



Why is Product Management here to stay & Where is it Going?

Hristo Zahariev | SoftUni | 20 Apr 2022

What's your involvement with Product Management?

- A) Part of the Product team.
- B) Part of the Tech team.
- C) Part of a Business function.
- D) Generally interested in the topic.

Before we start

SLI.DO

code

1. Go to sli.do
2. Type letter A, B, C, or D

- **Product Guy**
- **Pragmatic**
- **Family**

sli.do | # code

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Why Product Management?

- **Be a visionary and inspire**
- **Drive transformation and lead**
- **Better economy, better life**



“

...decision making as close as possible to the customer, and making the product manager the voice of the customer internally.

Source: <https://www.mindtheproduct.com>

Origin Story



Product Management

Why get into it?



Top 10 Challenges



Where is it going?



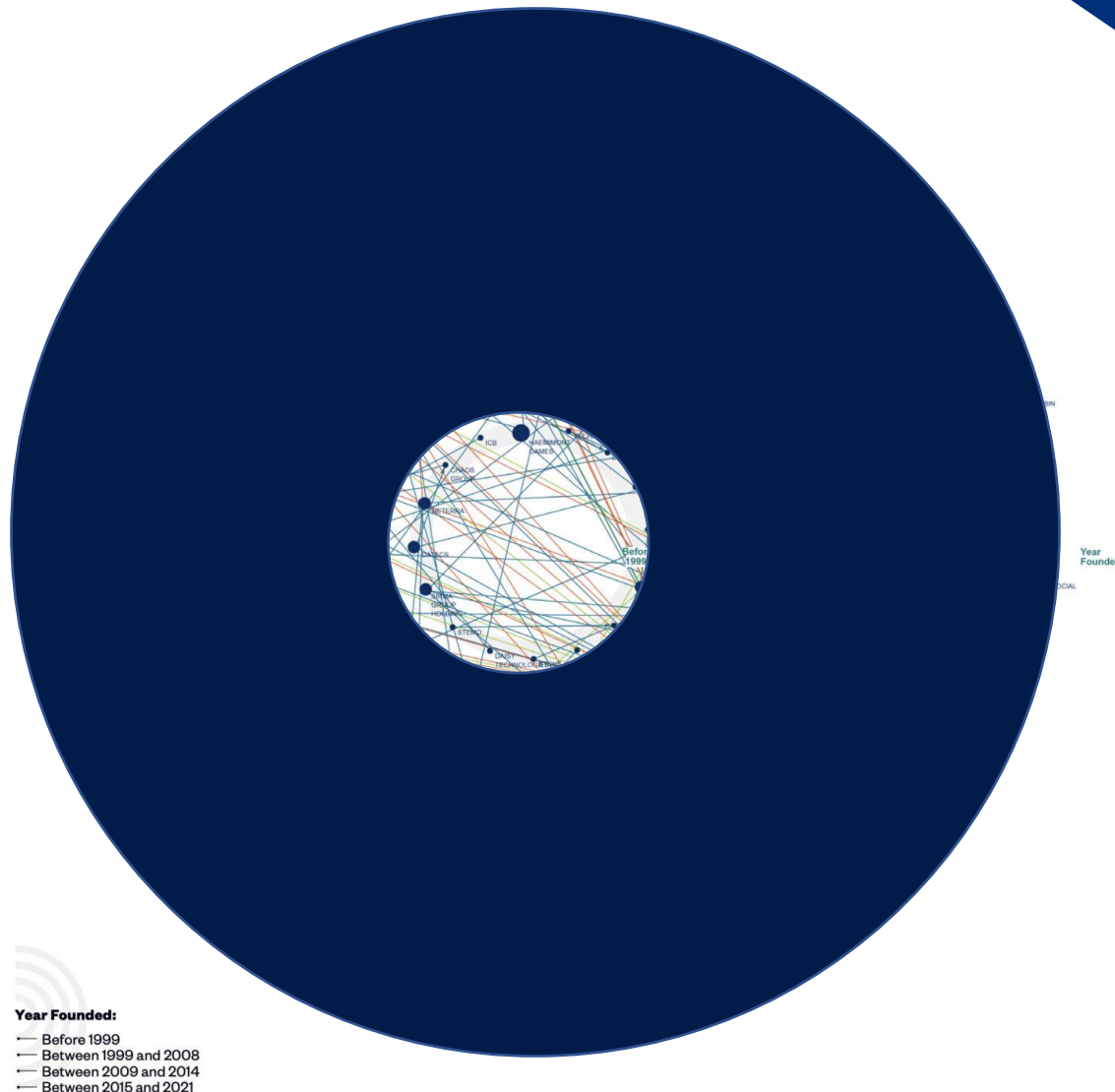
The Software Sector in BG

- **Value Generation Hub**, not a 'cheap labour' destination
- **Big Product Investments in BG companies**
- **Strategic**, not Tactical

