product

focus

2018
Product Management and Product Marketing survey

Each year Product Focus runs a survey on product management and product marketing in technology industries.

The survey looks at the role, salaries and day-to-day activities of those currently working in product management and product marketing. It also asks about the issues they face.

680 people took part in this year's survey. They were mainly from the UK (44%) and other European countries (46%). And of those that responded 19% were Head of, Director or VP.

All the responses for this report were gathered in January 2018.

Remember the survey results are the industry norm, not best practice. You can find out about best practice by subscribing to our free resources or attending one of our training courses.

Please note: we use the term product manager to refer to both product managers and product marketers as the roles often overlap.

Snapshot

We've analysed hundreds of written comments to identify the 6 most common issues for product managers. These are:

- Product management responsibilities are not clearly defined or aligned with other areas

- Ever changing business priorities and a lack of business strategy makes it tough to plan and deliver

- Product managers often find themselves covering for other roles just to get things done

- Too much focus on tactical or customer work at the expense of the longer-term

- Any and every issue involving the product is thrown at product managers to resolve

- Too much to do, too little time and too few resources

£57k
The average salary paid to Product Managers and Senior Product Managers

90%
of respondents reporting their company use a type of Agile development

33%
of respondents in companies that use Agile are also the Scrum Product Owner

64%
The percentage of respondents who've been trained is consistent with the number on 2017

73%
of respondents work on software, 53% on services and 29% have responsibility for hardware products

3
The average number of years spent in their current role

39%
of respondents' product management teams report to board level

68%
The most frequently used people-performance measure is Management by Objectives

51%
The amount of time spent on unplanned 'fire-fighting' activities

Salary

£57k

The average base salary paid to Product Managers and Senior Product Managers (excl Juniors and Heads etc)

€ £ (in thousands)

Junior Product Manager | Product Manager | Senior Product Manager | Head, Director or VP

■ Lowest quartile
■ 2nd quartile
■ 3rd quartile
■ Highest quartile

Salaries in the UK are similar to those in mainland Europe for entry level Product Managers but almost 15% higher for Heads, Directors or VPs of product management.

Full package

£4k

Benefits add £4,150 to the packages of the average PM, £14,000 to the most senior staff

€ £ (in thousands)

Junior Product Manager | Product Manager | Senior Product Manager | Head, Director or VP
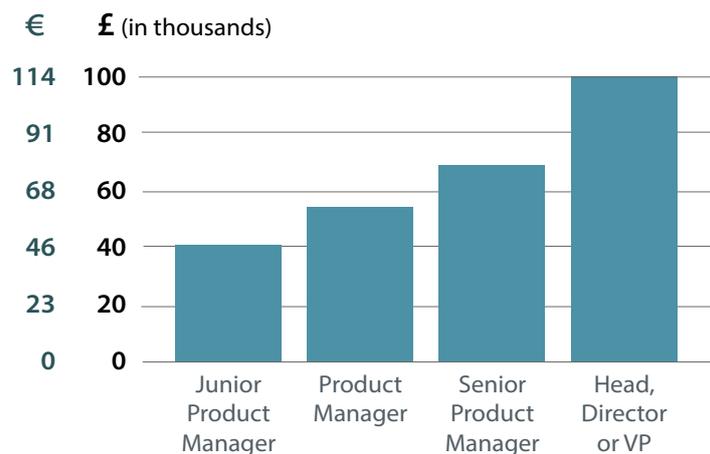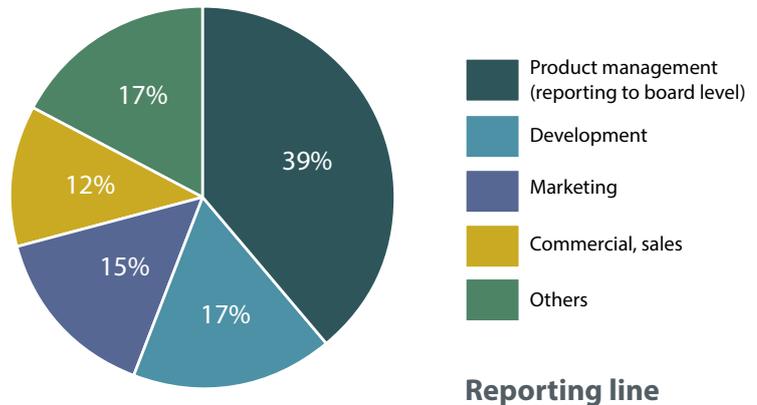
Package value

68% receive a bonus as part of their package.

