Pragmatic Roadmaps for Agile Projects
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Let’s start with an activity:
1. Introduce yourself to a neighbor
2. Share if you currently use a product roadmap
3. Share one positive and one negative thing about that
Idea from @cagan: to convince yourself roadmaps don't work, look at last quarter's & count the number of ideas that shipped & really worked
DO A SEARCH ON MEDIUM...

product roadmap

...YOU’LL FIND LOTS OF OPINIONS

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The product roadmap is dead: welcome to the age of problem roadmaps

Your product roadmap is one of the most important tools you will use to communicate with both internal stakeholders and customers to the direction of your product.
Stop doing roadmaps. Why? Product managers can align their teams and create a clear vision for the future. As a result of this, a product roadmap is created and communicated to the organization.

How to create a product roadmap:

Becoming a Product Manager #1: Build a Product Roadmap

Build a Product Roadmap

Read more...
# Motorola Roadmap Matrix

- summary of product plans and technology forecast

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<td>Plus: Scan Seek</td>
<td>Plus: Personal paging</td>
<td>Plus: Stock market Road information Remote amplifiers Remote controls</td>
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Source: Willyard & McCles, 1987

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(Phaal; Probert, 2009)
Commit to specific features and dates only to disappoint?

Stop using roadmaps all together?

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“Even with the best of intentions, product roadmaps typically lead to very poor business results. I refer to the reasons for this as the two inconvenient truths about product.

- Marty Cagan, Author “Inspired”, CEO Silicon Valley Product Group
2 INCONVENIENT TRUTHS ABOUT PRODUCT:

1. At least 1/2 our ideas are not going to work
2. It typically takes several iterations until the idea delivers the necessary business value

“Commitment” makes Agile teams feel uneasy:

- commitments are often made too early
- the team has no ability to influence or change the commitments
- the commitments create dependencies outside their control
DEAR ROADMAP...
Dear Roadmap,

I hate you!

You are rushing too much and you want too many things from me in short time. I feel we are not going anywhere meaningful. You have your bold expectations about what I should do without giving me space to breath.

I need a roadmap who inspires and shows direction and you are not any of this. You compare me to others. It supposed to be me and you; it shouldn’t matter what others do.

- C. Todd Lombardo,
Roadmaps Are Dead, Long Live Roadmaps! MTPC 2018
Dear Roadmap,

I can’t do this anymore. We have the same problems every three months; we review (nearly) the same mix of features and enhancements and initiatives. We don’t often have any new information, and aren’t certain of our conclusions. We need to be more forward thinking. We don’t have alignment on our strategy.

I am DONE!

- C. Todd Lombardo,
Roadmaps Are Dead, Long Live Roadmaps! MTPC 2018
Dear Roadmap,

I’ve been putting so much energy to get this relationship working, but it feels like I only give and never get any value back from you!

- You are always out of date
- There is no way to get all the info in and keep it looking nice and readable
- You are all about solutions and not about the needs and the problems
- You are never good enough for all the different stakeholders.

This is it! I’M GOING BACK TO MS PROJECT!

- C. Todd Lombardo,
Roadmaps Are Dead, Long Live Roadmaps! MTPC 2018
**Business & Organization Needs**

- Working on the highest business value items first
- Can communicate and track date based commitments

**Agile Delivery Team Needs**

- Avoid prematurely committing to dates
- Business context: visibility into how they will contribute to the larger company success

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THE PRAGMATIC AGILE PRODUCT ROADMAP
dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations
The roadmap should provide business context to product teams.

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A ROADMAP IS...

A STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION TOOL

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched

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A STATEMENT OF INTENT AND DIRECTION

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched
A ROADMAP IS NOT...

A RELEASE PLAN
OR A PROJECT PLAN

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- Bruce McCarthy, Product Roadmaps Relaunched
Minimize This

Now

IDEAS!
- Products
- Features
- Enhancements

Specifications
- Requirements

Maximize This

LATER

Output

Release!

Outcome

Impact

Jeff Patton, User Story Mapping
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHAT YOU PRODUCE</strong></td>
<td><strong>BEHAVIOR CHANGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>BUSINESS METRIC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>What’s different?</td>
<td>Increase or Decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| e-Statements feature  
(Patient billing software) | Company no longer physically mails invoices and spend less money on postage, letters, stamps, etc. | 3M dollar savings per year  
(Currently spending 750K per month on billing) |
| Text localization editing feature  
(online learning platform) | Colleges can make hyper-localized changes for students without involving a developer or translation service | $14K savings per year per college (on average) |
WHAT GOES INTO A ROADMAP THEN?

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5 PRIMARY COMPONENTS

1. PRODUCT VISION
2. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES
3. TIMEFRAMES
4. THEMES
5. DISCLAIMER

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- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched
1. PRODUCT VISION

2. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

3. TIMEFRAMES

4. THEMES

5. DISCLAIMER

How a specific customer will benefit from your product

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched
For ______________ (target customer) who ______________ (statement of the need or opportunity) our (product/service name) is ______________ (product category) that ______________ (statement of benefit). 

