

Selling Your Ideas Using Prototypes

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Learning Objectives

- Identify which prototype features are needed to capture attention, prove concept, and close deals.
- Use Fusion 360 and Eagle to bring the working prototype to life.
- Develop the presentation using the prototype in a way that builds desire, creates excitement, and highlights the proposition.
- Design a full presentation including prototype, demo, and close.

Description

You have great ideas but how do you prove it? How do you get excited fans and the support you need to bring those ideas to life? This class will show you the tools and techniques to present your ideas in a way to get them noticed and backed. Using Autodesk’s Fusion 360 and Eagle you can create outstanding sales presentations that help people understand your ideas and also feel good about supporting and even evangelizing them.

Speaker

Perry The Inventor®, as everyone knows him, is an award-winning product designer. He’s been awarded over 50 US and Foreign Patents, won ABC Good Morning America’s Shark Tank Your Life (With Daymond John), built Flight Simulators for the US Air Force, appeared on and sold out many times on The Home Shopping Network and has developed products that sold in the USA and Internationally in both niche and Mass retailers including Walmart, Michaels, Barnes and Nobles and hundreds of other retailers.

Perry is founder and CEO of two companies: Perry Teri Toys LLC, which creates unique toys and games for children, and a consulting firm, Gizmo Enterprises, Inc., which helps companies and individuals find and bring to life their best innovations.

Interesting Fact about Perry The Inventor®. When he was a kid he worked at ComputerLand in Florida. He called Autodesk and asked if their software could run on the new, at the time, IBM AT. They said, “We can’t get one.” Perry had one, new in the box, at his desk and he sold it to them. This moved Autodesk into 16bit computing and got Perry his first copy of Autodesk version 1.14. CAD is a beautiful thing.

Why Care?

Ideas have no value. You can't eat them, breathe them, or drink them. Ideas live in your head until/if you do something with them. Like Schrödinger's Cat your idea may live or die, but you'll never know unless you get it out of your head and see what happens.

Technical people often have lots of ideas. Our brains are made to see problems and find solutions. Or even better, to see solutions and go hunting for big ornery problems!

Getting people to care requires empathy, understanding and an ability to explain things so they have meaning. We usually express ourselves with deep technical explanations that show details we're proud of. "Do you love a good recursive algorithm that optimizes itself using an external machine learning client? Who doesn't, right?" WRONG!

No one cares about something unless it has meaning to them and they understand that meaning, capisci? Yes, you care, but you also must get others to care too.

The life of your idea depends on you. No one else will fight to bring your idea to life. People have too many choices. Your idea might be great but they've got their own ideas and hundreds, nay millions, of others to choose from. If you really want to bring your idea to life, you need to get others excited about it. You need to prove, in the quickest way possible, that they should care. Without caring, there is nothing. But once you get them to care you'll get the green light, the green funding, and you'll make your competition green with envy.

How do you get people to care? If you want your ideas to take flight, you need to understand how to present them. Meaning, proving what is actually valuable to your "customer" and showing them why they should care in an exciting way. It's true, you can present in a boring way, but that won't make people care, will it?

In my years of research, I have discovered that "You Can Do This!" You don't need to be Steve Jobs or P.T. Barnum, which is great because you're not. But you do need additional skills, a different mindset and just enough fortitude to work your idea to life.

It's simple but not easy. If everyone thinks horses are a great means of transportation and you invent the car, you'd better expect pushback. "New" is not always liked nor well received. Even though the whole point of innovation is creating "New." Many people say they like innovation but often they really don't like "New."

So how do you take an idea, especially a revolutionary idea, and build a fan base? How do you get people, customers, superiors, managers, CEO's, and investors to buy-in? Glad you asked.

In this class you will learn how to sell your idea without selling your soul. You'll learn how to make people care about your idea. And you'll learn how to test your idea to see if it's any good. Because ideas are best when they are good.

If you want to learn these skills. This is the class for you.

Reality

We only have an hour, and this research has taken decades to put together. You'll learn a lot, all you can absorb in 60 minutes, but obviously you cannot learn everything from this one class. You'll need to do some additional work after you leave the room.

