

## The #1 Way to Enable Greater Market Success: Messaging Breakthrough Accelerates Each Phase of the Technology Adoption Life Cycle

By Michael Cannon

A great go-to-market strategy, poorly executed, is destined to fall short of expected results.

Geoffrey Moore's book, *Crossing the Chasm*, is one of the best strategy books ever on how to market and sell both

disruptive and continuous innovation via the Technology Adoption Life Cycle ([TALC](#)). There is no doubt that those who implement Moore's concepts and frameworks are much more successful. There is also a lot of agreement that a great strategy is necessary but not sufficient.

One of the biggest points of execution failure when launching a new product is Marketing's inability to successfully enable Sales (inside, outside, channel) to have an effective conversation with potential customers. Marketing has not figured out how to provide Sales with effective messaging, collateral, sales tools, and sales support training -- vital tools that Sales

*(Continued on page 9)*

### Sponsors

center for  
**UC Berkeley**  
executive education



### Inside this issue

-----  
Innovation Requires A Lot More Than  
Talking To Customers - page 2

July Event Review: "From a Start-Up to an  
S&P 500..." - page 6

Book Review: "Take Charge Product  
Management" - page 5

...and more

### August Event Review: "What Makes Product Management Different in Life Sciences?"

By Cindy F. Solomon

At SVPMA's August meeting, Jennifer Turcotte and Dione K. Bailey, Ph.D from Complete Genomics, Inc. provided a comprehensive discussion of what is required to successfully transition from product management in high tech to the Life Sciences industry.

Jennifer Turcotte, vice president of marketing at Complete Genomics, drew upon 15 years of enterprise software and biotechnology marketing and product management experience with both venture-funded startups and public companies. Jennifer currently directs all product management and marketing activities at Complete Genomics including strategic product planning, product marketing, market entry strategy, marketing communications, branding and public relations. She has held senior product marketing positions at SAP, Siperian, Ariba and BEA. Jennifer holds a B.Eng. in mechanical engineering from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Innovation Requires A Lot More Than Just Talking To Customers

By Greg Cohen

I recently participated in a discussion, on a Yahoo! developer group list, on the question of who owns innovation. There was consensus that creative ideas can come from anywhere and everyone is responsible for contributing to innovative outcomes. There also needs to be an owner, and for me, that owner should be the product manager. But, innovation doesn't just happen by telling the product team to be innovative.

It is a discipline with its own techniques and skills that can and need to be learned.

This discussion got me thinking because although I stated that product management should own the innovation process including the idea pipeline and innovation portfolio, I wondered how many companies take the time to teach their product managers how to be innovation leaders, equipping them with the skills necessary to facilitate the creative process in their teams and deliver innovative products and services. In practice, the majority of product management work focuses around existing products and incremental improvement. This makes it hard to get into the mindset of nurturing a breakthrough product that delivers substantially more value than the alternatives. Further, there is little discussion within product management about the mechanics of innovation. In fact, almost all my knowledge of innovation has come from adjacent fields to product management such as market research, strategy, psychology, product development, and design.

One practice, however, that has been widely accepted in our product management discipline is to get out of the office and talk to customers. This is a great technique and one in which we often need to be reminded. But this method to identify new opportunities, which was a ground breaking idea in the early '90's when many product managers spent all their time in the building, is widely adopted and practiced. If you want to gain an edge on your competition, you need to go further, to gain more insight and tap the creative potential of your team.

Doing so starts with good research techniques to identify problems worth solving. To list some of them:

1. Ethnography – observing you customer “in the wild”. See what issues they encounter that you might be able to solve.
2. Interviews or focus groups – try to understand the issues and opinions of customer segments.

*(Continued on page 3)*

SVPMA is an all volunteer non-profit association for Product Managers in Silicon Valley and around the San Francisco Bay area.

