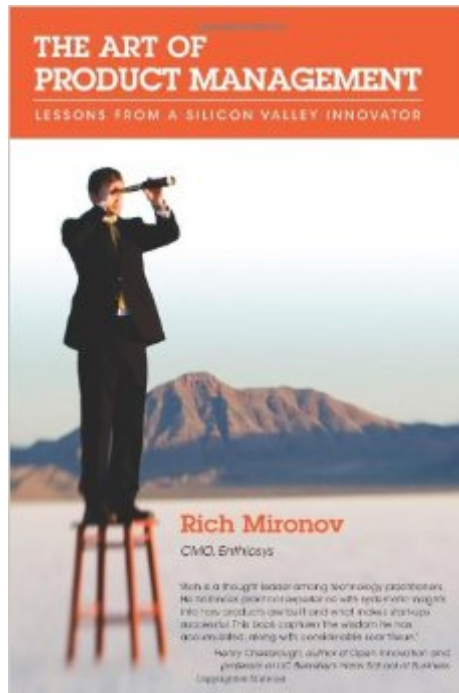# The Art Of Product Management: Lessons From A Silicon Valley Innovator

Synopsis

The Art of Product Management takes us inside the head of a product management thought leader. With color and humor, Rich Mironov gives us a taste of Silicon Valley's tireless pursuit of great technology and its creation of new products. He provides strategic advice to product managers and tech professionals about start-ups, big organizations, how to think like a customer, and what things should cost. He also reminds us to love our products and our teams. The Art of Product Management brings together the best insights from more than seven years of Product Bytes, Rich Mironov's long-running series on product strategy, technology companies, and how the two interact. This collection is for everyone who builds or markets the next new thing. This is more a how to think about products book than how to templates. Product managers (and others who are deeply committed to great products) will recognize themselves and their daily process struggles. How do I think about customers and solutions? Why does my organization behave the way it does? Can I help others to think long-term, or do I need to think for them? This book captures the inner life of product champions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book is actually a collection of blog posts. This gives an appropriate impression - a number of loosely collected essays, not a real book in sense that Charles Petzold defines the real book: "the type that have traditionally been read sequentially in stretches of an hour or multiple hours without frequent interruptions" [...]. This kind of book implies that "the author has spent a lot of time arranging the material in the book into a coherent progression and logic",which is not exactly the

case here.Some blog posts, included into the book, are pretty outdated, like articles from 2002 (in the SaaS part) - this is usually the case with books, compiled out of blogs. Problem is that blog is inherently a diary-like thing, so some posts are older then the others. And publisher require certain amount of pages ...Some important items (like project management or requirements management systems) are missing in the relevant sections. This is another problem with books, derived from blogs: blog posts are usually written 'under influence' of the moment, so we tend to talk about things that are important to us today, not about all impotant things.When you forget that this collection of essays takes the 'form' of the book, everything else is actully pretty fine. Essays are organized by topic and are pretty much independent of each other.Interesting moments (extremely subjective): -pretty good generic discussion of the place of product manager in the organization and "owning the gaps" -nice argument about the balancing position of the product manager between engineering and sales -good explanation of the differences between various roadmaps for various audiences -book emphasizes the importance of what I call "necessary amount of beuracracy" or what the author calls "defensive processes"BOTTOM LINE: A fair collection of essays. Probably nothing new for a veteran product manager. Maybe used, but not really, for a complete rookie,simply because of the fact that it's not a book, hence lack of coherence and flow. Definitely useful reading for a mid-start product manager.[...]

I just finished reading The Art of product management by Rich Mironov. In this review I will talk about the what I learnt from my reading and where I think the book can be improved.The book does a great job of identifying the key roles and responsibilities of a Product Manager in a start-up. I particularly enjoyed how he stressed the importance of decision making as a critical aspect of product management. I have captured a couple of "clippings" from his book: - Much of product management is about trying to understand customers: what they want, what they say they want, and what they really need. - Ideally, you want your PM to be both right and decisive. It may take years to find out if a decision was right, but indecisiveness can freeze up an entire organization. A great PM recognizes the important few decisions worthy of serious analysis - and plows through the rest. - David Thompson, a manager of mine at iPass, taught me that executives are paid to make decisions: a productive day must include least one decision. Meetings, emails, discussions, forecast reviews and brainstorming are secondary to making decisions that drive action. It's easy to be distracted by the minutiae of business, or by analysis paralysis. - So, we've defined the ideal PM: an experienced, decisive driver who understands the customer enough to make complex trade-offs.The second aspect of the book I liked was tips that Rich provides for day to day Product

