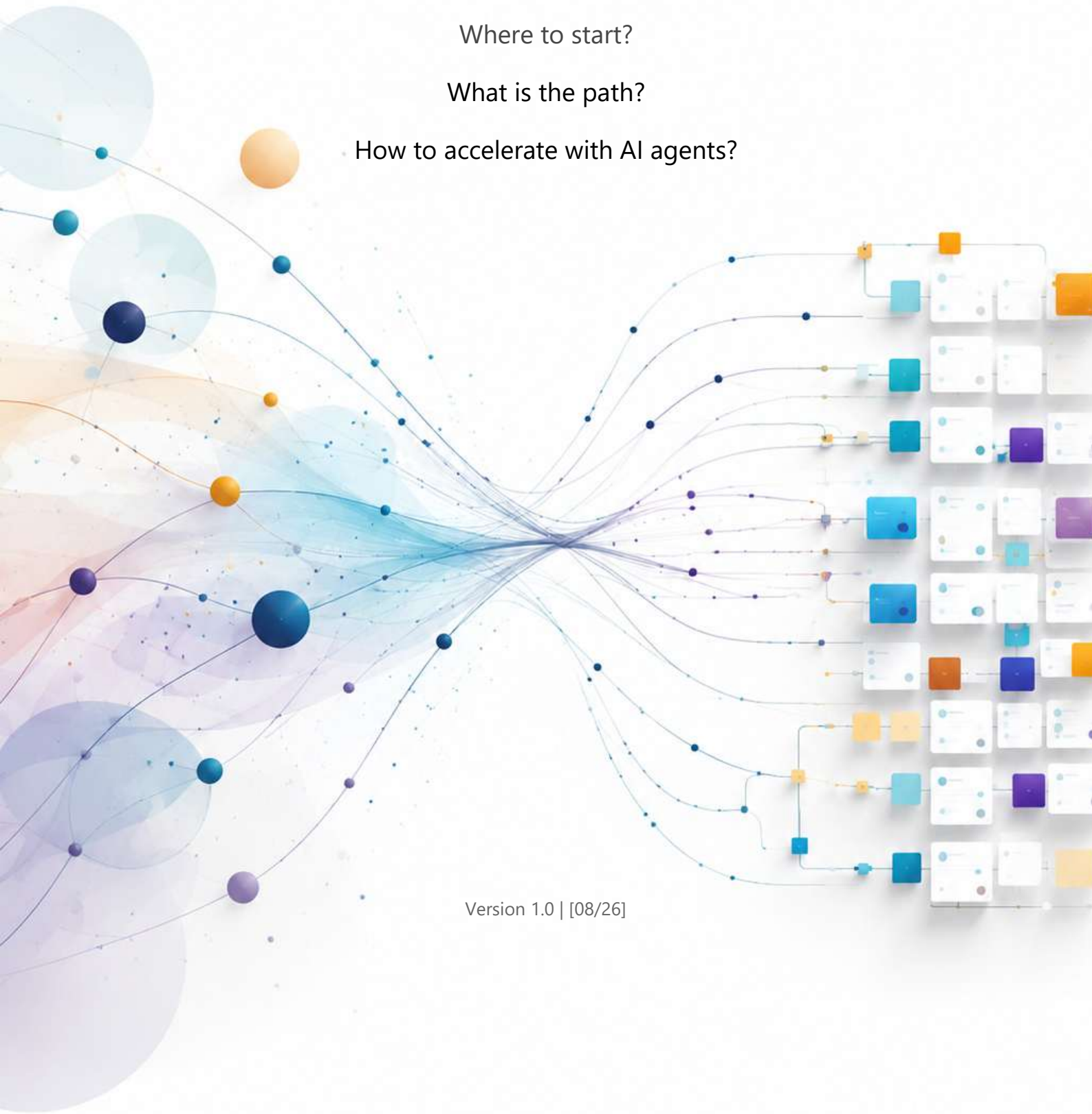
EuPMA

From User Needs to Product Requirements

Where to start?

What is the path?

How to accelerate with AI agents?



Version 1.0 | [08/26]

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WHY

Why this guide exists

A large share of **product failures** does not come from poor ideas or bad execution, but from **building the wrong thing**: requirements that are internally coherent, technically feasible and well documented, but **weakly connected to real customer needs**.

In fast-moving markets, the challenge is even sharper: customers often struggle to articulate needs that are still emerging, which means companies must go beyond simply listening to customers and need to learn how to interpret weak signals, behaviors, tensions and unspoken expectations.

This guide shows a **Connected Product Definition Approach** to move from user understanding to product and service requirements. The process can be used for **physical products**, **software** and **services**, in both **B2B** and **B2C** markets.

