One Knight in Product - E141 - Roger Snyder

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SPEAKERS

Jason Knight

Jason Knight 00:00

Hello, and welcome to the show. And I'm glad you're joining me tonight as we take a ride down Interstate 280. And look at all the technology company logos out the window. Speaking of long drives, if you need more travelling companions, I've got over 140 of them at one night in product.com. So I recommend popping over to the website and checking them out, or finding us on your favourite podcast app to make sure you're never alone again, tonight, we're going to be speaking about the difference between being data driven, data informed and data inspired, and how you can bring that all together to give you the best chance of product success. If you want to find out the three C's of product management, stay with us on what's in product.

Jason Knight 00:46

So my guest tonight is Roger Snyder was a backpacking and hiking junkie and Microsoft alumnus who did his best to make mobile's work for Microsoft with the Gone but not forgotten sidekick. You know, from the days when mobiles were real mobiles and keyboards and stuff, was a fan of sci fi and says he's a fan of the utopian future pay to buy Star Trek, in that vein is helping product managers Live long and prosper in their careers as a consultant instructor and VP of Products and Services at the 280 group. And it would only be logical if he also had a few things to say about product management in the enterprise. Hi, Roger, how are you tonight?

⚇ 01:17

Nice leading in there. Jason, thank you very much. I love talking about product management in the enterprise. It's great to be on with you.

Jason Knight 01:26

It's great to have you here. Hopefully, we'll solve a few problems tonight. But before we solve

any problems, start with an easy one, a soft pitch. You are the VP of Products and Services at the tweeter group. Now, I'm sure a bunch of my listeners are well aware of the tweet group. But for those that have been living under a rock, who were the two ad group, and what problem do they or you solve?

01:47

Great, thanks for asking the training and consulting firm and we focused on empowering product professionals, and giving them the tools and knowledge to create products that matter. And we really focus on products that matter to their customers, products that matter to the company's success. And of course, products that matter to them individually. So we're really focused on training and consulting, but all focused on how to professionals so we provide training, we provide self study courses, we provide optimization programmes for for enterprises. So nice to get back to that, where a lot of what we do these days, are helping companies get better at product management. And we look at people process and tools. So it isn't just about you know, do they know how to do competitive analysis? Is it also about do they actually have a thoughtful process of thinking about our product from cradle to grave? And being able to take that product through those various phases in that lifecycle and be successful in every phase?

Jason Knight 02:44

I mean, obviously, that sounds fantastic. And we'll talk a little bit about that process in a minute as well, because I do have some questions about processes, you know, processes aren't always popular these days in product management world and and certainly think of a few people that have that you've definitely heard of that have complained about process people in the past. But you say obviously, you're a consultancy and a training company? How does that kind of split breakout? Like? Are you primarily one with a bit of the other? Or is it very kind of across the board, you kind of just do everything,

03:14

we focus a lot on the training aspect, because that's where our clients come to us to get help on improving the skills. But what we actually find is that almost all the time, that training needs to be customised to meet the needs of the particular enterprise in terms of what are they really working on right now? Where are we struggling on? Is it getting voice in the customer? Is it is it about how to to build a compelling business case? Or is it about being more data informed and knowing then how to make better decisions, not based strictly on data, but based on having the data at hand so you can make intelligent decisions about what to do next. So we start with that training platform of let's make sure we understand what it means to be a product manager and what all the seals are that are required. But we then also help them improve. And you said that process word but it is useful to be able to have a consistent approach to things people don't like the word process, but a consistent approach to how they make decisions in the organisation, how they get budgeting, how they are able to then also teach your products and markets right

Jason Knight 04:17

now 100%. But you're talking now about obviously, enterprise you just mentioned and you know, we got to get those stock references in. But would you say that you're optimising for more of that kind of digital transformation, helping companies that are already established doing stuff better and transforming them into something better than they were before? Well, you also have you also got like a startup play, like trying to help video the founders get their stuff in order as well.