management tasks. Its a very handy checklist to ahve in your reportaire as you tackle the problems on a daily basis. I have captured a few below: - Customer facing vs. Internal roadmaps: I'd consider two or three distinct (and distinctly named) documents: a public roadmap for use with press, analysts and prospects; a Key Customer roadmap, used strictly under NDA when Product Management is present; and a Development calendar for staffing, planning and executive buy-in. Getting agreement and maintaining these is hard work. - Marketecture. Savvy product marketers can always describe their solution as a better fit with standards, upcoming technologies, industry leaders and the customer's own roadmap. Somehow, you are positioned as narrow and inflexible: a one-product company who arrived too early to see the important trends. - "whole B-O-M": Let's talk about how a "Whole Product Bill of Materials" can save both you and your customers a lot of grief. The hardware world has always known about Bills of Materials, also called B-O-Ms (pronounced "bombs"). GM and Honda have armies of BOM specialists who can recite the parts inventory for a transmission plus every supplier's production lead time. Among free-spirited software start-ups, there's usually a good list of the key software modules that have to be written. (Larry works on the installer, Sarah has database access, Vijay owns the user interface...) However, many of the essential parts of a software product are not software. Seemingly little things like toll-free support numbers and upgrade paths are often neglected, but are critical to customer success. A complete Marketing Requirements Document should have a Bill of Materials but usually doesn't.Another aspect of the book that I really liked is the fact that Rich is able to capture so many different facets of product management into such a short book. I am a product manager in a start-up (well I work for a large Silicon Valley giant, however, our group functions like a start up) and could relate to each and every chapter. This book gave me a framework in which to analyze all my efforts over the past two years- including what was doing well and areas where i could improve. Here are a few "clippings" of sections i thought were useful for any product manager (its not rocket science and most of us already know this stuff): - Processes are not naturally good or bad. It's all about results, effectiveness and motivating the right behaviors. Especially at a startup, initiative and insight need breathing room as well as rigor."Insider thinking": Stuck at headquarters, it's easy to forget customer realities and needs. Great PMs know that internal goals and criteria are only one part of a successful product. Frequent escapes to talk with live customers are essential to remind us of what's important. - Trying to find beta customers- read this FIRST: In theory, we all love beta testing. In practice, loyal customers are joined by a few panicked prospects in a rush to general release. This generates scant feedback and minimal revenue. If you want useful results, plan a long beta phase for friendly customers followed by a short, post-QA cycle for urgent - The beast called

pricing: Out in the field, where sales teams wrestle to bring in your paycheck, pricing should never be the focus of a sales call. You want your reps to spend prospects' precious time on benefits, solution selling, and creative problem-solving. As soon as pricing becomes the focus, the sales team loses their ability to sell value.However, one of the key shortcomings of the book is the lack of depth (the author chose to cover a large set of topics instead of diving deep on a few). In my opinion, each chapter of the book could be followed by an optional section either a list of further readings or appendix with a detailed (real or fictitious)example. This would have enabled better understanding as well as more actionable next steps.All in all, its a good read for any start up product manager- won't tell you anything new, but will give you a nice framework to assess yourself as a product manager and tips on how to improve. I would not recommend to someone without any product management experience as they would sturggle to appreciate the naunces of the job due to lack of details in the book. Similarly the book is not very useful for very experienced product managers who have been there done that. Ideal spot would be for young product managers with a couple of products under their belt.Hope you found this review useful.

This collection of essays provides a good overview of challenges that product managers face. It presents sensible advice with structure. The writing is clear, laced throughout with wry humor, and can be read in a day. I did.

In The Art of Product Management: Lessons from a Silicon Valley Innovator, Rich Mironov gives a series of quick articles designed for the busy product executive. Each short article tackles a single idea. One of my favorites is Mironov's analogy of product manager as parent of the product. He also explores where the product management role should report in the organization, roadmapping as a strategic planning tool, and techniques for understanding what customers really need in a product. Of particular note are the sections of pricing and packaging.As another reviewer notes, some of the technologies and examples mentioned are now obsolete but the concepts remain true over time.Mironov's breezy writing style is fresh and entertaining. The book reads more like a series of conversations than a college thesis, and offers practical advice that you can use right away.The Art of Product Management is a great supplement to my own Strategic Role of Product Management which is more of an overview of product management.

This is a nice book if you're new to product management but if you've been there for a while many chapters will look kind of obvious to you. Still it is an interesting read and many can learn from it.I

read this book after being a product manager for around 2 years and felt I should have gotten a different book instead but still, it didn't feel like a complete waste of money.

The Art of Product Management: Lessons from a Silicon Valley Innovator Agile Product Management: Product Owner (Box set) : 27 Tips To Manage Your Product, Product Backlog: 21 Tips To Capture and Manage Requirements with Scrum ... development, agile software development) Agile Product Management and Product Owner Box Set: 27 Tips to Manage Your Product, Product Backlog and 21 Tips to Capture and Manage Requirements with Scrum Valley Speak: Deciphering the Jargon of Silicon Valley Agile Product Management: Product Owner: 26 Tips to Manage Your Product and Work with Scrum Teams Agile Product Management: Product Vision:: 21 Steps to setting excellent goals for your product (scrum, scrum master, agile development, agile software development) Agile Product Management: Release Planning: 21 Steps to plan your product releases from a product vision with Scrum (scrum, scrum master, agile development, agile software development) Agile Product Management: Product Owner: 27 Tips To Manage Your Product And Work With Scrum Teams (scrum, scrum master, agile development, agile software development) Agile Product Management: Release Planning: 21 Steps to Plan Your Product Releases from a Product Vision with Scrum Make It New: The History of Silicon Valley Design The Geography of Genius: A Search for the World's Most Creative Places from Ancient Athens to Silicon Valley Clean Disruption of Energy and Transportation: How Silicon Valley Will Make Oil, Nuclear, Natural Gas, Coal, Electric Utilities and Conventional Cars Obsolete by 2030 Chaos Monkeys: Obscene Fortune and Random Failure in Silicon Valley The New New Thing: A Silicon Valley Story Startup: A Silicon Valley Adventure The Launch Pad: Inside Y Combinator, Silicon Valley's Most Exclusive School for Startups Chaos Monkeys: Inside the Silicon Valley money machine Agile Product Management: User Stories: How to capture, and manage requirements for Agile Product Management and Business Analysis with Scrum (scrum, ... development, agile software development) Agile Product Management: User Stories: How to Capture Requirements for Agile Product Management and Business Analysis with Scrum Take Charge Product Management: Time-tested tips, tactics, and tools for the new or improved product manager