



PRO ROADMAPS UCT

Includes our
ready-to-use
templates

A complete guide to
help product managers
get started on their
roadmapping journey

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About Roadmunk

Roadmunk was inspired by a problem our founders experienced personally: there was no simple way for product managers to build, share and align on the roadmap.

As we got to know our users, we discovered that roadmapping is not one-size-fits-all. Companies make roadmaps of all shapes, sizes and types—it's a powerful and essential tool for alignment.

Our goal is to make strategic roadmapping quick, effective and collaborative across an entire organization.

Why does this eBook exist?

I've witnessed firsthand how a product roadmap can improve the way a product team works. It's a dynamic, collaborative tool that allows you to communicate your product vision and strategy. It's why we built Roadmunk—to help companies find that strategic alignment in a smooth, uncomplicated way.

A product roadmap isn't a literal map that you sit down and plan like you would a GPS route. Before you get started, you need to establish why you need it, how you'll build it, what format you'll use, what initiatives you'll prioritize, and how you'll inject the user's needs into it above everything else. It's a lot! Which is why you're here: you're looking for ways to get started on/improve your own product roadmapping process.

I'm familiar with the questions that arise during the product roadmapping process—I've had to answer them all at some point during my career: How hard should the deadlines be for this initiative? Should we even have deadlines? What other formats are there? That's why we put together this ebook. In it, you'll find:

A not-frustrating definition of a product roadmap (Chapter 1): Why you should think of it as a statement of intent instead of, you know, a literal map

Find the format and template that suits your needs (Chapter 2): The different ways you can format a product roadmap

How to *actually* start building a solid product roadmap (Chapter 3): Everything you'll need to get started

Best practices for getting alignment and buy-in (Chapter 4): How to best share and present a product roadmap

No matter what type of product you're building, where it is along the lifecycle, or how big your company is—this ebook will give you the advice you need to both start and improve your product roadmap.

Happy reading (and roadmapping)!



 **roadmunk**

Latif Nanji, CEO at Roadmunk



A Product Roadmap Definition

Chapter One

Here at Roadmunk, we like to think of a product roadmap as a statement of intent. Here's why this roadmap definition works.

Product roadmaps aren't supposed to be inflexible, "set it and forget it" spreadsheets. Your roadmap is a dynamic, visual representation of where your company and your product are going.

They're communication tools, yes, but they're certainly not static. Every item and idea on your product roadmap should be pushing towards achieving product goals and realizing your product strategy. And product strategies, as you probably already know, evolve to reflect any market or customer insights gained along the product lifecycle.

There are many types of product roadmaps and many ways to organize them, but they all have one thing in common: **they're meant to change**. By framing your roadmaps as a definition of intent, it clarifies an often messy internal process; it offers a clear way of setting expectations among your team and your stakeholders.

For product-driven companies, a product roadmap is essential to organizational alignment.

A product roadmap illustrates high-level product strategy and demonstrates how a product will evolve over time. Depending on the stage, size and structure of your organization, it can be customer-facing. In some cases, companies will have two versions of the roadmap: an internal one for the company, and an external one for customers.

Below, we get into the reasons for why defining the product roadmap as a statement of intent is a good idea. In a nutshell, when you redefine the product roadmap as a statement of intent, a lot of the typical pain points that come from calling it a “communication document” tend to dissipate.

Pro

An external-facing product roadmap with a clear strategy can make all the difference when you need to convince clients—especially large companies with a lot of revenue—that your product is the right solution for them in the long term. It tells an enterprise that you're the right investment because you'll be building the solutions to the problems that matter the most to them.

Tip

Right vs. wrong approach to the product roadmap

The **right** product roadmap approach:

A visual communication tool: it presents a high-level product vision and product strategy, the different initiatives each team will carry out to achieve that vision and how the product will evolve over time

An external communication tool: it keeps product teams, customers, and stakeholders informed on what's being done to bring the product close to that high-level vision

A tool for organizational alignment and stakeholder buy-in: it helps product teams make informed decisions and keeps stakeholders up to date

Adaptable and focused on the short term: it responds to ongoing user research, market observations and strategic changes (especially in medium-to-large companies that are driven by innovation and frequent, incremental releases).

The **wrong** product roadmap approach:

A Gantt chart: A Gantt chart is a bar chart that shows a scheduled set of linear tasks to be completed by specific dates. The roadmap should show your strategic direction, not its granular execution

A long-term features release plan: your product, market, and user needs are dynamic and ever-changing. Planning a set of predetermined features over a rigid timeline is a recipe for disaster

A static document with a list of granular, tactical tasks: this is ok to have if you're an individual team or team member, but the overall company product roadmap shouldn't be a list of tasks

Created in a silo by product managers: When the roadmap is created without any input from the different parts that make up a product team (sales, CS, design, development), it can create a poor culture

The product feature backlog: see our point about a long-term release plan

A scheduled to-do list: nothing will kill your team's productivity and creativity more than the stress of a deadline for any given feature delivery.

Pain point 1

Managing team and stakeholder expectations is hard

How a statement of intent comes to the rescue: It smooths the alignment process and helps stakeholder management by bringing a sense of openness to the discussion

How do you balance the expectations and demands of sales, marketing and execs? How do you foster a sense of openness and empathy around the product roadmapping process? A good product roadmap, one that works as a definition of intent, fosters and nurtures a better communication process across the company.

By calling your product roadmap a statement of intent, it clarifies an often messy internal process that can come with a lot of interpersonal friction. This product roadmap definition offers a point of reference and context that every team can collaborate on.

Expectation management tactics:

- Hold regular product roadmapping sessions with your team and key stakeholders. Take this opportunity to decide which initiatives in the backlog will go on the next sprint
- Teach the product team to justify any ideas or roadmap items so that they are only aligned with customer problems, the product vision, goals and product strategy
- Only include roadmap initiatives that the whole team is confident on. As soon as something strays from that strategic picture your roadmap is supposed to paint, cancel it

Pain point 2

The roadmap is a static document that never changes

How a statement of intent comes to the rescue:
The roadmap grows with your company

As organizations evolve, so do their roadmaps. In young companies, roadmaps tend to be a list of features—that's fine, but you should also have a separate, high-level product roadmap that tells a strategic story. Defining your product roadmap as a statement of intent is particularly useful at this stage, especially in agile organizations that don't necessarily run on timelines. It provides a flexible framework at a volatile phase of your product's life.

This gets tricky at bigger companies, where roadmaps integrate a whole lot more complexity and often include aggressive timelines. By suggesting that you think of your roadmap as

a statement of intent, we're not suggesting you ignore deadlines.

When your product roadmap definition can be summed up as a "statement of intent," it creates room for flexibility—if and when flexibility becomes necessary.

These days, there's no excuse for creating a static, "set it and forget it" product roadmap document like an Excel spreadsheet or a Powerpoint graph. Why spend valuable time figuring out the kinks and twists of formatting? The pain of building a finicky spreadsheet roadmap is a big part of why we built our tool.

Why not [give it a try?](#)

Pain point 3

The roadmap is disconnected from any real user problems

How a statement of intent comes to the rescue: It's customer-friendly

It can be incredibly valuable to show customers your roadmap. Less valuable: making promises you can't keep. This usually happens when the product roadmap is a list of features, rather than a strategic document centred around user problems.