20% get some shares, 18% a company car and half get private health insurance.

Reporting

39%

of Product Management departments report directly to the board

Reporting line

Legend:
- Product management (reporting to board level)
- Development
- Marketing
- Commercial, sales
- Others

Pie chart values: 39%, 17%, 15%, 12%, 17%
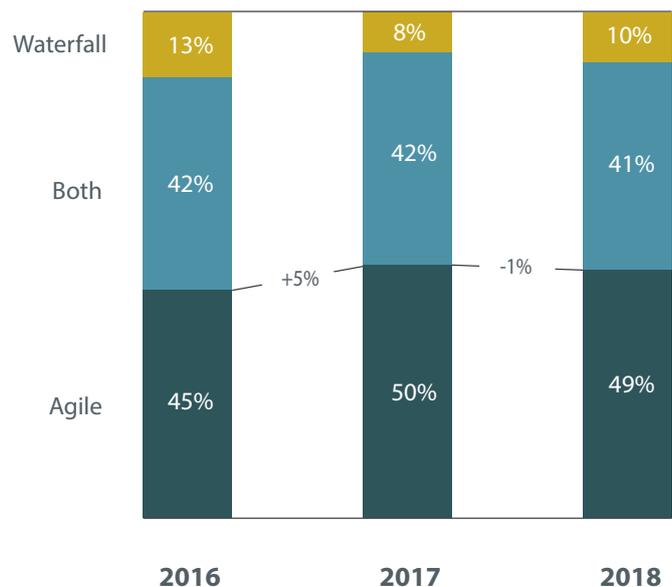
We believe the high proportion of Product Management teams reporting directly to the board reflects the value of an independent, unbiased, function.

Development approach

90%

The number of respondents reporting their company use a type of Agile development

Stacked bar chart:

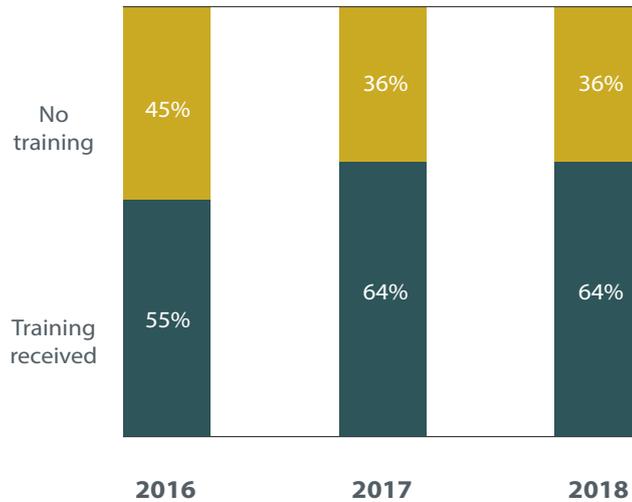|	2016	2017	2018
Waterfall	13%	8%	10%
Both	42%	42%	41%
Agile	45%	50%	49%

Annotations: +5%, -1%

41% of companies use a mix of both Agile and Waterfall e.g. water-scrum-fall.

Only 33% of product managers in companies using Scrum are the Product Owner.

Training

64%

of product managers have had product management training

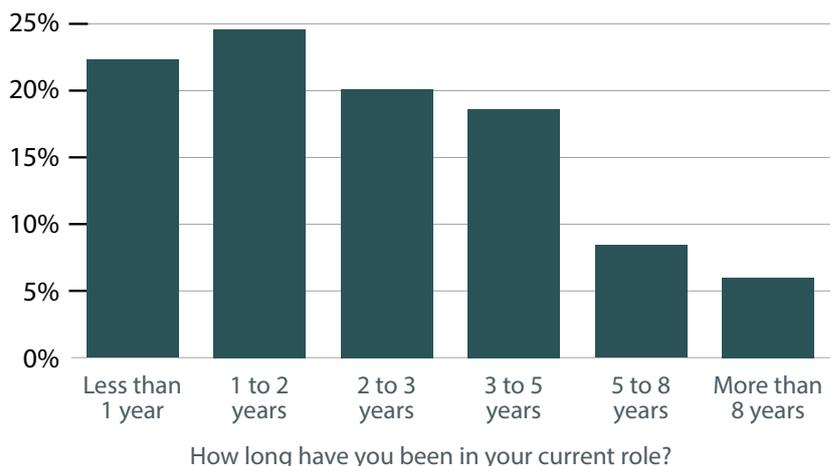|	2016	2017	2018
No training	45%	36%	36%
Training received	55%	64%	64%

3 in 5 of all respondents say the option to become certified is a consideration when selecting a training provider.

