Who is the Product Owner Anyway?

by Scrum.org – Improving the Profession of Software Delivery

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Improving the profession of software delivery
The Home of Scrum

90% Agile Teams Use Scrum

+12M Using Scrum Daily

ONE Scrum Guide

Practiced everywhere

1,380,000+ Open Assessments Taken

100,000+ Professional Scrum Certifications

180 Professional Scrum Trainers

73,000+ Taught

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Meet the Presenters

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Agenda

1. Introducing the Product Owner
2. The challenge of the role
3. Requirements vs Ownership
4. Who plays the role?
5. Making it work, and 7 characteristics of success
Introducing the Product Owner

source: http://dilbert.com/2013-02-25
Introducing the Product Owner

- The Product Owner is the **sole person** responsible for managing the **Product Backlog**.

- Product Backlog management includes:
  - Clearly expressing Product Backlog items;
  - Ordering the items in the Product Backlog to best achieve goals and missions;
  - Optimizing the value of the work the Development Team performs;
  - Ensuring that the Product Backlog is visible, transparent, and clear to all, and shows what the Scrum Team will work on next; and,
  - Ensuring the Development Team understands items in the Product Backlog to the level needed.

- The Product Owner may do the above work, or have the Development Team do it. However, the Product Owner remains **accountable**.
Scrum Framework
The Product Owner

- Maximizing the value of the product and the development team
- Sole person responsible for managing the product backlog
- Must be empowered to make decisions about the product
- No-one else is able to tell the development team what to do!

The what, who, how changes depending on the situation
So, What is the Problem Then…?

The Growing Product Company

• As organizations grow specialism of activity challenges ownership and responsibility
• Outbound vs inbound becomes problematic
• Product becomes so complex that no one knows what it does
• Fear replaces optimism as you have something to lose

IT Adopting Agility

• Many roles exist to support waterfall including BA, Project Manager
• Products exist on the business but not in IT
• Agile being driven by IT
• Process has replaced responsibility and ownership
• The PMO 😊
And You Have to Answer Questions Like…

- How much is it going to cost?
- What are we going to get?
- When is it going to be ready?
The “Ownership Dilemma”

How Many Roles?

How Many Products?

Market Sensing
- Interviews
- Validation
- Competition
- Win/Loss
- Secondary Research

Inbound
- Business Case
  - Numbers
  - Strategy
  - Portfolio Fit
- Roadmap
- Positioning

Planning
- User Personas
- Goals/Themes
- Epics
- Requirements
- Prioritization
- Acceptance Tests
- Release/Sprint Planning
- Demo Validation

Outbound
- Go to Market
- Launch
- Though Leadership
- Collateral & Tools
- Ongoing Support
“The enemy is in front of us, the enemy is behind us, the enemy is to the right and to the left of us. They can't get away this time!”

- General Douglas MacArthur
Requirements vs Ownership

SEE IF YOU CAN GET
CONSSENSUS ON YOUR
IDEA AND GET BACK
TO ME.

OR YOU COULD
DISPLAY SOME
LEADERSHIP AND
GET BACK TO ME.

I’M
LEADING
YOU RIGHT
NOW.

REALLY?
I THOUGHT
IT WOULD
FEEL
DIFFERENT.
Agile Does Not Remove the Need to do Requirements

Requirements 15% of effort, 16 – 24% of duration
Testing 31% of effort, 20 – 32% of duration

Agile is NOT magic, you still need to do the work

The Scrum Team (includes the PO)
Outcome based backlog items, with clear measures of success, are key
Managing the Backlog, Not Doing Everything In It!

PRODUCT OWNER

Sole person responsible for managing the product backlog
Owning the Product Vision

- Setting true north for the team
- Plans evolve over time
- Clarity come from work
- Will change every sprint
- Refinement is crucial for reviewing the backlog
And in more complex situations with more ‘stuff’ going on is more of a leader and less of a doer!

Decisions

Stuff

PRODUCT OWNER

Development Team

SMEs

Stakeholders
Leading is Not Easy

- The backlog is the primary vehicle for driving work
- Requirements is a team task
- Managing stakeholders, compromise and balance
- Providing a vision that communicates intent and value
- And refresh the vision frequently
Who plays the role?
Where Does This Person Come From?

PRODUCT OWNER

=  

Project Manager

Business Analyst

Product Manager

Relationship Manager
Product Owner Skills

1. Visionary
2. Decisive
3. Communicative

An ideal Product Owner is empowered, has business knowledge, and is technologically savvy.

*Warning*
Each situation is different, so not possible to make fast rules. This is illustrative of the decision you will make.
The PO’s Two Commandments...

Empowered to make decisions about the product

Available to the team to answer questions
Making it Work
Being the Mini CEO

THE BIGGER PICTURE

PRODUCT OWNER MATURITY

Company Vision
Business Strategy
Product Vision
Product Strategy
Release Plan
Sprint Plan
Daily Plan

Management
Development
Product Owner

Expected Benefits
Maturity

Entrepreneur
Sponsor
Business Representative
Proxy
Scribe
7 Habits of Highly Successful Product Owners

Building the "Right Thing"
- Primarily Customer Facing
- Maximizing Value

Building the thing "Right"
- Primarily Scrum Team Facing
- Maximizing Collaboration

Product Marketplace Expert
Product Release Decision Maker
Product Backlog Management Leader

Product Visionary
Product Value Maximizer
Lead Facilitator of Key Stakeholder Involvement

Effective and Active Scrum Team Collaborator

Jan 2015
Charles Bradley – ScrumCrazy.com
http://www.scrumcrazy.com/The+New+New+Product+Owner
Summary

Not responsible for...

- Writing all tests
- Creating all requirements
- Knowing everything about everything

Responsible for...

- Delivering value
- Managing trade-offs
- Leading the delivery of a valuable product

Who does it? Anyone can do it but...

- Visionary
- Decisive
- Communicative
- Empowered
- Available
Scrum Values

- COURAGE: we admit we do not know everything
- FOCUS: on what is the most important
- COMMITMENT: dedicated to delivering working software
- RESPECT: cross-functioning, self-organizing team
- OPENNESS: frequently inspecting through delivering
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