

For: CIOs

The Forrester Wave™: Innovation Management Tools, Q3 2013

by Chip Gliedman, July 11, 2013

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Innovation Management Platforms Support Sustained Innovation Programs

Today's economic environment is forcing CIOs and business executives to amplify their innovation programs and processes. Players in the market can support ideation, as well as many layers of innovation program support and governance, when needed. These tools can become the backbone of a sustained innovation program, propelling business value.

Vendor Tools And Services Are Outpacing Client Maturity

The innovation tools market is still immature and highly fragmented, reflecting shallow penetration of the tools into client organizations. As a result, vendors have had plenty of time to build robust platforms tailored to meet varying innovation needs. All that remains is for their use to grow.

Match Tools And Services To Organizational Maturity, Needs, And Communities

The wide range of products requires an organization to carefully consider its own innovation maturity, governance, and process requirements; the breadth and depth of the planned innovation program; the location and skill set of likely users; and the overall goals in order to make the best match with the available vendor offerings.



The Forrester Wave™: Innovation Management Tools, Q3 2013

The 14 Providers That Matter Most And How They Stack Up

by [Chip Gliedman](#)

with [Peter Burris](#) and Nancy Wang

WHY READ THIS REPORT

Using Forrester's 17-criteria evaluation of innovation management vendors, we identified, researched, analyzed, and rated 14 significant innovation platform providers — BrainBank, Brightidea, CogniStreamer, Hype Innovation, IdeaScale, Imaginatik, inno360, InnoCentive, Innovation Factory, InnovationCast, Kindling, Nosco, Qmarkets, and Spigit. The final scores are tightly clustered, which shows that ensuring the best results and maximizing value from innovation management tools is less about the specific feature set of any individual innovation management product and more about the appropriateness of the solution in relation to a customer's organizational innovation maturity, specific internal goals, and expected user communities. This report details our findings about how well each vendor fulfills our criteria and where they stand in relation to each other to help readers select the right partner for their innovation management needs.

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Forrester conducted product evaluations in January and February 2013 and interviewed more than 50 vendor and user companies.

Related Research Documents

[Fuel Business Growth Via The BT Innovation Portfolio](#)

August 23, 2012

[Sustained Innovation Propels The Business Engine](#)

August 23, 2012

[The Forrester Innovation Heat Index: Turn Good Ideas Into Real Innovations Faster](#)

August 23, 2012

[Move From Ideation To Innovation](#)

July 13, 2012

INNOVATION TOOLS ACCELERATE INNOVATION PROCESSES

Organizations must continually evolve through innovation to meet increasing market and economic pressures. Rather than simply mining promising suggestions submitted on slips of paper dropped into an employee suggestion box, an organization must actively mine and manage the collective wisdom and experiences of all of the players in the firm's innovation ecosystem to thrive in increasingly competitive markets (see Figure 1). Exploiting diverse innovation sources will expand the breadth of suggestions to explore and the depth of available solutions to existing problems.

An innovation program is based on possibilities. A firm will allocate funds and resources to possibilities that it selects for further refinement and incubation, and it will define stages and gates prior to implementation. Innovation management tools are software platforms that not only focus on the front end, or ideation part of the innovation process, but also enhance the idea enrichment and evaluation processes. To be most effective, they also must do this within the structure and governance required to properly manage an organization's intellectual property and resources. With the right tools, a firm can accelerate the work on an individual innovation, generate and manage a portfolio of innovations holistically, and make the entire innovation process self-sustaining (see Figure 2).

On the front end, these platforms allow companies to gather ideas from authorized participants (employees, external partners, customers, and consumers) in an open social environment. The company tracks and matures an idea through social interactions on the platform until it has developed into a concept that can move into a formal product development process.

On the back end, these platforms can allow companies to establish governance, funding, incentives, measurement, and communications programs around their innovation initiatives. In addition, such platforms can assist in managing a portfolio of ideas under incubation and integrate with installed business process or collaboration tools in place in the enterprise.