The **Connected Product Definition Approach** is built around three core elements:

- A **structured and connected process,** that guides the journey from user understanding to product and service requirements.
- The **Product Intelligence Base,** is the strategic asset where product knowledge is progressively structured, connected, validated and made reusable over time.
- The **AI Product Definition Engine,** supports and accelerates the work through specialized AI agents that help structure the reasoning, improve consistency and transform user understanding into clearer, more connected and more actionable product knowledge.



Make deep knowledge of customer needs

your strategic differentiator.

WHO

Who this guide is for

Ideal readers	Best situations
• Product managers and product owners • Innovation managers • R&D and engineering managers • Service designers • Consultants and facilitators • Business school participants	• Requirements are unclear • Roadmaps are based on opinions • AI outputs are too generic • Teams need traceability • Product/service concepts need validation • Market insights must become decisions

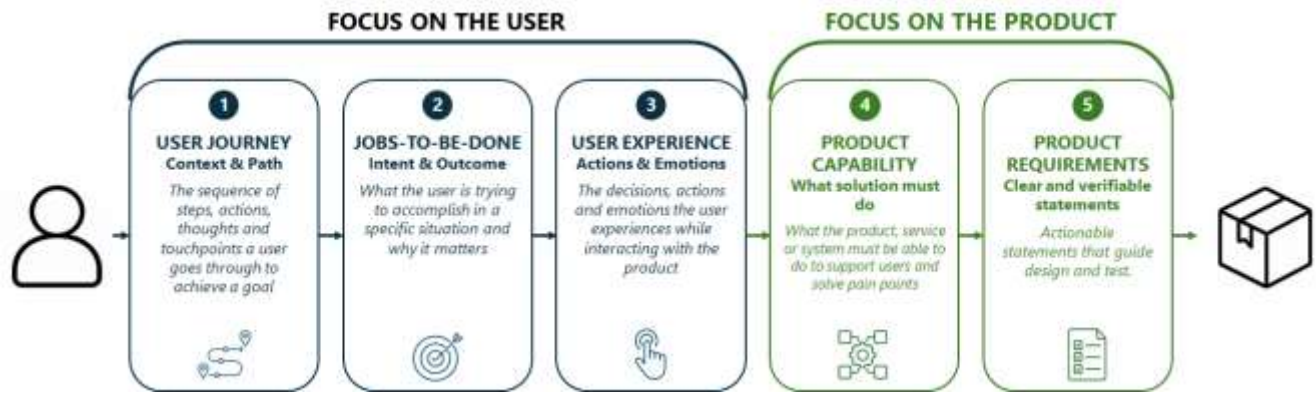
STRATEGIC ASSET

The process from user needs to product requirements

The path to defining product requirements starts from the customer, not from the product.

The **Connected Product Definition Approach** begins by understanding the user situation, the user journey and the needs that emerge in real contexts. Once this understanding has been explored and clarified, the process moves toward product and service requirements.