In this class, here is what you will get. A good foundation to launch from. I promise you'll learn enough to start presenting your ideas in a more powerful, fun, and influential way. I'll also make available additional resources, at <http://wa.ag/au19> for use after the class to hone your skills and become the pro you aspire to be. As with everything, you'll get better and more confident with practice.

Do you need to be an expert with Autodesk Fusion 360 and Eagle? No! A good foundation of the basics is all you need. And while we can't give you that in this 60 minute class, we can point you to the resources to get what you need. Here we show you the process and also where to get the details you'll need later in your journey.

The brilliance of Fusion 360 is that you don't need to know everything to use it. Once you get the basics, you'll be wonderfully effective. You'll amaze your friends and often yourself.

Eagle has a bit of a learning curve because you cannot use it without also knowing electronics. You need to know how to move electrons. But once you have a circuit you can make a board and send it out for manufacturing. There is nothing quite like opening a box containing your shiny new printed circuit boards.

Once you get your circuit worked out, Eagle will help you build professional PCB's quickly and in style. And the integration between the two programs is powerful.

For example, you can make the product's case first and then add the electronics later. Or, make the electronics and then boom (as in magician's smoke not as in creating an electrical fire), make the case to surround the electronics. Autodesk doesn't care. It just wants your product to be happy.

Combine the software with 3D Printing, CNC machines and you've got working prototypes in no time. We've actually come up with brilliant ideas in the morning, modeled the case, and built the electronics with Fusion 360 and Eagle and, using 3d printing, Laser Cutting and PCB Milling, had a working prototype before dinner. It's easy with the right tools and some skills.

All the power you need in one sweet place to work: your Autodesk Login.

Identifying Which Prototype Features are Needed to Capture Attention, Prove Concept, and Close Deals/Build Engagement

Capture Attention

People need to be amazed. The days of boring presentations are gone. If you can't or don't capture a person's attention, in a few seconds, you've lost the race. It's over, go home.

People, crave instant gratification. Bore them and they instantly swipe next. At the swish of their finger you are out of their mind. The funny thing is, they tell you this during the presentation. Not with an actual swish but with glances at their phone, accepting interruptions, talking in whispers, looking at their text notifications on their watch, etc. If you don't own their attention, your presentation is toast (not the cinnamon kind with melted butter, but the burnt kind that scraping won't fix).

People have too many alternatives to you. And you're probably not that shiny. The only way to fix that is to essentially PUNCH THEM IN THE FACE. Not with your fist. That would be illegal and would 1000% not get you the backing and support you seek. But instead, punch them in their face with your idea! Cut through the noise in their brain and wake them up.

To do this we use a technique called, as you might have guessed, the **P.U.N.C.H. Presentation Platform**.

It stands for...

- Prioritize The Presentation
- Unique Reveal Stages
- Nonchalant Answers
- Customer Focus
- How (Money, Launch, ROI, Do they Back You, Details)

Prioritize The Presentation

Remember that saying, "Save the Best for Last?" It's MALARKY! Remember to FORGET IT. Never save the best for last. Research shows that first impressions are so powerful and long lasting that they are exceptionally difficult to reverse. Once that first impression is made, you fight an uphill battle to change it (meaning your spears must fight gravity to get to your enemy but your enemy's spears ride gravity to get you). And while this alone is a good reason to lead with your best, an even better reason is your best feature has the best chance of making someone care.

If you designed a super-efficient fuel cell, don't begin with, "We painted the box my high-school colors Gold and Teal, Go Badgers!" No one cares!

This is boring and, worse, it shows you don't value of your listener's time. Don't laugh, this is a common problem.

I see too many brilliant people opening with stories about how they had a difficult time creating the prototype and describing in horrific detail the boring path they took to get there. In one

meeting I watched a technical person tell us about the traffic he encountered getting to the meeting. He wasted 15 minutes of the 30-minute meeting. Why waste valuable time? Makes zero sense. He didn't get what he came for.

Prioritize your presentation. Lead with your best feature shown in a magical demo. When done well, people should be shocked, engaged and excited. They should be on the edge of their seats. Do this and you have their attention.

After the first feature, what do you show next? The next most important feature!

Your presentation should go from feature to feature from most important to least important in magical stages.

