How to go live with your product in less than 3 months

This guidebook is brought to you by the CEO & CTO of TATEEDA **Slava Khristich** who has over 15 years of expertise in software development.

This guidebook draws on over 15 years of expertise from various entities within the realm of contemporary IT product creation. Its main objective is to demonstrate how both organizations and individuals can establish a lucrative enterprise by harnessing the potential of rapid feedback cycles.

Why startups fail

Indeed, only 10% of startups make it through to success. It may be surprising, but this is the reality.

Just one in every ten businesses present today will still be around in five years. The majority will face challenges surpassing the $50 million revenue mark, and only a select few will achieve unicorn status.

We identify the top five reasons for the failure of small businesses as follows.

No market need	42%
Ran out of cash	29%
Not the right team	23%
Got outcompeted	19%
Pricing, cost issues	18%

Time to market matters

The evidence strongly indicates that a swift entry to the market is crucial. Launching your product quickly enables you to gather user feedback earlier, which in turn offers more opportunity and resources to refine your offering. There's a common trap in allocating too much budget and attention to what you believe your customers will appreciate. While many founders are certain of their vision, lacking direct feedback from users means they're essentially making educated guesses.

How is its effectiveness proven?

By aiming for a launch within three months.

This strategy succeeds because it aligns with actual demands in the marketplace, supported by evidence.

Initiating a launch within a three-month frame is not about employing clever marketing strategies or shortcuts; it represents a strategic response to genuine needs in the market, informed by solid data.

This approach is a hallmark of highly successful entrepreneurs, offering significant benefits for you as well. By deploying a functional product to the market in under three months, you're able to test your business assumptions, maintain tighter control over your financial plan, evaluate your execution capabilities, ensure your chosen software collaborator meets expectations, and importantly, gain a competitive edge.

Why should you go live in less than 3 months?

Every entrepreneur believes they have devised the perfect product and understands exactly what their customers desire, need, and are willing to spend money on. However, until the market has confirmed these assumptions, they remain speculative. The truth is, many concepts falter upon encountering actual users, underscoring the urgency of market validation, quickly and economically.