## **Our mission is:**

- To provide a forum to share day-to-day experiences and insights in Product Management
- To create a safe network of peers
- To promote research and education in Product Management

## **Board**

Mike Freier. . . . . President/Membership  
Greg Cohen . . . . . Finance  
Jamie O'Halloran. . . . . Workshops  
John Armstrong . . . . . Marketing & Sponsorship  
David Grubman . . . . . Website  
Sree Kamala. . . . . Website  
Rich Mironov. . . . . Special Events  
Helene Eichler. . . . . Communications  
Shyla Klinder. . . . . Social Networking Events  
Nupur Thakur. . . . . Monthly Events/Speakers

## **Managing Editor**

Helene Eichler, CRM Marketing Consultant

## **Contributing Editors**

Cindy Solomon, National Organization  
Dan Galatin, Keynote Systems  
Greg Cohen, 280 Group  
Michael Cannon, Silver Bullet Group  
Steve Starke, Thomson Reuters

To learn more about SVPMA, go to  
<http://www.svpma.org>  
Or email to [newsletter@svpma.org](mailto:newsletter@svpma.org)

(Continued from page 2)

3. Opportunity score assessment – once you've done the research above to identify problems that people want solved, you survey them to understand how important an issue is and how satisfied they are today with their current solution. Find areas of large gaps, often with secondary capabilities because the primary ones are well satisfied. These are the opportunities (for more info you can read Anthony Ulwick's *What Customers Want*.)
4. Kano Surveys – separates out capabilities into three groups: must haves, would create more value if it worked better, and would delight the user but is not expected.
5. Conjoint analysis – help understand what combination of capabilities (and price) are valued. For example, this type of survey can help a mobile phone design team optimize the design tradeoffs for size, weight, and battery life.

6. Innovation games – this is the area developed by Luke Hohmann on collaborative play to get deeper into customer's minds and needs than traditional interview techniques.

Once you've identified the right problem to address, the next step is developing creative solutions and concepts. Lateral thinking, pioneered by Edward de Bono is a big help here. The premise is that Western or critical thinking evolved to find absolute truths and reduce risk in a very dangerous and ill understood world. Although this is great for self-preservation it is the antithesis of creative thinking. So we must actively disrupt our logical thought process to free our brains to think creatively.

One technique is called Provocation and Movement. When using this technique, the group thinks broadly about an issue and suspends judgment while

(Continued on page 10)



center for  
**UC Berkeley**  
executive education

The UC Berkeley Center for Executive Education delivers draws on the rich talent of top-level business educators and researchers from UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business to offer 2-5 day courses for Executives. We have a special expertise in training programs that develop Marketing and Product Management professionals into industry leaders.

<http://executive.berkeley.edu>

## July Event Review:

### “From a Start-Up to an S&P 500 – A Product Marketing Journey” with Baruch Deutsch, Senior Director of Product Marketing, Cisco Systems

By Dan Galatin

Baruch Deutsch, Senior Director of Product Marketing at Cisco Systems, presented at the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Silicon Valley Product Management Association. He described his experiences leading product marketing through various stages of his company: as a startup, after acquisition by Cisco, and during the subsequent growth phase of the newly-integrated business unit.

Each stage had its own challenges, but Mr. Deutsch identified three key themes that resonated throughout his journey.

**First**, you must have faith in the product you are managing and the venture in which you are participating. This faith will carry you and your team through tough experiences no matter what the current phase of your business. *If you don't have faith, enthusiasm and commitment, change the product, change the market segment, or change your job.*

**Second**, never lose focus on your customers. Product management is all about finding customer problems and solving them.

**Third**, build a motivated team that shares your vision. Make sure that everyone you depend on is on your team and that they are working well together.

The first chapter of Mr. Deutsch's "journey" was the startup phase. Actona Technologies happened to get seed money fairly easily during the dot-com bubble. However, the company initially ended up with a product for a market that didn't exist, contrary to what had been predicted. In order to survive, the company had to reapply its technology to a different problem space for which there was a market opportunity. It took a great deal of persistence to find the first set of customers.

The logo for Yahoo! Groups, featuring the word "YAHOO!" in red with an exclamation point and "GROUPS" in black.

[groups.yahoo.com/group/SVPMA/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SVPMA/)

Because it was a small organization, both sales and marketing had to pitch in to achieve this objective. Out of necessity, the first PO was the number-one priority for the company. Obtaining the next round of VC funding required still more changes, including hiring a new CEO with a stronger business background.

Eventually, Cisco acquired Actona. Suddenly, the company became part of a larger business and the employees had to work with new management and learn a new set of business rules. For the first time, portfolio management was crucial for determining how Actona's product line would fit in with the business unit's other products. Within a larger company, it became even more important to network in order to get one's job done.

