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Worth Every Cent

The 80/20 Way to Build What Your Customers Will Buy

Audiobook Visual Companion

Bill Canady

All 31 figures from the book, the reading guide, the Put It to Work section with its five starter worksheets, The Instruments and the reading list.

Each figure is narrated in the audiobook. This PDF lets you see it. The full Field Guide, with all thirty-six worksheets, is sold separately.

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A listener reference. It does not replace the book or the Field Guide.

LISTENER REFERENCE

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FIGURE 0.1 · HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

The nineteen decisions

Part	Chapter	The decision
One — Choose Your Customers	1. Busy Is Not a Business	Who owns this product, and what is it promising?
	2. Find the Customers Who Matter	Which customers and products carry the business?
	3. Learn the Problem Before You Build	What problem is worth solving?
	4. Know Who Will Buy It and How	Who will buy it, and how will it be bought?
	5. Choose a Strategy That Says No	Where will we win, and what will we refuse?
	6. Find Out If It Pays	Does it pay, through the constraint, in cash?
	7. Fund the Critical Few	What gets the next dollar and the next hour?
Two — Build What They'll Buy	8. Test Before You Fund	Which risk could kill it, and how do we test that first?
	9. Shape the Smallest Useful Product	What is the least we can build that does the whole job?
	10. Make a Roadmap You Can Defend	What have we promised, and what are we only guessing?
	11. Build with the People Who Deliver	Who decides what, and when is it done?
	12. Package What They'll Pay For	What exactly are we selling, and does the price cover the work?
	13. Launch So Customers Succeed	Can customers succeed with it, and can we stop if they can't?
Three — Run It So It Pays	14. Measure What Happens After the Sale	Did customers get the result, and did we get paid for it?
	15. Grow Without Rebuilding the Mess	Which growth can we repeat without rebuilding the product?
	16. Simplify with a Scalpel	What should we change, narrow or retire, and how?
	17. Lead the Decisions Nobody Owns	Who decides when the functions disagree?
	18. Run the Product Review	What changes this month because of the evidence?
	19. Your First Ninety Days	Where do you start on Monday?

Figure 0.1. The nineteen decisions. Each chapter turns on one of them, and each has its worksheets in the Field Guide.

If You Are Short of Time

If this is you	Read
Everyone is busy and the numbers are going the wrong way	Chapters 1, 7 and 16
The roadmap is full and nothing on it seems to matter	Chapters 1, 5 and 7
A big customer wants something special, and sales has said yes	Chapters 5, 15 and 17
You’re about to fund a new product or a big feature	Chapters 3, 6 and 8
Engineering is building to a specification, and nobody can name the buyer	Chapters 4, 8 and 9
The catalog is too big and nobody will let you cut it	Chapters 2, 6 and 16
You’re about to launch	Chapters 9, 12 and 13
Revenue is growing and the team is drowning	Chapters 6, 14 and 15
You’ve just taken over a company, a business unit or a product	Chapters 1, 18 and 19

FIGURE 1.1 · CHAPTER 1: BUSY IS NOT A BUSINESS

Three scoreboards at Dispatchwell

Whose scoreboard	What it counts	What it says about the photo-ordering feature
The team's	Features shipped, tickets closed, dates met	A clean win
The customer's	The right part, found once and on site when the job needs it	Unchanged for most technicians
The business's	Repeat orders and a bigger share of spending from accounts that order every week	Unknown

Figure 1.1. Three scoreboards at Dispatchwell. The team kept the first one, and it was the only one of the three that couldn't say whether the work paid.

FIGURE 2.1 · CHAPTER 2: FIND THE CUSTOMERS WHO MATTER

Kittredge’s 240 SKUs, cut at the top fifth

Group	SKUs (share)	Revenue (share)	Contribution (share)
Top 48	48 (20%)	$54.0M (75%)	$16.2M (90%)
Other 192	192 (80%)	$18.0M (25%)	$1.8M (10%)
Total	240	$72.0M	$18.0M

Figure 2.1. Kittredge’s 240 SKUs, cut at the top fifth. One cut, three different measurements, three different percentages.

FIGURE 2.2 · CHAPTER 2: FIND THE CUSTOMERS WHO MATTER

The quad

Box	Who buys what	The product question it raises
Quad 1	A customers buying A products	What makes this combination work, and how do we protect and grow it?
Quad 2	A customers buying B products	Which of these are necessary evils, and which could a standard product replace?
Quad 3	B customers buying A products	Can we serve these customers through a simpler, cheaper path?
Quad 4	B customers buying B products	What does it really cost to keep this, and what would change if we repriced it or stopped?