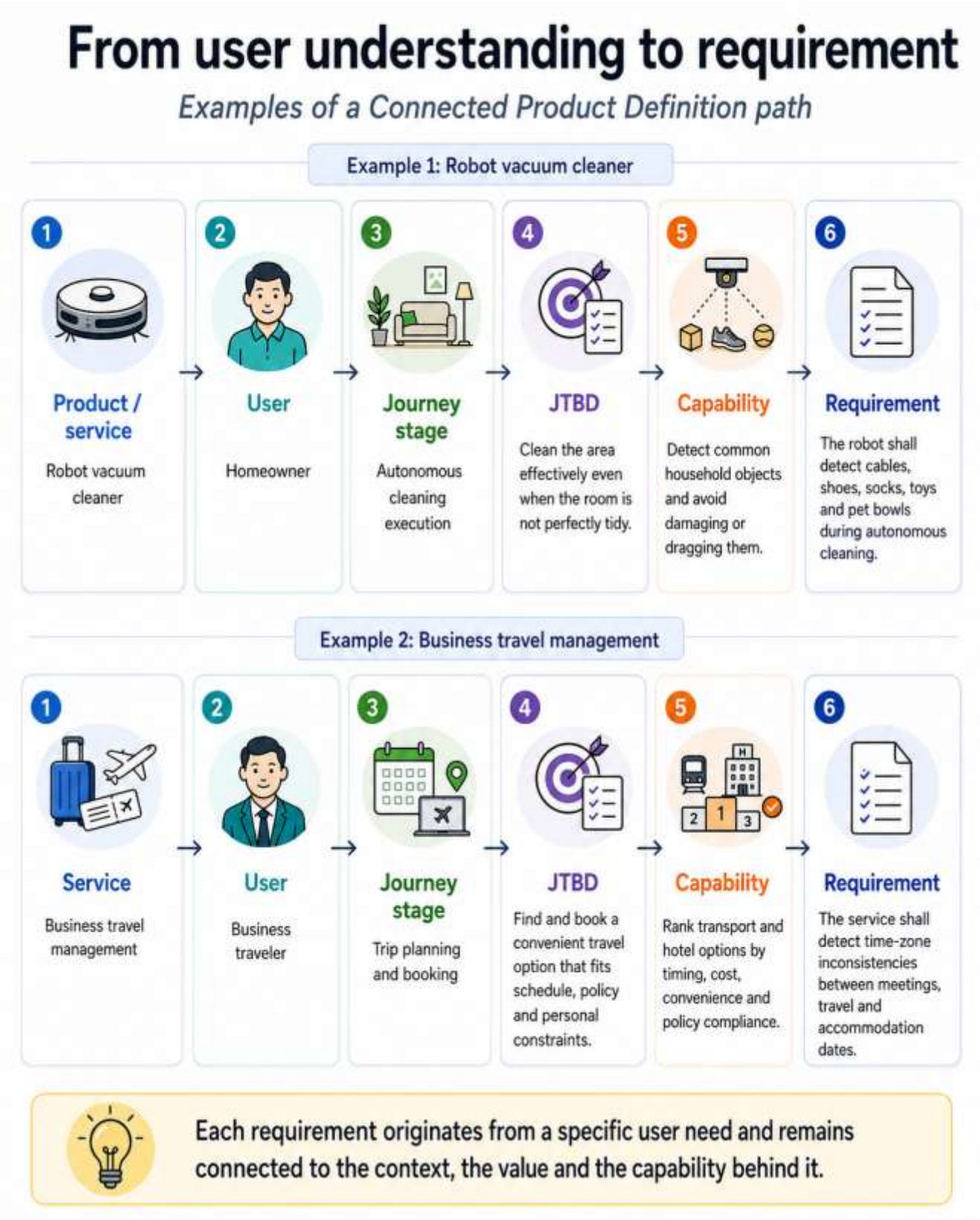
The process follows a consequential reasoning path: jobs-to-be-done clarify what users are trying to achieve, user activities reveal what people actually do, product capabilities define how the product or service should support them, and requirements translate those capabilities into clear, verifiable statements for design, development, testing and acceptance.



"You've got to start with the customer experience and work backwards to the technology. You can't start with the technology and try to figure out where you're going to try to sell it."

Steve Jobs

Examples


From user understanding to requirement
Examples of a Connected Product Definition path
Example 1: Robot vacuum cleaner
1
Product / service
Robot vacuum cleaner
2
User
Homeowner
3
Journey stage
Autonomous cleaning execution
4
JTBD
Clean the area effectively even when the room is not perfectly tidy.
5
Capability
Detect common household objects and avoid damaging or dragging them.
6
Requirement
The robot shall detect cables, shoes, socks, toys and pet bowls during autonomous cleaning.
Example 2: Business travel management
1
Service
Business travel management
2
User
Business traveler
3
Journey stage
Trip planning and booking
4
JTBD
Find and book a convenient travel option that fits schedule, policy and personal constraints.
5
Capability
Rank transport and hotel options by timing, cost, convenience and policy compliance.
6
Requirement
The service shall detect time-zone inconsistencies between meetings, travel and accommodation dates.
Each requirement originates from a specific user need and remains connected to the context, the value and the capability behind it.