Post-acquisition, it was also necessary to review business and product strategy and redefine the group's mission. It took a great deal of internal evangelization to realign the entire team's vision and overcome inertia that can accumulate in a larger organization. Making hard decisions to change product investments risked alienating the sales force and the existing customer base. This reprioritization required a lot of courage and executive backing.

The third chapter in the journey involved the transition from a startup to building a customer base as a large company. Booking the sale is only the beginning of the customer relationship – successful deployment is critical. A large company cannot get away with the same quality problems as a small company.

Product problems at a large company like Cisco quickly get amplified by the size of its customer base and the vociferousness of industry analysts. Often, quality must trump new features – given the amount of sales that new features can pull in, this can be a difficult trade-off. Above all, continued success in this environment depends on continuing to create relevance for your product line and developing partnerships with other parts of the business. ☘

*Dan Galatin has 18 years combined experience in product management and software engineering. He is currently a Senior Product Manager at Keynote Systems and can be contacted at [dgalatin@yahoo.com](mailto:dgalatin@yahoo.com).*

## Book Review: *Take Charge Product Management* by Greg Geracie

Reviewed by Steve Starke

Greg Geracie has written a book intended to help product managers understand the discipline of product management and guide them, step by step, through the process of becoming product *leaders*. What I liked about this book was that it was not written in a reference format. Instead it was written through the eyes of an engaging fictitious product manager, Sean Knight. It was very easy to relate to the character and follow the journey that Sean was on. Although, Sean is a fictitious character, it was clear that Sean's experiences were based upon the author's *real-life experiences*. As a result the author's guidance is tangible and directly applicable to the corporate world and not based on theory.

I immediately felt connected to Sean and his encounters and found myself not wanting to put the book down as I anticipated his next steps. What was so unique was Geracie was actually teaching through a fundamental tool that all product managers should know, "the user persona / user story". You don't really recognize it until you are a majority of the way through the book, where you have the realization that you were just walked through a user story of the role that you're actively playing in real life! If only text books were written like this, I think learning would be easier, more relevant, and much more enjoyable.

Besides the unique format, Geracie's depth on certain topics makes this an essential read. For the first time, someone finally recognizes the different product management roles and how they change relative to the size of your company – yes size does matter. This understanding is crucial for anyone trying to build a Product

Management organization. So often, organizations are not staffed with the right skill set and bandwidth to get the job done. This lens often gets focused on software engineering but gets ignored when it comes to Product Management. Geracie points out that you will, in fact, sacrifice innovation and your market, if you are not staffed with the right skill set within product management. He gets it right by saying, if you're staffed correctly; you "shift from reactive to proactive product management".

I found it refreshing that tips and tools were provided through each and every step of the product management process. Summarized tips were, by design, put at the end of each chapter which made pulling them out and hanging them on my bulletin board easy. The other thing I found very insightful, was how Geracie took you into the mind of the senior executive. Having an understanding and insight into how people in these senior leadership roles think, better prepares anyone going into the field of Product Management. My only problem reading this book was that I wish I had this book 10 years ago when I had started my career. Having a mentor in a book is invaluable. But what is nice about this book is that I know I will continue to use it for the next 10 years of my career. ☘

*Steve Starke is Vice President of Product Management at Thomson Reuters. Prior to joining Thomson Reuters, Mr. Starke worked at Baxter Healthcare, Centrifusion/Dewpoint, and Aksys Ltd.. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in BioEngineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago.*



**Looking for new opportunities in  
Product Management**

**Looking to hire an experienced Product  
Management or Marketing Professional?**

*SVPMA represents over 4000 talented product management and marketing professionals!*

**SVPMA Job Board Forum: <http://www.svpma.org/forum.html>**

*(Continued from page 1)*

Dione K. Bailey, Ph.D. is the Director of Product Management at Complete Genomics, Inc. She joined Complete Genomics in 2009 where she focuses on requirements gathering and improvements to existing products and strategies that impact the direction of future products. Prior to joining Complete Genomics, Dr. Bailey was the Product Manager for CGH/CNV microarrays at Agilent Technologies. Dione was at Affymetrix for 5 years where she started as a Postdoctoral Fellow and also served as a Genomics Collaborations Scientist and Application Scientist. Dione has 14 years of experience in the life sciences market. She holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of Delaware and a B.S. in chemistry from the College of New Jersey. Dione has co-authored articles that appeared in *Science*, *Cell*, *Cancer Research*, *The American Journal of Human Genetics* and *Genome Research*.