Once people see this first stage, guess what? They're going to have some questions. Anticipate the questions and decide when you'll answer them. This is your presentation; you have their attention and the power that goes with it.

Make the answers to your presentation a part of your process. It's perfectly okay to organize your presentation so that the next demo answers the question. And it's equally okay to say, "That's a great question, which I answer later in the presentation, let me show you this next feature and I promise I'll answer you in just a bit, okay?" And continue the presentation.

Control your presentation. Show your idea in the best possible light giving the appropriate time and order to each feature that is important.

How do you know which features are important? I'll show you that later in the document when we discuss Q.U.E.S.T.S., okay?

Unique Reveal Stages

Ever have someone ruin a movie or TV show for you with a spoiler? You know, they accidentally blurt out, "I can't believe the butler did it." And now you know the plot but didn't have the fun of finding it out. Sucks, right?

People love to learn things without the spoilers. They want to learn about your product, and how it will change the world, for themselves. You don't want to be the person ruining the magic by throwing spoilers at them. Build your presentation as a show. Build anticipation. Have magical elements. Break everything up into distinct sections that help people learn something new about your project in a fun and exciting way.

Use Unique Reveal Stages. Build them directly into the Prioritized Presentation. Plan the magic.

A Unique Reveal Stage is a feature demo designed to prove what your product can do and why everyone should care. Each Unique Reveal Stage helps us learn something new about the product in a fun and powerful way. These should be demos that are exciting and interesting to experience. A person should want to talk about it after they see it.

Unique Reveal Stages should be woven into the presentation in order of priority.

What is a great example of a Unique Reveal Stage? In 1984 when Steve Jobs introduced the Mac by removing a plastic bag from it, the computer said, "Hello, I am the Macintosh. It sure is great to get out of that bag." This showed we should give it our attention. Computers of the day didn't normally speak, and none were self-aware. And while this new computer didn't know it was in a bag, its presenter knew this Unique Reveal Stage would help everyone understand this was a game changer.

Nonchalant Answers

Many technical people take pride in their technical prowess. But even the best technical people cannot know everything. And pretending to do so is bad. It converts friendly meetings into arguments, coworkers into foe and meetings into disasters. Remember, you want people to care about your new project. They have to like doing so. They have to understand your project and they will have questions. Some will be brilliant and many will be stupid. You know that saying, "There are no stupid questions?" Well, it's not true. There are lots of stupid questions. But people are allowed to ask them. And you need to answer them in a respectful way.

Questions are not attacks. (Usually) There are some people who will be gunning for you. Using feigned interest and pointed questions in an effort to burst your idea's bubble. But if you've done your work well, you'll have those answers in your back pocket ready to use when you need them. The trick is how to use them that makes the difference.

Every good presentation will get questions. If you don't get questions then you should worry. If you get good questions, no problem, pointy questions, no problem. But no questions, there's a problem. Chances are you'll do a great presentation and will get questions. Be prepared for them and answer them in a calm and confident manner.

As a technical person you're probably thinking, "Hey, I'm logical, I'll use logic!" People don't do that. Here's why. There is a myth about logic and answers. It says that, "People will believe logical answer to their questions." THIS IS FALSE!

Research shows people get their answers using emotion. Few people, other than you and Star Trek's Spock rely so heavily on logic. People are emotional creatures. Forcing logic on them just pisses them off, it doesn't work.

People are also skeptical creatures. I hear things like, "Well it makes sense, but my gut tells me to do the opposite." How do you convince someone to believe you over their own gut?

The truth is, you're trying to get them to believe something. You're trying to sell them. Why should they believe you? You have your best interest in mind as do they theirs. So they may not believe you. And if a person won't believe you, who do you think they'll believe?

Right, the only person guaranteed to be believed is the person themselves. People believe their own stories and statements. What you say may be a lie, but what they say is the truth.

So stop talking. Stop convincing. Stop pushing your beliefs. Demo your product and help guide the person to find their truth in your product.

