PENDO
MONIUM
2024

PENDOMONIUM 2024

Organizations' unsung heroes: Internal PMs and the value they drive

Agenda

- My take on the Internal PM role
- Internal vs External PM role
- Balancing Data Sources
- Use case: Internal Developer Portal

Hi, my name is Andrei!

Role: Sr Product Manager, Asana, Observability & Feature Scaling teams

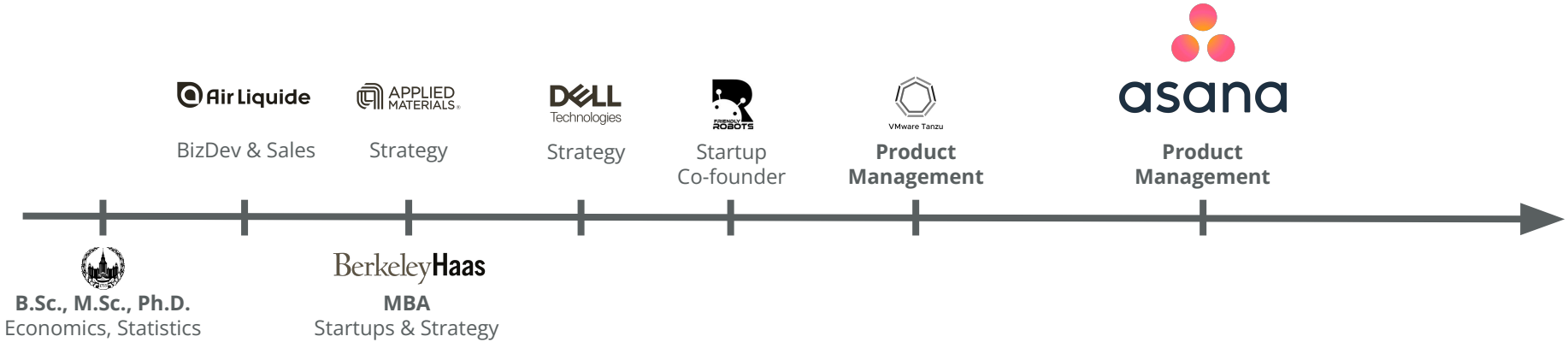
Specialty: Enterprise software, SaaS, DevEx, and User Research

Superpowers:

- deep empathy for users & customers
- facilitating transparent collaboration across the org
- natural optimism, resilience, and a sense of humor

Skills:

Core PM	Communication
Strategy	BizDev & Sales
Technology	Startups

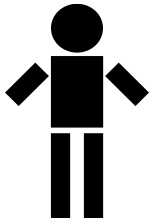


asana

The #1 AI work management platform

The role of an Internal Product Manager

- Function is not necessarily called “Product Manager”
- Strategic about spending company’s resources & time
- Worried about internal users’ well-being & productivity



- Develops & presents new initiatives to leadership to secure buy-in
- Treats internal processes & frameworks as “products”
- Interacts with various functions (eng, design, PMO, etc.) to get initiatives executed

Internal PM can deliver a ton of value for your org

Voice of your users. When employee experience is a critical success factor, it is important to treat internal users as customers.

Product mindset evangelist. Treats your internal tools & processes as products & experiences.

Roadmap owner. Turns user pain points into strategic initiatives and gets leadership buy-in

External vs internal PM – key similarities & differences

	External PM	Internal PM
Focus on users & customers	Yes! External users	Yes! Internal users
Organization's buy-in	Most are clear why a PM is needed	Leadership needs to convince the org that they need a PM
Process vs feature work	Primarily feature work	Combination of process & feature work

Internal PM role – key challenges

Lack of
support resources

Larger scope
of responsibility

Tech Debt
heavy roadmap

KTLO
constraint

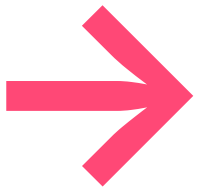
Internal PM role – key challenges (cont'd)

Buy (not build) trap

Internal urgency trap

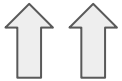
Program management trap

Fewer data sources available

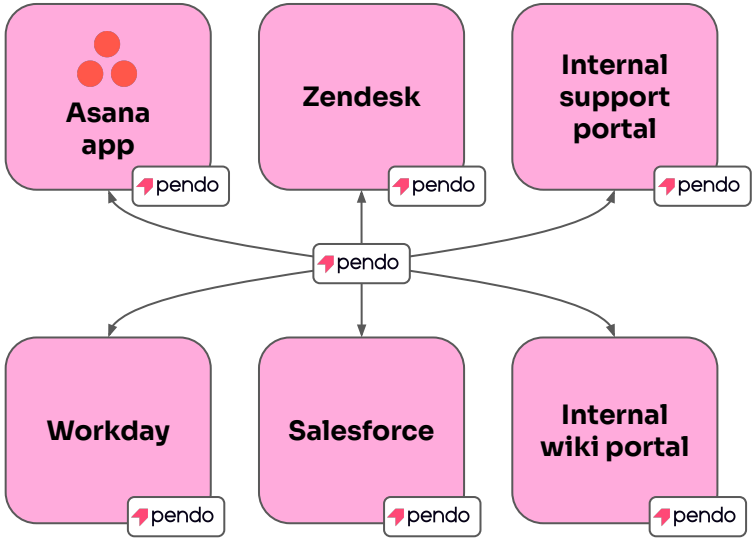


Data is critical to your PM's success

Balancing the data sources: Current state

Data Source	Frequency of observations	Availability for internal PMs	Cost per insight
Interviews & deep dives	One-off		
Surveys	Usually semi-annual or annual		
Telemetry	Continuous, usually limited to each tool's perimeter		

