# The New Product Journey

*Onboarding Manual*

Everything you need to go from blank canvas to investor-ready pitch — without leaving your browser.

VERSION 3.0 — SCREEN EDITION (DARK)

# Contents

CHAPTER 1

# Onboarding Manual

## Table of Contents

. . .

CHAPTER 2

# The Night Before Launch

You know that feeling. The one at 2am when the apartment is quiet and the screen is too bright and the idea in your head feels simultaneously like the most important thing in the world and the most fragile.

Maybe you've been here before — scribbling on napkins, filling notebooks with arrows and boxes, opening yet another Google Doc titled "PLAN v7 FINAL (2)." Maybe this is your first time, and the sheer number of things you don't know has started to feel like a physical weight on your chest.

This manual is for that moment.

The New Product Journey is a single HTML file. No server. No account. No subscription. You open it in your browser, and everything you type stays on your machine, in your localStorage, like a diary that never phones home. It was built for people who think best when nobody is watching.

What follows is not a quick-start guide. It's the whole map — every corner of the toolkit explained the way you'd explain it to a friend over coffee, with the kind of honesty that only works when you're not trying to sell anything.

Take what you need. Skip what you don't. Come back when you're stuck.

### *What This Tool Is (And What It Isn't)*

The Product Journey is a full-lifecycle product planning toolkit. That sounds like a mouthful, so here's what it means in practice: it covers the entire arc from "I have an idea" to "here's my investor pitch," and every messy, uncertain stage in between.

It is not project management software. It will not send you notifications or track your team's time or integrate with Jira. It is a thinking tool — a place to do the quiet, unglamorous work of figuring out whether your idea deserves to exist and, if so, how to bring it into the world without losing your mind or your savings.

Think of it as a workshop bench. The wood and the nails are yours. The bench just makes the work easier.

### *How This Manual Is Organised*

We'll walk through the toolkit in the order the sidebar presents it — four phases (Idea, Build, Launch, Growth), followed by the power tools (Storm Test Arena, Visual Roadmap, Executive Summary). Along the way, we'll cover the features that cut across everything: the Co-Pilot, global search, templates, exports, and keyboard shortcuts.

Each chapter opens with what the module is for, then shows you how to use it, and finishes with the patterns that separate good usage from great usage. There are no exercises or homework assignments. You're an adult. You'll figure out when to apply what.

· · ·

CHAPTER 3

# Getting Your Bearings

## *Opening the File*

Double-click the HTML file. That's it. No installation wizard, no terms of service, no email confirmation. Your browser opens, and you're looking at the Product Canvas.

If you're on a phone, it works too — the sidebar tucks itself away behind a hamburger menu, and the input fields expand to finger-friendly sizes. But if you have the choice, use a laptop. Product thinking benefits from screen real estate the way cooking benefits from counter space.

## *The Sidebar*

The left-hand sidebar is your navigation. It's divided into five groups, each with a small percentage next to it:

Idea (Canvas, Personas, Brainstorm) — where you define the problem and the people who have it. Build (Features & RICE, Sprint Planner, Experiments) — where you decide what to make and in what order. Launch (Marketing Copy, GTM Timeline, Pipeline, Pricing) — where you prepare to meet the market. Growth (Metrics, Runway Clock, Post-Launch Report) — where you measure, sustain, and reflect. Tools (Storm Test Arena, Visual Roadmap, Pitch Summary, Templates) — the stress-test chamber, the bird's-eye view, and the pitch generator.

Those percentages? They're phase completion scores. They're calculated from how thoroughly you've filled each module. Don't obsess over hitting 100%. They're a compass, not a scoreboard.

## *Projects and Switching Between Them*

You can run multiple projects. The dropdown at the top of the sidebar shows your current project; the "+" button creates a new one. Each project is stored separately in your browser's localStorage, so switching between them is instant and nothing bleeds between projects.

A word of caution: localStorage is tied to your browser and your device. If you clear your browser data, your projects disappear. This is why the Export JSON button exists. Use it. Back up your work to a file on your desktop, in your cloud drive, wherever you keep things you'd be upset to lose. It takes two seconds and it might save you from a very bad Tuesday.

### *Dark Mode, Light Mode*

Click the half-moon icon in the sidebar footer to toggle between dark and light themes. Dark mode is the default because most product work happens at hours when bright screens feel like an assault. But if you're printing, or if you prefer light backgrounds, switch it over. Your preference saves automatically with the project.

### *Saving and the Auto-Save System*

Every keystroke triggers an auto-save after a 400-millisecond debounce. You'll see the timestamp update in the sidebar footer. If you're the kind of person who compulsively hits Ctrl+S, that works too — it forces an immediate save and shows a toast confirmation.

The "Last saved" timestamp in the Save & Export panel tells you exactly when your data was last written to localStorage. If it's more than a few seconds old while you're actively typing, something is wrong (which, in practice, almost never happens).

### *Keyboard Shortcuts*

These are worth memorising because they'll save you more time than you'd expect:

Ctrl/ + K opens global search. Type a word and it searches across every module — canvas fields, persona names, feature titles, sprint tasks, experiment hypotheses, even your Storm Test notes. Hit Enter on a result to jump straight there. This becomes essential once your project has real data in it.

Ctrl/ + I opens the Co-Pilot sidebar. More on the Co-Pilot later, but the short version: it analyses your data and surfaces the most important gaps and risks.

Ctrl/ + Z is undo. Ctrl/ + Shift + Z is redo. The undo stack holds 50 states. If you accidentally delete a persona or clear your brainstorm notes, just undo. The relief of having this is hard to overstate until the moment you need it.

Ctrl/ + S forces an immediate save. Esc closes whatever overlay is open — search, modals, anything.

