

# INTRODUCING MEDICAL DEVICES INTO NEW MARKETS



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**This set of tools is intended to help organizations prepare for objections, barriers, competition and customer service issues that impact product adoption in new markets.**

**The core activities to be covered in this guide include, in a rough order of timeline:**

- 1. Selecting the right next geography**
- 2. Identifying and understanding a new set of users + value chain partners**
- 3. Selecting your niche in the new market**
- 4. Gaining a foothold in a new market**
- 5. Identifying influencers and decision making processes**
- 6. Tailoring your customer pitch**
- 7. Ensuring after-sales service and support**

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*This toolkit offers a bite-sized, readable look into one slice of the social impact innovation process: bringing an existing commercial product or service to a new place<sup>1</sup>. The reader may ask: “why is this needed?” Not every innovator will (nor should) scale their innovation themselves; they may license, assign, or otherwise partner with collaborating organizations or governments. But at some point, someone—one hopes—will be engaged in the work of bringing an innovation to a place it hasn’t been before, and can leverage design principles to do so effectively.*

*Inevitably, this guide emerges from the authors’ experience at D-Rev, with the lens of social impact health technologies, low and middle-income markets, and a design-thinking perspective. Multiple sections presents case studies from D-Rev’s ReMotion Knee Project work in South Africa, one of six [winning ideas](#) of the OpenIDEO Amplify Disability and Inclusion Challenge. This set of tools is intended to help organizations prepare for objections, barriers, competition and customer service issues that impact product adoption in new markets.*

<sup>1</sup> Important aspects pertaining to initial design and scaling of impact innovations won’t be covered in this toolkit, but are amply explored elsewhere. [Idea to Impact](#) (USAID, 2015) is an excellent reference for identifying needs, engaging in R&D, and planning for launch. D-Rev’s [“Impact Innovation for Medical Devices”](#) (2016) framework covers this subject with a focus on health technology. [The Market Shaping Primer](#) (USAID, 2014) can help innovators consider how their product or service may fit in the big picture. [Pathways to Scale](#) (USAID, 2016) offers guiding principles and examples of how social impact innovators have pursued different commercialization strategies informed by their capabilities and unique goals.

# 1. SELECTING THE RIGHT NEXT GEOGRAPHY



**in which to introduce a new product or service can be critically important and easily undervalued. Some key things to consider include:**



The financial opportunity, such as the market size and ability to pay



The presence of competitor products or services



The potential impact, examining gaps in access



The market environment as relates to your offering, including presence of related infrastructure, policy priorities, regulatory complexity, language barriers, and more

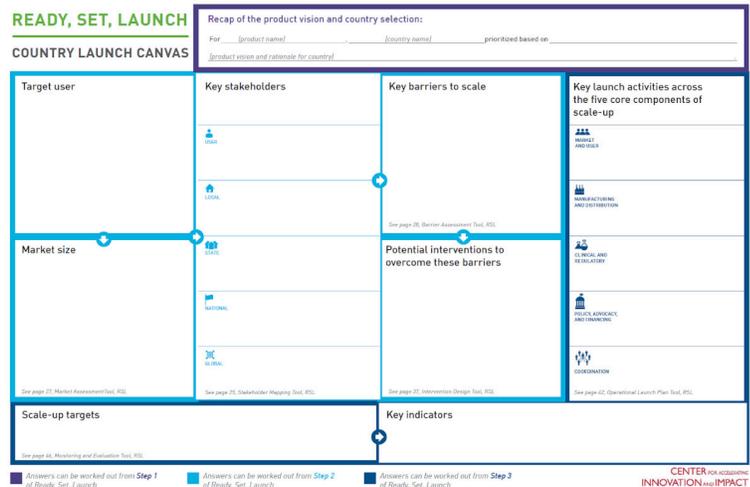
## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Finding a market with the best chance of success can sometimes be in tension with maximizing impact. Markets with the greatest gaps in access may be precisely where the conditions for success—the presence of expert clinicians, qualified commercial partners, users able to afford the product or service—are most limited. Having a clear sense of your organization's short and long-term goals, as well as existing competencies and assets, can help to develop a strategy to select the right market. Is achieving positive net revenue in the first few years critical to the viability of the project? If so, consider focusing on easier-to-serve markets, turning to higher-need regions only after having first worked out the kinks.

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

Direct market data is not always available, but it is usually possible to assemble a picture by looking at relevant indicators. When D-Rev decided to focus our Re-Motion work under the OpenIDEO Amplify Challenge on South Africa, research revealed a high number of qualified prosthetists and rehabilitation hospitals, indicating a robust prosthetics market and community.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES



Reproduced from USAID Center for Accelerating Innovation and Impact (CII), [Country Launch Canvas](#) (2016)

# 2. IDENTIFYING & UNDERSTANDING A NEW SET OF USERS & VALUE CHAIN PARTNERS



is a critical first step in entering a new market.