When customers understand that your roadmap is a statement of intent, they understand that the items on it might shift. Making it clear that your roadmap articulates intention, rather than commitment, allows you to build enthusiasm while managing expectations.

A product roadmap is a powerful communication tool that product managers use to align different departments on one vision. It empowers the sales team to lead informed product conversations with prospects, the marketing team to plan campaigns that align with feature releases and HR to determine who to hire and when.



Ways to format your product roadmap

Chapter two

Our [product roadmap templates](#) were built knowing that there isn't just one way to create a product roadmap. Some product teams love key dates, while others prefer a date-less approach.

There's a lot of debate around what the ideal product roadmap should look like. It should be organized by themes! No, by goals! Actually, it's by strategic initiatives! There shouldn't be any dates at all! Hang on, that's impossible! We need some dates, even if it's just by quarters or vague scheduled sprints!

There's also a lot of disagreement on what the ideal number of roadmaps should be and how everyone's plans should be managed. Is it one master product roadmap that acts as a visualization tool for the overall product strategy (for stakeholders, executives and clients)? Is it one roadmap per department? One per strategic initiative? A separate roadmap for the team, the stakeholders and the customers?

The truth is, there's no easy answer to those questions. It depends on your team, your product's needs and where it is along the lifecycle, your goals, your industry, and the type of product you're building.

If your company values deadlines, your roadmap should reflect that approach. If plans are more loosey-goosey, your roadmap should be, too. Like we mentioned earlier, it all depends on culture, and **the way PMs do roadmapping can affect how that culture evolves.**

Generally speaking, your product roadmap can fall under one of three format categories:

1 Theme-based

2 Timeline

3 Hybrid

The best part? You can use [Roadmunk](#) to create all of them.

Format #1

Theme-based product roadmap

Presenting your roadmap in themes helps you with the stakeholder expectations we discussed earlier. A product roadmap that organizes its initiatives into themes or “buckets” facilitates an organized discussion around the different moving parts of a product strategy, rather than having to sift through them all at once.

A theme-based product roadmap also eliminates the constraints that

come with dates (it’s considered a type of [“no-dates” roadmap](#)). This type of roadmap is especially relevant to teams that operate under some type of agile methodology, where dates and timelines are shunned.

By avoiding dates, you can keep the focus entirely on building the product—not on arbitrary timelines or deadlines.

Theme-based roadmaps frame the work your team does as **a promise to solve problems, not build specific features.**

Find this roadmap template in our template library and make it your own. Sign up for Roadmunk’s [free 14-day trial](#).

	INFRASTRUCTURE	NEW FEATURES	STICKINESS	IMPROVEMENTS	INTEGRATIONS
WEB APP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metrics Automated Tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature A Scope Integrated Prototype Undo Function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding Flow Desktop Delighter (TBD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue Styling Import Engine Update Navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salesforce Marketo
MOBILE APP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demo Staging Regression Back-End Analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature Requirements Front-End Prototype Feature B Scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reward (Progress Bar) Mobile Delighter (TBD) Gamification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Overhaul 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slack Trello
DESIGN / UX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MVP Requirements Archiving Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple Environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JIRA Zendesk

Format #2

Timeline product roadmaps

A timeline roadmap is pretty self-explanatory. It charts how your product will grow and evolve over time. Timelines are the best choice when you want to present a time-oriented view of the roadmapped initiatives across your organization. In some large-to-enterprise companies that are juggling multiple departments, dependencies and deadlines, a complex timeline product roadmap is helpful (and sometimes necessary).

In larger companies, there are multiple departments working together—and they need a concrete framework by which to coordinate their efforts. Marketing can't look at a no-dates roadmap and properly plan campaigns. Sales needs to be able to pin commitments on dates, or they won't be able to close deals. The product team needs to understand—and be accountable to—the needs of other departments.

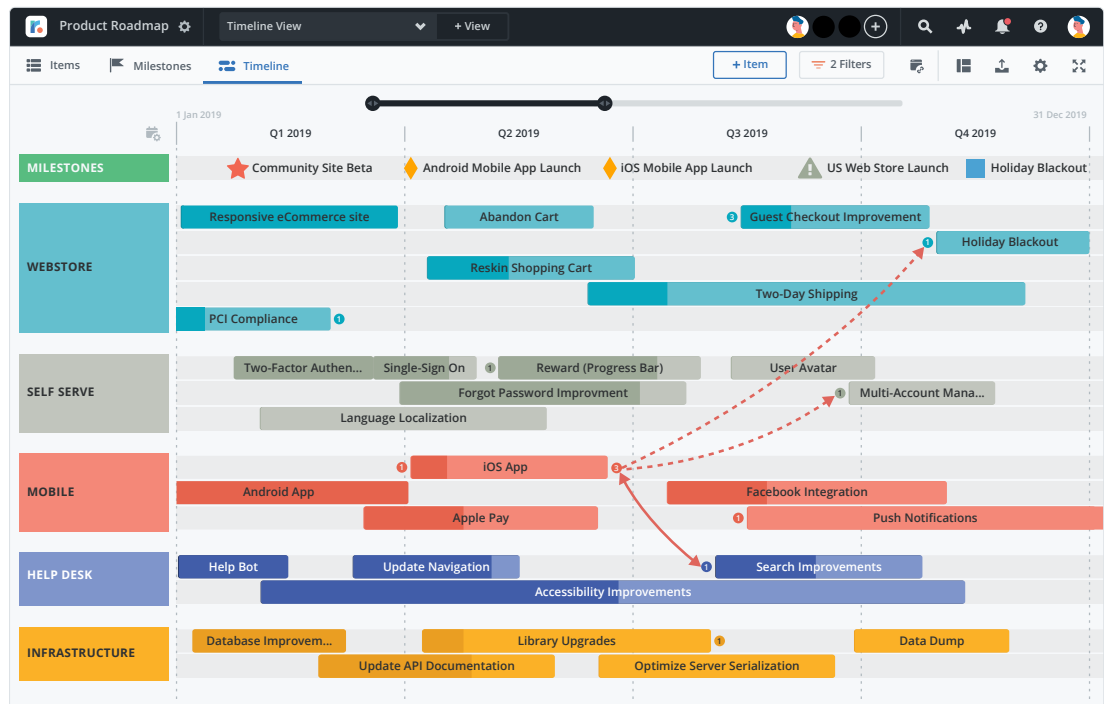
Timelines are the more traditional way of visualizing a roadmap, showing a time-oriented view of items such as initiatives and objectives punctuated by milestones to highlight goals, achievements, and other important time markers.

More importantly, a timeline product roadmap gives structure to the many moving parts that must operate in tandem to make a product function within the mainstream market.

They also show the product's long-term vision—since some departments must plan a year or more in advance.

Note

On Roadmunk, you can organize your team's tasks into pre-set buckets—including new features, infrastructure and stickiness. You can also highlight important events, like a feature release, with milestones. Use [our timeline view](#) of the product roadmap template to chart how your product will grow over time.