04:38

We're more focused on one small, medium and large companies is not not so much to startups, but we are very much focused on one the larger companies that are oftentimes they're at their fees where, you know, like the founders are almost always talking to managers. And I've been to several startups, right. And so founders are product managers. They don't know it sometimes but that's what they do. When you get too loud 100 people and larger, you start having to differentiate roles. And that's when it becomes important to understand what role the product manager can play to bring value to the overall organisation. So that's really where we find that the bulk of the need is, and that's where we get to go to.

Jason Knight 05:15

Fair enough, you got to make a difference where you can, but out of interest Why 280? I mean, I was thinking 180 For darts, or 360 for skateboards and stuff. Where does it come from?

05:26

All right, so great question. I get this question all the time. So it is not three to 80 group is named after a freeway. All right. So highway 280, connects San Francisco to San Jose in Silicon Valley. And so we often say it has been the sign of innovation for many, many companies. So that is where we get our data.

Jason Knight 05:49

There you go. And hopefully, you don't get any speeding tickets, either. No. But what is the VP of product and services A to A to group do now I can obviously imagine what those words might mean. But like, are you building products specifically? Or are you mainly there as a kind of a representative for the arts of Product Management? Like, what does your day job look like?

06:10

Because my day job now, and I've been here for six years, right? So and I've been in product management for multiple decades, I don't want to admit how many. But I lead product management teams for over 20 years in various companies large and small. And I joined two ad group because the thing that I love the most about my job was bringing young and new

product managers in their skills, and seeing them spread their wings and fly and become great product managers. And that's what you need group does, right. So I actually joined as a consultant, and I was going out and doing the training and consultant on the road for a few years. And then I took a full time job. And as VP of Products and Services, I'm responsible for making sure that we have the right courses, that we have the right capabilities to help people all along their journey. From the first time they moved into a project management into product management. Right? I know a horror topic. But when they first made that transition in front of management all the way to how do they become a VP of Product Management successfully. And then a whole team growth and transformation that we talked a little bit about earlier. So my job is make sure we've got the right courses, make sure that we upgrade the other things besides courses. So we do assessments, we also provide self study courses so that you, if you missed out on the class with the rest of your cohort, then you can have a new employee, just just a self study course and be able to come up to speed quickly on the same concepts. So the assessments and all that and then the consulting that we do as well, and making sure that it's all whole product. If you have another podcast on that topic, but that's another one where you kind of talk about not just what's the course? Yeah, but the customer service that goes with it, the financing options available for all the follow on that happens afterwards. One of the key things we focus on is making it stick. Yeah, right. It is a challenge to take a training class, you get all hyped up, you're excited, you go back to your office, you want to do all those great things, but then times that enthusiasm peters out. And so we help with organisations that are serious about making this transformation, so that we're there as a partner all along that journey and continue to get the sustaining energy with follow up workshops, follow up assessments, follow up coaching, so that people are able to keep going on this journey. So that's what I want to mean when I say products and services, if that makes sense.

Jason Knight 08:22

That does make sense. And it's definitely an interesting conundrum with the learning space. I mean, is that something I've got an interest in as well for my day job. And it's, as you say, very tricky to try and do things in a way that engage people and continuously innovate as well. So it's just to make sure that you're not just putting the same old stuff out. But I guess on that, I mean, there are a bunch of other training and consultancy providers out there in Silicon Valley and elsewhere. And I'm sure they will have their own pros and cons. So I guess most of those might say something along the lines of roughly of what you said like they're all gonna claim to do some of the things that you've just said that you can do. So why is to aid your group, the best of all of them. So here

09:07

are two key differentiators. One is that we aren't slaves to a particular process. And we are about what are your particular needs? Right. So 100 person company versus a fortune 500 company is in a different place in terms of what's next for them to get better at product management. So we will tailor our courses, tailor our processes, tailor the frameworks to meet the needs of where we are at the moment. So that's number one. Number two is the the depth of our consultants. All of them have at least 20 years experience and they are dedicated to the craft. Right They are part timers. They are full time employees of the GA group focused on helping people get better at product management. That is their day job. That's all they do. And they have the experience to draw upon being able to make that transformation and stick with it

right so Like, before I took this job, I need the products and services, I helped one company for four years. Right. And so I was there all along every time they needed something to help them continue in that journey. And all of our consultants are in that stripe experience and dedication to the craft.

