

**Presenting**

# **2021 Product Awards**

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# Forward

**SC Moatti**

Products That Count, Founder

One of the questions I am asked most often by product leaders is on what tools they should be buying for their teams. This is why I started the Product Awards, to recognize and celebrate the best products for product managers.

This year, we received **over 2,000 nominations** of products that, in some capacity, make the life of at least one product manager easier. This was whittled down to 100 finalists via people's choice voting from our network, and then 20 winners were selected by our Awards Advisory Board.

Our Awards Advisory Board is a team comprised of senior product leaders who come from different industries, different geographies and represent a healthy mix of product executives like yourself. Each represented one stage of the product lifecycle: **conceive, design, build, operate, and collaborate**. They identified four superpowers that product managers need to master to be great for each of these five stages. They pared down all those nominations to the finalists and winners celebrated at the 2021 Product Awards.

I want to personally congratulate each of the winning products. They're highlighted throughout this eBook. Let it serve as your reference guide when searching for the best products for your product team.

In addition to celebrating the products that helped us overcome this year's challenges, the 2021 Product Awards featured conversations on helping you build market leadership for your product. This is something that's been oft-discussed in the past year, which goes beyond mastering these superpowers. **How do we design products that are market leaders?**

The 2021 Product Awards was our third annual event but the first virtual one. Amid a global pandemic, product organizations had to change the way we work entirely. We've had to accelerate the digitalization and the productization of our craft. This brought many new nominations and finalists. The event was also an opportunity to come together as product leaders. In a year of remote working, it was a chance to be together and connect, network, and enjoy the company of our peers.

If you couldn't make it this year, I'm sorry to have missed you, and I look forward to seeing you next year! However, here are many of my favorite moments from the 2021 Product Awards for you to enjoy.



# The Product Lifecycle

Within each stage of the product lifecycle, there are superpowers that every great product manager needs to excel within that stage. Each year, these superpowers evolve based on the speed of product innovation.

## CONCEIVE

- Generate Ideas
- Discover & Prioritize
- Develop Concepts
- Engage Stakeholders

## DESIGN

- Design Interface
- Iterate & Research
- Drive Conversions
- Refine & Collaborate

## OPERATE

- Measure Impact
- Document Knowledge
- Listen & Gather
- Automate

## COLLABORATE

- Resolve Issues
- Coordinate
- Communicate
- Capture & Understand

## BUILD

- Focus Solutions
- Navigate Complexities
- Integrate
- Scale & Grow

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## Stage #1

# The Product Management Function Begins to Shine at the Conceive Stage

With the role of product growing increasingly important, honing our superpowers at each stage of the product lifecycle is more important than ever. It begins at the conceive stage, where the brainstorming begins for overcoming the challenges our customers face.

“Generating ideas, being able to prioritize those ideas, building out the concept, and then communicating with stakeholders are the superpowers for the conceived stage,” - detailed Universal Electronics Product Lead, Nikki Ahmadi.

The conceive stage is a big opportunity for us as product managers to shine in an organization.

“By being collaborative, participatory, and inclusive in how we conceive new product ideas, we help answer the question some people on what product managers do,” said Autodesk EVP of Architecture, Engineering & Construction Design, Amy Bunszel. “However, by being inclusive, especially in this early phase, it helps teams engage and build better products for their customers.”

The conceive stage and its superpowers provide the spark that leads to the rest of the product lifecycle stages.

Here are the categories and winners of the Conceive Stage:

Category: **Generate Ideas**

 **miro**

Category: **Discover & Prioritize**

 **AMPLITUDE**

Category: **Develop Concepts**

 **AUTODESK**

Category: **Engage Stakeholders**

 **Figma**

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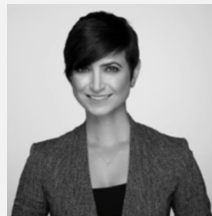
 **bluedot**

Exclusive  
Stage Sponsor

 **AUTODESK**

“

Generating ideas, being able to prioritize those ideas, building out the concept, and then communicating with stakeholders are the superpowers for the conceived stage.



**Nikki Ahmadi**  
Universal Electronics  
Product Lead

## Stage #2

# There is Magic in the Superpowers of the Design Stage

The first impression our products get to make is with design. We want products that look and feel good, especially during that initial user experience. The acceleration of digital transformations means our design superpowers are imperative these days.

“Creating good design takes a lot of effort, collaboration, and thoughtfulness,” articulated Prezi Product Lead, Neha Taleja. “There’s a magic that happens behind the scenes. Our products help design interfaces, drive conversions, listen and gather all the user feedback and all of the input we’re getting. Ultimately, we include that in our products to collaborate and refine them.”