STRATEGIC ASSET

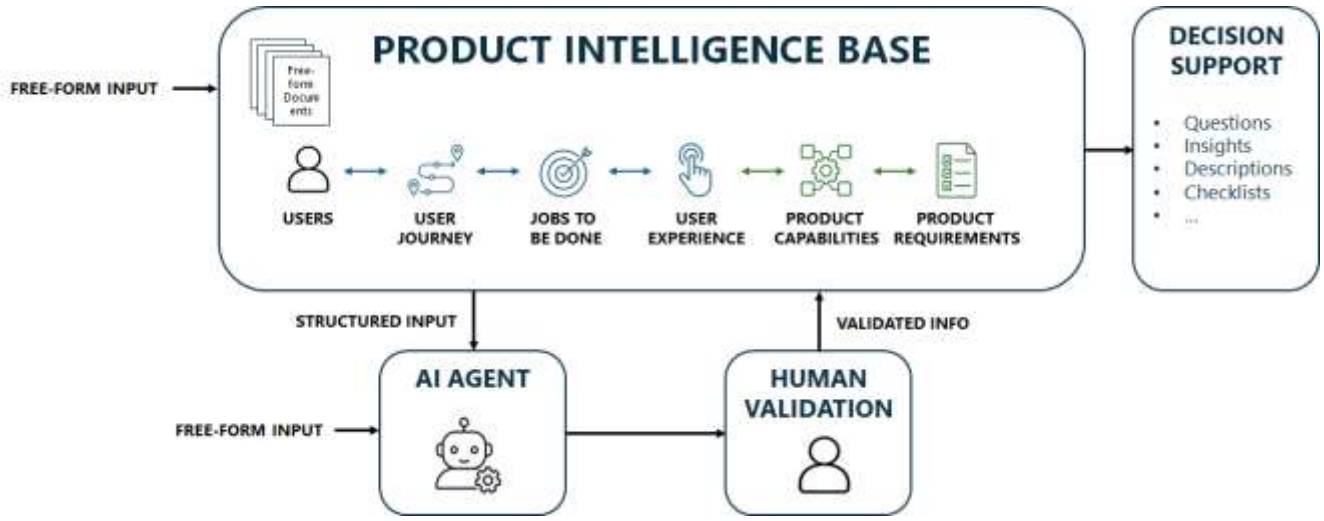
The Product Intelligence Base

The output of the product definition process is much more than a repository of requirements. It is a **structured Product Intelligence Base**: a strategic asset for managing, improving and evolving a product or service throughout its lifecycle.

Because every element is connected, coherent and traceable, the Product Intelligence Base creates a solid foundation for better product decisions.

It helps maintain coherence and alignment as the product evolves, reducing the risk of scattered decisions, disconnected requirements or features that lose their link with real user value. It also makes product knowledge easier to validate, update and reuse over time, especially when developing product variants, next-generation solutions or similar products and services.

This structured knowledge can also be reused to generate more focused and concise documents for different purposes: component sheets, concept descriptions, improvement opportunities, roadmap inputs, validation checklists, stakeholder summaries and decision-support documents — also with the support of AI.



The Product Intelligence Base transforms scattered product knowledge into structured intelligence — making decisions clearer, faster and more strategically grounded.

Why use AI?

Analyzing and writing product requirements in depth is a broad, demanding and complex effort. When it is not done properly, products may become less aligned with real customer needs, while the development process becomes more exposed to uncertainty, indecision, late changes and rework.This is where AI makes a real difference.

AI can help transform scattered inputs into structured outputs, manage coherence across many interconnected elements and different levels of detail, support consistency checks, and synthesize insights and concepts from large amounts of information.

It can also reduce the cognitive effort required to navigate complexity, make assumptions more explicit, accelerate iterations, compare alternative interpretations, standardize language and terminology, and generate focused documents for different teams, decisions or business purposes.

The human factor

AI does not replace expert judgment. It should not define the meaning, direction or priorities of the product journey.

Humans bring purpose, context, strategic intent, technical judgment and market sensitivity. They decide what really matters, what should be pursued, what should be discarded and what kind of product the company wants to build.

For this reason, the Product Intelligence Base should never become a place where AI-generated outputs are automatically stored without control. The safest workflow is clear: focused AI generation, human review, validation and only then integration into the official master table.

AI provides speed, structure, consistency and scalability.

Humans provide meaning, judgment, direction and responsibility.

Together, they make requirements definition faster, deeper, more coherent and more reliable.