Jason Knight 10:16

Now, that makes a lot of sense. And hopefully a bit of a differentiated elbow going back to that process thing. I mean, I'm looking at it on your website, right now, the optimal product process TM, although seems not to have been updated since 2014. So maybe I have to pay for a better picture with the new stuff on it. But it obviously you're looking at it, and it does seem to there's obviously a lot of things in there that you'd recognise. And it seems that that's very much like the underpinning of your approach. But you're saying that that's really, that you can change any of it is that what you're saying?

10:45

is the starting point, right? So the process is a starting point. And what I emphasise to you we still do when we're training is do not become a slave or a zombie to process or to documentation. Instead, use these as the right questions to ask at the right moments in your product's lifecycle, and then make the right decisions. I always say don't delete anything out of the template, because six months from now, that question may actually be valid right now, it isn't valid at all, but six months from now, or a year from now, it will be valid. So don't delete stuff, but pass over the stuff that doesn't make sense for your business. But use it as a reference guide to ask the right questions. That's the emphasis.

Jason Knight 11:28

Make sense? Although I do now have this image of like 25 copies of the same PowerPoint slide with different version numbers on the end, where people are kind of manually version controlling it. But hopefully, we'll find a solution for that at some point as well. Thankfully,

11:41

we're beyond PowerPoint slides. Now. We're working in mural, and we're using this on a lake. And so those are the kinds of tools that we like to help help folks. Well, and also all the new crop of great product management tools. Right? There's so much better tools now than when I was doing this even 10 years ago. Right away better.

Jason Knight 12:01

Oh, yeah. I mean, how could we have gone through a global pandemic, that mirror? Absolutely right. But when it comes to product education, these days, there's a bit of a backlash around things like certificates. And to some extent, even just training courses in general, like you get a lot of people out there loudly claiming that you basically can only learn this stuff by doing a

school of hard knocks style, it's not really something that you can get certificate in certificates of worthless now, I don't know if you do certificates, specifically, but have you got any kind of answer back to these people that basically say that this stuff is kind of useless, and that they just have to get a job doing it, because that's the only way you can really learn?

12:38

I think it's a little bit of both, honestly, you know, because when I started, there wasn't there wasn't a lot of this. And so I learned from the school of hard knocks perfectly on able to admit that. But I think training is an accelerant. It allows you to go way faster, and it allows you to learn from the mistakes other people have made. I think, again, that's one of our differentiators is the experience of all of our consultants to be able to say I've been there. And this was what I did well, and this is where I fell flat on my face. And this is how you get better product management is by being able to learn from mistakes of others. So I think the training definitely helps from that perspective. And yeah, I know, there's this big debate about certificates and certifications. So let me be pedantic for one moment, and then talk about real world, right? So we have got certificates of completion, just like all of our competitors, right? Yeah, you finish our course. That's different from a certification, right. And so we we partner with the Association of international product marketing and management, and they administer an independent exam, and is a two hour exam in for some of the courses. And that is a much harder and better test. Do you really understand product lifecycle? Do you understand product management roles and responsibilities? Soup to nuts? So when you pass that exam, we're talking like a GRE kind of thing. It means something, right? Yeah. So now what does it mean? It means that you understand the knowledge, it means that you understand the tools, it doesn't mean that you're immediately an excellent practitioner,