Choose from 35+ ready-to-use roadmap templates in our template library. Sign up for Roadmunk's [free 14-day trial](#).

Format #3

Hybrid product roadmaps

Hybrid roadmaps incorporate the concept of time but lack any hard, granularly-defined dates. For example, a company might create a roadmap that is organized by month or quarter. This style of roadmap allows you to plan into the future while maintaining flexibility.

There are many arguments to be made about why a dateless product roadmap is the best way to go. But for a lot of teams, dates are a contextual necessity for:

That's why there are many types of roadmaps that include some form of dates and timelines. These “date-flexible” roadmaps are ideal for teams working within some type of agile philosophy, but who'd still like to see the concept of time defined at some level (without hard dates).

- Planning for the long-term
- Keeping stakeholders informed about deliverability
- Managing a large number of departments with multiple priorities and expectations (in a large company)

Sprint roadmaps

If you work in a more structured agile environment, another option is to structure your product roadmap by cycle or sprint—and not link those sprints to specific dates.

The sprint roadmap allows agile teams to work in short one- or two-week sprints. Sprints work well for

teams that don't like to see defined dates on their roadmap. They define the amount of work to be completed, and in what order, but without the stress of a deadline looming over their heads.

	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2
DESIGN / UX	Investment (status update)	Import Engine Export	Search Update Navigation Prototypes	Dialogue Styling	Archiving
OPERATIONS	Marketo Hiring: Phase 1	Update API Documentation	Delighter (TBD) Hiring: Phase 2	Onboarding Now	Zendesk
MOBILE	Change Log	Performance Regression	Automated Tests	Comment Platform Reward (Progress Bar)	Localization
WEB APPLICATIONS	Database Improvements	Slack Library Upgrades	JIRA	Set Up Multiple Environments	Action (Reply)

For teams that need a bit more structure than a theme-based roadmap, try a sprint roadmap. Check out this template in our [library](#).

Fuzzy time

Many agile teams also organize their product roadmaps according to “fuzzy time.” This means that rather than stating explicit dates, their product roadmap might include loose time buckets like In Progress, Future and Completed.

Growing agile teams can’t ignore time, so a “fuzzy” approach is a compromise for teams that don’t want to be held to specific dates, but still need rough time frames.

Some teams need to start planning for a few months or quarters into

the future—say, medium-term.

Creating a fuzzy time roadmap ([which is also a type of hybrid product roadmap](#)) allows you to be more aggressive with your vision and speak intelligently and transparently to your market—without forcing you into a rigid timeline before it makes sense for your product.

By time-boxing projects according to these loose time buckets, you create a projection that’s helpful but not constraining.

	IN PROGRESS	SOON	FUTURE	COMPLETED
DESIGN / UX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue Styling Archiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prototypes Menus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search Export Update Navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment (Status Update) Import Engine
OPERATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delighter (TBD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding Flow Hiring: Phase 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update API Documentation Zendesk Hiring: Phase 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketo
MOBILE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localization Comment Platform Regression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated Tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Log Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reward (Progress Bar)
WEB APP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database Improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set Up Multiple Environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action (Reply) JIRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slack Library Upgrades

Track progress without hard deadlines using a fuzzy time roadmap. [Try this roadmap template.](#)

Agile-ish

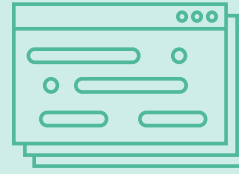
If you're an agile-ish team that's still incorporating waterfall elements, your product roadmap tends to have dates with a caveat. Dates that are closer to the present tend to be more granular, whereas the further along you go, the more abstract (i.e. fuzzy) the time headers become. It wouldn't be agile if the dates were the be-all-end-all.

For teams that stick to an agile-ish roadmap, the closer they are to the present, the more certainty there is around what they can deliver. The further into the future they plan, the more uncertainty there is.

	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	SOON	FUTURE
NEW FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature Requirements Front-End Prototype 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature A Scope Archiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Prototype MVP Requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undo Function Feature B Scope
STICKINESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Updates Onboarding Flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reward (Progress Bar) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile Delighter (TBD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gamification Desktop Delighter (TBD)
INTEGRATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slack Salesforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JIRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trello HubSpot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hipchat Zendesk Marketo
INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demo Staging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regression Automated Tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metrics Back-End Analytics

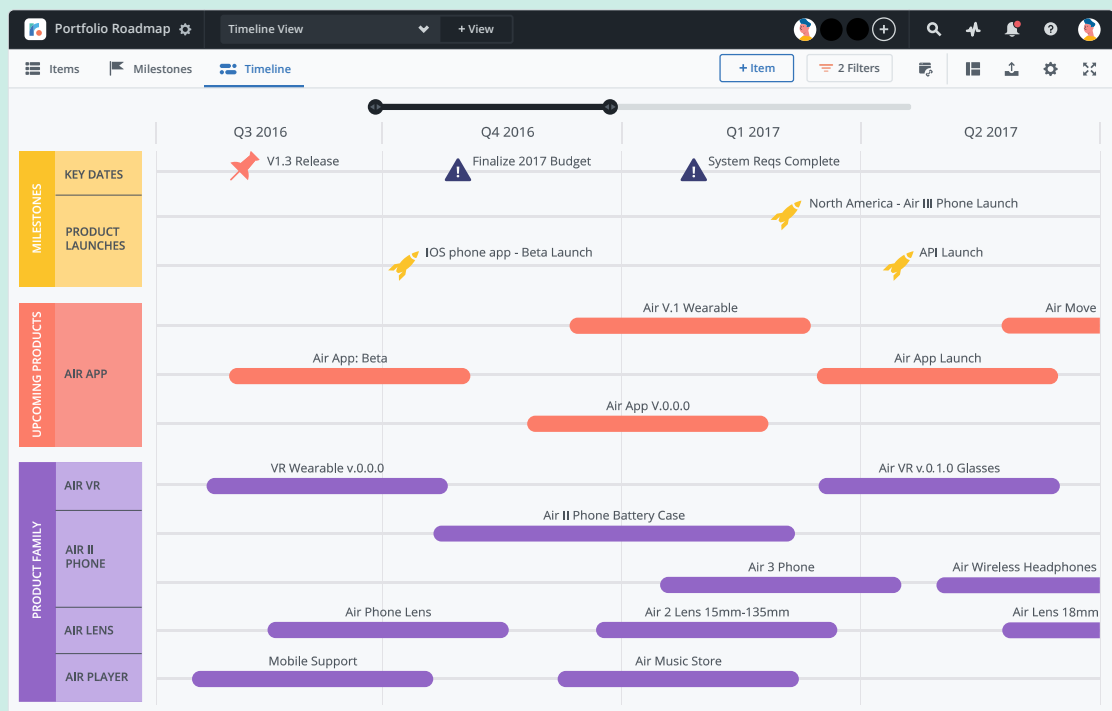
For more on agile roadmapping and why that's not a contradictory idea, check out our ebook, [Agile Roadmapping: A Not-Boring Guide For Real-World Product Managers.](#)

Roadmunk's Template Library



Now that you know what the different types of roadmaps are, you can give one of our product roadmap templates a try. Head over to our [templates library](#) and choose one that fits your needs.

