

# Questions for the ODM: what two plans ask of one partner

For the client's program and engineering leads to take into the next ODM review. Each question is tied to a specific finding in the loading brief.

The loading brief takes two native project schedules as saved on the as-of date (month 0) and sums what they ask of the ODM week by week. Four pressure points come out: EE and firmware in months 2 to 3, mechanical engineering now, tooling lead time from month 4, and the production line in months 12 to 16. The questions below are framed so that the answers can be written straight back into the schedules as named resources, dates and quantities. Ask them in order; the first group is the one that moves the launch dates.

## 1 EE and firmware capacity, months 2 to 3

The plans need 4.2 EE and firmware engineers across weeks 8 to 12 against three named in the files.

| Ask                                                                                                                                                     | What the files show                                                                                                                                | A good answer gives                                                                                                      |
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| 1. Who, by name, carries each of the five boards through E0 layout, firmware and debug between now and month 5: three for Project A, two for Project B? | Project A names three EE owners, one per board. Project B names one owner for both boards, the same engineer who owns one of the Project A boards. | A name per board with the share of their week on it. If one name appears twice, the dates in one file are already wrong. |
| 2. Does the same engineer write the product firmware and lay out the PCB, or are those different people at the ODM?                                     | Both files give firmware design and debug to the EE owner of the board. The client's resourcing review treats EE as one pool.                      | A split roster. If firmware is a separate group, the collision is smaller than modeled; if not, it is as drawn.          |
| 3. If Project A takes priority, which Project B EE dates move, and by how much?                                                                         | The client's resourcing review models Project B EE starting in month 3 and finishing in month 10, 222 days later than the saved plan.              | Specific task dates for both E0 boards, not a percentage split. A 70/30 allocation is a hope, not a plan.                |
| 4. Can a fourth EE be assigned for the eight weeks of the overlap, and what would it cost?                                                              | The shortfall is 1.2 FTE for five weeks, under 0.5 of a person-year.                                                                               | A yes with a start date, or a no with the reason. Silence on cost is itself an answer.                                   |

## 2 Mechanical engineering, months 0 to 2

ME demand peaks at 4.0 FTE in month 1 against two named engineers and stays above two until the end of month 2.

| Ask                                                                                                                    | What the files show                                                                                                                                         | A good answer gives                                                                                                      |
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| 5. Which ME engineer owns which Project A housing, and is either also on Project B housings from month 2?              | Project A names two ME owners. Project B housings name one of them starting in month 2, two weeks before that engineer's Project A tooling drawing release. | Confirmation that the shared owner is clear of Project A before Project B geometry starts, or a revised Project B start. |
| 6. Who builds and tests the four Project B alpha concepts running in parallel through month 2?                         | All four are owned by the ODM program lead with no ME named. They overlap the Project A housing work entirely.                                              | A prototype shop or ME name per concept. If it is the same two ME engineers, the month 1 peak is real.                   |
| 7. Is the machined metal fitting (months 2 to 4) ODM ME work or a supplier's, and who at the ODM checks the CNC parts? | Owned by the shared ME engineer; runs in the same window as Project B geometry and surfacing.                                                               | A supplier name and an ODM reviewer, or agreement that the fitting slips behind Project B housings.                      |

# Tooling, the production line and the data

Three groups: the lead-time chain that sets both launches, the months 12 to 16 stack on the line, and the governance that decides how the ODM reads every other question

## 3 Tooling and the toolmaker

ODM tooling engineering never exceeds 2 FTE; each program carries 65 days of fabrication, and Project B tool design starts the day its DP gate closes.

| Ask                                                                                                                                                                         | What the files show                                                                                                                                                 | A good answer gives                                                                                                    |
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| 8. Is the toolmaker the same for both programs, and has it been told that Project A fabrication (months 3 to 5) and Project B fabrication (months 5 to 8) run back to back? | Both files carry identical 28-day design, 65-day fabrication, T1, T2, T3 sequences. No toolmaker is named in either.                                                | The toolmaker's name, its booked capacity for the coming year, and whether 65 days is a quote or a template default.   |
| 9. What is the T1 to T3 history on the last three ODM programs of this kind: how many trials, and how many days from T1 to hard tooling approval?                           | Both plans allow 30 days from T1 to T3 approval with two modification loops.                                                                                        | Actuals. If the history says three loops and 45 days, both launches move by the difference.                            |
| 10. If the Project B DP gate slips past month 4, does tool design slip one for one, or can design start on the locked geometry before the gate?                             | Project B tool design is linked to DP; housing geometry locks the day before. Any DP slip moves tooling, first article samples and the home market launch together. | Agreement to start tool design on the drawing release, decoupled from the financial and transition work that gates DP. |

## 4 Production line, months 12 to 16

Project A export pilot and inventory meet Project B first article samples, home market pilot and home market inventory; the model peaks at 6.3 line FTE in month 14.

| Ask                                                                                                       | What the files show                                                                                                        | A good answer gives                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. How many units are in each pilot run and each saleable inventory build, and on which line?            | Project A pilot quantities read 'Qty ?' in the file. Only the 500-unit first article run has a number. Project B has none. | Quantities per run. Without them the line loading is a guess and the ODM cannot book capacity. |
| 12. Is there one line for both products or two, and what else is booked on it in months 12 to 16?         | The model assumes one shared pool of line staff. The ODM's other customers are invisible to both files.                    | A line allocation per month for months 12 to 18, in writing.                                   |
| 13. Can the Project B home market inventory build (months 14 to 15) move later without moving the launch? | It ends the day of the planned home market launch. A year-end holiday week sits inside the build.                          | A yes, or the shipping and distributor dates that forbid it.                                   |

## 5 Priority, governance and the schedules themselves

The answers above only hold if the ODM and the client agree on what comes first and keep the files honest.

| Ask                                                                                                                                                              | What the files show                                                                                                                               | A good answer gives                                                                                                                         |
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| 14. When Project A and Project B compete for the same engineer, who at the ODM decides, and does the client hear about it the same week?                         | The client's resourcing review assumes Project A priority. Neither file records a priority rule or an escalation path.                            | A named decision owner at the ODM and a weekly touchpoint where reallocations are reported, not discovered.                                 |
| 15. Will the ODM provide named resources and a status date in each weekly schedule update, so the loading can be recomputed from the file rather than estimated? | Neither file carries a status date. Project B has no resource assignments at all; Project A names six.                                            | Yes, starting with the next save. This is the cheapest fix on the list.                                                                     |
| 16. What is the ODM's own view of its capacity for the program's first release as a whole, beyond these two projects?                                            | The program runs to nine projects across three releases. These two files show ODM engineering busy through month 8 and the line through month 16. | A capacity statement by discipline for the coming year. Evasion here is diagnostic of where the relationship sits on the Liker-Choi ladder. |

Evidence: two native project schedules as saved on the as-of date; the client's internal resourcing review of the same plans; the lateralworks ODM resource loading brief. Headcount figures are estimates from task class, not ODM data; the questions are meant to replace them with the ODM's own numbers. Client, ODM and product identities removed; dates expressed as months from the as-of date.