**Example**
For non-technical marketers who struggle to find return on investment in social media our product is a web-based analytics software that translates engagement metrics into actionable revenue metrics.
1. PRODUCT VISION

2. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

3. TIMEFRAMES

4. THEMES

5. DISCLAIMER

What goals will your product accomplish? What will be measurably different for your organization?

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched

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OBJECTIVES & KEY RESULTS (OKRs)

Objective: a single sentence that’s qualitative and inspirational, time bound, and actionable by the team independently.

Key Result: quantitative measures of progress toward achieving those objectives

—Christina Wodtke, Radical Focus
GUIDELINES FOR ROADMAPPING OKRs

- Everything on the roadmap must be tied to at least one of your objectives.
- Stick to a manageable number of objectives at a time; fewer than 5 is usually effective.
- Focus on outcomes, not output.

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COMPANY MISSION: Make going to Mars a reality in this lifetime

PRODUCT VISION: Create a high efficiency, low cost space vehicle that can seat multiple civilian passengers

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the cost of space travel to what an average American family can afford

KEY RESULT: A target cost for travel to Mars under $200K
Broad timeframes provide guidance while preserving some flexibility. The sequence communicates what’s important now and what can wait awhile.

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched

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Our Roadmap

Our product roadmap helps us share what we’re working on next and the direction that we’re taking our business in. This helps us open up a practical dialogue with our customers and leads about what they want and need without giving away any top secret details.

TIMEFRAMES

Core Application

Current

- Engagement
  - Notifications - Phase 1
    Improvements to the notification system and changes to improve the users situational awareness of what is happening to products, feedback and ideas that are of interest to them.

Near term

- Advanced Usage
  - Idea management workflow
    Changes to the ideas list, canvas and charts to improve the day-to-day workflow

- Enterprise
  - GDPR Compliance
  - Various product changes needed to become

Future

- Delight
  - Task specific mobile apps
    Allow product managers to use ProdPad while on their other devices.

- Advanced Usage
  - Competitive Landscape Module
    A module to help track competitors or potential
GitHub Platform Roadmap

Overview

We want to build the best software development ecosystem together. To help you prioritize what you work on and to share insight into our priorities, we've published GitHub's Platform Roadmap. This roadmap is a rough estimate of what we're focused on building in the near-, medium-, and long-term.

Placement on the roadmap represents our estimate of when each project will enter full production release. Some larger projects will land in your hands through Early Access programs in advance of their full release.

The items in the roadmap are subject to change or delay, so you should check the roadmap updated as things change. We'll revise the roadmap monthly to ensure the most current.

Current Roadmap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Near-term</th>
<th>Medium-term</th>
<th>Long-term</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrations</strong></td>
<td>More intuitive Integration rate limiting policies and improved troubleshooting</td>
<td>Improved discoverability of Integrations within GitHub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Granular access permissions</td>
<td>Webhooks for repository and organization administration</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to connect at the Organization level</td>
<td>Webhooks for permissions and access changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Allow access to only specific repositories</td>
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<tr>
<td>• First class actors</td>
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TIMEFRAME GUIDELINES

- Use broad timeframes to avoid overcommitting
- Broad timeframes provide guidance while preserving flexibility. The sequence communicates what’s important now and what can wait.
- Don’t let dates be the primary measure of success
Protects you from claims of broken promises; makes it clear that change is possible, even likely.

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched

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### Disclaimer

This roadmap is for informational purposes only, so you shouldn't rely on this information for major purchasing or planning purposes. Just like all projects, the items in the roadmap are subject to change or delay, and the continued development or release of a project on the roadmap is at the sole discretion of GitHub.
The disclaimer protects you (and your customer)

It’s acts as a reminder that the roadmap is a living document

Could be as simple as: “Subject to change without notice”, “Last updated...”, or “Expires on...”
Themes are an expression of customer needs or problems. They are very effective in guiding the development of solutions.

- Bruce McCarthy, C. Todd Lombardo, Product Roadmaps Relaunched

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THEMES ARE NOT A LIST OR GROUPING OF FEATURES
THEMES ARE AN EXPRESSION OF A CUSTOMER NEED OR PROBLEM
DESIRED OUTCOME

Increase Engagement

FEATURE

- Share photo album
- Post to Twitter
- Add to Facebook feed
- Add collaborators
Increase Engagement

**Desired Outcome**

- Want to share albums with family and friends
- Want to post on social media

**Customer Need**

**Feature**

- Share photo album
- Add collaborators
- Add to Facebook feed
- Post to Twitter
“It is important to focus most of the roadmapping effort on customer needs and problems because the viability of a feature may shift dramatically, while the nature of an important customer problem will likely remain the same.

- Jared Spool, co-founder of Center Centre and the founder of UIE
What should we solve for?

How should we solve it?

Roadmap

Need

Release plan

Solutions

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OPPORTUNITY SOLUTION TREE

It’s a simple way of **visually** representing how you plan to reach a desired outcome. It helps you to make your implicit assumptions explicit.