When combined with a staffed and funded innovation process, innovation management tools can provide value to an organization in many ways, including:

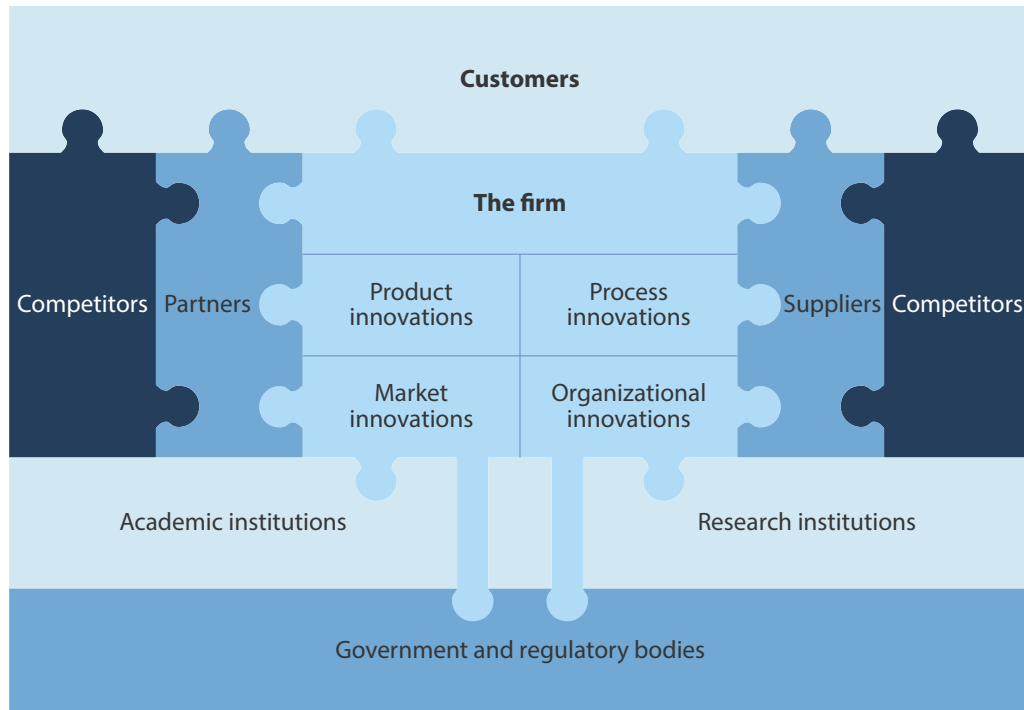
- **Faster time-to-value for promising ideas.** Promoting a targeted innovation challenge across an organization can unearth institutional knowledge unknown to the challenge owners and champions. We spoke to numerous companies that found experts and solutions to problems in unexpected areas of their organizations, which allowed them to quickly solve otherwise thorny challenges.
- **Access to external experts.** Platforms that specialize in external innovations often have access to willing pools of experts and innovators. A small financial incentive may be all that is required to multiply the number of researchers seeking out a solution to a technical or market issue. A number of companies reported that they were able to license applicable intellectual property from participants in such challenges to assist in new product and market development.

- **Serving as a collection point for customer-driven improvements.** Many companies report that their innovation platform provides an outlet for customer-facing employees, such as call-center agents or field technicians, to propose new products or solutions to meet specific customer needs based on their firsthand interactions with the customers. An easily accessible platform, with the ability for others to refine and promote submitted ideas, ensures that good ideas are captured and reviewed, rather than lost in the day-to-day bustle.
- **Positive employee engagement.** One service-oriented company we spoke with pointed out a strong correlation between participation in innovation initiatives and customer satisfaction scores for their different locations. Employees who engage in the organization's program to solve problems are more likely to bring those same skills to bear when dealing with customers, leading to both internal and external benefits.

Even though innovation management tools contribute to positive business benefits for the users, the tools market is still fairly immature and highly fragmented. Although many of the vendors in the space have offered solutions for five or more years, the total revenue of the 14 vendors we evaluated remains at less than \$70 million annually. One vendor, Spigit, represents approximately 28% of this revenue with the remaining 13 vendors averaging \$4 million per year. Though the market is immature, we found virtually all of the tools we evaluated to be fairly mature and, when paired with the appropriate organizational needs, quite useful. It appears that the maturity of the tools exceeds the average innovation maturity of large organizations.

Forrester believes that organizations should not stand on the sideline waiting for the market to sort itself out. The cost of entry to implement one of the named tools is low, with the benefits potentially very high. At the same time, the cost of switching products is also low, and there's minimal impact on the customer organization. Many of the organizations we've talked to over the past year are already on their second or third innovation tool, with product changes occurring as maturity and needs evolve. Uncertainty in the market should not impede implementation.