STRATEGIC ASSET

Product Definition Engine

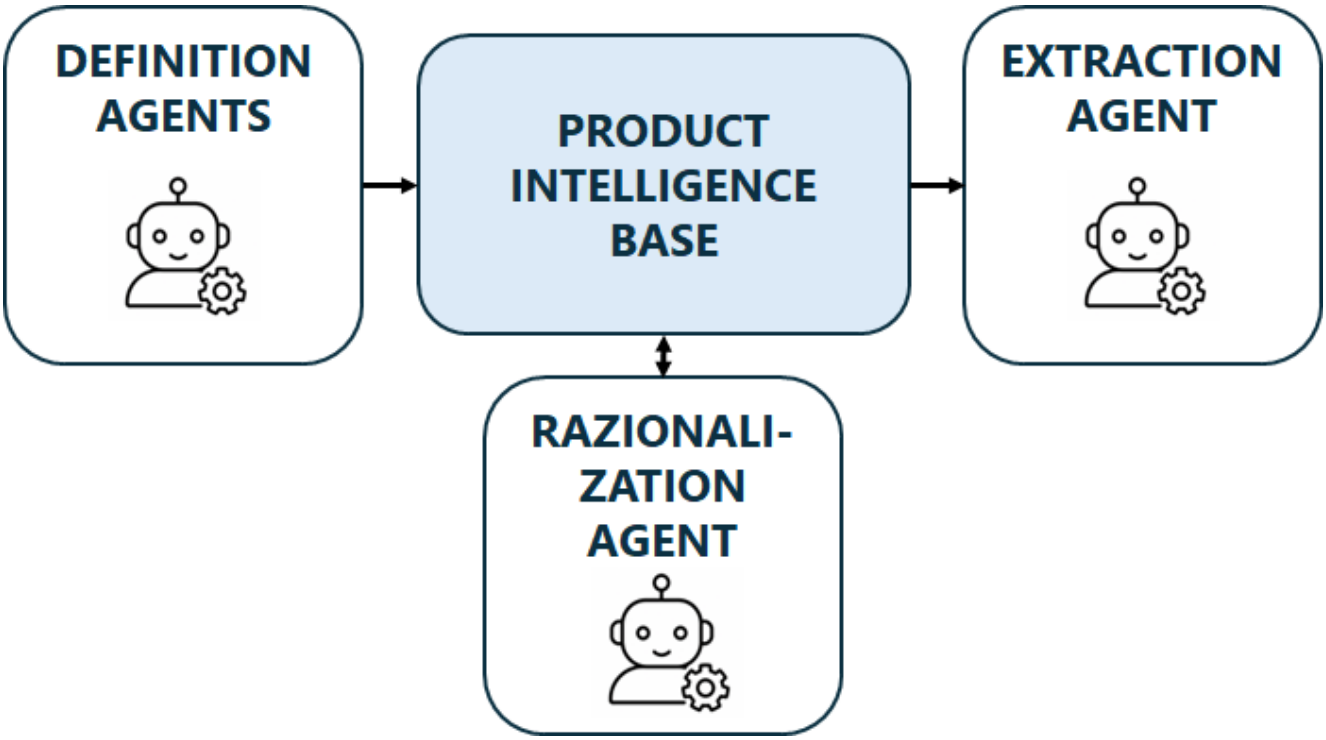
A Product Definition Engine, composed of specialized AI agents, is available to support and accelerate the process. Each step in the process requires a different kind of reasoning, a different scope and a different output structure. **Specialized AI agents** help keep the analysis focused, consistent, traceable and easier to validate.

The Product Definition Engine is composed of three types of agents: Definition Agents, Rationalization Agents and Extraction Agents.

Definition Agents help create the Product Intelligence Base by transforming user understanding into structured product knowledge, moving from context and user journeys to needs, activities, capabilities and requirements.

Rationalization Agents improve the quality and consistency of the Product Intelligence Base. They help identify overlaps, remove duplications, reorganize content, refine wording, check connections and strengthen the overall coherence of the system.

Extraction Agents use the Product Intelligence Base to generate focused outputs, such as summaries, briefs, reports, vertical views or documents for specific teams, decisions or business purposes.



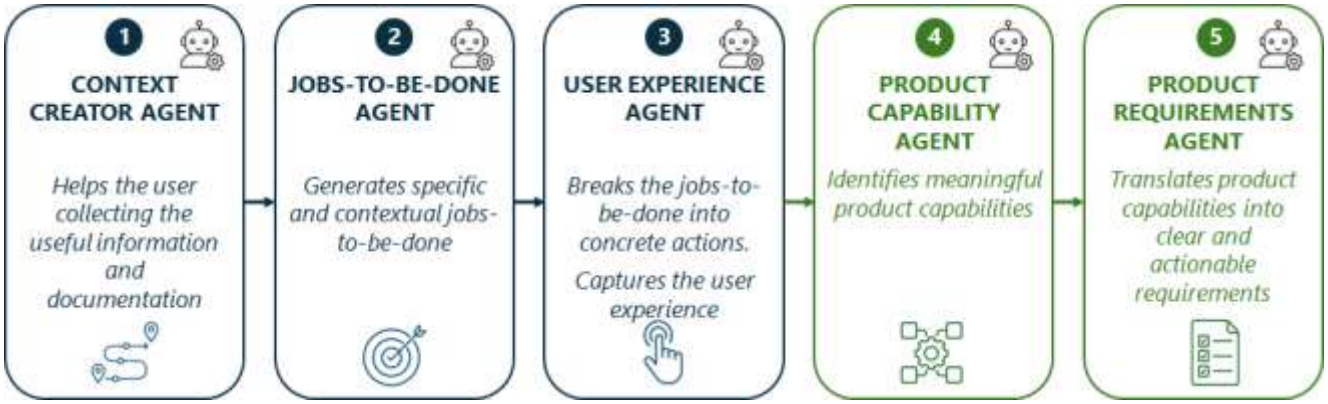
AGENTS

Definition Agents

Definition Agents help build the Product Intelligence Base by transforming user understanding into structured product knowledge.

They guide the reasoning process step by step, from product context and user journey to jobs-to-be-done, user activities, product capabilities and product or service requirements. Each agent focuses on a specific level of analysis, helping teams make the transition from customer insight to actionable requirements clearer, faster and more consistent.