Founded before 1999

Software Landscape in BG

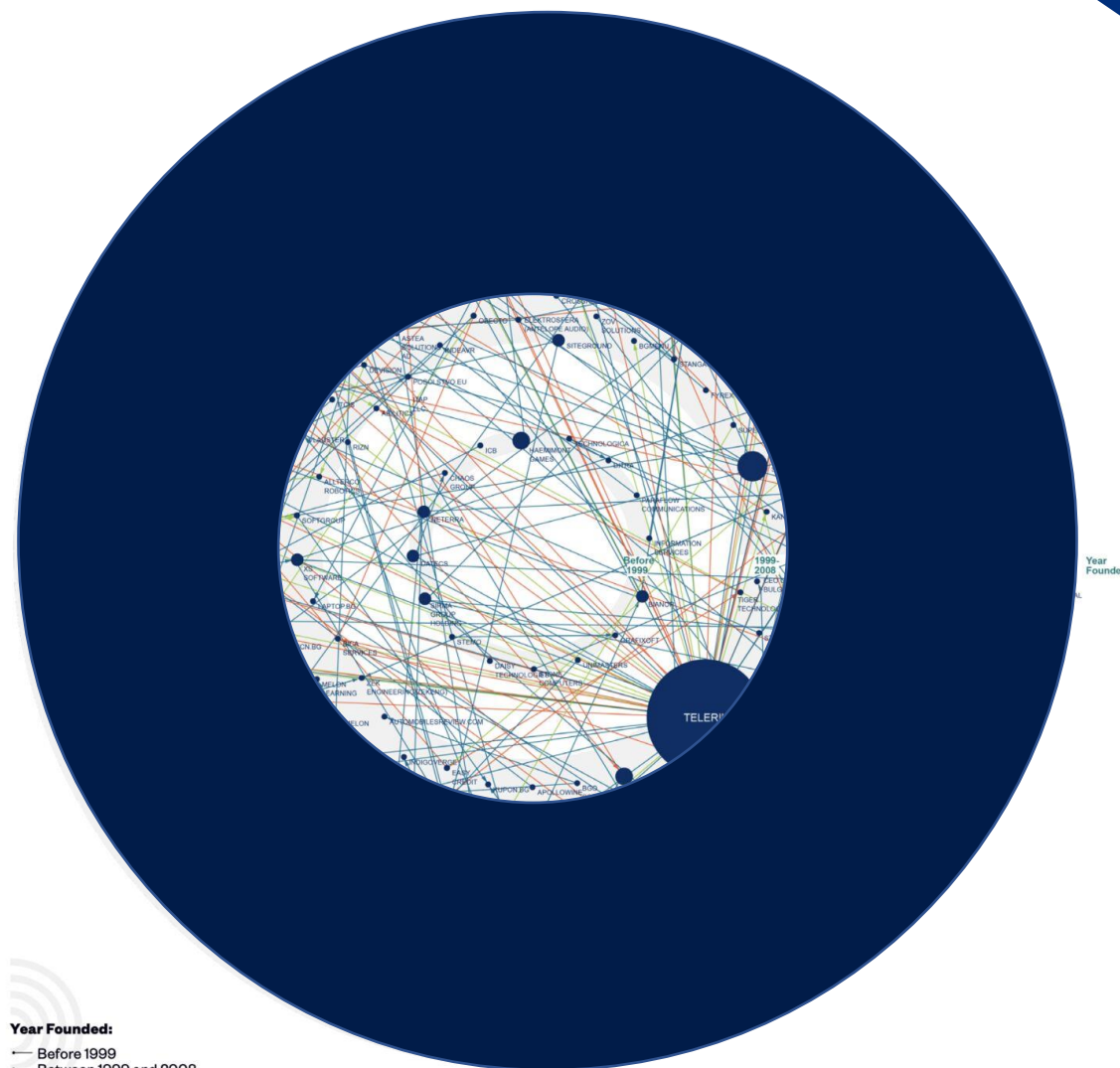
NETWORK MAP OF SOFIA'S TECH COMPANIES



Founded before 2008

Software Landscape in BG