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

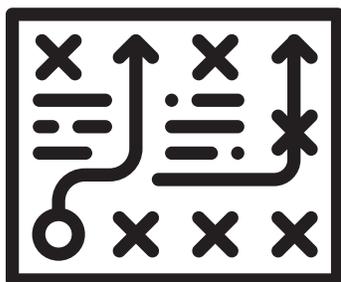
One end user's journey will vary greatly from another's depending on a number of differing factors: age, gender, income, location, etc. Adding to that additional stakeholders in the value chain, including distributors, service providers, key opinion leaders, government policy makers, can quickly ramp up the complexity. While it's important to get a read on these diverse voices, speed is the name of the game at this point; remember that the journey to better understand your stakeholders is never over, one can't be paralyzed by the need for perfection.

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

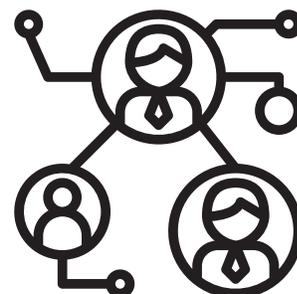
Insights from interviews with customers, distributors, patients, and other supporting actors (surgeons, physiotherapists) in South Africa were plugged into a journey map to help D-Rev understand the end-to-end experience with our prosthetic knee. The map highlighted key obstacles and surprising insights, such as that even "free" prosthetic care required patients to travel multiple days from their home, entailing significant expense, to reach their clinic.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

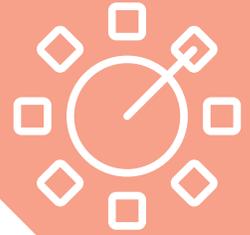
[IDEO Journey Map](#) can unveil obstacles to successfully using your product or service.



[Customer Value Chain analysis](#) can also help identify the relationship between myriad stakeholders.



# 3. SELECTING YOUR NICHE IN THE NEW MARKET



**is an aspect of ensuring your product solves an identified issue and doesn't create new problems for the stakeholders in the value chain.**

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

D-Rev's product didn't provide a solution to every clinician or end user. For example, high-end private prosthetic clinics could offer knees with more advanced functionality than ReMotion. On the flip side, very resource-constrained prosthetic clinics fitting lower-tech limbs might not have the practice or equipment to use ours effectively.

## TIPS & TRICKS

***Hone in on pain points where you can provide multiple positive outcomes. For example, where lack of diversified products existed between supplier and clinician, two possible positive outcomes:***

- 1. Opportunity to increase clinicians ability to prescribe devices for user's specific needs***
- 2. Pairing new device with latest training techniques creates a more professionally enriching experience for clinicians.***

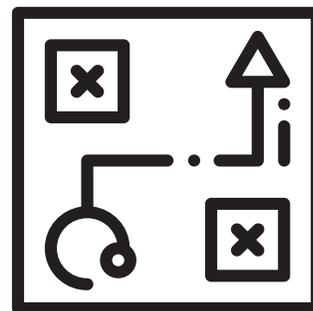
## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

We identified the following issues once we narrowed our focus on the purchasers who would be able to adopt our product:

1. A limited pool of affordable knee joints
2. The prosthetic knee joints sold to clinicians at government hospitals offered limited functionality for patients
3. Lack of opportunity for prosthetists to equip themselves with new devices and trainings

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The [Holistic Impact Assessment](#) helps examine the various touch-points between stakeholders and possible negative and positive implications. This exercise can help identify when to create new strategy to avoid negative impacts or if it's necessary to turn focus to a new market segment.



(Pg. 101- funded by BMFG and brought together by IDEO, IDE, Heifer International, and ICRW)

# 4. GAINING A Foothold in a New Market



often requires getting creative about how to get your innovation into the hands of decision-makers, discovering the barriers that require a new tactic or approach before a decision can be reached on purchasing and procurement.

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

When introducing the ReMotion Knee in South Africa, D-Rev first offered clinicians the opportunity to informally evaluate the product with patients, as the product was already FDA registered and on market in 30 countries. However, we learned that a more formal evaluation involving collection of documented metrics and results was a crucial part of establishing validity for public sector hospitals to up-take the product.

## TIPS & TRICKS

*Hiring locally-based staff is especially crucial when determining procurement and trialling processes. Having someone on the ground makes it easier to react and respond to barriers and quickly come back with a new strategy and approach.*

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

After analysing current product demonstrations between public and private clinics, it became apparent that professionals in the public sector weren't given an efficient amount of time to examine new products as seen in private clinics.

Product introductions in the private sector allowed time for free testing and were presented by sales representatives equipped to address all technical concerns. Our team could build customer rapport in the public sector by hiring a local representative to deliver the same level of technical attention and time for free evaluation.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

["Set...Build a Strategy" from USAID : Ready Set Launch](#)  
Step 2.1 reveals the barriers that will require new strategies and/or resources to overcome.



1



2



3

# 5. IDENTIFYING INFLUENCERS & DECISION MAKING PROCESSES



**Key opinion leaders (KOLs) who have interest in seeing you succeed in introducing your innovation can become advocates, influencing other decision-makers to overcome barriers to product or service adoption. Their sphere of influence may affect decision-making processes both inside and outside of their own institutions.**

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Without you being on the ground, identifying the champions in your sector is difficult—and building robust relationships even more so. You'll want to spend meaningful time, or have team member(s) based in the new market, to establish relationships with KOLs who are not only well-respected and can bring awareness, but who are engaged and enthusiastic about your goals. In some cases, you may later discover that a KOL who you've been building a relationship with doesn't have the time, or isn't quite aligned, to become a key ally. Spending time in market with your key allies early on, can surface such issues and save effort later on.

