Grounding Ideation in Technical Realities Produces Better Results

Ideation can achieve higher value when sessions are focused around specific seed technologies that form the basis of enduring technology and product platforms. "Blue Sky" sessions may allow people to dream and feel good about participation, but rarely result in successful products –often wasting time and money along the way.

Most professionals engaged in the business of product development have had the opportunity to participate in product ideation sessions where new product ideas are captured from session participants via yellow stickies and posted. Product ideas sharing common themes are clustered accordingly with the group then setting priorities as to which clusters are most deserving of advancement.

While meeting participants leave product ideation sessions feeling invigorated and confident, in our experience, too many of these meetings result in wasted effort - with the yellow stickies neatly arranged on a rolled-up poster board gathering dust in the corner of someone's office.

Despite the best of intentions to unlock creativity, why do traditional ideation sessions fail to deliver on expectations?

The answer: *New product ideas lack context and are not grounded in technology realties.*

We have found that most ideation sessions do not result in advances because there are too many variables and insufficient data that simply cannot be covered in a series of meetings.

- *Are market objectives articulated? Do we know what the consumer wants?*
- *Are there clear technology objectives? Do we know what the technology dimensions are?*
- *Does the technology search identify relevant and available technologies?*
- *Will the product concept work? Is it technically feasible? Is there a precedent?*
- *Which of the technically feasible product concepts are deserving of development?*
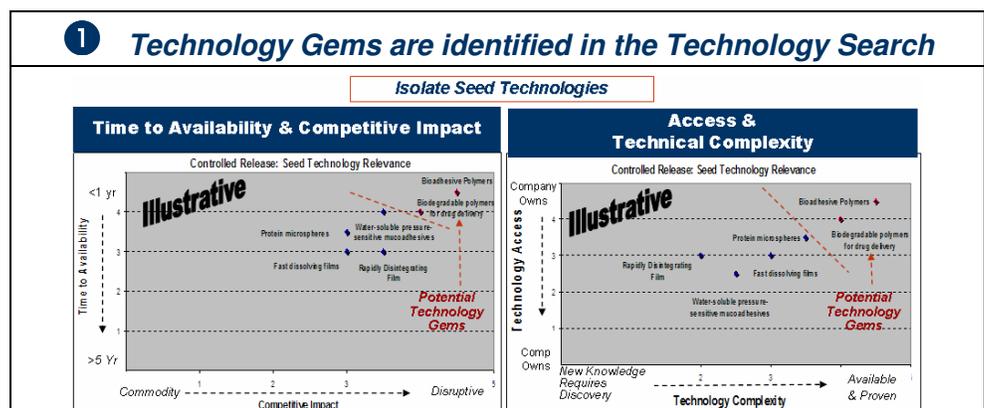
We have found that grounding ideation sessions with a context and basing advancement decisions requires doing the homework up-front and staging ideation once each participant becomes cognizant of market and technology realities. Participants who engage in a longer term association with a more structured initiative produce demonstrable results vs. professionals subject to discontinuous and random participating in an unstructured approach.

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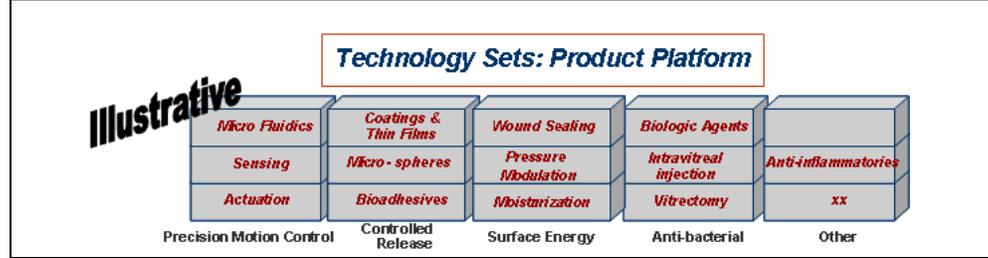
Most senior executives and company professionals we interact with across the Fortune 500 share the view that innovation is critical to the business but find it very difficult to become motivated to attend *yet another ideation session* having participated in past sessions that have gone absolutely nowhere.

**However: with Context and the Homework Done:** *The Yellow Sticky Approach has its place*

Three primary steps lead to successful product ideation and the identification of high impact, Big Hit, product candidates.

❶ Technology Gems are identified in the Technology Search

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❷ Technology Gems under multiple technology sets translate into product platforms…

❸ …and spawn multiple Product Concepts and subsequently screened for Big Hit potential.
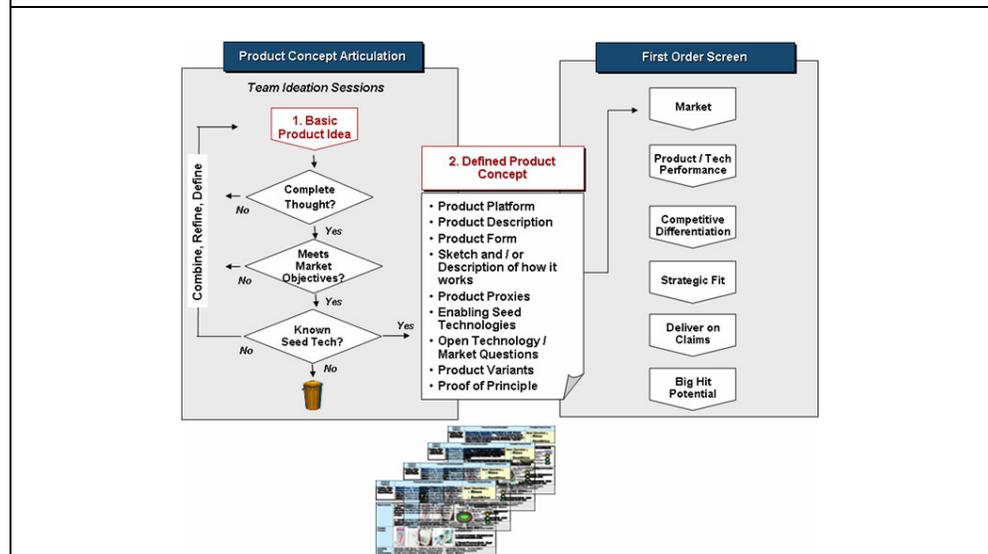
The BIC Approach Produces Outstanding Results

Results are obtained within six months. For a recent F250 Consumer Products Company, BIC formulated hundreds of product concepts from over 1,000 external technologies gathered during the search. Seventeen products were selected and advanced with each holding the potential to transform categories and produce more than $1 billion in new revenue. Ideation sessions are now a culminating, exciting event not a one off *do I need to attend* kind of affair.