NETWORK MAP OF SOFIA'S TECH COMPANIES

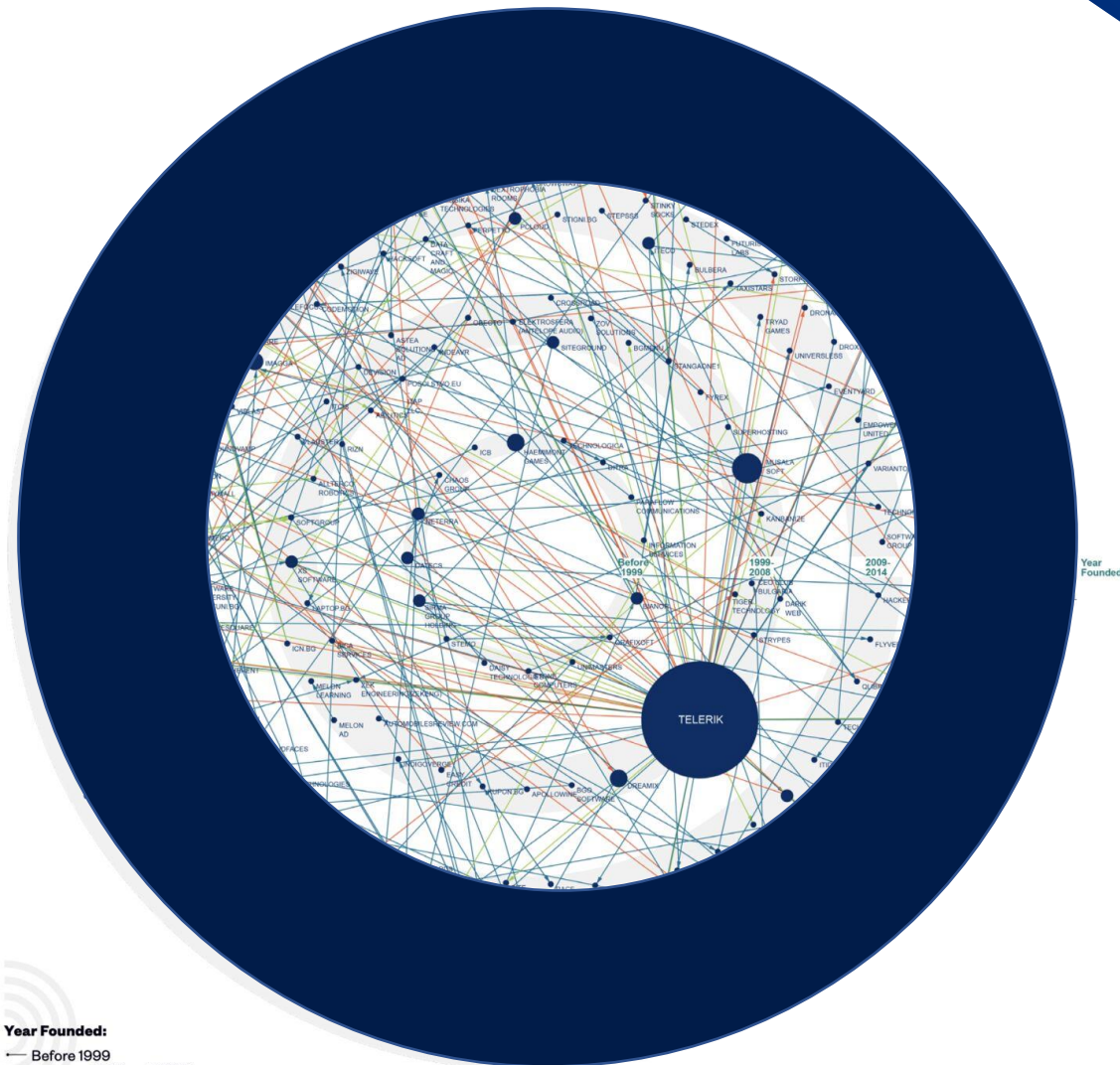


- Year Founded:**
- Before 1999
 - Between 1999 and 2008
 - Between 2009 and 2014
 - Between 2015 and 2021

