

Introduction to Roadmapping

**Presented by: uchechi
chibuzor**

Learning Objectives

- Understand what product roadmap is
- Why a product roadmap is important
- Types of product management roadmap
- PM Tools for roadmapping
- How to build a roadmap

What is Product Roadmap?

Definition:

Product roadmap is a high-level **visual** summary that speaks to the direction of the product. The initiatives, ideas or features that'd be worked on inline with the organization's short and long-term goal for the product

- It communicates the why and what behind what you're building. It is a guiding strategic document as well as a plan for executing the product strategy.
- It's a plan of action that aligns the organization around short and long-term goals for the product or project, and how they will be achieved.

Think of a product roadmap like a construction blueprint timeline. it shows *what you plan to build, why you're building it, and when* different parts will come together.

Why is Product Roadmap Important?

- Describe the vision and strategy
- Provide a guiding document for executing the strategy
- Get internal stakeholders in alignment
- Facilitate discussion of options and scenario planning
- Help communicate with external stakeholders, including customers

What are the key components of a good roadmap?

- Goals or outcomes
- Prioritized initiatives or features
- Timelines or time horizons
- Ownership or responsible teams
- Clear value to the customer or business

WHY?



PRODUCT ROADMAP

HOW?



PRODUCT BACKLOG

Aspect	Product Roadmap	Product Backlog
Definition	A high-level strategic plan showing product direction over time	A detailed, tactical list of all work items to be done
Focus	Why and When ; business goals, vision, priorities	What and How features, bugs, tasks, and improvements
Timeframe	Mid to long-term (e.g., quarterly or yearly)	Short-term (e.g., sprint or weekly tasks)
Audience	Stakeholders, execs, business teams	Development teams, designers, QA
Level of Detail	Low to medium (e.g., themes, epics, major features)	Very detailed (user stories, tasks, acceptance criteria)
Change Frequency	Changes occasionally (based on strategy updates)	Changes frequently (e.g., every sprint)

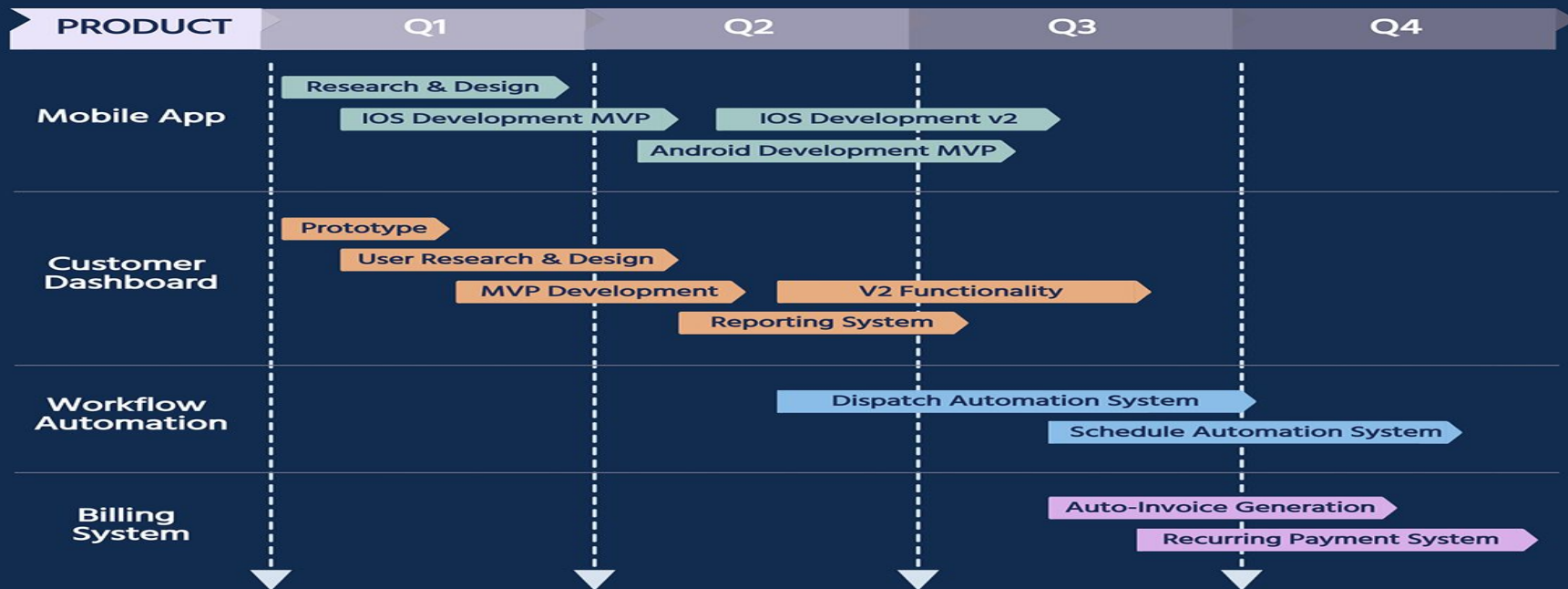
What should go into the Roadmap?

