



SaaS Journey Framework

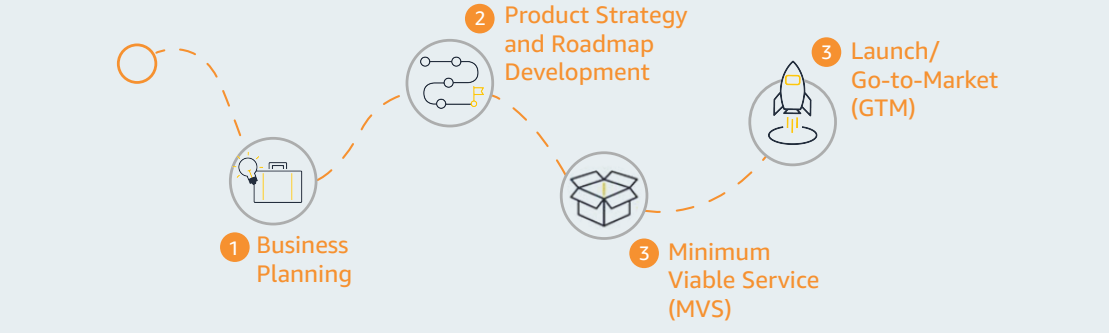
► [One-Minute Whitepaper](#)

This one-minute whitepaper provides a quick framework overview for companies building a new software-as-a-service (SaaS) product, transitioning to a SaaS business model from traditional software and technology delivery models, or optimizing an existing SaaS solution.

Our framework was developed by SaaS experts from Amazon Web Services (AWS), with guidance and best practices based on years of AWS experience, and feedback from thousands of AWS Partners. To access the full whitepaper with detailed guidance on delivering successful SaaS on AWS, read our SaaS Journey Framework whitepaper.

A movement to a SaaS model often requires a fundamental shift in strategic and operational mindset. It forces companies to rethink roles and responsibilities, define cultural change, and introduce new processes that better align with the best practices of SaaS companies.

The SaaS Journey Framework breaks down the path to SaaS into four distinct phases, each of which represents a key stage in the move to SaaS. These phases are outlined below:



The journey to SaaS is different for each company. Where you are starting, what domain you are in, what competitive pressures you are facing, the answers to these questions can influence the path you take on your SaaS journey. Therefore, we have identified a few of the common profiles for companies that adopted a SaaS delivery model. Find the profile that best fits your organization and review the phases to understand what your SaaS journey may look like.



ToeDipper Software

This profile represents a large and conservative company running a legacy product that is hindered by an aging technology and/or process, but has a captive, lucrative market.

- Phase 1 Business Planning:** Find a model that enables the company to explore SaaS without impacting the growth and performance of the current business
- Phase 2 Product Strategy & Roadmap Dev:** Have a solid product strategy to avoid under-investing in a more complete product strategy and/or treating your plan as more of an experiment
- Phase 3 Minimum Viable Service:** Be hyper-focused on building a complete product strategy that drives value to your customers
- Phase 4 Launch/GTM:** Align GTM plan with customer expectations and priorities of investors. Leverage SaaS to reach new buyer profiles (e.g. early adopters) within existing and new customers



SurvivorTech

This profile represents the companies that have an existing product but are seeing their market being eroded by competitors that have used price, agility, and/or cost efficiency to capture mindshare.

- Phase 1 Business Planning:** Focus on determining whether there is a way to accelerate and fund the development path
- Phase 2 Product Strategy & Roadmap Dev:** Build a strategy that goes beyond just having a SaaS offering in order to compete against current and emerging offerings in the market
- Phase 3 Minimum Viable Service:** Map out a more complete product strategy path that is less reactive and more strategic to enable you to retain and grab market
- Phase 4 Launch/GTM:** Align internally to establish new sales motions and back-office processes. Land and expand sales model in tandem with agile design and frequent product releases



UnicornExpress.com

This profile represents the greenfield SaaS companies that are building their solution from scratch and setting out on the path to SaaS without the baggage of an existing legacy environment.