Jason Knight   14:07

VP of Product straight away. Right? So I

14:10

exactly. But that has its place, right? It does. Like anybody it's a differentiator in hiring especially these days when when hiring markets are so difficult. How do you pick out so when you see that, that certification, not just as a certificate of completion, but in independent certifications means they've got a knowledge base, they understand the basis here, that is a differentiator when you're looking at a whole bunch of other people who also have the school of hard knocks. So I think you want

Jason Knight   14:37

on? Yeah, I think from my perspective, when I'm looking at hiring people, for example, I mean, I'm never going to not hire someone because they don't have a certificate or, or certification. But, sure, I guess at the same time when I look at it and think, Well, I'm a big fan of training, I love learning stuff, you know, something that is one of my personal values, you know, growth, mindset, all that sort of thing. But I think for me, it's like that even the certification is almost

like your driving test that you've passed your driving test, you're allowed on the roads properly on your own now, but then you got the old cliche, that's when you learn to drive. And it's only after you've been rear ended a couple of times that you actually start to understand how this stuff works in the real world. So yeah, no, I completely agree with that. But let's talk about some specific stuff that I know you're keen on both personally and with tweet group in general. And that's the topic of data driven decision making, both making the decisions, but also promoting those decisions around the organisation. And I presume, by implication, helping to make those stick against potentially sceptical stakeholders. But before we go into some of the details, when what do you really mean, when you're talking about data driven decision making?

15:48

Okay, so let's talk a little bit about that. Right. So there's, there's data driven decision making, which means you're you're looking at data, and it can be qualitative or quantitative, right? It doesn't just have to mean that you're looking at a console, looking at the output, Google Analytics, or ready output, you know, maybe half a dozen different tools, right? Data driven, can kind of mean you're you're really focused on just making decisions based on data, right? We make a distinction, we call data informed, making a decision where data is a key part of making that decision. Right? It does require I mean, to the earlier conversation, right? It requires that you've got some gut feeling, you got some experience, but you're using data in a meaningful way that you can use to justify and back, why are we making choice A versus choice B? And then there's, there's, what was the other one that you were talking about

Jason Knight 16:39

before? Data inspired? was an inspired

16:41

right, and data inspired? Sounds like Okay, so like the executive came with one piece of data, and then said, we should go do this? Right. Let's go double check that data, right. So that's something that's very important in order to make those distinctions. So we emphasise data informed. So that makes sense.

Jason Knight 17:00

Yeah, that does make sense. So I'm just looking at the article on your website now, which obviously breaks a lot of that stuff down. But I guess, when you're talking about that your recommendation of being data informed? Is that something that you have your own then framework and kind of methodology around that? Or is that more of a mindset that people just have to have?

17:21

It is a mindset, we do provide a framework to, again, it's a tool, right? I don't want to become a

slave to the tool recommends, you know, if you're looking, for example, at a an application, right, there's going to be a very typical set of key performance indicators, KPIs that you should think about, right? Yeah, you want to be following, for example, the customer journey from awareness all the way through to either purchase or completion, whatever it might be, right? And there's just Yes, a playbook for that. And you should follow that playbook. If you're looking at something where instead you have a hybrid product, which isn't so many people now have, where there is a product that has a digital component to it. But it also may be a physical product, then you've got to expand the set of data points, if you will, that you're going to look at, of course, you want to look at the digital aspects. Like if there's a web interface that helps you configure a new, say you're talking about home security, right? You're talking about cameras, right? So yeah, you want to watch how well people use all of that software to set up their cameras and use them. But then there's also data you can get from the cameras themselves. And there's the fact of whether the user continues to keep the subscription, or they dropping in a couple of months, because they're not satisfied. So that's an example of multiple dimensions of data. And you also want to bring in actual customer interviews, spend time talking to real customers, either in focus groups or interviews using surveys. So there's just a big spectrum of what we call data. I want to be clear about that.

