GUIDE A2

TURN8

HOW TO VALIDATE PROBLEM-SOLUTION FIT WITHOUT BUILDING ANYTHING

Customer validation & insight generation

WHERE THIS IS USED

- Venture Studio programs
- Accelerators
- Corporate Incubators
- AI Studio (pre-agent design)
- Foundry-as-a-Service engagements

AUDIENCE

- Venture Builders
- Product Strategists
- Innovation Program Leads
- Startup Founders
- Corporate Venture Teams

PHASE

Phase Two: Validation & Design → Problem-Solution Fit (Weeks 2–4)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guide teaches teams **to test whether a proposed solution genuinely resolves a validated customer pain** — before writing a single line of code, hiring for the venture, or spending any capital. Using a combination of paper prototypes, role-play scenarios, landing pages, and structured willingness-to-pay experiments, teams can generate statistically meaningful demand signals in under two weeks.

The output is a Problem-Solution Fit Assessment document that either authorizes the team to proceed to **MVP design** or triggers a pivot.

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THE CORE PROBLEM

Why Most Teams Get This Wrong

- Teams confuse internal enthusiasm for external demand — '*we love it*' is not the same as '*customers will pay for it.*'
- Prototypes are built too early, encoding bad assumptions into expensive artefacts.
- Willingness-to-pay is never tested — teams discover pricing problems after building the product.
- Solutions are designed for the loudest customer voice, not the most representative segment.
- In corporate ventures: organizational pressure to show progress drives premature building.

In GCC contexts:

In relationship-driven GCC business culture, verbal affirmation during meetings often signals politeness rather than purchase intent — making behavioral validation essential.

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PREREQUISITES

- Completed Guide A1 with a minimum of 15 customer interviews and a validated pain point
- A written Problem Statement: one paragraph describing the problem, who has it, and why current solutions fail
- At least 3 solution concepts (these can be rough ideas, not finished designs)
- Access to a simple prototyping tool: Figma (free tier), Canva, PowerPoint, or even paper
- A landing page tool: Carrd, Webflow, or equivalent (for demand signal testing)
- A defined success threshold: the minimum conversion rate or signal strength required to authorize progression to MVP.

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EXPECTED OUTPUT/ SUCCESS CRITERIA

You Have Succeeded When:

- ☑ 3 solution concepts tested with minimum 5 customers each using structured walkthrough method
- ☑ Willingness-to-pay data collected from at least 20 target customers
- ☑ A ranked solution concept with >50% of tested customers expressing strong preference
- ☑ At least one pricing anchor point validated (customers stated a price they would pay)
- ☑ A Problem-Solution Fit Assessment document with a clear Proceed / Pivot / Stop recommendation
- ☑ Executive sponsor sign-off on the recommended solution direction

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STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1 DEFINE YOUR SOLUTION CONCEPTS

1.1 Based on your Guide A1 pain point findings and Phase One Opportunity Areas, write 3 distinct solution directions.

1.2 Each solution concept should be one paragraph: what it does, who it serves, and how it resolves the pain.

1.3 Use this AI prompt to pressure-test your concepts:

AI PROMPT

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"For each of these 3 solution concepts, act as a skeptical customer
and identify: (1) the 3 most likely objections, (2) what would make
them walk away, (3) what competing alternative they would choose
instead, (4) the minimum viable version they would actually pay for."
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STEP 2 BUILD A PAPER PROTOTYPE FOR EACH CONCEPT

2.1 For each solution concept, create a 5-slide visual representation: (1) Problem statement, (2) How the solution works in 3 steps, (3) What the customer does differently, (4) The outcome/result, (5) A pricing page with 3 tiers.

2.2 Do NOT use real product branding, logos, or polished design — paper-level fidelity forces customers to respond to the concept, not the aesthetic.

2.3 Label each concept with a neutral name (Concept A, B, C) to avoid anchoring bias.

STEP 3 RUN SOLUTION WALKTHROUGH SESSIONS

3.1 Schedule 30-minute sessions with customers from your Guide A1 interview pool. Prioritize the customers who expressed the most intense pain.

3.2 Walk the customer through each concept using the 5-slide structure. Do not explain or defend — only observe their reaction.

