Balancing business and user needs in product development

Sharing best practices and challenges

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Product Workshop Agenda

- Workshop Introduction and Goals Overview

- Segment 1: Strategy & Data Driven Prioritization

- Segment 2: Two-sided Insight Creation

- Segment 3: Measuring Key KPIs, Execution
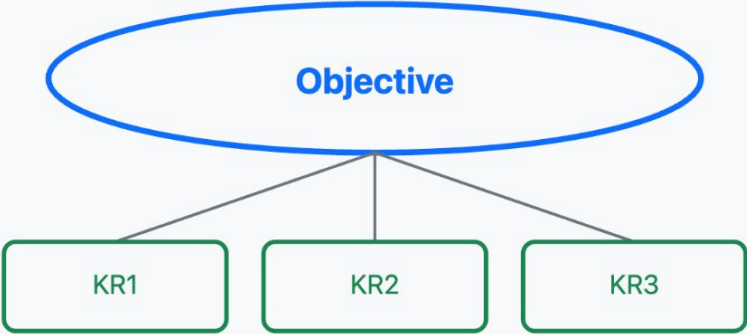
Intro round!

Joonas Pihlajamaa

- **CTO at Mezzoforte Oy / Huutokaupat.com auctions site**
- **DMA Chairperson**
- **Schibsted Marketplaces / Jobs vertical Insight & Analytics Director**
- **Schibsted & Sanoma Corpo / Oikotie Jobs (Finland) Director**
- **Elisa Corporation / Business Manager**
- **AI enthusiast with passion for tech and long background in business and product development**

Segment 1

Strategy & Data Driven
Prioritization

OKR Methodology

Objectives: Qualitative, ambitious goals

Key Results: Specific, measurable outcomes

Alignment: Transparency across teams

Cadence: Quarterly cycles with reviews

Example OKR Sheet (Q2 2025)

Objective	Key Result	Owner	Progress
Increase product adoption by 30%	Grow active users by 20%	Team A	50%
	Improve NPS from 30 to 45	Team A	40%
Optimize website performance	Reduce load time to <2s	Team B	60%
	Achieve 90+ page-speed score	Team B	55%

RICE SCORING

REACH

IMPACT

CONFIDENCE

EFFORT

$$\frac{Reach \times Impact \times Confidence}{Effort}$$

Opportunity Scoring

Identify the best innovation opportunities by scoring customer outcomes on a 1–10 scale for importance and satisfaction. High importance with low satisfaction signals the greatest opportunity.

Formula

$$Opportunity\ Score = Importance + (Importance - Satisfaction)$$

Based on Scrum.org's Opportunity Scoring and Anthony Ulwick's ODI.

Example Survey Results

Outcome	Importance	Satisfaction	Score
Save Money	9	4	14
Outcome 2	6	3	9
Outcome 3	5	1	9

Strategic change case: Airbnb in Covid-19

Pre-Pandemic Positioning

- Founded 2008; millions of listings across 100k+ cities

- Poised for a blockbuster IPO in early 2020

COVID-19 Shock

- Bookings collapsed overnight; massive revenue losses

- Hosts faced income loss; guests demanded refunds

- IPO timeline thrown into doubt

Strategic Response

- **Trust & Safety:** Flexible cancellations; Enhanced Cleaning Initiative

- **Host Support:** $250M relief fund; Host Endowment Fund

- **New Offerings:** Online Experiences; long-term stay focus

- **Cost Management:** ~25% workforce reduction; refocus on core lodging

Outcomes & Takeaways

- Rebound via domestic travel & multi-month stays in H2 2020

- December 2020 IPO achieved strong valuation

- *Agility, transparency, innovation*

Let's discuss!

Interactive Sharing (20 min):

Small groups of 3—each member shares:

1. A success story of using one of the frameworks.
2. A key pain point or blind spot their team encountered.
3. How they ensure both strategy and implementation are grounded in data

Report-back (10 min):

Each group picks two standout insights to share with everyone.

Learnings to share

1. Team 1
    a. Too many metrics // 10 metrics make it hard to move the needle
    b. Planning cycle in OKR quite involved
    c. OKR gives structure and framework for learning and sharing
2. Team 2
    a. One department is owner of the metric, but contributors can be spread across the organization
        i. There are reps and business reviews to go through progress
    b. Effort can be a pain point – parts of system has not been touched for a long time, even with data you don't have context
        i. Missing metrics and data when you "return" to an area of the platform after a long pause
    c. For some initiatives, OKRs shouldn't be set in stone
        i. Found that a percent of users was the target —> scrap the original target and focus elsewhere
3. Team 3
    a. OKR might not be the way for us to go – too much thinking, planning etc. – you can do it more linearly if you have a small team (4-5 ppl in the whole product)
    b. In a company of 50, product (&tech) is only 30 people. There is a lot of overhead in OKR model. Is the ritual worthwhile, or can we be more agile?
4. Team 4
    a. How to ensure implementation & strategy is grounded in data?
        i. 200k visitors per day – don't know what they are actually doing on the site → makes it hard to align strategy and implementation with data!
        ii. Have focused on actually building BI data cube and capabilities, so we can do this
    b. OKRs are from each type – sales, CS, IT, product. We are trying to align the goals at the same time, as we are doing maintenance, tech debt management and new feature development
5. Side note: There are items tied to performance, but not very visible to business and end user, so they don't get the attention

Segment 2

Two-sided Insight Creation
& (Not) Finding The Balance

Buyer Insight Methods

Method	Description	Best Suited For	Time & Effort
Web/App Analytics	Analyze on-site behavior via page views, funnels, heatmaps.	Spot journey drop-offs & high-interest pages.	Quick
A/B Testing	Run experiments showing variants to measure impact.	Decide design/feature choices by conversion lift.	Moderate
Customer Surveys	Collect ratings & open feedback via popups or emails.	Understand buyer sentiment & feature preferences.	Moderate
User Interviews	One-on-one sessions exploring motivations and pain points.	Reveal why buyers act or feel as they do.	Moderate
Usability Testing	Observe buyers completing tasks while thinking aloud.	Identify UI friction and task roadblocks.	Moderate
Focus Groups	Group discussions to surface perceptions & ideas.	Explore collective views and brainstorm concepts.	Involved

Combine quantitative & qualitative methods for a comprehensive buyer view.