With this stage, ideas become designs that we can then build upon.

Here are the categories and winners of the Design Stage:



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**Neha Taleja**  
Prezi Product Lead

Category: **Design Interface**

**M U R A L**

Category: **Drive Conversions**

 **productboard**

Category: **Iterate & Research**

**in**VISION

Category: **Refine & Collaborate**

**webflow**

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### Stage #3

## The Build Stage Sees Our Superpowers Bring Our Products to Life

How we build great products is one of the core questions Products That Count was founded on. Understanding this set of superpowers allows us to bring these great products to life.

“I’m excited about the build stage this year,” exclaimed nate Product Marketing Head, Patrick Blute. “The nominees reflect the nexus between idea and opportunity; being immersed in a moment and creating that type of product experience from that; refocusing to the needs and demands of today’s ecosystem.”

With digital transformations have come new expectations from our customers. The loyalty we’ve built with customers over time isn’t enough anymore.

“What customers are looking for more today is an enhanced experience. They want to understand, right out of the gate, what you can provide to them, the differentiation that you have within your market, and how you really can provide them value quickly,”

voiced Sisense CPO & CMO, Ashley Kramer. “This past year has been hard for many industries. The people that can go beyond loyalty into those different areas have been the ones that have stepped up and won with their products.”

We build products that solve customer problems and those problems. Those that were quick to innovate during the pandemic are winning by building exceptional products.

Here are the categories and winners of the Build Stage:

Category: **Focus Solutions**



Category: **Navigate Complexities**



Category: **Integrate**



Category: **Scale & Grow**



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The nominees reflect the nexus between idea and opportunity; being immersed in a moment and creating that type of product experience from that; refocusing to the needs and demands of today’s ecosystem.



**Patrick Blute**  
nate Product  
Marketing Head



## Stage #4

# The Operate Stage Helps Us Maximize Product Success

We know it's true, but it's easy to lose sight of: the product launch is just the beginning. It's not an endpoint. Exercising your superpowers at the operate stage will help you grow a customer base that will help your products thrive.

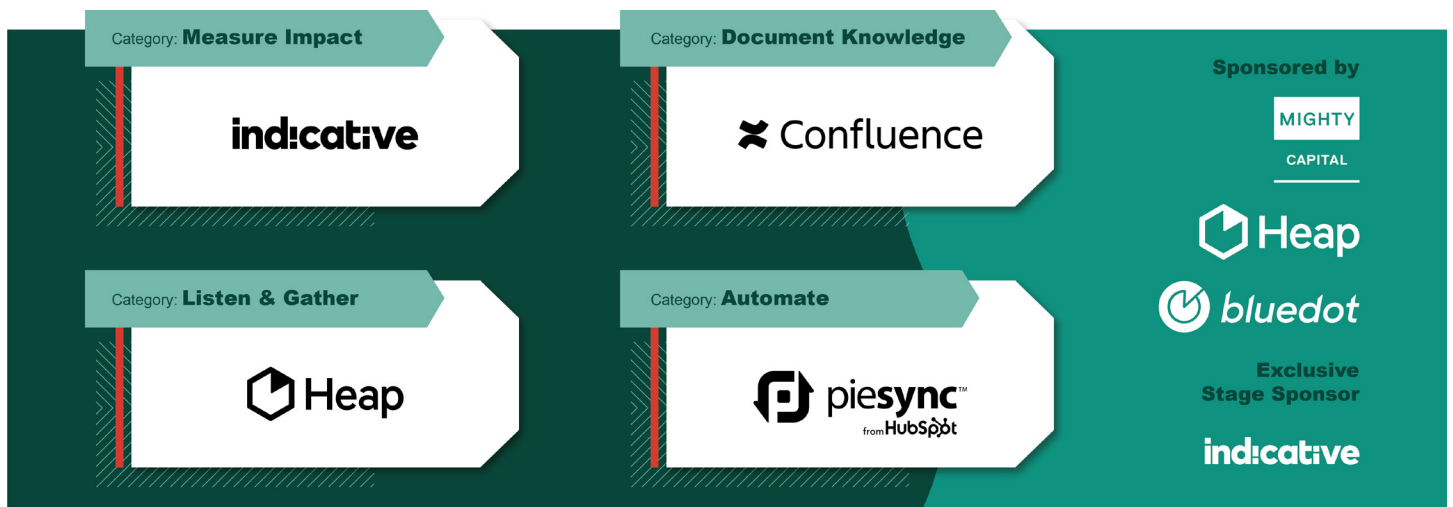
"Where the rubber meets the road is in that operate stage. I'm all about using that initial success as a launchpad for rapid growth and the expansion and life after product-market fit," reported Tatari Product Lead, Bryce York. "Getting that right is vital for sustaining success and competitive advantage. These tools are super important. Breaking down the category here, we looked at the classic build, measure, learn loop, and how it applied to this stage once you're in the market and trying to figure out how to go from one to 100."