Founded before 2014

Software Landscape in BG

NETWORK MAP OF SOFIA'S TECH COMPANIES

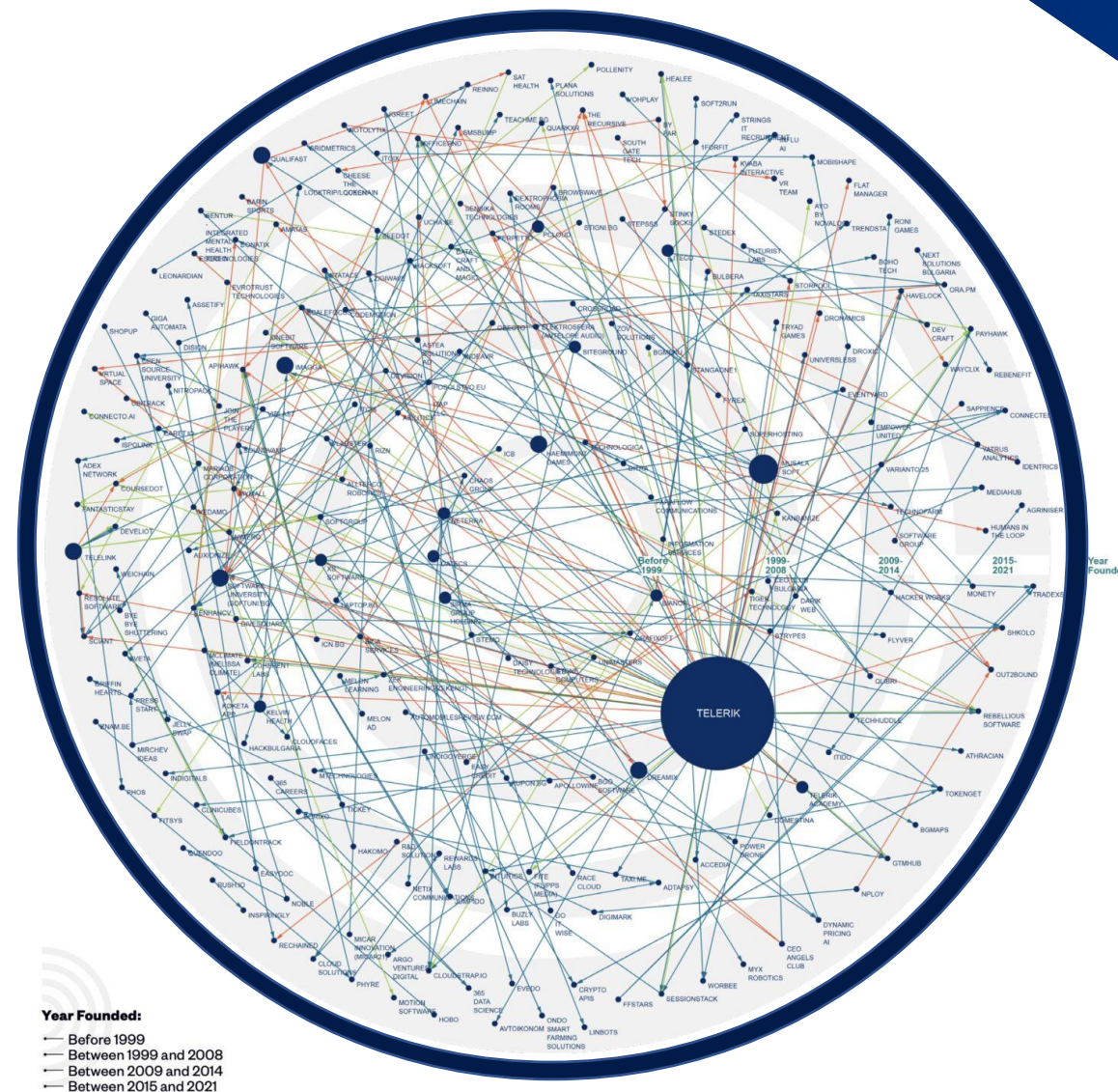


Founded before 2022

Software Landscape in BG

- “Founder to founder connectivity”

NETWORK MAP OF SOFIA'S TECH COMPANIES



So, what?

Rev 2020: 4.5bn BGN
(+15%)