It's easy: just log in or [sign up for a free trial](#). Choose the “Templates” folder from the home screen, pick one of our ready-to-use templates from the 35+ we have available, then edit, save and share it! That's all it takes.



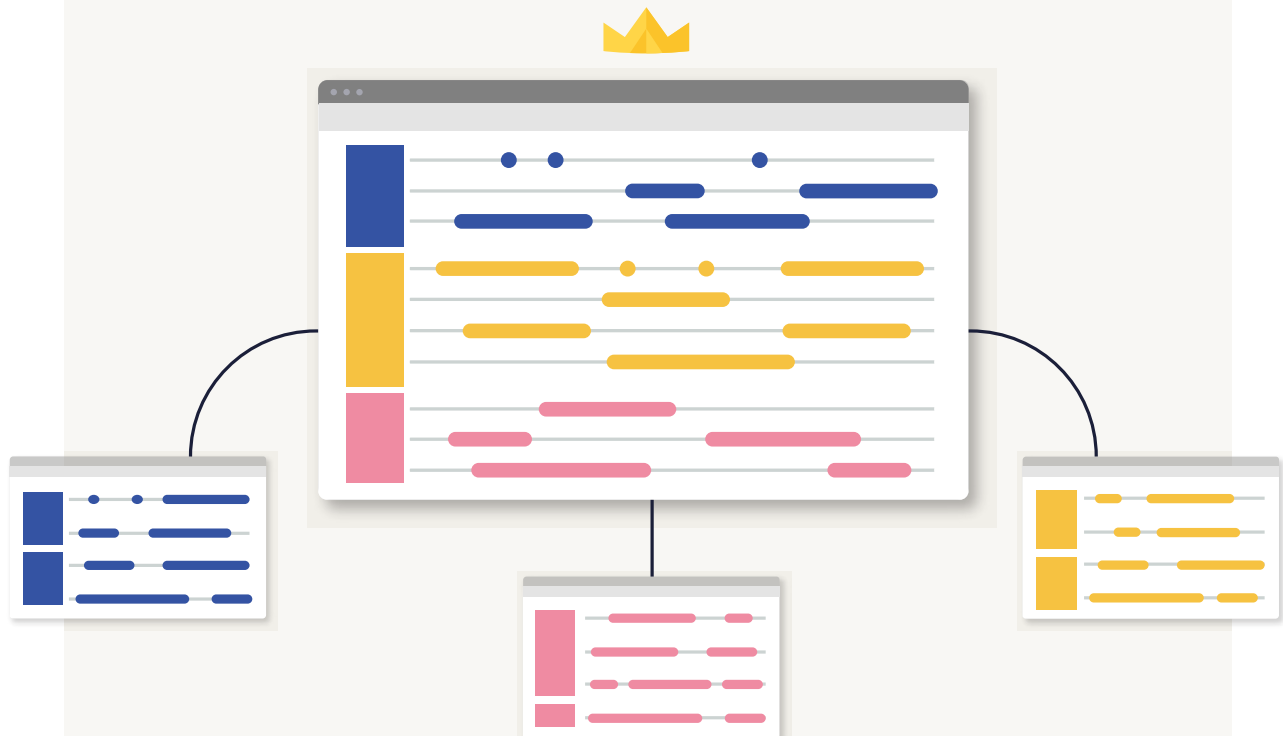
For organizations with multiple product lines, our portfolio template makes it possible to illustrate and communicate a high-level overview of how different products will evolve and how they relate to each other. Try our portfolio roadmap template [here](#).

Master Roadmaps

Your product roadmap is a powerful tool for communicating strategy. But no matter how effective a single roadmap might be, it's hard to show the initiatives each individual department is working on when everyone has their own individual roadmaps.

This is where master roadmapping comes in handy. You can merge all of your roadmaps in your account to form a master product roadmap. This means that products, departments and programs can each have their own individual roadmap, which can then be rolled up into a master with a few clicks.

[Give our Master Roadmap a try](#)





What you
need to
create a
product
roadmap

Chapter three Alright, now that you know about all the different types of product roadmaps (and hopefully know which one fits your organization the best), it's time to get into the different moving parts that go into building one.

Your roadmap often lives at the edge between the product strategy and the more tactical initiatives your team will undertake to get there. It should also provide a complete look into all the cross-departmental strategies that will fulfill the vision and the product strategy.

So, what do you need in order to build a roadmap that actually points everyone in the right direction? Here are some general guidelines and best practices for product roadmap planning.

1 Set goals on your roadmap that are aligned with your vision and product strategy

It's no use if your roadmap is just a release plan, a backlog, or a bunch of features listed in the order you want to release them (also known as a Gantt chart). This flawed approach doesn't include measurable goals or the outcomes you'd like to see that will bring you closer to those goals. Any product manager worth their salt will tell you that a "feature map" roadmap is a recipe for disaster. Remember that your roadmap should list goals and objectives that are directly in line with your vision and product strategy. This involves more than just crafting a strong vision and strategy—part of the product manager's priorities is to make sure the leadership team and the internal team understand those strategic values and rationalize their decisions using that product vision and strategy.

Key questions you should ask:

- How does this bucket/theme/initiative bring us closer to delivering the product strategy?
- Does this bucket/theme/initiative address a core need or problem faced by our users? Show how it does that exactly by tying it back to qualitative and quantitative data
- Is this bucket/theme/initiative pushing us towards achieving the figures in our KPIs and SMART objectives? Show how exactly
- Have we done everything to prioritize this bucket/theme/initiative? Like, for example, run it by a [prioritization framework](#) (Kano, Value vs. Complexity, ROI Scorecard, Cost of Delay)

Key Deliverables:

