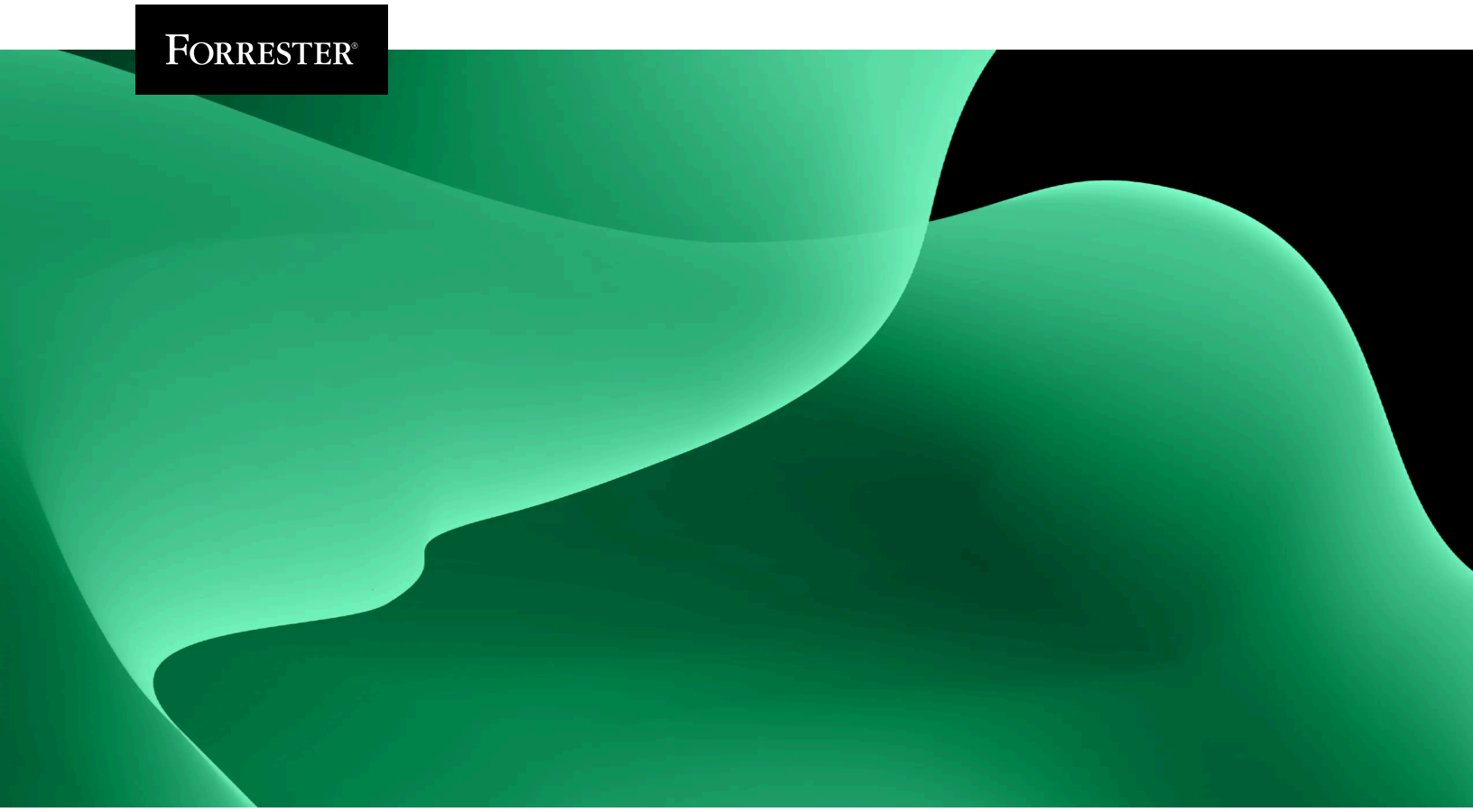
Total Economic Impact

The Total Economic Impact™ Of Dscout

Cost Savings And Business Benefits Enabled By Dscout

A FORRESTER TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY COMMISSIONED BY DSCOUT, JULY 2025



Executive Summary

User research is crucial for successful product development, yet organizations often struggle with obtaining accurate and timely user insights due to limited access to diverse user groups and biases in data collection methods. Additionally, time constraints and resource limitations can hinder research depth and quality, leading to uncertainty. These challenges can delay user experience improvements, so organizations must find solutions that help researcher and design teams deliver trusted insights within tight time and resource constraints.

Dscout is a flexible experience research platform comprising a suite of tools that allow researchers, designers, product managers, and others to recruit and pay participants, field research, analyze data, and socialize insights. Dscout facilitates diverse methodologies, such as in-depth interviews, usability studies, and long-term diary studies, and it provides access to participants from demographics that can be hard to recruit. Its automation and AI tools also help researchers streamline the process of designing and analyzing user research.

Dscout commissioned Forrester Consulting to conduct a Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study and examine the potential return on investment (ROI) enterprises may realize by deploying Dscout.[1] The goal of this study is to provide readers with a framework to evaluate the potential financial impact of Dscout on their organizations.

320%

Return on investment (ROI)

$2.0M

Net present value (NPV)

To better understand the benefits, costs, and risks associated with this investment, Forrester interviewed four decision-makers with experience using Dscout. For the purposes of this study, Forrester aggregated the experiences of the interviewees and combined the results into a single composite organization, which is a $4 billion global company with seven full-time researchers. Twenty of the company's product designers and product managers also spend some of their time executing user research for their development projects.

Interviewees said that prior to Dscout, their organizations used several other experience research platforms. They accumulated these tools due to individual's preferences, previous experience with them, or niche capabilities each possessed. However, the lack of uniformity and integration among tools compromised teams' ability to complete projects quickly and maximize the value of their learnings. Interviewees also stated that there were always questions they could not address internally due to tool limitations, so they outsourced several projects to market research firms at considerable cost.

After the investment in Dscout, the interviewees agreed that their research operations and results improved. Key results from the investment include more efficient use of researchers' time, more reliable and timely insights to better meet user needs and increase new product launch success, and an overall increase in user empathy throughout the organization.