Figure 2.2. The quad. The letters record a commercial grouping, not a verdict, and each box asks its own question about the product.

FIGURE 3.1 · CHAPTER 3: LEARN THE PROBLEM BEFORE YOU BUILD

Four kinds of statement from one visit to a Dispatchwell customer

Kind	Example	What it can support
Observed	The dispatcher typed the same part number into two systems.	That the behavior exists
Reported	She says she does this on most emergency jobs.	How often it might happen, pending records
Inferred	The double entry creates avoidable work and errors.	A reason to investigate
Hypothesis	Passing the part number across automatically will cut ordering errors.	A test, not a requirement

Figure 3.1. Four kinds of statement from one visit to a Dispatchwell customer. Each is useful, and each supports a different amount of weight.

FIGURE 4.1 · CHAPTER 4: KNOW WHO WILL BUY IT AND HOW

One Kittredge control, two ways to buy it

	Equipment builders	Maintenance teams
What starts it	A new machine design	A control that failed
Who decides	The builder's engineers, then purchasing	The technician or supervisor at the stopped line
How the order arrives	A supply agreement and scheduled orders	The old part number, often through a distributor
When	Months before production	Today, for delivery tomorrow
What they must see	Test data, fixed drawings and supply through any change	A part that fits the cabinet and matches the old number

Figure 4.1. One Kittredge control, two ways to buy it. The part number is the same, and nearly everything the buyer needs to see is different. The details are illustrations.

FIGURE 4.2 · CHAPTER 4: KNOW WHO WILL BUY IT AND HOW

Who buys Dispatchwell's same-day replacement program at a regional service company

Role	Who	Must see before saying yes	Says no when
Uses it	The technician at the failed machine	The right part on site the same day, without a phone chase	It is slower than calling the branch
Chooses it	The service manager	Fewer second trips, nothing new to run	Setup turns into a project
Approves and pays	The owner	Same-day fixes and second trips, in numbers the owner trusts	It needs a new supply agreement mid-year
Can stop it	The purchasing manager	Every order inside the company's approval rules	It lets technicians spend without a limit
Can stop it too	The largest facilities client	The parts records its contract requires	Parts it never approved appear on its bill

Figure 4.2. Who buys Dispatchwell's same-day replacement program at a regional service company. Four of the roles come from Chapter 2. The people are assumed for illustration, and one of them holds two roles.

A line about use and a line about the purchase, for each company

Company	A line about use	A line about the purchase
Kittredge	Diagnoses its own faults	Fits the old control's space and wiring, and is listed under the old part number
Dispatchwell	Matches the failed part to the right replacement and gets it to the job the same day	Shows the owner each month which emergency jobs got the right part the same day
Halloran	Services one family of equipment in a defined area	Sold a visit at a time, each one bookable on the facility manager's own signature

Figure 4.3. A line about use and a line about the purchase, for each company. Engineering would write the first without being asked. The second comes from the buying map. The examples are invented.

FIGURE 5.1 · CHAPTER 5: CHOOSE A STRATEGY THAT SAYS NO

Five requests at Dispatchwell and the answer each one got

Request	Answer	Why
Faster emergency replacement	Investigate	Central to the promise, but the integration risk is untested
Purchasing connector upgrade customer service keeps asking for	Proceed	Fits, cuts a known source of order errors, capacity exists
A simpler counter account for small contractors	Defer	A real segment, but not the one chosen. Revisit when the core is stable
A program to finance customers' equipment	Decline	Outside the promise and outside the capability
The monthly report one facilities customer's contract requires	Honor as a bounded exception	A signed obligation. Deliver it, fence it, don't sell it again

Figure 5.1. Five requests at Dispatchwell and the answer each one got. The strategy made every answer explainable, including the two that disappointed a customer.

FIGURE 6.1 · CHAPTER 6: FIND OUT IF IT PAYS

One tail, two reports

	The management report	What changes if the tail goes
Contribution from the 192 SKUs	$1,800,000	−$1,800,000
Common fixed costs charged to them	−$3,000,000	$0 (the costs stay)
Result	−$1,200,000	−$1,800,000
Company operating profit	$6.0 million today	$4.2 million after

Figure 6.1. One tail, two reports. The allocated view answered a question about who shares the overhead. The decision in front of Owen was a different question.