Years experience

3

The average number of years respondents have been in their **current** role
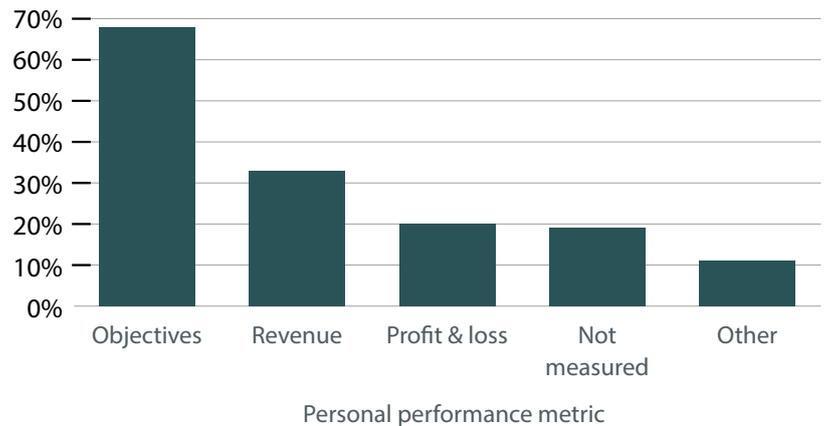

How long have you been in your current role?

People build a career in product management. 2/3 of respondents have more than 4 years experience and 23% have more than 10 years in various roles.

Personal performance

68%

The most frequently used personal performance measurement is Management by Objectives
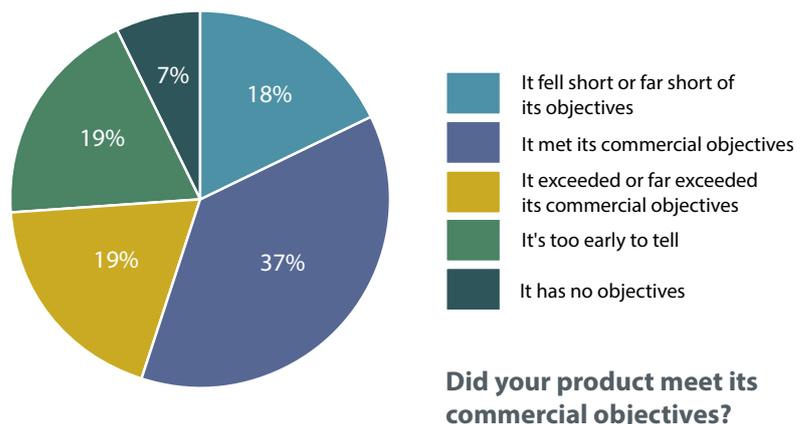

Personal performance metric

Revenue (33%) and profit & loss (20%) metrics are used for many respondents. Customer satisfaction is the most common metric in the 'other' category.

Commercial objectives

56%

of respondents had products that met or bettered their commercial objectives

- It fell short or far short of its objectives
- It met its commercial objectives
- It exceeded or far exceeded its commercial objectives
- It's too early to tell
- It has no objectives

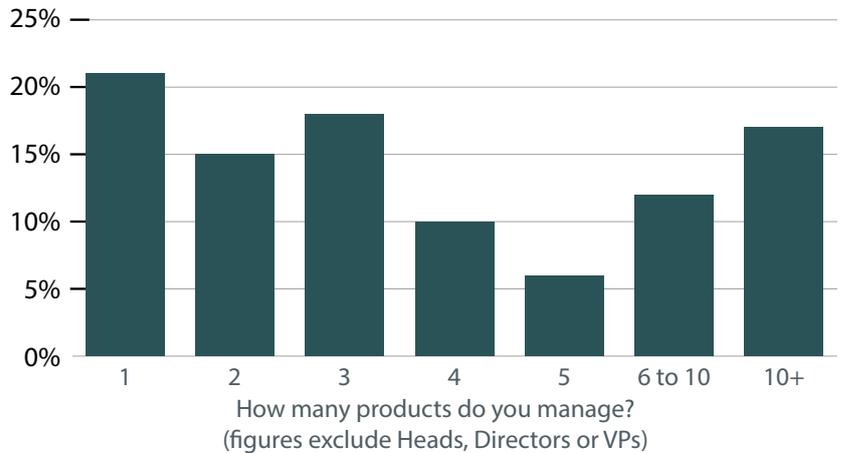**Did your product meet its commercial objectives?**

