

THE 5-MINUTE SCALE-UP PRODUCT HEALTH CHECK

Are you moving commercial metrics or just shipping features?

Most indigenous Irish tech scale-ups don't suffer from a delivery problem; they suffer from a **discovery problem**.

You have built a talented engineering team, integrated modern sprint frameworks, and built an aggressive product roadmap. Yet, despite hitting your shipping deadlines, your core commercial metrics—ARR, user retention, and customer churn—remain stubbornly flat.

When a technology organization shifts from an **empowered product model** to a reactive, sales-driven backlog-clearing service, it enters the *Feature Factory*. This diagnostic tool is designed to benchmark your current product operations across four critical pillars in less than five minutes.

1. YOUR TEAM DIAGNOSTIC BLUEPRINT (UNCHECKED)

Evaluate your own setup. For each pillar below, check the box that most accurately reflects the current operational framework of your technology team.

Pillar 1: Output vs. Outcomes (Team Motivation)

- [1 Point]** Our product and engineering teams are given a strict list of features to build (e.g., "Build an integration with X," "Add a filter to Y"). Success is measured by whether we ship on time.
- [2 Points]** Our teams have input into the roadmap, but development priorities are frequently interrupted or rewritten by direct enterprise sales requests or founder instincts.
- [3 Points]** Our teams are given clear, commercial business problems to solve (e.g., "Reduce onboarding drop-off by 15%"). Success is measured by the commercial metric moved, not the lines of code written.

Pillar 2: Customer Discovery Frequency

- [1 Point] Our developers and product managers rarely talk directly to active users without a sales representative or account manager present. Customer feedback filters in through support tickets or lost deals.
- [2 Points] We conduct deep-dive user research at the beginning of a major project or redesign, but once development begins, user contact drops off entirely until launch.
- [3 Points] We practice continuous discovery. Our product leaders engage with active users every single week, turning qualitative insights into rapid prototypes before engineering capital is ever deployed.

Pillar 3: Data Architecture vs. Boardroom Opinion

- [1 Point] Roadmap prioritization shifts frequently based on the highest paid person's opinion (HIPPO) or a critical client threatening to churn. Quantitative product analytics are sparse or poorly tracked.
- [2 Points] We track high-level quantitative metrics (e.g., Monthly Active Users), but we struggle to attribute exactly which deployed features are driving commercial ROI or causing user friction.
- [3 Points] Opinion is treated as a hypothesis, not a mandate. Every roadmap item is backed by quantitative data arrays and tightly monitored behavioral instrumentation to track feature success post-release.

Pillar 4: Strategic Alignment & Roadmap Velocity

- [1 Point] Our technical roadmap feels like an endless, disconnected wish list of features. Engineering and product teams operate in a silo, detached from sales targets and investor expectations.
- [2 Points] We use OKRs or KPIs, but they feel like bureaucratic paperwork. Sprints are consistently clogged by technical dependencies, missed requirements, and unexpected downtime.
- [3 Points] Our product strategy directly clears the path for our next milestone (e.g., Series B readiness, international expansion). Teams are structured to eliminate engineering dependencies, unlocking high velocity.

2. STRATEGIC EVALUATION EXAMPLE (WORKING MODEL)

FICTIONAL HIGH-BURN PROFILE CASE STUDY

Benchmarking Model: *ApexLogix Ltd* (Dublin-based B2B SaaS Scale-up, 45 employees).

This pre-filled reference section serves as a structural guide to help you identify symptoms of structural drag within your own organization. ApexLogix exhibits a high engineering output but zero metric tracking, scoring **5 points total**. Review their highlighted choices below for reference.

Pillar 1: Output vs. Outcomes (Team Motivation)

- [1 Point] Our product and engineering teams are given a strict list of features to build (e.g., "Build an integration with X," "Add a filter to Y"). Success is measured by whether we ship on time.
ApexLogix Baseline: Deployed 100% of internal sprints last quarter to clear reactive feature commitments promised by sales to land a single corporate account.
- [2 Points] Our teams have input into the roadmap, but development priorities are frequently interrupted or rewritten by direct enterprise sales requests or founder instincts.
- [3 Points] Our teams are given clear, commercial business problems to solve (e.g., "Reduce onboarding drop-off by 15%"). Success is measured by the commercial metric moved, not the lines of code written.

