The journal for technology product management and marketing professionals • A Pragmatic Marketing® Publication

The Pragmatic Marketer™

Volume 5 Issue 1 2007

Formerly productmarketing.com™

Pragmatic Marketing's 2006 Annual Product Management and Marketing Survey

Technology Assessment for a Better Strategy

Product Managers are Really Super Heroes in Disguise!

Navigating Uncharted Territory: How we developed a strategic product marketing role

Product Design: Bridging the Gap between Product Management & Development

Communicating Strategy and Vision for Your Product

Planning

Resource alignment

Building the roadmap

Communicating internally and externally

Tracking progress

PRAGMATIC ROADMAPPING™ is a one-day, facilitated session offering techniques for planning, consolidating and communicating product strategy information to different audiences. Using practical, real-world examples and best-practice techniques, attendees will enjoy a fast-paced, content-rich curriculum combined with practical hands-on application.

Course designed for

Members of the product management, marketing and development teams tasked with planning product direction and communicating product strategy. Attendees should have some experience or knowledge of their product lifecycle.

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Pragmatic Marketing®

The Industry Standard in Technology Product Management and Marketing Education

The Pragmatic Marketer™

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About Pragmatic Marketing®

The industry standard for technology product management and marketing education, Pragmatic Marketing teaches a practical, market-driven approach to creating and delivering technology products. Founded in 1993, Pragmatic Marketing has trained over 35,000 product management and marketing professionals with more than 90% of alumni indicating the training as essential or very useful to their careers. To learn more about our public and on-site seminars, visit PragmaticMarketing.com or call (480) 515-1411.

"What's in a name?"

Did you notice the magazine name change on the front cover and ask yourself "Why?"

productmarketing.com, launched in April 2003, has grown into a much-read publication with a worldwide following all its own. The magazine's rousing success presented Pragmatic Marketing an opportunity to reassess its name in order to more closely align with the Pragmatic brand.

The name we've chosen, with its play on words, should be easily recognizable to our 75,000 subscribers—*The Pragmatic Marketer.* Be assured that the new name does not impact the content of the publication you have all come to enjoy. We plan to continue providing the same top-notch quality articles, tips and tools for years to come!

New Pragmatic Marketing Roadmapping seminar

How do you deliver the right products, not just the most features? Where should you "wow" the customer? And when is "good enough" enough?

We recently announced the addition of a one-day Pragmatic Roadmapping™ seminar to our suite of seminar offerings. Learn how to achieve success by aligning your product strategy with the market. This new seminar provides practical tools for product roadmapping that you can put to immediate use. Visit pragmaticmarketing.com/Roadmapping to register.

Software 2007 sponsorship

We are excited to announce our sponsorship of Software 2007. What began as a Silicon Valley gathering of software vendors has exploded into a global meeting of over 2,000 software business experts who are charting the course for the industry. The Software conference series, launched in 2004, has quickly grown to be the "must-attend" event for executives representing the entire software ecosystem—including software and services vendors, investors, industry experts and CIOs. Visit software2007.com for details and look for more on this event in the next issue of *The Pragmatic Marketer.*

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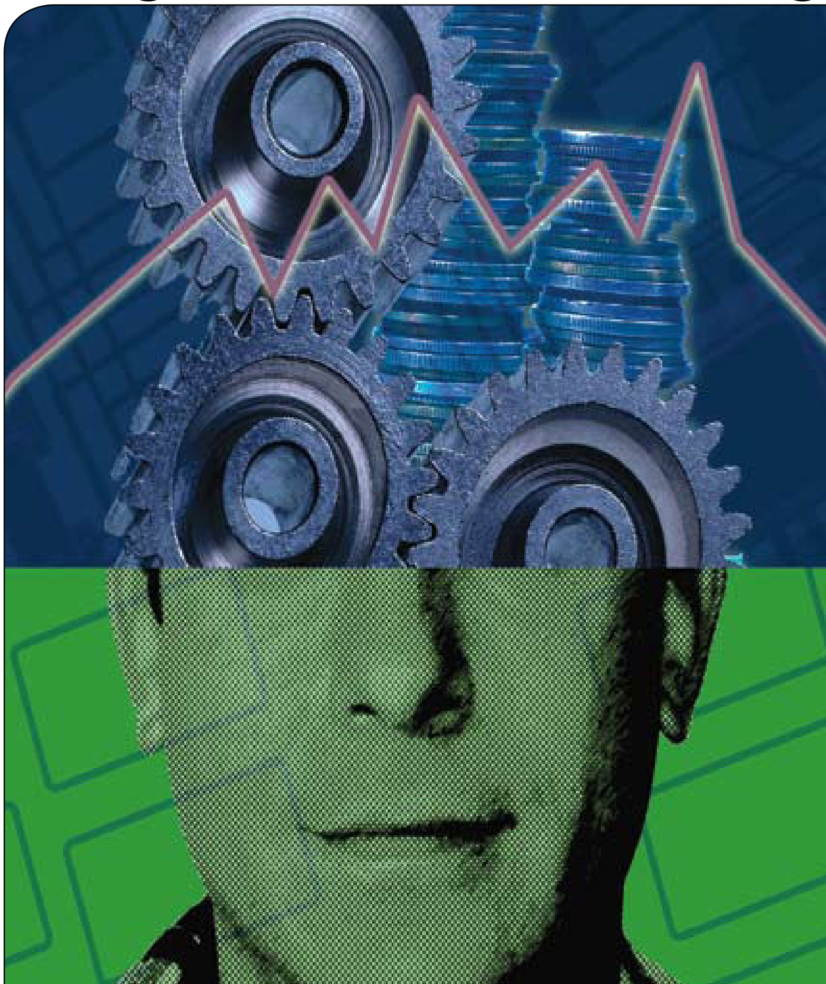
Pragmatic Marketing's 2006 Annual

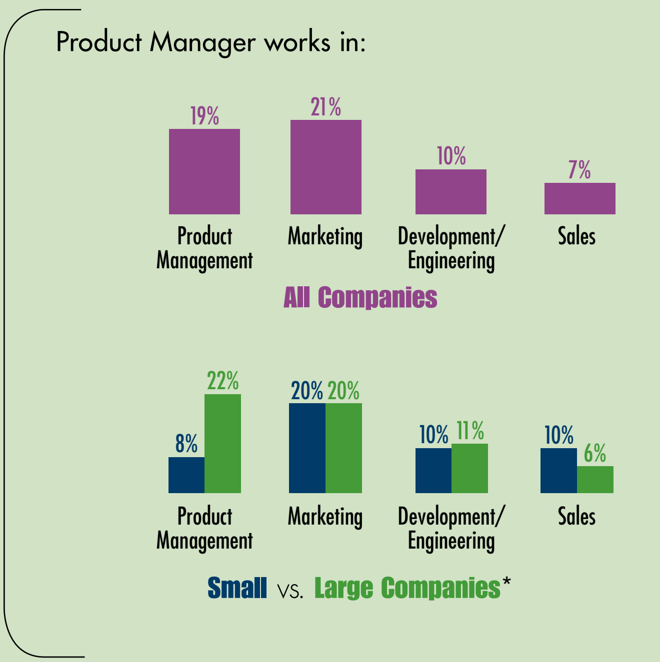


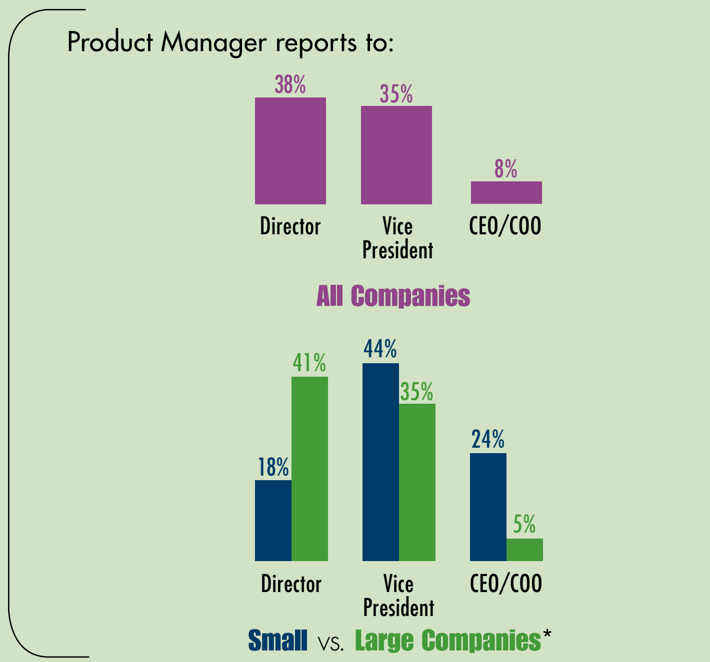
Each year, Pragmatic Marketing® conducts a survey of product managers and marketing professionals. Our objective is to provide information about compensation as well as the most common responsibilities for product managers and other marketing professionals. This year, 550 product management and marketing professionals responded to the survey conducted from October 22 through November 23, 2006 using WebSurveyor®.

Is product management different in a small company compared to a large one? This year, in several categories, we provide comparison information. For the purposes of this report, $50 million annual revenue is used as the break between small and large companies.

Organization

The average product manager reports to a director in either the Product Management department or in Marketing.





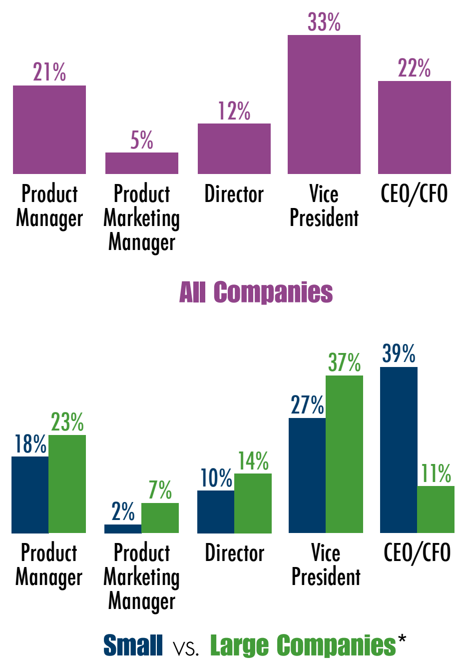
Product Management and Marketing Survey

Profile of a Product Manager

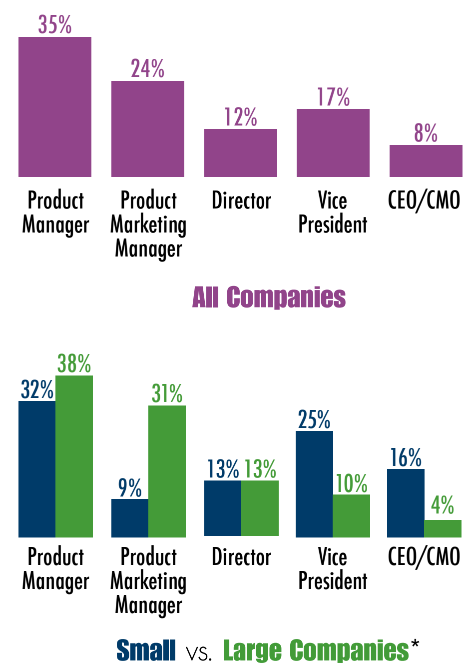
The average product manager is 36 years old with 88% claiming to be "somewhat" or "very" technical. 91% have completed college and 39% have completed a masters program. 29% are female and 71% are male.

