

# What Makes Product Management Different in Life Sciences?

Dione K. Bailey, PhD, Director, Product Management  
Jennifer Turcotte, VP of Marketing

SVPMA Meeting

# Overview

- } Product Management is very different across Life Sciences and High Tech industries
  - } Contrast of Product Management in Life Sciences and High Tech
  - } Domain Knowledge: Is it more important in one industry versus another?
  - } Use of Social Media – Is Life Sciences ready?
  - } What's required to successfully transition from High Tech to Life Sciences
- 

# Intro to Complete Genomics

## } Who is Complete Genomics?

- Small, start-up company that provides DNA sequencing of human genomes
- Goal is to provide large-scale and affordable complete human genome sequencing as a service
- Enable large-scale research of the genetic mechanisms underlying complex diseases and drug response
- We are a life sciences tools company

## } What we are not?

- Diagnostics company
- Medical Devices company

## } Biggest challenges relating to product management

- Highly competitive market – small number of large and fierce competitors
- Multi-disciplinary technology – bio-chemistry, hardware, software, bioinformatics, genetics
- Domain knowledge is a MUST -- we sell to the Scientist (PhD)

# Differences between Life Sciences Tools and High Tech Companies

## } Life Sciences Tools

- No industry analysts but key opinion leaders who are renowned, leading scientists who influence customers' buying decisions
- Selling to scientists requires facts, proof/validation and credibility
- Companies rarely employ complex selling or unique marketing tactics
- Often sell features/functions ('knobs & whistles')
- Marketing grows out of R&D; very small industry (everyone knows everyone)

## } High Tech

- Briefing and influencing industry analysts is critical
  - To sell a solution, sales requires differentiated positioning and messaging, competitive intelligence and sales tools
  - Product management and product marketing are well-understood and valued (at least more so than in Life Sciences)
- 

# R&D/Dev at a Start-up Life Sciences Tools Company

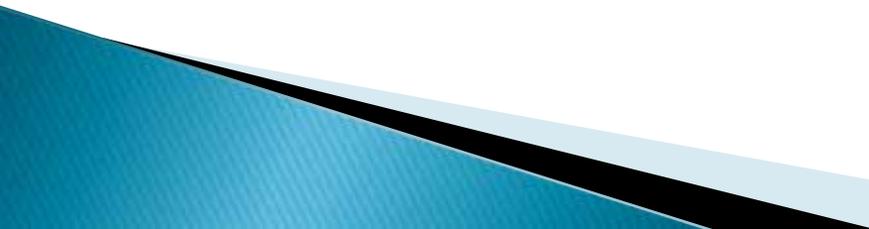
- } High Tech:
  - Product Mgmt is often brought in halfway through development to steer final product, run alpha/beta and launch product
- } Life Sciences Tools:
  - Often R&D works for many years without any marketing (or product mgmt) who is hired prior to initial commercial launch
  - R&D is often multi-disciplinary
  - Often takes longer to transition to a commercial organization than high-tech companies
- } What is the right approach?
  - Both industries struggle with the transition from an R&D-driven to a Marketing-driven company
- } What is the solution?
  - Bring PM in earlier 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

# Separate but Coordinated Roles

	Product Management	Product Marketing
<b>4 Ps</b>	Product	Pricing, Place, Promotion
<b>Focus:</b>	Product Inbound-focused	Customer Outbound-focused
<b>Drives:</b>	New product development	Positioning, messaging and differentiation of product
<b>Interacts with:</b>	Development/Engineering	Sales, prospects and customers
<b>Bridges gaps between:</b>	Engineering-oriented teams and product marketing (and business-oriented teams)	Business-oriented teams and product mgmt
<b>Responsible for:</b>	High-level business/product requirements, including the detailed requirements and especially the user experience and defines longer term roadmap	Positioning product to prospects and customers, managing the product launch, providing tools for sales to sell the product, and for supporting marketing programs
<b>Validation:</b>	Validates that product meets the needs of real customers and users	Validates that positioning of product is understand and value resonates
<b>Duties:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather market/customer requirements; develop MRDs</li> <li>• Determine business-case feasibility</li> <li>• Scope and define new products</li> <li>• Build product roadmaps</li> <li>• Run alpha and beta programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positioning and outbound messaging</li> <li>• Provide collateral, presentations, sales tools</li> <li>• Training materials for training the sales force</li> <li>• Conduct customer feedback (user group, surveys, etc.)</li> <li>• Launch new products (or features)</li> </ul>