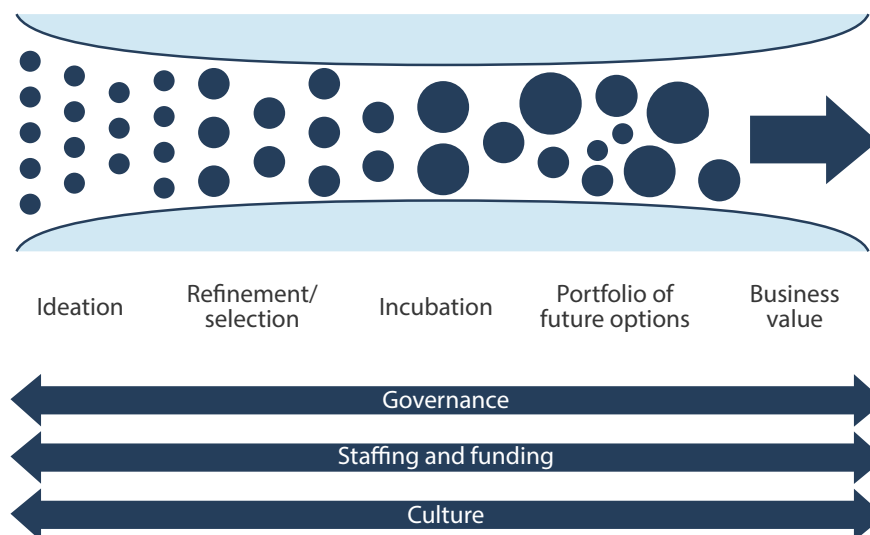
Figure 1 Exploit The Full Innovation Ecosystem For Maximum Benefits



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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 2 Innovation Management Tools Provide Structure To The Innovation Process



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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

TOOLS CAN'T CURE CORPORATE OR CULTURAL ILLS

Implementing an innovation management platform without defined resources and processes in place is really just the implementation of an (expensive) electronic suggestion box. However, with management and resource commitment to an innovation program, the tools can provide a basic process framework and platform, potentially accelerating the maturity of the organization's management, communications, and governance of the innovative possibilities.

Virtually all of the vendors in the innovation management market have teams of professionals who can assist an organization in implementing best practices across the spectrum of innovation activities — ideation and campaign management, refinement and selection, communications, and governance. Depending upon the maturity of your organization, look to vendors whose offerings address what you need most.

Over the course of this evaluation, Forrester spoke with more than 40 users of the tools included in this Forrester Wave report. Virtually all of these vendor reference clients cited positive outcomes for their initiatives and positive return on investment in their innovation programs. However, the organizations that seemed to be most successful were those that matched the most appropriate tool to their innovation maturity and participants.

Align Products With Your Innovation Maturity

Organizations that are just starting with an innovation program and have lower levels of innovation maturity should focus on vendors whose products and service offerings:

- **Are challenge-oriented.** In the context of innovation management tools, a challenge is a problem-solving initiative around a defined theme of value to the organization. Tools that are based around challenges or campaigns allow an organization to segment its innovative activities and tackle problems sequentially — growing in number, scale, and scope as maturity increases. Challenge-oriented tools ensure that scale is not required to generate value from the tool. A single challenge can produce immediate benefits without the overhead of trying to implement a full innovation program.
- **Have defined workflows for different kinds of innovation programs.** Organizations may look to implement different processes for different kinds of innovation programs. A vendor that can provide workflow choices based upon other client experiences can shorten your rollout times and simplify adoption of your evolved governance processes.
- **Have a defined customer life cycle — and the consulting offerings to assist at each stage.** Successful innovation is less about tools than it is about process, organization, and culture. A vendor with consulting offerings that span the innovation process, as opposed to just product use and administration, is a better partner for the less mature organization.

Organizations with a higher level of innovation maturity should focus on vendors whose product and service offerings:

- **Have more flexibility in underlying workflow tools.** A more mature organization is more likely to have defined processes in place. Such organizations should pick vendors with adaptable and flexible workflows. However, even a mature organization should think twice about making wholesale changes to a tool's workflow, as they may be automating an internal but suboptimal process, rather than taking advantage of the lessons learned by the vendor in servicing many innovation customers.
- **Have tools to manage across the innovation portfolio.** Many of the innovation tools maintain segregation between specific innovation challenges and campaigns. As the organization increases maturity, a tool that can aggregate innovation activities across campaigns and manage the portfolio of innovation activities and business outcomes becomes more important.
- **Link to existing project management and project portfolio management (PPM) tools.** Incubation activities require funding and resources. More mature organizations will look toward project and portfolio management tools to support this aspect of their programs. Such organizations with multiple funded initiatives may place integration with these tools higher on their shortlist. In fact, PPM vendors, such as Sopheon and Planview, distribute integrated innovation tools as modules of their solutions. Sopheon's Accolade Idea Lab software contains an OEM version of Hype's innovation tools, and Planview's Enterprise Ideation Management offering includes Brightidea's innovation tool. Some of the other innovation management platforms also have links to PPM and product life-cycle management (PLM) tools.