The typical product manager has responsibility for three products but not always for the profit & loss or the go-to-market strategy of those products.

Percentage of those responsible for product profit & loss

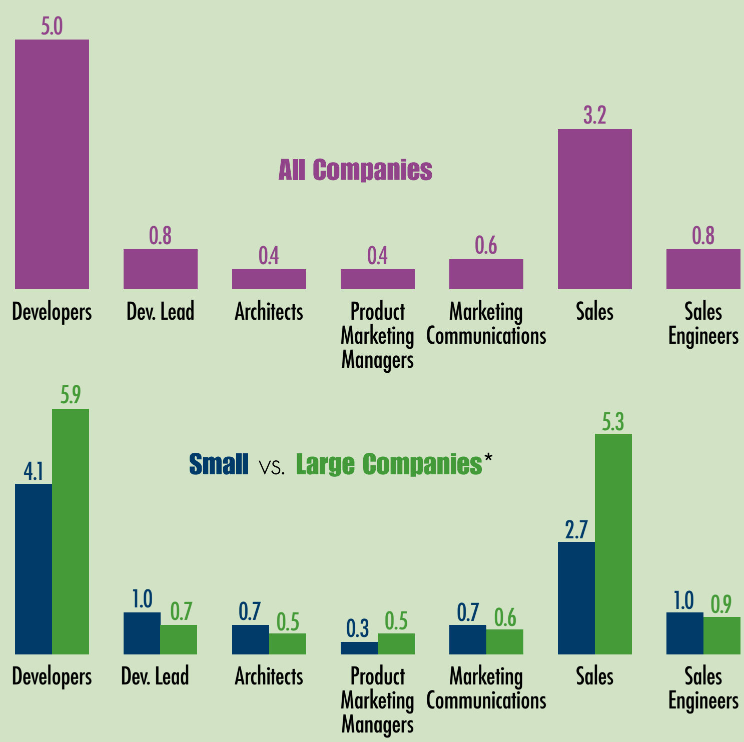


Percentage of those responsible for the product's go-to-market strategy



How are product managers allocated relative to other departments?

For each product manager:



Other ratios include an average of 0.3 QA people per developer and 4.0 sales people per Sales Engineer.

*Small vs. Large Companies graphs only include responses that reported company revenue.

Impacts on productivity

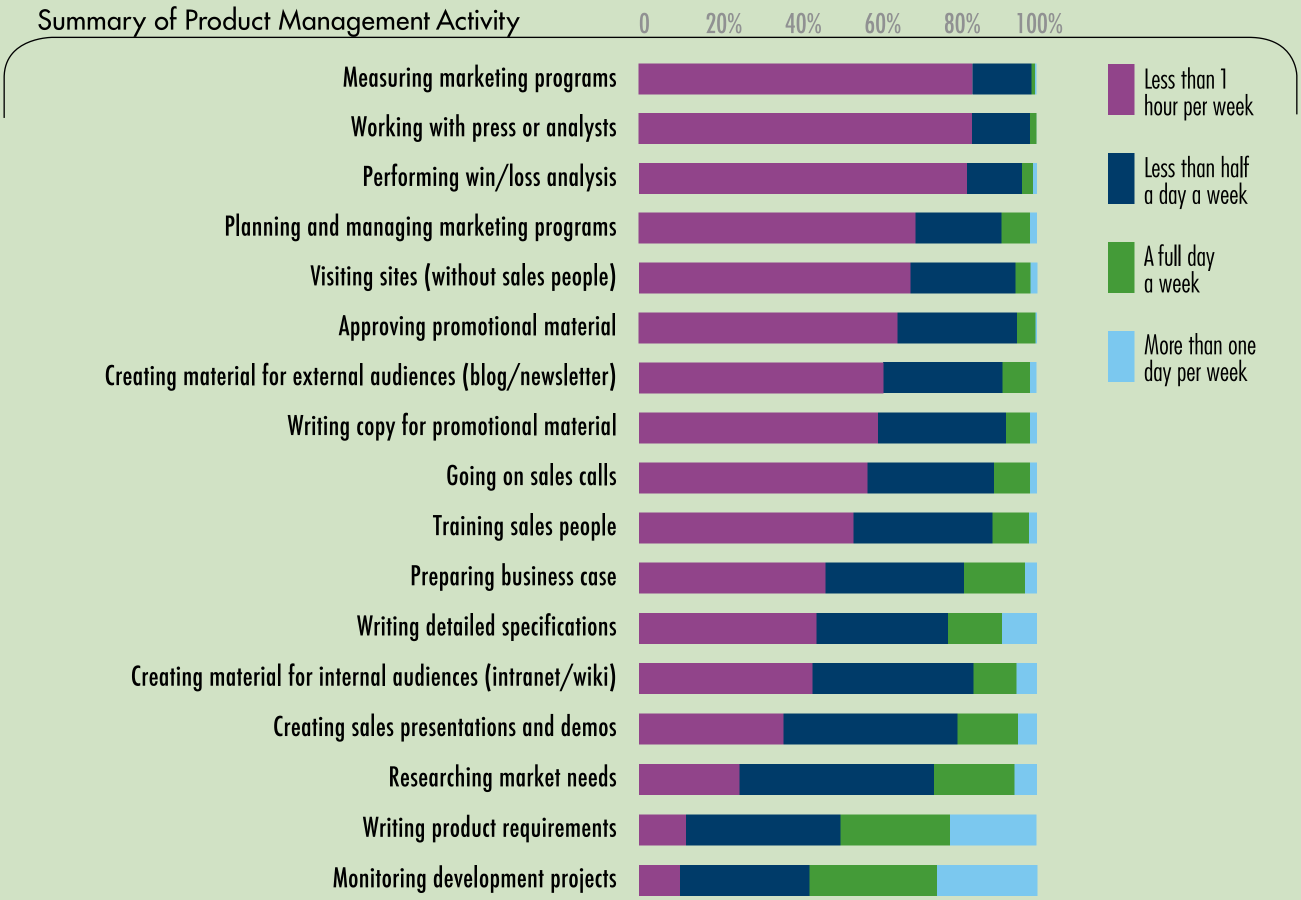
Product managers receive 50 e-mails a day and send about 25. They spend two days a week in internal meetings (14 meetings/week), but 50% of respondents go to at least 15 meetings each week, with 27% attending 20 or more!

With the increased use of blogging and wiki's for sharing knowledge, we added new questions this year to determine how much time product managers spend writing original material for others.

About 39% of product managers write for external audiences by using blogs or newsletters with 9% of them spending 8 hours or more a week. This compares to 52% of product marketing managers who spend some of their time writing material with 25% of them spending 8 hours or more.

Contributing to an intranet or wiki for internal audiences is also prevalent with 56% of product managers writing some material with 16% of them spending 8 hours or more in a typical week. 61% of product marketing managers contribute with 24% spending 8 hours or more.

Summary of Product Management Activity



Working with Development

The majority of product managers are researching market needs, writing requirements, and monitoring development projects.

- 71% researching market needs
- 51% preparing business case
- 18% performing win/loss analysis
- 82% monitoring development projects
- 80% writing requirements (the "what" document)
- 54% writing specifications (the "how" document)

Working with Marketing Communications and Sales

Product managers also spend time providing technical content for Marketing and Sales.

- 44% writing promotional copy
- 41% approving promotional materials
- 9% working with press and analysts
- 49% training sales people
- 42% going on sales calls →

Product Management vs. Product Marketing

Compensation

After reaching a plateau in 2004 and 2005, product management salaries appear to be on the rise again with a 7% increase in total compensation over 2005. The average US product management compensation in 2006 is $93,682 salary plus $14,875 annual bonus (79% of product managers get a bonus).

By job title (salary/bonus):

Product manager:
$90,000/$10,000

Product marketing manager:
$93,000/$13,000

Technical product manager:
$85,000/$10,000

Director:
$120,000/$23,000

Executive:
$153,000/$45,000

Bonuses are based on:

55% company profit

32% product revenue

45% quarterly objectives (MBOs)

Over 25% say the bonus does not motivate at all and only 16% say the bonus motivates a lot.

Regional impact on compensation

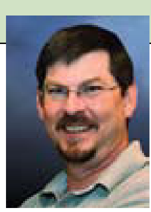
	Female			Male		
US Region [1]	Salary	Bonus	Total	Salary	Bonus	Total
Midwest	78,583	11,857	90,440	85,140	13,361	98,501
Northeast	95,862	19,263	115,125	103,872	17,974	121,846
Pacific	90,536	11,250	101,786	103,855	18,816	122,671
South	77,227	9,462	86,689	91,511	12,472	103,983
Southwest	76,778	11,500	88,278	98,381	17,222	115,603
West	88,167	10,750	98,917	97,519	12,000	109,519
Overall	$ 84,841	$ 12,630	$ 97,471	$ 94,663	$ 16,819	$ 111,482
International [2]						
Canada	73,133	9,455	82,588	83,800	10,636	94,436
Europe	90,250	10,000	100,250	103,313	18,714	122,027

Averages, Maximums and Minimums

	Average			Maximum			Minimum		
US Region [1]	Salary	Bonus	Total	Salary	Bonus	Total	Salary	Min Bonus	Total
Midwest	83,643	13,045	96,688	150,000	78,000	228,000	25,000	2,000	27,000
Northeast	100,649	18,288	118,937	157,000	100,000	257,000	55,000	3,000	58,000
Pacific	99,361	16,207	115,568	159,000	155,000	314,000	43,000	-	43,000
South	86,957	11,673	98,630	160,000	50,000	210,000	36,000	-	36,000
Southwest	92,000	15,960	107,960	130,000	47,000	177,000	50,000	2,000	52,000
West	95,818	11,773	107,591	133,000	30,000	163,000	64,000	2,000	66,000
Overall	$ 93,682	$ 14,875	$ 108,557	$ 160,000	$ 155,000	$ 315,000	$ 25,000	-	$ 25,000
International [2]									
Canada	81,525	11,000	92,525	155,000	40,000	195,000	46,000	1,000	47,000
Europe	100,700	18,133	118,833	200,000	47,000	247,000	50,000	-	50,000

1) Midwest (IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI) 67 respondents
Northeast (CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT) 99 respondents
Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA) 102 respondents
South (AL, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV) 85 respondents
Southwest (AR, LA, OK, TX) 40 respondents
West (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY) 42 respondents
2) Canada 73 respondents
Europe 25 respondents
International amounts requested in US$. We did not get adequate responses from other regions of the world to report statistically valid data.

