

Sushama Kuttysankaran PMP

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Strategic and delivery-focused Product Owner with 24 years of experience leading complex, multi-system software products in highly regulated, safety-critical environments. Expert in translating business and executive requirements into clear technical scope, driving backlog prioritization, and delivering customer-centric product increments that align with enterprise goals. Adept at partnering with cross-functional stakeholders, engineering teams, and global SMEs to define roadmaps, refine requirements, and ensure high-quality, predictable delivery. Proven success guiding Agile teams through PI planning, sprint execution, and value-driven decision-making while improving delivery efficiency, reducing defects, and strengthening organizational agility. Recognized for strong technical acumen, exceptional communication, and the ability to influence outcomes across diverse teams and complex portfolios.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Product Ownership & Product Management
- Strategic & Technical Leadership
- Systems Engineering
- Risk & Quality Management
- Process & Procedure Development
- Quality Assurance Oversight
- Backlog Prioritization & Roadmap Management
- Agile/SCRUM Leadership & Coaching
- Cross-Functional & Multi-Geography Leadership
- Customer & Stakeholder Management
- Continuous Improvement & Organizational Agility
- Portfolio & KPI-Driven Decision-Making
- Requirements Engineering & User Story Development
- Solution Design & Documentation (SDDs, Epics, ACs)
- Program/Project Management
- Vendor & Remote Team Management
- Reporting & Executive Presentations
- Team Development

Languages: English, Hindi, Malayalam, and Japanese

Skills: Product Owner, Product Backlog, User Stories, Functional Requirements (FRD), Acceptance Criteria, Requirements Gathering, Business Analysis, Stakeholder Demos, Status Updates, Microsoft Word/Excel/PowerPoint/Outlook

CAREER SUMMARY

Wabtec – Melbourne FL

2021 – Present

Senior Product Owner – Rail Dispatch System

2019 - 2020

Led the end-to-end ownership of an extremely complex Train Authority module designed specifically for the Canadian Rail Network, delivering functionality that required deep domain understanding and rigorous coordination across multiple systems. Collaborated with multicultural, cross-geographical teams distributed across Asia, North America, and South America, successfully managing both external vendor teams and internal remote engineering groups to ensure alignment and delivery consistency. Conducted multiple Program Increment (PI) planning events, facilitated cross-team synchronization within the Agile Release Train, and regularly presented leadership reports covering progress, risks, dependencies, and value outcomes. Worked closely with customer Business Analysts and Subject Matter Experts, to elicit and refine requirements, defined solution approaches, negotiated defects and change requests, and ensured product increments met regulatory, technical, and operational expectations. Owned and prioritized the product backlog, authored Solution Design Documents (SDDs), created Functional requirements / Epics, and produced detailed user stories with clear acceptance criteria. Additionally, drove Quality Assurance efforts by guiding test planning, validating acceptance results, and ensuring seamless integration across dependent modules, consistently delivering high-quality releases in a complex, safety-critical environment.

Key Achievements

- Recipient of the Golden Award for Product Ownership, recognizing excellence in delivering high-value products, stakeholder alignment, and consistent agile execution
- Led product development for a cloud-native dispatch system leveraging Azure, Kafka event streaming, and Kubernetes orchestration to ensure scalability and resilience.
- Drove end-to-end product strategy and roadmap execution, aligning delivery tightly with business goals and customer needs along with delivery deadlines
- Optimized the product backlog through value-based prioritization and ROI-focused decision-making, improving delivery impact.
- Translated business/executive requirements into actionable stories and sprint objectives, reducing ambiguity and improving development efficiency.
- Strengthened organizational agility by promoting Scrum values, continuous improvement, and cross-team collaboration.
- Influenced portfolio decisions using KPIs, value metrics, and evidence-based evaluations to guide strategic investments.
- Served as the primary PO point of contact for business-related questions during development, enabling faster decisions and fewer escalations.
- Conducted customer discovery with BAs/SMEs to refine requirements and validate solution direction.

- Significantly reduced feature development timelines (26%) over two PIs with detailed stories and planning.
- Requirements clarifications cut rework/defects in UAT by ~12% across three releases.
- Managed diverse stakeholder expectations while maintaining product vision and prioritization authority.
- Led stakeholder demos and regular status updates.
- Began foundational research into AI-driven enhancements for dispatch systems, assessing model-fit, data needs, and workflow impact using modern AI agent and code-generation platforms such as Azure AI Studio, OpenAI GPT-4, and LangChain to inform future AI-native product strategy.
- Improved user experience and operational efficiency through customer-centric product increments and measurable value delivery.
- Increased delivery predictability by guiding agile ceremonies and ensuring consistent, high-quality increments.
- Elevated product maturity by mentoring teams on scaling, value delivery, and strategic alignment.

GE - Atlanta GA

2016 - 2018

Technical Program Manager

Implementing program plans and functional requirements, and using excellent program management capabilities to deliver on time, within budget and scope, and to the stipulated quality parameters. Ensuring the concise communication of schedules for program iterations and increments, focusing on program-level continuous integration engineering and quality practices, and measuring project performance through earned value management (EVM).

