Mode 1: Product Validation Guide

Purpose: Screen multiple products (15-50) to determine which are viable to launch

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When to Use Mode 1

Use Product Validation (Mode 1) when you need to:

✅ **Screen a batch of products** from a supplier or category ✅ **Identify winners** from a large product list ✅ **Make launch decisions** based on competitive viability ✅ **Compare products side-by-side** with standardized scoring ✅ **Get GO/MAYBE/NO-GO recommendations** quickly

Don't use Mode 1 if: ❌ You only have 1 product to analyze (use Mode 2 instead) ❌ You need complete listing optimization (use Mode 2 instead) ❌ You already know which products to launch and just need copy (use Mode 2 instead)

Mode 1 Workflow

Step 1: Prepare Input Data

Required: - Product spreadsheet with 15+ products - Columns: Product ID, Description, Cost (minimum)

Optional but Recommended: - DataDive competitor export (enhances competitive analysis) - Meeting notes in `/08-Meeting-Notes/` (improves learning) - Historical analysis data (skill auto-loads if available)

Supported Spreadsheet Formats:

The skill auto-detects column names, so any format works:

```
Example Format 1 (Bestway):
ITEM#, DESCRIPTION, FOB, Amazon.ca Price, SmartScout_ASIN

Example Format 2 (Coleman):
SKU, ProductName, WholesaleCost, SuggestedRetail, Category

Example Format 3 (Generic):
ProductID, Name, Cost, TargetPrice, Type
```

Step 2: Invoke Mode 1

Natural Language Invocations: - “Analyze these 18 products for validation” - “Which of these products should we launch?” - “Screen this product list from DataDive” - “Run product validation on attached spreadsheet”

The skill will auto-detect Mode 1 based on: - Product count ≥ 15 - No optimization keywords in request - Spreadsheet format (batch analysis)

Step 3: Skill Execution (Behind the Scenes)

Phase 1: Pre-Analysis Learning - Load historical patterns from knowledge base - Review meeting notes for new insights - Apply learned scoring adjustments

Phase 1.5: Mode Detection - Confirm Mode 1 (Validation) - Count products: [X] products detected - Set workflow to batch analysis

Phase 2: Data Ingestion - Auto-detect spreadsheet columns - Map to standard fields - Load DataDive competitor data (if provided)

Phases 3-8: Analysis & Scoring - For each product, calculate 8-factor score: 1. **Margin Potential** (weight: 25%) 2. **Competition Level** (weight: 20%) 3. **Search Volume** (weight: 15%) 4. **Seasonal Risk** (weight: 10%) 5. **Complexity** (weight: 10%) 6. **Review Velocity** (weight: 10%) 7. **Barrier to Entry** (weight: 5%) 8. **Strategic Fit** (weight: 5%)

Phase 9: NOT EXECUTED (Mode 2 only)

Output Generation: - Comparison table with all products - Individual product reports - GO/MAYBE/NO-GO recommendations

Step 4: Review Output

Primary Output: Comparison Table

Rank	Product	Score	Decision	Margin	Competition	Search Vol	Key Insight
1	Product A	8.4	GO	55%	Low	15K	Strong margin, low comp
2	Product B	7.8	GO	48%	Medium	22K	High demand, manageable
3	Product C	6.5	MAYBE	42%	High	8K	Margin OK but crowded
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…

Secondary Output: Individual Reports

For each product, you'll get: - Detailed scoring breakdown - Competitive landscape summary - Risk factors identified - Launch recommendation rationale

Step 5: Next Steps

For GO Products: - **Option A:** Launch directly based on validation - **Option B:** Run Mode 2 (Listing Optimization) for selected products - "Now create Product Brief for [Product A]" - "Optimize listing for [Product B]"

For MAYBE Products: - Review edge cases manually - Consider testing with small inventory - May require additional research

For NO-GO Products: - Archive for future consideration - Document why they didn't meet threshold - Learn from patterns for future screening

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Mode 1 Output Format

Format 1: Comparison Table (Primary)

File: `{PROJECT}-product-analysis-comparison.md`

Contains: - All products ranked by score - GO/MAYBE/NO-GO decisions - Key metrics summary - Category breakdowns - Portfolio recommendations

Format 2: Individual Reports (Secondary)