Dione began with an introduction to Complete Genomics, explaining that they are a life sciences tools company, not a diagnostics or medical devices company. The goal at Complete Genomics is to provide large scale and affordable complete human genome sequencing as a service to enable the large scale research of the genetic mechanisms underlying complex diseases and drug response. As a small start-up company, their biggest challenges, from a product management perspective, are the highly competitive market comprised of a small number of amply sized, fierce competitors and the multi-disciplinary technology required to provide DNA sequencing of human genomes. Domain knowledge of bio-chemistry, hardware, software, bioinformatics and genetics is essential because they sell to PhD level research scientists.

Regulatory considerations are a factor in the life sciences industry, however they do not currently affect Complete Genomics since their customers are not doctors or CLIA labs (testing laboratories affected by the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments). However, if and when DNA sequencing becomes a diagnostic test or part of standard care, it will require FDA regulation. FDA regulation will severely impact product management's role in product lifecycle management given the rigorous reporting and clinical trials necessary. Product Marketing is also inhibited by FDA regulation in restrictions of who you can sell to, how you can market, what you can and cannot say about the product. These are not common issues in high tech product management.

Dione referenced bay area companies focusing on personal genomics services, Navigenics and 23andMe. They provide analysis of personal genomes to indi-

viduals for use in predictive medicine. They use the information produced by personal genomics techniques for making decisions on medical treatments, such as type of treatment or drug and appropriate dosage for a particular individual. The companies require genetic counselors to help interpret the results. Currently these sequencing tests and results are considered a regulatory gray zone for the FDA. All have received warning letters from the FDA asserting that the gene-analysis systems the companies are using are medical devices that must be regulated.

The presentation focus shifted to the differences between the Life Sciences Tools and High Tech industries. The life science tools industry does not utilize industry analysts as is done in high tech – instead there are key opinion leaders who are renowned, leading scientists who influence customers' buying decisions. Selling to scientists requires facts, proof and validation and credibility. "Scientific meetings" are considered closed events where scientists interact with scientists to share research. Scientific meetings are not a conference, trade show or event and no vendors are present. News is provided under embargo and opinion leaders are treated equal to journalists and put in touch with R&D directly for peer-to-peer discussion.

Life science companies rarely employ complex selling or unique marketing tactics because scientists are only interested in the features and functions of the products. They are aware of all the offerings available since it is a small industry where everyone knows everyone, and the marketing grows out of research and development. In life science companies, buyers will purchase every solution they can acquire to advance their research. Comparatively, in the high tech world, briefing and influencing industry analysts is critical to the marketing strategy. Sales require differentiated positioning and messaging, competitive intelligence and sales tools to highlight product offerings. Product management and product marketing are understood and valued in high tech companies when compared to life sciences.

Regarding research and development in high tech, product management is often brought in half-way through development to steer the final product feature set, run the alpha/beta testing and launch the product. This may be three to six months after launch of the company. In a start-up life sciences tools company, R&D works for many years without any marketing or product management. R&D is often multi-disciplinary and it takes longer to transition to a commercial organization. Dione suggested that bringing

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 6)*

in product management to help drive the way products are developed, marketed and sold by focusing on the problems of the market rather than the features of the product is optimal.

Typically in high tech, product management and product marketing have separate but coordinated roles even in small companies. Developers want product managers to prioritize requirements; marketing people want product managers to write copy; sales people want product managers for demo after demo. Product managers are so busy supporting the other departments they have no time remaining for actual product management. But just because the product manager is an expert in the product doesn't mean no one else needs product expertise. Product marketing must work alongside product management to fill in the more tactical outbound role. Successful companies clearly define the distinct roles of product manager and product marketing, and they work together to maximize sales revenue, market share and profits.