Key Achievements

- Introduced SCRUM into software development programs, which boosted team efficiency 10% in three months.
- Implemented Agile methodology, coached the team in the key principles, and delivered project management consulting and advice to Technical Leaders and Lead Engineers on SCRUM practices.
- Acted as Product owner for all software initiatives in PRO engineering group.
- Produced a variety of reports illustrating planned vs. actual deployment and budgetary trends.
- Managed project risks and identified and developed alternative solutions to problems.
- Led the Product Development Team in software prototype development and release management of the PoC.
- Played a key role in the merger between GE and Alstom
- Developed a GE-customized technical solution and designed a simpler solution for the complex aspects.
- Planned the process, created process charts, and mastered the relevant tools quickly.
- Assisted other vendors to improve the efficiency of delivery and oversaw vendor training in different GE tools.

QUEST GLOBAL - Trivandrum, Kerala, India / US

2006 - 2016

Program Manager

2014 - 2016

Project Manager, Product Owner, Scrum Master

2012 - 2014

Project Lead

2006 - 2011

Progressed through roles of increasing responsibility and worked primarily in the Power, Semi, Water, Broadband and Industrial domains. Led projects valued at up to \$5 M for elite Fortune 500 OEM customers in hi-tech sectors, and managed teams of 20 to 40 Engineers. QuEST Global acquired NeST in 2014.

Key Achievements

- Coordinated the planning, negotiation, execution and delivery of numerous competitive and non- competitive proposals for the Renewable Energy Strategic Program, spearheaded program efforts involving a variety of internal funding options, and carried total budget responsibility of \$3 M.
- Migrated 2 major products from traditional Waterfall models to Agile APM and SCRUM, which contributed to a boost in product revenue of 15% and 5% respectively in the first year.
- Delivered zero schedule slippage projects for a Japanese client, which led the client to launch an Offshore Development Center at QuEST, and ensured 41% cost benefit for the customer by suggesting open source solutions, which strengthened the relationship with the customer.
- Successfully delivered multiple SCADA projects (solar power plant) for an external EPC team, which involved the management of an offshore Software and Embedded team and onsite Contract Engineers.
- Defined the vision, managed and prioritized the back logs and anticipated the customer needs and ensure the progression of each iteration to meet the sprint goals
- Designed a Remote Monitoring Solution for a water treatment plant and led all project phases to project delivery.

Key Achievements Continued

- Led and coached five SCRUM teams accountable to develop different software products and automated tools and ensured the achievement of goals for quality, schedule and cost.
- Led retrospective meetings for discussions about lesson learned, in which metrics were analyzed and converted into critique information for Senior Management.
- Generated reports in MS Excel and MS PowerPoint, which included Deployment Mapping, Labor Spend (Actual vs. Estimated) and Product Burn Down charts.

FOCAL3 SOFTWARE PVT LTD - Trivandrum, Kerala, India

2005 - 2006

Project Manager

Defined, developed, and implemented the strategy, vision, and objectives, and established policies and procedures,

which included Software Development, Quality Assurance, and Quality Control. Provided effective technical leadership, and managed, trained and mentored the Delivery and Release Coordination teams. Formulated proposals and project plans, developed user stories, and prepared presentations and closure reports for Senior Management. Evaluated lessons learned for use in future projects

Key Achievements

- Launched the Software Development Division of the organization with a team of 5 Engineers and grew the team to 30 Engineers within a year.
- Boosted overall business in the organization by 30%.
- Developed the Quality Manual of the Organization.

NETWORK SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGIES PVT LTD - Trivandrum, Kerala, India

1999 - 2005

Project Lead

2002 - 2005

Software Engineer / Process Consultant

2000 - 2002

Coordinated and managed code releases, conducted early risk analyses, and implemented initiatives to mitigate project risks. Collaborated with Management, Engineers, Product Managers and Support Specialists on various product issues, and facilitated requirements elicitation sessions with business partners. Part of design and development teams for multiple customer products – standalone to enterprise applications - in engineering domain (Semi Conductors, SCADA, Power etc) and OMS systems (broadband network)

Key Achievements

- Received recognition as the best team player.
- Maintained a sense of urgency and responsiveness in the delivery of projects and in the resolution of problems.

CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Certified Project Management Professional, Project Management Institute
- Management of Process Quality
- CMMI v1.2 and SCRUM, Software Engineering Institute
- ITPL Software Testing Certification
- Agile Lean Six Sigma, Green belt

EDUCATION

- Computer Engineering from Board of Technical Education, Kerala

PUBLICATIONS

- Coauthored the Paper "Tailoring the Measurement Program for Short Term Projects", SEPG Asia
- Authored the Paper "Refining Process Sanity for Product Proliferation"

TECHNOLOGIES / TOOLS

- **Methodologies:** Agile/SCRUM, Iterative and Incremental Models
- **Tools:** MS Project, MS Word, MS Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Pivotal Tracker, MS Visio, Balsamiq, Rally, Figma
- **Programming:** C#, C++, Visual C++, Java, .NET, ASP.NET, XML, MS SQL Server, JavaScript and VBscripts, MFC
- **Build & Productivity Tools:** TeamCity, CruiseControl, Time Doctor
- **Version Management:** JIRA, GitHub