· · ·

CHAPTER 4

# The Idea Phase

This is where most products die. Not from bad execution, but from fuzzy thinking — from skipping the hard work of defining exactly what you're building, for whom, and why they should care. The three modules in this phase are designed to force that clarity before you write a single line of code or spend a single euro on ads.

## *Product Canvas*

The Canvas is a Lean Canvas — a one-page view of your entire business model. It has nine fields: Problem, Solution, Unique Value Proposition, Unfair Advantage, Target Customer, Channels, Revenue Streams, Key Metrics, and Cost Structure.

The progress ring in the top-left corner fills as you complete fields. A field counts as "complete" when it has more than ten characters of meaningful text. This is intentionally low — the ring is measuring whether you've started thinking about each dimension, not whether you've perfected it.

Start with Problem. Not because it's at the top, but because everything downstream depends on it. A vague problem statement ("people need better tools") will produce a vague product. A specific one ("dual-income parents spend 4+ hours per week deciding what to eat, resulting in $1,600/year in food waste") gives you something to build against.

The fields are interconnected. Your Target Customer should feel like they're the specific human who has the Problem you described. Your Solution should directly address that Problem. Your UVP should explain why your Solution is different from the alternatives. If any of these feel disconnected, that's not a writing problem — it's a thinking problem. Sit with it.

The Unfair Advantage field is the one people struggle with most. "We work harder" is not an unfair advantage. "We have exclusive access to 2.3 million real household meal logs" is. If you genuinely don't have one yet, leave it honest: "None yet — building toward [X]." That honesty will serve you better than a fabricated moat.

Every other module in the toolkit pulls from the Canvas. Your personas should match your Target Customer. Your features should deliver your Solution. Your pricing should reflect your Revenue Streams. Your metrics should track the Key Metrics you defined here. The Canvas is the root system. Everything grows from it.

## *User Personas*

Click "+ Add Persona" to create a profile card. Each persona has fields for name, role, age, goals, pains, and a representative quote.

Here's where most people go wrong with personas: they make them too generic. "Sarah, 34, busy professional" doesn't help you make decisions. "Sarah Chen, 34, product manager at Salesforce, hates the 5pm 'what's for dinner?' panic, husband is picky, daughter is allergic to nuts" — that person will change the way you design your onboarding flow.

Give them real names. Make them specific enough that you could recognise them at a coffee shop. The quote field is particularly powerful — write what this person would actually say, in their actual words, with their actual frustrations. "I just want someone to tell me what to cook tonight with what I already have in my fridge" is a quote that can guide an entire product roadmap.

You don't need many personas. Two or three that are vivid and distinct will serve you better than seven that blur together. If you're building a two-sided marketplace, make at least one persona for each side.

The hint box at the top tells you that personas feed into Features and Copy. This isn't metaphorical — when you sit down to write marketing copy, having Sarah's voice in your head will make you a better copywriter than any template.

### *Brainstorm and Synthesis*

This module has two modes, toggled by the buttons at the top: Ideate and Synthesize.

In Ideate mode, you add ideas one at a time with a title, category (Feature, Marketing, Pricing, Partnership, or Other), and description. Ideas appear as cards that can be upvoted or downvoted. This isn't a democracy — the votes are for you to signal to yourself which ideas have the most energy behind them. After a brainstorming session, the vote counts help you see what your gut is telling you.

Synthesis mode is where you step back and look at the patterns. What strategic theme connects your best ideas? What key insights emerge? What action items follow? What questions remain open?

The most common mistake is jumping straight from brainstorming to building. The synthesis step is what turns a pile of ideas into a strategy. It's the difference between having ingredients and having a recipe. Take the time.

· · ·

CHAPTER 5

# The Build Phase

You've defined the problem. You know who has it. You have a strategy. Now you need to decide what to build, in what order, and how to validate that it works. This phase is where discipline saves you from your own enthusiasm.

## *Feature Backlog and RICE Scoring*

The Feature Backlog is a table where every feature gets scored using the RICE framework: Reach (how many users does this affect?), Impact (how much does it move the needle? scored 0.5 to 3), Confidence (how sure are you about these estimates? as a percentage), and Effort (in person-weeks or sprints).

The formula is Reach × Impact × Confidence ÷ Effort = RICE Score. Higher is better. The table is sortable — click any column header to sort by that dimension. This means you can quickly see your highest-reach features, your lowest-confidence bets, or your best bang-for-the-buck opportunities.

Status tags let you mark each feature as Planned, In Progress, Done, or Cut. Yes, Cut — not every feature deserves to be built, and removing a feature from scope is sometimes the most important product decision you'll make.

You can export the feature table as a CSV file for use in spreadsheets, or share it with a technical co-founder who prefers columns to conversations.

A practical pattern: start by adding every feature you can think of, no matter how ambitious. Score them honestly. Then sort by RICE score and draw a line. Everything above the line is your MVP. Everything below it is "later, maybe." This exercise takes 30 minutes and can save you months of building the wrong thing.

## *Sprint Planner*

Each sprint has a name, start and end dates, a goal, and a task list (one task per line). This is intentionally simple. If you need a full Agile board with story points and velocity charts, you should be using a dedicated project management tool. The Sprint Planner is for founders who are also the development team, or for small teams who need just enough structure to stay focused.

The sprint goal is the most important field. It should be one sentence that answers: "If we ship nothing else this sprint, what is the one thing that must get done?" Write it before you write the tasks. It keeps you honest about what matters.

### *Experiment Tracker*

Every experiment follows the same four-part structure: Hypothesis (what you believe will happen), Metric (how you'll measure it), Result (what actually happened), and Status (Planned, Running, or Completed).