Forecast 2021:
5.5bn

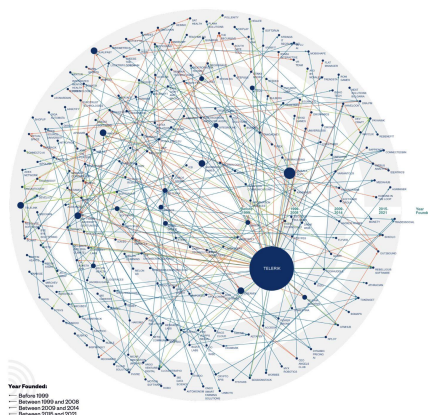
People:
>40,000

New Jobs:
4,000/year

GDP 2020: 3.8% of BG
GDP

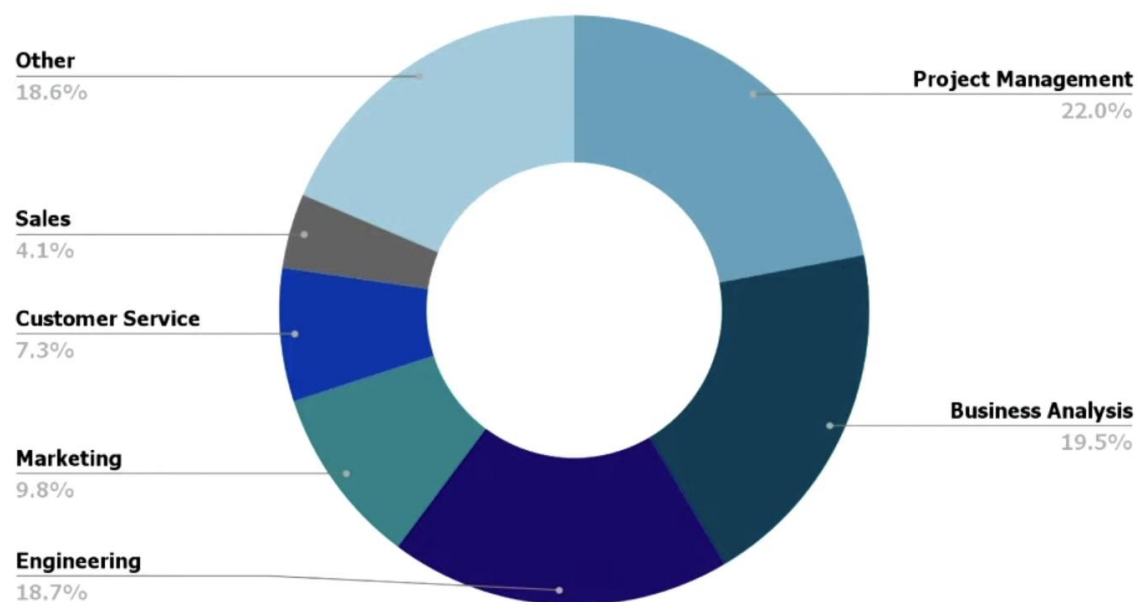
By 2024: > 6% of
GDP

NETWORK MAP OF SOFIA'S TECH COMPANIES



Getting into Product Management

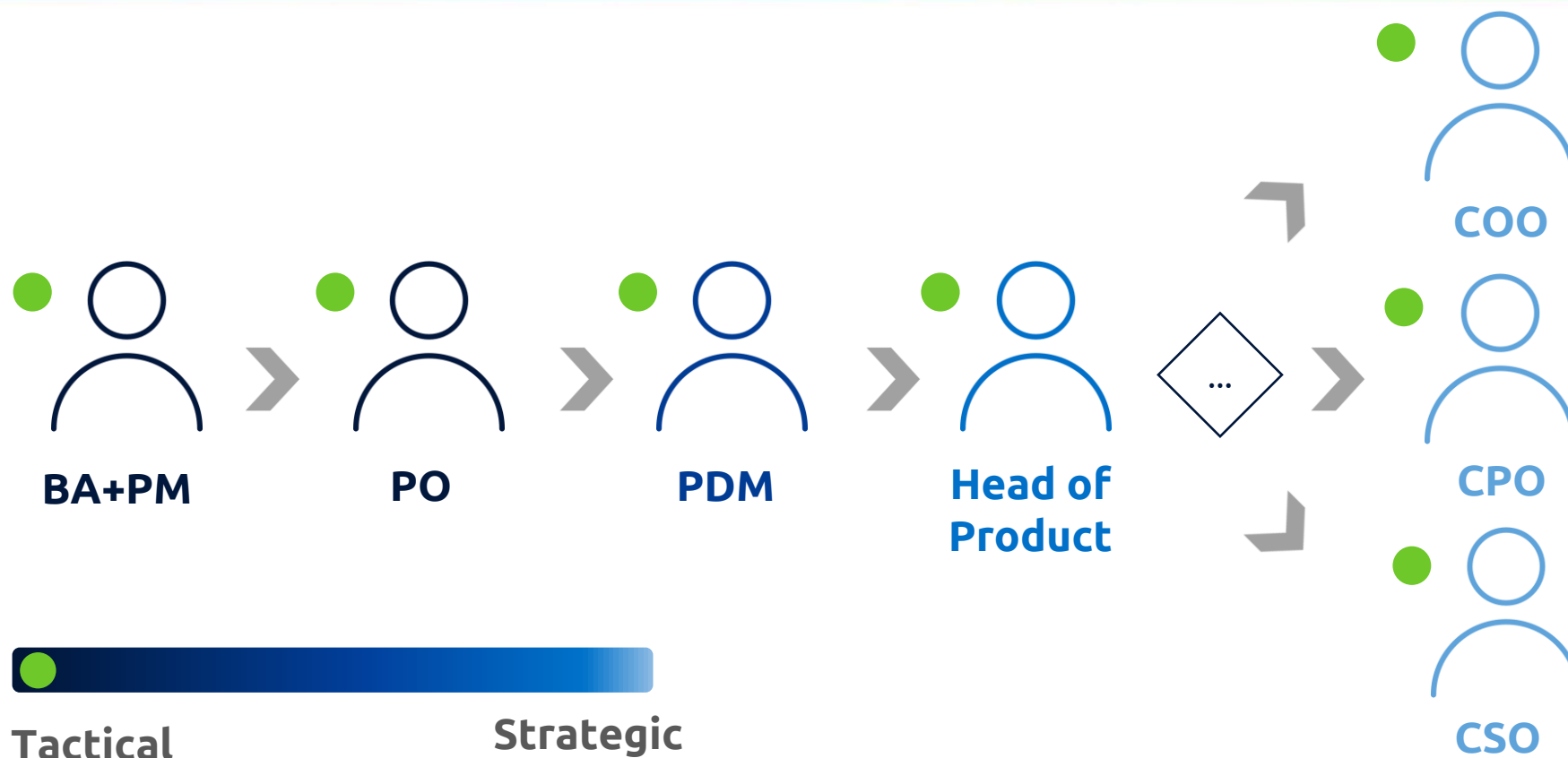
What the BG Product community is saying



[Y2U](#)

Getting into Product Management

My journey so far...



