

The ABC's of POC's

How to maximize the impact of the Proof of Concept for your IoT solution

In this guide we will share our experience related to the softer aspects of getting your IoT hardware development approved and funded.

From a technical perspective, you're the master of your own destiny – but what can you do to secure that the value of your intended solution is seen and understood by the relevant decision-makers?

How do you mobilize the right people within R&D, Operations, Product Management, Marketing and Sales and leave them wanting more?!

Following the steps described in this guide should allow you to maximize your impact and set you up for success.

Best of luck with your POC!



PETER LINDKVIST

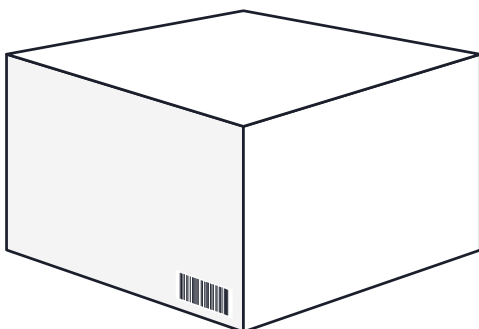
Peter Lindkvist is the Sales Director for LumenRadio. Since he joined LumenRadio in 2016, he has been a major part of our customers Proof Of Concept journey. An engineer at heart, but with a passion for communication – he knows what it takes to make technology sexy, yet simple.

So, you've started your Digitalization journey, you have your resources and budget lined up, and you have selected your pilot application – the product or solution that will, certainly and rapidly, simplify the daily life of your customers through more efficient use of data and analytics. Then now's the time to prove yourself – to convince your internal stakeholders that you're on the right track and your key customers that you're ahead of the pack. **It's time for the POC.**

The Proof Of Concept or POC has the purpose of demonstrating the technical and commercial viability of a new product or solution, using a minimum of effort and investment. Simply put, it's a quick-but-not-too-dirty development, that should enable you to get the go-ahead decision for starting prototyping and/or doing field trials.

Getting the POC right is a key step in the development of any IoT solution – independent if you're in HVAC, Building Automation, Lighting, Physical Security, Access Control or Industrial Sensors. It will save you time, money, headaches and sleepless nights – and, give you access to the funding needed for your subsequent development project.

FROM PRODUCT...



...TO SMART, CONNECTED PRODUCT



A

Scoping the POC, is like aiming the catapult before firing - it decides what trajectory your project will take. The most important thing to get right, is to find that killer feature that you want to showcase – the thing that will make your stakeholders go **“WOW!”**

As you're limited in time and resources, you can not impress through versatility or completeness. You need to find a very limited set of features, that still will engage your audience and have them visualize the full potential of the solution. Starting small, and keeping it small, is the key to POC bliss.

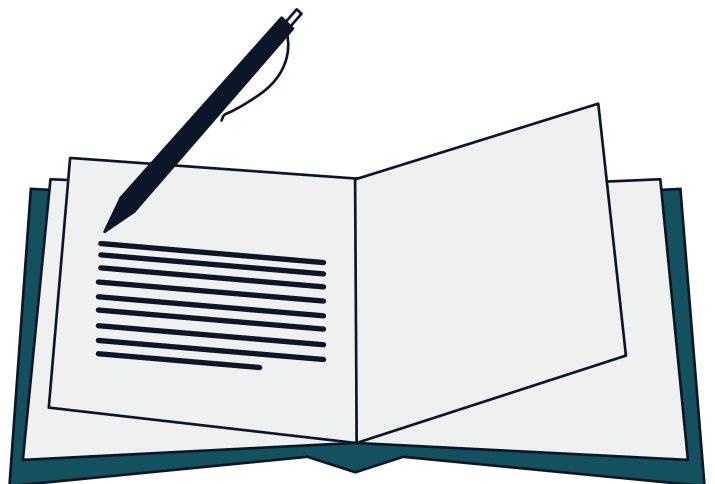
But when you decide on the scope, you also have to ask yourself **“What narrative am I getting? What customer story can I tell based on this?”** It is vital to think about what end-user problems that the feature set of the POC will address. You need to provide yourself with a storyline, that will make communication of the customer value clear and appetizing.

Say that you're creating a POC for an Industrial Sensor Network application in order to enable a Condition Monitoring solution. You decide to go

for a very basic sensor, measuring only one thing such as temperature or vibrations. But you do add the possibility of battery-operation and the ability for the device to trigger a push notice or a text message to a smart device. The end-user story you then can tell is: “I can retrofit this solution to any machine in our installed base with zero wires in less than five minutes. I can make my maintenance crew be proactive by having an early warning, while maximizing their efficiency by being on-demand and only spend time on equipment with a real need for servicing.” That sounds pretty good to me.

If you would go the other way and focus the POC on proving that your device will be able to generate the right data - optimizing sampling frequency, sampling depth, sensor selection, etc. you might win over one or two hard core engineers, but you're not speaking to the masses.

Be small, show off, tell a good story.



