

# New Product Concepting in 10 Easy Steps

*An HI and AI Guide to Developing A Consumer-Testable MVC*

by Jeffrey Stamp, PhD



APEC 3551: Concept Design and Value-Added Entrepreneurship  
Department of Applied Economics  
University of Minnesota  
Stamp013@umn.edu



## **APEC 3551: Concept Design and Value-Added Entrepreneurship** by Jeffrey Stamp, PhD

**Entrepreneurship** is a method of creating value by bringing together a unique set of resources in order to pursue an opportunity.

**Opportunity** - those situations where a new good (product) or service can be introduced to fill a gap in a marketplace to solve a problem for some customer AND sold at greater than their cost of production.

*"All ideas deserve to exist, but not all ideas deserve to be in a marketplace."*

---

### **Basic ChatGPT Prompt Engineering** RTG Prompting Framework

#### **1) Role**

- Assign the AI a role (Example: You are a social media manager with 10 years of experience.)

#### **2) Task**

- Provides the assignment to be done (Example: Create a month of Instagram copy for my new product.)

#### **3) Format**

- How you want the output to look (Example: The social media posts should be for 28 days, exclude weekends, and focus on the launch of my new product. The calendar should be in table format that includes the date, the social media platform, and the post for that platform.)
- 

## **New Product Concepting in 10 Easy Steps**

*"The ten most important steps you can take before building a product MVP"*

### **Step #1: Scan the Opportunity Space**

- Macro Trends (health, technology, lifestyle, awareness, mindset, societal)
- Shifts in personal preferences (efficiency, ease, adventure, experiences, influence)
- Go Shopping - look at what is on the shelf - what are the patterns that emerge
- Mystery Shop - talk to customers in the aisle, ask them to help you choose a product
- Problem Finding - what are common pain points, wants, needs (intention gaps)

**Prompt #1a (Simple):** "Act as an experienced product developer looking for new product ideas for consumer packaged goods. You want to scan the consumer opportunity space. Include Macro Trends (health, technology, lifestyle, awareness, mindset, societal) and shifts in personal preferences (efficiency, ease, adventure, experiences, influence). Identify common pain points, wants, and needs (intention gaps)."

**Prompt #1b (Detailed):** "Act like an experienced product developer with over 15 years of experience in consumer packaged goods (CPG) innovation. Your expertise lies in identifying market opportunities by analyzing emerging consumer trends, behaviors, and unmet needs. You are currently scanning the opportunity space to generate new product ideas for the consumer packaged goods market.

To guide this exploration, focus on the following key areas:

1. **Macro Trends:** Identify and analyze large-scale trends that are shaping consumer behavior and influencing the CPG market. Consider:
  - **Health:** Increasing focus on health and wellness, demand for functional foods, clean ingredients, and immune-boosting products.
  - **Technology:** Innovations in packaging, food tech, and sustainability, such as smart packaging or plant-based materials.
  - **Lifestyle:** Evolving consumer lifestyles, including busy routines, plant-based diets, and focus on convenience.
  - **Awareness:** Growing awareness around environmental sustainability, ethical sourcing, and social responsibility.
  - **Mindset:** Shifts toward self-care, mindfulness, and balanced living, with consumers seeking products that reflect these values.
  - **Societal:** Societal movements toward climate change action, reducing food waste, and promoting ethical consumerism.
2. **Shifts in Personal Preferences:** Consider how consumer preferences are evolving and what individuals are now seeking from their products:
  - **Efficiency:** Consumers are looking for products that save time and are easy to use or consume on the go.
  - **Ease:** A desire for simplicity and convenience in both product use and purchasing experiences.
  - **Adventure:** Consumers are seeking novel experiences, such as unique flavors, global ingredients, or innovative product formats.
  - **Experiences:** People are valuing products that provide an emotional or memorable experience, such as indulgence, relaxation, or celebration.
  - **Influence:** The impact of social media, influencers, and peer recommendations in shaping purchasing decisions and preferences.
3. **Common Pain Points, Wants, and Needs (Intention Gaps):** Identify specific areas where consumer expectations are not being fully met, including:
  - **Pain Points:** Current frustrations such as lack of transparency in ingredients, complicated packaging, or limited product availability.
  - **Wants and Needs:** Consumers' desires for products that align with their health goals, environmental values, or dietary needs (e.g., allergen-free, plant-based, or low sugar).
  - **Intention Gaps:** Areas where consumers intend to change their behavior (e.g., adopting healthier eating or sustainable practices) but face barriers like high costs, lack of information, or product inconvenience.