Additionally, innovation tools should be matched to the skills and needs of the participants in an organization's innovation program. Internal innovation programs should have tools linked to corporate directories with role and group permissions appropriate for the expected users. External or open innovation programs will need tools that can handle user registration, clarify intellectual property (IP) issues, and protect this IP from dissemination to others outside the organization. Additionally, all of the tools must be matched to the technical competency of the expected users. When matching tools to constituencies, consider whether the tool is:

- **Tailored for broad, lower-level consumption.** These tools may sacrifice some complexity, but they make up for it in ease of use, which encourages broad participation at all organizational levels. For example, we spoke with a restaurant chain that deployed an innovation management tool that generated high-return participation down to the kitchen and wait staff. Likewise, a product innovation program that links an idea management tool to a customer-facing Facebook or web page must be simple enough for people to use with minimal or no instruction.
- **Designed for open or external innovation.** Innovation challenges posed to external participants, whether part of your immediate ecosystem or a broader, public-based community,

must take IP ownership into account. Vendors and tools with experience in open or external innovation challenges can ensure that IP rules are clearly outlined to participants in advance and the integrity of submitted content is ensured.

- **Able to support more complex refinement and evaluation of ideas.** Organizations looking to address larger-scale issues with large numbers of participants would likely best be served by tools that can support complex refinement, evaluation, and community development functions. The ability for the organization to model more complex evaluation criteria and processes, use pair-wise comparisons to speed the ranking of large numbers of submissions, and set up virtual marketplaces and other gamification options to broaden participation make them good solutions for these larger-scale programs.

AN IMMATURE, FRAGMENTED PRODUCT LANDSCAPE IS RIPE FOR CONSOLIDATION

The lack of broad traction in this marketplace is most likely the result of customer immaturity, rather than any inherent problem with vendor offerings. Only 45% of respondents in a recent survey of IT and business decision-makers reported that they have groups dedicated to innovation, and only 34% of respondents had centralized organizations and processes for innovation (see Figure 3).¹ As more organizations get serious about adding rigor to their innovation activities, market size should increase.

It is also apparent that there will likely be consolidation in this market. 2012 saw Intuit cease the marketing of its Brainstorm ideation tool and Spigit acquire Crowdcast. There are few scenarios we can imagine where all of the evaluated vendors remain as independent software and service providers into 2015.

Acquisition and consolidation is likely to occur along three fronts:

- **Small vendors consolidate for bulk and greater presence.** We can easily foresee scenarios where vendors consolidate through acquisition or merger in order to leverage resources to better attack the market. As there are still clear differentiators among many of the vendors — either by market presence and focus (North America/Europe) or by innovation communities served (open/corporate) — vendors can combine with little or no redundancy in product, market, or services offered.
- **Social and collaboration tools vendors move in.** Most of the tools evaluated integrate with enterprise social and/or collaboration tools, such as Chatter, Yammer, and SharePoint. Microsoft, with its acquisition of Yammer, has already shown a willingness to move into adjoining marketplaces. We can easily envision an acquisition by vendors such as Microsoft, Google, or salesforce.com looking to solidify their position as enterprise productivity platforms.

- **PLM and PPM vendors add an innovative face to their offerings.** A good idea often requires significant effort, coupled with the allocation of funds and resources, to bring it to fruition. The management of such initiatives is the realm of PLM and PPM products. Sopheon and Planview, to name just two vendors in this marketplace, already OEM innovation tools from vendors included in this evaluation. As the market expands, it is not a stretch to assume that they and others will look to solidify their offerings through acquisitions or internal development.

Figure 3 The Tools Are Ready — But Most Organizations Are Not



Source: Q4 2012 IT Organization, Innovation, And Governance Online Survey

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

INNOVATION MANAGEMENT TOOLS EVALUATION OVERVIEW

To assess the state of the innovation management tools market and see how the vendors stack up against each other, Forrester evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of top innovation management tools vendors.