SETTING THE SCENE

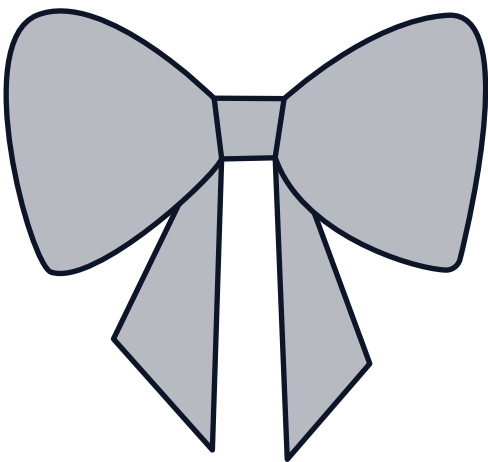
B

The reason for actually doing a POC is normally that you want to convince someone of something. It could be convincing yourself that something actually works, but I would argue that it's actually more often convincing someone else that something is going to sell!

This means that the normal rules of Sales also apply to POC's:

- **Make it look nice:** use your corporate colours, add a logotype, etc. to help your audience picture a product, not a science project.
- **Make it visually intuitive:** a green LED lighting up is much better than showing some kind of confirmation in a log-file.
- **Include some kind of metrics:** make sure you can prove the technical performance of the new solution and/or clearly quantify the customer value to strengthen your business case.

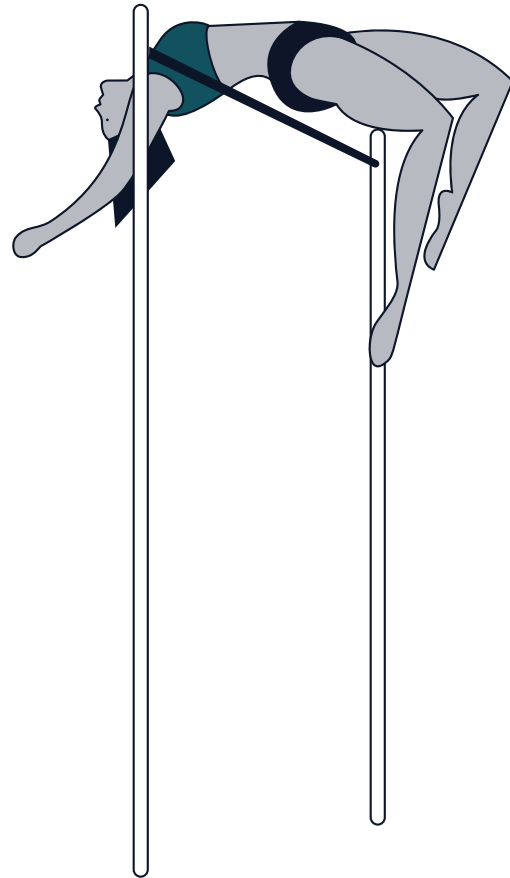
QUICK-BUT-NOT-TOO-DIRTY



By adding some wrapping to the presentation of your POC, you increase the chance of having your audience picture a future blockbuster in your product and solution offer. You obviously want to have them focused on seeing the value in the features that you showcase and the end-user stories you tell, but not giving them the option of discarding your solution as "engineering junk" is always a wise move.



So now you have a good-looking Thing, showing some killer features – then the rest is all about exposure and penetration. The more people that see your POC, the better! You want it shown at every internal management conference in the coming six months and brought to every Key Account meeting by your Sales team (as proof that you have new, cool things in your product pipeline). Then what are the things that could stop this? Bulk and complexity. You have to assume that the POC will be allowed to go places where you won't. This means that the solution has to be designed and built as truly "portable". In practice this means:



SETTING THE BAR

- **Flexible:** size and weight that enable it to be brought as carry-on luggage.
- **Completely independent of any infrastructure:** ideally battery-operated, cellular Cloud connectivity (with a global access plan), smart device for user interaction included in the POC package, etc.
- **Fool-proof operation:** power up, push a button, see what happens.
- **Fool-proof presentation:** make a small video or create a one-page infographic, explaining the architecture of the solution, the key features and the end-user value.

The best way to summarize above, is that you should plan for lending it to your CEO. He or she should be comfortable to show and present it to everybody, without the help of anybody. If you can achieve this, then you're likely to get the air- time that you need.

Succeeding with your POC will guarantee that you move more quickly from A to Z in your development process.

...and to go from A to Z; remember the ABC's:

A

You cannot be too careful in scoping your POC – make sure you maximize the communicative value, while you manage the technical complexity. Limited but cool, beats comprehensive but complex, in this part of the process.

EPILOGUE

Packaging is everything! Make sure the POC hardware and software can meet the eye-test of your stakeholders. You're selling a vision, so the visual appearance matters for people without the specific domain knowledge, that are unable fill in the dots themselves.

B

C

Plan for lending it to your CEO. The primary purpose of the POC is communication – maximize your impact, by making sure there are no reasons for anybody NOT to show it.



LumenRadio is your wireless partner in connecting your products and enabling your future IoT-offer. Based on our patented ultra-reliable Cognitive Coexistence technologies, we offer radio modules and an operating system that can be integrated straight into your products.

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