Experience counts, 76% of products managed by PMs with more than 3 years experience were commercially successful.

Number of products

5

Was the average number of products managed by respondents

How many products do you manage?
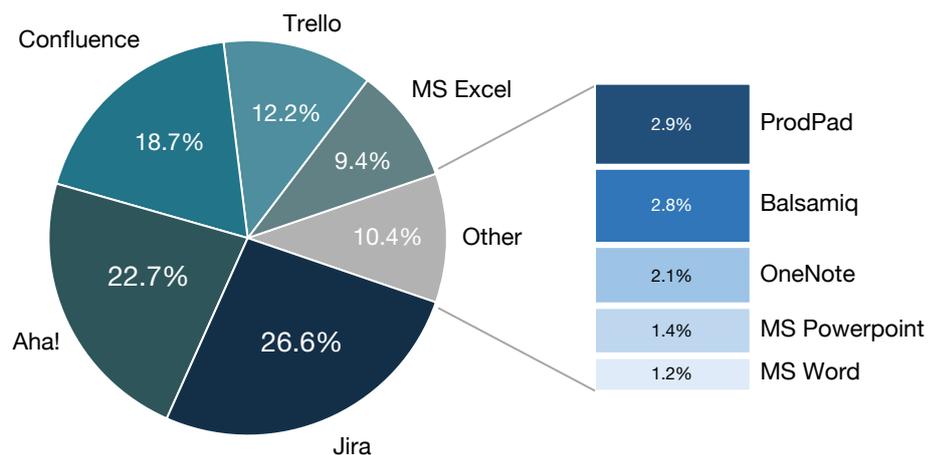(figures exclude Heads, Directors or VPs)

73% work on software, 53% on services and 29% on hardware (many on all 3).

71% of respondents work on business products, 9% on consumer products and 20% on both.

Recommended tools
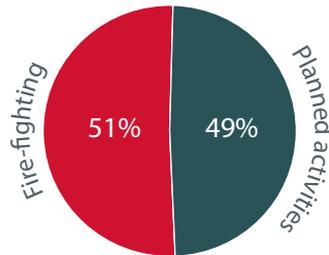
27%

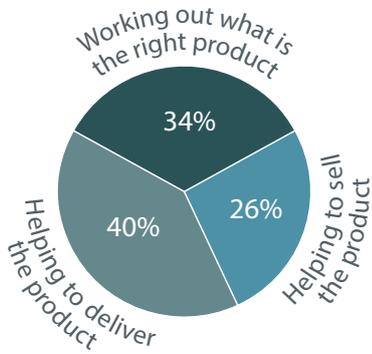Jira is the tool most frequently **recommended** by product managers

Although these were the most recommended tools, the Microsoft Office applications (PowerPoint, Excel and Word) were, by far, the most frequently used at 39%.
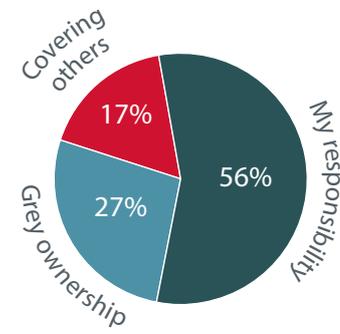
Time