Evaluations Focused On Both The Current And The Future For The Products

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we developed a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria. We evaluated vendors against 17 criteria, which we grouped into three high-level buckets:

- **Current offering.** In this category, we looked at ideation/idea management; idea refinement and selection; incentives; communications; governance; customization; architecture and integration;

security; and professional services. We weighted the ideation/idea management, idea refinement and selection, and governance categories the greatest, as we deemed these to be most important to the CIOs and innovation professionals we spoke with who were considering such tools.

- **Strategy.** In this category, we took a close look at each vendor's product strategy and road map, management team, and vision. In particular, we focused on evaluating which vendors had compelling road maps that demonstrated thought leadership, rather than market parity; seasoned management teams to lead them through this period of market uncertainty; and a clear and compelling vision for the future of sustainable innovation.
- **Market presence.** In this category, we looked at the install base of customers using the vendor's products, corporate revenue and growth, and the size and diversity of the partner ecosystem that could accelerate adoption and use of the product.

Evaluated Vendors Have Demonstrable Customer Successes

Forrester included 14 vendors in the assessment: BrainBank, Brightidea, CogniStreamer, Hype Innovation, IdeaScale, Imaginatik, inno360, InnoCentive, Innovation Factory, InnovationCast, Kindling, Nosco, Qmarkets, and Spigit. Each of these vendors has (see Figure 4):

- **A sustained presence in the innovation tools market.** Vendors included in this Forrester Wave target the innovation management platform business and have offered a product to the market for at least three years.
- **Notable growth in clients, revenues, and employees between 2009 and 2012.** Vendors included in this Forrester Wave have at least \$1 million in revenue and at least 15 employees. While this may appear to be a low threshold, the average revenue for the 14 included vendors is only about \$5 million per year, reflecting the fragmented and immature nature of the innovation tools market.
- **The proven ability to serve large enterprise clients across the globe.** Each of the vendors provided us with at least three reference customers that we spoke with to validate the utility of the product. All of the references provided were in organizations typical of the Forrester client base.
- **Mindshare within Forrester's client base.** Included vendors are frequently mentioned in Forrester client inquiries and other forms of client interaction.

Figure 4 Evaluated Vendors: Product Information And Selection Criteria

Company name	Product name	Product version	Product release date
BrainBank	Idealink	8.0	January 2013
Brightidea	Brightidea Innovation Suite	Winter 2012	September 2012
CogniStreamer	CogniStreamer Innovation Portal	3.16	February 2013
Hype Innovation	Hype Enterprise	8.0.1	January 2013
IdeaScale	IdeaScale	2013	January 2013
Imaginatik	Innovation Central	11.02	September 2012
inno360	inno360	2.8	March 2013
InnoCentive	InnoCentive	InnoCentive Challenges: version 4.23.1; InnoCentive@Work: version 3.23.2	InnoCentive Challenges: February 2013; InnoCentive@Work: February 2013
Innovation Factory	PIT	4.19	January 2013
InnovationCast	InnovationCast	3	January 2013
Kindling	Kindling	3.12.1	February 2013
Nosco	Nosco App	2	May 2012
Qmarkets	Qmarkets Ideation	5.7	September 2012
Spigit	Spigit	3.4	December 2012

Vendor selection criteria

Vendors included in this Forrester Wave target the idea management platform business and have been working in this or a related innovation space for at least three years; have demonstrated growth in employees, clients, and revenue between 2009 and 2012; have at least 15 employees; and have demonstrated the ability to serve large enterprise clients across the globe.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