The hypothesis field is where rigour lives. "Users will like the new feature" is not a hypothesis. "Reducing onboarding from 12 questions to 5 will increase completion rate from 61% to 80% without hurting meal plan quality" is. The specificity is the point — it gives you a clear pass/fail condition.

When you complete an experiment, write the result in plain language. Did it work? By how much? What surprised you? What did you learn that you didn't expect? These notes become the institutional memory of your product. Six months from now, when someone asks "why did we build it this way?", the answer is in your experiment results.

If you're using the Co-Pilot, it will notice when you have features with low confidence scores and no corresponding experiments. That's not a bug in the Co-Pilot — it's a nudge to validate your assumptions before you build on them.

. . .

CHAPTER 6

# The Launch Phase

Building the product is the easy part. (That statement will annoy some of you, and it should.) The hard part is getting it in front of the right people, with the right message, at the right time. These four modules help you prepare for that reckoning.

### *Marketing Copy*

The Copy module has six fields: Headline, Subheadline, Hero Copy, CTA (call-to-action), Social Proof line, and Elevator Pitch.

Your headline is the single most important sentence in your entire marketing effort. It appears on your landing page, in your ads, in your App Store listing. It needs to pass one test: would your target persona (remember Sarah?) stop scrolling and read the next line? "Dinner, Decided." works. "AI-Powered Meal Planning Solution" doesn't.

The Elevator Pitch field uses a classic template: "For [target customer] who [need], [product] is a [category] that [key benefit]. Unlike [alternative], we [differentiator]." You don't have to use this format, but it forces you to articulate the positioning in a way that a stranger can understand in 30 seconds. That discipline matters.

The "Copy Markdown" button copies all your marketing copy as formatted Markdown to your clipboard. You can paste it straight into a GitHub README, a Notion doc, or a website builder.

### *GTM Timeline*

GTM stands for Go-To-Market. This module lets you create milestones with a name, start date, end date, owner, and phase (Idea, Build, Launch, or Growth). The phase assignment matters because it determines where the milestone appears in the Visual Roadmap's swimlanes.

Below the milestone list, a Gantt-style timeline view appears automatically once you've added dates. The bars are colour-coded by phase: blue for Idea, amber for Build, green for Launch, rose for Growth.

A practical note about timelines: they are wrong. Every timeline in the history of product development has been wrong. The value is not in the dates themselves but in the act of sequencing — forcing yourself to decide what comes before what, and what depends on what. If your "Public Launch" milestone starts before your "Beta Testing" milestone ends, you have a conversation to have with yourself.

### *Marketing Pipeline*

The Pipeline is a table tracking your marketing channels: Channel name, Status (Active, Paused, Planned), Budget, Leads generated, Conversion rate, and a calculated CAC (Customer Acquisition Cost).

CAC is calculated automatically: Budget ÷ (Leads × Conversion Rate). This is a simplified model, but it's enough to tell you which channels are worth doubling down on and which are burning money. If your Instagram ads have a CAC of €250 and your newsletter referrals have a CAC of €12, the math is doing the strategy work for you.

### *Pricing and Revenue*

Set your pricing model (subscription, one-time, freemium, usage-based), price point, currency, target Month 1 customers, and monthly growth rate. Click "Calculate 12-Month Projection" and the tool generates a month-by-month table showing customer growth, MRR (Monthly Recurring Revenue), and cumulative revenue.

The stat cards at the bottom show your projected Month 12 MRR, ARR (Annual Run Rate), and total 12-month revenue. These numbers are projections, not promises — they assume your growth rate holds steady, which it won't. But they give you a target to sanity-check your ambition. If your model shows $200K MRR at Month 12 but you're in a market where the top competitor does $50K MRR, you should examine your assumptions.

. . .

CHAPTER 7

# The Growth Phase

You've launched. Users are arriving. Money is (hopefully) flowing. Now what? This phase is about measuring what matters, watching your runway, and being honest about what happened.

### *Metrics Dashboard*

Six input fields: DAU (Daily Active Users), MAU (Monthly Active Users), Churn Rate, NPS (Net Promoter Score), Conversion Rate, and LTV (Lifetime Value). The stat cards below calculate Stickiness (DAU/MAU ratio) automatically.

These fields are manual — you type in the numbers from your analytics tool. This is intentional. The act of looking up the number, typing it in, and seeing it alongside your other metrics forces a moment of reckoning that auto-synced dashboards don't provide. You can't ignore a churn rate you had to type with your own fingers.

### *Runway Clock*

Three inputs: Cash in Bank, Monthly Revenue, Monthly Expenses. The tool calculates your net burn rate, months of runway, and projected cash-zero date. The progress bar changes colour: green for 12+ months, amber for 6-12, rose for under 6.

If you see the word "Profitable!" in the progress bar, congratulations — your revenue exceeds your expenses. If you see a cash-zero date that's uncomfortably close, that's the tool doing its job. Better to face it here than to discover it in a bank statement.

The Co-Pilot will surface a warning if your runway drops below 6 months, and a critical alert below 3. These aren't arbitrary thresholds — fundraising typically takes 3-6 months, so if you're below 6, the clock is already ticking.

### *Post-Launch Report*

Four text areas: What Went Well, What Didn't Go Well, Key Learnings, and Next Steps. Plus a launch date field.

The "Generate Report" button compiles this into a formatted retrospective that pulls in your product name from the Canvas. This report is for you and your team — not for investors, not for Twitter. Be honest. The most valuable post-launch reports are the ones that name the specific failures, not just the wins.

A pattern worth stealing: write the "What Went Well" section last. Start with what didn't go well, then the learnings, then the next steps. By the time you get to the wins, you'll have earned the right to celebrate them.

· · ·

CHAPTER 8

# The Storm Test Arena

Here's where the toolkit gets uncomfortable. And that's the point.