3.3 After each concept, ask: *'What resonates? What doesn't work for you? What would you need to add or remove? On a scale of 1–10, how likely would you be to use or seek out this solution?'*

3.4 Record scores and verbatim responses in your Concept Testing Tracker.

3.5 After all 3 concepts, ask: *'If you had to choose one of these to use tomorrow, which would it be and why?'*

3.6 Ask the interviewee how much of $100 they would spend today for this solution and why.

STEP 4 TEST WILLINGNESS TO PAY

4.1 For the top-ranking concept after Step 3, design a pricing test using the Van Westendorp Price Sensitivity Model (also known as the Price Sensitivity Meter, PSM). Ask 4 questions:

- *'At what price would this be so cheap you would question the quality?'*
- *'At what price would this be a bargain — expensive but still worth it?'*
- *'At what price would this start to feel expensive?'*
- *'At what price would this be too expensive to consider?'*

4.2 Run this with at least 20 target customers. Use a simple Google Form or Typeform for scale.

4.3 Analyze results to find the Acceptable Price Range (intersection of acceptable and not-too-cheap).

4.4 Cross-validate with a fake door test: build a landing page describing the solution, state a price, and add a 'Join Waitlist' button. Run targeted outreach and measure conversion rate.

STEP 5 PRODUCE THE PROBLEM-SOLUTION FIT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Compile all walkthrough scores, willingness-to-pay data, and landing page conversion rates.

5.2 Use the following AI prompt to generate a first draft of your assessment:

AI PROMPT

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"Based on this validation data [paste data], assess Problem-Solution
Fit across 5 dimensions: (1) Pain Severity, (2) Solution Resonance,
(3) Willingness to Pay, (4) Frequency of Need, (5) Switching
Likelihood from Current Solution. Score each dimension 1-5. Produce a
radar chart description, a 3-sentence fit summary, and a recommended
action: Proceed to MVP / Pivot Concept / Stop."
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5.3 Present the Assessment to your executive sponsor with a clear recommendation.

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TROUBLESHOOTING

ISSUE	LIKELY CAUSE	FIX
Customers choose different concepts in each session	Concepts are not differentiated enough	Sharpen the unique mechanism of each concept. Increase contrast between options.
Willingness to pay data is too wide a range	Question framing is too abstract	Add context: 'For a team of 10 people, using this weekly...' Ground the price in a concrete scenario.
Landing page conversion is below 5%	Audience targeting is wrong, or pain is not severe enough	Re-examine your customer segment. The pain may exist but not be urgent enough to drive action.
Executive sponsor rejects all 3 concepts	Concepts don't connect to strategic intent from Phase One	Return to Phase One thesis. Re-anchor concepts to the approved strategic challenge statement.

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VALIDATION STEPS

Has at least one concept scored above 7/10 in more than 50% of walkthrough sessions?

Is there a clear Acceptable Price Range from the Van Westendorp analysis?

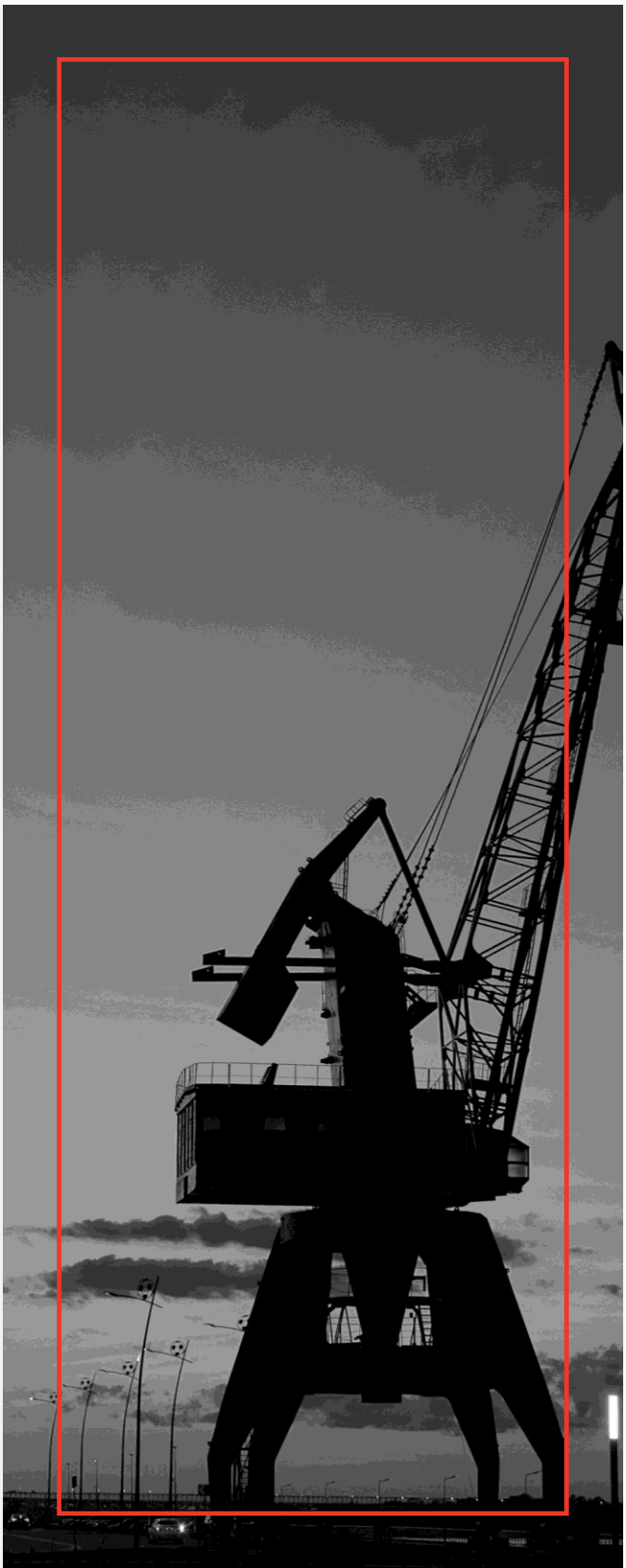
Has the executive sponsor reviewed and signed off on the recommended solution direction?