Product vision

Product strategy

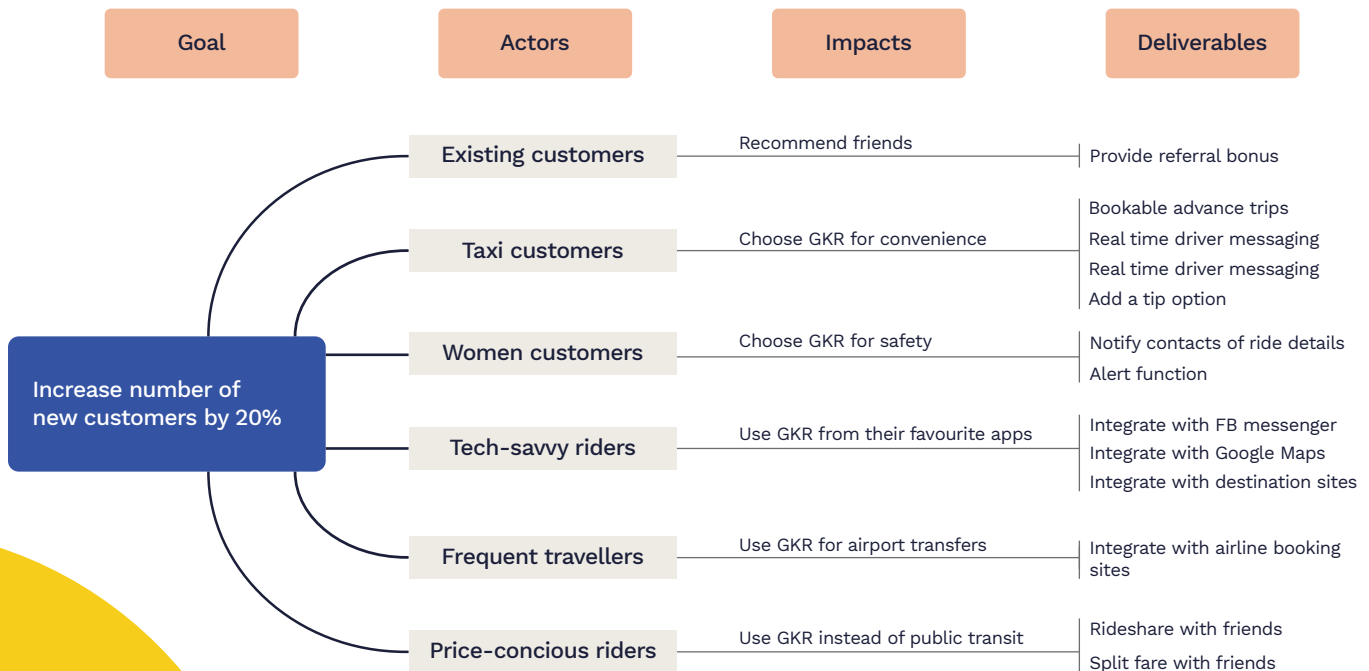
Business goals

OKRs and KPIs

Product roadmap planning session exercise: Impact map

What is it?

Impact mapping is a type of mind-mapping technique that allows teams to plan and visualize the strategic initiatives that will bring them closer to the goals of the organization. It can be used at the business level goals, the product level goals, or individual team-level goals.



Source: Example by scrum.org

What are the benefits?

Impact mapping is a team exercise that allows participants (the product team or the stakeholders) understand how their efforts and ideas are linked with the results and outcomes outlined in the product strategy and vision.

It's a great exercise for product roadmap planning. It allows everyone to reach a clear understanding of the product and business objectives that are needed to improve decisions.

How do you do it?

There are four main parts to an impact map:

a Goals (The Why):

The goal is a measurable outcome that the business would like to see. Impact mapping can also be used to set user-specific goals.

Always make your goals
SMART: Specific, Measurable,
Attainable/Agreed upon,
Relevant and Time-bound

b Impacts (The How):

These are the actions that the actors will ideally perform to get you closer to the goal. It's also important to define behaviours that would prevent you from getting closer to the goal (negative impacts). That way you can define the desired impact as minimizing that negative behaviour.

c Actors (The Who):

These are the people who can help you achieve the outcome of that goal. Actors can be people who use your product, people or parties that might prevent you from reaching that goal, and/or people who can push you closer to that goal.

- Who are you doing this for?
- Who could prevent you from doing this?

d Deliverables (The What):

Here's where you get into what your product can do to support each actor's behaviour and ideal impact. The main question to ask here is "what can you do to accomplish the positive impact or reduce the negative impact?". When you list one deliverable per impact, you'll have the tasks and specific deliverables you need to establish a plan of action.

2 Hunt and gather those inputs and requirements

Gathering input from your internal and external stakeholders isn't just a participation exercise. It's an opportunity to gain an added level of insight that quantitative data can't provide. Overall, the most important sources of input and priorities come from the following groups:

- **Customer/Client/User needs**
- **Internal stakeholders** (heads of department, managers of sales, CS, design, development)
- **External stakeholders** (investors and executives)

A good product roadmap is a combination of unified decisions, goals and strategy-justified objectives coming from each individual team and stakeholder involved in the development of your product. When you involve the right people in the product roadmapping process, you allow everyone to link their daily efforts to the company mission.

Collaborative roadmapping also allows you to create a process where the people invested in/responsible for the development of the product can learn how to position their decisions, requests and objectives so they are in-line/justified by the overall vision and product strategy that you defined earlier.

Other benefits of a collaborative product roadmap planning process include:

- Faster product delivery thanks to the implementation of a transparent roadmapping process
- Reach compromise by encouraging stakeholders to discuss, among themselves, their priorities and justify why they matter over others
- It teaches the team how to link their solutions to the overall objectives, KPIs and product strategy
- Gain new, previously undiscovered perspectives on old and new problems

3 Determine the themes on your roadmap by defining user needs

If you're using a theme-based roadmap (like the type we described in Chapter 2), one way you can determine those building blocks is by customer needs.

Framing your roadmap initiatives and features by customer needs allows you to do a few things. It helps you make a strong case when it's time to get buy-in for the roadmap. Stakeholders can't resist a roadmap that's grounded in real user needs. It tells them that your plan isn't aimless or focused on the wrong metrics, which makes them feel

confident that the product is set in the right direction.

Gather the information you need to define your roadmap themes from the following sources:

- **Surveys**
- **In-person sessions**
- **User interviews to understand audience pain points**
- **Customer feedback & support requests**
- **Audience surveys**

Feedback	Category
I really love the way you show me the statuses and percentage so that I can learn more about how I'm performing against the others	User metrics
I don't understand how to export my user data to use in XLS	Reporting
It would be great if I could use this on my iPad	Mobile
When I click on the number I expect it to show me a breakdown of each instance of the test	User metrics
Why can't I filter my data on this view? It would be really helpful	Reporting
I really need to see a keyboard breakdown without having to run a complicated SQL query	User metrics

Example from product perspective

4 Use a roadmapping tool to build your product roadmap

Product roadmaps are an important part of a product team's workflow.

They equip a product manager with a simple but effective way to visualize their product strategy, collaborate with their team, and present it to stakeholders. Making this happen isn't so quick and easy in Excel spreadsheets, Powerpoint presentations and other ad hoc tools like Trello and Jira.

Some other benefits of using a roadmapping tool include:

- They present your product strategy using a high-level view of your team's initiatives
- They help you craft beautiful visual roadmaps that allow you to use the elements of information design
- They foster an open and collaborative product culture. A product roadmapping tool allows you to collaborate with everyone from sales to the development team.
- They make it easy to update and keep track of the initiatives
- They facilitate the alignment of stakeholders and the discussions during the roadmap planning stage

Our roadmap tool is designed to make it easy to share and visualize your product strategy.

Why not [give it a try?](#)

Roadmunk is a product roadmap tool built to help teams cut through the clutter of day-to-day tasks and focus on the big picture.

With Roadmunk, it's easy to build, share and present your high-level product strategy to keep the whole organization working towards the same product goals. Our roadmap tool focuses on three key roadmapping functions: **planning, collaborating and visualizing.**

We understand that there isn't one prescribed way to build a product

roadmap. Each one is as unique as the product team that built it. We also like to think of a product roadmap as a living document – as flexible as the team managing it. They're constantly evolving.