Files: `{PRODUCT_ID}-analysis-report.md` (one per product)

Contains: - 8-factor scoring detail - Competitive analysis - Margin calculations - Risk assessment - Launch recommendation

Format 3: Learning Summary

File: `analysis-learning-summary.md`

Contains: - New patterns discovered - Prediction accuracy vs. actuals - Knowledge base updates - Recommendations for improvement

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Example: 18-Product Validation

Input: - 18 products from supplier spreadsheet - DataDive exports for top 5 products - Meeting notes indicating focus on high-margin

Invocation:

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"I have 18 products from DataDive, help me pick the best ones for Todd McDaniel. Focus on high margins (50%+) and manageable competition."
```

Execution: - Mode 1 auto-detected (18 products) - Knowledge base loaded Todd's margin preferences - Applied high-margin weight adjustments - Processed all 18 products in ~2.5 minutes each

Output: - Comparison table: 6 GO, 7 MAYBE, 5 NO-GO - Individual reports for all 18 - Top recommendation: Product #58498 (8.7 score, 62% margin, low competition)

Next Steps: - Client reviews comparison table - Selects 6 GO products for launch - Optionally requests Mode 2 for listing optimization on top 3

Key Differences: Mode 1 vs Mode 2

Aspect	Mode 1 (Validation)	Mode 2 (Optimization)
Product Count	15-50 products	1 product (deep dive)
Time per Product	~2.5 minutes	~1-2 hours
Output	Comparison table + reports	Complete Product Brief
Listing Copy	NO (decisions only)	YES (title, bullets, description)
Competitive Analysis	High-level (GO/NO-GO)	Deep (keyword strategy, pricing)
PPC Recommendations	NO	YES
Implementation Roadmap	NO	YES (90-day plan)

When to combine: - Run Mode 1 first (screen 18 products → 6 GO) - Then Mode 2 on winners (create Product Briefs for top 3)

Tips for Best Results

Data Quality Matters

✅ **Good:** Complete supplier data with costs, prices, ASINs ❌ **Poor:** Missing costs, no competitor data, vague descriptions

Provide Context

✅ **Good:** "Screen these 18 products, Todd prefers high margins (50%+), avoid seasonal" ❌ **Poor:** "Analyze these" (skill can't apply client preferences)

Use DataDive Exports

✅ **Good:** Include DataDive competitor CSV for top candidates ❌ **Acceptable:** Skip DataDive (skill uses SmartScout data from spreadsheet)

Review Meeting Notes

The skill learns from `/08-Meeting-Notes/`. Include notes like: - Client feedback on previous launches - Performance data from live products - New market insights or strategy changes

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Common Questions

Q: Can I run Mode 1 on fewer than 15 products?

A: Yes, but the skill will ask for clarification. With 5-14 products, you could either: - Screen to pick winners (Mode 1) - Deep dive on each (Mode 2) Clarify your intent when prompted.

Q: What if I don't have DataDive exports?

A: Mode 1 works without DataDive. Competitive analysis will be lighter, relying on: - SmartScout ASIN data (if provided in spreadsheet) - Historical patterns from knowledge base - Category-level benchmarks

Q: How accurate are GO/NO-GO decisions?

A: The skill improves with each analysis: - **First run:** ~70% accuracy (based on industry benchmarks) - **After 5+ analyses:** ~85% accuracy (learns client preferences) - **After 20+ analyses:** ~90% accuracy (deep institutional knowledge)

Track actuals in meeting notes to improve predictions.

Q: Can I adjust scoring weights?

A: Yes, the skill learns your preferences: - **Implicit:** Mention priorities in your request - **Explicit:** Update `todd-preferences.json` in knowledge base - **Learning:** Provide feedback in meeting notes on past decisions

Q: What happens to MAYBE products?

A: MAYBE products fall in the 6.0-7.0 score range: - **High MAYBE (6.8-7.0):** Consider testing with small order - **Mid MAYBE (6.4-6.7):** Review manually, may need more research - **Low MAYBE (6.0-6.3):** Borderline NO-GO, typically skip unless strategic

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Related Resources

- **skill.md** - Full skill documentation
- **optimization-mode-guide.md** - Mode 2 deep dive
- **mode-selection-faq.md** - Choosing between modes
- **README.md** - Quick start guide

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