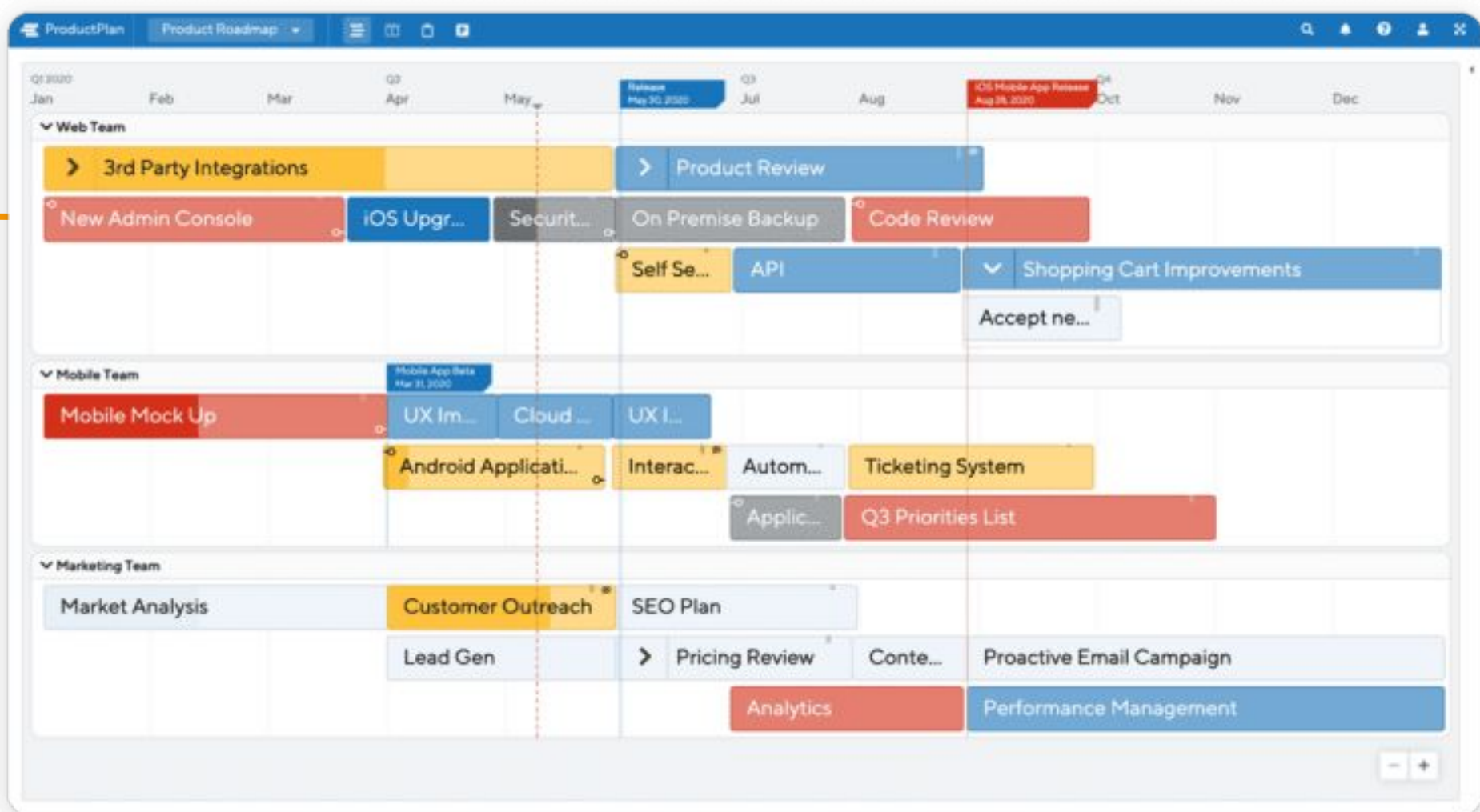
- Themes
- Epics
- Stories
- Features



PRODUCT ROADMAP

Source: <https://blog.kohactive.com/what-is-a-product-roadmap-and-why-you-need-one/>





PM Tools for Roadmapping?

:

- Notion
- product board
- Trello
- Aha
- Jira

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Feature Roadmap

Features roadmap: Shows the timeline for when new features will be delivered. Features roadmaps are perfect for communicating the details of what is coming and when to customers and other teams.

Purpose: Plan and track the development of individual features over time.

Best for: Teams focusing on granular functionality.

Example:

Timeline	Feature	Description
Month 1	Deadline Notifications	Push reminders for upcoming assignments.
Month 2	Subtasks	Break assignments into smaller steps.
Month 3	Dark Mode	Reduce eye strain for late-night study.

Feature Roadmap

Case Story:

In a building, the foreman says:

“For Floor 1: windows, plumbing, tiling. For Floor 2: same.”

Similarly, a PM might say:

Our Q1 focus is on core delivery features: tracking, ratings, payment. No dates — just clear priorities.