FIGURE 6.2 · CHAPTER 6: FIND OUT IF IT PAYS

Two jobs at Halloran Service

	Standard job	Custom job
Revenue	$240	$500
Technician hours	2	5
Technician cost at $45 an hour	$90	$225
Contribution per job	$150	$275
Contribution per technician hour	$75	$55

Figure 6.2. Two jobs at Halloran Service. The custom job wins on the invoice. The standard job wins on the hour, and the hour is the constraint.

FIGURE 6.3 · CHAPTER 6: FIND OUT IF IT PAYS

The program’s simple payback, and what happens when one assumption halves

	Base assumption	If contribution halves
Initial investment	$1,200,000	$1,200,000
Monthly revenue added	$180,000	—
Monthly service cost added	$60,000	—
Monthly contribution	$120,000	$60,000
Simple steady-state payback	10 months	20 months

Figure 6.3. The program’s simple payback, and what happens when one assumption halves. Neither line is a forecast.

FIGURE 7.1 · CHAPTER 7: FUND THE CRITICAL FEW

Dispatchwell’s integration hours for the quarter, in the funding order

Layer	Work	Hours
Obligations	Required security correction	160
Upkeep	Continuing support	240
The critical few	Purchasing connector upgrade	240
Bounded learning	Program discovery, capped	160
Reserve	Unassigned	160
	Total	960
Declined	Custom report for one facilities customer	(200)

Figure 7.1. Dispatchwell’s integration hours for the quarter, in the funding order. The custom report was the only request that fit neither the strategy nor a contract.

FIGURE 8.1 · CHAPTER 8: TEST BEFORE YOU FUND

Five ways a product fails, as they applied to Dispatchwell's program

The risk	At Dispatchwell	A test that can answer it	What that test cannot tell you
They do not care enough	Is a job waiting on a part painful enough to pay to fix?	Interviews about the last breakdown, checked against the records	Whether they will buy this answer
They will not change how they work	Will technicians stop phoning the branch?	Observed use on real breakdowns	Whether the buyer will fund it
They cannot use it	Can a technician order the right part without help?	A prototype task with realistic failures	Whether it works with their systems
It does not work in their world	Can their maintenance systems supply the equipment records?	A technical check against real customer records	Whether anyone will pay for it
It costs more than they will pay	Will service cost stay near the $60,000 a month the model assumed?	A bounded pilot with the service time recorded	What the wider market will do

Figure 8.1. Five ways a product fails, as they applied to Dispatchwell's program. Every test answers one of them and stays silent on the rest.

FIGURE 8.2 · CHAPTER 8: TEST BEFORE YOU FUND

The test record for Dispatchwell's prototype test, written before the first session

Field	Entry
Assumption	Technicians can order the right replacement for a failed part with the new workflow, without phoning the branch to check it
Who	Six technicians from three willing customer accounts
Task	Order replacements for realistic failures using what they normally have at the machine — the nameplate, the old part number, a photo
Evidence	Where help was needed, what information was missing, whether the part would have fit and worked
Severe error	Any order for a part that doesn't fit the installed equipment, or that skips the customer's approval rule
Limits	A prototype, not live orders. Three accounts are not the market
Decision it informs	Revise the workflow and prepare a limited pilot, or stop
Owner and end date	Priya Raman, three weeks from the first session

Figure 8.2. The test record for Dispatchwell's prototype test, written before the first session. The numbers are invented for teaching and are not a recommended sample size.

FIGURE 9.1 · CHAPTER 9: SHAPE THE SMALLEST USEFUL PRODUCT

A standard Halloran job as designed, and with one unpriced return visit in four

	As designed	One return visit in four
Average technician hours per job	2.0	2.5
Revenue	$240	$240
Technician cost at $45 an hour	$90.00	$112.50
Contribution per job	$150.00	$127.50
Contribution per technician hour	$75	$51

Figure 9.1. A standard Halloran job as designed, and with one unpriced return visit in four. The second visit is an assumption for illustration. It wipes out the standard job's advantage over the custom job's $55 an hour.