Key Findings

Quantified benefits. Three-year, risk-adjusted present value (PV) quantified benefits for the composite organization include:

- **Reduced investment risk conserves $918,000 in product development costs that would have been spent on unsuccessful ideas.** The availability of reliable and timely input from users and potential users allows the composite to better identify product ideas that would be unsuccessful once launched and to halt investment in their development earlier.
- **Reduced time to market delivers $406,000 of incremental profit to the bottom line.** Dscout enables faster time to insights through automation, research activity distribution, and lower error and study rework rates. This results in

new products getting to market three weeks faster, allowing the composite to earn additional revenue in its initial year of using Dscout.

- **Improved product/market fit results in $350,000 in additional profit for the composite.** Dscout allows the composite organization to conduct additional, in-depth research to gain deeper empathy for users and a better understanding of their needs. As a result, it improves product market fitness and increases market success for new products.
- **Increased productivity saves the composite more than $471,000.** The professional research staff and the product designers and managers who conduct research can automate tasks and accomplish them more quickly. Employees put these time savings to use performing additional value-added work.

> *"At least half your work as a researcher is finding the right people to talk to and doing the legwork to get in front of the right people. Dscout definitely helps with that."*
>
> **Director, product design, financial services**

- **Eliminated legacy solutions save the composite $436,000.** The composite uses Dscout to perform user experience research and sunsets its previous solution licenses. In addition, the composite can conduct more exploratory research to generate new ideas and other types of research which it previously contracted to third-party research firms.

Unquantified benefits. Benefits that provide value for the composite organization but are not quantified for this study include:

- **Wider organizational access to research, insights, and empathy.** Dscout's research quality support and ease of use encourage key contributors in the product development process to engage directly with users and potential users to inform their work. As a result, all team members have a better appreciation for customers and their needs and can get input on questions quickly.
- **Improved reputation and interaction with business units**. Dscout makes additional types of research and output possible, such as in-depth diary studies and high-impact video reporting. This, combined with accelerated insights delivery, helps the research team increase trust and engagement among business units and leads directly to faster and more confident business decisions.

Costs. Three-year, risk-adjusted PV costs for the composite organization include:

- **Dscout fees cost the composite approximately $424,000.** The organization purchases a comprehensive subscription for its seven researchers and 20 product team members and also incurs costs to provide incentives to study participants.
- **Planning and implementation comprises approximately $79,000 of internal costs.** Platform training and ramp-up costs include upfront training for all 27 licensees and ongoing support to help researchers upskill and adopt new features. It also includes full training for new employees who join the composite.
- **Ongoing platform maintenance by the research team costs the composite just more than $112,000.** The organization assigns one research team member to manage the platform. They work with procurement, IT, and other departments as necessary to keep it up to date and accessible for employees.

The financial analysis based on the interviews found that a composite organization experiences benefits of $2.6 million over three years versus costs of $615,000, adding up to a net present value (NPV) of $2.0 million and an ROI of 320%.

> *"We've gained so much knowledge, and we've been able to launch studies that we wouldn't have been able to launch if we didn't have Dscout."*
>
> **Research program manager, e-commerce**

Key Statistics

320%

Return on investment (ROI)

$2.6M

Benefits PV

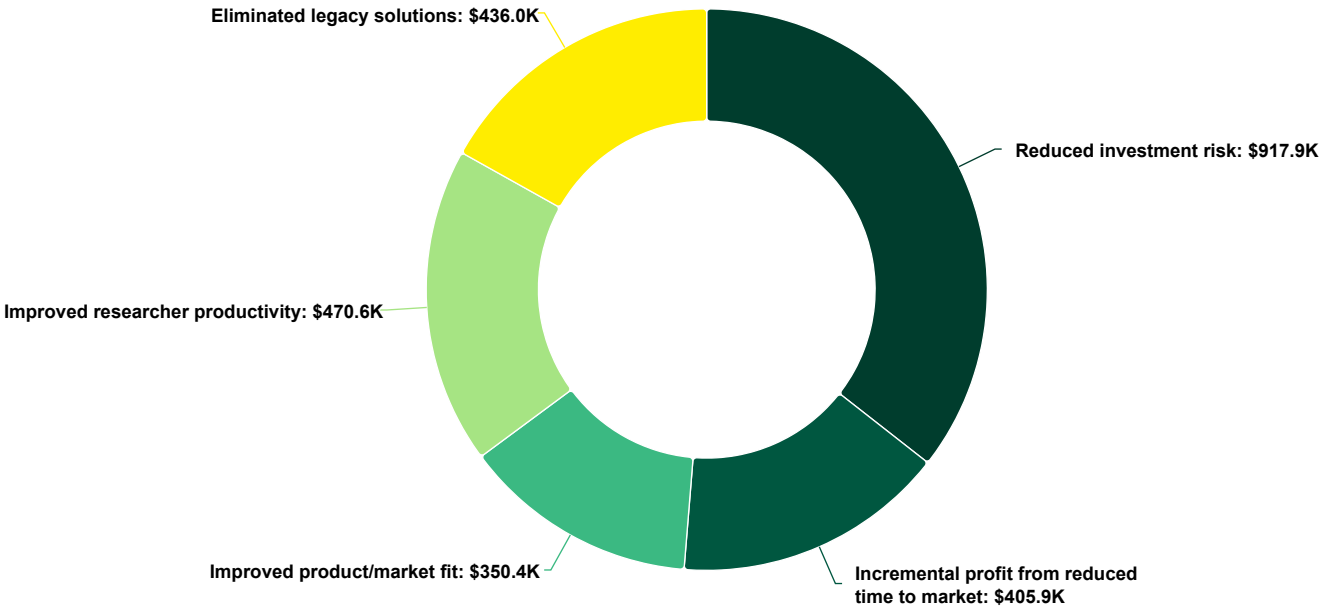
$2.0M

Net present value (NPV)

<6 months

Payback

Benefits (Three-Year)



The Dscout Customer Journey

Drivers leading to the Dscout investment

Interviews			
Role	**Industry**	**Region**	**Annual Revenue**
Director, product design	Financial services	Global, US HQ	$9.1B
UX design operations manager	Healthcare	North America, US HQ	$9.9B
Senior manager of research	Education	Global, US HQ	$238M
Senior UX researcher	Technology	Global, US HQ	$28.8B
Research program manager	E-commerce	Global, US HQ	$852M

Key Challenges

Before deploying Dscout, interviewees used several unconnected research and analytics platforms and providers to gather foundational and user experience (UX) feedback and insights from customers. In general, they were more likely to use an experience research platform for UX and either outsource foundational research or conduct it internally through a manual process that involved recruiting and scheduling respondent interviews by email, social media, or virtual meeting platforms.