The Storm Test Arena presents 25 devil's-advocate challenges across four categories: Market (6 questions), Product (7 questions), Business (6 questions), and Team & Execution (6 questions). Each one is designed to find the weak spots in your plan — the assumptions you haven't examined, the risks you've been avoiding, the conversations you've been postponing.

### *How It Works*

Each challenge has a circular button with three states. Click it once: Survived (green checkmark) — you have a confident, evidence-backed answer. Click again: Failed (red X) — you don't have a good answer, and you know it. Click once more: Uncertain (amber question mark) — you're not sure, and you need to find out.

Below each challenge is a text area for your response. This is where the real work happens. Don't just click buttons — write your reasoning. "Name 3 direct competitors. Why would customers choose you?" deserves more than a checkmark. It deserves three names and three honest assessments of why you're better (or why you're not).

### *The Storm Score*

At the bottom, four stat cards show your Survived, Failed, Uncertain, and Survival Rate. The survival rate is the percentage of answered challenges where you clicked Survived.

A survival rate of 100% means one of two things: your idea is genuinely bulletproof, or you're not being honest with yourself. Most strong products score between 65% and 85% at this stage. The failures and uncertainties are not shameful — they're a prioritised list of things to work on.

The Co-Pilot watches your Storm Test results. If you have failures, it will suggest you address them before launch. If you've answered fewer than 10 challenges, it will nudge you to keep going. If your survival rate is above 80%, it will suggest you're ready to generate your Executive Summary.

### *The Hardest Question*

Every founder has one challenge in the Arena that they skip, come back to, skip again, and eventually have to face. It might be "How long until you run out of money?" or "What if your lead developer quits?" or "Is this a vitamin or a painkiller?"

That question — the one you keep circling — is probably the most important one to answer.

· · ·

CHAPTER 9

# The Visual Roadmap

### *The Product Health Score*

At the top of the Roadmap panel, a ring chart displays your Product Health Score — a single number from 0 to 100 that aggregates five dimensions: Canvas completeness (20% weight), Feature progress (15%), Experiment completion (15%), Storm Test survival rate

(25%), and Runway health (25%).

The colour of the ring tells you the story at a glance: green for 70+, amber for 40-69, rose for below 40. Beside the ring, five detail cards break down each component with its own colour indicator.

The Health Score is not a grade. It's a diagnostic. A score of 45 doesn't mean your product is bad — it means you have identified, specific areas to strengthen. A score of 90 doesn't mean you're guaranteed to succeed — it means you've done thorough preparation. The score is most useful as a trend: are you making progress week over week?

### *Swimlane View*

The roadmap displays your GTM Timeline milestones as horizontal bars in four swimlanes: Idea, Build, Launch, and Growth. Each milestone appears in the lane matching its phase assignment. The month columns auto-generate from your earliest to latest milestone dates, with the current month highlighted in blue.

This view is most powerful when shared. If you're pitching to an investor, or aligning with a co-founder, or onboarding a new team member, the swimlane roadmap communicates your plan at a glance in a way that a bulleted list never could.

· · ·

CHAPTER 10

# The Executive Summary

Click "Generate" and the tool compiles everything — your Canvas, Personas, top RICE-scored features, Health Score, Storm Test survival rate, runway, pricing model, and elevator pitch — into a single, formatted document.

This is your one-page pitch. It pulls live data from every module, so the more thoroughly you've filled the toolkit, the more complete and compelling the summary becomes.

You can export this as a shareable HTML file (Save & Export → Export tab → "Export Shareable HTML") or as a PDF report. The HTML version inherits your current theme (dark or light) and looks polished enough to send to an investor or advisor. The PDF version uses clean typography and is designed for printing or attaching to emails.

A note about timing: don't generate the Executive Summary too early. It's tempting to see what the pitch looks like when you're halfway through the Canvas, but the result will be thin and unconvincing. Wait until your Health Score is above 60, your Storm Test has at least 15 answers, and your pricing model has real numbers. The Summary will be worth the wait.

· · ·

CHAPTER 11

# The Co-Pilot

The Co-Pilot is your advisor-in-the-sidebar. Open it with Ctrl/ + I or the star icon in the sidebar footer. It analyses your project data in real-time and surfaces actionable insights.

## *Rule-Based Mode (No API Key Required)*

By default, the Co-Pilot runs in rule-based mode. It doesn't use any external API — all analysis happens locally in your browser. The insights it generates are based on patterns in your data:

Canvas gaps: if your Canvas is less than 100% complete, it tells you which fields are thin or missing. RICE alerts: if a feature has a high RICE score but low confidence, it suggests running an experiment to de-risk it. Storm warnings: if you have failed challenges, it flags them. Runway alerts: if your runway is below 6 months, it warns you. Progress tracking: it monitors how many features are done, how many experiments are completed, and whether your timeline has milestones.

You can also type questions in the "Ask" field. The rule-based engine handles several query types: "what should I do next?" gives you a prioritised action list; "how's my runway?" gives you burn rate analysis; "analyse my pricing" projects your Month 12 MRR; "review my storm test" breaks down your survival statistics; "how's my canvas?" identifies thin fields.

### *LLM Mode (With OpenAI API Key)*

If you paste an OpenAI API key into the Co-Pilot's settings field, it upgrades to LLM mode. Your questions are sent to GPT-4o-mini along with a summary of your project data (health score, feature counts, storm test results, runway). The API key is stored in your browser's localStorage — it never leaves your machine except when making the API call.

In LLM mode, you can ask open-ended strategic questions: "Should we launch with a freemium model or a free trial?" or "What's the biggest risk in my go-to-market plan?" or "How would you improve my elevator pitch?" The model has context about your specific product data, so its answers are grounded in your situation rather than generic.