Successful products come from companies that know the market and its problems. Strong dedicated product management is necessary to provide nimble product development and highly differentiated products with a strong value proposition within highly competitive, rapidly evolving markets. It is important to keep product management focused on strategic product direction while simultaneously ensuring that vital tactical activities are managed, including providing consistent messaging to customers, sales support, marketing programs, industry analysts and the press. One person is unlikely to have the bandwidth to do product management and product marketing jobs well.

In Life sciences, domain knowledge is a critical requirement for product managers. The product manager is often responsible for both product management and product marketing, yet it's difficult to find one person who can do both roles well who also has domain expertise. Each role is critical and necessitates different skills and talents. Due to the technical nature of the buyer who is a scientist, product management in life sciences requires someone with more scientific background than marketing training. Marketing training in life sciences comes from on-the-job training which prevents much out of the box thinking.

Being a product manager in a life sciences company often requires a PhD which makes it difficult to transition from other industries. Domain knowledge in life sciences requires understanding of the customer's problem in depth. Requirements are often technically focused and detailed (i.e. requires molecular biology, genetics background and understanding). This is not solution selling as the only thing differentiating one product from another are the technical product features and most buyers purchase solutions from more than one vendor. Many researchers from R&D within life sciences transition from a technical development role into a marketing role.

In high tech, domain knowledge is secondary to product management and customer facing experience. Jennifer Turcotte told the story of when Ariba decided to hire purchasing managers from their customer channel to help guide product management solution, assuming they would convey what drove their purchasing decisions to enhance the product development process. This was reasonable decision given it had been suc-

*(Continued on page 8)*



and



Access to the LinkedIn group is exclusive to current SVPMA members. The LinkedIn group provides one-degree access to other product management/marketing professionals and the opportunity to demonstrate your affiliation by displaying the SVPMA logo on your LinkedIn profile.

(Continued from page 7)

cessful in other industries. The experiment failed here because purchase managers couldn't translate their job into product requirements, they were not skilled as product managers. In high tech it is often important to have business to business or business to customer product management experience as well as business acumen. Jennifer talked about when she was in enterprise software and wanted to move away from enterprise to a consumer-oriented business like Yahoo, Google, Adobe, but lacked consumer experience. She thought it was weird that she was a consumer yet couldn't represent one when she represented B2B software but was never a business. Sometimes things aren't logical and you have to find a way to break-down these misconceptions.

Jennifer discussed social media where bloggers are emerging as a key media audience. Many life science tools companies believe they don't need to participate in social media marketing because their products or services are not customer facing. Whereas in high tech an integrated approach that includes social media like blogging, Facebook or twitter is second nature. Customers, decision makers, influencers and investors are all participating online and companies need to actively listen to what is being discussed in this arena. She shared she will pre-brief key reporters and key bloggers. She treats key bloggers with the same respect and inclusion given to the press because they are read by customers who are often more knowledgeable than the reporters.

Jennifer tackled the challenge of changing industries, not roles in your career progression as a product man-

ager. Really understand why you want a change and what is motivating that change. Research new careers and key companies, identify transferrable skills, network and find a mentor. Be flexible with location, role and salary. Changing roles within a life science organization to transition from R&D to marketing requires patience. Take the time to learn the basics and grow into the role. Don't be afraid to ask your marketing peers for advice and help. Expect on the job training. Some companies will contribute to MBA and other training programs.

To transition industries, set a goal and map out a plan with steps and milestones. Satisfaction is found when playing to your strengths and passions. Try to determine how the role you are in now will get you to your next goal. Leverage your network immediately and look for peers who have made a similar move. You'll need to be flexible about nearly everything, from your employment status to relocation and salary. Set positive goals for yourself, but expect setbacks and change. Besides a totally new career, you might also consider a lateral move that could serve as a springboard. ☚

*Cindy F. Solomon founded her first company in NYC before the age of 30 after holding positions with Radio Shack, American Express and Boardroom, Inc. Cindy has held technology marketing management positions with Apple, Vadem, NetObjects and several start-ups. Cindy is a Certified Product Manager and Certified Product Marketing Manager. <http://www.cindyfsolomon.com>*



**Become our fan on Facebook**  
**[www.facebook.com/SVPMA](http://www.facebook.com/SVPMA)**

---

---



(Continued from page 1)

must have in order to successfully persuade a prospective customer to buy.

