Date: Saturday, 01-24-2009

Session Title: Build Partner or Buy

Presenter: Michael Helmbrecht

What should I take away from the session? (Summary):

Product Managers must fill holes to sell completeness. IT buyers like to deal with fewest possible vendors

Notes (key points, book suggestions, website suggestions, etc)

Build: Define the market you are going after and the appropriate metric (usually financial)

- Can you build to where you will be #1 or #2

- Do you have the core competencies

- This is a more critical decision for smaller companies

- May also include secondary measures eg. Quality or customer satisfaction metrics

Partner: Often the fastest approach to fill a gap but can be frustrating

- Partner if you lack skills, differentiation, technology or time

- Adequate but due diligence is often overlooked

- Many considerations are the same as Buy (i.e. integration, how to support, train the field, go to market, platform integration, education , documentation etc)

- Attractive to be a partner but

    o Will need to continue to develop customer base and innovation

    o Right balance of use of your time and influence of roadmap

Buy: When you must own the technology and want to make it a part of your core business

- Easier if there is a technology fit

- High need to integrate processes, services, manufacturing, tools, sales etc

- Fast way to fill a gap

- Product Manager may not be the decision maker but will be held responsible. Product Manager should get heavily involved as early as possible