A word of caution: the LLM is a thinking partner, not an oracle. It can help you see blind spots and generate alternative perspectives, but it doesn't know your market the way you do. Treat its suggestions as prompts for your own thinking, not as directives.

· · ·

CHAPTER 12

# The Template Gallery

Navigate to Save & Export and click the "Templates" tab. You'll find 13 pre-built project templates covering different business models: B2B SaaS Platform, Consumer Mobile App, AI-Powered Tool, Two-Sided Marketplace, Developer Tool/API, D2C E-Commerce Brand, EdTech/Online Course, API/Infrastructure, Creator/Media Business, Health & Wellness App, FinTech Product, Community Platform, and Hardware/IoT Product.

Each template comes with a fully populated Canvas (all nine fields filled with realistic, detailed content), a pre-set pricing model with growth projections, and the theme set appropriately. When you click a template card, it asks for confirmation and then overwrites the current project's data with the template content.

Templates are not paint-by-numbers. They're starting positions. The Canvas fields are written to show you the level of specificity and depth that a good product plan requires. Read them, learn from the phrasing, then overwrite every word with your own reality.

A useful pattern: if you're exploring a business model you've never built before (say, a marketplace), load that template into a separate project first. Read through the Canvas to see how the revenue model, cost structure, and channels interact. Then create your actual project and write your own version with that structural understanding in your head.

· · ·

CHAPTER 13

# Save, Export, and Protect Your Work

## *The Session Tab*

The session panel shows your auto-save status, storage method (localStorage), and last saved timestamp. Below it, the core data management buttons: Export JSON (downloads your complete project as a .json file), Import JSON (loads a previously exported file), Delete Project (removes the current project), and Reset All (nuclear option — clears everything).

Export JSON is your backup button. Use it after every significant working session. The file is small — typically 10-20 KB — and contains your entire project in a human-readable format. You can open it in a text editor if you're curious about the data structure, or import it on a different computer to continue working.

### *The Export Tab*

The Export tab offers four additional output formats:

Export PDF Report generates a formatted A4 document with your product name, health score, all Canvas sections, top RICE-scored features, and pricing details. The typography is clean (Helvetica for reliable cross-device rendering) and the layout is designed for printing or email attachments.

Export Shareable HTML creates a self-contained HTML file that looks like a polished product summary page. It inherits your current theme (dark or light), loads Google Fonts for beautiful typography, and includes your health score, Canvas data, top features, and elevator pitch. You can send this file to anyone — they open it in their browser, no special software needed.

Export Features CSV downloads your feature backlog as a spreadsheet-friendly CSV file. Useful for sharing with technical co-founders or importing into project management tools.

Copy Marketing Markdown copies your marketing copy fields (headline, subheadline, hero, CTA, social proof, elevator pitch) as formatted Markdown to your clipboard.

### *A Note About Data Safety*

Your data lives in your browser's localStorage. This means three things you should understand:

First, it's local. Nobody else can access it. There's no server, no cloud sync, no analytics. This is a feature, not a limitation — your product plans are private by default.

Second, it's fragile. If you clear your browser data, switch browsers, or use a private/incognito window, your data may not be there. This is why exporting JSON backups is essential.

Third, it has size limits. Most browsers allow 5-10 MB of localStorage per origin. A single Product Journey project is typically 10-20 KB, so you'd need hundreds of projects to approach the limit. But if you paste enormous blocks of text into every field, keep an eye on it.

· · ·

CHAPTER 14

# Workflows That Work

### *The First-Timer Flow*

If this is your first product idea and you're staring at a blank Canvas, here's a path:

Start with the Problem field. Write three sentences about a real pain you've observed — in your own life, in your work, in conversations with friends. Don't write about solutions yet. Just the pain.

Now write the Target Customer field. Describe one specific person who has this pain. Not a demographic segment — a person. Give them a name, an age, a job title. This is your proto-persona.

Write the Solution field. How does your product make this specific person's pain go away? Be concrete. "We help people save time" is not a solution. "We generate a weekly meal plan in 10 seconds based on your family's actual food preferences" is.

Fill the remaining Canvas fields as honestly as you can. Leave Unfair Advantage blank if you don't have one yet — that's honest, not weak.

Now go to Personas and create a full profile for the person you described in Target Customer. Add a second persona who has the same Problem but a different life situation.

Go to Brainstorm. Spend 15 minutes adding every idea you have — features, marketing angles, pricing experiments, partnership possibilities. Don't filter. Then switch to Synthesis and look for the theme.

Go to Features. Add 5-10 features and score them with RICE. Sort by score. The top 3-4 are your MVP.

Go to the Storm Test Arena. Answer at least 15 of the 25 challenges. Be brutally honest. The failures are your homework.

Now generate your Executive Summary. Read it. Does it sound like a product you'd use? Does it sound like a product someone would pay for? If not, go back to the Canvas and revise.

### *The Weekly Review Flow*

Once your project is underway, a weekly 20-minute review keeps everything current:

Open the Roadmap tab. Check your Health Score trend. Has it gone up, down, or stayed flat? If it's dropped, something has slipped — a new Storm Test failure, an experiment that didn't pan out, a feature that got cut.

Open Features. Update statuses: move things from Planned to In Progress, In Progress to Done. Cut anything that no longer makes sense. Re-score if your confidence has changed based on new data.

Open Experiments. Log results for completed experiments. Plan new ones for your biggest uncertainties.

Open the Runway Clock. Update your cash, revenue, and expenses. Watch the months-remaining number. If it's changing faster than you expected, adjust your burn.

Open the Co-Pilot. Click "Refresh Analysis." Read the insights. Act on the most urgent one.