The operate stage is where companies are looking to maximize product success. A company will rarely launch a product that's a perfect fit from the get-go.

"In this stage is where product teams get smart," revealed Indicative CEO, Jeremy Levy. "It's the place where we are learning from how customers are interacting with our products at scale and incorporating that information back into the product lifecycle. The best product teams are ones that can quickly incorporate the information and iterate their products which lead to better customer experiences."

Product-fit is a moving target, which makes it nearly impossible to ever fully achieve. Focusing on the operate stage and its superpowers allow us to give our products the best chance at sustained success.

Here are the categories and winners of the Operate Stage:



## Stage #5

# Products Power Us to Work Together at the Collaborate Stage

We all know how much of a cross-functional role product management is within a company. Multiple stakeholders come into play from every department to help ensure the success of a product.

Additionally, looking outside of your company and listening to your customers to improve your products is also a part of the collaborate stage.

“I found that collaboration is supercritical in the sense that you have all these high-value customers, and making sure they have the best customer experience is a critical thing,” expressed fmr IBM Product Lead, Nita Maheswaren. “Having the right tools to collaborate with your stakeholders on all sides of the aisle is super important.”

The ultimate success of a product is when all parties are happy. Your company grows, all departments can celebrate success, and customers have the solution to their problems. This is made possible by the superpowers at the collaborate stage.

Here are the categories and winners of the Collaborate Stage:

Category: **Resolve Issues**

UserLeap

Category: **Coordinate**

VONAGE

Category: **Communicate**

zoom

Category: **Capture & Understand**

Jira Software

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**Nita Maheswaren**  
IBM Product Lead

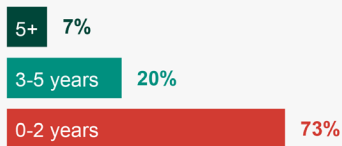


# Turn Your Product Team into a Competitive Advantage with our Product Acceleration Platform

Our product management superpowers are accelerated by the products we use. However, that's not enough. PMs need to hone their superpowers and work to level up their skillsets. These facts, and the simple truth about the current state of product teams, are why our Product Acceleration Platform is so important.

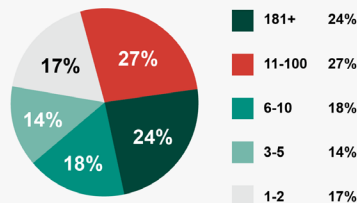
## Profile of a typical product management team

01



**3 out of 4 PMs have been on the job 2 years or less**

02



**No matter the industry, PM teams are small**

03



**>70% of PM team budget is spent on hiring & learning**

When we cannot correctly flex our PM superpowers, the result is ineffective product management. This comes at a steep cost to any company.

Companies with ineffective product management can face one in three product launches failing, 30 percent lost engineering throughput, and significant missed revenue. The impact of low-performing product teams threatens the success of digital transformations.

This is why we were extremely excited to officially launch our Product Acceleration Platform at the 2021 Product Awards.

“Our Product Acceleration Platform enables any organization to learn this craft of product management in a scalable, personalized approach,” explained Products That Count CPO, James Gray. “It’s predicated around three basic core capabilities. The first is a breadth of world-class content from great practitioners and product executives worldwide who are innovating. The second is a depth of content across product topics, geographies, industries, and maturity stages in the product life cycle. The third is progressive programs that help product managers continuously learn and stay sharp.”

**In the Age of Products, the best products win.** Learning the products that give us superpowers at each stage of the product life cycle and taking advantage of them helps put us all on a path towards building winning products and creating a product-first world. These superpowers help us battle the scourge of ineffective product management that plagues some companies.

## Heap Helped Us Put A Spotlight on Those Who Act As PMs Without the Title

Amidst a global pandemic, companies were driven to accelerate digital transformation and rapidly innovate products to serve customers in new ways.

It's seemed as if product accelerated seven years in the past year alone. This was reflected across the 2021 Product Awards. Heap sought to acknowledge that this has included others outside of the product organization operating like product managers.

"It's not just the product team's job or the product manager's job to ensure a great experience," described Heap Founder & Chairman, Matin Movassate. "What we're seeing with our most successful customers and the most successful companies is that **more people within an organization are developing a product mindset** even if they don't necessarily have product manager in their title."

