

Product Research Report

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Here's a lesson plan for product planning that helps students begin to think about the importance of the product management function. I call it my Revolutionary Product Research Report. Before beginning the project, we developed lessons to introduce product management and the basics of a good presentation. (The students in my Marketing 1 classes really had a good time with the project. One of the groups actually developed their own pet rocks; another had a visual made entirely of Post-It Notes.)

Assignment: You and a partner (one only) will research the history of a revolutionary product that changed the way we operate or think or "do business." You will prepare a professional presentation outlining the history of this product and how it has "revolutionized" the market. Your product may be anything from the pet rock to the computer chip.

Include in your presentation:

- The history of the product
- The current nature of the product
- Products that were later developed as a result
- Was it the beginning of a new company? Be thorough in your investigation.
- Who first developed the product?
- How did the product change things? Do we take it for granted now?

Some suggested products (you may choose from this list or may choose a product of your own). Each team must research a different product.

Post it notes	Plastic milk container	Calculator
Pet rocks	Fuel injection	Television
Light bulb	Computer chip	Plastic
Internet	Ballpoint pen	Radar
Duct tape	Radio	Automobile

You will be graded on the following:

1. Identification of the revolutionary impact of the product
2. Explanation of the challenges of marketing the product in the early stages
3. Evidence of thorough research
4. Completeness and accuracy of product history, including inventor
5. Quality of written paper, including layout, neatness, grammar, spelling, and word usage (use of marketing terminology)
6. Quality of oral presentation, including professional appearance, poise, confidence, presentation techniques, and effective use of visuals
7. Professionalism and participation by each participant