### *The Pitch Prep Flow*

When you're preparing to pitch to investors, advisors, or partners:

Complete your Canvas to 100%. Every field should be detailed, specific, and honest. An investor will ask about each one.

Score all your features with RICE and ensure at least 3 are marked "Done." Investors want to see that you can ship, not just plan.

Answer all 25 Storm Test challenges. An investor will ask every hard question in the Arena — better to have your answers ready.

Run at least 3 experiments to "Completed" status with real results. Investors love data. "We tested X and learned Y" is more compelling than "We plan to test X."

Generate the Executive Summary. Export it as PDF and HTML. Send the HTML link in advance; bring the PDF to the meeting.

Open the Co-Pilot and ask: "What are my biggest weaknesses?" Whatever it says, prepare answers for those topics.

· · ·

CHAPTER 15

# Advanced Features and Hidden Depths

### *PWA Installation*

The Product Journey includes a Progressive Web App manifest. On supported browsers (Chrome, Edge, Safari), you may see an "Install" prompt in the address bar. Installing it adds the app to your dock or start menu, and it opens in its own window without browser chrome. It's still the same HTML file — just with a more app-like experience.

### *Multi-Project Strategies*

Some founders use multiple projects in the toolkit for different purposes: one for the actual product, one for a competitor analysis (filling the Canvas as if you were the competitor), and one for a "Plan B" pivot scenario. Because switching projects is instant and data is isolated, this is a lightweight way to maintain multiple strategic perspectives without muddying your primary plan.

### *Data Model for Developers*

If you're technically inclined, the JSON export is a clean, flat object where each module is a top-level key (canvas, personas, features, experiments, etc.). Modules with lists use an "items" array. The data model is stable and documented by example — export a project, open the JSON, and the structure is self-evident.

This means you can write scripts that generate Product Journey data from other sources, or that analyse your data programmatically. Some founders pipe their exported JSON into custom dashboards or Notion databases.

### *Extending the Toolkit*

The Product Journey is a single HTML file with vanilla JavaScript. If you know HTML/JS, you can modify it directly — add custom fields to the Canvas, create new modules, change the colour scheme, adjust the RICE formula. The code uses a straightforward pattern: each module has a getToolState() function for data access, a render function for display, and auto-save hooks on input events.

Because it's a single file with no build step, your modifications are immediate — just save and refresh. If you break something, Ctrl+Z in your text editor and refresh again.

### *Importing the Sample Projects*

This manual ships alongside three pre-built JSON files — Culina (an AI meal planning app), Vaultline (a B2B compliance platform), and Terraverde (a sustainable fashion marketplace). Each one is a fully loaded project with every module populated: detailed Canvas fields, vivid personas, scored features, completed experiments with real results, marketing pipelines with conversion data, runway calculations, and all 25 Storm Test challenges answered with notes.

Import any of them through Save & Export → Import JSON. They're not just demos — they're case studies you can learn from. Open Culina and look at how its Problem field specifies "$1,600/year in food waste" rather than "people waste food." Open Vaultline and notice how the personas include the emotional pain ("I became an engineer to build things, not to write access control policies at 11pm") alongside the functional need. Open Terraverde and see how the experiments section documents not just what was tested but what surprised them.

A useful exercise: import one of these projects, read through every module, and then create a new project for your own idea. The specificity and depth in the sample projects will calibrate your sense of what "thorough" looks like.

· · ·

CHAPTER 16

# The Fourteen Mistakes Everyone Makes

After watching hundreds of founders use planning tools like this one, patterns emerge. Here are the mistakes that show up most often, and the quiet corrections that help.

### *Mistake 1: Starting With the Solution*

You have a brilliant idea for an app. You open the Canvas and immediately write three paragraphs about the technology. The Problem field gets a sentence, if that. The Target Customer field says "everyone who needs this."

This is backwards. The solution should be the last thing you write, not the first. Start with the person. Start with their pain. The solution will change — probably multiple times. The problem, if it's real, will outlast every pivot.

### *Mistake 2: Persona as Demographic Slice*

"Women 25-40 in urban areas" is not a persona. It's a targeting parameter for a Facebook ad. A persona is a single human being with a name, a job, specific frustrations, specific language, and a quote you could imagine hearing in a conversation. If you can't picture having coffee with your persona, they're not real enough to guide product decisions.

### *Mistake 3: Too Many Features, No RICE Discipline*

The feature backlog grows. And grows. Thirty features, then forty. None scored. None prioritised. The backlog becomes a wish list, and wish lists don't ship products.

Score everything. Sort by RICE. Draw a line after the top five. That's your first release. Everything below the line goes into a "maybe later" mental bucket. You can always promote features up — but you can't build forty things at once, and pretending you can is how products die in development.

### *Mistake 4: Skipping Experiments*

You have features. You have RICE scores. You have sprints planned. You have zero experiments.

This is the product planning equivalent of driving at night with the headlights off. Your RICE scores are estimates — every single one of them contains assumptions that might be wrong. Experiments are how you turn assumptions into evidence. Run them before you build, not after.

### *Mistake 5: Vanity Metrics in the Dashboard*

Total signups is not a metric. Total page views is not a metric. These numbers only go up, which feels nice but tells you nothing about the health of your product. DAU/MAU ratio, retention curves, activation rates, churn — these are the numbers that tell you whether people are actually using what you built or whether they tried it once and left.

### *Mistake 6: Ignoring the Storm Test*

Some founders open the Storm Test Arena, glance at the questions, feel uncomfortable, and close the tab. This is exactly the reaction the Arena is designed to provoke — and exactly the reaction you should push through.

The discomfort is information. The questions you avoid are the risks you haven't mitigated. An investor will ask every single one of them. Better to face them in private, in a text area where nobody is watching, than on a stage with money on the line.