- } Successful companies clearly define the distinct roles of product manager and product marketing
- Work together to maximize sales revenue, market share and profits

# Product Management Role in High Tech

- } Typically separate product marketing and product management roles (even in small companies)
  - } Work as a team with a clear delineation in roles
  - } Highly competitive, rapidly evolving market requires nimble product development and highly differentiated products with a strong value proposition -> Need strong dedicated product management
  - } Why separate roles?
    - PM is a strategic role but be overwhelmed with tactical activities; important to keep PM focused on strategic product direction
    - One person is unlikely to have the bandwidth to do both jobs well
    - Need another role to manage communication to customers, sales support, marketing programs support, industry analyst relations, etc.
- 

# Product Mgmt Role in Life Sciences

- } PM is often responsible for both product management and product marketing
  - Yet, it's hard to find one person who can do both roles well
  - Each role is critical and requires different skills/talents
- } Due to the technical nature of the buyer (scientist), typically the role requires someone with more scientific background than marketing training
  - Marketing training comes from on-the-job training which can lead to a very similar approach taken for most problems (no thinking outside of the box)

# Domain Knowledge in Life Science

## } Critical in a Life Science company

- Understand the customer's problem that your product needs to solve ('been in their shoes')
- Requirements are often technically focused and detailed (requires molecular biology, genetics background and understanding)
- Technical product features differentiate it from competitors (not a solution sell)
- Most buyers don't buy one solution from one vendor

## } Often requires PhD

- Con: Makes it difficult to transition into a Life Science product manager role from other industries
- Pro: Many researchers/R&D within Life Science transition from a technical/development role into a marketing role

# Domain Knowledge in High Tech

- } Domain knowledge is a secondary requirement behind Product Mgmt/customer-facing experience
    - Ariba hired purchasing managers from F100 companies to help guide product mgmt only to find they couldn't translate their job into requirements -> needed a product manager
  - } Often important to have business-to-business or business-to-consumer product mgmt experience
    - Do you know how to market/sell to consumers versus businesses?
  - } Also critical is business acumen
- 

# Social Media

- } 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 consumer facing
  - } High Tech companies often are immersed in the Internet so social media like blogging, Facebook or Twitter are integrated with other marketing programs and are second nature
  - } Customers, decision makers, influencers and investors are participating online (blogs, videos, podcasts, news articles)
  - } Need to actively listen to what is being discussed online
- 

# Changing Industries – Not roles

- } Career changes are a natural progression
  - } What is motivating the change? Really understand why you want a change.
  - } Research new careers, and key companies
  - } Transferrable skills
  - } Networking
  - } Find a mentor
  - } Training and education – gain experience
  - } Be flexible – With location, role and salary
- 

# Changing Roles within Life Science Organizations

- } Making the transition from R&D to marketing
    - Know your strengths
    - Talk to your Product manager peers about their position
  - } Expect on the job training
    - Find a good mentor
    - Take marketing classes
    - Some companies will help pay for MBA or other training programs
  - } Be patient
    - Take the time to learn the basics and grow into the role
    - Don't be afraid to ask you marketing peers for advice and help
- 

# Lessons Learned

- } Is there an ideal split between product mgmt and marketing?
    - No, but you must define the role or roles to ensure the best success
  - } Don't be afraid to look to other industries for guidance, best practices
    - Social media, industry analysts, etc.
  - } Product mgmt and marketing in any size company is critical
    - Successful products come from the companies that know the market and its problems
  - } Transitioning industries
    - Set a goal and map out a plan with steps and milestones
    - Playing to your strengths and passions provides satisfaction
    - 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
- 

Thank you!