Pillar 2: Customer Discovery Frequency

- [1 Point] Our developers and product managers rarely talk directly to active users without a sales representative or account manager present. Customer feedback filters in through support tickets or lost deals.
ApexLogix Baseline: Product Managers spend 100% of their weeks inside Jira tickets. The engineering division has not seen or observed a live end-user interact with the application interface in over 6 months.
- [2 Points] We conduct deep-dive user research at the beginning of a major project or redesign, but once development begins, user contact drops off entirely until launch.
- [3 Points] We practice continuous discovery. Our product leaders engage with active users every single week, turning qualitative insights into rapid prototypes before engineering capital is ever deployed.

Pillar 3: Data Architecture vs. Boardroom Opinion

- [1 Point] Roadmap prioritization shifts frequently based on the highest paid person's opinion (HIPPO) or a critical client threatening to churn. Quantitative product analytics are sparse or poorly tracked.
- [2 Points] We track high-level quantitative metrics (e.g., Monthly Active Users), but we struggle to attribute exactly which deployed features are driving commercial ROI or causing user friction.
ApexLogix Baseline: Dashboard shows total platform signups increasing, but management cannot answer why 45% of user workspaces go dormant inside week two.
- [3 Points] Opinion is treated as a hypothesis, not a mandate. Every roadmap item is backed by quantitative data arrays and tightly monitored behavioral instrumentation to track feature success post-release.

Pillar 4: Strategic Alignment & Roadmap Velocity

- [1 Point] Our technical roadmap feels like an endless, disconnected wish list of features. Engineering and product teams operate in a silo, detached from sales targets and investor expectations.
ApexLogix Baseline: Engineering tracks "velocity points" indicating high performance, while executive leadership reports that the actual business lines are missing ARR growth metrics entirely.
- [2 Points] We use OKRs or KPIs, but they feel like bureaucratic paperwork. Sprints are consistently clogged by technical dependencies, missed requirements, and unexpected downtime.
- [3 Points] Our product strategy directly clears the path for our next milestone (e.g., Series B readiness, international expansion). Teams are structured to eliminate engineering dependencies, unlocking high velocity.

THE SCORING MATRIX

Calculate your aggregate score from section one and evaluate your current organizational quadrant:

4 to 6 Points: The High-Burn Feature Factory

★ ApexLogix Example Score: 5

The Diagnostic: Your product organization is operating under a traditional project/delivery model. Expensive engineering talent is likely being consumed by reactive requests, leading to massive feature bloat without moving revenue metrics. **Immediate Fix:** You need to strip back the feature backlog, implement structural metric ownership, and build an objective boundary between commercial pressures and engineering sprints.

7 to 10 Points: The Friction-Locked Scale-Up

The Diagnostic: Your team understands modern product culture but is trapped in the messy reality of scaling. Sales-led disruptions, missing data loops, or architectural dependencies are causing immense drag and stalling your roadmap velocity. **Immediate Fix:** You need a pragmatic, continuous discovery pipeline and automated reporting loops to turn boardroom opinions into data-driven, de-risked validation.

11 to 12 Points: The Empowered Metric-Mover

The Diagnostic: Your organization is tightly aligned around commercial metrics and customer reality. Your main focus should be optimizing internal leadership grooming and ensuring your infrastructure is structurally ready for global expansion or M&A.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND ALIGNED FRAMEWORK

TURN STRATEGY INTO PREDICTABLE SCALE

Building a high-performing product organization doesn't require textbook academic perfection—it requires commercial alignment.

At **Leading Metric**, we partner with indigenous Irish tech scale-ups, founders, and VCs to dismantle feature factories and focus teams squarely on revenue-driving metrics. Our frameworks are built on a decade of real-world corporate exits, 9-figure international enterprise AI data deals, and high-volume B2C platforms serving millions of users globally.

To support scaling Irish tech businesses, our specialized **Product Maturity Audits** and **Fractional CPO Retainers** are structured to match the core funding frameworks for **Enterprise Ireland Digital Discovery and Strategic Consultancy Grants**, allowing eligible client companies to access up to **50% to 80% funding** to offset optimization fees.

Ready to see what is happening under the hood of your product pipeline?

Visit LeadingMetric.com to schedule a free 30-minute Product Assessment.