To do this you also need to accept the fact that not everyone will like your project. That is okay. Not everyone loves ice cream. It doesn't mean ice cream is bad. It just means that person does not like ice cream. Don't try to push ice cream on people who hate it. They may have great reasons for their dislike. Maybe they're allergic to milk. So, don't focus on trying to sell ice cream to someone who clearly doesn't like it. Spend your time finding the people who love it!

The best way to find the fans is to show (not tell). Rather than say, "My new solar panel is 200% more efficient at ½ the cost." Show your solar panel next to its competitor producing 200% more efficient results with the price tag next to each unit. Have a stack of cash next to your unit showing the money saved each year. Let the user see the answer for themselves. They'll get it and you don't have to say it.

Once you've prioritized your presentation and included the Unique Reveal Stages, you will discover that people have similar questions at similar times. It is best to answer these questions, ideally right as they are having them, using the demos as proof that the answers are true and correct.

Customer Focused

You know those airline ads that say how much they care about you? Do you believe them? Does it ring true when you're sitting in your lumpy seat, your knees crushed against the seat in front of you, and you eager to just get to your destination?

The truth is we all know what good and bad customer-focus is. But few of us think about it when we're presenting. We believe we need to focus on the product and hammer it home. We forget that the product does not matter if it doesn't make the customers happy.

Customers are the reason your product should or should not exist. If your product is the best way to help a customer solve their problem or enhance their life, then you might have a winner.

With that said, who is your customer?

A customer is someone who benefits from your product. It is more than simply the user of the product. It is also, most likely, the person you're demoing too. For example, if you are presenting your project to upper management at your company, then you will have at least two customers: 1) the end users who hopefully will eventually have your product in their hands, and 2) the upper managers deciding whether the company will manufacture the product. To get your product to market you need to make all your customers happy, starting with your managers.

If you pitch ideas for products to management at the company you work for, these are likely some of the many customers you have...

- 1) The consumer who will ultimately use the product
- 2) Retailers and distributors who will sell the product to the end users
- 3) The company that physically manufactures the product
- 4) Any regulatory agencies that regulate the product/use
- 5) You manager, department head, VP, CEO – whomever must approve moving it ahead
- 6) The investors of the company
- 7) Yourself (work on things you love)

You know the consumer's happiness is your major goal. But what happens if the product does not make a profit for the company? What happens if the product makes a profit for the company, the consumers love it but it cannot be certified by a regulatory agency? The more customers that love the product the easier it is to launch. The goal should be to make all customers happy.

Who are your customers? How can you show them, through your presentation, that you will make them happy? This is one of the most important questions you need to answer.

Remember, with no customers, your product is worthless.

How (Money, Launch, ROI, Details)

Wow, you made it this far. Your presentation has been mapped out into a series of Unique Reveal Stages ordered by Priority with embedded answers to questions and presented in words and images your customers relate to. Now you have to tell them "How" all this goes down.

Will it be profitable? Can it be manufactured? Can it meet cost requirements? Is it better than the competition? What details do you need to show to prove this is going to work? And how can they support, back or buy-in to your project?

That's what you place here. This can be a series of slides that you only show IF they are needed. It could be a different document if you want to have different paths. One document for investors and another for client orders. But it's also time to listen and provide answers. Here, you tie up loose ends and close the deal, if appropriate.

Avoid the feelings to show more demos. Avoid the impulse to tell one more story. Show the final details and ask for questions. And LISTEN – for objections, suggestions, whatever.

Have an honest conversation.

And finally, if everything went as planned, they should ask you to close them. Yes, you read that correctly. If you did a great job, and your project is worthy of being greenlighted, this is where you will hear "How much do you need to get started?", "What can we do to help?", or "Can we be your launch partner?" Each of these statements has been said to me at this stage in the presentation. You will get similar results if you follow these steps and your project has legs.

If you don't get a request to close, it means something is missing. In this case you should specifically ask for what you want. Say, "Would you like to be involved with this?" And see what happens. Here is where you will find out what is missing. It could be you left something out, they have no need or interest in your project, they don't understand it or they can't (due to lack of resources, conflict of interest, hidden constraints, etc.) help you move it ahead.