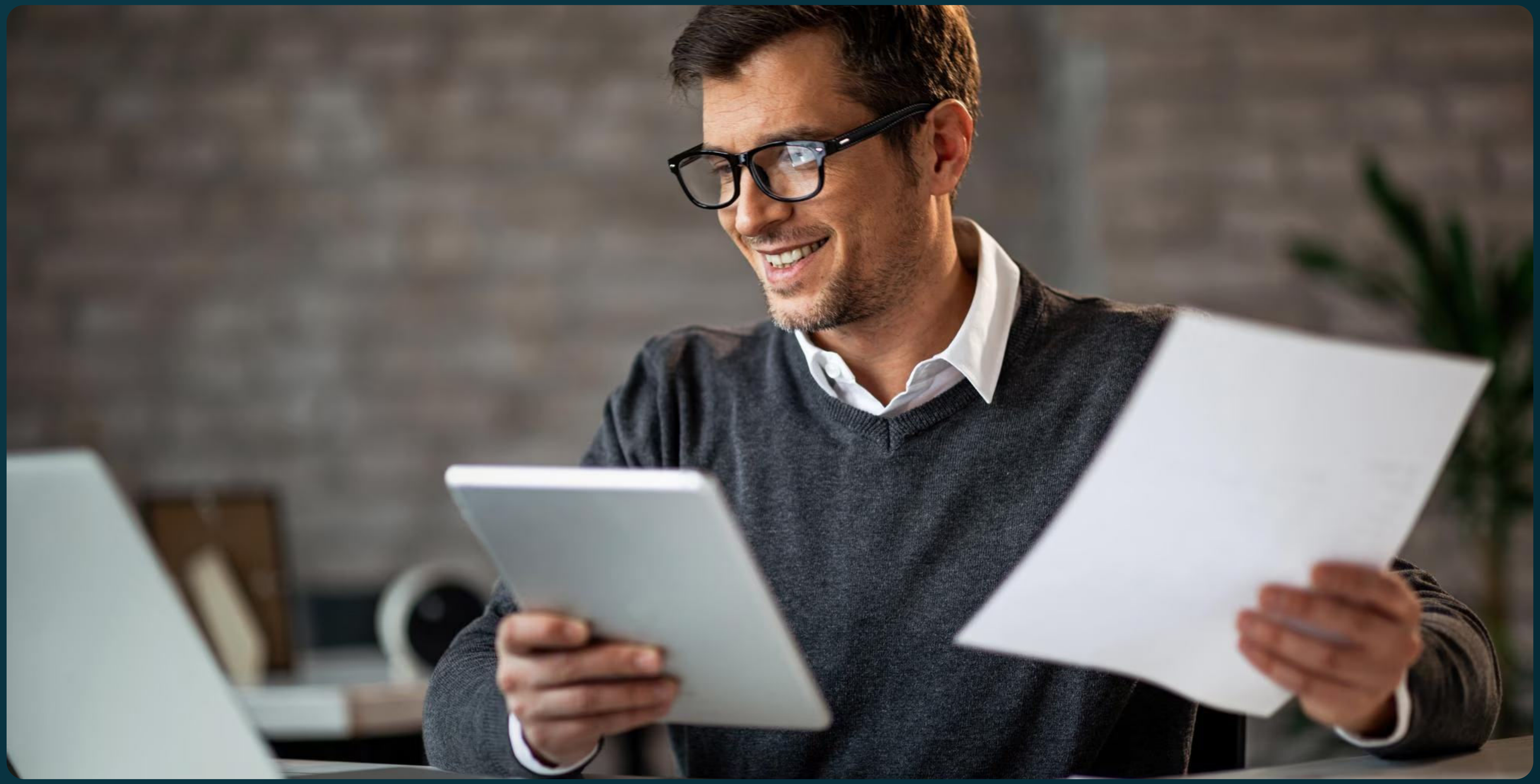
VALIDATE MARKET NEED

Steve Jobs famously stated, "people don’t know what they want until you show it to them." This is partly true; they also cannot identify what they don't want until it's presented. The most reliable method to determine product design and pricing is to consult the market, users, and community directly. Overlooking market feedback can lead to wasted resources and time, making early feedback crucial for direction.

This point addresses a primary reason startups fail:
Not meeting a genuine market need.

GET MARKET FEEDBACK

Why aim for a launch within three months? With the advancements in technology, developing software still demands significant time, finances, and energy. Often, time directly translates to money. Rather than depleting resources on an exhaustive product or an MVP with numerous features, it's wiser to concentrate on the unique selling proposition and realize it quicker. This strategy leaves room for adjustments, based on budget.



SAVE TIME, MONEY, AND ENERGY

Introducing a functional product early in the development process signals strong entrepreneurial acumen. It assures investors and clients of your delivery capability and allows for the early refinement of your product, fostering trust in the development process and paving the way for broader acceptance.

SHOW WHAT YOU CAN DO

Whether working with an in-house development team or an external software partner, launching in under three months tests the team's effectiveness. Claiming capability for long-term projects is easy initially; delivering tangible business value in a short span presents a more meaningful and lower-risk challenge.

BUILD A SAFETY NET FOR PROVIDERS AND PARTNERS

Starting a business is daunting, especially without prior experience. It demands confidence, commitment, and motivation. Embarking on this journey sooner rather than later encourages the transition of your concept into a tangible product that serves real users, rather than an endlessly expanding document of requirements.

CHALLENGE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Achieving business success often necessitates backing from VC firms, angel investors, or personal connections. Early traction improves the terms of potential investments, serving as concrete evidence that your business model is viable, capable of attracting customers, and executing beyond mere discussion.

We want to work with entrepreneurs who understand this

From the viewpoint of a software development firm, launching a project in under three months might seem counterintuitive compared to the usual goals of a service provider, which tend to focus on maximizing billable hours. Generally, a longer development timeline, the addition of numerous features, and frequent meetings all contribute to increased costs.

Our approach is shaped by the recognition of the challenges involved in establishing and growing a profitable business. This understanding influences us to prioritize efficiency and value, distinguishing our mindset from the more traditional, time-intensive methods.

What does actually mean? Go live in less than 3 months

Consider your Minimum Viable Product (MVP) as a vehicle featuring a robust frame and an eye-catching exterior, yet it possesses a basic set of functionalities internally. It functions sufficiently to be demonstrated and introduced to initial users, but it won't enter large-scale production until its future viability is confirmed.

IT'S A WORKING PRODUCT

Crafted, evaluated, and deployed following current development methodologies, it's sufficiently robust for processing authentic data from real users, financial transactions included. Indeed, accelerating doesn't require compromising on quality—rather, the focus should be on investing in elements that yield enduring benefits.

IT IS CAPABLE OF BEING EVALUATED USING GENUINE DATA WITHIN A REAL-WORLD SETTING

Operational data frequently highlights exceptional scenarios difficult to foresee in testing settings. Actual users will discover scenarios that may astonish your development team. Obtaining user feedback quickly allows for the prompt resolution of these unique cases before they evolve into issues. Products do not operate in isolation. Numerous modern products integrate with, and sometimes rely on, other platforms to a certain extent. Early testing of these integrations reduces the likelihood of malfunctions and verifies the compatibility with external systems.