8 NEXT STEPS

↘ First, proceed to Guide A3: How to Synthesize Customer Insights and Demand Signals

↘ Then, feed the winning concept into Guide B1: MVP Specification Design

↘ Archive losing concepts with reasons — these may become relevant at a later stage



CHECKLIST

PREPARATION

☐ Problem Statement written in one clear paragraph: the pain, who has it, and why current solutions fail

☐ 3 solution concepts defined — each as a one-paragraph description of what it does, who it serves, and how it resolves the pain

☐ AI pressure-test run on all 3 concepts: objections, walk-away conditions, competitive alternatives, minimum viable version

☐ Paper prototypes created for all 3 concepts using a 5-slide structure (Problem / How it works / What changes / Outcome / Pricing)

☐ Concepts labeled neutrally as Concept A, B, and C — no product branding or polished design used

☐ Real content used in prototypes (not Lorem Ipsum): real language, real pricing tiers, real outcomes

SOLUTION WALKTHROUGH SESSIONS

☐ Minimum 15 solution walkthrough sessions scheduled with customers from Guide A1 interview pool

☐ Customers with the highest Demand Signal Scores from Guide A1 prioritized for early sessions

☐ Sessions introduced as: We are testing the concept, not asking for your approval — there are no right answers

☐ Facilitator presents all 3 concepts without explaining or defending any of them

☐ Post-concept questions asked for each: What resonates? What does not work? What would you add or remove? Score 1–10

☐ Final question asked after all 3 concepts: If you had to choose one to use tomorrow, which would it be and why?

☐ Concept scoring tracker updated after every session

WILLINGNESS-TO-PAY TESTING

☐ Van Westendorp Price Sensitivity survey designed with all 4 questions (too cheap / bargain / expensive / too expensive)

☐ Survey grounded in concrete context: specify team size, frequency of use, and role to avoid abstract pricing responses

☐ Survey distributed to minimum 20 target customers (Google Form, Typeform, or equivalent)

☐ Acceptable Price Range calculated from survey results (intersection of not-too-cheap and not-too-expensive)

☐ Fake door landing page built for the top-ranked concept with a stated price and Join Waitlist button

☐ Targeted outreach sent to drive traffic to the landing page; conversion rate measured

☐ $100 spending exercise run in at least 5 sessions: customers allocate budget across pain points to reveal true priorities

PROBLEM-SOLUTION FIT ASSESSMENT

☐ Walkthrough scores compiled: top-ranking concept identified with greater than 50% of sessions scoring it above 7/10

☐ AI-generated Problem-Solution Fit Assessment produced and cross-referenced against raw data

☐ Assessment covers 5 dimensions: Pain Severity, Solution Resonance, Willingness to Pay, Frequency of Need, Switching Likelihood

☐ Clear recommendation produced: Proceed to MVP / Pivot Concept / Stop

☐ Executive sponsor has reviewed and signed off on the recommended solution direction