

Market Research & Understanding User Needs

Identifying Problems and Validating Ideas Before You Build

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Learning Objectives

- Understand what market research and user needs are
 - Learn techniques to identify user problems and market gaps
 - Understand how to validate product ideas before building
 - Connect product concepts to real-life construction scenarios
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What is Market Research?

Definition: Market research is the process of gathering information about target users and the market to understand problems, opportunities, behaviors, and preferences.

Analogy: Before starting a new real estate project, you'd survey the land, assess demand, check competitors (other builders), and understand what buyers want. That's market research.

Why it matters in Product Management:

- Prevents you from building the wrong solution
- Ensures user problems are clearly understood
- Helps find market opportunities

 Topic	 Market Research	 User Research
Focus	The whole market — trends, competitors, demand	The individual user — needs, pain points, behavior
Main Question	<i>"Is there a need or demand for this product?"</i>	<i>"How do users feel about this product or feature?"</i>
Looks At	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industry trends - Competitors - Pricing - Target audience size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - User habits - User feedback - How people use your product
Purpose	Understand if the product is viable in the market	Build a product that is usable and valuable to the user
When Used	At the start of a new product or business idea	During design, development, or after launch
Tools/Methods	Surveys, industry reports, competitor analysis	Interviews, usability testing, user observation

What is User Needs?

Definition: User needs are the problems, challenges, or desires users have that they want a product or service to solve.

In Product Management:

- Identifying user needs is foundational
- If you don't solve a real need, users won't care about your product

What is Market Gap?

Definition: A market gap is an unmet need in the market. It means there's a demand that current solutions don't satisfy.

Analogy: Imagine a city with many buildings going up but no easy way to book certified electricians. That's a market gap.

Importance:

- Market gaps are opportunities to create impactful products
- Helps you stand out from competitors

Why do you need a Market Research?

- To understand who your users are and what they truly need
- To find out what solutions already exist
- To reduce the risk of building a product no one wants
- To increase product success rate



Techniques for Identifying User Problems

User Interviews

- Talk to users 1-on-1
- Ask about daily challenges, tools, and processes

Surveys

- Structured questions for larger audiences
- Helps identify common issues

Observation


- Watch users as they work
- Spot inefficiencies they may not mention

Competitor Analysis

- Study existing solutions
 - Look at user complaints and feature gaps
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Understanding and Documenting User Needs



- Write down key problems you observe or hear repeatedly
 - Group them by theme (e.g., delays, communication, safety)
 - Prioritize by impact and frequency
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What is Validation?

Definition: Validation is testing your product idea to see if it's something users really want and need, before you build.

Methods of Validating Ideas

Landing Page Test

- Create a simple page describing your product idea
- Track how many people sign up or show interest

Prototypes or Mockups

- Visual demo of your product (no code needed)
- Share with potential users for feedback

Preorders or Interest Forms

- Ask users to register or commit early
- Shows real demand

Construction Example: Like showing 3D visuals of a building and letting potential tenants book early.

Case study

Problem Identified: Tool loss across multiple job sites

Research:

- Interviewed 10 site managers
- 7 reported frequent tool loss
- Common workaround:
WhatsApp groups to track who has what

Idea: A tool tracking mobile app

Validation:

- Built simple prototype
- Shared with 3 site teams for a week
- Positive feedback: "This would really help us"

Result:

