

# Ultimate Software

Delivering Breakthrough Products

## Industry

Software-as-a-Service: Global Human Capital Management (HCM)

## Business Opportunity

Align product strategy and execution with company goals

## Solution

Accept360 Suite for Enterprise Product Portfolio Management

## Results & Benefits

Reliable Release Forecasts and Satisfied Customers



Ultimate Software, headquartered in Weston, Florida, is a provider of end-to-end strategic human resources, payroll, and talent management solutions to approximately 1,900 customers with an impressive retention rate of 97%. The company's SaaS-based UltiPro solution helps businesses streamline their human capital management (HCM) operations without relying on internal IT resources.

## Business Opportunity

*Aligning company goals to product strategy and execution*

Ultimate Software is in a very competitive market and their continued success is fueled by relentlessly delivering new breakthrough products and incremental innovation. And they are not shy about transforming their business. A few years back their strategic initiatives were to:

- Continually evolve of their SaaS delivery model – involving a large number of software changes and other initiatives driven by requirements from all departments
- Launch new features targeted to medium sized enterprises

An exciting time, rich with promises, but also challenges. In order to meet these objectives and the associated growth goals, the entire organization had to be focused on well-delineated initiatives. Customer intimacy was critical to balance current customer priorities and deliver the right products while rapidly iterating in new market opportunities. There was no room for misalignment between departments or confusion about what to work on.

Executives, managers and team members needed transparency over the entire product innovation process from capturing ideas from customers, to defining product strategy, to prioritizing product releases and backlogs, to tracking commitments through development execution. The new Product Strategy leadership group at Ultimate Software recognized this right away and took decisive action to establish a single system of record that would provide an objective framework to make product priority decisions and execute them in the context of company goals and initiatives.

*“Accept360 is a mission critical enterprise application for us. We rely on it to help transform and run our business and bring to market award winning HCM solutions.”*

## Solution

### *The Accept360 Suite: Single System of Record for Enterprise Product Portfolio Management*

Ultimate Software was not just looking for a tool to improve the efficiency of their products team, they were looking for a strategic application that would give all stakeholders in the company a trusted view of what was being worked on, and why. And they wanted the system to help drive priority decisions from the perspective of company strategy.

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**“The analytics in Accept360 were a powerful surprise. We use them to identify the items that best match our strategic criteria to quickly and objectively narrow down our choices.”**

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### *Technology Selection*

As typical of most companies, before Accept, Ultimate Software used spreadsheets and slides to track and communicate product requirements and priorities. It also did not support the factoring of strategic criteria into the process.

Several point solutions were evaluated and eliminated because they lacked the strategic perspective and analytics that Ultimate Software wanted and did not support the full innovation lifecycle process from ideation through to product delivery. Other key selection criteria were usability, reports and metrics.

### *Adoption*

The modules of Ultimate Software’s products are very tightly integrated and with extensive dependencies, therefore they needed comprehensive visibility across all modules and teams and they needed it right away. Therefore, they decided to rollout the solution across all module teams.

### *Establish a Trusted System of Record*

The first adoption wave focused on a blend of strategic and operational areas leveraging two Accept360 modules:

- Strategy and Portfolio –Strategy and portfolio managers defined in the system the criteria for prioritization: initiatives, themes, target markets.
- Roadmap and Requirements – The core team of business owners and product managers populated requirements and dependencies, and associate them to strategic drivers in order to manage prioritization and roadmap.

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**“The releases planing process is now radically different and at least 30% more efficient. We have 100% adoption. Accept360 helped us knock this critical process out of the park.”**

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Having established a single system of record, Accept360 was opened up to all stakeholders for transparency on the entire process. Twice a quarter over 200 distributed stakeholders review and make adjustments to the roadmap priorities. Accept360 is the one version of the truth that aligns and informs all their decisions.

### *Engage with Customer Community*

The latest adoption wave for Ultimate Software focused on engaging with customers in a community powered by the Accept360 Ideation module. The community was launched in conjunction with the release of new product functionality and customers right away started putting comments, sharing ideas and discussing/voting each other ideas. Quickly the community grew to over 1,300 users and 350 ideas.

## Results & Benefits

### *Trusted Release Forecasts and Satisfied Customers*

As a SaaS vendor, customer satisfaction and retention is of paramount importance. Accept360 has helped them transform product planning and execution into a core enterprise business process.

Everybody has visibility into the commitments and trusts the data because they have built a track record of impeccable delivery.

**"We are able to forecast our work many months out and maintain a unified shared vision, speaking the same language across all levels and departments in the company."**

Ultimate Software is just at the beginning of their customer community experience, and they have already been pleasantly surprised by the impact, not only in terms of ideas submitted by customers, but also by the time savings and value of engaging customers upfront in the design of new features. Research that used to take weeks is now completed in hours or days.

Everybody hates surprises. With Accept360 Ultimate Software tracks all dependencies and associated risks. Everybody is fully aware of the impact of their work and if there is a change, the affected parties are immediately notified and can take corrective action.

Every stakeholder across the organization at Ultimate Software now has transparency over the entire product innovation process from capturing ideas from customers, to defining product strategy, to prioritizing product releases and backlogs, to tracking commitments through development execution. The rules of engagement are clear, the data that drives decisions is trusted, and Ultimate Software is meeting its objectives.

**"We no longer have to second guess our customer: they tell us exactly what they think and we know it right away, everyday; so we can build the product they want."**

## About Accept Software, Inc.

Accept Software, Inc. delivers The Product Innovation Management solution that technology-driven companies use to decide which products to bring to market for the fastest time-to-profit. The Accept360 Suite is the only complete end-to-end software solution that tightly links company and product strategy through ideation, portfolio planning, roadmaps, requirements and execution.

## For More Information

Please contact us at [info@accept360.com](mailto:info@accept360.com) or visit [www.accept360.com](http://www.accept360.com)