Product Management

Why get into it?



Top 10 Challenges



Where is it going?



TOP 10 CHALLENGES

- Source: <https://www.prodify.group/>

Co-Founders



Rajesh Nerlikar



Ben Foster



100 +

Years of PM Experience



10

Startup Exits



80

Companies Advised



6,250

Hours with Clients



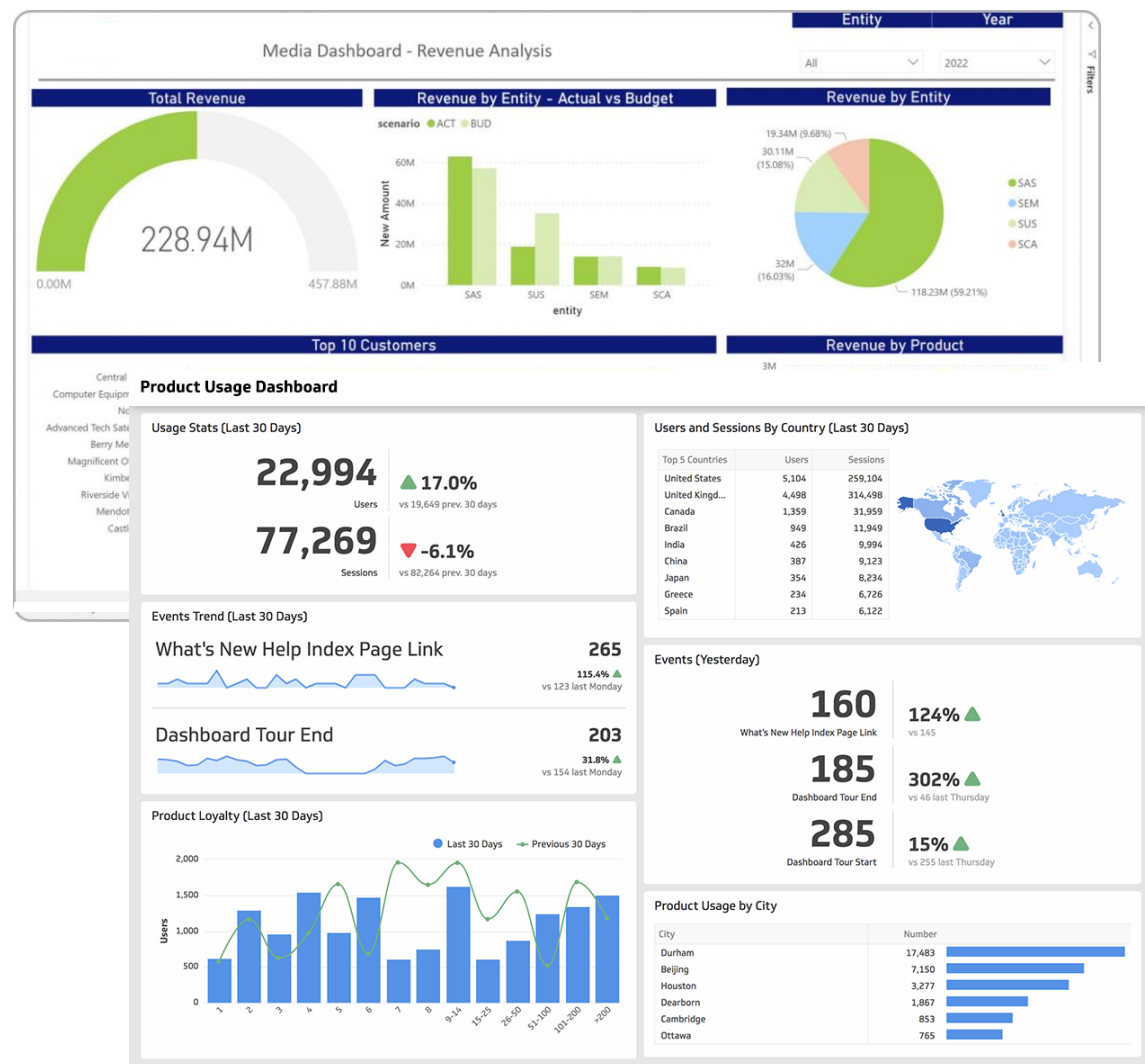
Output over outcomes



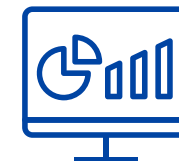
THE HAMSTER WHEEL



Obsession with internal metrics



THE COUNTING HOUSE





lack of customer research
NIHITO

THE IVORY TOWER



THE SCIENCE LAB



Overoptimizing to the point of no return



The screenshot shows the Yahoo! homepage with the following elements:

- Top Navigation:** Auctions, Messenger, Check Email, **YAHOO!**, What's New, My, Help.
- Services:**
 - NEW! Yahoo! Photos:** upload, share, print
 - Know when friends are online!** Click to download Yahoo! Messenger
 - Yahoo! Mail:** free email for life
- Search:** Search [advanced search](#)
- Shop:** Auctions, Classifieds, Shopping, Travel, Yellow Pgs, Maps, Media, News, Sports, Stock Quotes, TV, Weather, Connect, Chat, Clubs, Games, GeoCities, Greetings, Invites, Mail, Messenger, Personals, People Search, For Kids, Personal, My Yahoo!, Addr Book, Calendar, Briefcase, Photos, Alerts, Bookmarks, Companion, Bill Pay, [more...](#)
- Yahoo! Shopping:** Thousands of stores. Millions of products.

Departments	Stores	Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apparel Luxury Computers Electronics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beauty Sports Music Video/DVD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macy's Tavolo Sephora Banana Republic Summer Fun Special Offers Top-selling CDs Gift Ideas
- Arts & Humanities:** Literature, Photography...
- Business & Economy:** B2B, Finance, Shopping, Jobs...
- News & Media:** Full Coverage, Newspapers, TV...
- Recreation & Sports:** Sports, Travel, Autos, Outdoors...
- In the News:**
 - Sierra Leone diamonds banned
 - JFK Jr. crash blamed on pilot error
 - Flight attendants denounce air rage
 - Wimbledon - Venus defeats Serena, advances to final[more...](#)
- Marketplace:**
 - Y! Auctions - Pokemon, Longaberger, autos, 'N Sync
 - Free 56K Internet Access

No roadmap, just a ton of one-off features



THE FEATURE FACTO



“

Done is better than perfect because perfect is never done.

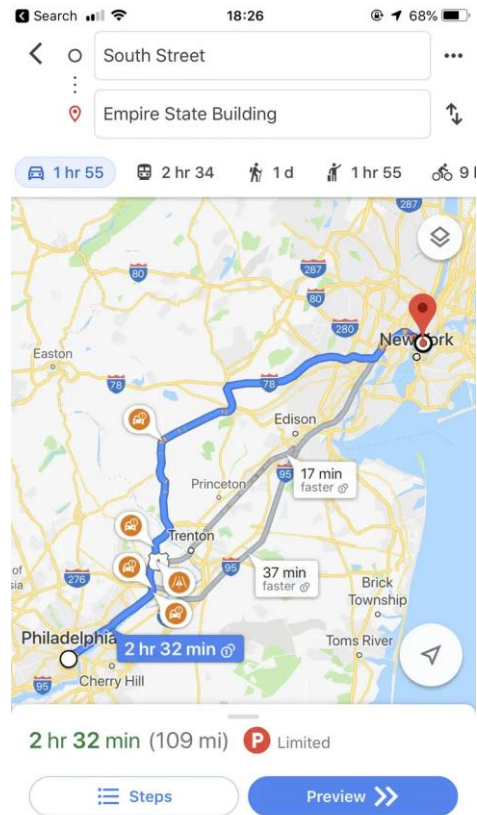
– Sheryl Sandberg (COO, Facebook)