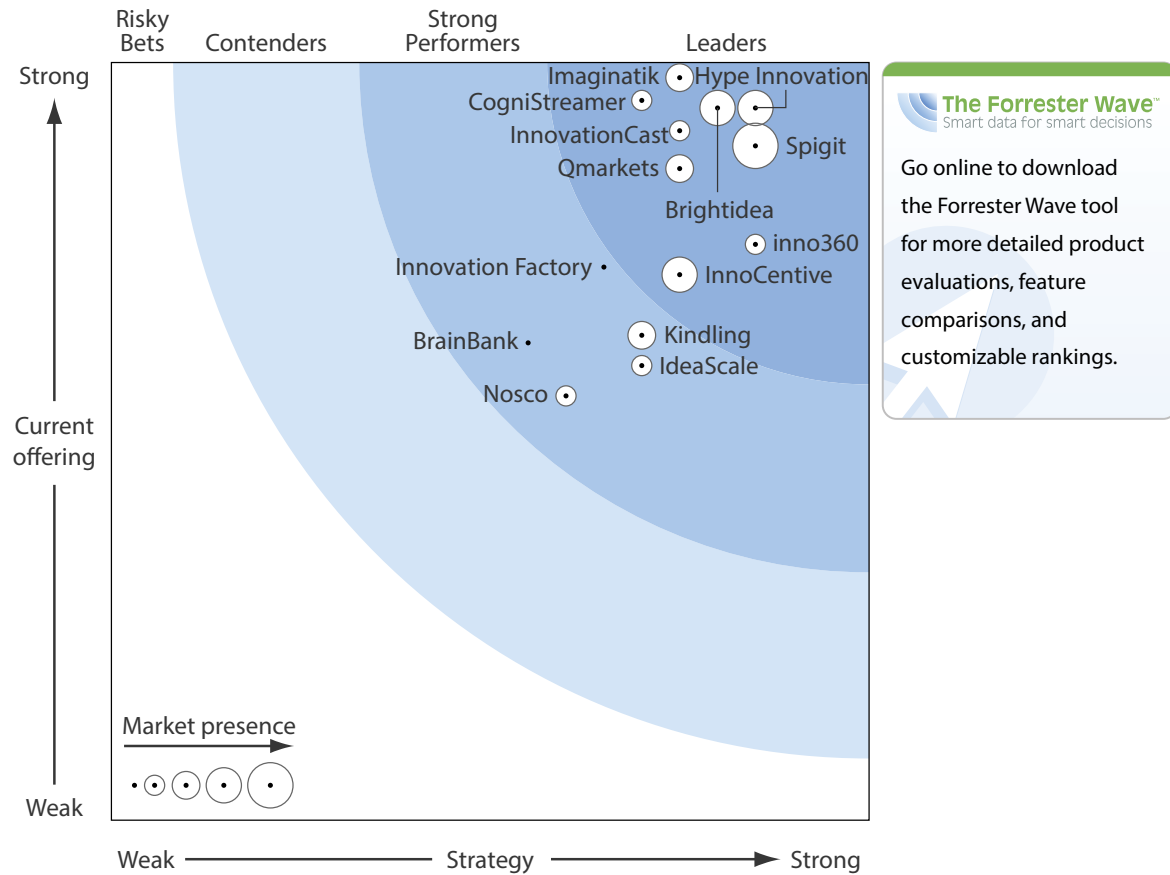
EVALUATED VENDORS OFFER FUNCTION-RICH PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The evaluation uncovered a market in which (see Figure 5):

- **Brightidea, CogniStreamer, Hype Innovation, Imaginatik, inno360, InnoCentive, InnovationCast, Qmarkets, and Spigit lead the pack.** These vendors provide full-functioned product and service offerings that can be deployed in standard configurations that can guide less mature organizations and handle the customized needs of more mature organizations. Products in this category distinguish themselves with advanced features, such as integrations with project and life-cycle management tools, innovation portfolio management tools, and advanced analytics that help manage larger-scale innovation programs.
- **BrainBank, IdeaScale, Innovation Factory, Kindling, and Nosco offer competitive options.** These vendors' products and services are good choices for organizations looking for a quick-to-deploy, more focused tool to support their innovation program. These products are well-matched to organizations that want to start automating their innovation programs and those that have limited resources to dedicate to the implementation and support of an innovation tool suite.

This evaluation of the innovation management tools market is intended to be a starting point only. We encourage clients to view detailed product evaluations and adapt criteria weightings to fit their individual needs through the Forrester Wave Excel-based vendor comparison tool.

Figure 5 Forrester Wave™: Innovation Management Tools, Q3 '13



Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 5 Forrester Wave™: Innovation Management Tools, Q3 '13 (Cont.)