Jason Knight   18:57

So what are some of the main reasons that you see or hear with the work that you do the obviously the consulting, that you're doing the training that you're doing the PMs that you're talking to? Some of the reasons that they're not making data driven decisions? Because there's loads of books, there's loads of blog posts, articles, podcast episodes, all talk about this stuff now. So surely they would. As long as they're not like brand new product managers, or just getting into it, they should probably be doing some of that stuff already. So are there any key reasons that you see that they're just not?

19:27

Yeah, we see a number of reasons, recurring, you know, as we work with different clients for why they aren't being data informed. The first one is they don't have the data. So that's one of one of the challenges. And that challenge as well, even just in the last six years has become no becoming less and less of a reason. Right. You should be if you're talking about software, you should easily instrument your software. Yeah. Right. If you're not talking about software, then there's all the other things I was just talking about where, okay, yeah, it's harder to get data check. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be going and getting that data, right. Another barrier. And honestly, this is kind of surprising and 2022. But is that product managers don't have access to data? Because the other parts of the organisation are giving it to them, or don't get that they need it. Right. So like, this is common. I have so many folks in my classes I keep hearing it of, well, yeah, I want to talk to my customers, but seals

Jason Knight   20:22

will let me Oh, though, class it? Yeah. Yeah.

And I'm just like, really seriously, you have to show the wisdom to know what's in it for me, for the salespeople to want to have a product manager get in front of their customers, right? So category one don't have access to the data. All right, so you got to tackle that problem. All right. Number two, how do I figure out what the data means? And that's where, okay, now there are some skills that you need to apply and tools you need to use to be able to come up and find patterns, find insights. Right, then the data informs the decision. All right. Number three is the hippo role.

Jason Knight 21:05

Right? Are you familiar with hippos? Oh, 100%.

21:08

Okay, right. So the highly important persons or highly paid person's opinion, often Trumps right. So that's where there's also a bit of storytelling involved. So actually, one of the workshops that we just completed, as a last module we just talked about, okay, you got to build your business case, what's your hypothesis? What problem are you trying to solve, go get the data, prove or disprove your hypothesis. But then we added another module tell the story. And we actually have four different ways to go about telling a story, because you've got to not just have the data, but you have to make a compelling argument based on that that data.

Jason Knight 21:45

Yeah, that story attendant, possibly the interesting thing, actually, the the whole idea that, you know, you can't just like you need to persuade, you can't just put some number. I mean, obviously, you can put some people like if you have some very data savvy leaders, or data savvy stakeholders, I'm sure you just sit there and say, Hey, look at this, and let's go, well, that absolutely makes it. I don't know how not sure how many times it actually happens, but at least in theory, that could happen. But yeah, that whole kind of idea that you need to wrap a narrative around it. And I think for me, it's always about trying to tie a thread from whatever it is that your data is saying to whatever the actual outcome and the business outcome and the business KPI that that's actually rolling up to exactly right. It can be tricky sometimes. But you've got to get it done. So is that what you're talking about? When you're then talking about the ability to promote those decisions around the organisation? Is it just that storytelling aspect? Or are there also some other kind of persuasion and negotiation skills that you teach to try and help people get over that hump with maybe sceptical stakeholders?

22:44

Is multiple, it's all of that, right? Yes, you got to be able to tell a story based on the data, you have to have the data to start with, right? make heads or tails of that data, and then be able to make a compelling argument based upon that by telling a good story. But yes, you also have to influence and you have to have negotiation skills. And we do talk about those in our courses as well, because it isn't just about being great. Conducting data analysis, it's also being able to

win the day at the end. And that requires, you know, sometimes what examples I use is, you don't want to come to a big boss meeting with everybody around you to get your business case approved, without having spent time actually speaking to sort of the heads of departments around that table ahead of time, it's more work, and you don't do it for every decision. But for the bigger ones, it's an important thing to do. One of the other techniques I use is, don't have only just the VPs of all these various functions come to that meeting, but have their subordinates that you actually worked with in the background to come up with this proposal, sitting along the sides of that conference room, so that they're there to answer questions is another stalling tactic is, you know, VP of DEV will say, Well, we have taken this to ground, we have to go off and do two weeks of analysis, we'll come back to you know, not if the director is sitting right behind them, and has been on your team building the case. Right? So those kinds of practical aspects of how do you get a decision made are crucial also for the success of a product manager?