TPM

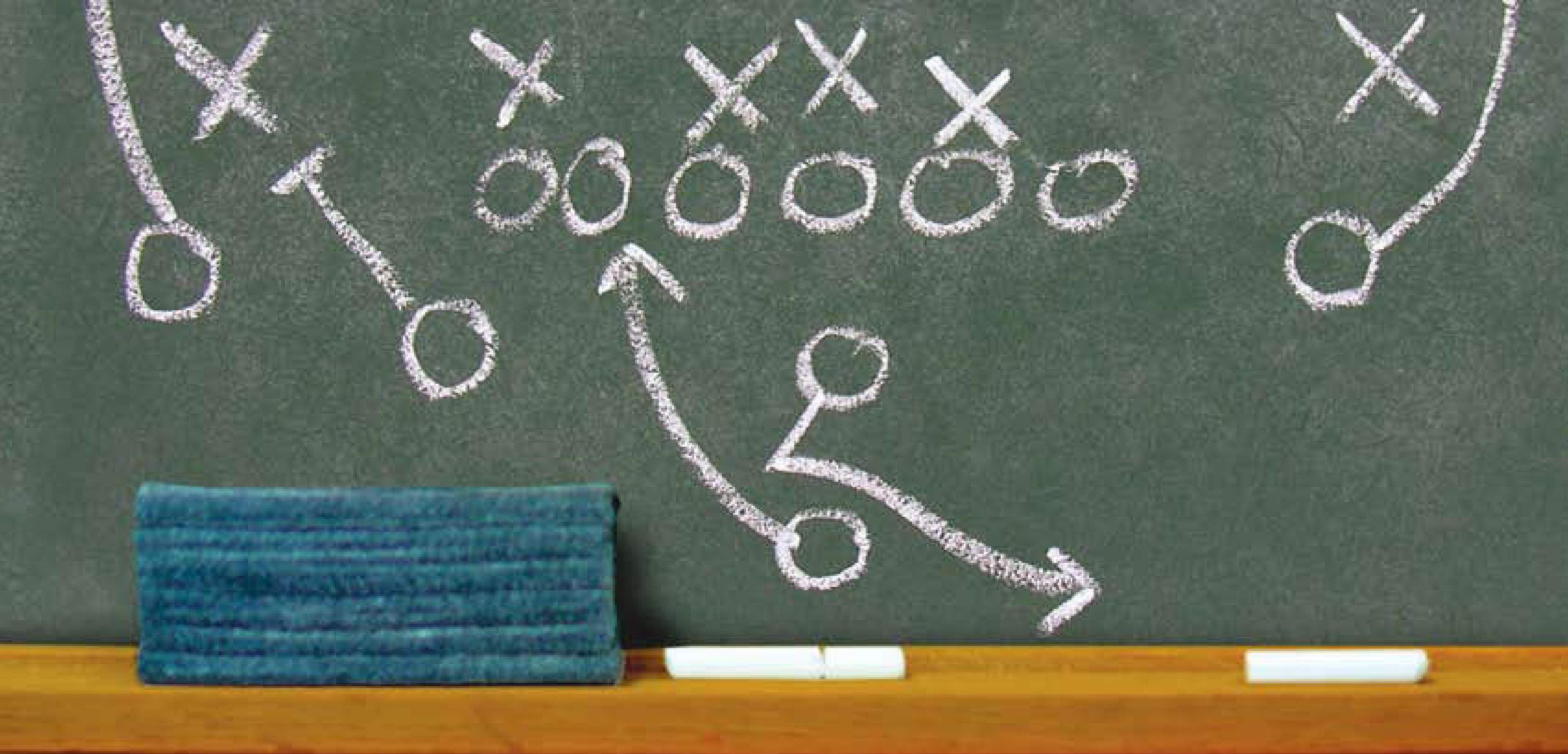


Steve Johnson is an expert in technology product management. He works for Pragmatic Marketing® as an instructor for the top-rated courses Practical Product Management® and Requirements That Work™ as well as onsite courses. Contact Steve at sjohnson@PragmaticMarketing.com

Technology Assessment for a Better Strategy

By John Milburn

"Strategy" is such an overused term in our industry. "Where's your STRATEGY?" or "It's our STRATEGIC direction!" or "How do these tactics fit into the STRATEGY?" Let's start over. Market-driven product managers should drive the product and corporate strategy. A strategy provides vision and consistency and is critical to your company's future. So, what's the first step in defining a successful product strategy? Before you can determine where you want to be, you need to define where you are today! Know where your products are positioned against the competition, against other products in your portfolio, and from the perspective of your customers and the markets you serve, *before* defining your strategy. →



Technology assessment

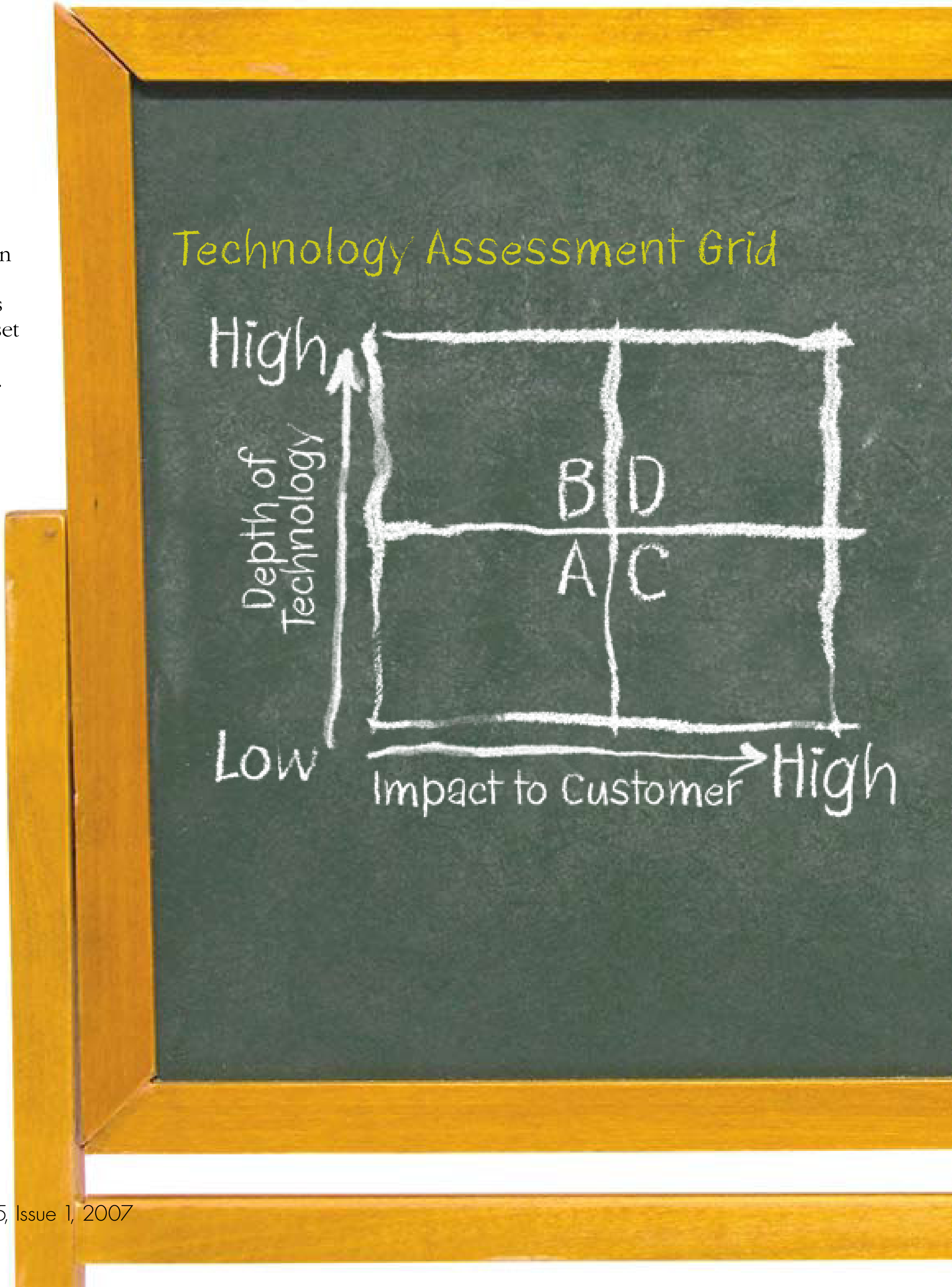
The Pragmatic Marketing® Technology Assessment Grid™ (TAG) is a tool to plot products on a 2 by 2, X/Y grid. This tool is introduced in the Practical Product Management® seminar. The vertical axis is technology; the horizontal axis is the impact of the technology on customers. By plotting products on the TAG, companies can better understand where to invest, divest, and how to better package or promote the products in their portfolio. Many companies have used the TAG to gain better internal alignment of thought and resources. It's also an excellent way to understand and explain competitive positioning. The quadrants on the TAG are labeled A, B, C, and D. Use these labels to identify particular products in your portfolio.

How do you determine where your products fit on the TAG, and how can you use that information to develop your strategy? Before moving on, it is important to first introduce another set of concepts that are critical to laying the foundation for a product strategy.

What's good enough?