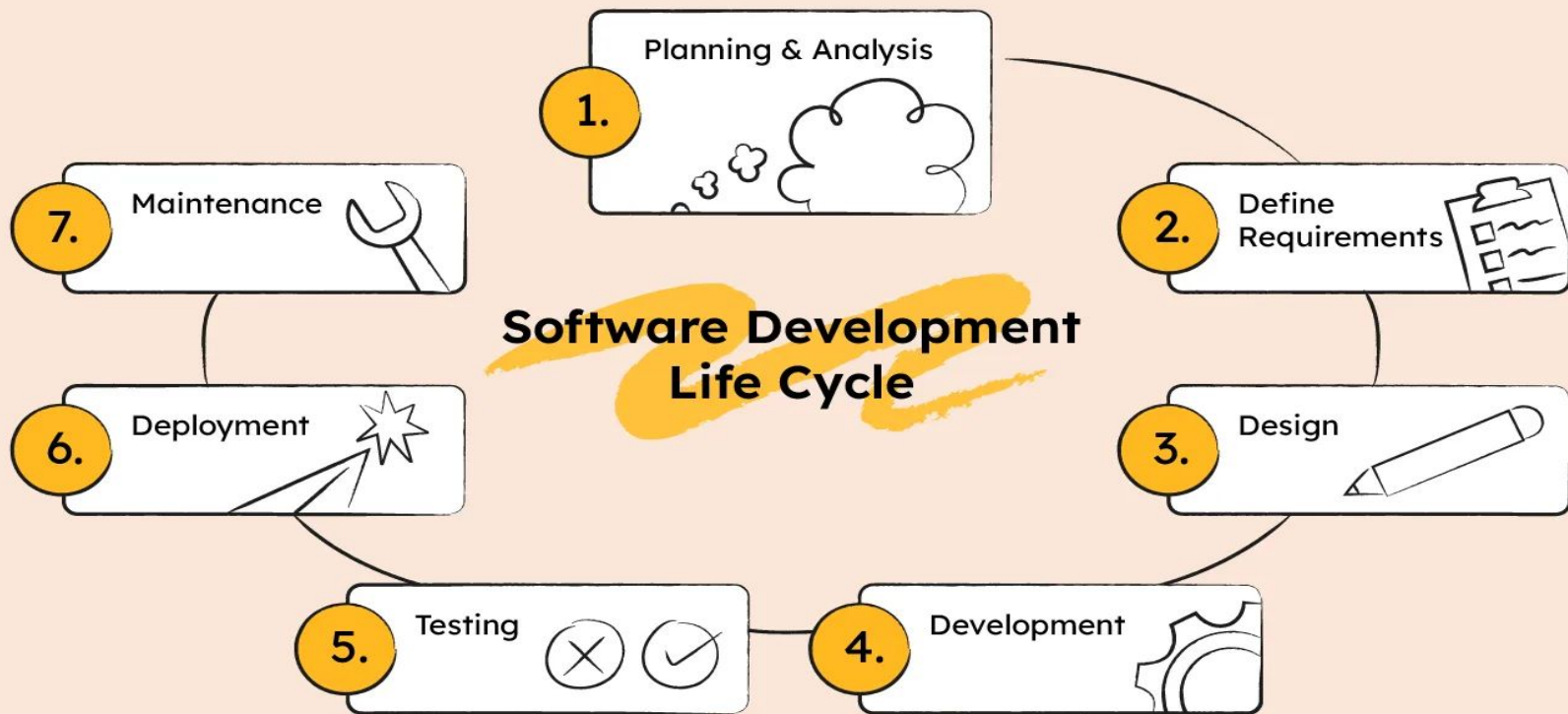
- Idea validated with no major build
_____ cost

Next Steps

- Choose one problem you've seen around you
 - Interview 3 people about it
 - Note common pain points
 - Think of a product idea to solve it
 - Consider how you might validate it quickly
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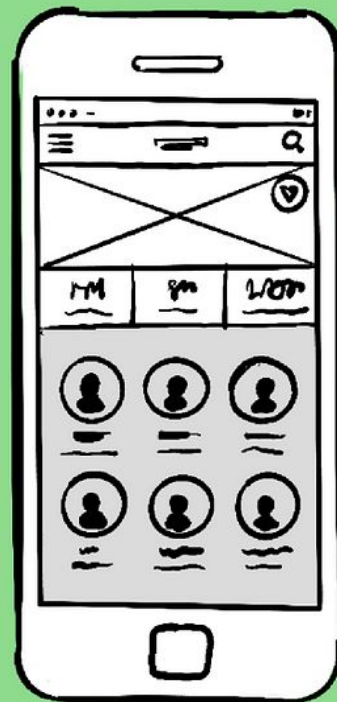
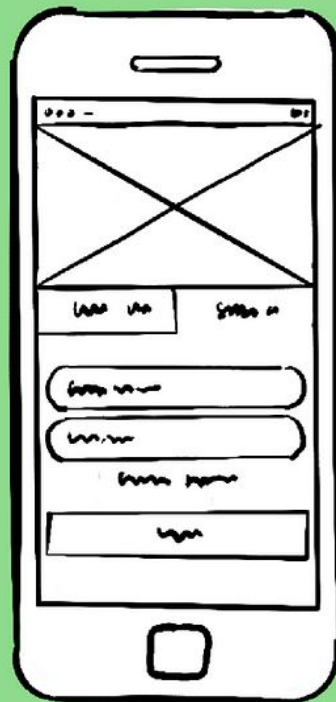