Jason Knight 24:16

Yeah, I think there's this other part of that, which is the empathy that you need to start to develop for your stakeholders to start to understand what it is is actually important to them, because it's not always exactly what's important to you, or it maybe doesn't feel like it. So like, we have to assume that everyone wants the same end goal of a successful product or successful company, but everyone's got their own ideas about how they might get there. So trying to translate things as well. Not just making it all about what you think and in putting it in your language but actually trying to put it in language in a in terms that resonate with them as well. So absolutely. Feels like that's a very big topic and something I think a lot of PMS struggle with, to be honest.

24:51

And that is one of the one of the things that we talked about is the whip. I think I mentioned it earlier right? What's in it for me you're thinking or wisdom of each of these things. quarters that you're working with around this table, you know, if finance needs ROI, then you've got to work with them on coming up with a compelling ROI case, if sales needs to show that this is going to meet their goal of penetrating a new market, then you've got to make sure you show them the benefits are appealing to that particular market, or that there's a competitive differentiator in that new market. That's gonna mean yes, it's way more successful in that market going after that market, because you've got something that sets you apart from the rest of the competition. So just two examples, right? Financing salesman, you got to go all the way around the table.

Jason Knight 25:33

100% got to get inside people's heads, but in a good way. But how do you know when to pull the ripcord though, and stop looking at data and avoid getting caught up in this kind of analysis, paralysis cliche that people talk about? Because you know, sometimes you got to take a shot, right?

25:48

Absolutely. So perfect. is the enemy of good enough, right? You can absolutely drive yourself crazy with Well, what now that every time you do some research, you come up with as many questions as you do answer. What we identify is go back to the business problem you're trying to solve? And do you now have enough reasonable data to prove that for that business problem, you got a compelling case to make? And then you at least thought through some of the alternatives, right? That's another aspect of this is you hate to get caught hold at one of these decision making meetings by somebody who asks a question that you haven't thought of. So you do want to take a broader view step back, okay, forest for trees? Have I really thought about all of this? What's the alternative? Could I just go buy this? From some with somebody else? Instead of building it myself? And sometimes making good strategic decisions about is this a core competency? Or not? And if it isn't, or competency, go for it? If it's not a core competency? Can I go get somebody else who already does this really well, and partner with them. And that's, that's a valuable approach, they can also improve time to market. So you've got to take the big picture, look, to get back to you and answer your question, take the big picture, look, make sure you've got enough data. But as new questions come up, ask yourself, Do I really need to answer that question? Or do I have enough to keep going? Because, you know, we're all partners are problem solvers. And whenever they see something on answer, they want to go answer it some more. But then you always get back to the end in mind, always get back to that business objective you're trying to accomplish. And if you feel like you've got what you need from that, move on.

Jason Knight 27:29

Now, 100%. And I think that build by thing is also super interesting. I always like to try and think about it in terms of I think I call it defensibility. Like, how much IP are we building versus just building some commoditize thing? Yeah, I don't want to build another login system or something like that. There's so many different ways to build login systems these days, or SSO providers and sites like this, just use one of them. I've fully, fully believe that anyone that's starting out, building their own username and password table should just immediately stop doing whatever it is that they're doing, and immediately just go and integrate some SSO provider because otherwise, it's gonna be ripping it all out in six to 12 months anyway. Absolutely.

28:05

And since we're talking about data, I have the same opinion about instrumenting your products, right? It's just go get somebody else's library and report them tool and integrate it into your body. Right, that trumps rash.