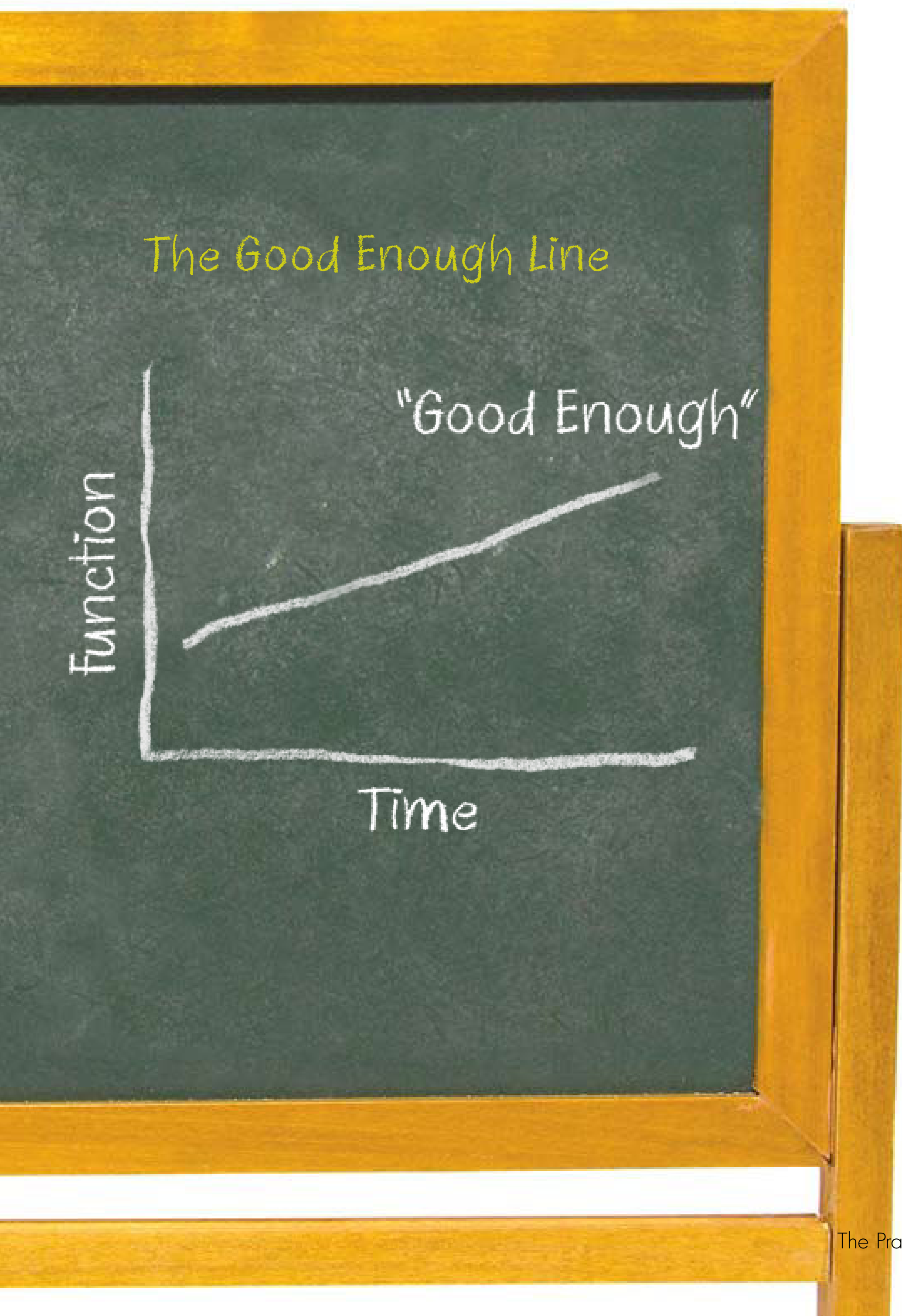
Many of the following concepts have been developed or adapted from Clayton Christensen and Michael Raynor's best-selling book, *The Innovator's Solution**. For every product, customers base purchase decisions on the concept of what is "good enough." Purchases require choice, and choice depends on perception and values. Customers and markets perceive or value a certain product or capability differently. The graph below shows this as a "good enough line," or "G-E-L." The Y, or vertical axis, is defined as the level of function delivered. The X, or horizontal axis, is time.

You must understand the G-E-L for your products in the markets served. Notice that the G-E-L gradually slopes up and to the right. This demonstrates that over time "good enough" typically increases in a gradual and incremental



way. Remember when dial-up modems were "good enough" for remotely connecting our computers? This is definitely no longer good enough for most of us. By plotting products with respect to the G-E-L, product managers can understand where and how to introduce new and disruptive innovation, and where it makes more sense to invest in sustaining, incremental improvements. Additionally, the analysis may help identify new and nascent markets that have a different G-E-L than other more traditional or competitive markets.

Disruptive innovation is defined as addressing a problem in a new way. It could be as mundane as a Post-it® note or as sophisticated as a new form of an internal combustion engine. New, disruptive technologies typically fall below the G-E-L. The objective in introducing these tools is that there is untapped demand in the market and this new technology will begin to address problems in that area. The most visible disruptive technology over the past twenty years is the desktop PC. Early versions of the PC were well below the G-E-L for most users and they begged for more functionality. Both incremental and disruptive technologies were integrated with the PC—higher resolution displays, increased density memory, new disk drive technologies, new operating systems and applications, portability via laptops, etc. Users couldn't get enough! However, there was a point in time when the PC crossed over the G-E-L. As the more traditional business/commercial (vs. technical/engineering) markets became satisfied with processor speed, memory, and storage, they began looking at other characteristics of the PC such as applications and data portability.



PC manufacturers often put new and more sophisticated hardware and software into their offerings and are disappointed in the lack of increased market demand. How much better is 1 MB of memory vs. 768KB? Will my application really run faster with a dual-core processor? When will I ever need 4 USB ports? More isn't always better. What really drives the business user is productivity, not features. Will my old applications run on the new technology? Will this new system integrate into my network? Do I have to buy new add-ons and accessories? The new Dell™ and HP PCs now come with an ExpressCard™/34, replacing the old PCMCIA format; uh oh, I have to buy a new broadband modem!

Increasing technology depth or breadth in a product that is at or above the G-E-L will not generate a corresponding increase in sales or market acceptance unless the new capability is in an area below the line. Also, product capability that is above the line for one market may be below the line for other markets. Target the markets that value what you deliver. Apple® has done a wonderful job of this with the Macintosh®. By targeting markets that value innovation rather than standardization, Apple has built a very successful and profitable business. So, where can you make the most money? It depends! ➔

Invest wisely

For products or technologies that fall below the G-E-L in their targeted markets, the following strategies have proven most successful:

- Proprietary, non-standard offerings
- "Vertically integrated" companies—"sole source providers"
- Total solutions from a single vendor

For products or technologies that are above the G-E-L, the greatest ROI is gained from:

- Standards compliance
- Pluggable and portable
- Component providers

For example, Intel®-based Microsoft® Windows® workstations are "above the G-E-L." Vertically integrated companies that deliver total solutions are finding it much harder to compete in the traditional commercial market space. Even IBM® discovered that they can't compete in this low-margin space and sold their ThinkPad® line to Lenovo™.

Typically, both disruptive and incremental innovation strategies are necessary to sustain growth in technology-based markets. However, avoid continual investment in innovative, oftentimes very expensive extensions to products that are above the G-E-L. Customers aren't willing to pay more for the new capabilities, installation, upgrade, training, and support costs. Many companies introduce new ways to solve old problems via disruptive technologies and are perplexed at the slow adoption rates. ASP? SOA? SaaS? AI? Eclipse? Biometrics? These disruptive technologies will not be rapidly adopted by your current markets unless you address problems that are below the G-E-L as compared to the alternative.

Plotting your course

How does this tie together as a basis for product strategy? Let's go back to the TAG and think in terms of the G-E-L to develop a basis for the strategy.

"A" products are typically at or above the G-E-L, are generally very profitable and have a balance between depth of technology and positive customer impact. They typically solve the problems they were designed to solve in a simple and efficient way. The sales cycle is usually short and A's are prime candidates to sell through multiple channels of distribution. A's are typically "cash cows" and appeal to mature users. They are not sexy, but return a great deal of profit to the bottom line. Avoid making significant technology enhancements in A products, thereby increasing cost, without addressing problems that are below the G-E-L. If you are the "president of the product," recognize that unless increased revenue is keeping up with increased costs, investment in A's may result in less net profit to the bottom line.

"B" products fall into two primary categories—both somewhat extreme in relation to the G-E-L. The first category is when companies continue to add functional enhancements to "A" products while not correspondingly increasing customer value. Are you adding additional database support without a huge target market? Are you adding new international language support without presence or a plan for those parts of the world? Are you re-architecting your code libraries? Does your market feel that your product is good enough, but you keep adding more and more function? If so, you may not be investing wisely. The second category of "B" products is when companies deliver a disruptive solution that addresses problems that are below that G-E-L, but the market is not yet ready or enabled to adopt it. There's a saying, "you have to build highways before you can drive on them." B's are ahead of the market, which also typically means they're ahead of the revenue. B products of this type require significant investment in training, advertising, enabling technologies, and marketing programs to expedite customer adoption.

"C" products are typically lower cost, higher value, can command a high price, and are extremely profitable. Developing and protecting "C" products should be a major goal for the product manager. These products address problems that are below the G-E-L. Customers will typically pay a premium for a differentiated solution that is not overly sophisticated or complex. Companies must develop defensive strategies for their "C" products because these products have a lower barrier to competitive entry—more easily replicated and prone to competitive pressure.

"D" products are high value, high-depth offerings. Anything that is "end-to-end" or is referred to as a "suite" usually fits the "D" product category. A "D" offering may not be a product itself, but a vision for how all of a company's products work together to solve a higher-order set of problems. D's are fun to work on, analysts and the press love them, and they give companies a vision. D's should address problems that are below the G-E-L. They are generally high-cost and by implication should provide high value. Be on the lookout for D's that your market feels are B's. D products require ongoing customer and market validation to make sure that the value delivered is still in line with the market and thus justify a higher price than the alternatives.

Building your strategy

The following strategies can be considered related to the G-E-L and product positioning on the TAG:

Problem: Too few C's in your portfolio

Strategy: Look for B's or D's that could be decomposed or repackaged to address specific problems. Leverage your distinctive competence to look for C opportunities. Interview customers to find out what they value in your company and brainstorm ways to deliver more C products.

Problem: C's are sliding to the left

Strategy: If the competition or alternative technologies are causing your C's to have less impact or perceived value, consider bundling multiple C's and/or A's to protect your space.

Problem: Too much investment in A's

Strategy: Perform a business analysis or do a business case that shows the return to the company of each development dollar spent. Decision makers often are not aware of profit "leaks" that may be hampering potential growth in other, more innovative, "below the G-E-L" areas.

Problem: Key customers bought your B's and you are changing course

Strategy: This is one of the most difficult problems to address. We suggest a two-step approach. First, develop a migration strategy for your customers, at no cost to them. If you want to retain these key customers, you can't ask them to pay for migration and you can't take away the core function or value of the product. Secondly, once the migration strategy is complete, "fall on your sword." Explain to the customers that the market, technology, demand, etc., did not develop as anticipated and it is necessary for a change. Spell out the trade-offs to the customer from *their* perspective. Most will respect your business judgment and become a more loyal customer over time if you are up-front about your dilemma. For those that don't, they would probably not have been long-term customers anyway.

Problem: Delivery and promise of a D continues to slip

Strategy: Customers have good memories. Slips in D's are usually measured in years rather than weeks, and customers will have little patience for this when there are alternatives available in the market. Apply the necessary resources to stop the slippage. Alternatively, back-off on how much detail you provide in your confidential disclosures. If this is not possible, revisit the D "suite" and consider rolling out parts of the solution earlier than the rest to meet some level of expectation in your markets.