With this in mind, Roadmunk was built to give product teams as much

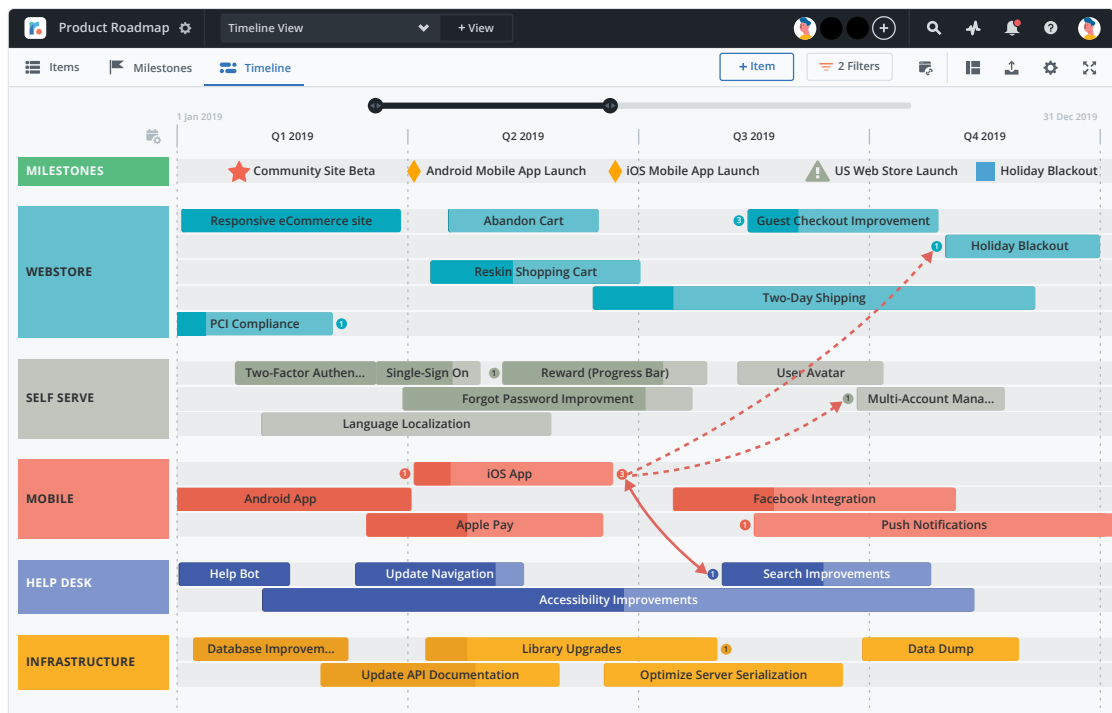
3 - What you need to create a product roadmap

flexibility as possible. Teams can customize roadmapping fields, pivot to create different views of the same data set and easily edit / move items around within their roadmaps.

We also know that a roadmap is a visual communication tool. This is why we offer two different views—Timeline and Swimlane (which we described in much more detail in Chapter 2). Both views are powerful

visuals designed to look great in presentations. Timeline clearly displays what's happening when and Swimlane organizes items into buckets like progress or priority.

We'll dive into the best practices around sharing and presenting your product roadmap in the next chapter.



Roadmunk also offers a flexible Jira integration that bridges the gap between your high-level product vision and your day-to-day planning. Set up Jira for Roadmunk by signing up or logging in [here](#).



Sharing and presenting your roadmap

Chapter four Now, onto the fun part: presenting your snazzy product roadmap to a room full of stakeholders. By now, you've done the following:

- Worked with stakeholders (internal and external) to establish what their priorities are for the product and the business
- Used quantitative and qualitative research to establish roadmap themes around customer needs
- Established what the best product roadmap format is for your specific needs
- Worked with the team to figure out if there are any resource constraints for any of these initiatives
- Plotted these prioritized, strategy-bound initiatives using a roadmapping tool (preferably Roadmunk, wink wink)

The presentation is where you validate that final product roadmap that you spent so much time crafting and building. During a well-executed roadmap presentation, you have the chance to show stakeholders that you understood those motivations they expressed during the planning process. This presentation is a chance for them to publicly affirm their alignment.

And if your presentation flops, so might your product or marketing strategy. **So you want to make sure you prepare for it.**

Your roadmap presentation isn't the place for getting buy-in for those plans. It sounds contradictory, but a presentation is just an affirmation of the alignment that was already established during that roadmap planning process. Think of it as an opportunity to "hand over" the roadmap to the rest of the company. **You're sharing the final plan everyone had input on and giving everyone access to it.**

Product roadmap presentation categories

Short-term updates

Taking place weekly or biweekly, these frequent syncs tend to get in the weeds, covering the particularities of what's getting built and how that affects other departments. This type of sit-down would be more common on smaller teams. And because these catch-ups happen regularly, formal buy-in before the presentation is not imperative. But the roadmap still needs to be communicated prior to the meeting to avoid any major surprises or backlash.

Long-term updates

For bigger organizations and teams, the roadmap presentation will likely happen monthly, bi-monthly or even quarterly. For these conversations, buy-in before the meeting is critical. These meetings can often involve high-stakes projects that rely on massive alignment and dependencies. Show up to your presentation without everyone on board, and you'll probably leave feeling pretty beat-up.

What should you actually present during your product roadmap presentation?

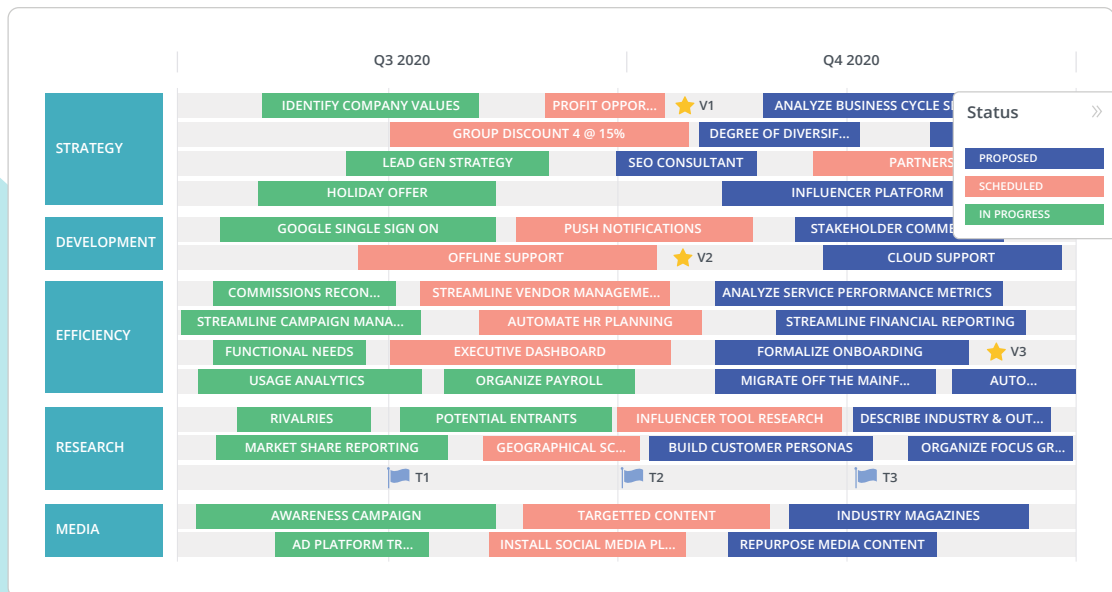
As we've mentioned before, we can't tell you exactly how to build a roadmap that suits your particular organization (that's where our [roadmap template library](#) comes in handy), but we do recommend that you aim to meet at least a few of the following criteria:

- 1. Flexibility**
- 2. Personalization**
- 3. Collaboration**
- 4. Clarity + Attractiveness**

1. Flexibility

Does your roadmap distinguish between what's planned and what's still TBD?