**One of the biggest points of execution failure when launching a new product is Marketing's inability to successfully enable Sales (inside, outside, channel) to have an effective conversation with potential customers.**

You can see this failure point exposed year after year in [market research studies](#) like these:

- "58% of a vendor's marketing content is not relevant to potential buyers and reduces the vendor's chance of closing a sale by 45%." -- IT Buyer Survey, International Data Group, 2008
- "Over 65% of sales leaders feel they're losing business because they don't have a compelling value proposition." -- Miller Heiman, Sales Best Practice Study, 2006



- "As much as 40% of a sales rep's time is spent creating presentations, customizing messaging and preparing for pitches." -- CMO Council Study, 2004
- "80 to 90% of marketing collateral is considered useless by sales." -- Proceedings of the Customer Message Management Forums, published by the American Marketing Association (2002 and 2003)

In addition to developing a great go-to-market strategy and a great product, Marketing must provide Sales, and customers, with more effective messaging and tools that are in alignment with the key teachings contained in the TALC.

One of the TALC's major contributions is that it identifies specific market dynamics that must be addressed in order to achieve market success. They are:

(Continued on page 12)

## Technology Adoption Life Cycle Overview

Market Phases	 Early Market	 Bowling Alley	 Tornado	 Main Street
Buyer Types	Visionaries	Early Pragmatists	Late Pragmatists	Conservatives
Buyer's Compelling Reason for Buying, a.k.a. Messaging Theme	Gain a competitive advantage	Fix a broken business process	Adopt the right solution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gorilla – lowest risk</li> <li>• Chimp – best of breed</li> <li>• Monkey – best value</li> </ul>	The best solution for maintaining and leveraging your investment

© 2009 Chasm Institute LLC. All rights in all media reserved

Learn more about using the TALC model to enable greater market success at [www.chasminstitute.com](http://www.chasminstitute.com) and [www.chasmforum.com](http://www.chasmforum.com)

(Continued from page 3)

considering four aspects about potential solutions in relation to current convention:

1. Reversal – deliberately do the opposite of convention. For example, What if we made video games targeted at the casual gamer? (Nintendo did this with the Wii, while Sony and Microsoft continued on the industry trajectory targeting young male players with their PlayStation and Xbox platforms respectively)
2. Escape – eliminate or trim features or capabilities. Continuing the Nintendo Wii example above, Nintendo eliminated rich 3-D graphics and the high end hardware needed to render it.
3. Wishful Thinking – describe your desires, e.g. “wouldn’t it be nice if I didn’t have to go to the bank to deposit a check?”. (Some banks now allow you to deposit a check just by taking a picture of it with your cell phone.)
4. Outrageous – this is a catchall for all other provocations but they usually focus on exaggeration, such as what if we could make a car for \$100? Or what if solar panels could be used as a roofing material?

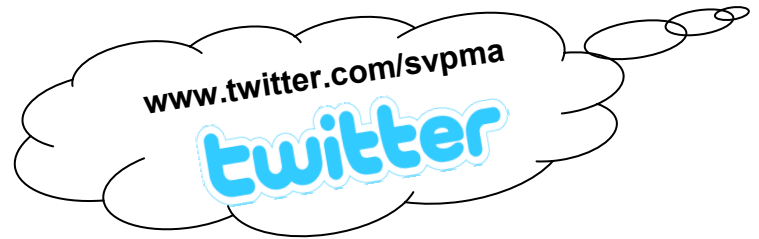


## Upcoming Events:

Sept. 1st - Steve Blank, Serial Entrepreneur, Author and Professor

Oct. 6th - Randy Farmer, social media strategist and former Yahoo social media architect/strategist (Rich Mironov)

Nov. 3rd - Michael Cannon, Silver Bullet Group



On important aspect about ideas is they need to be nurtured. It is too easy to eliminate an idea before it has been fully explored. Another de Bono technique that can help is Six Hats. Each hat has its own color and represents a style of thinking. The black hat represents judgment and caution, the white hat is facts, the red for emotion, the green is for creativity and alternatives, the yellow is for optimism and upside, and the blue is for process.