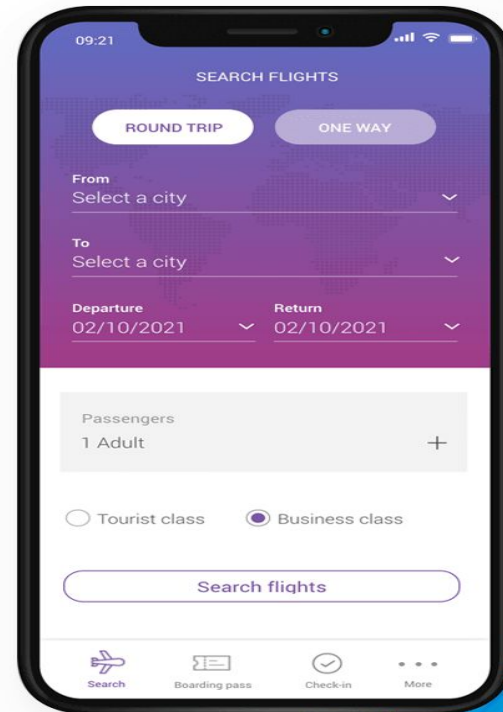
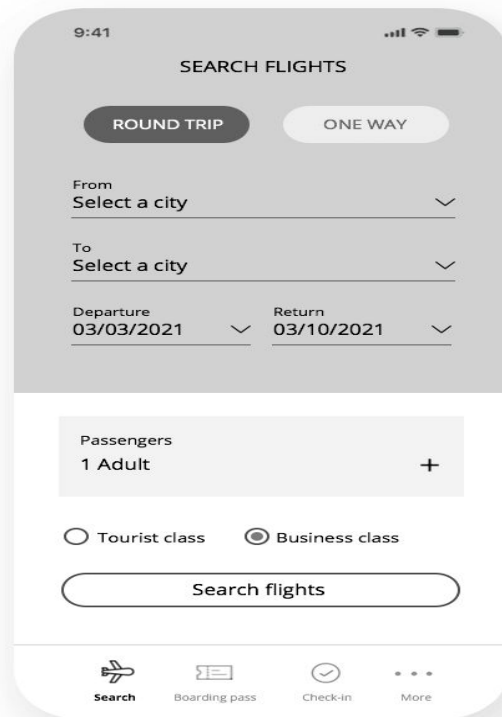
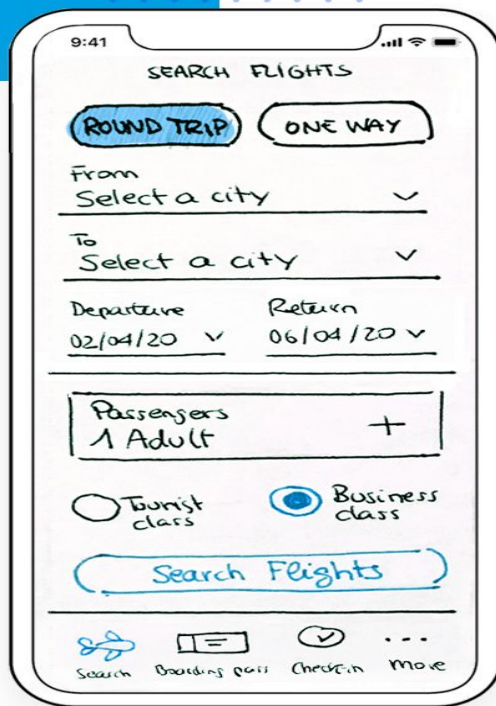
Overview of the software development lifecycle