Interviewees noted how their organizations struggled with common challenges, including:

- **Lack of access to key target audience populations.** Interviewees told Forrester that developers often had to base their decisions on inadequate data about likely users. Either because of legal restrictions that limited access to certain user groups (e.g., young students) or the recruitment time and expense for others (e.g., high-net-worth individuals), their legacy research techniques and tools did not provide regular access to important user groups.

  A senior UX researcher in the technology industry reported: “It was incredibly difficult at times to recruit. That was one of the biggest challenges — our users are really technical folks with very niche knowledge, and they are extremely busy.”

  A UX design operations manager in healthcare recalled their inability to recruit the appropriate respondents before using Dscout’s participant panel. They said, “[Our previous vendor’s] participant pool was not strong enough for specific research needs, particularly for physician and hospital-side research.”

> *“It was difficult and expensive for us to do research with student participants until we got Dscout. We facilitated it with some research partners, but we paid a hefty price to farm that out. Dscout dramatically increased our access to students and ability to do student testing in-house.”*
>
> **Senior manager of research, education**

- **Difficulty conducting targeted and appropriate user research.** Different questions about users, their habits, and their preferences lend themselves to different research methodologies. Some questions can easily be answered with a simple online survey or keystroke tracking on a website; others require uncovering attitudes and preferences users may not even be aware they have. Interviewees related their frustration with not having access to the right methodologies for all their needs. The research program manager at an e-commerce company lamented: “Previously, we did not have an efficient way, to say the least, to do diary studies. We were mostly using things like

Google forms or online user surveys, and tracking, and kind of making up little hacky ways to do it, but it honestly just was not efficient or informative enough."

- **Inability to scale research activity due to manual and administrative labor constraints.** Each of the interviewees recalled experiencing difficulties when trying to field studies before Dscout. A senior manager of research in education related their process: "We had to recruit by pulling and comparing customer and opt-in lists, then sending emails to invite them to our studies. Then we scheduled them using yet another (videoconferencing) platform or we sent them a screener through one of our survey tools." The complicated manual approach not only led to frustrated researchers but also impacted their organization's ability to gather critical user input needed for product development programs.

> *"[Our previous process] involved a lot of manual work, a lot of time, and a lot of effort that we honestly just did not have."*
>
> **Research program manager, e-commerce**

Composite Organization

Based on the interviews, Forrester constructed a TEI framework, a composite company, and an ROI analysis that illustrates the areas financially affected. The composite organization is representative of the interviewees' organizations, and it is used to present the aggregate financial analysis in the next section. The composite organization has the following characteristics:

- **Description of composite.** The $4 billion global organization spends 2% of its annual revenue on an ongoing physical and digital new product and feature development function. As a result, it receives approximately $65 million of its annual revenue from new products released that year. It employs seven full-time research professionals to support that function's need for customer insights and empathy. Twenty of its product designers also spend approximately 20% of their time conducting research (primarily UX-related).
- **Deployment characteristics.** The composite adds Dscout to its portfolio of research tools, and more than half of researchers and designers adopt it in favor of at least one other tool in Year 1. The organization can also field one foundational study internally that it would have otherwise outsourced to a third-party research partner. With additional exposure, researchers and designers continue to adopt Dscout for more user experience and foundational research projects until it becomes the platform of choice for more than 75% of the organization's research.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- $4 billion annual revenue
- 3.9% of sales are invested in research and development annually
- $65 million in revenue per year from new products
- Seven full-time employees on the research team
- 20 product designers performing research

Analysis Of Benefits

Total Benefits						
Ref.	**Benefit**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Total**	**Present Value**
Atr	Reduced investment risk	$168,480	$351,000	$631,800	$1,151,280	$917,927
Btr	Incremental profit from reduced time to market	$163,200	$163,200	$163,200	$489,600	$405,854
Ctr	Improved product/market fit	$140,888	$140,888	$140,888	$422,663	$350,366
Dtr	Increased researcher productivity	$170,656	$187,722	$213,320	$571,698	$470,555
Etr	Eliminated legacy solutions	$90,525	$181,050	$271,575	$543,150	$435,962
	Total benefits (risk-adjusted)	$733,749	$1,023,859	$1,420,783	$3,178,391	$2,580,665

Reduced Investment Risk

Evidence and data. Interviewees explained that a significant result of their research programs is identifying product development work that will not be successful in the market. Several interviewees recounted stories of projects that their organizations halted or redirected based on learnings from users or prospective users. As they explained it, Dscout was instrumental in uncovering new insights because it allowed their teams to use previously unavailable methodologies, tap into new audiences, obtain richer data, or examine the data in a new way.

- A research program manager at an e-commerce company explained how richer data gathered with Dscout improved the quality of insights they provided to developers. They said, “Rather than maybe having a brief look into someone’s experience, we now have a wealth of information to look through.”
- This access to new, richer data was critical for a senior UX researcher in the technology industry, who reported being asked to validate the concept behind a $10 million development project at their organization. They noted, “Using Dscout, in less than two weeks from learning about its existence, I delivered results that indicated a no-go on this product.” This data saved the company from spending millions to develop the wrong product, and the researcher took the initiative to dive deeper into the results, develop new recommendations, and pivot the project in a more successful direction.

  The interviewee recalled: “The depth of the research that I got using Dscout, using its express surveys and diary studies, to really probe into very specific areas of how people thought about the technology, how they used it, and what their expectations were — [there were] so many nuances that I couldn’t get in a one hour session. That’s what made it possible to gain the trust of the team and convince them the opportunity was different from what they thought.”