Their role is not to replace human judgment, but to accelerate exploration, organize information and support a more connected and consequential path from users to requirements.



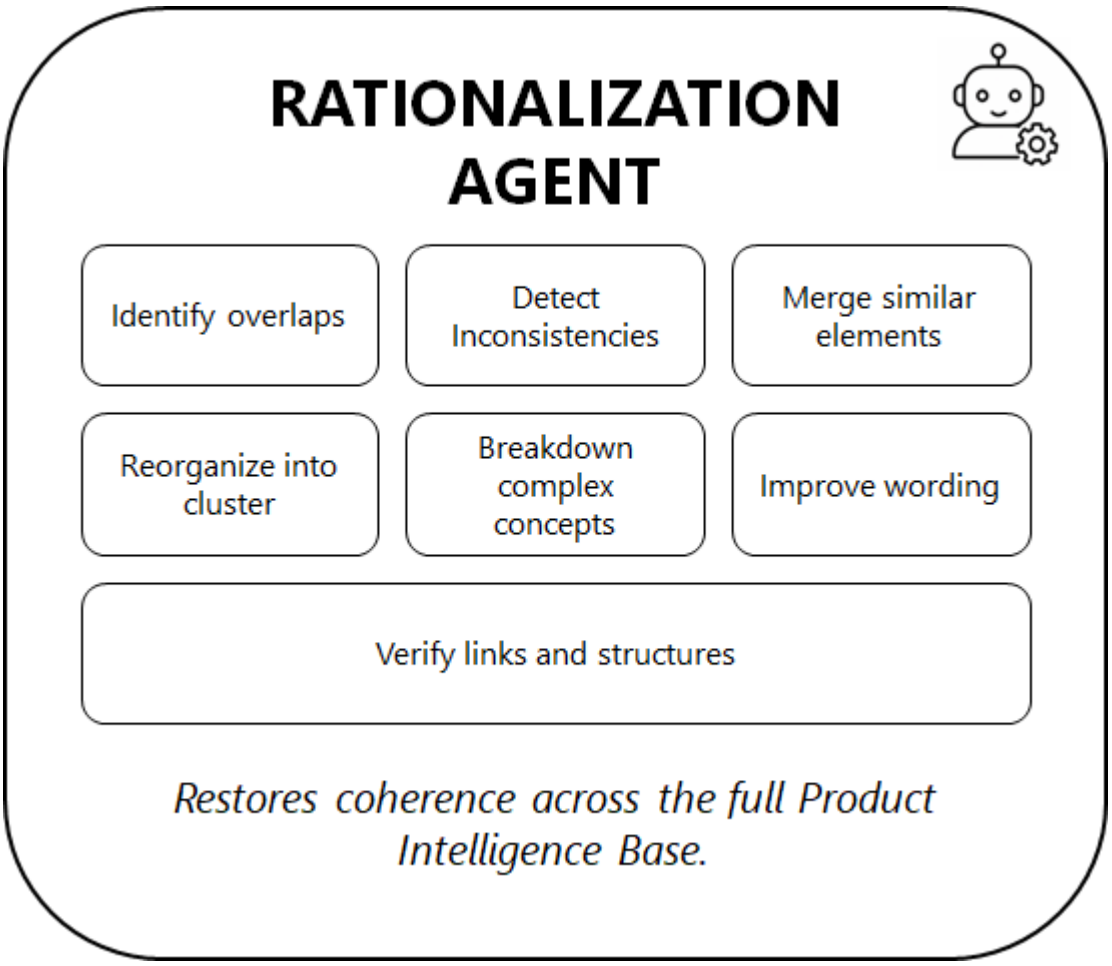
The rationalization Agent

Working in depth with each Definition Agent increases quality locally, but it may reduce coherence globally. This is why an additional **Rationalization Agent** has been created.

The Rationalization Agent can review Jobs to be Done, user activities, experience insights, product capabilities and product requirements. It can detect duplicated or partially duplicated items, merge similar elements, reorganize content into clearer clusters and highlight missing links across the requirement chain.

The analytical agents help generate depth. The Rationalization Agent helps restore coherence and synthesys.

Together, they allow teams to work both vertically and horizontally: deep enough to understand the details, structured enough to manage the whole product.