- Phase 1 Business Planning:** Build out the fundamental projections for staffing the company, identify target markets, and develop a monetization scheme
- Phase 2 Product Strategy & Roadmap Dev:** Avoid short-circuiting the product strategy process, as it may undermine the company success when growth curve kicks in
- Phase 3 Minimum Viable Service:** Align the product with this target experience through a clear product strategy that can maximize growth
- Phase 4 Launch/GTM:** Focus on in-product communication and knowledge management tools to reduce the need for high-touch human support, allowing a successful product adoption by new customers, at scale



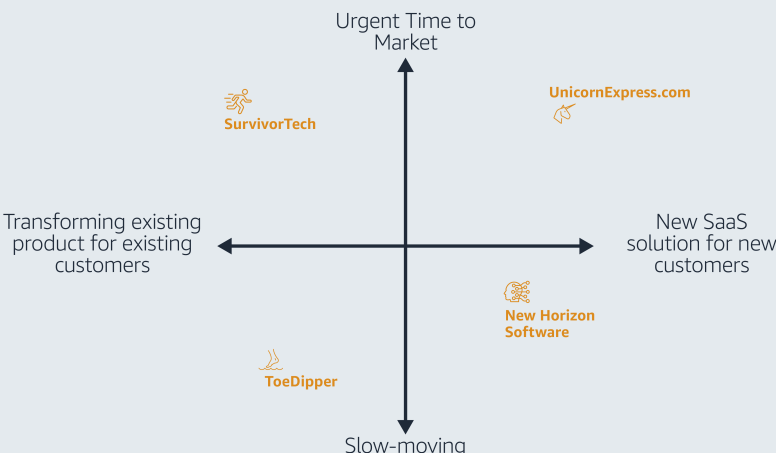
New Horizons Software

This profile represents companies for which the move to SaaS is more about identifying and exploring some new market segment that is not addressed by their existing offering.

- Phase 1 Business Planning:** Identify a new segment or product that will enable the company to begin offering a SaaS product. Assess incremental costs and strategy implications
- Phase 2 Product Strategy & Roadmap Dev:** Look at your product strategy as if creating new line of business. Consider forming new teams that can operate separately from the rest of the company
- Phase 3 Minimum Viable Service:** Build a product strategy for the new SaaS offering that is independent of the other products in the company portfolio
- Phase 4 Launch/GTM:** Work backwards from the prospective customer perspective to understand your new audience and build a successful GTM plan. Consider leveraging channel partners for incremental reach

The figure below visualizes the SaaS objectives of each company profile upon the following criteria:

Time to Market and Business Goal.



The key takeaway: Through all of the four phases in the journey to SaaS, there are some common themes that will likely be part of each phase, regardless of your organization profile, such as organizational and cultural change. At each step in this process, you are likely to be making decisions that require changes in how your teams are organized, how they work together, and how they adopt a new culture as part of moving to a SaaS delivery model. For many organizations, the move to SaaS is more about changing how they think and operate as a business. This is all part of our guidance for them to think more like a service company and less like a product company.

While we present here a sequenced flow of your journey, let your customers, both present and future, be your ultimate guide. Throughout this process, you are likely to be making decisions that will require changes in how your teams are organized, how they work together, and how they adopt new cultural tenets as part of moving to a SaaS delivery model. Leverage this framework in whole or in part. Take what you need. Leave the rest. We don't mind. And let us know how we can help. To further explore the details highlighted here, take a look at the new [SaaS Journey Framework whitepaper](#).

About AWS SaaS Factory

AWS SaaS Factory provides a wide range of resources that help accelerate the adoption or optimization of a SaaS delivery model. SaaS Factory includes best practices for SaaS business strategy, reference architectures for building SaaS solutions on AWS, exclusive training opportunities, and more.

[Learn more about AWS SaaS Factory >>](#)