An excerpt from Kittredge’s roadmap for the installation interface

When	Entry	Label	The decision it serves
This quarter	Requalify a top-selling control after a supplier’s component change	Promised	None to make. Existing customers depend on continued supply
This quarter	Installer evaluation and compatibility review of the proposed interface	Planned	Change, narrow or stop the design
Next two quarters	Tooling and a limited production run, if the evaluation supports it	Planned, conditional	Commit the tooling money or not
Later	Convert the whole family to the new interface	Possible	Depends on compatibility, inventory and the cost of moving customers
Not this year	A new interface for a second product family	Excluded	Revisit after the first family’s results

Figure 10.1. An excerpt from Kittredge's roadmap for the installation interface. Each entry carries its label and the decision it serves. The last row is as important as the first.

FIGURE 11.1 · CHAPTER 11: BUILD WITH THE PEOPLE WHO DELIVER

Who decides what in delivering Dispatchwell's same-day replacement program

Decision	Who decides	Who must be heard first
The customer, the promise and the scope trade-offs	Priya Raman, head of product management	Sales, branch operations, engineering
How it is built	The engineering lead	Product, security
Whether it is fit to release	The quality owner, who can stop a release for a severe risk	Product, engineering, branch operations
Whether the operation is ready to support it	The head of branch operations	Product, sales
Commercial terms within the price policy	The sales leader	Product, finance
A conflict none of them can settle	The chief executive	Everyone above

Figure 11.1. Who decides what in delivering Dispatchwell's same-day replacement program. Every decision has one owner, and the people who must be heard are named before the argument starts.

FIGURE 11.2 · CHAPTER 11: BUILD WITH THE PEOPLE WHO DELIVER

Three states of one emergency order

State	What it means	If it fails, who needs to know
Accepted	The branch recorded the order and reserved the part	The technician, at once
Delivered	The part reached the site	The technician and the dispatcher, before the promised time
Acknowledged	The technician confirmed it is the right part	The branch, before the driver leaves the site

Figure 11.2. Three states of one emergency order. A product that shows only the first one will tell a technician the part is on its way while it is still on the shelf.

FIGURE 12.1 · CHAPTER 12: PACKAGE WHAT THEY'LL PAY FOR

Three ways Dispatchwell could charge for the same-day replacement program

Charge by	Easy to understand?	Tracks value?	The risk
Technician enrolled	Yes	Poorly. Twenty technicians may look after a very large base of equipment	The heaviest users pay the least
Emergency order filled	Reasonably	Closely	Customers ration the very use that creates the value
Flat monthly fee per account	Yes	Loosely	Dispatchwell carries the cost of its heaviest users

Figure 12.1. Three ways Dispatchwell could charge for the same-day replacement program. None is correct in general, and each one changes how customers use the product.

FIGURE 12.2 · CHAPTER 12: PACKAGE WHAT THEY'LL PAY FOR

The same price with two different packages

	Delivery in working hours	Delivery at any hour
Accounts buying	30	30
Monthly fee per account	$6,000	$6,000
Monthly revenue	$180,000	$180,000
Monthly service cost	$60,000 ($2,000 an account)	$120,000 ($4,000 an account)
Monthly contribution	$120,000	$60,000
Simple payback on $1.2 million	10 months	20 months

Figure 12.2. The same price with two different packages. Delivery at any hour leaves the revenue untouched, doubles the service cost and doubles the payback period.

FIGURE 13.1 · CHAPTER 13: LAUNCH SO CUSTOMERS SUCCEED

Dispatchwell’s staged launch, counted one step at a time

Step	Accounts	The question it answers
Eligible (maintenance systems supply equipment lists)	40	Who can the product serve today?
Offered the program	40	Did sales reach them?
Purchased	12	Do they want this offer at this price?
Completed setup	9	Can they get it working?
Got the right part the same day for a real failure, within thirty days	6	Did they get what they paid for?

Figure 13.1. Dispatchwell’s staged launch, counted one step at a time. The numbers are invented for teaching. Each count answers a different question, and each gap calls for a different action.

FIGURE 14.1 · CHAPTER 14: MEASURE WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SALE

One year at Dispatchwell

	Annual sales
Start of the year, 5,000 accounts	$600 million
250 accounts that left	−$45 million
Existing accounts that bought less	−$15 million
Existing accounts that bought more	+$30 million
New customers	+$75 million
End of the year	$645 million
Sales kept from the starting base, with expansion	$570 million (95 percent, net revenue retention)
Sales kept from the starting base, without expansion	$540 million (90 percent, gross revenue retention)
Starting accounts still customers	4,750 of 5,000 (95 percent)

Figure 14.1. One year at Dispatchwell. The movements are invented for teaching, not benchmarks. Growth and retention are different questions, and only the second one is about the customers you already had.