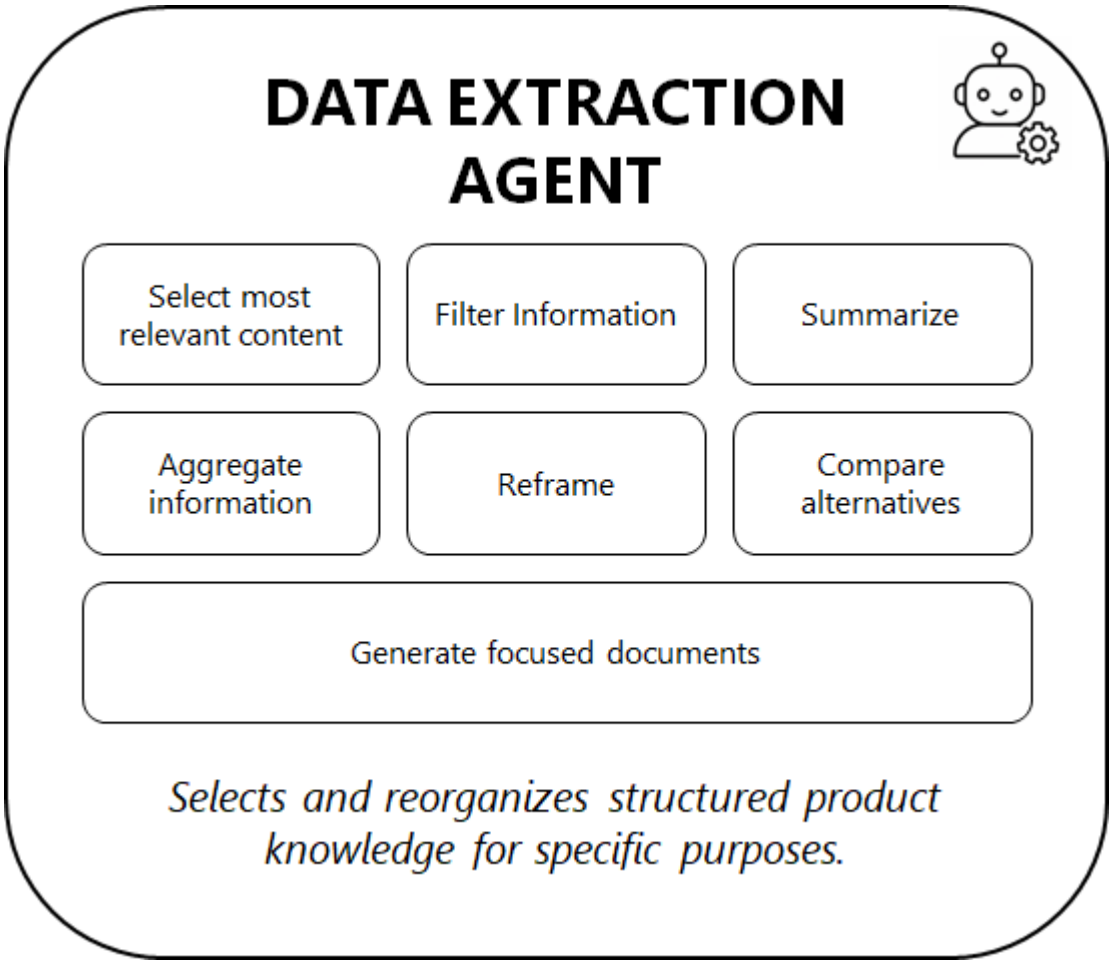


Data extraction agents

Data Extraction Agents use the Product Intelligence Base to extract, filter, select, aggregate, summarize and reframe validated product knowledge. They transform structured data into focused outputs, such as briefs, reports, checklists, decision inputs, vertical views and reusable knowledge packages for specific teams, products or lifecycle stages.

They help teams move from a broad and detailed master table to focused outputs, such as product briefs, requirement summaries, component sheets, validation checklists, roadmap inputs, stakeholder reports or decision-support documents.

Their role is not to create new product logic from scratch, but to make existing validated knowledge easier to access, understand, reuse and communicate across different teams, products and lifecycle stages.



TRY IT

Try it now: 30-minute exercise

Experience the requirements definition journey with a set of preconfigured AI agents.

Each agent is dedicated to a specific step of the process, but is not tailored to a particular industry, product category or company. This makes them suitable for experimenting with the method across different products and services.

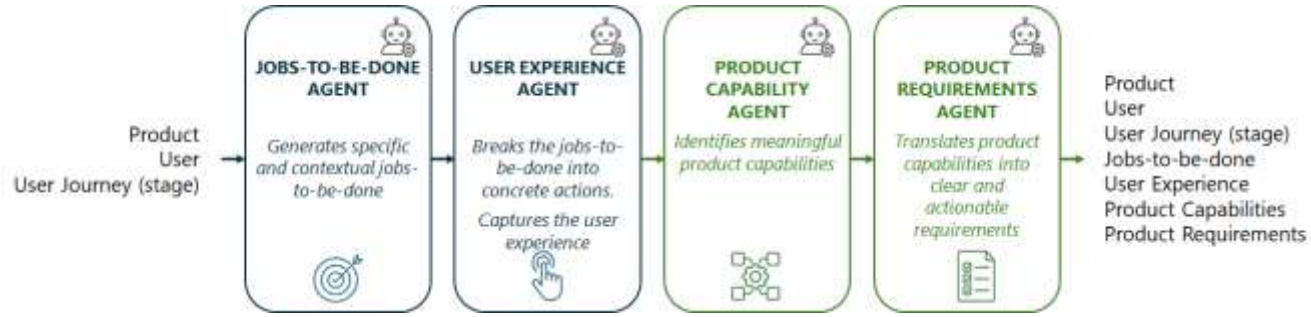
The journey starts with the definition of the product or service context, the target user and the relevant stage of the user journey. From there, the agents guide you progressively through the generation and refinement of:

