



Superior Reliability and Performance

Coherent Scotland
Product Line Management
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Manager



What is a PLM?



- *Primary responsibility is ownership of a specific product or product family. This person is fundamentally charged with the responsibility of maintaining, promoting and protecting the integrity of an existing and road-mapped product lines. This extends globally. Responsible for new product launches including product line extensions.*
- Influencer – no functional reports
- Not a Production Manager, Project Manager, Program Manager... Etc etc
- Function was born in Silicon Valley – not always well understood in the UK
- Closer to being “Managing Director for a Product” than any other functional manager
- Key evangelist for product
- Outward facing – sales / marketing bent

Why a good PLM is critical?



- They are the eyes and ears of your organisation – with closest relationship to Sales and Customers
- They are pragmatists to steer the technology obsessed through the product lifecycle – avoiding potholes such as overengineering
- They drive bookings and revenue Growth – and maintain margin
- They are responsible for keeping the products competitive
- A GM always needs good PLMs for the succession plan

What is Product Management



- Product Management is a loosely defined term.
- Many companies tend to have their own interpretation or flavour of Product Management – which is why Product Managers are called upon to perform a very wide range of functions from one company to the next
- Top level definition
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PLM – Key responsibilities



P&L management for product line

- Revenue management (tactical decisions of shipments)
- Advocating/promoting cost reduction
- Responsible for tactical pricing.

Forecasting

- Revenue forecast management
- Responsible for compiling forecast from market, Delivering to manufacturing and finance, Managing lead times, schedule changes

Project leader

- Interfaces with BU, Eng, Mfg and Sales on product enhancements or customization.

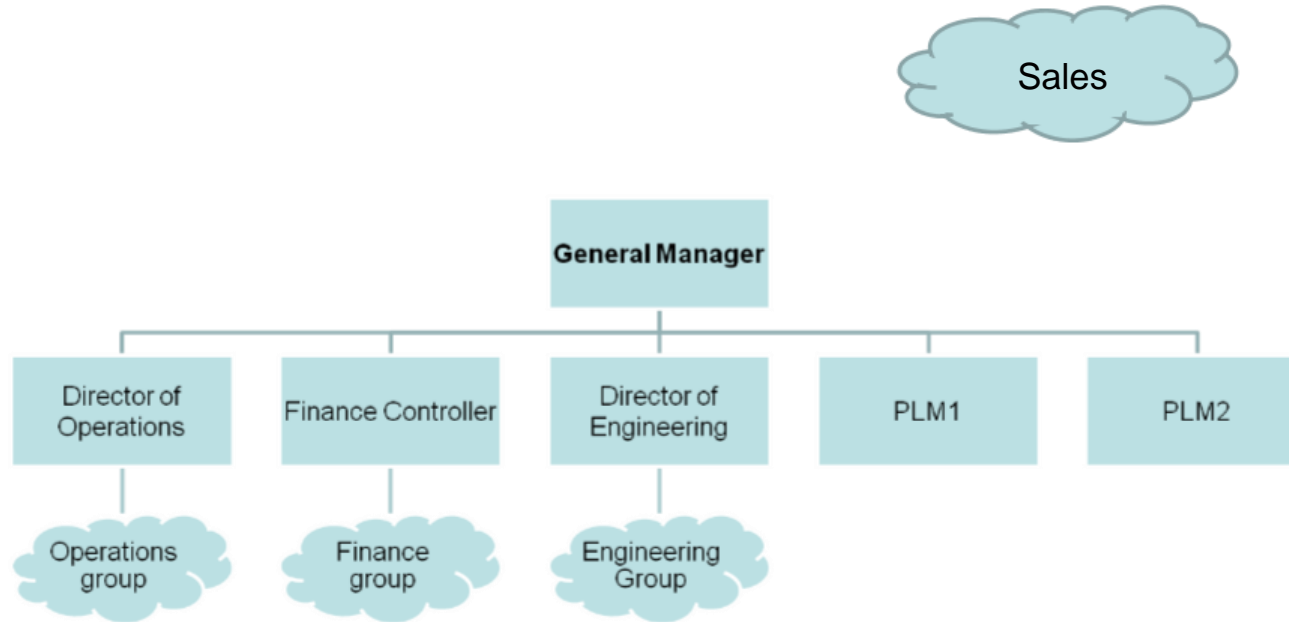
Product development

- Integral part of product development team following NPI protocols.
- Define and becomes custodian of the product definition, includes: performance, price, cost, customer and sales support plan, and time to market