Based on your analysis, provide a thorough exploration of the opportunity space for new product development in CPG. Highlight areas with strong growth potential, unmet consumer needs, and innovative product ideas that could address these gaps. Take a deep breath and work on this problem step-by-step."

## Step #2: Craft a Consumer Persona

**A consumer persona** is a fictional representation of your target customer. It's a detailed profile that helps you understand their motivations, behaviors, and pain points. By creating a detailed consumer persona, you can gain a deeper understanding of your target market and make more informed decisions about product development, marketing, and sales strategies.

### Learning Prompt:

“What is a consumer persona, and what are the key elements in writing a persona profile from the perspective of the entrepreneur building a new product for a target consumer?”

### Prompt #2a (Simple):

“Create three consumer personas you might envision would be interested in purchasing a product (describe product here) for themselves or family.”

### Prompt #2b (Detailed):

“Act like an experienced product developer with expertise in plant-based products. You have worked for over 15 years in the consumer packaged food and beverage industry, focusing on consumer trends and product-market fit. Your specialty is identifying and creating detailed consumer personas for innovative food products, particularly \_\_\_\_ (add opportunity descriptor here)\_\_\_\_\_.

Your task is to create three distinct consumer personas that would be most interested in purchasing a new oat-milk-based plant protein product. The product is marketed as a clean, sustainable, and nutritious alternative to dairy-based proteins.

Please ensure that each persona includes the following details:

1. **Demographics:**
  - Name
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Education level
  - Occupation
  - Income level
  - Family status (married, single, children)
2. **Psychographics:**
  - Lifestyle (e.g., active, laid-back, dietary preferences)
  - Values (e.g., family, sustainability)
  - Interests (e.g., hobbies, travel)
  - Attitudes (e.g., towards technology, health and fitness, ethical or environmental values and how these align with their purchase decisions)
  - Personality traits (e.g., introverted, extroverted)
3. **Goals and Aspirations:**
  - What do they want to achieve in life?
  - What are their professional goals?
  - What are their personal goals?
4. **Pain Points and Challenges:**
  - What problems or frustrations do they face and are seeking to solve?
  - What are their biggest fears or anxieties?
  - What obstacles prevent them from achieving their goals?

5. **Motivations:**
  - What drives their decisions?
  - What are their biggest motivators?
  - What rewards or incentives are most effective?
6. **Digital Habits:**
  - How do they use technology?
  - What social media platforms do they use?
  - What websites or apps do they visit regularly?
  - How do they prefer to consume information?
  - What kind of messaging would appeal most to each persona, including specific keywords or phrase that resonate with them?
7. **Relationship with Your Brand:**
  - How do they perceive your brand?
  - What do they value most about your brand?
  - What are their expectations of your brand?

Be as specific and detailed as possible in building out each persona, considering the unique challenges and motivations they may have in relation to traditional dairy products.

Take a deep breath and work on this problem step-by-step."

### **Prompt #2c: (visualize your persona)**

"Create an image of each persona."

### **Step #3: ProductStorm** (brainstorming new product raw ideas)

**Prompt #3:** "Act as an experienced product developer in the consumer packaged food and beverage industry. Provide 20 new product concepts for \_\_\_\_ (opportunity seed here from prompt #1)\_\_\_\_ that would appeal to this consumer persona \_\_\_\_ (add persona here from prompt #2)\_\_\_\_."

