

Good Product Marketing Leadership, Bad Product Marketing Leadership

Inspired by the [Ben Horowitz classic](#) Good Product Manager/Bad Product Manager

Good Product Marketing VPs are a strategic thought partner to their Product Management VP, as well as the CMO, CPO, CRO, and COO. A Good Product Marketing VP understands being a leader is setting an achievable vision and building the team to operationalize the vision at scale. A Good Product Marketing VP understands the different outcomes each of the c-suite, and their leadership peers are striving for, and finds a way to align this vision with how they help them in their day-to-day.

Good Product Marketing VPs “grew up” with a diverse background. They come from a variety of marketing disciplines as often as they come from product, customer success, or field engineering. Product Marketers can be comedians, PR mavens (or ravens) or even politicians. But Good Product Marketing VPs’ non-linear backgrounds make them curious about the world, the people they are trying to reach with their product, and at their core they are a gregarious communicator.

Bad Product Marketing VPs scoff at descriptions of Product Marketing that don’t meet their own. Bad Product Marketing VPs are not curious about the teams around them, learning from other Product Marketing VPs (and product marketers), how other marketing pieces work. Really Bad Product Marketing VPs have tunnel vision, create moats around non-functional villages, and see their team’s success based on content generation and busy work.

Good Product Marketing VPs know that to scale they have to empower their team and hire the right people to make the vision a reality. Product Marketing is a team sport - just like release engineering a product. Good Product Marketing teams have the resources they need to be [Good Product Marketers](#), and those include:

- Competitive Intelligence
- Sales Enablement
- Product Marketing Operations

Good Product Marketing VPs define clear boundaries for what their team does and does not do - and understand where Product Marketing ends and the other marketing disciplines begin. This is because they’ve seen how the parts can come together in different ways, and view themselves as the owner of the success of their product. And by being an owner of a product - they know everything can’t be done by them alone.

Bad Product Marketing VPs view themselves as “yes” men (or women). They don’t view it as their to ensure that product marketing has a clearly defined objective and deliverables. They view themselves as catering to any ask made of them as opposed to prioritizing work that helps meet the agreed upon objectives for the organization within the company. Or worse, Bad Product Marketing VPs don’t understand how to prioritize and leave it to their team to decipher what needs to be done.

Good Product Marketing VPs have stellar relationships with their Marketing counterparts and can help their Product Marketers up-level their Product plans with the support of Growth, Demand Gen, Brand, and Content Marketing.

Bad Product Marketing VPs don't understand how different marketing skills and channels can be used to promote and grow adoption of their products. Bad Product Marketing VPs look to empire build as opposed to collaborate with other Marketing VPs who can help even more customers and prospects learn about the problem the product solves.

Good Product Marketing VPs, despite being VPs, still get their hands dirty. They talk to customers regularly, they do skip levels, horizontal 1x1s, and understand how the business works. Good Product Marketing VPs instill ownership, collaboration, and operational excellence within their organizations because they lead by example.

Good Product Marketing VPs sign up for outcome based objectives. They champ at the bit to set goals that are tied to product adoption and that can be measured, in real time, based on the strategies developed by the Product Marketers on their team. Good Product Marketing VPs are data driven and roll up their sleeves to set up dashboards and data funnels. Good Product Marketing VPs don't mind getting their hands dirty and are as comfortable presenting to the C-suite as they are helping a new IC understand their company's databases.

Bad Product Marketing VPs have a limited view of what "impact" to the business is. Bad Product Marketers VP fail to own the data that shows the success of their initiatives and balk at the notion that they must be measured on outcomes. Bad Product Marketing VPs support Bad Product Marketers who see their role as churning out content and hoping that it sticks. Bad Product Marketing VPs build Bad Product Marketers.