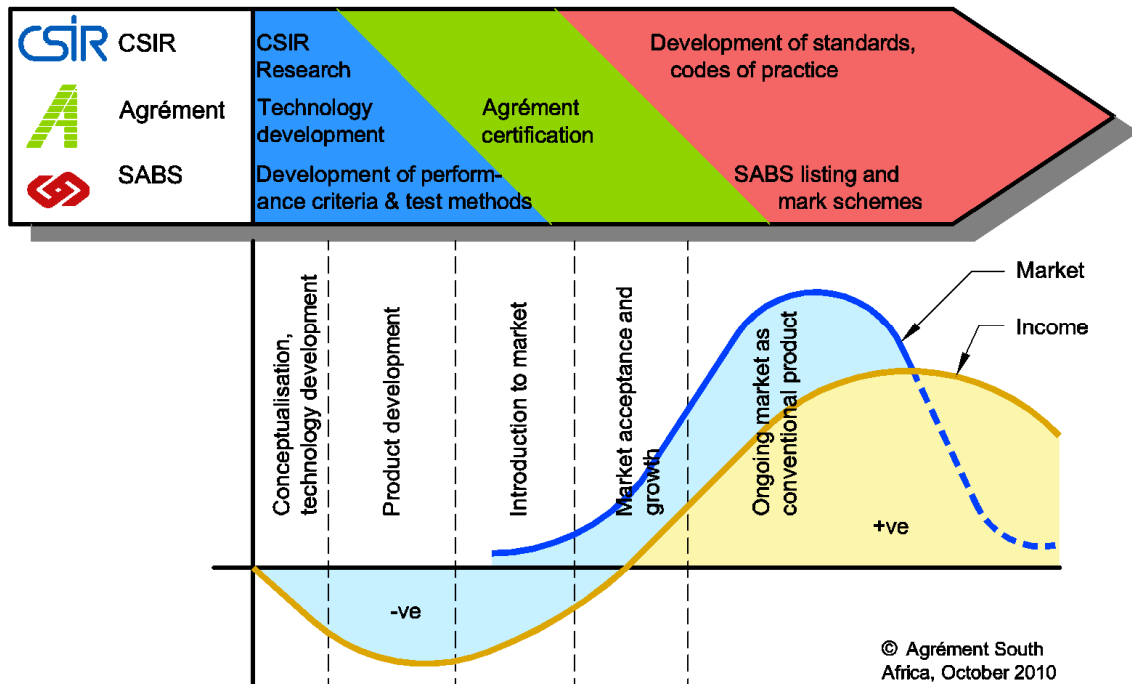


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All new products go through similar development phases which are categorised according to the entrepreneur's and consumer's needs as:

The master copy of this document appears on the website:  
<http://www.agrement.co.za>

- Concept
- Development
- Introduction to market
- Market acceptance and growth
- Ongoing market as conventional product



The role of the CSIR, Agrément and the SABS in the product development cycle

## Concept

### Entrepreneur

The entrepreneur needs some research to give substance to his concept and to assess its technological feasibility.

### Consumer

As long as the potential user is unaware of the product he has no interest in it.

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## Development

### Entrepreneur

Having established that the product warrants further development, it is generally necessary to invest substantial amounts in development capital to produce a prototype. Further research is often required during this phase to ascertain, say, an appropriate production technology, the suitability of various alternative materials, likely product costs, etc. The entrepreneur needs to know as early as possible whether the performance-in-use of the product is likely to meet expectations.

For a radically new product it may be necessary to develop a set of appropriate performance criteria before such an evaluation can be carried out. Where innovation consists of modifying some aspects of an existing product to give better functionality or cost savings, appropriate performance criteria may already exist and an evaluation of likely performance-in-use can be carried out at a fairly early stage.

### Consumer

As long as the potential user is unaware of the product he has no interest in it.