So we might ask someone to put their yellow hat on and discuss the benefits of the idea. We then might have another team member put their black hat on and describe reasons why we should not do the idea. Then we can ask the team to put their green hat on to see if we can find creative alternatives to the objections raised when using the black hat.

By asking team members to think in a single style, they can think more clearly and contribute to developing an idea even if they currently do not support it. By using this technique, we can ensure ideas are not DOA (dead on arrival) because every time an interesting idea is proposed, someone on the team feels the need to prove themselves and shoot it down.

As a product manager, you do not need to leave innovation to chance. There are techniques that you can use during research and with your team to drive the creative thinking that is the foundation of breakthrough innovations.

Although it is absolutely necessary to talk to your customers, use the many additional tools available to identify products and enhancements that will truly make your offerings better than the competition. ☘

*Greg Cohen is a Senior Principal Consultant and Trainer at the 280 Group and the author of the book “Agile Excellence for Product Managers”. He is a certified Scrum Master, former President of the Silicon Valley Product Management Association, and trainer to product managers from around the world on Agile development methods, Road Mapping, and product lifecycle issue.*



Every Product Manager Should be able to answer these simple questions about their product:

- Where are you now?
- How did you get here?
- Where do you want to go?
- How will you get there?
- How will you know?

To get the *big picture*, you'll want to attend Sequent's

**Product Strategy & Planning Workshop**

San Francisco Bay Area

**September 21-22, 2010**

**SVPMA Members: Enroll 2 for the price of 1 if you register by July 30, 2010**

**WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:** <http://bit.ly/sequentstrat>

**REGISTER:** <http://www.sequentlearning.com/schedule.php>

**USE PROMO CODE SVPMAS**

Minimum of 2 people per company - limited to the first four pairs of participants who register

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Call 212-647-9100

(Continued from page 9)

These market dynamics are crucial to understand in order to develop a successful go-to-market plan. Of particular importance, the TALC provides a solid indication of the key messaging themes needed in order to translate these strategic insights into greater market success.

To complete the translation from high-level messaging themes to highly effective messaging and tools, we need a breakthrough in the way we think about customer messaging. We need a better way to identify the [categories and types of messaging that Marketing must create](#) and integrate into the collateral, sales tools, and training provided to Sales.

**Marketing must close the sales messaging gap in order to eliminate one of the biggest points of execution failure and achieve greater market success.**

As the map above indicates, the primary reason Marketing is not successful in enabling Sales to have an effective conversation with potential customers is that the marketing team does not create sales messaging. Instead, it creates corporate, market, and product messaging, and then it tries unsuccessfully to use these categories of messaging to enable the sales conversation. The map makes it obvious why the current approach does not work. The messaging and the tools

into which the messaging is integrated are not in alignment with the types of real-world questions potential customers are asking Sales -- and Marketing, for that matter -- to answer. Marketing must close the sales messaging gap in order to eliminate one of the biggest points of execution failure and to achieve greater market success.

(Continued on page 13)

### Typical Customer Messaging Map

	Message Categories	Distance to Customer	Message Types	Primary Questions to Answer	Message Goals
Lesser Influence on Customer Buying Decision ↑ <b>GAP</b> ↓ Greater Influence on Customer Buying Decision	<b>Corporate Messaging</b> (Mostly Descriptive)	30,000 feet	Brand  Company	What does the company stand for?  What products, services, and benefits does the company offer to whom?	Trust-Relationships  Interest
	<b>Market Messaging</b> (Mostly Descriptive)	20,000 feet	Industry, Market, Market Segment	What solutions (products and services) and value do you offer?	Distinctions
	<b>Product Messaging</b> (Mostly Descriptive)	10,000 feet	Product Positioning Statement	How do target customers distinguish the offering from other company offerings and all primary competitors?	Distinctions
			Product Overview  Demand Generation	What does this offering do and include, how does it work and what are the key benefits?  Why should I consider your offering?	Distinctions  Leads
	<b>Sales Messaging</b> (Mostly Persuasive)	10 feet	Business Creation  Competitive  Meeting Creation	Why should I change-out my current solution for a new solution?  Why should I buy the solution from your company rather than from the competition?  Why should I meet with you?	Opportunities  Orders  Meetings
<b>Sales Conversation</b> (Highly Persuasive)	3 feet	Persuasive Conversation	"Why consider?", "Why meet?", "Why change-out?", and "Why buy from you?" for all opportunities	Create Consideration / Meetings, Opportunities, and Orders	



