

Lead Product Manager

Basic information

Band: 3*

Job family: External Customer Services

Terms: Fixed Term Contract – 1 Year

Location: Cheltenham

Reports to: Head of Product

Direct Reports: None

Team: Product

Business unit: Digital & Data

Date reviewed: December 2020



Job purpose:

As a Lead Product Manager, you will be responsible for defining the strategy for a portfolio of customer products and will be responsible for identifying and defining the needs of the customer/end user and evaluating a wide range of opportunities as the business diversifies into new markets.

You will set the product vision, roadmaps and outcomes, working with business analysts and product owners to translate these into requirements, and setting direction and priorities for our multi-disciplinary teams. You will lead the business to establish a robust product management and evidence-based approach to ensure the creation and improvement of desirable, feasible, viable, and sustainable products that meet customer needs over the product lifecycle.

Key accountabilities:

Oversee end to end product lifecycle management from research and business case, discovery, design, delivery, go-to-market, implementation and in-life performance management. Championing the true and evidenced customer voice and data-based decision making in product development, to ensure that customer/user needs are central to prioritisation and decision-making.

Responsibilities include:

- Understanding of strategic goals, market and customer needs to create and define business cases and product strategies that articulate product propositions and customer and business value.
- Building a body of insight on product performance to enable evidence-based decisions on the future shape of the portfolio.

- Development and ownership of product roadmaps and backlogs that align with business goals and prioritise building what matters most to achieve business goals.
- Communicate product roadmaps to the business and customers to build buy-in.
- Translation of the product strategy into detailed requirements, explaining how each of the elements will deliver customer value.
- Work with multidisciplinary teams to build product delivery plans.
- Advocate and enable user-centered research and design practices in product research and design.
- Develop understanding of product costs as well as benefits.
- Create epic level outcomes and success metrics based on customer need and market definition.
- Work with Product Owners to define requirements for each feature and participate in planning to prioritise features based on the value the new feature will deliver to customers and to the business.
- Work with Product Owners, marketing and Operations to define the release process.
- Responsible for leading in-life product performance, product optimisation, decommissioning and lessons learned.

Design and lead the execution of effective go to market strategies in collaboration with business stakeholders to launch products effectively, deliver market reach and enable the delivery of revenue and profitability targets.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that go to market strategy development starts at business case development, with determination of market opportunity, understanding potential customers and their buying cycles, end-user need, value proposition, competitor landscape, pricing strategy, investment appraisal and success criteria / target KPIs.
- Facilitating the design and definition of market propensity assessment (buying cycles, dependencies, leads, customer budgets), sales and support capability and sales strategy.
- Demand generation planning.
- Ensuring the creation of compelling content and assets for customers, customer facing teams and staff.
- Management of the launch and on-going product management, including pipeline analysis and performance evaluation.
- Risk and issue management and mitigation.

Skills, Qualifications & Experience:

You will have a proven track record of achievements in strategic product management and strategy development, which could have been gained in one or more business sectors (B2B and B2C). You should be highly commercially aware, outcomes driven and innovative, whilst being motivated by UCAS' vision and values. This role requires working in close collaboration with a wide range of colleagues across the business and with external audiences.

You will demonstrate the following:

- A thorough understanding of strategic product lifecycle management and good practice.
- A passion for understanding customers' needs and motivations and a proven ability to deliver high quality products that realise these.
- Demonstrable experience of taking products from idea through to development, to successful market adoption, and demonstrable experience of optimising existing products to improve reach and revenue.
- A strong understanding of user-centered design and digital optimisation practices.
- Strong team-player, with the ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams and demonstrate empathy to build collaborative and collegiate working relationships.
- Excellent communication skills and stakeholder management, with proven ability to influence very senior stakeholders and articulate and promote customer and business benefits. Active listening and influencing skills are required.
- A strategic thinker, with a proven track record of problem solving and analytical skills.

- Excellent judgment, well-organised and able to work flexibly on various complex and fast-moving activities simultaneously.
- Knowledge and understanding of the education and higher education sectors is desirable but not essential.
- A strong people leader, with a proven track record in motivating, nurturing and developing teams to deliver consistently high performance.

This role profile sets out the scope and main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such details may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the level of the post. All UCAS employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their role and may be asked to perform other duties, which reasonably correspond to the general character of their role and their level of responsibility.

Our values in action:

Customer-focused – We understand what our customers want, and we act on their changing needs.

Collaborative – We collectively create an engaging and positive work environment.

Accountable – We take ownership of our individual and organisational performance.

Service excellence – We realise, grow, and maximise our potential.

Trusted – Individuals are trusted to make informed decisions and take appropriate risks.