



Creating Customer Magic: How to Infuse a VOC Mindset to Fuel Insights for Innovation

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What I'll cover today

- How Voice of the Customer (VOC) remains a critical tool in new product development
- How traditional VOC techniques have been augmented by AI
- An example of how product developers can get insights faster, cheaper, and from a broader pool of data

VOC is the study of customer needs



The levers that represent **sources of customer value**



Occur when a customer seeks a benefit that a product or service could deliver

There are many types of customer needs, including but not limited to:

Functional
Product
Segment
Emerging
Service
Universal
Enduring
Fleeting
Emotional
Timeless

Customer needs are NOT

Solutions

Target Values

Opinions

What is VOC?



A **complete** set of customer wants and needs



Expressed in the **customer's own words**



Organized **by the customer**



Prioritized by the customer in terms of **importance** and **current satisfaction**

Traditional VOC relies on customer interviews

Professional VOC teams conduct and transcribe customer interviews to identify needs¹

But now, there are **many** potential sources of insights, in both B2C and B2B categories

1 Articulated in *The PDMA Toolbook 2*, P. Belliveau, A. Griffin & S. Somermeyer, eds., Wiley, 2004.

Product developers have many sources to consult

- Email communication
- Chatbot data
- Company website inquiries
- Open-ended survey data
- YouTube Channels
- Specialized Social Media Groups
- Industry forums
- Reddit

The explosion of sources of customer needs makes finding them time-consuming and overwhelming

A fine-tuned LLM revolutionizes needs gathering



Optimized for a myriad of data sources

- Primary research
- Publicly available data



Fast, efficient and scalable process

- Aggregated
- Massive scale
- Fast turnaround



Unparalleled ability to find insights

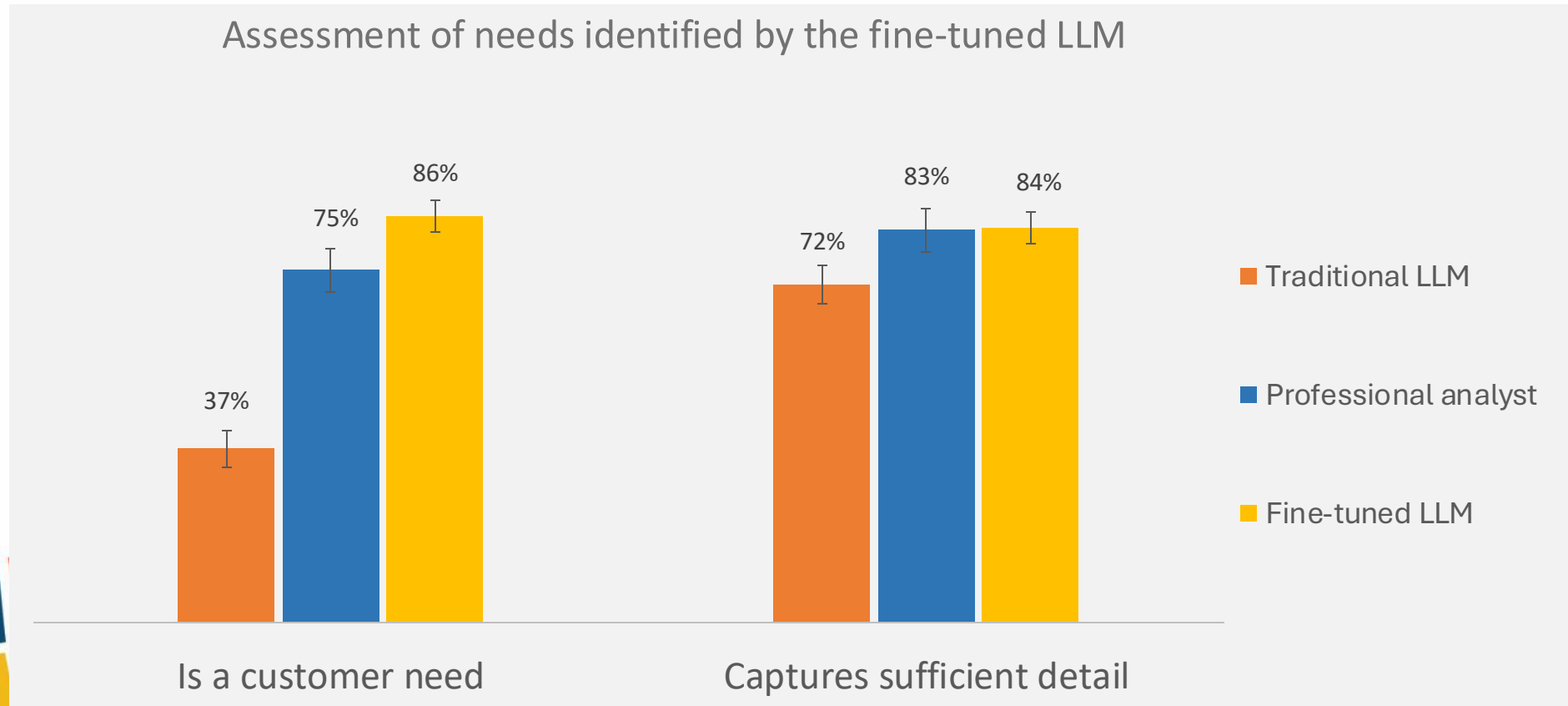
- Less bias
- No analyst fatigue



More comprehensive than ever before

- Functional and emotional needs
- Unique insights that are a source of competitive advantage

In a blind test, the fine-tuned LLM performed as well as professional analysts and better than traditional LLMs



What did we do?



1. Conducted in-depth interviews across key segments of interest
2. Used LLM-based AI to extract in-depth needs
3. Analyzed opportunities for innovation through quantitative measurement



Qualitative Interviews

Phase One

(N=21)

- In-depth telephone interviews with academics, practitioners, and service providers (N=21)
- Develop hypotheses, which will be tested with quantitative research
- Collect insights that will be used in the needs hierarchy



Quantitative Survey

Phase Two

(N=106)

- An online survey to quantify areas of focus
- Measure each need on importance
- Benchmark the market on its performance/ ability to deliver on each need

Nuanced needs related to community and networking were only found by the LLM

A **community for product leaders** who are between jobs

Able to **break down barriers and pave the way for others** (e.g., in my field, for women in leadership roles)

Able to easily switch between sessions if I feel I'm not getting enough **industry and career specific value**

Able to **network with both for-profit and non-profit organizations** at events




Able to interact with the people who are **shaping the future of the industry**

Able to join an association that **values my career goals** (e.g., Able to get my paper published, able to guide clients for consulting services)



Feel free to reach out!



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