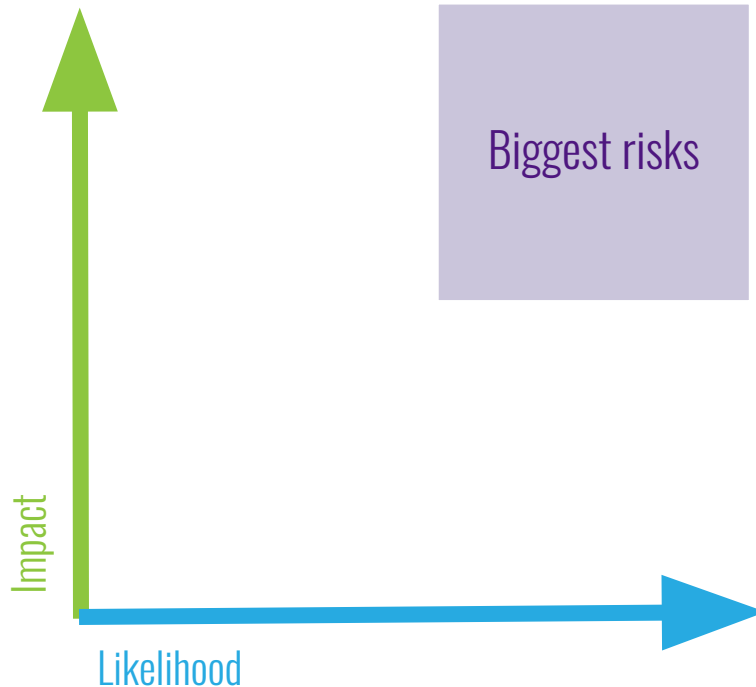


## Pre-Mortem Part 2

Draw a chart like this and place your stickies on it according to your assessment of:

- How likely is it that this will happen?
- How strongly would it impact success if it did happen?

**Pick the single biggest risk.**



→ Place your sticky on the chart individually → Discuss with team

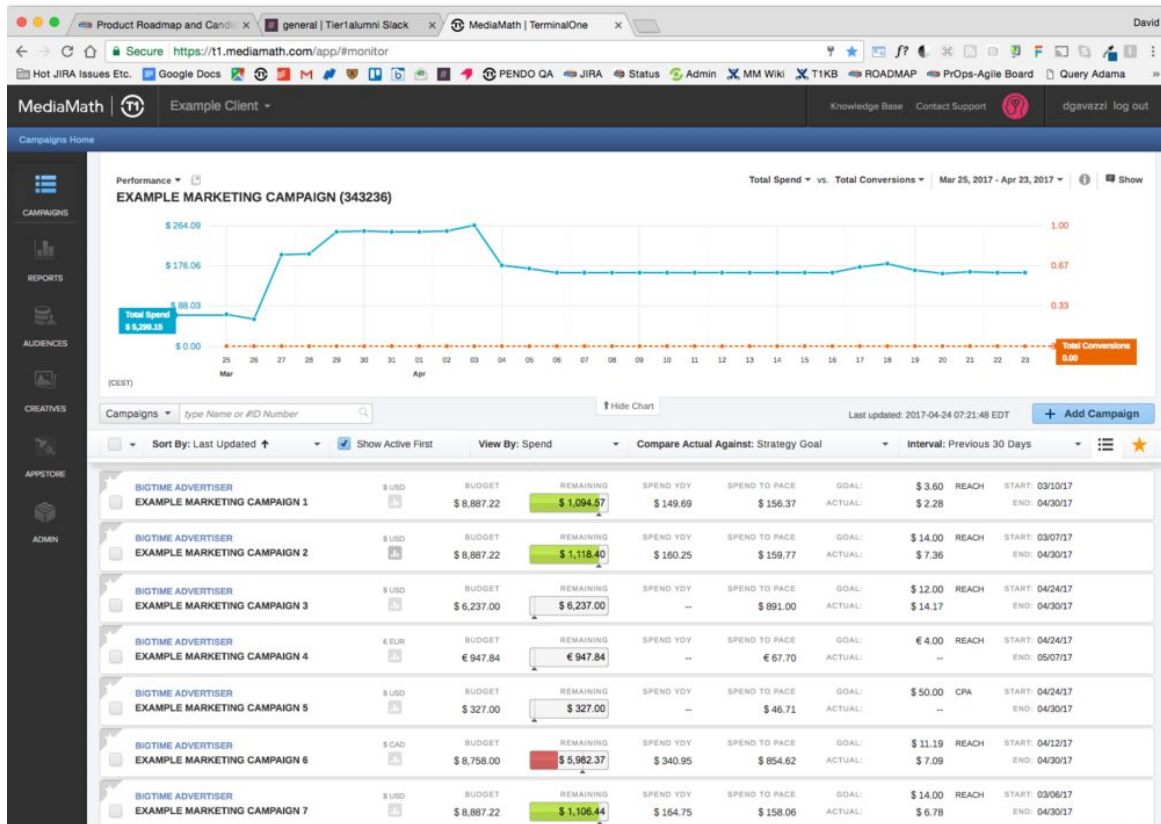




# Planning Your Discovery Approach

# Case Study

MediaMath



Step 1:

# Define Research Goals

- **What are the top questions we want to answer with this stage of research?**
- **What are our riskiest assumptions?**
- **What decisions do we need to make soon?**

Examples:

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1. How do users use the platform to manage their marketing campaigns today?
2. Which types of users are hands-on-keyboard?
3. How do our target users know when they are successful at their job?