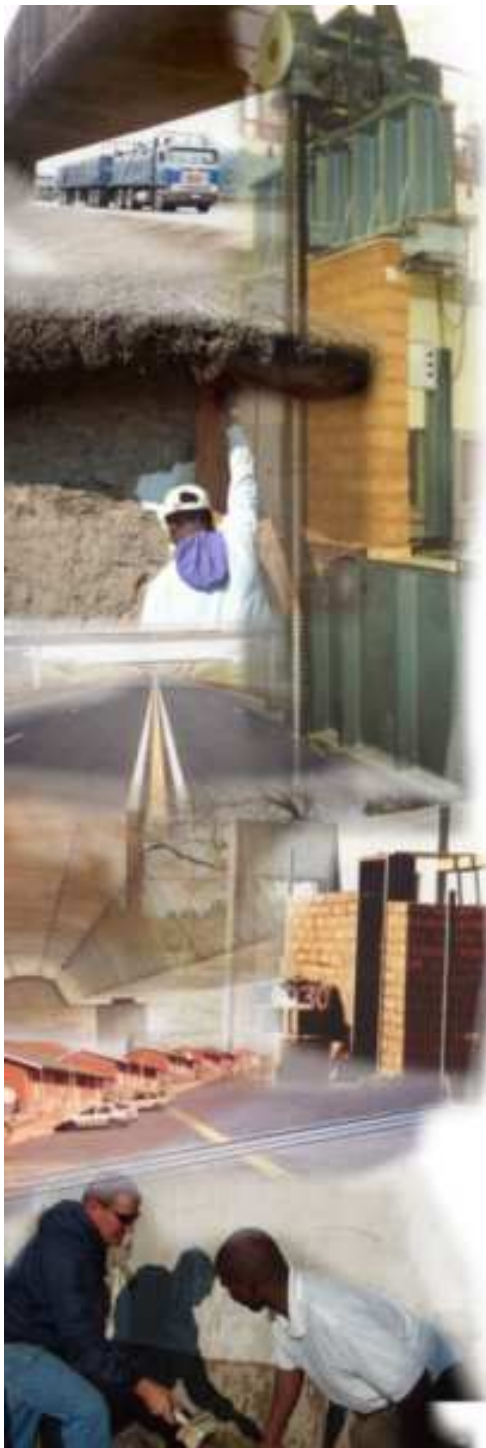
## Introduction to market

### Entrepreneur

By now the entrepreneur will have the assurance that his product is technically adequate and that there is a potential market for it. He now needs to invest in the commercialisation of his product. To be able to successfully launch a new product in a basically conservative market such as the building industry, he needs to satisfy potential users of its fitness-for-purpose. Such assurance needs to be accepted in the market place and be regarded as having the necessary credibility and status.

### Consumer

The user would generally ask himself what benefits in cost, performance or time the new product could have for him. To take a well-informed decision he would need access to objective, credible information on the technical performance of the product and its fitness for the purpose for which he wishes to use it. This information needs to be readily available in a useable form.



## Market acceptance and growth

### Entrepreneur

Once the product and its performance-in-use become known and generally accepted in the market and there is an increasing demand for it, competition will develop. The entrepreneur wishing to retain a competitive edge needs to provide assurance that the quality of his product will consistently satisfy the customer's expectations, and is equal to or better than that of his competitors.

### Consumer

After the product has been on the market for some time, the experience and feedback received from other users would ensure that its performance-in-use would be fairly well known. The user's main concern would therefore be to seek assurance that the quality of the product has been maintained at the required level.

## Ongoing market as conventional product

### Entrepreneur

Once the product is well established in the market the entrepreneur's main concern will be to retain and grow his market share in an increasingly competitive market. From a technical point of view he could achieve this by development and improvement of the product (repeating the cycle) and by ensuring that his product retains its "quality" image by standardisation and effective quality management.

### Consumer

By this stage the user will usually be able to select from a range of similar products which, provided they are produced to the same standard of quality, would have the same performance characteristics. To take an informed decision on which product represents the best value for money, the user needs to know the price and the standard of quality. The former is usually readily available but the latter requires some form of reliable and credible confirmation by a reputable, objective organisation.