Problem: Too many products are above the G-E-L

Strategy: What if your company has gotten stale and not uncovered new problems that are below the line? This often results in decreased margins, less innovation, and degrading market share. Read *The Innovator's Solution.* In it, Christensen suggests several approaches to dealing with this problem, including, but not limited to, establishing independent business units or acquiring other companies in your space.

Problem:
The competition is influencing customers to move the G-E-L "down" with less functional products

Strategy: This is a challenge. How do you continue to demand a higher price for your products when customers are willing to buy less functional ones? Perhaps your view of the G-E-L is out-of-sync with your market. Are you positioning your products in the wrong markets? Have the customer's values changed since you set your strategy? Can you offer a "lite" version of your product to hold the space against the competition?

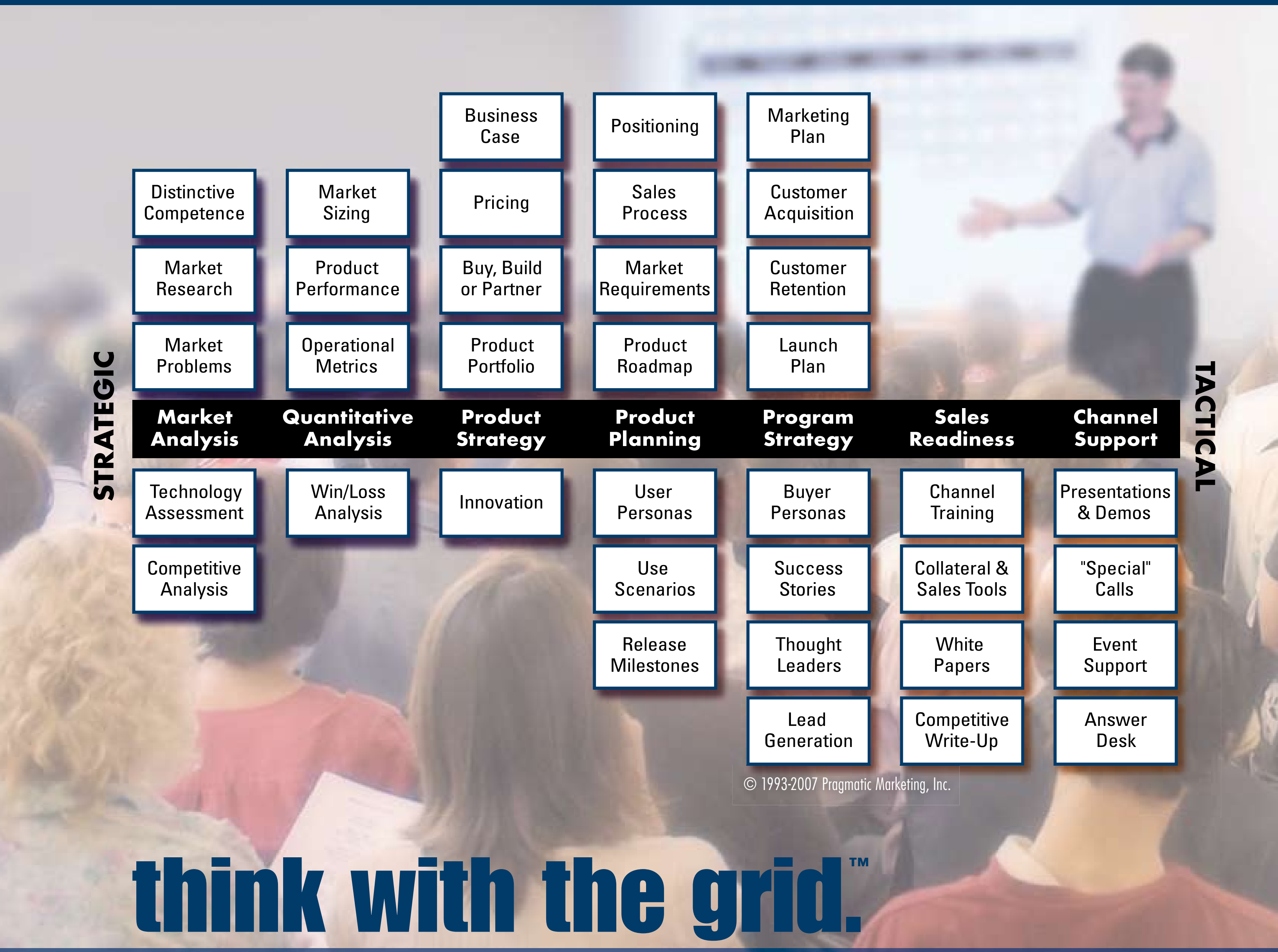
Problem: The competition is influencing customers to move the G-E-L "up" with new features or functions

Strategy: If you are on the receiving end of this phenomenon, it must be countered to maintain or grow your market share. Find reference accounts that have solved problems with your solution to argue for a lower G-E-L. Remind customers that more features results in an increase in support, training, and maintenance. Show your customers a roadmap that addresses the critical competitive features.

Ok, now go deliver on your strategy. Don't be afraid to paint a vision for your company. Understand your current product positioning and where the G-E-L is for your markets. Act as "president of the product" and base your product direction on market facts. Don't be afraid to take on the hierarchy and challenge past decisions. If you understand where you are, where your competition is, and where your markets are, then developing your strategy will get a whole lot easier. TPM

John Milburn is an instructor for Pragmatic Marketing and has been in the computer industry for over 20 years. He has implemented the Pragmatic Marketing Framework and launched several successful software and hardware products following this market-driven methodology. He teaches the top-rated courses Practical Product Management® and Requirements That Work™ as well as onsite workshops. You can contact John at jmilburn@pragmaticmarketing.com

Pragmatic Marketing Seminars for



STRATEGIC

Market Analysis	Quantitative Analysis	Product Strategy	Product Planning	Program Strategy	Sales Readiness	Channel Support
		Business Case	Positioning	Marketing Plan		
Distinctive Competence	Market Sizing	Pricing	Sales Process	Customer Acquisition		
Market Research	Product Performance	Buy, Build or Partner	Market Requirements	Customer Retention		
Market Problems	Operational Metrics	Product Portfolio	Product Roadmap	Launch Plan		
Technology Assessment	Win/Loss Analysis	Innovation	User Personas	Buyer Personas	Channel Training	Presentations & Demos
Competitive Analysis			Use Scenarios	Success Stories	Collateral & Sales Tools	"Special" Calls
			Release Milestones	Thought Leaders	White Papers	Event Support
				Lead Generation	Competitive Write-Up	Answer Desk

TACTICAL

think with the grid.™

The recognized expert in technology product management and marketing, Pragmatic Marketing's common sense approach is built on years of experience and best practices. The Pragmatic Marketing seminars introduce a framework that gives technology marketers the tools necessary to deliver market-driven products that people want to buy. Our framework is the foundation for all our courses, from identifying markets and their problems to writing market requirements to creating a go-to-market strategy that meets your corporate and revenue goals. Since 1993, over 35,000 attendees have been trained to "think with the grid."

Pragmatic Marketing®

The Industry Standard in Technology Product Management and Marketing Education

Product Managers and Product Marketers

Practical Product Management®

Practical Product Management is for product managers and those who manage or contribute to aspects of product marketing and management. This two-day seminar fully explores the role of technical product management, providing tools and a framework to help get products to market more efficiently.

Complete seminar agendas are available at www.PragmaticMarketing.com

DAYS 1 – 2

I. Strategic Role of Product Management
- What is marketing?
- Definition of the role of product management
- Contrasting product management and product marketing
- Assigning ownership of responsibilities
- Identifying the "first steps" with gap analysis

II. Market Analysis
- Distinctive competence
- Market research
- Market problems
- Technology assessment
- Competitive analysis

III. Quantitative Analysis
- Market sizing
- Product performance
- Operational metrics
- Win/loss analysis

IV. Product Strategy
- Business case
- Pricing
- Buy, build, or partner?
- Thought leaders
- Innovation

V. Product Planning
- Positioning
- Sales process

VI. Case Study

VII. Delineating Responsibilities
- Communicating market facts to Development, Marcom, and Sales
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Product Managers are Really SUPER HEROES IN

By Nilofer Merchant

There are two really hard jobs inside a company. One is being a CEO, and the other is being a product manager. Both the CEO and product managers are expected to be the most flexible, acrobatic kind of leaders—adjusting to people's styles, making sure to communicate with clarity the requirements of what is needed, translating vision into specifics and constantly at the beck-and-call of many constituents. It's a wonder someone would take either job.

As the point of contact between customer needs and engineering realities, a product manager is the linchpin who can make a product into a market success, or doom it to irrelevance. This determines whether a company lives or dies. Yet, many people don't really get product management. Compani es often fail to give product managers the support, training, and empowerment they need to succeed.

This article is my attempt to put the super hero cape onto product managers and to share what I think they need to be successful. Note to all product managers: share this with your boss.

Gone are the days when product managers created things. Some of the existing concepts in the industry today are based on old-school thinking of what constitutes a product. In the 1980's, Porter's model focused on the competitive edge of a company being managed by a silo function: design ➝ manufacture ➝ build ➝ market ➝ sell ➝ deliver. Product managers had to be the first to see the product definition vision of the silo function, or the market would have moved from underneath the company. It was a 2-year cycle, and it was largely about defining a product and shepherding that product to life.

That's not the case anymore. *Products* are not the thing, *solutions* are. But I'll get back to that later. I've been thinking about what constitutes market power in today's era. I have a notion that replaces Porter's model, at least in technology and the Web 2.0 era.

Why does product management matter?

In a word, globalization. More than ever before, efficient and low-cost companies in other parts of the world, some of them government-subsidized, have access to markets in the First World. Many of these companies specialize in the rapid, low-cost production of generic copies of successful products. A company based in the developed world can't win just by making a good product at a reasonable price. To survive, Western companies must innovate—and they must make

DISGUISE!

sure their innovations are compelling enough that customers will value them, even if they cost more. I would also argue that what we need today is "solutions" not "products." That requires an inherently broader aperture to clearly understand the situation.

One of the most successful products in today's market is the iPod™. When Apple® introduced it, the market for MP3 music players was commoditized, and dominated by no-name Asian manufacturers. The company was playing a hardware game, and the customer was expected to do a lot of work to assemble the real solution. Apple created the iPod (the hardware) but what made it "it", was the accompanying iTunes™ music service. Apple's approach made e-music purchase and playback much easier than it had ever been before, and the market rewarded Apple with an estimated 70%+ share in the US market for mobile music players.