© 2008-2010 Silver Bullet Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

(Continued from page 12)

Before we align sales messaging with the TALC, let's take a closer look at the business creation and competitive sales messaging types. Business creation messaging is mandatory in the early stages of the life cycle, when the most important customer question is, "Why should I change-out my current solution for a new solution?". The answer to this question has little to do with your company, per se. The primary goal of business creation sales messaging is to create *demand* for the product or service category by stating a *compelling reason to change*, convincing buyers that there is great value (Business Case) to be gained in changing from their current solution to a new or better solution.

**The primary goal of business creation sales messaging is to create demand by stating a compelling reason to change.**

Competitive messaging is mandatory in the late-market stage of the life cycle, when market demand is more established. The most important customer question then shifts to, "Why should I buy the solution from *your* company rather than the competition?". The answer to this question must focus on competitive differentiation. The primary goal of competitive sales messaging is to create orders for your company, convincing buyers that your product is their best choice.

Now let's look at the model below to see how these two sales messaging types align with, and support, the TALC.

In the Early Market and Bowling Alley phases, it's all about business creation sales messaging. The primary reason the buyer is going to spend money, time, and resources to change is that it will help him or her gain a competitive advantage or because it will help fix a broken business process. These are the two high-level business case themes for change.

In a Tornado market, many buyers have decided to change, but some have not. This means that you need both types of sales messaging: highly differentiated competitive sales messaging to get orders from those buyers who are ready to change and business creation sales messaging to get more of the fence-sitters to agree to change. From a competitive messaging perspective, key themes are lowest-risk, best-of-breed, or best value.

On Main Street, it's all about competitive sales messaging. Your company must find a meaningful way to differentiate itself as being able to provide the best whole-product solution.





The role sales messaging plays is to help tune these high-level TALC messaging themes into highly persuasive reasons for the potential customer to spend money -- and to spend it with your company. The more persuasive the reasons, the greater your market success. It's that simple.

***"Our win rate increased by 30% and the time we spend supporting the field reduced by around 50% for the product family I support."*** -- Nigel Mott, Product Sales Manager, Agilent Technologies, Inc.

As the quote above indicates, making this one change -- creating TALC-aligned sales messaging, and then integrating the sales messaging into the collateral, sales tools, sales training, etc., delivered to Sales and, ultimately, to customers -- enables Sales and Marketing to increase their win rates by 15-20% or more. Now that's greater market success. ☘

*Michael Cannon is an internationally renowned sales and marketing effectiveness expert and best-selling author on topics related to sales messaging and sales planning. For more information, visit [www.silverbulletgroup.com](http://www.silverbulletgroup.com) or call 925-930-9436.*

## Sales Messaging Alignment to Technology Adoption Life Cycle

Market Phases	 Early Market	 Bowling Alley	 Tornado	 Main Street
Buyer Types	Visionaries	Early Pragmatists	Late Pragmatists	Conservatives
Sales Messaging Types/ Priority	1) Business Creation	1) Business Creation	1) Competitive 2) Business Creation	1) Competitive

© 2009 Chasm Institute LLC and Silver Bullet Group, Inc. All rights in all media reserved.

## Want to put your PM Career on Fast Forward?

- » Product Management & Product Marketing Training  
Boost your skill set, become more effective and enhance your resume.  
The most practical, comprehensive and affordable training available!
  
- » Product Management Certification Exam  
Become a CPM (Certified Product Manager)!  
Gain a competitive edge in the job market and accelerate your career!

## Need to get more work done in less time?

- » Product Management Toolkits:  
Templates, Tips, Samples, White Papers, Presentations & Best Practices.  
\$20 SVPMA member discount.

- Product Manager's Toolkit™
- Product Launch Toolkit™
- Product Roadmap Toolkit™
- Beta Program Toolkit™
- Developer Program Toolkit™

## Short on resources and too much to get done?

- » Consulting and Contractors for short-term projects or longer assignments.



**The Product Marketing & Product Management Experts™**  
Consulting • Contractors • Training • Templates

Contact us:  
[www.280group.com](http://www.280group.com)  
408-834-7518