At this stage you've already built rapport. You won't be selling anyone. The meeting is ending, everyone is packing up their stuff and this is the perfect time to say, "So what can I do better in the future?" "Can you tell me why you aren't interested in the project?" or something along those lines. Listen closely to what they say, this is the closest thing to honesty you will hear. Don't argue. Thank them. And leave the meeting.

This one question often reveals oodles of information - which is sometimes better than a greenlight. Go find your next customer and use this feedback to adjust your pitch.

If your project gets greenlighted, Congratulations! Go celebrate for a few minutes and then get to work.

Use Fusion 360 and Eagle to Bring the working prototype you need to life

We are not going to do basic Fusion 360 and Eagle demos. There is a list of resource links here for you to get up to speed. We will describe what each product does and how it integrates into our workflow. This information, combined with the basic tutorials, will bring you up to speed.

Fusion 360 is a powerful tool for creating 3D models, CNC Tool Paths, Photorealistic Renderings, Mechanical components and Assemblies. Anything you can touch; you can probably make in Fusion 360.

Eagle is a Printed Circuit Board (PCB) layout program that integrates with Fusion 360. Meaning you can create PCBs in Eagle and move those board into Fusion 360 to model your electronics and solid components together.

FUSION 360 DEMOS <http://wa.ag/au19>

EAGLE DEMO <http://wa.ag/au19>

Develop the presentation using the prototype in a way that builds desire, create excitement and highlights the proposition.

You have your prototype and it works. How do you know what to put into your presentation? You could guess. But why not go on a quest for answers instead.?

To know what to put into presentation we use a system called Q.U.E.S.T.S.

Q.U.E.S.T.S. stands for...

- Quick Demo (No hype, No framing, No puffing)
- User Trial (Let the user test it, let them be. No prodding)
- Experience Their Experience (Watch them, their face tells what they really feel)
- Smart, Honest, Review (Your best friend is you with a smart, honest, review)
- Tactical Upgrades & Changes (How can you make it better)
- Start Over (Make better prototype and begin new QUESTS)

Quick Demo (No hype, No framing, No puffing)

People hate being the bringer of bad news. Most people will tell you your idea is great, even if they don't like it or don't understand it. Your goal, is to get honest feedback from them and here is a simple way to do that.

Demo the prototype for a person. Don't tell them about it. Don't ask them leading questions. Don't explain why its so great, simply say, "Can I show you something and get your honest opinion about it?" And demo it.

As you demo it, watch their face. See which emotions they reveal. Are they surprised and smiling or confused and frowning?

The best outcome at this stage, for most products, is they say, "Can I try it?" If you hear this, you might be on to something. If you don't hear "Can I try it?" then ask "What do you think?"

Accept whatever answer they give you. Good or bad, you need honesty. Ask them why they think what they think. Find out as much information as possible. And move on to step 2. User trial.

User Trial (Let the user test it, Let them be. No prodding)

Assuming the product is safe, if the user asks, "Can I try it?" say "Sure!" And let them try it. Don't bother them. Don't show them all kinds of things. This trial is for you to learn, not teach or sell. If they ask for help, note what they were thinking and why they needed help. If they do it wrong, watch them and see if you need to provide a fix for their problem. Your goal is to see everything they like, dislike, understand, misunderstand, enjoy, hate, love, etc.

All of this information will be revealed by their actions and their facial expressions. People usually reveal their inner emotions through involuntary facial expressions. You'll know if they like, hate or are indifferent to the product by their facial expressions.

If the product is good, the best possible outcome at this step is for the user to say, "I want one, how much is it?" And your best course of action is to respond with, "What do you think it should sell for?" Remember, you're on a quest to learn everything you can about how the end users will benefit from this product.

Experience Their Experience (Watch them, their face tells what they really feel)

There is a great tendency to want to help the user love the product. This is not going to help you. At this stage in the process you need to see how far from ready the product is to launch.

When the user is testing, you need to be in "Fly on the Wall" mode - waiting to see what happens and making not only mental notes but also actual notes.

These tests will help you learn which features are most exciting to your customer base, how users will try to use your product, and if you can make any modifications to enhance the user experience.

Did the user smile and giggle? Did the user get frustrated? Did the user use it as you thought they would? What experience did they have?