You have something to show investors, clients and users

Move past mere mockups, PowerPoint slides, and interactive prototypes. An actual product allows for user, client, and investor testing, providing a tangible sense of the investment's worth.
When aligned with effective marketing and sales strategies, it's possible to empirically demonstrate market traction, significantly strengthening your stance in future discussions.

Truth be told, perfection isn't the goal, but it should captivate both users and investors alike. Implementing solid user experience (UX) principles from the outset significantly boosts your prospects for gaining market traction. Expect the user interface to undergo multiple revisions, yet a well-executed design could be pivotal in the success or failure of your venture.

IT PRESENTS AN APPEALING AESTHETIC

Your product's initial version should encapsulate the essence of your business—highlighting the fundamental features that distinguish you in the marketplace, those unique elements that define your brand. Occasionally, it might focus solely on the most uncertain and unexplored aspects you aim to test before diving into comprehensive development. The objective is to create enough to solicit market feedback.

IT EMBODIES THE BUSINESS'S ESSENTIALS

A product developed within three months or less is unlikely to include any supplementary, desirable features. The skill lies in maintaining focus, establishing attainable objectives, verifying critical assumptions, and incorporating just enough functionality for the product to be operational. Expediency stems from judicious decision-making, not merely faster typing. An adept Product Owner is instrumental in conserving resources and time, freeing up effort for deployment elsewhere.

This approach isn't about cutting corners but leveraging technical proficiency to ensure the software's future scalability. Experienced developers understand where to allocate their efforts for optimal outcomes, recognizing that not every segment of the codebase carries equal importance. Such foresight comes from a top-tier team trained to emphasize technical coherence.

IT IS DESIGNED FOR FUTURE EXPANSION

Despite any time limitations, all elements of a production-grade infrastructure are expected to operate in a fully scalable and robust manner. Opting for a less expensive or quicker but compromised solution can lead to poor user experiences. At Tateeda, we've crafted a suite of infrastructure-as-code templates to expedite the setup of AWS environments that are ready for production, ensuring a consistent development velocity across projects.

How we do it?

So, how is it accomplished? Over the years, we've identified several crucial factors enabling us to launch valuable products within a timeframe of less than three months

Identify your real goal

First and foremost, identify your true objective. What are your aims for the upcoming months? It's vital to be transparent with yourself as the genuine goal might be concealed beneath the surface. Contemplate the following questions:

Are you aiming to demonstrate to investors your capability to create a comprehensive solution? If that's the case, should you begin by crafting a demo application that showcases your competitive edge?

Do you intend to validate your product hypothesis with actual users? Maybe you're curious to find out if your concept is compelling enough for users to be willing to pay for it?

Are you looking to streamline a manual operation that has been the backbone of your business so far? If yes, how much are you prepared to invest in this endeavor to ensure it remains economically viable? What do you anticipate as the result, and which metrics will confirm that it was a prudent decision?

Is this an R&D project aimed at establishing the feasibility of developing a product from a technical perspective within a reasonable budget? In such a scenario, you might start by prototyping the most uncertain, high-risk component of your envisioned product. Eliminating this uncertainty early on allows you to allocate your budget towards developing features that will be beneficial in the future.

With an experienced Product Owner at the helm, achieving your goals, albeit challenging, is entirely feasible. The most efficient way to economize is by maximizing the amount of work not done, yet still fulfilling your objectives. This is our daily practice, and it's something you can adopt as well.

We often encounter the notion that accelerating delivery requires sacrificing quality, a concept we firmly reject. High quality forms the foundation of swift delivery, particularly in the long term. This balance is attainable with a technically skilled development team that knows which corners to cut and where to allocate time for delivering outstanding quality.

BALANCE QUALITY AND SPEED

During product development, the product team, comprising the Product Owner and developers, must manage critical considerations to ensure both quality and speed.

EMPOWER THE PRODUCT TEAM

Having a competent team is crucial for producing a functional product. On one hand, even straightforward tasks can become sources of frustration if the team fails to grasp the business significance behind them. Conversely, a development team that deeply understands your business's value is an invaluable asset. Such a team can identify the appropriate level of quality required to maintain a steady pace of development both now and in the future.

Who does what?

What is the order of execution?

What needs to be optimized and how?

What is the scope of the current iterations?

Use pre-built components

Seeking out reusable components whenever feasible is a key strategy. At Tateeda, our experience has taught us that every product we develop needs user management capabilities. In response, we crafted a user management system that offers basic functionality right from the start. We also recognized that setting up the frontend for our applications was time-consuming, leading us to develop frontend starters that expedite the development process by weeks. Similarly, for infrastructure—given that most cloud-based apps employ a similar technology stack—establishing an infrastructure for each project seemed like redundant work. By creating our AWS infrastructure starters as code, we managed to reduce what previously took weeks down to just a few hours.