**A-ha!** This should produce your first harvest of new product ideas to capture your curiosity and imagination. If none of these seem to catch your eye, then ask for 20 more or try a new combination of the opportunity seed from prompt #1 and the consumer persona in prompt #2.

My choice from the AI-generated ideas: "develop plant-based versions of indulgent comfort foods, such as dairy-free ice cream with exotic flavors or plant-based pastries that cater to consumers seeking indulgence without guilt."

This is the completion of the first sprint in our MVC (minimum viable concept) project on our three-sprint journey from seeding, growing, and harvesting a testable new product consumer concept. Let's continue!

## Step #4: Consumer Concept Map

A consumer concept is:

1. an offering of your solution to a consumer problem written in a consumer-directed voice.
2. A testable consumer hypothesis that can be used to validate value creation.
3. Is the first emergence of a new product asset.

Use the Concept Map canvas to develop your narrative insights that will be useful in building a well-crafted consumer concept. This can be an individual exercise or a team exercise.

Consider the six essential narrative components of a well-crafted consumer concept.

1. Overt benefit: Answers the question, "What's in it for the consumer if they use your product to solve the problem?"
2. Real Reason-to-Believe: Answers the question, "What evidence do you have that your solution delivers the promised benefit?"
3. How Does It Work: Answers the question, "How does it solve the customer's problem?"
4. Dramatic Difference: Answer the value creation question, "How is this different than other solutions available to the customer?"
5. Take Action: Answers the question, "What call to action makes this solution desirable and feasible?"
6. Desired Outcome: Answers the question, "How does a better solution feel when the problem is solved?"

## Step #5: Consumer Concept Prompt Build

Integrate the elements from the concept map exercise and build a consumer concept prompt. A consumer concept has six essential structural elements that are common in consumer testing:

<p><b>Product Name</b> (in Bold)</p> <p><i>Benefit Tag Line</i> (in Italics)</p> <p>Body Copy - (100 - 300 words depending on product complexity)</p> <p>Call to Action</p> <p>Product Offering Descriptors (different flavors, sizes, types ect.)</p> <p>Product Pricing</p>
---

Here's the prompt template for your use. It is essential that the phrase "consumer marketing concept" appear in the prompt.

**Prompt #5a:** "Act as an experienced copywriter. Write a 100-300 word consumer marketing concept for a new consumer product and include a benefit tagline. Include in the concept the product description and pricing. The product is called \_\_(product name)\_\_\_\_\_, and it is a \_\_\_(one-sentence benefit sentence)\_\_\_\_\_. It has \_\_\_(what are the important features that separate this product from others). The problem \_\_\_(product name)\_\_\_ solves is \_\_\_(problem statement)\_\_\_\_\_. The overt benefit of this product is \_\_\_(overt benefit statement)\_\_\_\_\_. The value solution is \_\_\_(value solution statement)\_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_(customer experience description)\_\_\_\_\_. Describe how the consumer feels when successful with this product. It's easy to get started (or take action phrase)\_\_\_\_\_. Describe the product offerings (different flavors, sizes or types). Include product sizes (10 oz, 1 lb) and prices."

## **Step #6: Draft Consumer Concept**

Use the finalized prompt from Step 5 and let ChatGPT or Gemini do the heavy lifting.

### **My Prompt 6: For a frozen oat-milk ice cream confectionary treat**

"Act as an experienced copywriter. Write a 100-word consumer marketing concept for a new consumer product and include a benefit tagline. Include in the concept the product description and pricing. The product is called FrozeOat, and it is a delicious oat milk ice cream sandwich between two vegan chocolate chip cookies. It has 16 g of protein and comes in four delicious flavors: Vanilla Chocolate Chip, Mint Chip Delight, confetti craze, and strawberry chocolate bliss. The problem Froze Oat solves is a delicious, indulgent dessert or treat alternative without dairy. The overt benefit of this product is a satisfying alternative to dairy for those who are lactose intolerant or have trouble digesting milk protein. The value solution is that this product is creamy and has a mouthfeel, just like dairy without the issues. And moms will love this for their family and themselves. Having a great-tasting oat-milk ice cream treat makes you feel like you are doing something great for yourself and the environment. Find these in the frozen dairy case. These oat-milk ice cream sandwiches are 5 ounces each and priced at \$4.50 each or a 4-pack at \$16.95."