FIGURE 14.2 · CHAPTER 14: MEASURE WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SALE

Three numbers for Dispatchwell's program

	The measure	What it protects against
The result	Days from purchase to a technician's first same-day replacement on a real failure	Counting sales as success
The return	Monthly contribution from the accounts that bought the program	Growth that costs more to serve than it brings in
The guardrail	Orders that ship a part that doesn't fit the installed equipment, per thousand emergency orders	A faster setup won by removing checks customers need

Figure 14.2. Three numbers for Dispatchwell's program. Any one of them can be improved by damaging another, which is why they travel together.

FIGURE 15.1 · CHAPTER 15: GROW WITHOUT REBUILDING THE MESS

Kittredge’s monitoring service, sorted

Carries over	Has to be built or proven
Relationships with the maintenance teams who buy replacements	Evidence that those teams want monitoring and someone will pay for it
Years of field-failure knowledge	Permission to collect and use data from customers’ equipment
An installed base of compatible controls	A way to connect controls that were never designed to report
A sales channel that already reaches the buyer	People who respond to alerts around the clock, and a cost for them

Figure 15.1. Kittredge’s monitoring service, sorted. The installed base removes one uncertainty and leaves the others exactly where they were.

FIGURE 15.2 · CHAPTER 15: GROW WITHOUT REBUILDING THE MESS

Ten technician hours at Halloran, filled two ways

	Standard jobs	Custom jobs
Jobs that fit in ten hours	5	2
Contribution per job	$150	$275
Contribution from ten hours	$750	$550

Figure 15.2. Ten technician hours at Halloran, filled two ways. The bigger invoices earn less, because the hour is what is scarce.

FIGURE 16.1 · CHAPTER 16: SIMPLIFY WITH A SCALPEL

Retiring forty Kittredge SKUs, and two ways the case can fail

	The case as proposed	If related products lose $300,000	If only $300,000 of expense goes away
Contribution lost from the forty SKUs	−$360,000	−$360,000	−$360,000
Contribution lost from related products	$0	−$300,000	$0
Fixed expense that disappears	+$540,000	+$540,000	+$300,000
Effect on the year	+$180,000	−$120,000	−$60,000
One-time transition cost	$270,000	$270,000	$270,000
Simple payback	18 months	Never	Never

Figure 16.1. Retiring forty Kittredge SKUs, and two ways the case can fail. Small changes in the right assumptions matter more than elaborate formatting.

Dispatchwell’s three options for the approval chain

	Commit to the full chain	Offer a configurable approval rule	Decline
Serves the chosen segment?	No. Built for one account	Yes. Regional service companies need sign-off too	—
What the prospect gets	Everything it asked for	Named approvers by order type and amount, but not its full chain	Nothing new
Effort and what it displaces	Most of two releases, including the equipment-data work	Part of one release	None
Recurring burden	A special version to maintain for years	One capability inside the standard product	None
Main uncertainty	Whether the prospect’s process stays stable	Whether the prospect accepts less than it asked for	Whether the prospect walks

Figure 17.1. Dispatchwell’s three options for the approval chain. The non-negotiables came first. The comparison happened inside them.

FIGURE 18.1 · CHAPTER 18: RUN THE PRODUCT REVIEW

A monthly product review that ends in decisions

Part	Time	What happens
Last month’s commitments	10 minutes	Each owner reports done, not done and why, or no longer needed
What changed	10 minutes	The result, the return and the guardrail, and anything that moved them
The decision	30 minutes	One unresolved choice, with the options laid out in the brief
The record	10 minutes	Decision, reason, owner, resources, evidence due, review condition

Figure 18.1. A monthly product review that ends in decisions. The times are a guide for a one-hour meeting. The order is the point.

FIGURE 18.2 · CHAPTER 18: RUN THE PRODUCT REVIEW

The decision record from Dispatchwell’s review

Item	What was recorded
Decision	Offer the program to ten more eligible accounts, and build and test automatic import of each account’s equipment list during setup
Reason	The workflow works, but onboarding help is running far over plan, and engineering’s change could remove most of it
Owner	Priya Raman
Resources	The import change inside the next release. Onboarding help for the ten accounts capped at the first group’s average
Evidence due	Onboarding hours per account, days to the first same-day replacement and wrong-part orders, compared with the first twelve
Review condition	The review after the tenth account finishes setup, or two months, whichever comes first
What sales may promise	The program to eligible accounts only. No setup dates shorter than the first group achieved, and no custom onboarding

Figure 18.2. The decision record from Dispatchwell’s review. The last row is the one that keeps a limited test from becoming a full rollout through sales promises. The size of the next group is invented for teaching.