	Forrester's Weighting	BrainBank	Brightidea	CogniStream	Hype Innovation	IdeaScale	Imaginatik	inno360	InnoCentive	Innovation Factory	InnovationCast	Kindling	Nosco	Qmarkets	Spigit
CURRENT OFFERING	50%	3.15	4.70	4.75	4.70	3.00	4.90	3.80	3.60	3.65	4.55	3.20	2.80	4.30	4.45
Ideation/idea management	20%	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
Idea refinement and selection	20%	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00
Incentives	5%	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
Communications	5%	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
Governance	20%	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
Customization	10%	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00
Architecture and integration	5%	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Security	5%	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
Professional services	10%	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
Deployment model	0%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
STRATEGY	50%	2.75	4.00	3.50	4.25	3.50	3.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.50	3.00	3.75	4.25
Product road map	50%	2.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00
Management team	25%	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
Vision	25%	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Cost	0%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
MARKET PRESENCE	0%	1.00	3.75	1.25	3.25	1.25	2.25	1.75	3.75	1.00	1.25	2.50	1.25	3.00	5.00
Customers	25%	1.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
Partner program	25%	1.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	0.00	3.00	5.00
Size	50%	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	5.00

All scores are based on a scale of 0 (weak) to 5 (strong).

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

VENDOR PROFILES

Leaders

- **Hype Innovation provides a mature, comprehensive platform to support innovation.** In its 11th year in the innovation space, the company has matured and developed a well-rounded innovation management platform that supports all aspects of the innovation program, from idea collection and refinement to governance and communication. Many global organizations

have deployed the tool, and customers praise it as highly customizable. An out-of-box standard version is also available. As mentioned earlier in the report, Hype partners with Sopheon, which resells an OEM version of Hype Enterprise as part of its Accolade Idea Lab, for organizations that require PPM tools. The company is based in Germany and has offices both in Bonn, Germany and Cambridge, Mass.

- **Brightidea brings a strong platform and ecosystem to innovation leaders.** Brightidea focuses on working closely with innovation leaders in an organization to help them develop a successful innovation program. With an innovation-ecosystem-oriented offering, Brightidea offers integration with an extensive portfolio of systems that also can play an important role in bringing innovation to life, from enterprise social platforms like Yammer and Tibco Tibbr to analytics software like QlikView and GoodData. Via an OEM relationship, Brightidea provides the innovation management component in Planview's PPM tool and in Rally Software's application life-cycle management tool. The company is based in the US.
- **Spigit delivers innovation using advanced crowdsourcing and analytics.** As the biggest vendor in this market, with over 28% of the 2012 global revenue for the market, Spigit has a clear vision of how to harness the power of crowds for innovation. On top of a well-developed enterprise innovation platform, Spigit invests heavily in developing advanced technology such as pairwise voting, gamification, and smart idea evaluation to continue improving the value of the innovation platform — for example, through better platform engagement, a better idea refinement and evaluation process, and automated idea graduation. Its acquisition of Crowdcast in September 2012 demonstrated its determination to get crowdsourcing and predictive analytics to work for innovation.
- **Imaginatik complements its platform with capable consulting services.** Imaginatik started out in Europe and has expanded to North America to establish a presence on both continents. While it has a mature and thorough offering that supports organizations in managing end-to-end innovation, the key differentiator of Imaginatik is its strong consulting services. Technology alone cannot sustain innovation. Imaginatik aims to help its customers develop processes, culture, and governance for innovation on top of its technology services. Considering that organizations have different levels of innovation maturity, Imaginatik strives to provide the right mix of technology and consulting services to help companies be successful in their innovation programs.
- **InnovationCast partners with a social platform vendor to harness innovation.** InnovationCast, part of weListen, is built on top of Telligent Systems' enterprise social platform, although firms can deploy InnovationCast without Telligent. Leveraging the power of enterprise social, InnovationCast is a platform that excels in building communities and challenges, supporting communications, and supplying workflows and templates. Although it's a European company and has a stronger presence in Europe, InnovationCast leverages the resources at Telligent to serve the North American market.