How internal telemetry (done right) aids an internal PM



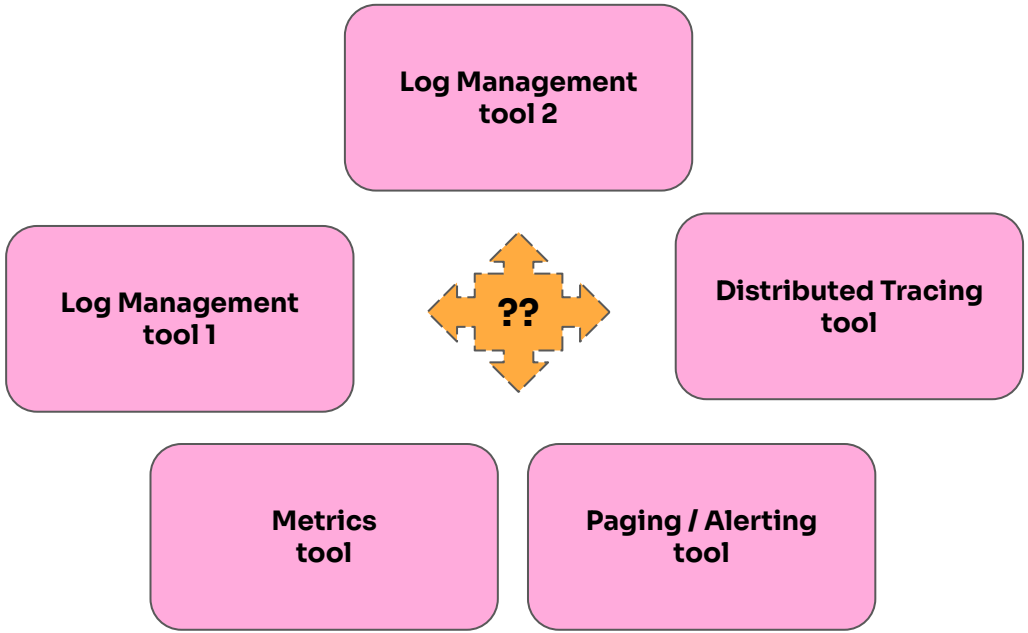
Obstacles:

- Various tools provide different insights into their tool's usage
- Many workflows span across multiple apps, and it's hard to see the full picture
- Telemetry instrumentation is usually a complex engineering task

Solution:

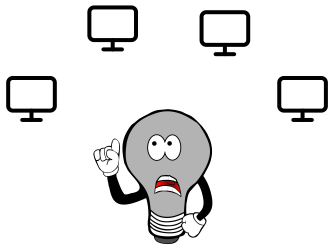
- Consider a tool like Pendo for Employees so that a PM can observe complex workflows and propose meaningful improvements

Example: Internal observability tools



- Little insight into how each tool is being used
- Little insight into how the tools are being used *together*
- Little understanding where exactly the users are struggling
- Best practice: Tools should be used together to resolve prod issues

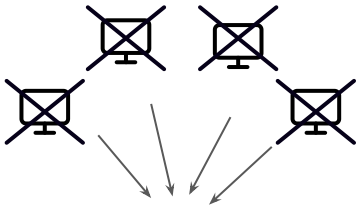
Use case: Internal Developer Portal

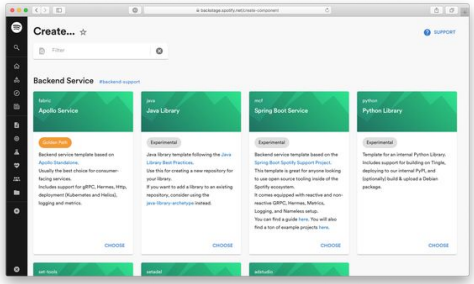


Problem statement:

- Developers have a hard time finding information about the org's digital assets
- Information is fragmented & out of date
- New developers need significant time to onboard and get up to speed

Use case: Internal Developer Portal





Solution:

- Revamping / consolidation of an internal dev portal

Impact:

- Bring value to the organization by improving developer efficiency
- Showcase the value of telemetry to measure user engagement

Experience Points (XP) for an internal PM:

- Discover what the users want, what is broken in the current systems, and how to improve
- An internal portal usually justifies design support and a dedicated eng team

Conclusion & Q&A

Recap:

- Internal PM role is key to bring value to internal users & the whole org
- Internal & External PMs have much in common, yet they differ
    - scope, build vs buy, feature vs process
- Data is critical to internal PMs success; has to be done right

Happy to answer your questions!

Connect with me on LinkedIn if you want to chat about Product Management or related topics!

Andrei Zimin

Product @ Asana | ex-VMware | Backstage.io evangelist | Passionate about listening to custo...

Thank you!