FIGURE 19.1 · CHAPTER 19: YOUR FIRST NINETY DAYS

The first ninety days on one page

Days	The work	What you leave behind	Chapters
1–14	Find out what is true and what is owed	An owner and a product page for every product, and a register of commitments	1, 2
15–30	Find the concentration and the customer reality	The quad and a segment assessment, the vitality baseline, one written problem statement and a buying map	2–4
31–45	Choose one consequential, bounded commitment	A decision brief, a test or delivery plan, and a stop list	5–8
46–65	Carry the choice into operating reality	An evidence log and a readiness or learning record	9–13
66–85	Decide from what happened	A product review, a decision record and one simplification case	14–18
86–90	Leave a working system	A ninety-day account and the next reviews on the calendar	19

Figure 19.1. The first ninety days on one page. Each stretch of days uses a few chapters of this book and leaves something behind that the next stretch needs.

FROM THE BOOK

Put It to Work

Pages from The Field Guide

The book leaves Dispatchwell at a monthly review that sent its same-day program to ten more eligible accounts, with a line on what sales could promise. Yours starts earlier, with one product and a decision nobody owns.

Chair the first meeting yourself. Bring the product's owner and someone from each of engineering, service, sales and finance. Work from your own records: a year of sales by customer and by product, tied to the financial statements, and a month of support cases. Say which numbers are records and which are assumptions, and name who will test each assumption, and by what date.

Start with the product page, even for a product everyone thinks they know. Dispatchwell's photo-ordering feature shipped on time, and six weeks later only a handful of technicians used it.

These pages are a start. Worth Every Cent · The Field Guide, sold separately, holds all thirty-six worksheets, and beside each blank sits a finished one from Dispatchwell, Kittredge or Halloran. It adds the leader's call and the team's on every unit, Before Day One, a master page for the monthly review and a facilitator's guide. The Instruments page follows this section.

What the first meeting must put on paper

1. One owner, by name, and the decisions that person makes alone.
2. Every promise already made, who made it and when it falls due.
3. The next decision, the evidence it needs, its owner and its date.

Do the work by hand or use the tools you have. Check every figure against its source, work one yourself and keep customer records in approved systems. The owner of the decision makes it.

Thinking is required.

The nineteen decisions on one page

Each number is its chapter. Work them in order the first time.

Part One · Choose Your Customers

1. Busy Is Not a Business. The product page and who decides what.
2. Find the Customers Who Matter. The ranking and the quad.
3. Learn the Problem Before You Build. The last time it happened.
4. Know Who Will Buy It and How. Who must say yes, and how the order reaches you.
5. Choose a Strategy That Says No. One of five answers per request.
6. Find Out If It Pays. The economics sheet and the cash view.
7. Fund the Critical Few. Obligations and upkeep come first.

Part Two · Build What They'll Buy

8. Test Before You Fund. The assumption that could kill it.
9. Shape the Smallest Useful Product. Draw the whole job, then narrow the situations, never the result.
10. Make a Roadmap You Can Defend. Label every date, and show what is excluded.
11. Build with the People Who Deliver. A home for every decision.
12. Package What They'll Pay For. A price that covers the work.
13. Launch So Customers Succeed. The first useful result, counted.

Part Three · Run It So It Pays

14. Measure What Happens After the Sale. Retention apart from growth, and a result, a return and a guardrail.
15. Grow Without Rebuilding the Mess. Product, configuration or project, and an owner and an end for every exception.
16. Simplify with a Scalpel. A case that survives subtraction.
17. Lead the Decisions Nobody Owns. One sentence for the decision, the options side by side, the dissent on record.
18. Run the Product Review. One hour a month, one decision.
19. Your First Ninety Days. What is true, what is owed and one bounded commitment carried through.

The first thirty days

This month finds out what is true about one product and what the company already owes, before any work moves. A live safety problem goes first, whatever this page says.

Days 1 to 7: name the owner and list what is owed. Name one product owner and write down what that person decides alone. Book twelve monthly product reviews of an hour each. Ask finance for last year's sales, customer by customer and product by product. Start the register of commitments: every customer date, warranty, required fix and contract term, with the person who promised it.