Smart, Honest, Review (Your best friend is you with a smart, honest, review)

What happened? Did it work as you expected? Did you learn anything? Are you still in love with this project? You need to be honest with yourself and others.

At this stage in the project it is cheapest to make changes and easiest too. If you're going to kill it, now is the time. If it's a winner then move on to the next step.

Tactical Upgrades & Changes (how can you make it better)

Based on your honest review and customer feedback what can you do to make the product better? Can you make it easier to use? Are there additional features you need to add? How does it interface to the customer's hands or the environment? What, if any, changes need to be made to make this the best product they've ever used?

What are the customers' hot buttons? What did they love about the product? What was most important to them? What made them the most excited? This information is used in your presentation.

Start Over (Make better prototype and begin new QUESTS)

Take the information you've learned so far and make a new prototype. Then go back to step 1 and do a new quest. Continue this process until you've got a product people love and you have all the information for your presentation.

Design a full presentation including prototype, demo, and close

You've developed your prototype using Fusion 360 and Eagle. You've done your Q.U.E.S.T.S. and know what makes your customers happy and refined your product to meet your customers' needs. Now how do you put it all together?

Remember the BOLD 4 and L.A.U.G.H.

BOLD 4

- BOLD STATEMENT or QUESTION
- BOLD PRESENTATION
- BOLD DEMO
- BOLD REQUEST

BOLD STATEMENT or QUESTION

Begin your presentation with a BOLD Statement or Question. Boldness is exciting, intriguing and fun.

Bold questions and statements like this command attention and let people know you believe in your project.

"Would you like to see the World's smallest _____?"

"I have the most innovative product at this tradeshow, want to see it?"

"I bet this machine is 500x faster than you!"

"This machine will outperform your current equipment by 250%"

A Bold statement that can be proven through the demo is your best friend. It shows you keep your word; you make magic happen and you are someone who get things done.

BOLD PRESENTATION (P.U.N.C.H.)

After you make a bold statement you need to back it up. This is where you begin your presentation. You have their attention. Now you begin presenting.

BOLD DEMO

Do your demo. Prove your bold statement. Continue your PUNCH presentation.

BOLD REQUEST

Ask for the sale. Simply say, "You see what this does. I would like X. How can we work together?" And see what happens.

Boldness is contagious. Boldness is exciting. Be Bold.

Attitude Matters

L.A.U.G.H.

- Let Product Speak For Itself
- Amaze Everyone
- User Experience Matters
- Goal Achievement Matters
- Have Fun

Let Product Speak For Itself

The best thing you can do during your demo is let the product speak for itself. You should have it working well and it should do as you stated it would. Don't over sell. If it helps your customers, help them realize that.

Amaze Everyone

Amaze everyone with your P.U.N.C.H. presentation. After your Q.U.E.S.T.S. you'll know what your product can do and who will benefit from it. Be sure to make your presentation truly awesome. Go over the top. Make unicorns dance and ninjas fly.

User Experience Matters

In the end, remember the user. If the product doesn't make the user happy, it has no reason to be on Earth. Make the product solve a problem in an enjoyable way. The user will love it and you will get to take pride in making people more productive and happier.

Goal Achievement Matters

All your users must be happy. That means not only the end user, but also the company and retailers, too. This means your product, most likely, also has the goal of making a profit. Remember the goals you have for customers who may not be users.

Have Fun

And finally, HAVE FUN. Yeah, not everything is a joke, but more things should be. There are so many products and projects that could use a little humor to make this planet more enjoyable. If you can add joy to your product or your work, spend time doing that. It will make your work stand out and will give you a reason to jump out of bed too. If you are going to make it, make it fun.

BONUS MATERIAL

Bonus and support material available at <https://wa.ag/au19>

There you will find...

Video Tutorials of Fusion 360, Eagle, Example files and video about innovation, product dev and product launch.

Thank you for reviewing this document.

If we have time...

Attribute Warp™

Find a _____

_____ Seeds are large, sweeping, global, often nebulous.

_____ Seeds are laser focused, specific, narrow in scope.

List all of the _____'s _____.

Pick a _____.

Build a _____ by applying a _____ to a _____.

Answer the _____.

Write everything down.

Be curious.

Work in a state of wonder.

Repeat