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

Our D-Rev team members located KOLs in South Africa by interviewing various actors in the sector (students, prosthetists, professors, distributors). When interviewees were asked if they could identify the regional leaders in the prosthetic industry, the responses formed a consistent picture. Over time, we could successfully map who the key decision-makers were in the region, and their unique strengths and particular interests.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Mapping out each activity can help decipher where the identified KOLs fit into the decision-making processes, where other actors weigh in and highlight trends across facilities. Assess user activities in the [Template for Mapping Influencers and Decision Makers](#) from USAID's Center for Accelerating Innovation and Impact (CII).

If roles within decision-makers are too broad in the initial mapping phase, The DIYToolkit [People and Connections Map](#) can help measure which stakeholders have the most influence on end users or "target audience".

Inspired by Stakeholder Spidergram by the Helsinki Design Lab and by [Stakeholder Mapping](#) tool by Namahn and Yellow Window.



# 6. TAILORING YOUR NEW CUSTOMER PITCH



helps match your solution to a customer's deeply felt needs, minimizing pain points or amplifying what they find satisfying.

## BIGGEST CHALLENGES

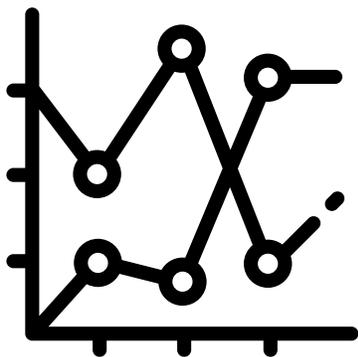
In entering a new market, even a well-validated, well-designed innovation may be serving customer needs in a different way (or require tweaking to succeed) in comparison to your initial market. Rather than leading with a one-size-fits-all pitch, considering first listening to your new customers, working to understand both their deeply-felt challenges and the things they find joyful in their work. It can be challenging to slow down and do this when you have a clear sense of how your innovation has delivered value in the past. A mindset of openness and genuine curiosity can help.

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

D-Rev's team observed when visiting private prosthetics clinics in South Africa that suppliers would often send an experienced clinician (a peer of the potential customer) to demonstrate new devices. Yet no such practice was to be found in government hospitals. Young practitioners in the government hospital system described a hunger for these sorts of professionally-enriching experiences, saying that the chance to learn new techniques to better serve their patients was a key driver for switching into private practice. To capitalize on this, we developed a concept for introducing our product into public hospitals where clinicians would have the opportunity to test our device, paired with coaching from trusted peers on key aspects like patient selection and fitting, before making a purchasing decision.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Clayton Christiansen et al's (2016) Harvard Business Review article "[Know Your Customers' Jobs To Be Done](#)" and Silverstein, David et al (2012) [Innovator's Toolkit framework on "Jobs to Be Done"](#) explore the higher-order functional and emotional aspects that drive buying decisions.



# 7. AFTER-SALES SUPPORT & PARTNER STEWARDSHIP



**Many hospitals in low-income countries have “equipment graveyards” —a storage room or section of the ward where broken devices gather dust. To avoid this pitfall, consider exploring questions about the life cycle of a device, including:**

- **Will hospital staff be equipped with the relevant training to use it?**
- **Is there budget for ongoing operating costs, like consumables?**
- **What provision is there for maintenance and servicing?**

**Market mechanisms, though imperfect, can help ensure these questions are answered. Through the purchasing process, users can gain an opportunity to assess the appropriateness of a product, and solicit appropriate training & servicing to ensure the success of their investment.**

## **BIGGEST CHALLENGES**

Customers may have low expectations about servicing that leads to a lack of willingness to aggressively pursue solutions. Making proactive service calls can ensure that devices are being used and set customer expectations that you are committed to ensuring device uptime.

## **TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES**

Although companies must make efforts to maximize product durability, impact-driven organizations should not be surprised that their devices will need servicing or replacement at some point. Instead, maintenance ought to be factored into the plan from the beginning. Social impact organizations like [Gradian Health Systems](#) consider servicing a critical aspect of their global Universal Anesthesia Machine sales. [USAID’s Pathways to Scale toolkit](#) highlights Gradian and other companies that plan for excellent service. And new models such as “Managed Equipment Services,” specifically tie supplier payment to device uptime, giving sellers a direct financial incentive to ensure devices continue to function after the initial sale.

## **CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS**

In South Africa, the ReMotion team met a customer who showed us a drawer full of broken knee joints from one of his suppliers, a leading European brand. He shared that these knees regularly broke within one year under the uniquely challenging usage conditions—walking long distances in uneven terrain—that his patients faced. Serving this clinician and his patients well would mean not just sending them products, but providing a durable product, a warranty, appropriate training to minimize the likelihood of failures, and coordinating closely to ensure replacement devices were provided in the event of a breakage.