### ChatGPT4o Output: Draft Consumer Concept

#### **FrozeOat** - Oat-Milk Ice Cream Sandwiches *Creamy Indulgence Without Compromise!*

Indulge in a FrozeOat, the delicious oat-milk ice cream sandwich nestled between two soft, vegan chocolate chip cookies. With 16g of protein and four crave-worthy flavors—Vanilla Chocolate Chip, Mint Chip Delight, Confetti Craze, and Strawberry Chocolate Bliss—it's the perfect dairy-free treat for lactose intolerant families or anyone seeking a plant-based dessert. FrozeOat gives you the creamy, dairy-like satisfaction without the tummy troubles. Feel good about your indulgence with this eco-friendly, mouth-watering delight.

Available in the frozen dairy aisle for \$4.50 each or in convenient 4-packs for \$16.95.

### Step #7: Edit Your Draft Consumer Concept

Use the 4-Rs to guide your editing work:

**Revise:** Look for hyperbole adjectives that are general or overpromise the benefit. Look for words like ultimate, perfect, outstanding, amazing, etc., and ask, "Are they?" Make sure the narrative is realistic and deliverable.

**Rework:** the product descriptors, flavors, or user experience narrative to appeal to your persona.

**Recalibrate:** make sure there is sufficient reason-to-believe narrative that gives objective facts to support your benefit claims. For example, if the concept says "high protein," then there should be a disclosure of how much protein per serving so that the consumer can evaluate the value exchange in this product - 16 g." Be sure that 16 g is actually considered high protein. ChatGPT or Gemini can help you build these objective statements.

**Rewrite:** a concept spans between 100-300 words, build in the story narrative you need to appeal to your chosen persona. Don't be afraid to reuse the prompts and iterate to your concept or use your own writing sense to build the concept. Also, share your persona with your consumer concept prompt for more detailed or specific narrative.

This is the completion of the second sprint in our MVC (minimum viable concept) project on our three-sprint journey from seeding, growing, and harvesting a testable new product consumer concept. You have a growing consumer concept. Only a few steps more are needed to complete a new product concept that is ready to test with prospective new consumers. Let's continue!



## Step #8: Create a Package Image

This is the fun part... use your imaginative and prompt-building skills to craft a product image, package concept, or image of the targeted consumer persona using the product by themselves or in the context of the usage occasion. Here is a simple prompt to get you started.

**Prompt #8:** “Act as an experienced packaging designer. Step 1: design a consumer retail package for the following concept (add consumer concept copy here). Step 2: create the image for this package.”

## Step #9: Create the Nutrition Facts Panel

An essential part of any new food product concept is projecting the nutritional content of the product. The nutrition facts panel is required by FDA regulation and an important way that consumers make purchase decisions.

Here is a simple prompt that creates this panel. Use Google to help you find an editable version of the stylized nutrition facts label.

**Prompt #9:** “Create a nutrition facts panel for the (product name) product concept.”

## Step #10: The final Consumer Concept

You are now ready to put all of these elements together to create a professional consumer concept that is both testable with prospective consumers and represents a design brief for the other essential functions of product development: formulation, production, shelf-life and quality assessment, marketing, and sales. Once you have a validated consumer concept, you can build a physical MVP. Concepting is an exercise that can be accomplished at a low cost, and with the advent of Generative AI tools, concepting can be done quickly with more time for developing strategy and human guidance of the process.

See my final effort below for the FrozeOat consumer concept. I want to thank and acknowledge my former students, Xavier Dante and Danielle Jakob, who created the original FrozeOat concept and the final packaging design that you see in the consumer concept below.