Jason Knight 28:22

Yeah, again, you're just gonna be sitting there unpicking it 1218 months in the future and installing amplitude or Pendo or something like that instead, which, you know, again, I get it because people don't look at the kind of running costs, they just kind of see the capital expense, right? They don't really look at the ongoing maintenance and the fact that they've got to keep running that as well as also running the stuff that they're actually making money off of.

So yeah, absolutely. Make sure you spend your money wisely. Core Competencies. Right, exactly. Your core competency, core competencies. defensibility got to better defend your stuff, not just but any old nonsense. Absolutely. But it's obviously possible to measure quite a lot of stuff these days with some of the tools like we just mentioned, like, you know, we can instal stuff we can track just about everything. We can do live screen recordings, we can obviously do audio recordings, now auto transcriptions and pull that stuff into a bucket is so much stuff that we can actually analyse and and get these days. And, of course, one problem is making sure that you're analysing the right thing. Sure. And the opposite of analysing the right thing, of course, is basically going down the route of like vanity metrics and spending all your time analysing stuff and trying to make decisions off stuff that isn't actually that important at all. Now, that's a tricky one. But do you have any approaches to try and kind of snuff that out and make it so that you can actually make sure that there's actually a meaningful outcome from the metric that you're tracking versus that you're just tracking something that looks good or confirms your own biases?

29:51

All right. So let's talk about vanity metrics per second since you brought up the journey right there. I think a metrics can be both valuable and it can become a vanity metric if you aren't careful. So, you know, the typical classic example was eyeballs, which led to an economic recession 20 years ago, right? So it was, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't know how many folks are, if we're talking to website visiting your website, it is important to know how many people are visiting your website, it's just not that important relative to how many people are doing revenue generating things for you. So it's only a piece of that puzzle. And don't make it the thing that you like, put up on the top of your dashboard and say this is it, it's only a piece of the puzzle, if it starts to drop, you should wonder why. Right? Because at the top of the funnel ain't working, then something's really wrong. But it's the top of the funnel is just the beginning of that customer journey. So you need to get down to what are the critical moments that matter along that customer journey, you know, I'm kind of making up this problem. But if the problem is, is that you're seeing a drop in actual purchases, where look at your funnel, and see where are people dropping out of your funnel, and that's where you then put a lens, a magnifying glass into that area. And so if you now got to worry about that, that doesn't mean that then once you've solved that problem, that becomes a metric, you always have to try it probably now you've solved that problem, the problem is gonna move somewhere else. Right? So you cannot just say, All right, I have three KPIs, and those are going to be what I track for. However, over time, things are going to change. And you're going to have to be agile in understanding where are the things that matter next, right? So this is this is where Curiosity as a product owner is important, and where you don't want to be complacent about the things that you're measuring. Sure, number of eyeballs, it is important, but it becomes a vanity metric very quickly, if it's not the thing that is changing in your business. And you need to be tracking, where are the changes? What's the outcome I'm driving for? Now, I made up this example that I want to get from purchases, right. But whatever it may be, in your particular case, what what is the business objective you're trying to meet? Or what's the customer delight you're trying to create? And then figure out how do I measure that successfully.

Jason Knight 32:17

That makes a lot of sense, sort of by iterating, your metrics as well, from the sounds of it. But one thing you also talked about before this was building a fact base for your product vision,

which, to me starts to sound like we're trying to use data to inform our product vision and make sure that that vision is visionary or something along those lines. Now, we have to call out a course that not everyone has a product vision or certainly doesn't seem like it. So we have to hope that some people would do anything would be better than doing nothing. But when you're talking about facts, and using a fact base for your product vision, I mean, is that just an extension of this, like bringing data in and using that to inform the vision? Or is it something a little bit different, or fact, this

