

PMM SPOTLIGHT

Celebrating Product Marketing Managers Driving Impactful Solutions In Africa's Tech Ecosystem.

FEATURE STORIES | SPOTLIGHT 1

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CAROLYNE MWEBERI

Consulting Senior Product Marketing Manager at Qhala

In this month's feature story, we spotlight the remarkable journey of a product marketing manager whose collaborative efforts have propelled tech innovation to new heights, fostering empowerment and social impact across Africa.



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What is your name and what do you do?

"I'm Carolyne Mweberi, a consulting Senior Product Marketing Manager (PMM) at Qhala."

What led you to Product Marketing?

"While working at the Safaricom Innovation department in 2018, I discovered that there was a gap in how tech solutions are marketed to end users and technology buyers. This is where my journey into product marketing began. I'm now a certified and experienced Senior Product Marketing Manager offering consulting services to help technology businesses in Africa find product-market fit, establish go-to-market strategies, and deliver value to their target customers"

Do you have any pivotal moments or mentors?

"My pivotal moment in my tech product marketing career has been working collaboratively with the team at Leaf Global Fintech (now rebranded to Boss Money) from the early growth stage of the app to its acquisition in April 2022 by IDT, one of the largest telcos in the world. Coming in, I noticed that the company didn't have a clear customer segment they were serving and this made their go-to-market initiatives and messaging quite disjointed. I helped streamline this and aligned the team to serve two main customer segments in Rwanda, Kenya,

and Uganda. Because of this, we experienced 15x growth in transactions in the first year and a 4x increase in customers quarterly.

For mentors, I always look up to and learn so much from PMM leaders and tech executives such as Marcus Andrews, April Dunford and Brian Chesky."

Is there a particular product you are proud of?

"Yes, I've supported a number of tech products as a product marketing manager for the past few years but one I can easily mention that was quite exciting to work on is called Revivo.

Revivo is a two-sided e-commerce platform that provides high-quality, affordable spare parts, accessories, repair tools, and refurbished parts to technicians in rural and peri-urban locations in Kenya."

What are the impact metrics of that project?

"This was a short-term consulting project and the three deliverables for this project were:

- Increase technician acquisition rate
- Increase monthly average order value
- Customer Retention"

In approaching product launches, what are some strategies for successful launches?

"After planning and successfully executing multiple tier 1, tier 2,

and tier 3 launches over the past few years, here are some strategies I have used that have helped me reach the set launch goals:

- Start by aligning with the product manager on the key features and functionalities you would like your product to have during your upcoming launch and ensuring that the features and functionalities are working optimally to offer your customers value.
- It's really important to fully understand your target users and how to reach them by undertaking detailed customer research
- Set clear launch objectives and goals first before planning any tactics or launch strategies. Metrics that are in line with these objectives and goals should accompany these goals and objectives.
- Product Marketing plays a crucial role in connecting and aligning the efforts of multiple teams, including PR, Demand Gen, Product Management, Sales Enablement, Sales, Design, Content, Social, and more. Collaborating across these teams demands careful planning and effective communication. It is essential to establish regular check-ins and develop a comprehensive project plan that includes tasks, responsible individuals, and deadlines to ensure the launch is successful.

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- *Continuously monitor how your launch is performing and update your strategies accordingly. After the product is launched, it is crucial to consistently collect feedback from customers to enhance your key strategies and performance. Monitor usage, adoption, and revenue metrics to enhance the onboarding process and encourage product usage. Also, review the funnel metrics to identify any obstacles that may be affecting conversion rates. It is also important to monitor the key performance indicators to gauge your progress in relation to our goals.*
- *Remember to undertake a post-launch evaluation”*

In approaching product launches, how do you handle unexpected hurdles?

“Through open and continuous communication with all the key stakeholders. After implementing the launch strategies shared in my previous response, open and continuous communication will enable the team to effectively handle challenges that arise.”

What strategies or considerations do you prioritize when building and launching products specifically tailored for the African market?

“Please review this article I wrote on [Positioning and Scaling Products in Africa](#).”

How do you navigate cultural diversity when tailoring marketing strategies for different African countries?

“This starts by understanding the market and customers you are targeting in the different countries. Once you're clear on this, only use marketing strategies, messaging, and positioning that will appeal to target users in the respective countries. Avoid copying strategies from other countries with the understanding that your users from the different countries have different attitudes, preferences, and belief systems that will influence how they perceive your product and the marketing strategies used.”

How would you say the African market differs from other continents/markets?

The African market is very unique compared to other continents. One thing I can point out is that only 37% of the African population had internet access as of 2023, which means companies need to plan how they can build more inclusive products for a population that still struggles with internet connectivity. This also means that product marketers need to use a bit of traditional media to reach some of these users. I love seeing all the ambitious initiatives, such as Google's 'Next Billion Users' that aims to build solutions and infrastructure that will be beneficial to new internet users in Africa.



It's really important to fully understand your target users and how to reach them by undertaking detailed customer research.

As a junior or aspiring PMM what skills do I need to develop?

Project management, Cross-functional collaboration, Empathy, and Curiosity.

Any networking tips for junior or aspiring PMMs?

Do not just attend tech events, be intentional with whom you want to connect with, proactively speak to people, and follow up after the event.

What do you like or dislike the most about being a PMM?

One thing I love about being a PMM is that I get to research and explore new markets and opportunities that will help the growth of the company. This has exposed me to a lot of knowledge about different markets in Africa.

We hope you found this read insightful.
You can connect with Carolyn on [LinkedIn here](#).

Are you a PMM in the African space?
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