- **CogniStreamer rises in the market with solid innovation management capabilities.** Having offices in both Europe and North America, CogniStreamer offers a full-grown set of capabilities as an innovation management platform addressing ideation, idea evaluation, communications, etc. The company has a clear philosophy for innovation success and partners closely with its customers. CogniStreamer provides dedicated technical and consulting services as well as training; to help customers succeed with innovation programs, it offers comprehensive support both during and after the implementation.
- **Inno360 turns ideas to innovation by providing an extensive expert and knowledge network.** Inno360 differentiates its offering by focusing on idea refinement and collaboration. The company's roots are in consumer packaged product research and development, and the platform brings value to organizations in the area of product innovation by helping users connect to external expertise and knowledge and navigate the IP landscape such as patent databases and academic research. It also provides advanced visualization to help users organize and understand the information and develop better ideas.
- **Qmarkets serves globally with a highly customizable innovation tool.** With its roots in prediction markets, Qmarkets extends its knowledge in predictive algorithms such as intelligent grouping and evaluation into its innovation management tool. The tool comes with dozens of standard workflow templates based on various innovation frameworks that can help organizations jump-start their innovation process. The product is also strong in flexibility and customization. Headquartered in Israel, Qmarkets has offices in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific.
- **InnoCentive uses its strength in open challenges to expand into employee-facing innovation.** Based in the US, InnoCentive is well known for its public-facing innovation challenges, as it has worked with many organizations to run large-scale open innovation campaigns on InnoCentive.com. InnoCentive has accrued one of the largest solver communities, which fuels ideas via the crowdsourcing of open challenges. Expanding its offering to enterprise-focused innovation, its recent addition, InnoCentive@Work, addresses internal innovation programs.

Strong Performers

- **Innovation Factory's knowledge repository improves innovation portfolio management.** Innovation Factory started in the Netherlands and has worked mostly with European companies. Its platform, PIT or "Power Ideas Together," emphasizes knowledge management, which will foster better ideas and innovation management. Although the platform is challenge-based, the company makes everything in the platform searchable so users can easily find information and resurface ideas and knowledge stored in previous challenges. The simple user interface also allows for easy access and collaboration.

- **Kindling prioritizes platform engagement and focuses on user experience.** Kindling is a simple innovation management tool that emphasizes user experience. Seeing user experience as a key factor in getting value from the innovation platform, Kindling focuses on ease of use across all roles in the innovation process — from idea submitters to commenters to evaluators. The tool integrates with SharePoint and other enterprise social platforms, and Kindling also offers OEM capacity. For example, Deloitte Australia partnered with Kindling and white-labeled the product as Deloitte Innovation Academy. Kindling is based in New York.
- **IdeaScale makes innovation participation easy for customers, employees, and partners.** IdeaScale is a relatively lightweight innovation tool, as it focuses on lowering the barrier to participation in innovation challenges. Started as a public-facing feedback platform for US federal agencies in 2008, IdeaScale is designed for broad-level participation. The company is experienced in supporting large communities of users, collecting and managing ideas, customizing the tool, and integrating with consumer-facing social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
- **BrainBank offers a more capable innovation platform after revamp.** Canadian company BrainBank has been in the innovation market since 1999. In its recent overhaul of its platform, BrainBank strengthened usability and flexibility. To better accommodate consumer-facing challenges, BrainBank provides the ability to customize the tool and better integration with other systems. It also plans to improve the platform's user experience in the near future.
- **Nosco aims to scale its platform by offering more flexibility for customization.** Danish company Nosco established its European presence with offices in Copenhagen, Milan, and London. The company's small size allows it to provide flexibility and to build close relationships with its customers, and Nosco now wants to scale the innovation platform. While maintaining its idea management capability, Nosco is developing the ability for customers to customize the platform, which will give them more control in managing their ideas and innovation campaigns. The company also plans to improve its innovation consulting services.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource

The online version of Figure 5 is an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

Data Sources Used In This Forrester Wave

Forrester used a combination of four data sources to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each solution:

- **Vendor surveys.** Forrester surveyed vendors on their capabilities as they relate to the evaluation criteria. Once we analyzed the completed vendor surveys, we conducted vendor calls where necessary to gather details of vendor qualifications.
- **Product and offering briefings.** We asked vendors to familiarize us with their product capabilities, service offerings, marketing messages, management, and vision. We used these sessions to clarify the information provided in the vendor's written responses.
- **Product demos.** We asked vendors to conduct demonstrations of their product's functionality. We used findings from these product demos to validate details of each vendor's product capabilities.
- **Customer reference calls.** To validate product and vendor qualifications, Forrester also conducted reference calls with three of each vendor's current customers. These reference calls allowed us to validate vendor claims with the users of the products, as well as to better understand how customers received value from the vendor's products and services.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and we encourage readers to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Only 45% of the firms surveyed have groups dedicated to innovation. Fewer than half of firms have defined processes to evaluate the ideas generated through innovation programs, and only a third have funds dedicated to incubating and commercializing those ideas deemed promising. See the February 26, 2013, [“CIOs Are Not Ready To Support Business Innovation”](#) report.

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« CAROL ITO, client persona representing CIOs

