



Why Your Product Vision Might Be Letting You Down



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30 Second Overview

A compelling product vision is more than a slogan. It's a strategic anchor that aligns teams, sharpens decision-making, and fuels innovation. When it's missing, misaligned, or unclear, teams can end up building the wrong things, wasting time and resources. The result? Fragmented efforts, duplicated work, and features that don't deliver value. A weak or absent vision leads to busyness without progress. But when done well, a product vision acts as a north star, helping teams say no to distractions and yes to what matters most.

1: What Success Looks Like

- The product vision is clear, concise, and inspiring and easily understood by anyone in the organisation.
- It focuses on customer value, not just internal goals or features.
- It is used actively to guide strategic decisions, prioritisation, and trade-offs.
- The vision is shared and reinforced across teams — from leadership to engineering.
- Product managers and stakeholders refer to it regularly as a decision-making tool, not just a poster.

2: Take a Look: Spotify's Vision



"To give people access to all the music they want, instantly, wherever they are, and whatever device they use."

Why this works:

- Customer-first: Focused on listener needs.
- Forward-looking: Signals innovation and platform expansion.
- Strategic clarity: Guides product, design, and platform teams in feature prioritisation.

3: Step-by-Step

- Start with the Customer: What problem are you solving? For whom? What impact should your product have on their lives or business?
- Make It Aspirational, Not Operational: Avoid listing features or tasks. Describe the future state your product aims to create.
- Keep It Short and Memorable: Aim for one or two sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Validate and Align: Share with stakeholders and teams. Does it resonate? Can everyone interpret it the same way?
- Embed It in the Work: Use it in roadmapping, prioritisation, sprint planning, and OKRs. Revisit it regularly to keep it alive.

4: Vision Checklist

- Vision is written down and easily accessible
- Clearly describes the customer problem and intended impact
- Inspires action and guides decisions
- Known and understood across teams
- Referenced during planning and prioritisation
- Reviewed and updated when major shifts occur

5: Vision FAQ

- How is a vision different from a mission or strategy?
 - Vision is your destination — what future you want to create. Mission is why you exist. Strategy is how you get there.
- Who should write the product vision?
 - The product manager usually leads, but it should involve input from key stakeholders (leadership, design, tech, customers).

- How often should we revisit our product vision?
 - At least annually, or when major changes occur (new markets, pivots, or shifts in customer behaviour).
- Should each team have their own vision?
 - Teams may have aligned sub-visions, but they should ladder up to the overall product vision to ensure coherence

6: Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

Pitfall	Avoidance Strategy
Too vague or generic	Use specific language tied to real outcomes for users
Focused on internal goals rather than customers	Anchor vision in customer needs and value, not revenue or features
Treated as a one-time activity	Revisit and reinforce in rituals like retros, roadmapping, OKRs
Not shared or understood across teams	Communicate regularly, include in onboarding, meetings, and docs
Lacking buy-in from leadership	Involve leadership early and ensure alignment with strategic direction