# Question Storming

- **Collate the questions you have as a group**
  - Aim for at least 5 questions each
  - 1 question per sticky note
  - Include qualitative and quantitative questions

Which types of users are hands-on-keyboard?

How do our target users know when they are successful at their job?

How do users use the platform to manage their marketing campaigns today?

→ Place your sticky on the chart individually → Discuss with team



# Evidence at Every Level

Org Position	Decision Types	Testing Methods
Leadership	Vision & Target Market	Quantitative & Qualitative Behavior-Based Research Competitive Landscape Market Trends Analysis
Management	Pains & Outcomes for each Target Market	User Interviews Competitive Product Reviews User Surveys Usage Data
Teams	Solutions (Designs, Features, Technologies)	Design Research User Interviews Usability Testing Feasibility Research Usage Data A/B Tests



# Diving into Discovery Research

# Qualitative Research

Answers WHY and HOW

- Ask questions
- Explore
- Observe

Better understand user behavior

# Quantitative Research

Answers HOW MUCH and HOW MANY

- Validate qualitative observations
- Gather data from larger groups

Get broader picture of many user types and behaviors

**Combine to get deeper understanding of unmet needs**

# Qualitative Research in B2B vs. B2C



# Start with what you have

**Customer Support**

**Sales**

**Customer Success**

**Customer Feedback**

**Primary Documents:**

**Customer E-mails  
Support Tickets**



# Identify Your Target



# How do you get users to participate?

**Work your contacts**

**Compliment**

**Include**

**Share**

# Find look alike



# Executing Interviews



- Ask how purchase decisions are made
- Validate problems, don't promise their solutions

# Create an Interview Guide

	Date:	Participant:
Want to know	We say	They say
Intro	<p>Hi, my name is &lt;name&gt; and I'll be facilitating this research session. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today.</p> <p>We will record our session but this recording will only be used for internal purposes. Is that okay with you?</p>	
Who are they? What is their situation?	<p>First, we'd like to <u>know a little more about you and your work life</u>.</p> <p>What is your title?</p> <p>How do you describe your role?</p> <p>How long have you been doing that kind of work?</p> <p>Where do you work?</p> <p>How big is the organization?</p> <p>How is the organization structured? Do you work on a team?</p> <p>How big is the team?</p>	
Identify a project that would benefit from <product>	<p>Next, we'd like to talk about challenges you face in &lt;area of interest&gt;. Can you think of a <u>recent project you did</u> where you had &lt;example problem&gt;?</p> <p>Can use relevant examples here depending on participant. &lt;examples of problems [organization] is interested in&gt;</p> <p>What was the project?</p> <p>What was your role in it?</p> <p>How different (or similar) was the project from other projects the organization undertook?</p>	
Understand	We'd like to learn a bit more about <u>how these challenges affected</u>	



# How many is enough?



# Compensation

*Good will & impact on product direction*

**Thank you card**

**Gift cards**

**Coffee**

**Lunch**

**Swag**

**Product discounts**

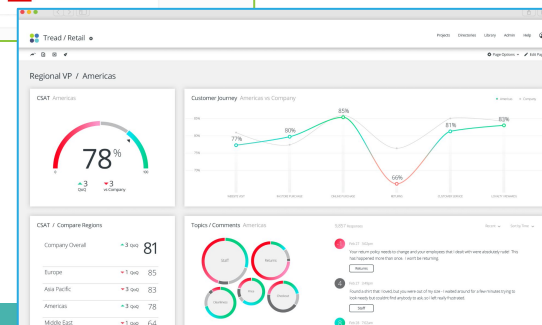
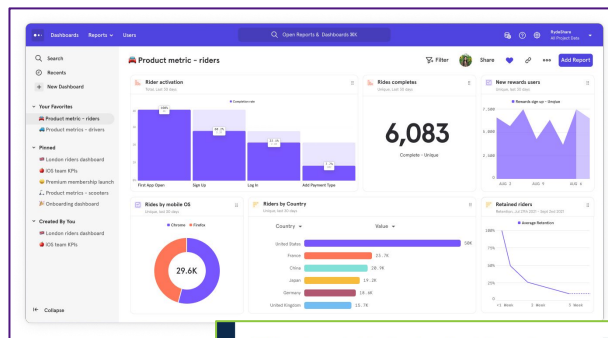
# Customer Advisory





# Quantitative Data Discovery

# Leverage Product Usage Data



**“The North Star Metric is the single metric that best captures the core value that your product delivers to customers.”**

**Sean Ellis**  
**Coauthor, Hacking Growth**



# A/B Testing in B2B



# THE PRODUCT SCIENCE PODCAST



# Thank You!

What areas do you want to know more about?  
Send us a message and let's talk about it.



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[H2R Product Science](https://www.linkedin.com/company/H2R-Product-Science)



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