



Intentional Invention

Invention Process: Evaluation and Screening Questions

Intentional Invention should be viewed as an integral component of an organization's strategy. Intentional Invention means achieving protection from competitive forces and it creates a unique advantage that will help to enhanced growth that will increase community, shareholder, employee, and consumer satisfaction.

After review of the stage-gate invention process, a common question is how do you measure success?

Within the nine stages, there are three screen stages to evaluate progress and to determine if a concept should continue through the process. These are located at the end of stages two, four and seven.

Tied to these concept and tested product screens should be strategic, consumer and financial hurdles or measures that need to be achieved in order to proceed. Financial expectations should be differentiated according to perceived level of risk, which will vary by new product type.

Product Types

- Existing business
- Restages: Existing products that are redesigned, repackaged, or remarketed to attract new customers.
- Line extensions: Products closely related to existing lines.
- New-line concepts: Product lines developed and marketed around a packaging or concept theme.
- New-to-the-company: Products that exist in one form or another, but not at company.
- New-to-the-world: Products that create a new market or category, products that deliver new perceived consumer benefits or bundling or benefits.

Strategic Roles of New Products

- Utilizing a new technology
- Gaining or maintaining a competitive advantage
- Filling a growth or profit gap
- Arresting margin erosion
- Attracting a new customer/market
- Retaining customers



Screen One at Stage Two: Selecting High-Potential Ideas

After idea generation, to prune down the list and select a few idea for concept development.

Strategic Screens	
Fits with strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the new product idea fit within the strategic roles? (See business model) • Does the idea have universal national or international potential? • Is the idea consistent with the company's environmental posture?
Exploits internal strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the idea manufacturable, either in-house or through an outside vendor? • Does the idea capitalize on channel/sales strengths? • Does the idea fit the company core technologies? If not, can the technology be developed internally, purchased or licensed?
Source of competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are competitors present in the potential segment? • Does the idea capitalize on an existing trend or establish a new trend?
Consumer Screens	
Need intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the product have a broad or narrow appeal? • Does the idea satisfy the expressed need?
Uniqueness/differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the idea satisfy an existing or unmet need? • Does the idea deliver an important customer benefit?
Financial Screens	
Size of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the universe of customers in the potential segment?
Impact on existing business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the idea add significant incremental sales? • What resources are required to continue development?
Return potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How big will sales revenues need to be for this potential product to break even?



Screen Two at Stage Four: Selecting High-Impact Concepts

After business analysis, to determine which concepts should move to prototype development.

Strategic Screens	
Fits with strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the new product concept capitalize on or build on the existing brand? Can the concept potentially provide a competitive advantage?
Exploits internal strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the concept utilize existing equipment and/or technology? Can the idea be distributed through existing channels?
Source of competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the concept patentable or is the technology proprietary? Can we achieve a sustainable or first-to-market advantage against current and potential competitors? Can we insulate ourselves from competition with respect to cost structures, process design, raw materials, or regulatory barriers?
Consumer Screens	
Need intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the concept deliver against and unmet need? What purchase intent scores did the concept achieve?
Uniqueness/differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What uniqueness score did the concept achieve? Does the concept extend the benefits available to consumers?
Financial Screens	
Size of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the revenues, margins, and profits expected to be? How much will the concept cost to manufacture?
Impact on existing business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the concept cannibalize existing business? Is the concept expected to grow the category?
Return potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What discount rate should be applied to this concept? What is the expected net profit and return on investment for the concept?



Screen Three at Stage Seven: Optimizing the New Product Offering

After market testing, prior to commercialization or product launch

Strategic Screens	
Fits with strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the product deliver against strategic objectives?
Exploits internal strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the product capitalize on distribution strengths?
Source of competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the product satisfy the customer need better than competitive offerings?
Consumer Screens	
Need intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have field tests indicated customer acceptance of the product? Have field tests indicated customer preference for the product versus a relevant standard?
Uniqueness/differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the product truly distinctive? Do the communication strategies position the product uniquely in customers' minds?
Financial Screens	
Size of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the product offer significant opportunities for future line extensions?
Impact on existing business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the implications of proceeding to market?
Return potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the product achieve manufacturing cost estimates and margin projections? Does it achieve profitably goals and return objectives?

Modified by Insight Strategic Concepts® from the book:

Innovation, Leadership Strategies for the Competitive Edge by Thomas D. Kuczmarski