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The organization spends 3.9% of its annual revenue on R&D.[2]
- It spends approximately 50% of these R&D funds on new product development activities.
- Each year, approximately 45% of the new products and features it releases fail due to misunderstanding buyer needs and other avoidable design mistakes.
- Because of more extensive and higher-quality user research, the organization avoids 2% of those failures in Year 1, halting investment in time to save 30% of the project’s development costs.
- In Year 2, the organization avoids 2.5% of failed product launches, halting investment in time to save 50% of the development costs.

- In Year 3, the organization avoids 3% of failed product launches, halting investment in time to save 75% of the development costs.

Risks. There may be differences across organizations in several of the factors used in this projection, which would affect the financial impact of the benefit on any individual organization. These include the following:

- The percentage of annual revenue accrued from new product/feature introductions.
- The market failure rate of new product launches before adopting Dscout.
- The number of failures avoided and the speed at which an organization identifies them using Dscout.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 20%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $918,000.

> *"The leader of the design research organization who reports to me has been a big advocate for Dscout because of the quality of the participant panel and the excellence in research that it helps facilitate."*
>
> **Director, product design, financial services**

Reduced Investment Risk					
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
A1	Annual revenue	Composite	$4,000,000,000	$4,000,000,000	$4,000,000,000
A2	Percentage of revenue spent on R&D	Research data	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%
A3	Percentage of R&D spent on product development	Composite	50%	50%	50%
A4	Average annual spend on new product development	A1*A2*A3	$78,000,000	$78,000,000	$78,000,000
A5	Percentage of new products that will fail	Composite	45%	45%	45%
A6	**Subtotal: Spending on products that will fail**	**A4*A5**	**$35,100,000**	**$35,100,000**	**$35,100,000**
A7	Percentage of failed launches avoided attributable to Dscout	Interviews	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%
A8	Percentage of development cost avoided	Interviews	30%	50%	75%
At	Reduced investment risk	A6*A7*A8	$210,600	$438,750	$789,750
	Risk adjustment	↓20%			
Atr	Reduced investment risk (risk-adjusted)		$168,480	$351,000	$631,800
	Three-year total: $1,151,280			**Three-year present value: $917,927**	

Incremental Profit From Reduced Time To Market

Evidence and data. Interviewees reported that Dscout shortened the time required to field and analyze research studies, so development teams could act on insights and recommendations more quickly and bring their work to market faster. The senior manager of research in education estimated decreasing the average turnaround time for their studies from two months to less than one month with Dscout.

One key reason for the shorter timeframe was what interviewees identified as Dscout's high-quality panel of participants and its quality control support for research plans and tools. The senior manager of research in education estimated that recruitment time dropped from three weeks to three days when they began using Dscout's incorporated panel. Other interviewees added that they could get a clearer picture of individual panel respondents with Dscout before inviting them to participate in studies, which resulted in richer, more reliable data. That, in turn,

meant they did not have to rerun studies or look for additional participants after the initial results were in, saving time over previous solutions.

Several interviewees also mentioned that Dscout provided oversight to study design and fielding, helping them catch errors or improve their approach before their studies launched. This feature was especially important for organizations where employees less familiar with research best practices — such as designers or other product team members — conducted some of their own research. It ensured these employees fielded studies that provided useful data the first time around, eliminating the need to rerun or rework studies and delay the development process.

Finally, Dscout sped up the research process by automating many of the more time-consuming processes interviewees associated with their legacy solutions. This was particularly true for qualitative research, where researchers typically spent days or weeks combing through customer lists, inviting respondents via email, scheduling and rescheduling interviews, and moderating qualitative research. The senior manager of research at an education company explained that the research team typically spent three days per study just conducting interviews. Dscout allowed the team to run remote, unmoderated studies concurrently, reducing each project's data collection time and allowing the same size team to conduct more studies.

> *"I don't find myself having to constantly switch between different platforms too much anymore, and I really can do everything from screening, recruiting, collecting, and analyzing data to creating clips and playlists for reporting, all within the Dscout platform."*
>
> **Senior manager of research, education**

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The organization averages $800,000 per week in revenue from new products launched in the previous 12 months.
- Dscout cuts the time to insights for the research and product development teams by three weeks, allowing new products to launch three weeks faster and earn three weeks of additional sales in their launch year.
- The organization enjoys an 8.5% net margin on revenues.[3]

Risks. There may be differences across organizations in a few of the factors used in this projection, which would affect the financial impact of the benefit on any individual organization. These include the following:

- The historical annual revenue an organization experiences from new product launches.
- The speed at which development teams historically received insights and the improvement attributable to Dscout.
- Relevant industry net margins.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 20%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $406,000.

50%

Decrease in average study turnaround time

Incremental Profit From Reduced Time To Market					
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
B1	Average revenue per week from new launches	Composite	$800,000	$800,000	$800,000
B2	Average weeks saved per launch	Interviews	3	3	3
B3	**Subtotal: Incremental revenue**	**B1*B2**	**$2,400,000**	**$2,400,000**	**$2,400,000**
B4	Industry net margin	Research data	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%
Bt	Incremental profit from reduced time to market	B3*B4	$204,000	$204,000	$204,000
	Risk adjustment	↓20%			
Btr	Incremental profit from reduced time to market (risk-adjusted)		$163,200	$163,200	$163,200
	Three-year total: $489,600			**Three-year present value: $405,854**	

Improved Product/Market Fit

Evidence and data. Interviewees agreed that the core reason their organizations invest in consumer and user research is to improve how they deliver products and services to their customers. To develop and market the set of products and services that will best meet market needs, those involved need to have an in-depth understanding of how users perceive and interact with their products, how they do so with their competitors' products, and which of their needs (some of which users may be unaware of) remain unmet. Providing this insight is the remit of the user research program.

Interviewees discussed several ways in which Dscout improved the quality and quantity of insights their teams provided and, in turn, enhanced the marketability, adoption, and retention/satisfaction rate of their products.

