

# 14

## The development process

### A

#### Market research

The **original concept** is the basic idea for something.

In designing products and services, **market research** – finding out what people want – is of course very important. This may involve **questionnaires** or **surveys**, with questions about what people buy and why, perhaps with interviews in the street or by telephone.

There may be **consumer panels** and **focus groups**, where ordinary people meet to discuss product ideas informally.

Perhaps the researchers will make **sales forecasts**, estimates of how many products will be sold.

See Unit 21 for more on marketing.



### B

#### Development and launch

In software, developers often produce a final test version, the **beta version**, where users are asked to point out **bugs** (problems) before the software is finalized.

Car designers use **CADCAM** (computer-assisted design / computer-assisted manufacturing) to help develop and make products and test different **prototypes**.

Researchers in **laboratories** may take years to develop new drugs, **testing** or **trailing** them in **trials** to show not only that they are **effective**, but also that they are **safe**. Drugs need to be made on an **industrial scale** before they can be sold.

**Rollout** is the process of making a product available, perhaps in particular places, to test reaction.

**Product launch** is the moment when the product is officially made available for sale. This is the 'big moment'.

If a **design defect** or **design fault** is found in a product after it has been launched, the company may have to **recall** it, asking those who have bought it to return it, perhaps so that the defect can be corrected.

14.1 Three people are talking about their work in product development. Correct the mistakes in italics, using expressions from A and B opposite.

1 (a) *Market researches showed* there was a real need for this service, but before offering it, we had to test it in a (b) *beta copy* with small groups of users over several months to eliminate all the bugs. Even so, (c) *after lunch*, some users said they could get into other people's accounts!

2 The more you eat, the thinner you get, and (d) *the focal groups* said they liked the taste, but first we had to prove to the authorities that it was (e) *secure*. Another problem was making it on an (f) *industrial level*: at first we could only make it in small quantities in the laboratory, but making it in bigger quantities was impossible.

3 At our research centre in Toulouse in France, the (g) *designators* develop the prototypes. People think that my job is dangerous, but there is so much (h) *tasting* on computer first, that all the danger has been eliminated by the time we use the product. (i) *CADCAR* means that the process of design and manufacture is much quicker than before.

14.2 Complete this talk by a marketing specialist using words from A and B opposite.

A few years ago a famous car company launched a new car, based on a completely new (1) ..... . They'd done years of technical research and (2) ..... research with focus (3) ..... and (4) ..... panels and analysis of responses to questionnaires and (5) ..... . Then came the (6) ..... . Sales of the car were very good until a Swedish newspaper reported the results of its 'elk test'. They found that the car had a tendency to tip over if you turned quickly to avoid an elk. This was due to a (7) ..... fault in the car, so they had to (8) ..... all the cars they'd sold in order to correct it.



Over to you

What sort of market research does your company, or one you would like to work for, do? Have you ever taken part in market research as a consumer?