Choose a 5-star team with a strong technical leader

Only a seasoned, business-focused group of skilled developers can make appropriate product decisions. Entrusting crucial business choices to a team lacking experience invites difficulties. To add value in under three months, it's imperative to have a team capable of comprehensively grasping and molding your business vision. We refer to these groups as 5-star development teams, akin to the level of service expected at a 5-star hotel. Such a team consistently anticipates the next steps in product development, affording you the time and resources to concentrate on business expansion.

Mitigate the technological risk by making business- oriented decisions

New technologies and frameworks emerge daily, with some swiftly rising in popularity before quickly fading away. Occasionally, a breakthrough technology provides the necessary advantage, as was the case with the emergence of blockchain. A proficient team recognizes that technology's main role is to support business objectives, not to dictate them. They possess the discernment to identify when it's beneficial to investigate a novel technology and when it's more prudent to continue developing features using familiar tools.

Keep stakeholders up-to-date with the development process

All participants in product development must understand the workflow. Given that no singular methodology suits every scenario, it's vital to establish an approach early and adjust it as needed. At Tateeda, ensuring that everyone remains updated about the process during the project is a key responsibility of our Product Owner.

Make tough decisions fast

Throughout the product development lifecycle, numerous decisions must be made. While some decisions will be challenging, they can be navigated successfully with effective management and a robust decision-making framework. Addressing difficult decisions early on is beneficial for the long-term health of the business. A competent product team is capable of making the correct decisions swiftly and efficiently.

Why does a software development company like us care about going live in less than 3 months?

We aim to be transparent regarding our abilities and the delivery process

Anyone asserting they can accurately forecast the timeline of a complex project extending beyond a few months is likely not being entirely honest. At the very least, these projections should encompass a significant risk buffer to account for uncertainties. This buffer or reserve essentially becomes a concealed expense that clients ultimately bear.

Should these estimations prove inaccurate, compromises, typically in the form of quality, are inevitable during the development phase.

Products with a narrow scope are simpler to understand and analyze

During the initial phase of Tateeda, we dedicated considerable time to estimating complex projects for our clients. Striving for transparency, we aimed to thoroughly comprehend the products and their users, taking all potential risks into account. However, we quickly learned that a product's scope invariably shifts upon entering the market. This variation, whether minor or significant, renders all prior estimates moot. Engaging in discussions about features that ultimately go unimplemented proves fruitless for both you, as an entrepreneur, and for us, who are committed to creating valuable products alongside you.

Talk is cheap - show me the product

We often say, "Talk is cheap - show me the product." It's through the delivery of value that we demonstrate our worthiness as partners to our clients. Anything less is merely conversation, a skill well-mastered by many.

9 Steps to go live in less than 3 months

1 Prioritize Your Actual Objective

Save 80% of your time by trimming your backlog to the bare essentials, ideally with the insight of an experienced Product Owner.

2 Narrow Down the Project Scope

Look for a software development team with top-notch technical prowess and a profound understanding of business for seamless collaboration.

3 Select the Appropriate Product Team

Streamline the decision-making process and accelerate progress by delegating certain responsibilities to Product Owners and developers.

4 Have Confidence in Your Product Team

To maintain a consistent project velocity, enable the development team to strike a balance among quality, functionality, and efficiency.

5 Emphasize Delivering Value

Don't hesitate to make decisions; the cost of indecision can surpass the expense of modifying a software component.

6 Decide Quickly on Difficult Matters

Effective operation and overcoming obstacles require the product team to be versed in the business context, and the business to comprehend the technology.

7 Facilitate Communication Within and Beyond the Team

Since software projects often involve multiple Product Owners, ensure all parties are informed and adhere to the established process to prevent derailment.

8 Inform Stakeholders About the Development Cycle

Integrate solutions with third-party SaaS providers, leverage existing reusable components, and utilize a stable infrastructure that requires minimal maintenance to save months of work.

9 Make Informed Choices Regarding the Tech Stack

Each technological innovation should align with business objectives. Investigate new technologies as your business requirements dictate, while focusing on proven, reliable frameworks to finalize the project.

Alternatively, you can entrust the intricate work to the experts at **Tateeda**. With 15 years of specialized experience in software development, particularly within the Healthcare and Fintech sectors, we boast a robust team of over 100 developers capable of providing the high-quality product you require, minimizing any obstacles. Reach out to our specialist today for a complimentary estimate.

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