Overanalysing and avoiding decision-making

THE BUSINESS SCHOOL



Whiplashing, changing direction chaotically



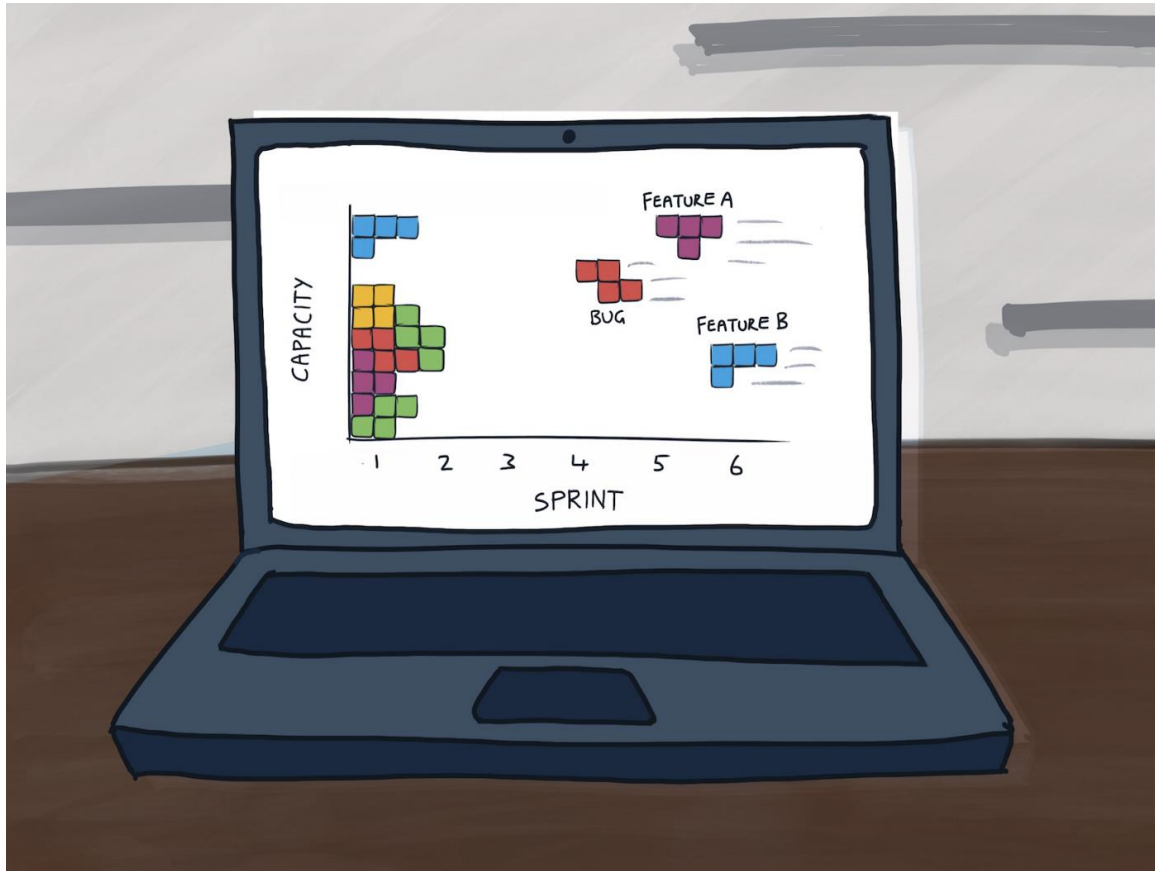
THE ROLLER COASTE



Overengineering for future
problems that never come

THE BRIDGE TO NOWHERE





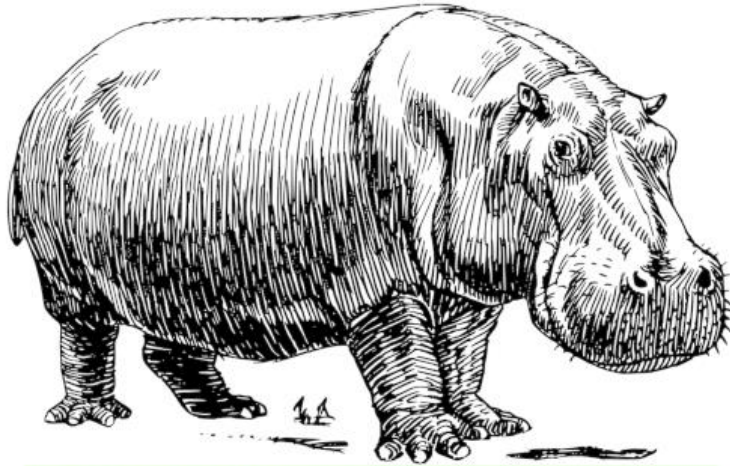
Trying to give everyone everything

THE NEGOTIATING TABLE



Subjective decision-making from the person in charge

Whoever has the gold makes the rules!



Part 1 of the Product Management Prioritization Menagerie Series

HiPPO

Highest Paid Person's Opinion

THE THRONE ROOM



How many did you get?

Scoring

- **0 points:** Wow! Go write a book!
- **1 point:** Amazing! Great Product skills.
- **2 points:** Not bad. You are keeping up!
- **3 points:** hmm. You've got some work to do.
- **4+ points:** Oof! You've got your work cut out for you

Product Management

Why get into it?



Top 10 Challenges



Where is it going?



Market

Job Profile

Specialisation

So, what's next?

Job Profile

- Product Manager skills in demand
- New Role: Product Operations Manager

Content and training are the top sources of learning for the respondents; there seems to be low use of coaching / mentorship

Top 5 Sources

Books, podcasts, blogs, etc. (87%)

Training Courses (62%)

Internal company knowledge sharing (50%)

Events (41%)

Coaching / Mentorship (33%)

Also Mentioned

Side Projects

On-the-job Learning

Product discovery and delivery, business acumen and user experience are the top preferred areas for upskill

Ranking of Upskill Priorities

Product discovery, prioritization, analytics (68%)

Business, marketing, strategy (50%)

User experience, UI, customer journey design (46%)

People management, leadership (37%)

Technology, engineering, development (34%)

Communication, influencing stakeholders (33%)

Market

- More demand for PMs with leadership characteristics over hard skills
- Empowered teams vs Dev Factories
- Bigger & Stronger Product community in BG
- Competitive compensation compared to other IT roles
- More Opportunities for abroad and remote work

Specialisation

- Higher Degrees / Specialised Courses
- Mentoring / Coaching
- Connected Community



INSAIT

Institute for Computer Science,
Artificial Intelligence and Technology



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