32:59

is another simple sort of framework to make sure that you are looking broadly at the things you need to be looking at. And so I like to use the three C's for your factories, what's the customer's needs? What is going on and the competitive landscape, market situation and what's going on inside your company? So you want to be looking at those three things. And so you're going to stop? So like, let's talk about company for a second, right? Your fact facing your company is what are you really good at? And what are you not so good at? And how do you make sure that you emphasise the good stuff in your product vision? Right? So that's that's company fatface. competitive and more broadly, market landscape is what makes this market that you want to go after really compelling and interesting. Is it someplace where you can differentiate versus your competition isn't a market that saturated and there will be really hard to break into? Or maybe you're already the 100 pound gorilla in that market. How do you hold on to that market leadership? Right? So you got to look at the market situation in the competitive situation and know your facts in there. And keep track I've seen multiple times where people ignore, say, a small competitor. And then that small competitor catches fire because they were below the radar. And suddenly now they're eating your lunch. Right? Yeah, they're multiple examples of that here in Silicon Valley. So you've got to keep your eye on the market and the competitive situation. And then number one, I end with that one because it's the most important, what are your customers needs? Right? And you need data to understand that and it's got to be both qual and quant right? I often encourage folks to like go get the qualitative first, what's the story? What's the problem? What's the pain point? What's the delight point that your customers really want? But then return to that first CD that matches what I am good at. Right? So once I find a pain point that I'm really good at okay, now we were going to start cooking with gas Right, that's gonna be exciting to go after that. But you've got to have that qualitative data of the story, and then some quantitative data and make sure that there's enough of those folks, that it makes sense for you to go after that market and be profitable. Right? And enough, people always ask me, you know, okay, well, what's a big enough market size? Well, I don't know, if you're selling luxury vehicles, like jaguars, you don't have to sell as many of them. But you got to make sure there's enough buyers even then, versus if you're selling a Hugo or a smart car, or tiny little car, you know, for very little amount of money, then you need a pretty big market to be able to make money off of that. It's gonna depend, right? Yeah. But that fact base is understanding your customer's needs and being being satisfied that you can, you can meet those needs with your own strengths, and that there's enough of them to make it a good profitable business, understanding the competitive landscape in the market situation and understanding your own company's core competencies. Right. So those three C's are what I asked people to use to build that fact base. And it's data, but it's qualitative data and stories and collect data. It's not just everybody looking at dashboards.

Jason Knight   36:10

They can look at a few dashboards surely come on, don't don't

36:14

know. There's just not the only thing.

Jason Knight 36:18

Yeah, no. 100%. Well, where can people find you after this, then if they want to find out more about any of this stuff, so about data driven decision making to a group in general or maybe see if you've got any T Mobile psychics go and spare in a garage?

36:34

Garage, I still have one right here on my desk. So

Jason Knight 36:36

I'll look at that. That's beautiful. It's fun.

36:39

Yeah, so Roger adds to a group.com. Very easy RG are at 280 group.com. One of the benefits of smaller companies, you get a first name, email address,

Jason Knight 36:50

Vega, you know, you're a player when that happens.

36:53

So love to hear from folks always excited to help people out in their journey of getting better at product management is passionate about as well we're passionate about. So it gets me up every morning. It's wonderful to help people solve problems.

Jason Knight 37:07

100%. But I made sure to link that all into the show notes. And yeah, hopefully you get a few people heading in your direction to find out more. Excellent. That's been a fantastic chat. So obviously, really appreciate you taking the time to talk about your work and how we can all be

a little bit more data informed. Hopefully, we can stay in touch but yeah, as for now. Thanks for taking the time. My

37:25

pleasure. Thank you so much, Jason, I really enjoyed our conversation.

Jason Knight 37:31

As always, thanks for listening. I hope you found the episode inspiring and insightful. If you did again, I can only encourage you to hop over to white knight in product.com. Check out some of my other fantastic guests sign up to the vape mist or subscribe on your favourite podcast app and make sure you share your friends so if you and they can never miss another episode again. I'll be back soon with another inspiring guest but as for now, thanks and good night.