- The same high-quality panel of respondents that helped developers avoid investing time in unsuccessful product ideas and saved researchers from rerunning or reworking studies created a richer data pool of successful ideas, leading developers to create even more successful new products and features.
- Researchers appreciated Dscout's flexibility, which encouraged them to experiment and try new methodologies or analytical techniques, or to combine data from multiple studies to deepen their understanding of users' lives and needs. The senior UX researcher at a technology firm described how important this flexibility was for their teams: "We have incredibly complicated flows, things that take weeks or months, and we also have things that require learning and comprehension. There was no way we could capture that with a participant in 30 to 90 minutes. We wanted to know those contextual moments that would not necessarily surface in a traditional study format." In this interviewee's opinion, the deep empathy allowed their organization to identify and address opportunities better than they could before deploying Dscout and resulted in more successful product launches and lifecycles.

  Describing their ability to gain new insights into research data with Dscout, the UX design operations manager in healthcare related: "It is a platform that allows us to quickly interact and communicate with customers. It is, for me, a more flexible platform than [our legacy solution] was." The senior UX researcher in technology agreed, adding: "The metaphor that rings true for me with Dscout is that it feels like Lego pieces. There's a lot of flexibility for me to use it in a way that enables me to do my job and ... to have a very playful approach."

> *"There's a lot of tools and mechanisms within there that really provide a lot of flexibility for analysis and playing with the data, making it very, very rich if you're doing something like a longitudinal study."*
>
> **Senior UX researcher, technology**

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The organization's annual revenue includes $65 million in new products, defined as those introduced in that same year.
- As a result of more timely and relevant insights uncovered with Dscout, the organization launches products that better meet customer needs and, therefore, bring in 3% more revenue than they would have otherwise.
- The organization enjoys an 8.5% net margin on sales.

Risks. There may be differences across organizations in several of the factors used in this projection, which would affect the financial impact of the benefit on any individual organization. These include the following:

- The historical annual revenue an organization experiences from new product launches.
- The extent of enhanced product/market fit the organization achieves with Dscout.
- The relevant industry net margin rate.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $350,000.

Improved Product/Market Fit					
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
C1	Annual revenue from new products	Research data	$65,000,000	$65,000,000	$65,000,000
C2	Incremental revenue from improved product/market fit	Interviews	3%	3%	3%
C3	**Subtotal: Incremental revenue**	**C1*C2**	**$1,950,000**	**$1,950,000**	**$1,950,000**
C4	Industry net margin	Research data	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%
Ct	Improved product/market fit	C3*C4	$165,750	$165,750	$165,750
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Ctr	Improved product/market fit (risk-adjusted)		$140,888	$140,888	$140,888
	Three-year total: $422,663		**Three-year present value: $350,366**		

Increased Researcher Productivity

Evidence and data. Interviewed research professionals universally agreed that Dscout had increased their team's productivity, allowing them to do more for their organizations with the same size team. They described conducting more research, devoting more time and creativity to their analysis, spending more time with development teams to understand their research needs, and applying the insights uncovered to their projects. The time saved on research process mechanics and recaptured for other productive uses was a source of financial benefit for interviewees' organizations.

- The senior manager of research in education stated: "Before Dscout, we were doing almost 100% of our moderated research over [a videoconferencing platform]. We would infuse some tools, but the process was much more manual and much more modular."
- The senior UX researcher in the technology industry estimated, "In general, in terms of the amount of time saved, I would say it consistently saves me about a day in the programming of the study."

> *"If our researchers didn't have Dscout, they would be hindered from where they are today. And they would also be more frustrated with the research tools that they had."*
>
> **Director, product design, financial services**

> *"We get better participant quality, and I think we get better research quality on the first turn with Dscout. Their option to have an embedded researcher that evaluates your study is definitely a safeguard against launching bad research."*
>
> **Director, product design, financial services**

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The research team comprises seven professionals whose fully burdened hourly rate is $75. They spend 90% of their time engaged in planning, executing, analyzing, and delivering research projects and the rest of their time on administrative tasks.
- Twenty product designers, whose fully burdened hourly rate is $90, also spend 15% of their time on research activities related to their development projects.
- In the first year after deploying Dscout, all employees conducting research save 20% of their time due to its streamlined project management capabilities. The time savings grow to 22% in Year 2 and 25% in Year 3.
- The organization recaptures 65% of these time savings for other higher value tasks and projects.

Risks. There may be differences across organizations in several of the factors used in this projection, which would affect the financial impact of the benefit on any individual organization. These include the following:

- The number of employees performing research activities and how much time they spend on those activities.
- The rates of pay of the employees performing the research.
- The speed at which these employees adopt Dscout as their research tool of choice.
- How much of the time saved with Dscout the company can recapture for productive work.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $471,000.

8,780 hours (4.2 FTEs)

Total researcher time saved with Dscout

4,181 hours (2.0 FTEs)

Total designer time saved with Dscout

Increased Researcher Productivity					
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
D1	Full-time researchers	Composite	7	7	7
D2	Total researcher hours	D1*2,080*90%	13,104	13,104	13,104
D3	Designers conducting research	Composite	20	20	20
D4	Designer hours devoted to research before Dscout	D3*2,080*15%	6,240	6,240	6,240
D5	**Subtotal: Hours devoted to research before Dscout**	**D2+D4**	**19,344**	**19,344**	**19,344**
D6	Fully burdened hourly rate for a researcher	Research data	$75	$75	$75
D7	Fully burdened hourly rate for a designer	Research data	$90	$90	$90
D8	**Subtotal: Investment in research time**	**(D2*D6)+(D4*D7)**	**$1,544,400**	**$1,544,400**	**$1,544,400**
D9	Percentage of time saved with Dscout	Interviews	20%	22%	25%
D10	Productivity recapture	TEI methodology	65%	65%	65%
Dt	Increased researcher productivity	D8*D9*D10	$200,772	$220,849	$250,965
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Dtr	Increased researcher productivity (risk-adjusted)		$170,656	$187,722	$213,320
	Three-year total: $571,698		**Three-year present value: $470,555**		

Eliminated Legacy Solutions

Evidence and data. After deploying Dscout, interviewees told Forrester that their research teams eliminated several previous research tools and outside partners because Dscout delivered broader capabilities, better data, and higher utility. In some cases, they sunsetted licenses for specific tools. Interviewees also found they rarely needed to employ outside research vendors. And several interviewees described no longer needing tools to integrate data and learnings from their other tools because Dscout allowed them to coordinate inputs and outputs from all phases of their research within one platform.