Done / still open:

Owner / due by:

Days 8 to 14: write the product page as it stands. Follow one real order through the whole process. Read twenty support cases yourself. Write the product page with every estimate labeled and every unknown left blank, then fill in who decides what, one name to a box.

Done / still open:

Owner / due by:

Days 15 to 30: find who matters and who pays. Mark the A customers and A products and build the quad. Ask customers about the last time the problem happened, and watch the work for an hour without helping. Write one problem statement and one buying map. Then list what your biggest pending investment assumes, and mark the assumption that could kill it.

Done / still open:

Owner / due by:

On Day 30, meet again. Put the product page, the register, who decides what, the quad with its questions, the problem statement and the buying map on the table, and choose the one decision your next review will settle. When Halloran's dispatcher asked for an approval button on a Tuesday, Priya Raman could have had an estimate by Wednesday. She called the dispatcher instead, and the twenty-minute answer described a technician stuck beside a stopped machine, not a missing button. Her team then read three months of emergency orders before it wrote the problem down.

Next review date, and its one decision:

A. The product page and who decides what

One product you sell, on one page, and a name beside every decision people argue about. The owner fills in both tables, and the leader above the owner reads them first.

The product:

The product page	What we know	Evidence, or the gap
Customer and situation		
Job and promise		
Whole offering		
Owner and boundary		
Results and the link		
Next decision and date		

Decision	Who decides	Heard first
A new product		
A material change in scope		
A delivery date		
One customer’s exception		
Ending an offering		

Dispatchwell sells $600 million a year of repair parts to 5,000 accounts. On three scoreboards, its photo-ordering feature was a clean win for the team, unchanged for most technicians and unknown for the business. The results line could only be a claim: technicians who find the right part with less back-and-forth order more often, and their owners move more spending to Dispatchwell. An average across customers hid the difference. A contractor with three technicians may get nothing from the app, while a regional service company with 150 may need it badly.

Write the link between the two results as a claim. Shipping on time proves the work moved, not that any customer’s day got easier.

Full Field Guide: Worksheets 1 and 2.

B. The ranking and the quad

A year of sales by customer and by product, tied to the books, ranked and crossed into four boxes. The owner builds it with finance and the account owners. Quad 1 is A customers buying A products, Quad 2 A customers buying B products, Quad 3 B customers buying A products and Quad 4 B customers buying B products.

Twelve months, from and to, and the total it ties to:

Quad	Revenue	Contribution	The question it raises
1			
2			
3			
4			

Exception or obligation	Reason	Owner	Review date

Exception or obligation	Reason	Owner	Review date

Kittredge's 240 SKUs bring in $72 million a year. The top fifth, forty-eight of them, carries $54 million of the revenue and $16.2 million of the contribution: 20 percent of the items, 75 percent of the revenue and 90 percent of the contribution. That cut is not the A line, which sits lower on the list, at 80 percent of sales. The other 192 SKUs still leave $1.8 million from $18 million of revenue after their own variable costs. Some may be the spare parts a large customer's installed base depends on.

A letter records what sells, not what is worth keeping. Before anything leaves the list, ask why an A customer buys it.

Full Field Guide: Worksheets 3 and 4.

C. The buying map

Before engineering builds to a specification, name the person behind each of the five jobs in a purchase, then trace the order from its trigger to the paid invoice. The owner drafts it from orders you have actually taken, and sales and service fix what it gets wrong.

Product, and the customer this map describes:

Role	Who	Must see before saying yes	Says no when
Uses it			
Chooses it			
Approves it			
Pays for it			
Can stop it			

What starts it, whose budget, which route:

Purchase requirement	Owner	How it will be tested

Purchase requirement	Owner	How it will be tested

Suppose, as Chapter 4 does, that Tom Halloran first built his preventive plan as one annual contract covering four visits a year. A facility manager can sign for a single visit alone, as they would for a repair. A contract that runs a year has to wait for the building owner to approve it and for a line in the next year's operating budget. If that budget is set each fall, a contract Tom offers in March starts no sooner than January, ten months on. So Tom made each visit a standard service a facility manager can pick, see priced and book on their own.

The person who asks is often not the person who pays. Put what the payer must see into the specification as requirements, each with an owner and a test.

Full Field Guide: Worksheets 8 and 9.

D. The assumption that could kill it

Pull the proposal apart into the assumptions under it, each written so evidence could prove it wrong. Mark the one that, if it fails, sinks the rest, and put its test on a single page before anyone runs a session.