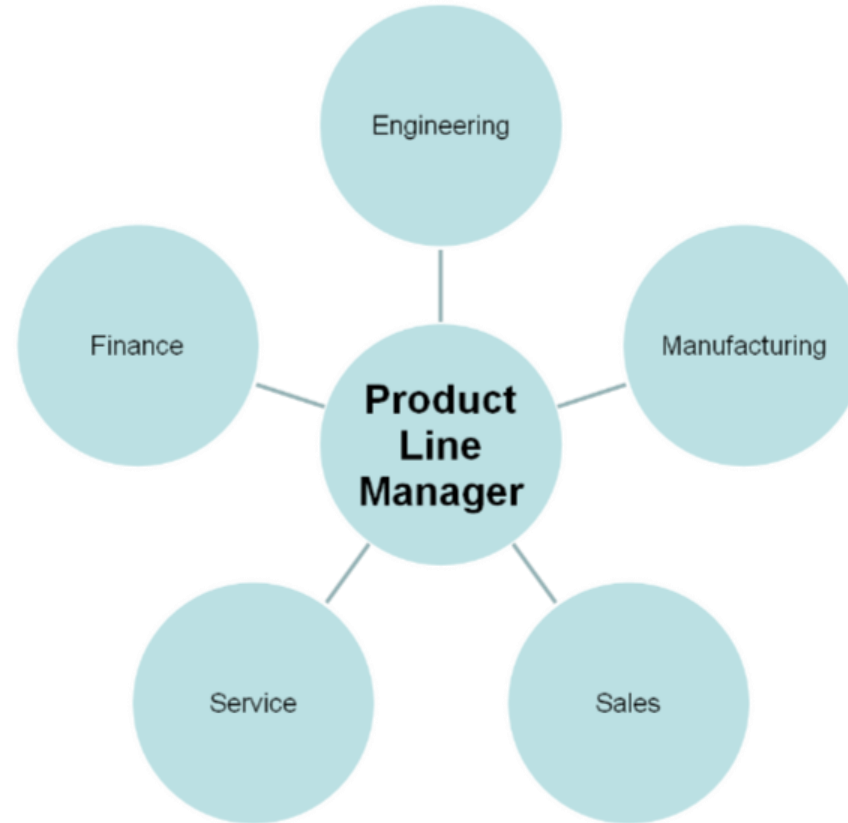
Key customer relationship manager

- Point of contact for product specific escalation issues (quality, shipments and support) – PM is the conduit for information and communication
- Visits customers on product specific missions such as; training new sales engineers on customer visits, helping a sale in difficult competitive situations; supporting MDM's in visiting OEM customers.

Business Unit Management Structure



Product Line Management Structure



- Spend time with customers
 - The single most important thing a product manager can do is to understand the market
 - The best way to understand the market is to spend time with customers
- Let go of your past
 - What were you in your “past” life? Whatever it was, you’re a product manager now
 - There is a natural instinct for product managers to gravitate towards the function of the business from which they came – resist it

- Surround yourself with experts
 - Product managers can not and should not do it all alone
 - Your success depends on others
 - Do not try to be an expert in everything
 - Leverage the expertise of others in certain areas
- Focus
 - It will be overwhelming
 - You will not know where to start
 - GTD

- Concentrate on what, not how
 - It will be tempting to control “how” things get done with your product
 - Resist the temptation
 - Product managers should define “what” needs to happen...
 - ... and others should define “how” those things happen
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities with team members
 - Engineering
 - Design
 - Marketing

- Sell to Sales

- This is one of the primary roles of a PLM – selling to sales
- Global sales forces have myriad products to sell, and myriad distractions
- You need to make sure that your product is easier to sell than any other
- Your competition is all of the other PLMs in the organisation (as well as the competitors)
- A close relationship to Global Sales Managers is Critically important.

- Sell your product internally
 - Be the champion for your product
 - “Sell” your product to executives, team members, other departments
 - Will help gain resources, funding, support for issues and new initiatives
 - Regularly communicate good news
 - Don’t go overboard
 - Don’t ignore or try to dismiss bad news
 - Make sure your communication plans include all the necessary audiences

PLM and ENGINEERING



- Owner of the product definition
- Provides feedback to engineering on applications
- Watchdogs the NPI process
- Drives project timelines with engineering
- Facilitates communication between BU, engineering and manufacturing
- Sets priorities with engineering
- General gatekeeper - in general all communication from the field to engineering regarding the product should go through the PLM

PLM and MANUFACTURING



- Provides accurate forecasts for MRP throughout the quarter communicating possible impacts on production
- Prioritizes shipments and understands capacity limitations
- Includes manufacturing throughout product lifecycle
- Facilitates support from engineering and service
- Brings awareness to manufacturing of QC and service escalation issues
- Communicates general market and application information

PLM and SALES



- Provide sales tools, marcom, presentations, data books, sales CDs and web information
- Acts as fall-guy in heated sales situations
- Pricing, contracts, engineering discounts
- Main factory interface - service escalation
- Visits customers to help advance sales
- Attends tradeshow
- Trains new sales engineers
- Scrutinizes sales bookings forecast
- Oversees delivery schedule
- PM is involved with new customers/markets for existing products

PLM and SERVICE



- Defines service strategies
- Makes decisions in exceptional cases of down customer escalation
- Facilitates assistance from engineering and manufacturing
- Generates service pricing
- Responsible for customer relations in escalation situations

PLM and FINANCE



- Revenue forecasting – next 4 quarters
- Works with Sales on Bookings forecast – next 4 quarters
- Works with Mktg / Sales on 3 year forecast

Tips for new PLMs

Communicate, communicate, communicate



Source: Seven Traits of Successful Product Managers; Michael Shrivathsan
michael.hightechproductmanagement.com/2006/12/seven_traits_of_successful_pro.html