- The UX design operations manager in healthcare recalled, “Our previous solution was great when we were doing a lot of patient research, but when we started to do more work on the physician or hospital side, their panel wasn’t very strong.”
- The senior manager of research in education reported, “We were able to explain [to management] that, by investing in Dscout, we didn’t have to use outside vendors, which was a huge cost.”

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The composite cuts its use of two other marketing research platforms, which it primarily uses to conduct UX research and testing. The licenses and associated recruiting fees for these solutions total $216,000 per year.
- The composite outsources its foundational research to third-party market research firms. In a typical year, it would commission three such studies at an average cost of $70,000 each.
- The organization cuts its spending on these resources by 25% in Year 1, 50% in Year 2, and 75% in Year 3.

Risks. There may be differences across organizations in several of the factors used in this projection, which would affect the financial impact of the benefit on any individual organization. These include the following:

- The amount and type of research the organization conducts before deploying Dscout.
- The rate at which the organization replaces its pre-Dscout research sources.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $436,000.

$630K

Three-year savings on outsourced research

Eliminated Legacy Solutions					
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
E1	Fees for previous solutions	Interviews	$216,000	$216,000	$216,000
E2	Projects outsourced to third parties	Interviews	3	3	3
E3	Average cost per project	Interviews	$70,000	$70,000	$70,000
E4	Percentage displaced by Dscout	Interviews	25%	50%	75%
Et	Eliminated legacy solutions	(E1+E2*E3)*E4	$106,500	$213,000	$319,500
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Etr	Eliminated legacy solutions (risk-adjusted)		$90,525	$181,050	$271,575
	Three-year total: $543,150			**Three-year present value: $435,962**	

Unquantified Benefits

Interviewees mentioned the following additional benefits that their organizations experienced but were not able to quantify:

- **Wider organizational access to research, insights, and empathy.** The most universal and appreciated unquantified benefit among interviewees was the opportunity to provide their organizations' non-research teams with direct access to users and their experiences. Although some of the impetus for this feeling was increased speed to insights from allowing designers and/or product owners to ask questions without intermediaries, interviewees were most excited about the cultural change it brought about. The easier Dscout made it for an organization's non-researchers to connect with users without compromising research quality, the more customer-obsessed everyone in the organization could become. Because Dscout provides research design and fielding oversight on all studies its clients use it to conduct, interviewees noted that their research and business teams could be confident that non-researchers did not sacrifice research quality for speed and direct access. And since it requires minimal interaction and monitoring from researchers, Dscout facilitated easy and more frequent access to users among interviewees' team members who are not research experts. This results in design and marketing teams that understand their users and can respond to their needs more organically and successfully.

> *"We want to spread that ability for our team members to build empathy when it makes sense. And then it really opens up bandwidth for our researchers to keep maturing our capital and our research activities."*
>
> **Senior manager of research, education**

- **Improved reputation and interaction with business units.** Interviewees shared that Dscout allowed their researchers to deliver timely, reliable, and relevant insights to the business and design teams that make key product investment decisions. The report quality and fast turnaround make its users' input more valuable to decision-makers, resulting in higher respect for and engagement with those doing the research and delivering the insights.

> *"The [previous] review process for studies was not scalable as it all fell solely on me, making it difficult to expand our research operations."*
>
> **UX design operations manager, healthcare**

Flexibility

The value of flexibility is unique to each customer. There are multiple scenarios in which a customer might implement Dscout and later realize additional uses and business opportunities, including:

- **New capabilities driven by generative AI.** Interviewees looked forward to new Dscout capabilities leveraging the power of generative AI to help with tasks such as writing effective survey questions, integrating data from multiple studies, employing innovative analytical techniques, and writing succinct and influential reports and recommendations. They expect that these capabilities will:
  - Further improve their teams' ability to save time, enabling them to conduct more research with the same resources.
  - Enhance data, analysis, and reporting quality and enable them to have a stronger impact on product development and other business decisions.
  - Empower additional teams and roles to interact with users and increase the organization's empathy with its customers.

Flexibility would also be quantified when evaluated as part of a specific project (described in more detail in Total Economic Impact Approach).

> *"[My company] is very risk averse when it comes to AI, but we got a preview of the features at Dscout's conference last year, and we are super excited for them."*
>
> **UX design operations manager, healthcare**

Analysis Of Costs

Quantified cost data as applied to the composite

Total Costs							
Ref.	**Cost**	**Initial**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Total**	**Present Value**
Ftr	Dscout fees	$0	$170,500	$170,500	$170,500	$511,500	$424,008
Gtr	Planning and implementation	$33,480	$18,270	$18,270	$18,270	$88,290	$78,915
Htr	Ongoing maintenance	$0	$44,850	$44,850	$44,850	$134,550	$111,535
	Total costs (risk-adjusted)	$33,480	$233,620	$233,620	$233,620	$734,340	$614,458

Dscout Fees

Evidence and data. Interviewees agreed that most of the cost they incurred with Dscout was for their subscription, which has several levels with varying access and pricing. In addition, customers pay separately for consumables (activity credits) which can be used to recruit from Dscout's panel, bring their own participants, and conduct research. They also pay incentives for Dscout panelists and can decide whether and how much to pay their own participants.

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- The composite spends $125,000 annually to provide licenses with varying access levels to its seven researchers and 20 product design team members.
- It also spends $30,000 per year on consumables and incentives for participants in the research studies it launches. These are billed separately from the licensing fees.
- Pricing varies depending on customer needs. Contact Dscout for additional details.

Risks. Organizational differences that may impact these costs include:

- The number of licenses and mix of access levels the organization purchases.
- The number and complexity of studies the organization launches, which will affect the incentives paid to participants.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 10%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $424,000.