Congratulations! This is the completion of the third sprint in our MVC (minimum viable concept) project on our three-sprint journey from seeding, growing, and harvesting a testable new product consumer concept. You now have a testable consumer concept. Onward to the market!

Good fortune in your concepting journey!

**FrozeOat**

*The Protein-Packed Oat-based Frozen Treat!*

Say hello to the ice cream sandwich reimaged: FrozeOat offers a high-protein oat-based alternative that satisfies your ice cream cravings without dairy. FrozeOat bridges the gap between frozen dessert cravings and convenient, high-protein snacks while being friendly to those with dietary restrictions.

**Goodness That Fits in The Palm of Your Hand**

Crafted from sustainable oat milk, this creamy vegan frozen novelty offers the perfect blend of indulgence and nutritional benefits sandwiched between two delicious homestyle cookies. A delicious treat for people with an active lifestyle, ideal for post-workout or as a tasty treat: FrozeOat sandwiches are packed with a whopping 16 grams of protein per serving!

**Sweet, Satisfying, & Sustainable**

There's a 95% reduction in the amount of water used to produce FrozeOat filling compared to traditional ice cream. Feel great when indulging in FrozeOat, knowing it comes with 66% less greenhouse gas emissions than dairy ice cream by weight.

**Indulgence On the Go**

Individually wrapped for your convenience, FrozeOat cookie sandwiches meet the needs of busy students, parents, athletes and ice-cream lovers! Indulge in our classic Vanilla Chip, Mint Chip Delight, Confetti Craze, and scrumptious Strawberry Chocolate Bliss flavors. Or, instead of choosing one, pick up a variety pack.

**Make the Switch from Dairy**

FrozeOat is your new go-to for only \$4.50 a single sandwich or a four-pack, one of each flavor, for \$16.95. Enjoy the creamy delight that fuels your body and supports the planet!



<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
<b>Serving Size</b>	1 sandwich
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Total Fat 11g</b>	<b>12%</b>
Saturated Fat 6g	
Trans Fat 0g	<b>28%</b>
<b>Cholesterol 10mg</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Sodium 120mg</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrates 40g</b>	<b>0%</b>
Total Sugars 25g	
Includes 12g Added Sugar	<b>22%</b>
<b>Protein 16g</b>	<b>18%</b>

## FrozeOat

*A protein-packed, oat-based frozen treat!*

**Persona:** Active Millennial with Dietary Preferences

Name: Tyler

Age: 28

Occupation: Freelance Graphic Designer

Income: \$55,000/year

Family: Lives with his girlfriend; both follow a plant-based diet



### Background:

Tyler is a freelance designer who enjoys an active lifestyle. He's an avid cyclist and runner, and he follows a primarily plant-based diet. He and his girlfriend are both foodies, experimenting with vegan recipes and always on the lookout for new plant-based products to add to their pantry. However, their busy freelance schedules mean they don't always have time to cook elaborate meals.

### Goals & Motivations:

Tyler wants to stay fit and energized through clean eating. He's always on the hunt for vegan, high-protein options that are easy to prepare and align with his ethical views on animal welfare. He values variety in his diet and enjoys trying innovative plant-based products that are convenient but still nutritious.

### Challenges & Pain Points:

Finding tasty, filling vegan meals that aren't heavily processed can be a challenge. He gets frustrated when plant-based options are either too expensive or bland. He also struggles to find convenient meals that provide enough protein and complex carbs to fuel his athletic lifestyle.

### Buying Behavior:

Tyler shops at health food stores and online specialty retailers. He follows vegan food blogs and Instagram accounts to discover new products. He values affordability but is willing to spend more on products that meet his dietary preferences and offer real nutritional benefits.

### Preferred Solutions:

Tyler would be drawn to FrozeOat as a quick, plant-based meal option. Its oat base could provide the fiber and complex carbs he needs, and if it's fortified with plant protein, it could become a go-to breakfast or post-workout snack.