Seller Insight Methods

Method	Description	Best Suited For	Time & Effort
Seller Analytics & Performance Data	Mining platform data on seller activities—listing views, conversion rates, pricing competitiveness, fulfillment times, retention.	Quantitative view of seller performance and systemic issues; answers supply-side "what's happening" questions.	Quick
Experimental Changes (A/B Testing for Seller Tools)	Run controlled experiments on new seller features (e.g., listing form, fee structure) to measure impact.	Validating impact of platform changes on sellers; de-risking feature rollouts.	Moderate
Seller Surveys	Collect ratings and open feedback via periodic or event-driven surveys on platform experience and needs.	Measuring sentiment, pain points, and feature requests at scale; broad input on policies and tools.	Moderate
Seller Interviews	One-on-one interviews exploring workflows, motivations, and challenges from seller perspective.	Deep qualitative insights—the "why" behind seller behavior and needs; uncover churn drivers and profitability mindset.	Moderate
Usability Testing for Seller Tools	Observe sellers performing tasks (listing, inventory updates, order handling) to identify UX friction.	Discover interface issues in seller dashboards and tools; ensure smooth workflows.	Moderate
Seller Feedback Groups / Forums	Host focus groups or monitor community forums for group discussion and peer-validated feedback.	Gain broad qualitative sentiment and urgency; surface consensus on issues and feature requests.	Involved

Let's continue the dialogue!

Interactive Sharing (10 min):

Discuss in pairs—each person shares:
1. One research method that surprised them with actionable insight.
2. A clash they saw between buyer vs. seller feedback.
3. How they prioritized one side over the other (and any remedies they later applied).

Group Synthesis (10 min):

Cluster shared examples into "go-to methods" and "common pitfalls."

Sharing notes

Side 1
- Tools
  - Customer support is actively listening to people on both sides of the marketplace
  - Surveys used by some (CSAT, product questionnaires etc.)
  - Qualitative & quantitative research for bigger projects
  - Hotjar
- Which side are you prioritizing
  - Buying side for some
  - Selling side for others
  - Paying side for most?
  - Filter out B2C vs. C2C ads (some want C2C)

Side 2
- Tools
  - Calling and talking to users
  - Experiment on live users across different platforms
  - Email surveys (e.g. 100k emails -> 8k responses)
  - A&B tools (experimentation tools)
- Which side are you prioritizing:
  - Clash between buyer and seller in "returns button"
  - Size and clout of sales org can impact guidance

Segment 3

Measuring Key KPIs,
Execution

Marketplace KPI Cheat Sheet

Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV)
Total value of all goods/services sold; key gauge of marketplace size & growth.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Number of Active Users
Count of unique buyers & sellers executing key actions (DAU/MAU), measuring engagement.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Buyer-to-Seller Ratio
Ratio of active buyers to sellers, reflecting marketplace balance & liquidity.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Conversion Rate
% of listings that sell or visits that convert; measures transaction efficiency.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Time to Sell / Fill Rate
Avg. time from listing to sale & % of searches that fill; gauges liquidity speed.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Churn Rate
% of buyers/sellers leaving over a period; shows retention & platform stickiness.

https://reasonstreet.co/business-model-two-sided-marketplace/

Repeat Transaction Rate
% of transactions from returning users; indicates loyalty & product-market fit.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Net Promoter Score (NPS)
Promoters minus detractors (0–10 scale); measures loyalty & word-of-mouth potential.

https://www.medallia.com/net-promoter-score/

Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)
Avg. cost to acquire a buyer/seller (or blended); evaluates acquisition efficiency.

https://www.mosaic.tech/financial-metrics/customer-acquisition-cost-cac

Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)
Predicted net profit per user over their full relationship; shows long-term value.

https://www.geckoboard.com/best-practice/kpi-examples/ltv-cac-ratio/

LTV/CAC Ratio
Ratio of LTV to CAC; key for assessing marketing ROI & model viability (3:1+ ideal).

https://www.klipfolio.com/resources/kpi-examples/saas/customer-lifetime-value-to-customer-acquisition-cost

Take Rate
% of transaction value kept as revenue; measures platform monetization power.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

User Concentration
Share of GMV or transactions from top 5–20% of users; flags dependency risk.

https://meetmarkko.com/knowledge/14-metrics-for-marketplace-success/?gclid=undefined

GMV Retention
% of GMV retained from existing cohorts period-to-period; shows sustainable growth.

https://www.sharetribe.com/academy/measure-your-success-key-marketplace-metrics/

Final discussion!

Roundtable:

- Which one metric keeps you up at night—and why?

- How often do you revisit your leading vs. lagging dashboards?

- How do you tie execution to your metrics? So it's not just management team looking at key metrics and development teams at theirs?