It's helpful to communicate which initiatives are actually in the pipeline, and which are still subject to change. One of our favourite ways to structure a roadmap is to organize items by **In Progress, Scheduled and Proposed**. If your organization works on a **timeline**, you can simply colour code the items on your roadmap.



If your organization prefers to avoid timelines, you could also create a **Swimlane View** with the headers **In Progress, Scheduled or Proposed**.

We've found this roadmap structure very effective for reducing backlash during a roadmap presentation.

Stakeholders get a clear and immediate visual indication of which features are actually committed, and which are still being decided. Overall, it means you're less likely to hear knee-jerk peanut gallery protestations.

	IN PROGRESS	SCHEDULED	PROPOSED
STRATEGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday Offer Identify Company Values Group Discount 4+ @ 15% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profit Opportunities Lead Generation Strategies Partnerships Influencer Platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of Diversification Analyze Business Cycle Sensitivities SEO Consultant Develop Continuing Education Policy
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Single Sign On 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push Notifications Offline Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Commenting Cloud Support
EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissions Reconciliation Streamline Campaign Management Functional Needs Usage Analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline Vendor Management Executive Dashboard Organize Payroll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automate HR Planning Process Streamline Financial Reporting Analyze Service Performance Metrics Formalize Onboarding Migrate Off The Mainframe

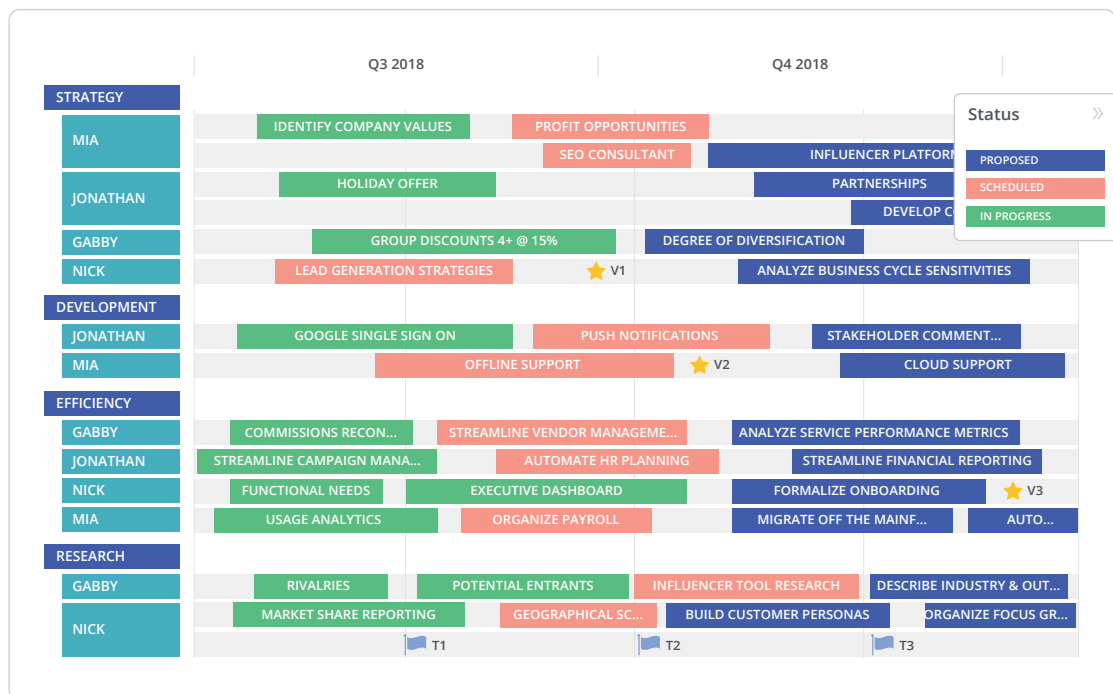
2. Personalization

Does it address the individual needs of each department and/or stakeholder?

As we mentioned above, it can also be effective to visualize ownership during your roadmap presentation. A great way to do this is to organize your roadmap by departments or

even by the individual responsible for each task.

The roadmap below includes the same data as the roadmaps above, but we've included subheaders indicating individual ownership over each project.



If you really want to get granular with ownership, you could create a **Swimlane View** roadmap that highlights department, resource or individual owner. This puts the focus on who's doing what for which department — not the timeline.

	MIA	JONATHAN	GABBY	NICK
STRATEGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Company Values SEO Consultant Profit Opportunities Influencer Platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday Offer Develop Continuing Education Policy Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of Diversification Analyze Business Cycle Sensitivities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Generation Strategies Analyze Business Cycle Sensitivities
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cloud Support Offline Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push Notifications Google Single Sign On Stakeholder Commenting 		
EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automate HR Planning Process Streamline Campaign Management Streamline Financial Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline Vendor Management Analyze Service Performance Metrics Functional Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissions Reconciliation Formalize Onboarding Executive Dashboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usage Analytics Organize Payroll Migrate Off The Mainframe

3. Collaboration

Can you iterate on the roadmap during the presentation itself?

There's a reason why the sticky-notes-on-a-wall method is such an enduring way to make a roadmap: it's easy to change things up on the fly. Although you'd ideally have buy-in for your roadmap before the presentation, your meeting will go much smoother if you are also able

to update your roadmap during the conversation.

It's time for us to humblebrag again. When you use a roadmapping tool like Roadmunk, you can easily add comments or adjust the document directly within the app during the meeting. This makes for a much more dynamic and participatory presentation.

Get dynamic during your product roadmap presentation using Roadmunk. Sign up for a free trial [here](#).