The solution is also tied to who is using/deploying the solution. When selling dental implants and crowns, the initial customer isn't the person getting the implant, it's the dentist who sells and installs the implant. For the patient, a major drawback has been the number of visits required to create and install a finished implant. Recently new systems, such as Cerec® from Sirona Dental Systems, Inc., compressed the multiple office visit process to a single visit. The patient's implant is measured in the office, fit is tested on a computer, and the finished ceramic implant is milled by an automated machine in the doctor's office—all while the patient waits. This increases satisfaction for the patient, and saves time and expense for the dentist. Sirona's insight was realizing that the dentist needed an implant production system, not just a medical CAD software program. →

On the consumer side of dentistry, Procter & Gamble® realized that there was increasing interest in tooth whitening as the baby boomer generation aged. But conventional tooth whitening meant either a trip to the dentist or the use of uncomfortable home-use trays. P&G™ combined its expertise in fabric bleach, toothpaste, and thin film technology to create Crest Whitestrips®, a product that lets people whiten their teeth by applying a thin bleach-saturated plastic strip to the teeth. Creating this sort of cross-discipline connection is one of the key tasks of product management. The result in P&G's case was a renaissance in the stale and commoditized tooth-care business. Suddenly tooth whitening was easy and convenient, sales took off, and some reports show P&G's Crest® brand displacing Colgate® as the market leader.

The markets for things as simple as tooth cleaning, music, and dental implants are vastly different, but the common thread between these solutions was that the manufacturer had an important insight into the customer's unmet needs and how they could be answered through solutions. Generating that sort of insight is the essence of good product management.

Why does product management fail today?

Theoretically, a product manager's involvement in the development of a product should be concentrated at the beginning and the end of the process. At the beginning, the product manager is responsible for defining the product—who it's for, what problems it will solve, and how big the opportunity. At the end of the process, the product manager is responsible for feeding that information to Marketing, in a form that they can easily transform into messages and deliverables.

The reality at many companies is that the product manager often gets pulled into the middle of the development process as a problem-solver. When there's a risk of a schedule slip, a conflict over resources, or a change in the market, the product manager often attends meetings and researches options, which eats into the time available for their core tasks. Product managers are so overburdened that they can no longer truly lead their products. They can't do the up-front work necessary to define a winning product strategy, or the back-end work to make sure it's marketed properly. The result is inevitably mediocre products that don't hit their sales goals, and product lines that aren't well differentiated from their competitors.

A critical goal for any company's product management process should be to avoid this time trap.

How to get it right?

To get consistent and insightful leadership from product management, a company needs to consider several things to avoid the process from falling apart:

1. Create a corporate culture in which product management leads.
2. Support product managers with information and peer groups that help them succeed.
3. Train product managers to listen properly to three key audiences—customers, competitors, and their own executives.
4. Hire product managers and engineers who can collaborate.

1. Create a culture in which product management leads

In many companies, engineers are the kings and queens of the product development process. They build what interests them, or they build what they think some imaginary customer would want, no matter what input they get from others.

Our favorite example was an engineering director who once sent a memo to Product Management saying, "We've finished designing the product, now we need you to write the Market Requirements Document so we can do the launch." That company was once a major technology player; it's now on the verge of bankruptcy.

Sometimes engineering-led companies are successful. If they have brilliant engineers, or if they get lucky, they may manage to hit a sweet spot in the market. But most engineering-driven companies have very inconsistent results. Many of their products will win praise from technophiles, but won't sell in volume. Numerous Asian consumer electronics companies are notorious for this, but they have cost structures that permit them to do "spaghetti development" in which they throw large numbers of products at the market to see what sticks. Western companies, with their higher cost of development, need a much higher success rate.

The ideal culture for success is one in which product development teams acknowledge the leadership of Product Management. They may argue about features and advocate their own ideas, but in the end, the product manager makes the decisions and Engineering carries them out. This is actually a two-way deal—Product Management should decide what needs to be done but let Engineering figure out how to do it. A product manager who starts second-guessing pure Engineering decisions usually ends up neglecting the work that only a product manager can drive.

2. Get the right information and peer support

Product managers' thinking about the market is only as good as the information available to them. That sounds obvious, but it's surprising how many companies make major business decisions based on poor or sparse information.

Companies often depend too heavily on the advice of syndicated industry analysts. Analysts have a valuable point of view, but their advice usually reflects the industry consensus, and most of the analysis companies don't have enough budgeted to do original quantitative research in all the markets they cover. That means most of them are relying on the things they hear from others in your industry, plus their own hunches. That's not a great basis for running a company. I don't want to hear one more person quote Gartner, Inc. or IDC to confirm a market size or trend in a concept review. It's silly to do so.

Be cautious about industry growth forecasts. It is difficult for anyone to predict the future accurately, but asking an analysis company that doesn't do quantitative work to make a forecast is especially risky. The track record of most industry forecasts is remarkably bad. For example, at the start of the decade, the analysts over-forecasted demand in mobile phones, and then significantly under-forecasted demand for mobile phones in each of the last two years. Even worse, much of the growth has come from developing countries, at lower price points than most of the analysts expected. Companies that invested heavily in making expensive "smart phones" for the developed world, a market that was supposed to explode, have suffered.

It's important for a company to do its own original, balanced research as part of the product planning process. In the case of consumer products, or enterprise products deployed broadly, the research should be qualitative and quantitative (in other words, focus groups / 1:1 interviews with early adopters, plus a numerical survey). There are two benefits to doing this research yourself. First, it ensures the quality of your data. And second, it allows your product managers to test the exact ideas they're considering. The more specific the research, the more actionable it will be.

The primary reason companies don't do this is cost. But skimping on research is a false economy if you're investing millions of dollars to develop and market a product. For smaller-scale projects, the Internet has made it much less expensive to conduct quick and simple surveys. There is no excuse for not doing your research. ➔

3. Listen to customers, executives, and competitors

One of the more common questions about product management is why company "A" is successful and company "B" is not. It's often that company "A" somehow does a better job of listening to its customers. But it sounds superficial to imply that success could be so tied to a single axis.

Turn the question around. Rather than asking who listens to customers, we should ask who they listen to, and what they listen for.

There are three primary audiences a product manager needs to listen to:

Customer. It's critical to know what's important from the perspective of those buying and using the product. Take lots of notes, but then step back from all the specific input and ask: What are customer pain points? What are customers doing now to solve the problems? What can you do creatively to solve the problems? Remember that people can go on and on about things they would like to have, but won't necessarily pay for. The most important task is to figure out what they need, not what they want.

When defining new markets, ask yourself:

- What keeps the customer awake at night?
- How could a product (any product) or service solve that problem? What must it do?
- Why could you provide the best solution?

Executives. It's important for product managers to listen carefully to what members of the company's executive team say about the product. Not because they're in charge (although that's a good reason), but because a product manager needs to understand the key influences driving the company. What do the executives want to achieve? Is it share, growth, acquiring a particular customer segment?

Product managers who listen for these priorities use them to guide product strategy. For example, say top management was interested in creating beachheads in new markets. That would mean pricing a new product high, for short-term revenue optimization, would be a very bad idea.

The competition. The most successful products answer unmet needs, or answer existing needs in new ways. To make sure a product will be unique, a product manager needs to understand what the competitors are doing and where competitors could be going. How do the competitors position themselves? Is there any unclaimed space? Is there a fulcrum where leverage could be applied to move a market? An assessment of the competition should include an analysis of competitor's advertisements, marketing materials, blogs, and community forums. The goal is to understand how competitors describe themselves, and how others describe them.

Plot these findings on a quadrant or perception map. This makes it easier to spot new opportunities not claimed by others.

4. Hire product leads and engineers who can collaborate

High-flying companies with growing stock values often hire the most capable people for every position in the company. This sounds great, but superstars have the biggest egos, and it can be very difficult to get them to cooperate as a team.

Companies are most effective when they hire people who are well suited to their roles. It's usually better to have a "B" player who knows exactly what to do than an "A" player who tries to do everyone else's job for them.

In the case of product managers, that means hiring people who are good at setting direction, understanding customers, and persuading others. Product management is a classic influencing job in which success is defined by persuading other people to do things. The product manager must be able to get out of the way of implementation. A product manager who tries to micromanage any part of the implementation process will fail.

Product managers also need to be teamed with people who are willing to work with them. Their most important peers are the product development staff. If the product developers are intent on setting their own direction, the product manager is doomed to fail from the start. Hire a good engineer who'll work with a team rather than a brilliant engineer who refuses to take direction.

Hit products like the iPod aren't always the result of a single genius being struck by a lightning insight. They can be designed systematically through the right combination of processes and leadership.

Good product management is the key to making that happen. Good product managers can make good companies great. And ultimately they are the key to company success for the long run. Get that cape on, you're going to need it for how high you're gonna fly. TPM

Nilofer Merchant founded Rubicon Consulting, Inc. in 1999 after gaining 15 years of operational experience in key leadership positions at Apple, Autodesk, and GoLive (later acquired by Adobe). She uses her sharp expertise to design industry-leading go-to-market programs, winning notable awards from CRN, VAR Business and Marketing Association in the fields of marketing and channel development. Nilofer has honed her multidisciplinary approach for assessing a business situation clearly, applying critical wisdom, and defining a strategic direction. You can reach Nilofer at nilofer@rubiconconsulting.com

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Gopal Shenoy, strategic marketing manager, SolidWorks Corp., responsible for understanding future requirements of customers.

Tom Baird, SVP Product Management, Marketing and Business Development for Mitchell International, the insurance software supplier, on how he has worked to reinvent the product management process at the company since coming on in 2005.

Ann Marie Beasley, VP Office of Strategy Management for Symantec Corp., the leading security software supplier, who ensures the company's business plans and activities reflect the corporate strategy and objectives.

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Navigating Uncharted Territory

How we developed a strategic product marketing role

By Dave Morse

The trouble with the outbound role of product marketing is that we have an identity crisis on our hands—we're misunderstood, misguided, and misaligned—and as a result, great products are either failing altogether or missing their potential. Executives and other members of management have wide-ranging expectations of product marketing that are almost never focused on strategy or the bottom line. Thus, we are usually confined to a tactical role supporting Sales and others, expending enormous resources on too many urgent tactics that are never measured and rarely appreciated. Uncertain about where our "turf" is located, we work in a state of reaction and firefighting, unable to contribute in a way that is meaningful to our companies or our careers.

It is time for product marketers to push the "reset button" on our activities and expectations. Before we began my company's effort to redefine our product marketing role, our executives had varied ideas about product marketing and felt that it should be part of the product management organization because (following common logic) "they need to know the product in order to market it."