Software Development lifecycle

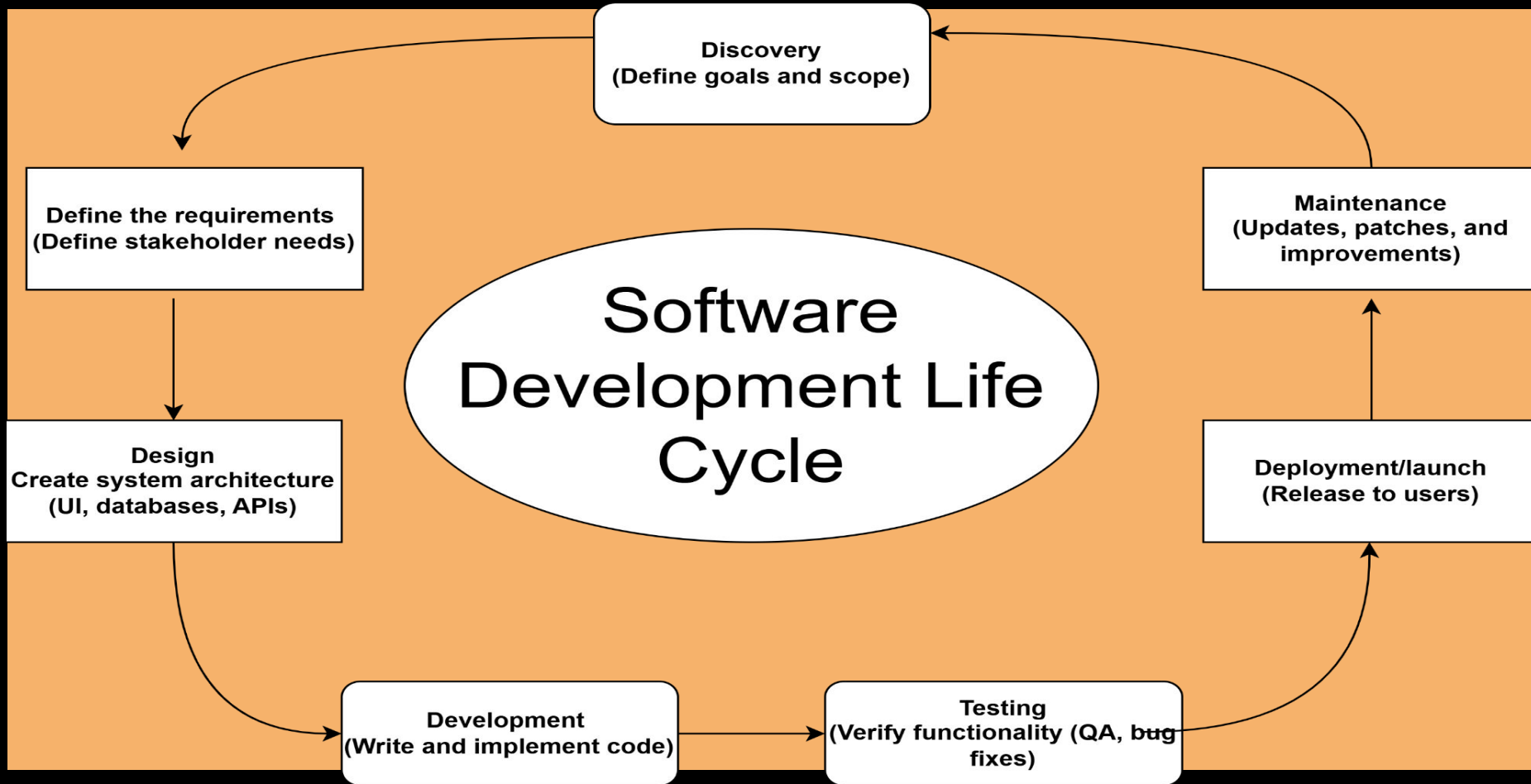
- Is the process that the development team uses to create awesome software that's top-notch in terms of quality, cost effectiveness, and time efficiency.
- It is about creating a detailed plan to guide the development of a product, and then breaking down the process into small modules that can be assigned, completed and measured to track the entire process
- The main goal of this process is to minimize risk, and make sure the software/product meets users needs/expectation both during and after production





Key Stages Of The Software Development Life Cycle

- Discovery– Define goals and scope.
- Define the requirements – Define stakeholder needs.
- Design – Create system architecture (UI, databases, APIs)
- Development – Write and implement code
- Testing — Verify functionality (QA, bug fixes).
- Deployment/launch – Release to users
- Maintenance — Updates, patches, and improvements.



How does the PM fits into the SDLC?

- They are involved in defining the product vision, gathering requirements, and prioritizing features during the planning phase.
- During development, they collaborate with cross-functional teams, provide clarifications, and ensure the product aligns with market needs.
- In testing, product managers may validate that the product meets user expectations.
- Post-release, they collect feedback, analyze metrics, and iterate on future development.

Generally, the product manager, oversees the entire lifecycle of the product, to ensure that transitions between stages are smooth, and improve communication across the team.

Popular SDLC Models

- **Waterfall** (Sequential)
- **Agile** (Iterative – Scrum, Kanban)
- **DevOps** (Continuous Integration/Deployment)

Why SDLC Matters?

- ✓ Reduces risks & costs.
- ✓ Improves collaboration.
- ✓ Ensures scalable, reliable software.