Q3 2016

Q4 2016

Q1 2017

Q2 2017

MILESTONES

Beta Launch

First 100 DAUs

First 1000 DAUs

CONSUMER GROWTH

Auto Save

Auto Sync

Menu Wide Options

Conversion Tracking

Real Time Mirroring

Google Single Sign On

ENTERPRISE GROWTH

Multi Language

CRM Intergration

SQL Support

Coworker Invitations

Executive View

Stakeholder Commenting

SCALABILITY

Geo-Locations

Handle Larger Data Sets

Feature Prioritization Tracking

Offline Support

Issue Map

DECREASE CHURN

Advanced Interactions

Sharing

New Like Notification

Custom Colors and Backgrounds

Performance Improvements

Theme Roadmap

A theme based roadmap speaks to a roadmap that's organised or grouped around a common thing. It could be an idea or a recurring issue that has effect on revenue, or an experience problem that frustrates users when using the product or ideas that'd give more stickiness factor to the product.

Structuring a roadmap according to themes offers more strategic advantages to a product team.

A theme based roadmap would get buy-in faster from top management than a feature laden roadmap.

Best for: Cross-functional collaboration.

Example:

Theme	Objective	Q3 2024 Outcomes
Never Miss a Deadline	Reduce late submissions by 20%.	Smart reminders, professor sync.
Study Smarter	Improve focus during sessions.	AI time-blocking, distraction alerts

Theme Roadmap

Case studies

Imagine you're leading a site, and instead of by timeline, you group tasks:

complete everything related to plumbing first across all floors not just Floor 1.”

For the app:

focus on improving trust features this quarter — all user-facing badges and fraud detection.

Q3 2020

Web Application

Theme: FTUE Improvements

Theme: Compliance with standard healthcare industry requirements

Redesigned sign up process

"smart" user onboarding flow

Support portal search

Activity emails 2.0

Theme: Project Panther

Theme: Website Rebranding

Mobile Application

Theme: Streamline mobile checkout experience

Refactoring: Update all legacy accounts

Theme: Account admin abilities on mobile

Integrations

Theme: Improve functionality for persona C

Theme: Customer Delight

Release Roadmap

Displays the high-level efforts that you plan to invest in to achieve your product goals. A strategy roadmap is great for presenting progress on initiatives to leadership and keeping cross-functional teams aligned on overarching business strategy.

Purpose: Communicate long-term vision and objectives (3–5 years).

Best for: Stakeholders and investors.

Example:

Year	Strategic Goal	Key Initiatives
2024	MVP Adoption	Launch core features, 10K users.
2025	Monetization	Premium plans, university partnerships.
2026	Global Expansion	Localize for 5+ languages.

Portfolio roadmap

Shows planned releases across multiple products in a single view. Portfolio roadmaps are useful for providing a strategic overview of your plan to leadership and a broad view of how multiple product teams work together.

Purpose: Align multiple projects/products under broader business goals.

Best for: Leadership visualizing high-level investments.

Example:

Initiative	Goal	Projects
Student Productivity	Improve task completion rates	Study Buddy App, Browser Extension
Campus Partnerships	Expand to 10+ universities.	Pilot Program, LMS Integrations

Outcome-based Product Roadmap

A roadmap that focuses on the "why" behind the product decisions, not just the features you're building. Instead of listing what you'll build (like login page, search bar, or dashboard), it lists the results or goals you want to achieve for your users or business.

Instead of:

“We will build Feature A, then Feature B, then Feature C.” You say:

“We want to increase user signups by 20%, or reduce customer complaints by half.”

Best for:

- Internal teams (to encourage autonomy and focus on impact)
- Stakeholders and leadership (to see how work ties to goals)

Outcome-based Product Roadmap

Goal	Now (1-2 months)	Next (3 - 6 months)	Later (6+ months)
Double DAU within the next 6 months	EU Daily Usage = 34% of users	EU Usage Mobile worker DAU increased 30% in EU by Feb 28, 2023	Daily use At least 80% of all app users manage at least 5 work orders weekly
	Total downloads = 120k	Total downloads Daily app downloads up by 80% by end of 1H2023	
Go big in Europe with 35% usage	Work in your language Customers create a work order in their language within 5 min of app download by Dec 31 2022	Expand deeper in EU Enter Eastern European EU Market by 1Q2023	Increase native language use 35% of all application usage is in Portuguese, French, or Spanish by end of 2023
		Compliance needs Full GDPR compliance by 1Q2020	

Roadmap Type**Focus****Best For**

Feature

What features are planned

Devs, PMs, short-term planning

Outcome-Based

Business/user results

Teams + Stakeholders

Theme-Based

Strategic initiatives

Execs, Cross-team alignment

Release

What goes live & when

Sales, Marketing, Support

Portfolio

Multiple products/teams

Execs, Program Managers

How to Build a Product Roadmap (Step-by-Step)

- Start with Product Vision
- Set Strategic Objectives
- Understand Your Users
- Prioritize Opportunities
- Choose Roadmap Format
- Add Time Frames
- Share & Align
- Update Continuously

Action Step

Management decided that the direction or theme the business wants to focus on for the next 6 months is customer retention and a 40% conversion rate of new users.

Which roadmapping method is the best to use and why?

Build a roadmap for the next 6 months using the best roadmapping method stated above.