> *"For us, Dscout costs a little less [than our legacy platform]. The structure of the contract is also better for us because participant incentives are separated out from the credits, so we can charge those back to the business units rather than paying them out of our budget."*
>
> **UX design operations manager, healthcare**

Dscout Fees						
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Initial**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
F1	Total license fees	Interviews		$125,000	$125,000	$125,000
F2	Average cost of sample and incentives	Interviews		$30,000	$30,000	$30,000
Ft	Dscout fees	F1+F2		$155,000	$155,000	$155,000
	Risk adjustment	↑10%				
Ftr	Dscout fees (risk-adjusted)		$0	$170,500	$170,500	$170,500
	Three-year total: $511,500			**Three-year present value: $424,008**		

Planning And Implementation

Evidence and data. Interviewees explained that, as an integrated SaaS platform, Dscout required very little upfront planning and implementation work. The primary commitment from the organizations was the time involved in training researchers and other team members who would use the platform. Since many interviewees and their teams had previously used other solutions in their research programs, the required training was minimal and consisted primarily of familiarizing employees with new capabilities they hadn't had access to in the past.

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- Seven researchers and 20 product designers receive 12 hours of training and on-the-job skill ramping when the organization launches Dscout.
- These employees receive 1 to 2 hours of ongoing training each year to master new features and upgrades from Dscout. In addition, new researchers and designers who join the organization receive the full 12 hours of training.
- This results in an ongoing training investment of 5 hours per researcher and 7 hours per designer.
- The fully burdened hourly rate for a researcher is $75, and the fully burdened hourly rate for a designer is $90.

Risks. Organizational differences that may impact these costs include:

- The number and mix of researchers and designers using Dscout.
- Employee turnover rate.
- Researcher and designer rates of pay.

Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 20%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $79,000.

Planning And Implementation						
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Initial**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
G1	Researchers	Composite	7	7	7	7
G2	Researcher training/ramp-up hours	Interviews	12	5	5	5
G3	Designers doing research	Composite	20	20	20	20
G4	Designer training/ramp-up hours	Interviews	12	7	7	7
G5	Fully burdened hourly rate for a researcher	Research data	$75	$75	$75	$75
G6	Fully burdened hourly rate for a designer	Research data	$90	$90	$90	$90
Gt	Planning and implementation	G1*G2*G5+G3*G4*G6	$27,900	$15,225	$15,225	$15,225
	Risk adjustment	↑20%				
Gtr	Planning and implementation (risk-adjusted)		$33,480	$18,270	$18,270	$18,270
	Three-year total: $88,290			**Three-year present value: $78,915**		

Ongoing Maintenance

Evidence and data. No interviewees reported using internal IT or third-party resources to manage Dscout. In general, their teams' lead researchers were responsible for partnering with Dscout to stay current with feature updates, contract renewals, and requests from others in the organization. Interviewees universally reported that this responsibility took a small amount of a lead researcher's time.

Modeling and assumptions. Based on the interviews, Forrester assumes the following about the composite organization:

- A member of the research or research operations team handles platform administration and vendor relations, and they spend up to 25% of their time on these activities.
- The fully burdened hourly rate for a researcher $75.

Risks. Organizational differences that may impact these costs include:

- The amount of time allocated to Dscout maintenance activities.
- Researcher rates of pay.

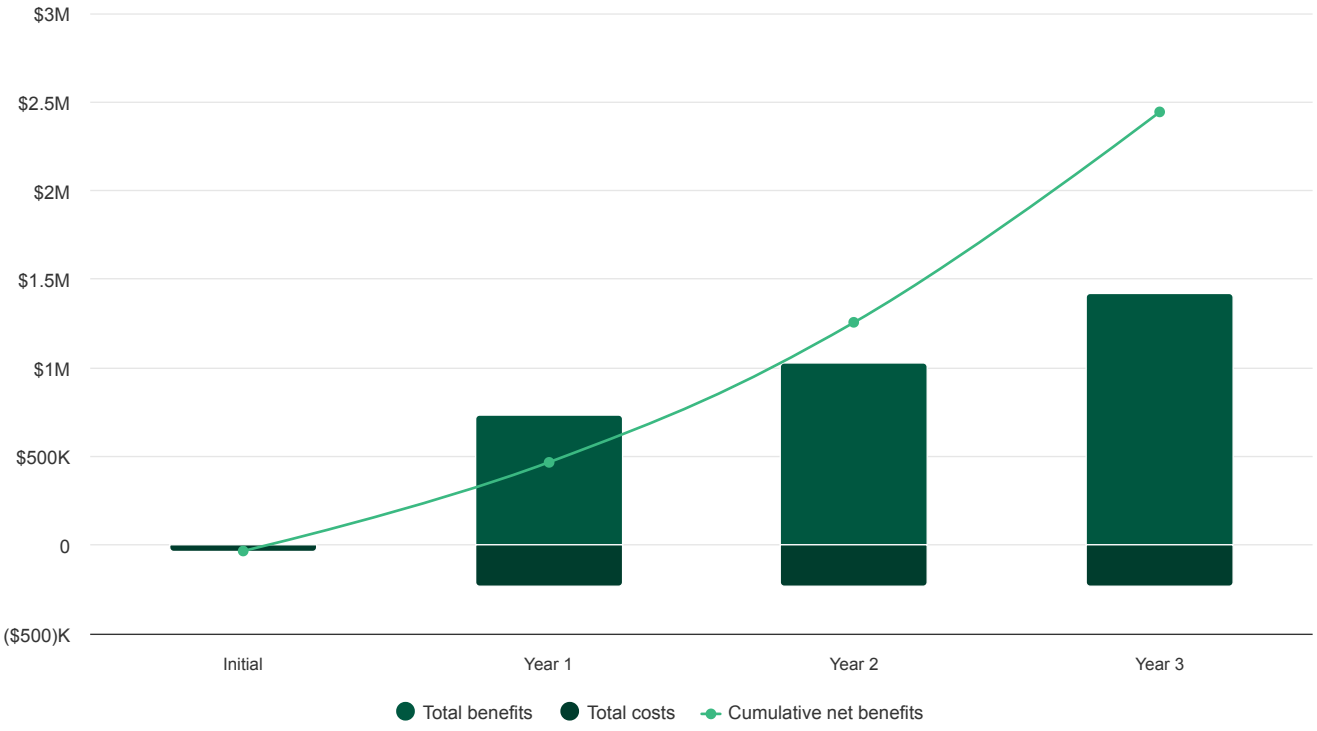
Results. To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 15%, yielding a three-year, risk-adjusted total PV (discounted at 10%) of $112,000.