### *Mistake 7: The 100% Canvas Fallacy*

Some people won't move past the Canvas until every field is perfect. They rewrite the UVP fifteen times. They agonise over cost structure numbers they'll revise next month.

The Canvas is a living document, not a thesis. Get to 80% and move on. Come back to it after you've built personas, run experiments, and stress-tested in the Arena. The later modules will teach you things that make the Canvas better.

### *Mistake 8: Pricing as Afterthought*

The Pricing module sits in the Launch phase, which leads some founders to skip it until launch is imminent. This is a mistake. Your pricing model shapes your product architecture, your target customer, your marketing message, and your runway math. A freemium model requires different engineering (usage limits, upgrade flows) than a subscription model. A usage-based model requires metering infrastructure.

Fill the Pricing module early, even if the numbers are rough. They'll anchor every other decision you make.

### *Mistake 9: Never Refreshing the Co-Pilot*

The Co-Pilot analyses your data at the moment you click "Refresh Analysis." If you filled the Canvas three weeks ago and haven't refreshed since, the insights are stale. Make it a habit: every time you open the toolkit for a working session, open the Co-Pilot and refresh. It takes two seconds and might surface something you missed.

### *Mistake 10: Not Exporting Backups*

This one bears repeating because the cost of failure is total. Your browser's localStorage can be wiped by clearing cookies, by a browser update, by a system restore, by an overzealous privacy extension. Export your JSON after every significant session. Store it somewhere durable. The five seconds it takes could save you hours of recreated work.

### *Mistake 11: Building Alone in Silence*

The Product Journey is an offline, private tool — and that's valuable for the thinking stage. But products don't succeed in isolation. At some point, you need to share your Canvas with a potential customer, your personas with a designer, your pricing model with an advisor, your Storm Test failures with a mentor.

Use the export features. Send the HTML summary. Share the PDF. The tool helps you think; other humans help you validate.

### *Mistake 12: Confusing the Map for the Territory*

A perfectly filled-out Product Journey is not a product. It's a plan for a product. The most beautiful Canvas in the world is worthless if you never build the thing. At some point — and only you know when — you have to close the toolkit and start shipping.

The tool is the workshop bench. The product is what you build on it. Don't polish the bench when you should be cutting wood.

### *Mistake 13: Runway Denial*

The Runway Clock turns rose when you have fewer than 6 months. Some founders see this and think "I'll deal with it next month." Next month, it's 5 months. Then 4.

The runway clock is not negotiable. The maths is simple: Cash ÷ (Expenses - Revenue) = Months. When that number is below 6, fundraising or cost-cutting becomes your primary job — not feature development, not marketing, not hiring. Face it early.

### *Mistake 14: Forgetting to Update*

The Product Journey is a living document. The danger is filling it once during a weekend of inspiration and then never returning. The data goes stale. The Health Score stays frozen. The roadmap doesn't reflect reality.

Build a ritual. Sunday evening, 20 minutes, update everything that's changed. Monday morning, you start the week with a current picture. It's the difference between a GPS and a paper map from last year.

· · ·

CHAPTER 17

# Glossary of Every Term You'll Encounter

You'll run into these terms throughout the toolkit and this manual. Some are industry-standard; some are specific to the Product Journey. Here they are, in plain language.

### *Core Concepts*

ARR (Annual Run Rate) — your current MRR multiplied by 12. It's a projection, not a measurement — it assumes this month's revenue continues unchanged for a year. Investors use it to gauge the scale of a SaaS business.

Burn Rate — how much more you spend each month than you earn. If your expenses are $50,000 and your revenue is $15,000, your burn rate is $35,000/month. The Runway Clock calculates this automatically.

CAC (Customer Acquisition Cost) — how much you spend to acquire one paying customer. Calculated as total marketing spend divided by the number of customers acquired. The Pipeline module calculates this per channel. A healthy SaaS business typically has an LTV:CAC ratio of 3:1 or better.

Churn Rate — the percentage of customers who cancel or stop using your product in a given period. A 5% monthly churn means you lose 5% of your customers each month. This sounds small until you do the compound maths: 5% monthly churn means losing 46% of your customers per year.

DAU/MAU — Daily Active Users and Monthly Active Users. The ratio (DAU ÷ MAU) is called "stickiness" and tells you how habitually your product is used. Social media apps aim for 50%+. Business tools are healthy at 30-40%. Below 15% means most people aren't coming back regularly.

GMV (Gross Merchandise Value) — the total value of goods sold through a marketplace, before the marketplace takes its commission. If Terraverde sells €100,000 of fashion at an 18% take rate, their GMV is €100,000 and their revenue is €18,000.

LTV (Lifetime Value) — the total revenue you expect from a customer over their entire relationship with your product. For subscriptions, a simple version is: Average Revenue Per User ÷ Monthly Churn Rate. If you charge $30/month and churn is 5%, your LTV is $600.

MRR (Monthly Recurring Revenue) — the predictable revenue your business generates each month from subscriptions. It's the heartbeat metric for SaaS companies. Growing

MRR means the business is working; shrinking MRR means something is wrong.

NPS (Net Promoter Score) — ask customers "How likely are you to recommend us?" on a 0-10 scale. Subtract the percentage of detractors (0-6) from the percentage of promoters (9-10). Score ranges from -100 to +100. Above 50 is excellent. Above 70 is world-class.

NRR (Net Revenue Retention) — how much revenue you retain from existing customers after accounting for churn, downgrades, and expansions. 100% means you're replacing lost revenue exactly. Above 120% means existing customers are spending more over time, which is the gold standard for B2B SaaS.

### *Product Journey Specific Terms*

Canvas — the nine-field Lean Canvas that captures your business model in one view. The root data structure that feeds every other module.