Context → Jobs-to-be-Done → User Experience → Product Capabilities → Product Requirements

Each step builds on the previous one, helping transform an initial idea into increasingly structured, coherent and traceable information.

You can follow the complete sequence or use individual agents independently, provided you supply the minimum input required for that specific step.

These agents are designed to let you explore the approach, test the potential of AI-supported requirements definition and understand how specialized, company-specific agents could provide even greater value.



What do you need to start

1. To use these agents, you need to be signed in to a ChatGPT account. They can also be accessed with the Free plan, but usage limits may interrupt the workflow or reduce the consistency of the experience. For more reliable and continuous experimentation, a paid plan such as ChatGPT Plus, Pro, Business or Enterprise is recommended.
2. The agents are available here
    a. Job-to-be-done Agent: …
    b. User Experience Agent: …
    c. Product Capability Agent: …
    d. Product Requirements Agent: …

If you do not have a ChatGPT license, need any further information before trying the agents or would like to run the test with guided support, please contact us here.

What to Expect from These Agents

These agents are general-purpose and not verticalized for a specific product category, industry or company context. They are not customized around proprietary processes, internal terminology, existing product architectures or company-specific requirement standards. Their role is to demonstrate the method, support experimentation and show what becomes possible when AI is used in a structured way.

To go beyond exploration and move toward operational use, companies should consider creating **customized agents**: tailored to their products, markets, language, data structure, validation rules, requirement formats and decision-making processes. This is where AI moves from a useful demonstration tool to a true product intelligence capability.

With its experience in product management, requirements definition, customer needs analysis and AI-assisted product workflows, **EuPMA can support companies in designing and customizing these agents**, turning a general method into a tailored product intelligence capability.

How to interact with the agents

How to interact with the agents

Interact with each agent as you would in a focused discussion that becomes progressively more precise.

Each agent is specialized in a specific area of the requirements definition process, such as Jobs-to-be-Done, user experience, product capabilities or product requirements. The conversation is therefore most valuable when it remains within the agent's field of competence. The agent will stay focused on its role and may clearly indicate when a question falls outside its scope or when it does not have enough information to provide a reliable answer.

AI agents respond to the quality and direction of the input they receive.

Broad or generic questions usually produce broad and generic answers. Precise, contextual and well-articulated questions lead to more focused, relevant and potentially original insights.

You can keep the conversation at a high level to identify essential needs, capabilities and baseline requirements. Alternatively, you can progressively deepen the discussion, explore specific situations, challenge assumptions, compare alternatives and search for less obvious opportunities.

To obtain better results, describe the product or service, the user role, the relevant journey stage, the issue to explore and the type of output you expect. You can then refine the initial response by asking the agent to expand, clarify, prioritize, challenge, split, combine or reconsider specific elements.

The agents can draw on a very broad body of knowledge, but that knowledge is activated and directed by the user's questions. The quality of the dialogue determines which perspectives are explored, how deeply they are investigated and how useful the final output becomes.

Generic questions lead to generic answers. Focused questions open the way to focused and original insights.

NEXT STEPS

Go further with EuPMA

This method is the result of years of practical experience and dozens of applications in companies of different sizes, industries and levels of product maturity. The AI agents are a more recent evolution of this work, designed to make the method easier to explore, apply and scale.

EuPMA makes this approach available because its mission is to improve product management knowledge, methods and practices, and to make them more widely accessible in order to contribute to innovation and progress.

This guide is only a starting point. EuPMA helps product managers and product-driven organizations turn customer needs into better products, services and requirements through practical methods, cards, AI agents, masterclasses and collaborative labs.

Join our community to contribute to the creation of new knowledge, exchange experiences and build meaningful relationships with peers across Europe.

Links: [insert EuPMA resource page] | [insert demo agents page] | [insert newsletter form] | [insert contact email]

ANNEXES CARDS

ACTION CARD

User

ACTION CARD

User Journey

ACTION CARD

Jobs-to-be-done

ACTION CARD

User Experience

ACTION CARD

Product Capabilities

ACTION CARD

Product Requirements