The investment, and what it would commit:

Assumption	Damage if wrong	What we know	Test

Outcome	Condition, written before the first session
Continue	
Revise	
Stop	

The severe error, the owner and the end date:

Dispatchwell's same-day program would cost $1.2 million, and its ten-month simple payback rested on four things no one had yet seen: customers buying it, technicians using it, the system working with their

records and service cost staying near $60,000 a month. The test gave six technicians from three willing accounts realistic failures to order parts for. Five ordered the right replacement. The sixth chose a control that matched the old number but not the machine, so the equipment check was redesigned first. Just one of the three accounts kept its equipment list in a system that could hand it over without custom work, so the first release went to accounts like that one.

Count the severe error on its own line. Five of six looks like 83 percent on a slide, and the one failure was the reason for the test.

Full Field Guide: Worksheets 16 and 17.

E. The monthly product review

One hour a month, one brief read in advance, and a record written before anyone leaves. The owner prepares the brief and writes the record, finance checks the figures, and the leader signs off.

Product, reporting period, data cut-off:

Part of the hour	Minutes	What goes on paper
Last month’s commitments	10	
What changed	10	
The one open choice	30	
The record	10	

The record	Entry
Decision and reason	
Owner and resources	
Evidence due	
Review condition	
What sales may promise	

Dispatchwell offered its same-day program to the forty accounts in two regions whose systems could supply equipment lists. Twelve bought, nine finished setup and six got the right part the same day for a real failure inside thirty days, and those twelve took far more onboarding help than planned. Sales wanted to widen the offer, branch operations wanted to wait, and engineering thought importing equipment lists during setup could remove most of the help. The review sent the program to ten more eligible accounts while the import was built and tested, with help held to the first group’s average. It returns when the tenth account is set up, or in two months if sooner.

Give every record a line on what sales may promise meanwhile. It keeps a limited test from turning into a rollout nobody approved.

Full Field Guide: Worksheet 35, and the monthly review master.

The Instruments

Chapter	Worksheets
1. Busy Is Not a Business	1 The product page · 2 Who decides what
2. Find the Customers Who Matter	3 The ranking and the quad · 4 Exceptions and obligations
3. Learn the Problem Before You Build	5 The “last time” interview guide · 6 The evidence log · 7 The problem statement
4. Know Who Will Buy It and How	8 The buying map · 9 The purchase requirements
5. Choose a Strategy That Says No	10 The strategy on one page · 11 The five answers
6. Find Out If It Pays	12 The product economics sheet · 13 The cash view and the weakest assumptions
7. Fund the Critical Few	14 The funding order · 15 The investment decision record
8. Test Before You Fund	16 The assumption that could kill it · 17 The test record
9. Shape the Smallest Useful Product	18 The whole job · 19 The scope sort and first-release boundaries
10. Make a Roadmap You Can Defend	20 Promised, planned or possible · 21 The option card
11. Build with the People Who Deliver	22 The delivery decision map · 23 The transaction walk-through and release conditions
12. Package What They’ll Pay For	24 The unit of value and the package · 25 The revenue model against the operating model
13. Launch So Customers Succeed	26 The readiness review and the way back · 27 The launch count
14. Measure What Happens After the Sale	28 The revenue bridge and retention · 29 The result, the return and the guardrail
15. Grow Without Rebuilding the Mess	30 What carries over · 31 Product, configuration or project
16. Simplify with a Scalpel	32 The retirement case · 33 The customer transition
17. Lead the Decisions Nobody Owns	34 The decision brief
18. Run the Product Review	35 The review brief and decision record
19. Your First Ninety Days	36 The ninety-day plan

CONTINUE THE WORK

Continue the Work

If this is you	Read
The product page is written and the first review is on the calendar	Worth Every Cent · The Field Guide, then Chapter 18 again before the second review
You need the whole 80/20 program, not just the product	The 80/20 Company
You have just taken command of a company, or want to see where the quads came from	The 80/20 CEO
The package is right and the price still leaks	Get Paid
Your product needs a place in the CEO’s operating rhythm	FORGE
You know who will buy and how, and now you have to reach them	The 80/20 Marketer
Your sellers need their own book on selling where the money is	The 80/20 Salesman
The product plan has to live inside the annual plan	The Strategy Management Process and The Strategy Deployment Process
Nobody on your team holds the others to the clock	The Rule of Three
Your team would take a story before a manual	The Art of Making Honey