Health Score — a composite 0-100 score calculated from five dimensions: Canvas completeness (20%), Feature progress (15%), Experiment completion (15%), Storm Test survival (25%), and Runway health (25%). Displayed as a ring chart in the Visual Roadmap.

RICE Score — Reach × Impact × Confidence ÷ Effort. A prioritisation framework for features. Higher scores indicate better return on investment. The Feature Backlog sorts by this score by default.

Storm Test — 25 devil's-advocate challenges designed to stress-test your business plan. Divided into Market, Product, Business, and Team categories. The survival rate is the percentage of answered challenges where you responded "Survived" with confidence.

Swimlane — in the Visual Roadmap, milestones are displayed in horizontal lanes grouped by phase (Idea, Build, Launch, Growth). This layout makes it easy to see which phase is most active and where milestones overlap.

Phase Completion — the percentage shown next to each phase name in the sidebar. Calculated from the completeness of modules within that phase. Not a perfection metric — it measures coverage, not quality.

### *Keyboard Shortcuts Reference*

Ctrl/ + K — Open global search. Searches across all modules: Canvas fields, persona names, feature titles, sprint tasks, experiment hypotheses, brainstorm ideas, timeline milestones, pipeline channels, and Storm Test notes. Use arrow keys to navigate results; Enter to jump to the match; Esc to close.

Ctrl/ + I — Toggle the Co-Pilot sidebar. The Co-Pilot analyses your project data and surfaces insights, gaps, and recommendations. Works in rule-based mode by default; add an OpenAI API key for LLM-powered strategic questions.

Ctrl/ + Z — Undo the last change. The undo stack holds 50 states, so you can undo extensively without losing earlier work.

Ctrl/ + Shift + Z — Redo a previously undone change.

Ctrl/ + S — Force an immediate save to localStorage and display a confirmation toast.

Esc — Close the currently open overlay: search, modal, or Co-Pilot.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

Can I use this with my team? Yes, but with a caveat. The Product Journey stores data in the browser of whoever opens it. If you want to share, use Export JSON to create a file, send it to your teammate, and they import it. You're essentially passing a baton — one person works at a time. If you need simultaneous collaboration, this isn't the right tool. Use it for the thinking, then export the results to share.

Is my data private? Completely. The Product Journey never sends data to any server. There are no analytics, no tracking pixels, no telemetry. Your product plans exist only in your browser's localStorage and in any JSON files you explicitly export. The only exception is if you add an OpenAI API key to the Co-Pilot — in that case, a summary of your data is sent to OpenAI when you ask a question, subject to their privacy policy.

What happens if I clear my browser data? Your projects will be deleted. This is why the Export JSON button exists. Export after every significant working session. Store the file somewhere safe. If the worst happens, you can import it and be back to exactly where you were.

Can I run this offline? Yes. The HTML file works without an internet connection. The only features that require internet are the Google Fonts loading (the manual falls back to Georgia if fonts can't load), the OpenAI Co-Pilot mode, and the initial PWA installation prompt. Everything else — every module, every calculation, every export — works offline.

How do I move my projects to a new computer? Export each project as JSON on the old computer. Copy the JSON files to the new computer (email, USB drive, cloud storage — whatever works). Open the Product Journey HTML file on the new computer and import each JSON file. Your projects will appear exactly as they were.

Can I customise the Storm Test questions? Not through the interface, but the questions are defined in a JavaScript array called ARENA near the bottom of the HTML file. If you're comfortable editing HTML, you can modify the questions, add new categories, or increase the total beyond 25. Each entry is a simple object with a category name, icon, and array of question strings.

The Health Score seems low even though I've done a lot of work. Why? The Health Score weights Storm Test survival (25%) and Runway health (25%) heavily. If you haven't filled the Runway Clock or haven't answered many Storm Test challenges, those components drag the score down. It's not punishing you — it's telling you that financial planning and risk assessment are as important as feature development.

I'm not a SaaS startup. Is this tool still relevant? The structure is universal: define a problem, understand your users, prioritise what to build, plan your market entry, track your finances, stress-test your assumptions. Whether you're building a hardware product, a community platform, a content business, or a marketplace, these are the same questions. The Templates gallery includes non-SaaS models (D2C, Marketplace, Hardware, Creator) to show how the framework adapts.

What's the difference between the Storm Test Arena and the Co-Pilot? The Storm Test is a structured checklist of 25 specific challenges that you answer yourself. The Co-Pilot is an analytical engine that looks at your data across all modules and surfaces patterns, gaps, and recommendations. The Arena asks you hard questions. The Co-Pilot tells you what your data reveals. They complement each other — the Arena feeds into the Health Score, which the Co-Pilot references in its analysis.

How often should I use this tool? During the early stages (pre-launch), daily or every other day is ideal — even if just for 15 minutes to update a field, add a feature, or answer a Storm Test question. Post-launch, a weekly 20-minute review keeps everything current. The tool is most dangerous when left dormant for weeks — the data goes stale and the disconnect between your plan and reality grows silently.

· · ·

CHAPTER 18

# The Morning After

Somewhere right now, someone is closing this manual and opening the Product Canvas for the first time. The cursor is blinking in the Problem field. The sidebar says 0% across every phase. The Health Score is a dash.

That blankness is not emptiness. It's potential energy. Every product that ever mattered started with a blank field and a person willing to type something honest into it.

You don't need to fill everything tonight. You don't need to get it right on the first try. The toolkit saves every keystroke. The undo button works. The templates are there if you need a running start.

The only thing you need to do right now is write one true sentence about a problem that matters to you. The rest follows from that.

The cursor is blinking.

---

The New Product Journey v3 — Onboarding Manual
Version 3.0