In this article, the first of a two-part series, I'll tell you how we redefined and revitalized product marketing as an organization responsible for strategies to influence potential buyers and sales channels. In the next issue, I'll walk you through each of the steps we took to get this change approved and implemented. You'll see that with the right definition and promotion of roles and processes, outbound product marketing can be a truly strategic group that is recognized for its impact on the company's most critical goals. ➔

With components that may include advertising, public relations, websites, lead generation, internal communications, collateral, media planning, branding, event planning, customer retention, channel training and so on, marketing is often defined by whichever activity the company has invested in most heavily. Individually, these tactics may not be that confusing. It is the absence of a *cohesive strategy* for applying these tactics and how they're *organized* within the company that causes perplexity.

When executives have pre-existing (and wide-ranging) ideas about marketing, it can lead to mixed expectations. Bob, VP of Sales, believes (and therefore expects) marketing to be a lead generation machine, while Mary, CEO, believes (and therefore expects) marketing to keep the website up-to-date as well as be the voice of the company through effective press and media relations. If executives can't comprehend the marketing big picture, how can they be expected to effectively delineate between product management, product marketing, and marketing communications?

Specifically for product marketing, these varied beliefs and expectations can lead to the role serving as product expert, sales support, "technical liaison between Product Management and Marketing Communications," collateral production, lead generators, event planners, and the "t-shirt and coffee mug department."

The trouble in product marketing today

Compared to positions like Sales or Engineering, Marketing is an odd bird. As a way to prove just how different we are from our cubicle counterparts, here is a simple yet effective test: Ask anyone (and I mean *anyone*) in your company the following two questions about Sales and/or Engineering:

1. What is the [Sales or Engineering] team responsible for delivering?
2. How are they measured?

The responses will be relatively uniform. You'll hear things like, "Software developers write and test code, and are measured by the quality and timeliness of their delivery." And, "Sales people are responsible for calling on prospects, closing deals, and attaining or beating their quota."

However, ask those same two questions about Marketing, and you'll find a wide range of answers. "Marketing is … *pause* … well, they write content for our website", "They generate our leads", "Dave is great on customer calls", "They plan our trade shows", or my favorite, "The golf shirt and coffee mug department"!

Granted, Marketing may perform these activities. But do any of them capture the true and complete essence of the role? What is our real purpose? Why is the company spending so much money on this stuff?

We are misunderstood

Most people don't *really* know what marketing is and believe it to be a "necessary evil" that eats up budgets and provides little-to-no return-on-investment. Others see it as an artistic venture, populated by creative people who are simply tasked with creating memorable ads.

We are misguided

We have a "misinformation proliferation" on our hands. Business schools seem to lack the focus needed to define the product marketing role and delineate it from other marketing functions. I have not yet met a b-school graduate who has been trained in the basic roles and responsibilities for product marketing.

Another example is the lack of decent books and publications. Go ahead and browse Amazon.com® for the term "product marketing." You won't find anything of *true* relevance, other than books clearly (or not-so-clearly) targeted at product management. One of the books claims that, "Regardless of the industry, *product managers… are responsible for the marketing of their product."* See what I mean?

We are misaligned

As a result of being misunderstood and misguided, the product marketer gets misaligned within the organization in a number of ways, including:

- Reporting to inappropriate functions/departments like engineering, sales, or marketing communications
- "One position, two hats" performing both inbound product management and outbound product marketing functions
- Not existing at all

I suggest you read the article "About Titles and Responsibilities" by Steve Johnson of Pragmatic Marketing (www.productmarketing.com/m/0701.asp). Steve says, "Titles really are a mess in our business. What one company calls a product manager, another calls a product marketing manager. Technology businesses have generally ignored the standard terms used in other industries."

How true! Go ahead and peruse the hundreds and hundreds of "product marketing" positions listed through career portals like www.simplyhired.com. After five minutes, you'll quickly reach the same conclusion: job titles and descriptions for this role are all over the map.

Wikipedia, the collaborative online encyclopedia, offers no help either. Search for product marketing and you'll see that this function is generally responsible for outbound marketing "tasks." Responsibilities include the market requirements document (a product management function) plus the tactical roles of "hot sheets, beat sheets, cheat sheets, white papers and case studies." As Wikipedia is developed through the combined input of "everyone," this leaves no doubt about the general chaos around titles.

A by-product of misalignment is what I call the "silo effect." In my company, it was common for individual functions, like product management or marketing communications, to work sheltered from each other in their own "silo" for an extended length of time. Most often, we were all blind as to what everyone else was working on. Even if we did hear about something happening in another department, we didn't know how our individual tasks fit into the big picture. Inevitably, the silos would burst open when, just before the release of a new product, Sales would demand training and collateral. Then Marketing Communications would need to know how to position the product. At the last possible moment, Product Marketing would get a brain dump from Product Management and be on the hook to quickly turn around a checklist of datasheets, website content, presentations, etc. (Sound familiar?)

> "As a result of being misunderstood and misguided, the product marketer gets misaligned within the organization in a number of ways…"

Press the reset button—primary responsibilities & objectives

The primary responsibility of the product marketing manager is to be the company's audience persona expert—to deeply understand the people that impact decisions about which products to buy (buyer personas), and which products to sell (sales personas).

What is a buyer persona?

Adele Revella, author of the Buyer Persona Blog (www.buyerpersona.com) and instructor of the Pragmatic Marketing® Effective Product Marketing seminar, says that a "buyer persona is a detailed profile of an example buyer that represents the real audience—an archetype of the target buyer. Marketers use buyer personas to segment and target different types of buyers, using individual profiles to understand the goals, concerns, preferences and decision process for each part of the market they need to influence."

Buyer personas allow marketers to step out of their role as product evangelists and see the world from their buyer's perspective. Through this profiling process, product marketers can be the "proxy" for the buyer, identifying how each solution addresses the most urgent problems for any particular persona, what role each will play in the purchase decision, why they have not looked to us to solve their problems, and where this persona will go to get new ideas and information.

Product marketers who are persona experts can break out of the tactical marketing role and identify a messaging and campaign strategy that will be relevant to the target audience. No more reverse engineering your messaging by aligning with your existing functionality. No more "shot gun" or "cookie-cutter" style marketing by creating one campaign or collateral piece to resonate with everyone. This new type of product marketer isn't a creative genius; this marketer has the insights that make it simple to get the right message delivered in the right place at the right time.

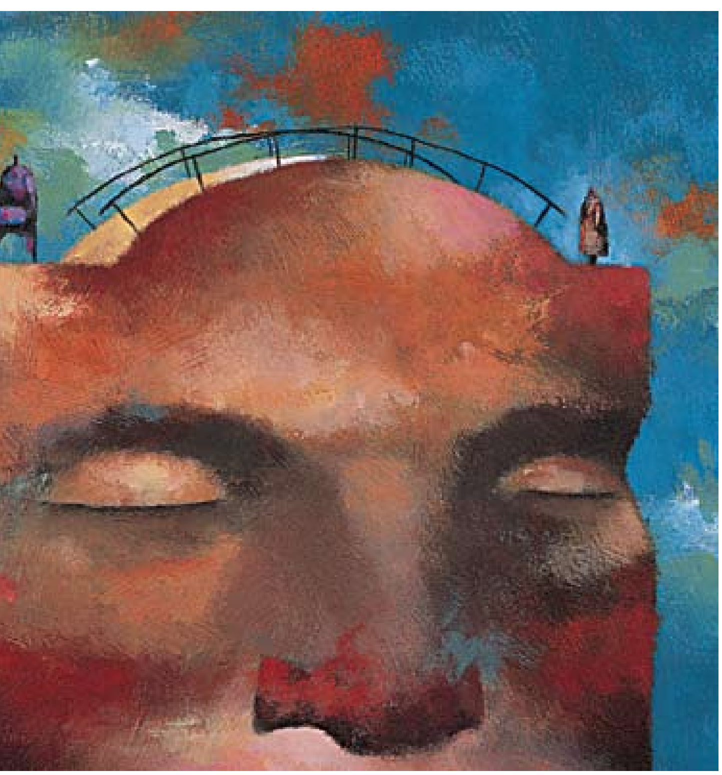
➔

What is a sales channel persona?

Similar to the buyer persona, the sales channel persona is a detailed profile of the different types of sales styles within a direct and indirect sales channel. Simply acknowledging that all sales organizations are "coin operated" isn't enough.

For example, if you introduce a new product that involves new technology, has a higher price point, and is targeted to a new type of buyer, your sales people will naturally prefer to sell the products that don't require change. One of the hallmarks of the new product marketing manager is to understand the changes that we ask the channel to make and delivering tools and insights that ease the transition.

It's common for marketers to say, "We already have a product with compelling features and purported benefits, so if we communicate them properly, people will understand and want to buy. And our sales team should know how to sell this stuff—that's why they get the big bucks!" Imagine how effective product marketers could be if we stop making up stuff and start aligning our messages and programs with the way *real* buyers and sales people think.



Product marketing responsibilities

The correct role for product marketing is to know each and every buyer persona better than anyone in Sales does, and intimately understand all channel personas. As a result of this expertise, product marketing is responsible for

Aligning with sales channels to prepare them to:

- Relate to buyers of all types
- Focus on the most effective messages and programs

Developing outbound marketing plans/programs that:

- Generate awareness to get prospects into the sales funnel
- Drive revenue and help prospects through each/every stage of the sale funnel
- Increase customer retention/ satisfaction to ensure customers remain happy and loyal

Product managers and product marketers have a few things in common but are ultimately quite different. Adele Revella makes these distinctions about the roles; "Product managers develop expertise in the market and then rely on this perspective to *influence the product strategy*—they are always thinking about how to bridge gaps between the market and the product. Product Marketing needs to understand the products too, but its attention needs to be on people, developing personas and using this insight *to influence markets full of people*—business peoples' decisions to buy and the sales peoples' decision to sell the company's products. This results in a cohesive go-to-market strategy that Marketing Communications can execute through its competencies in the individual marketing programs."

Many commonly engage in the "one position, two hats" debate, or "can product managers also be effective product marketers?" In *Crossing the Chasm,* Geoffrey Moore defines and recommends two separate positions for inbound and outbound activities:

"A product manager is a member of either the marketing organization or the development organization who is responsible for ensuring that a product gets created, tested, and shipped on schedule and meeting specifications. It is a highly *internally focused* job, bridging the marketing and development organizations, and requiring a high degree of technical competence and project management experience. A product marketing manager is always a member of the marketing organization, never of the development group, and is responsible for bringing the product to the marketplace and to the distribution organization. ...It is a highly *externally focused* job."

He goes on to say, "Not all organizations separate [the two positions], but they should ... *the type of people who are good at one are rarely good at the other.*" Well said, indeed.