This outcome will help fuel product-first cultures for many organizations this year and for years to come. It was also just one result of the pandemic that fueled product innovation.

The winners of these special awards are:

### ANALYTICS INSIGHT HERO

**ADAM SMITH**  
Director, Web Analytics

**1-800-flowers.com** SM

### PRODUCT GROWTH HERO

**PRIYA GOPALAKRISHNAN**  
Senior Manager, Marketing Systems

 **twilio**

## Bluedot Used Geolocation to Help Companies Adapt to a New Normal

Digital transformation was certainly a recurring theme at the Product Awards. The most innovative product leaders in our network have already focused on digital transformation, and others were in the process of doing so. However, everyone was forced to get on board or fall behind due to this once-in-a-lifetime change in how businesses operate and how consumers wanted to engage with those businesses.

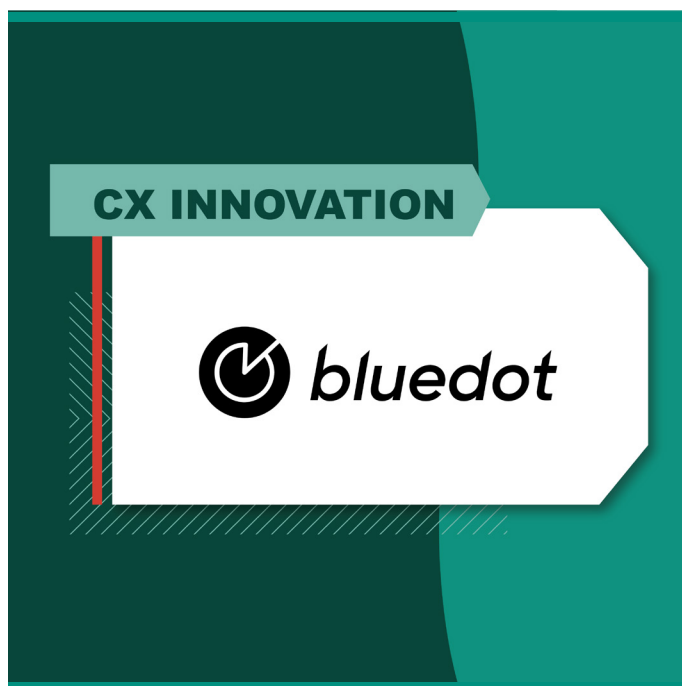
**It's an interesting time for product organizations because we have to deliver difficult to build products.**

“There are operational and logistical use cases that are about efficiency, throughput, safety, and sanitation,” explained Bluedot Co-Founder Emil Davityan. “At the same time, you can’t lose touch with the consumer. It puts even more pressure on making sure that that brand voice and consumer experience are there. It’s an interesting tension and trade-off that many brands are grappling with.”

The need for contactless alternatives, safety, and sanitation forced innovation for many companies. Product managers and leaders stepped up and overcame challenges at every stage of the product life cycle.

We thank all the incredible product leaders who participated in and attended the 2021 Product Awards and hope to see you all at next year’s event.

The winner of this special award is:



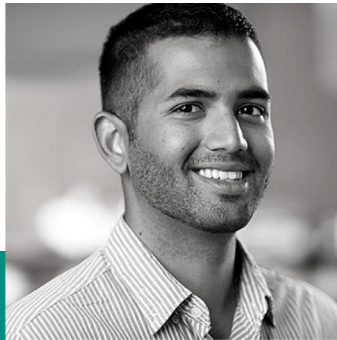
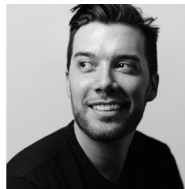
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## About Us

# Products That Count is the most influential Product Acceleration Platform in the world.

Empowers 300,000+ PMs via:

- 100+ events globally each year
- Thousands of videos, podcasts and articles online
- Best practices from Netflix product VP, Box CPO and more
- A focus on answering the question, "What makes a great product?"
- Its commitment to inclusion and increasing diversity in product



**Products That Count** is the original and most influential product acceleration platform in the world. Almost 300,000 product managers globally read, watch, attend and listen to our 3,000+ free blog posts, videos, webinars and podcasts.

C/VP-level product executives such as Netflix Product VP, Coinbase CPO, and Box CPO share best practices and raise their profile at our curated product salons, podcast show and mastermind circles. Leading brands such as Autodesk and Capital One join as corporate members to turn their product teams into a competitive advantage. Hyper-growth companies like Amplitude have generated 10X ROI from marketing partnerships.

Learn more at [productsthatcount.com](https://productsthatcount.com)



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