Ongoing Maintenance						
Ref.	**Metric**	**Source**	**Initial**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
H1	Research operations hours	Interviews		520	520	520
H2	Average fully burdened hourly rate for a researcher	Research data		$75	$75	$75
Ht	Ongoing maintenance	H1*H2	$0	$32,240	$32,240	$32,240
	Risk adjustment	↑15%				
Htr	Ongoing maintenance (risk-adjusted)		$0	$44,850	$44,850	$44,850
	Three-year total: $134,550			**Three-year present value: $111,535**		

Financial Summary

Consolidated Three-Year, Risk-Adjusted Metrics

Cash Flow Chart (Risk-Adjusted)



Cash Flow Analysis (Risk-Adjusted)						
	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Present Value
Total costs	($33,480)	($233,620)	($233,620)	($233,620)	($734,340)	($614,458)
Total benefits	$0	$733,749	$1,023,859	$1,420,783	$3,178,391	$2,580,665
Net benefits	($33,480)	$500,129	$790,239	$1,187,163	$2,444,051	$1,966,206
ROI						320%
Payback						<6 months

Please Note

The financial results calculated in the Benefits and Costs sections can be used to determine the ROI, NPV, and payback period for the composite organization's investment. Forrester assumes a yearly discount rate of 10% for this analysis.

These risk-adjusted ROI, NPV, and payback period values are determined by applying risk-adjustment factors to the unadjusted results in each Benefit and Cost section.

The initial investment column contains costs incurred at "time 0" or at the beginning of Year 1 that are not discounted. All other cash flows are discounted using the discount rate at the end of the year. PV calculations are calculated for each total cost and benefit estimate. NPV calculations in the summary tables are the sum of the initial investment and the discounted cash flows in each year. Sums and present value calculations of the Total Benefits, Total Costs, and Cash Flow tables may not exactly add up, as some rounding may occur.

TEI Framework And Methodology

From the information provided in the interviews, Forrester constructed a Total Economic Impact™ framework for those organizations considering an investment in Dscout.

The objective of the framework is to identify the cost, benefit, flexibility, and risk factors that affect the investment decision. Forrester took a multistep approach to evaluate the impact that Dscout can have on an organization.

Due Diligence

Interviewed Dscout stakeholders and Forrester analysts to gather data relative to Dscout.

Interviews

Interviewed five decision-makers at organizations using Dscout to obtain data about costs, benefits, and risks.

Composite Organization

Designed a composite organization based on characteristics of the interviewees' organizations.

Financial Model Framework

Constructed a financial model representative of the interviews using the TEI methodology and risk-adjusted the financial model based on issues and concerns of the interviewees.

Case Study

Employed four fundamental elements of TEI in modeling the investment impact: benefits, costs, flexibility, and risks. Given the increasing sophistication of ROI analyses related to IT investments, Forrester's TEI methodology provides a complete picture of the total economic impact of purchase decisions. Please see Appendix A for additional information on the TEI methodology.

Glossary

Total Economic Impact Approach

Benefits

Benefits represent the value the solution delivers to the business. The TEI methodology places equal weight on the measure of benefits and costs, allowing for a full examination of the solution's effect on the entire organization.

Costs

Costs comprise all expenses necessary to deliver the proposed value, or benefits, of the solution. The methodology captures implementation and ongoing costs associated with the solution.

Flexibility

Flexibility represents the strategic value that can be obtained for some future additional investment building on top of the initial investment already made. The ability to capture that benefit has a PV that can be estimated.

Risks

Risks measure the uncertainty of benefit and cost estimates given: 1) the likelihood that estimates will meet original projections and 2) the likelihood that estimates will be tracked over time. TEI risk factors are based on "triangular distribution."

Financial Terminology

Present Value (PV)

The present or current value of (discounted) cost and benefit estimates given at an interest rate (the discount rate). The PV of costs and benefits feed into the total NPV of cash flows.

Net Present Value (NPV)

The present or current value of (discounted) future net cash flows given an interest rate (the discount rate). A positive project NPV normally indicates that the investment should be made unless other projects have higher NPVs.

Return On Investment (ROI)

A project's expected return in percentage terms. ROI is calculated by dividing net benefits (benefits less costs) by costs.

Discount Rate

The interest rate used in cash flow analysis to take into account the time value of money. Organizations typically use discount rates between 8% and 16%.

Payback Period

The breakeven point for an investment. This is the point in time at which net benefits (benefits minus costs) equal initial investment or cost.

Appendixes

APPENDIX A

Total Economic Impact

Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists solution providers in communicating their value proposition to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of business and technology initiatives to both senior management and other key stakeholders.

APPENDIX B

Supplemental Material

Related Forrester Research

AJ Joplin and Senem Guler Biyikli, Experience Research And Design Leaders: Use Forrester's New Model To Assess Your Organization's Maturity, Forrester Blogs.

The Forrester Wave™: Experience Research Platforms, Q2 2023, Forrester Research, Inc., May 31, 2023.

The Experience Research Platforms Landscape, Q1 2023, Forrester Research, Inc., January 12, 2023.

APPENDIX C

Endnotes

[1]Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists solution providers in communicating their value proposition to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of business and technology initiatives to both senior management and other key stakeholders.

[2] Source: Margins by Sector, US, NYU Stern School of Business, January 2025.

[3] Ibid.

Disclosures

Readers should be aware of the following:

This study is commissioned by Dscout and delivered by Forrester Consulting. It is not meant to be used as a competitive analysis.

Forrester makes no assumptions as to the potential ROI that other organizations will receive. Forrester strongly advises that readers use their own estimates within the framework provided in the study to determine the appropriateness of an investment in Dscout.

Dscout reviewed and provided feedback to Forrester, but Forrester maintains editorial control over the study and its findings and does not accept changes to the study that contradict Forrester's findings or obscure the meaning of the study.

Dscout provided the customer names for the interviews but did not participate in the interviews.

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