4. Clarity + Attractiveness

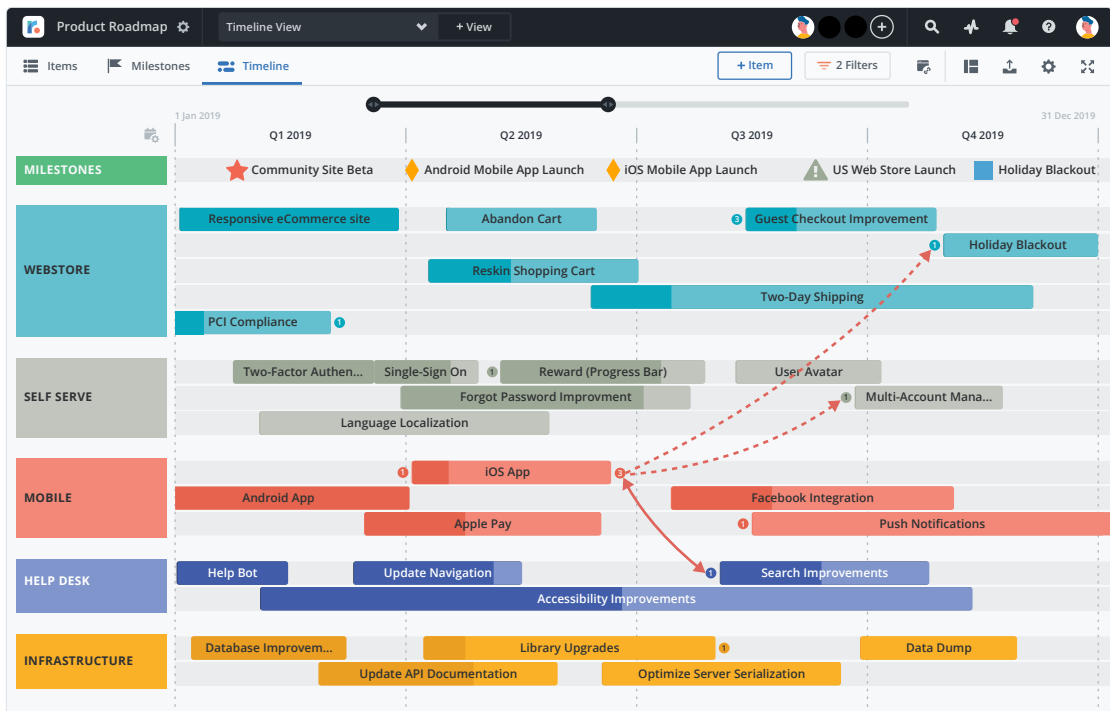
Does it look good? Is the plan visualized in a clear manner?

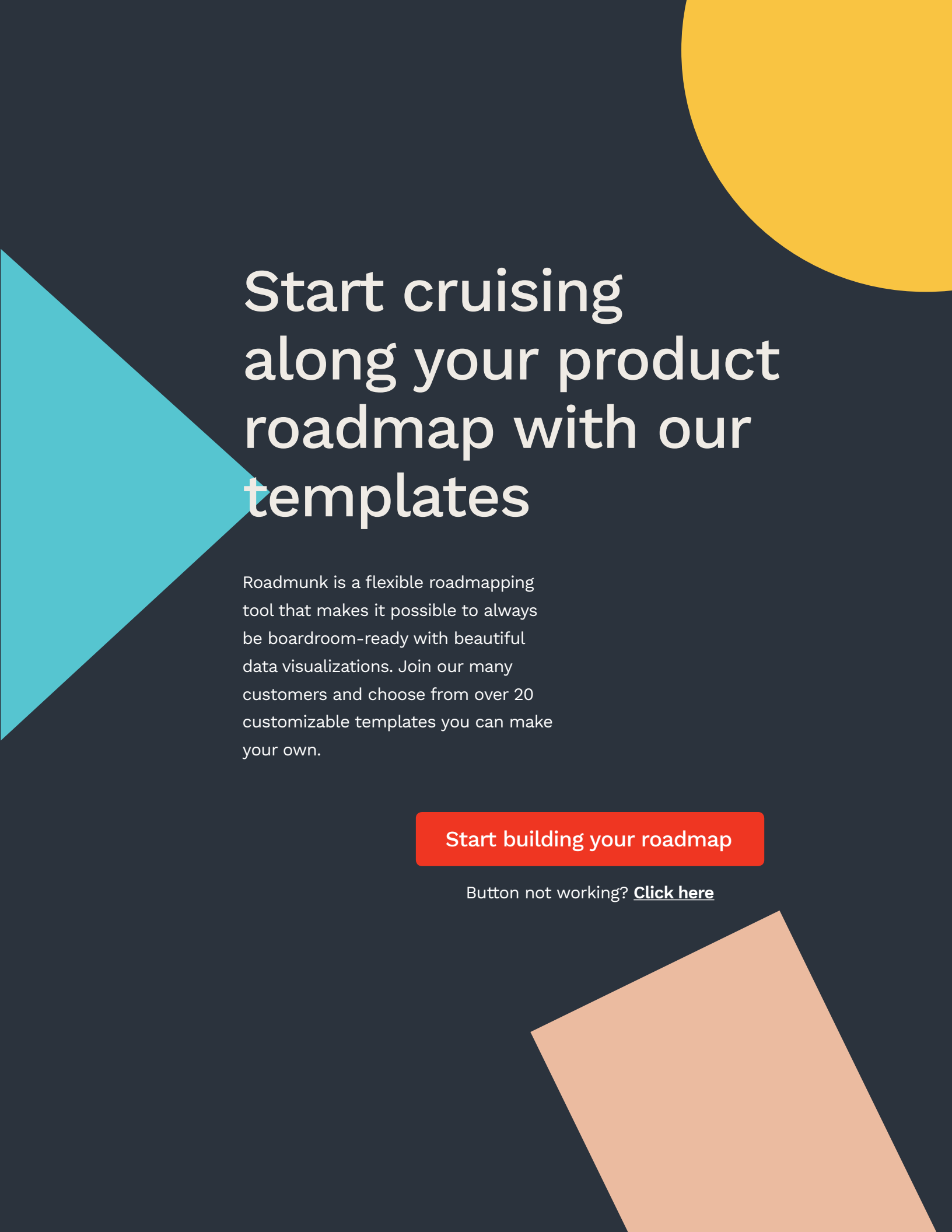
The core purpose of your roadmap is to visualize your strategy and make it crystal-clear to everyone in your organization. “Make something pretty!” may sound trite, but you’ll undermine your end-goal if your roadmap is unattractive or unclear.

Obviously, the content of your roadmap is more important than the appearance of your roadmap. But it will be a lot easier to highlight key information — no matter how

complicated — if your visualization is easy on the eyes. On top of that, this is something that yawn-inducing ad hoc tools, Excel spreadsheets and Powerpoint presentations can’t really do without requiring a high level of Microsoft Office expertise that most people don’t have time to acquire.

And with a dedicated roadmapping tool like Roadmunk, you can easily create and present multiple pivots of the same data.





Start cruising along your product roadmap with our templates

Roadmunk is a flexible roadmapping tool that makes it possible to always be boardroom-ready with beautiful data visualizations. Join our many customers and choose from over 20 customizable templates you can make your own.


[Start building your roadmap](#)

Button not working? [Click here](#)

Use your product roadmap to set the right strategic direction

We hope this eBook inspired you to get out there and get roadmapping!

If there's one thing you should take from this eBook, it's that everyone can reap the benefits of having and collaborating on a product roadmap. Whether you work at a startup, a mid-market company, an enterprise, or an SME; all teams at all levels and stages of the product lifecycle need a guiding compass, a North Star—a product strategy.



More importantly, everyone's ideas and initiatives need to be aligned on that strategy at all times along the product development process.

This is where the product roadmap comes in as *the* tool that facilitates the communication of that strategy. And if there's something we've learned from our countless conversations with the Product Leaders who use Roadmunk, it's that roadmaps need to be flexible and collaborative in order to truly shine.

Sign up for Roadmunk
and start kicking
some strategic ass!