This simple structure can be repeated over and over again, to explore how we might reach a desired outcome.

- Teresa Torres, Why This Opportunity Solution Tree is Changing the Way Product Teams Work
OPPORTUNITY SOLUTION TREE

Desired Outcome

Business Objective & Key Result

Opportunity

Theme
Expressed as customer needs/problems

Solution
Features
Solutions to customer needs
PRODUCT VISION

ROADMAP

OBJECTIVE

NEED

NEED

NEED

OBJECTIVE

NEED

NEED

NEED

OBJECTIVE

NEED

NEED

NEED

RELEASE PLAN

FEATURE

FEATURE

FEATURE

FEATURE

FEATURE

FEATURE

FEATURE

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COMMUNICATING AND CREATING ALIGNMENT

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AGILE ROADMAP SHOULD

- Flex with business and market needs
- Provide transparency from the business through delivery teams
- Highly visible
- Support and encourage collaboration at all levels

- Translate high level business goals to sprint level planning
- Avoid prematurely committing to dates
- Communicate and track dates/commitments
- Most important items clear
ROADMAP WALL

Product Vision: ----------------------------------------

Portfolio Kanban

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<tr>
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<th>Identify Opps &amp; Themes</th>
<th>Dev</th>
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Feature Story Maps

Opportunity Solution Tree

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ROADMAP WALL

Opportunity Canvas

What problem for your business does building this product, feature, or enhancement solve for your business? What types of users and customers have the addresses? Users & Customers

How much money and/or development would it take to discover, build, and refine this product. How will customers and users discover and adopt your solution? How will your target audience, if they have your solution, differently as a consequence? And, how will that benefit them? If your target audience has your solution, how is their use of the product affected by the success of this solution? User Value

These usually change as a consequence of behavior metrics changing. What user behaviors can you measure that will indicate they adopt, use, and place value in your solution? What business performance metrics will be affected by the success of this solution? Business Metrics

PORTFOLIO KANBAN

Feature Story Maps

BACKLOG

FEATURE STORY MAPS

OPPORTUNITY SOLUTION TREES
ROADMAP WALL

WHAT BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

WHAT CUSTOMER NEED

WHAT’S NEXT

WHAT SHOULD WE BUILD
# PORTFOLIO KANBAN

**Product Vision:**

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**Portfolio Kanban**

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OPPORTUNITY SOLUTION TREES
OPPORTUNITY SOLUTION TREE

Opportunity Canvas

Users & Customers
What types of users and customers have the challenges your solution addresses?
Look for differences in user's goals or uses that would affect their use of the product. Separate users and customers into different types based on those differences that make a difference. It's a bad idea to target "everyone" with your product.

Problems
What problems do prospective users and customers have today that your solution addresses?

Solution ideas
List product, feature, or enhancement ideas that solve problems for your target audience.

User Value
If your target audience has your solution, how can they do things differently as a consequence? And, how will that benefit them?

User Metrics
What user behaviors can you measure that will indicate they adopt, use, and place value in your solution?

Solutions Today
How do users address their problems today? List competitive products or work-around approaches your users have for meeting their needs.

Adoption Strategy
How will customers and users discover and adopt your solution?

Business Problems
What problem for your business does building this product, feature, or enhancement solve for your business?

Business Metrics
What business performance metrics will be affected by the success of this solution? These usually change as a consequence of behavior metrics changing.

Budget
What's it worth to you? How much money and/or development would you budget to discover, build, and refine this solution?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Users &amp; Customers</th>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Solution ideas</th>
<th>User Value</th>
<th>User Metrics</th>
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<tr>
<td>What types of users and customers have the challenges your solution addresses?</td>
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### Opportunity Canvas

#### Users & Customers
*What types of users and customers have the challenges your solution addresses?*

Look for differences in user's goals or uses that would affect their use of the product. Separate users and customers into different types based on those differences that make a difference. It's a bad idea to target “everyone” with your product.

#### Problems
*What problems do prospective users and customers have today that your solution addresses?*

#### Solution ideas
*List product, feature, or enhancement ideas that solve problems for your target audience.*

#### User Value
*If your target audience has your solution, how can they do things differently as a consequence? And, how will that benefit them?*

#### User Metrics
*What user behaviors can you measure that will indicate they adopt, use, and place value in your solution?*

#### Business Problems
*What problem for your business does building this product, feature, or enhancement solve for your business?*

#### Budget
*What's it worth to you?*

*How much money and/or development would you budget to discover, build, and refine this solution?*

#### Business Metrics
*What business performance metrics will be affected by the success of this solution?*

*These usually change as a consequence of behavior metrics changing.*
FEATURE STORY MAPS
TAKEAWAYS

• A roadmap is a strategic communication tool
• It is NOT a release or project plan
• Focus on needs, not solutions
• Invite design and engineering early in the process
• Add detail to the roadmap as needed
• Treat the roadmap as a living, breathing artifact

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