51%

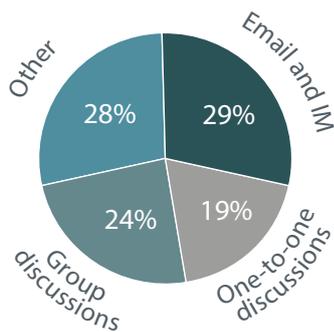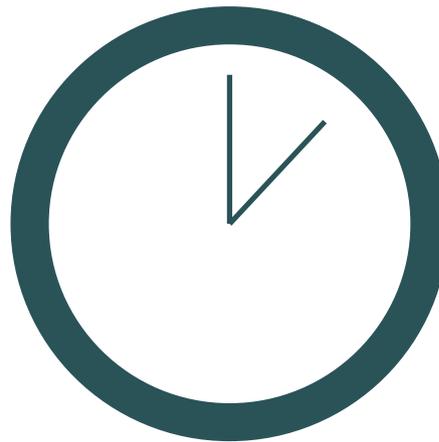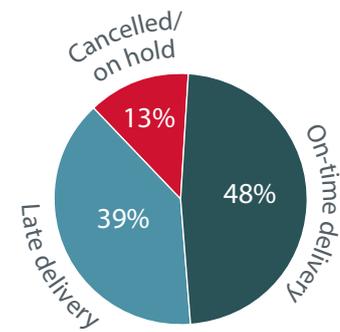The amount of time spent on unplanned 'fire-fighting' activities

Planned vs un-planned

Fire-fighting **51%**
Planned activities **49%**

Product activities

Working out what is the right product **34%**
Helping to sell the product **26%**
Helping to deliver the product **40%**

Activity ownership

Covering others **17%**
Grey ownership **27%**
My responsibility **56%**

Work and communications

Other **28%**
Email and IM **29%**
Group discussions **24%**
One-to-one discussions **19%**

Project delivery

Cancelled/ on hold **13%**
On-time delivery **48%**
Late delivery **39%**

Stage of lifecycle

Post-launch **53%**
Pre-launch **47%**
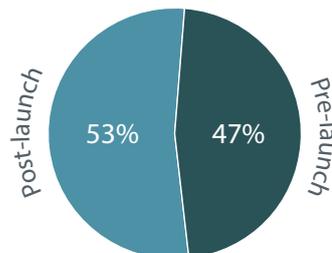
Your big issues

"Ambiguity around the roles of Product Management, Product Owner, Business Analyst etc."

"No company strategy – CEO jumping from product to product"

"Lack of development resources or, put another way, we lack an agreed rationale for prioritisation"

"Product management only own the product when there is a problem"

"The organisation as a whole is Waterfall whereas development is Agile"

"Balancing the strategic work with the tactical"

"The company buying into product management and seeing it as the link between business and development"

"Trying to do too many things at once, rarely finishing anything"

"We very much fall into the 'if I don't do it, no one will' trap – we don't hold anyone accountable"

"It's complicated! Getting the attention of the CEO is challenging, but not as hard as being treated like a service or tool for the rest of the business to abuse. As an industry we do not have clarification of the value good product people add; so whilst it is good that many industries now acknowledge the need for product management, the dilution of the value, thru people assuming that PM is easy or a given, is intrinsically damaging. In short - 20 years in the job, I know what value I add, my board know what I bring to the table, my products deliver 50% of our overall revenue. Yet I interview too many people who just don't know or understand what "proper product management" is about. They don't know their products, market, opportunity. They have no idea about launch activities, they don't understand risk vs benefit, prioritisation, personas. They think that product management is responding purely to customer demands or worse, project management. And that is demoralising because there are companies paying good money for "product managers" that just are not. It devalues our profession."

About Product Focus

Product Focus helps businesses and individuals deliver world class product management.

We teach the skills and tools to excel in product management and product marketing.

Our focus is on businesses that have technology-based products.

We work with some of the world's leading companies and the feedback we get is invariably excellent. Our experience, journal and industry survey make us leaders in our field.

Find out more about our training, register for our free journal and access other free resources on our site.

Stop fire-fighting

...and deliver world class product management

Public training courses

Build the skills, tools and confidence to excel in your role.

Attend a 3-day public course with industry peers in locations across Europe.

Show you care about your professional development by becoming a Product Focus Certified Product Manager.

On-site private training

Improve team performance with tailored on-site private training.

Get everyone using consistent best-practice approaches and speaking the same language.

We come to you, so you save travel costs and make the most of your time together.

Reviews and assessments

Ensure the team is set-up for success with a review of product management in your business.

Answer questions such as how should we measure performance, have we got the right processes and where can we improve?

What does world class product management look like?

Leadership forum

A one-day exclusive workshop for senior executives to meet, discuss and learn how to lead a high-performance product management function.

The forum provides an oasis away from daily distractions to focus on the strategic issues of leading and improving product management.