Tune in to the next issue of *The Pragmatic Marketer™* and I'll tell you how we got my company to understand and embrace the strategic role of product marketing. TPM

Dave Morse is an expert in the areas of software development, product management, and marketing within high-tech companies. Having worked for successful organizations such as Aspect Communications, GetThere, CoolSign, Salesforce.com, and Made2Manage Systems, he has developed a detailed framework that can help companies reposition and revitalize the role of product marketing. To learn more, feel free to contact Dave at dave.morse@gmail.com

Product Design: Bridging the Gap between Product

By Sean Van Tyne

Product Design is the bridge between Product Management and Product Development. Product Management quantifies the problems, writes requirements, and validates the solution; Product Design analyzes the requirements, designs the solution, and writes specifications; and Product Development builds the solution, tests and fixes bugs, and writes documentation.

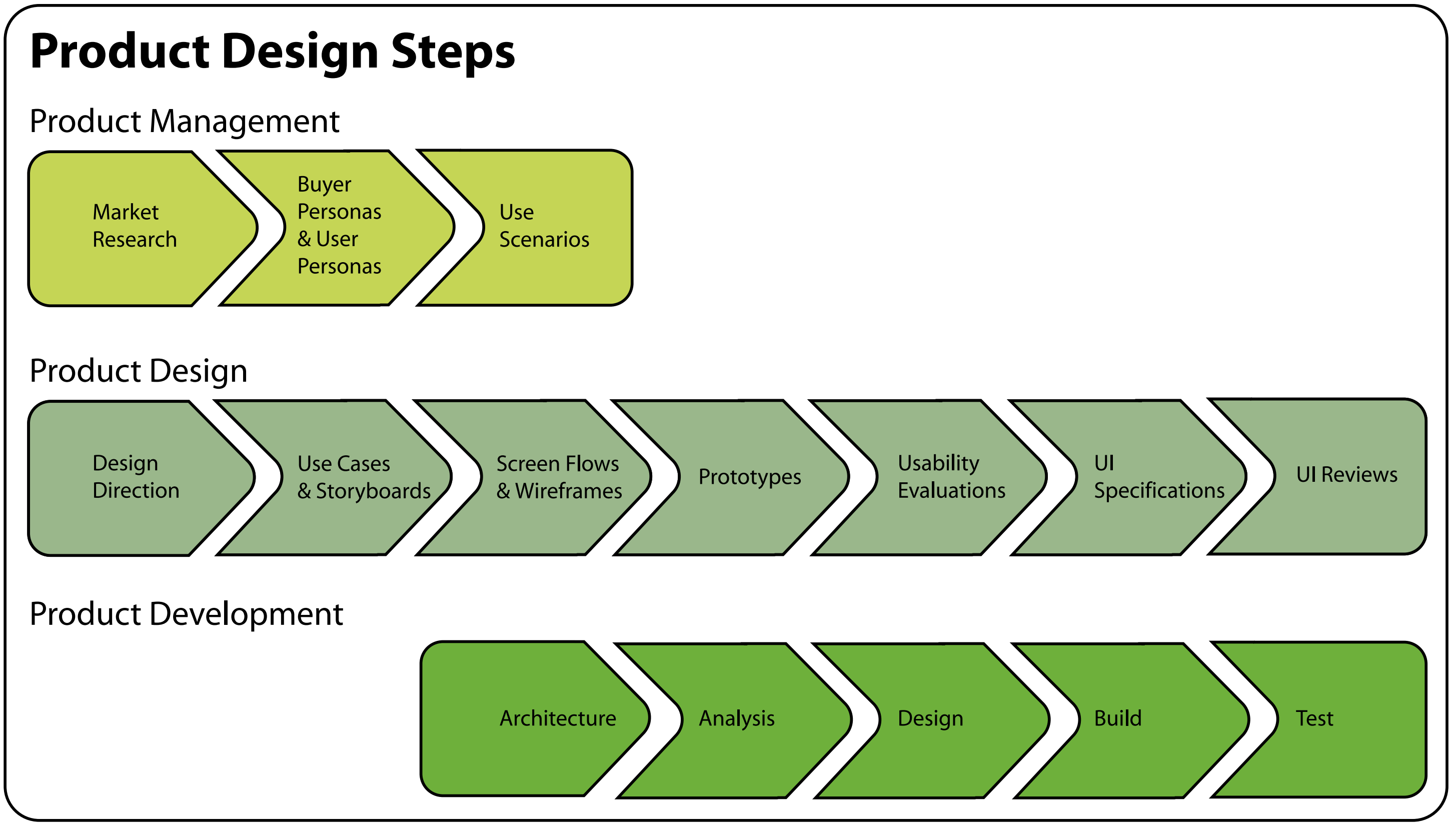
While Product Management is focused on the market and the customers' business needs and Development is focused on the customers' *technology* needs, Product Design is focused on the customers' *end-user* needs. Product Design focuses on the users' experience and their interaction with the technology.

The customer is the person who decides whether or not to purchase the solution, while the user is the person who uses the solution. For enterprise software, the *customer* is usually someone in upper or executive management interested in finding the best way to bring efficiency to their operation while the *user* is typically a company employee more interested in completing their daily assignments as easily and effectively as possible. The customer is looking at the overall workflow of their organization and how specific software solutions might improve it, while the users tend to emphasize the software's ease-of-use.

For this reason, Product Management, Design, and Development work together to understand the market, customer, and users' needs, and design and develop technology solutions that meet these needs.

Identify problems & quantify opportunities

Product Management identifies problems in the marketplace, conducts analysis, and quantifies opportunities for solutions to the



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Management & Development

problems. Product Management develops a better understanding of the market, customers, and the customers' end-users, to create Buyer and User Personas. Personas are a stand-in for a unique group of people who share common goals. They are fictional representatives—archetypes based on the users' behaviors, attitudes, and goals.

In some companies, the Product Design group assists Product Management in developing personas. As part of the design process, product designers conduct qualitative research that includes reviewing the target market segmentation and demographic data necessary to establish the design direction. Designers also interview stakeholders, customers, and users, in order to gain insight into the product domain and user population. This information feeds directly into the types and characteristics of the personas that drive the design.

Once personas have been developed, scenarios are created. Scenarios are "short stories" that describe a user's interaction with the solution. Scenarios are useful to Product Management to help define the business cases and useful for Product Design to help define the user interface design.

Product Management and Product Design use the scenarios to develop use cases. A use case is a single case of use—user interaction with the solution—that is well-defined, and meaningful from the user's perspective. Use cases are more detailed then scenarios—more systematic and structured—and define the tasks and expected outcomes.

Use cases provide a concise medium for modeling user requirements; are a powerful tasks model for understanding user needs and guiding user interface design; and guide the design of communicating objects to satisfy functional requirements for Development.

Writing requirements & validating solutions

Product Management writes requirements that identify the problems in the marketplace and quantifies opportunities for their solutions. Product Design assists Product Management in validating the solutions. Information Architects or Usability Specialists develop, conduct, and analyze surveys, interviews, and/or observations. The data from these studies helps identify problems and opportunities that are realized in the requirements.

Product Design develops prototypes that Product Management use to elicit feedback from customers to validate the solutions. Designers create wireframes to elicit feedback on conceptual user interface designs. Wireframes are a basic visual guide used to suggest the layout and placement of fundamental design elements in the interface design. They provide a visual reference for the structure of the screens, define the positioning of global and secondary levels of the information hierarchy, and maintain design consistency throughout the application.

Writing the requirements and validating the solutions is an iterative process. New insights in validating the solutions require the requirements to be updated. Updated requirements require more validation. This process continues until the requirements are adequately validated.

This iterative process overlaps with Product Design activities such as analyzing the requirements and designing the solution.

Analyze the requirements & design the solution

Product Design conducts an analysis of the market, technology, and competition, in terms of the user experience and interface design, early in the product lifecycle to determine the user interface (UI) design direction. Partnering with Product Management, the Product Design group conducts surveys, focus groups, reviews, and other activities to better understand the market, customer, and end-user problems that are being solved in terms of the user experience and interface design.

Product Design conceptualizes a solution to the problems identified in the requirements document that Product Management creates. The Product Design team develops storyboards, screen flow diagrams, wireframes, prototypes, and other artifacts to validate the UI workflow solution. UI design prototypes are iterated with customers and their end-users to ensure the solution continues to solve their business problems.

Insight from the analysis and design can cause some revisions and/or refinement to the initial requirements. Product Design also designs and develops some or all of the presentation layer components for the Product Development team. ➔

Write the specification & build the solution

Product Design writes specifications from which Product Development builds the actual software solution. Product Management writes market requirements, Product Design writes UI specifications of the user behavior, branding, and common look-and-feel and Development writes system specifications for the development of the user interface. Wireframes, use cases, and/or a prototype should be evaluated with the customers' end-users for usability issues—effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction—prior to final specification.

Usability evaluation and UI specification should be completed in the first phase of development. The UI specification along with Product Management's requirements should communicate to Development who we are building our solution for and what problems we will be solving for our market, customers, and end-users.

Product Development builds the solution based on requirements and specification provided by Product Management and Product Design. Product Design partners with Product Development in terms of the UI and presentation layer detailed design. Technology issues require revisions to the presentation layer user interface and UI specification, in which case Product Design and Product Development partner to determine the best approach on a case-by-case basis.

Product Development tests and fixes bugs in the final phases of development. Product Design reviews the UI design in the development testing environment and may request changes to ensure that the design developed follows the UI specification. These UI change requests could be informal or formal depending on the size of the team and the company's software development process. Depending on the relationship of the UI Designers and UI Developers, Product Design works together with Product Development to find the best solutions to the fixes concerning the user experience and interface design.

Conclusion

Product Design works with Product Management and Product Development throughout the product lifecycle. In many cases, Product Design elaborates on the solution that Product Management provides for Product Development to build. Product Design partners with Product Management early in the product lifecycle to quantify, analyze, and validate solutions, and partners with Product Development to design, build, and test the solution, thus fulfilling its role as a bridge between these two functions. TPM

Sean Van Tyne is CEO and Principal Consultant of Van Tyne Consulting, Inc. Van Tyne Consulting helps corporations realize their user experience strategy —bridging Marketing and Technology—marrying Product Management frameworks to Development best practices. From strategy, goal, and direction through process, tools, and resources, Van Tyne Consulting helps your company deliver innovative solutions with best-in-class user experience. To learn more, please visit www.vantyneconsulting.com

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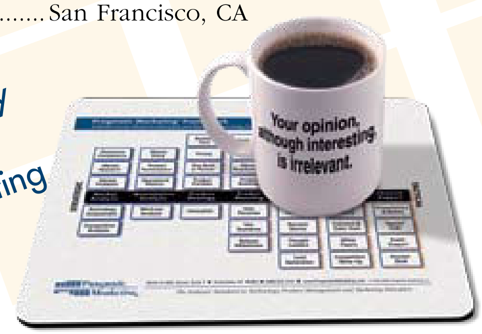

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