

## Trying to identify your target customer? Here's three questions you should be asking.

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It's sometimes a lot easier to build great technology than it is to properly identify your target customer and ideal market. Sure you may have found a market that has great potential. However, once deployed, will your solution have a significant impact? When defining your target market, here are three questions that you should be asking:

### Who has the pain?

Before getting a chance of successfully selling a product, you need to have a very good idea of the target customer. This is the person that has the pain (or the need) that your product will solve (or satisfy). If there is not a well defined pain or need, there is limited chance that your solution has value; besides selling to a few people. Of course, the greater the pain for the target customer, the greater the value of the market opportunity.

### When is your solution needed?

Even after finding a market, you still need to select the right time to drive your product to market. For example, take the tablet PC that came out 8 years ago - perhaps innovative, but obviously not as popular as today's iPad. It is so important to have a clear understanding on when the critical mass of your customers will be ready to buy your product. It is always better to delay than to simply burn money on a market that is yet not ready to purchase.

### Are you too close to the problem?

While you may have been thinking about these things for a while, it is sometimes beneficial to

have a little distance or fresh eyes in order to find the right answers. This is where leveraging the knowledge of a business consultant can pay off. You might be surprised on the outcome if you were to consider asking the advice of someone that has many years in developing product plans and go to market strategies. And while such consulting services are not cheap, they're certainly a lot less money than to ship a product to the wrong target customers or at a bad time to market.

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