# From Offline Retailer to E-Commerce Product Manager: My Journey Through Customer-Centric Learning and Product Research

## 1. Introduction

As part of my professional growth toward a Product Management career, I recently completed an E-Commerce Certification Program from [TamilEcommerce](https://tamilecommerce.graphy.com/). This course helped me think from a customer’s perspective, understand market behaviors, and build a data-driven mindset to evaluate and position products effectively.  
  
I have been managing my offline business, Walky Baggy [My Shop Link](https://share.google/Y5DnOJRZhNkgn05n0) for over 10 years, specializing in bags, purses, and travel accessories. Leveraging my offline expertise and newly acquired e-commerce knowledge, I conducted comprehensive product research and strategy planning for launching online.

## 2. Key Learnings from the E-Commerce Certification

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| Area of Learning | What I Gained | Relevance to Product Management |
| Marketing & Financial Strategy | Learned digital marketing funnels, pricing strategies, and budgeting. | Applies to defining product pricing models, growth metrics, and P&L ownership. |
| Leadership & Planning | Developed planning, leadership, and stakeholder management skills. | Core PM skills — leading cross-functional teams and prioritizing goals. |
| Product Research Tools | Hands-on with Helium 10, Ubersearch, Google Trends for market insights. | Experience in using data-driven tools for market validation and user research. |
| Product Listing & Cataloging | Created optimized titles, bullet points, and descriptions. | Connects to managing product information and improving discoverability (SEO). |
| GST, Vendor, and Logistics | Understood GST handling, supplier invoicing, and Amazon Easy Ship. | Product operations understanding — supply chain and compliance awareness. |
| Branding & IP | Learned about brand registry and trademark authorization. | Aligns with managing brand identity, differentiation, and long-term product positioning. |

## 3. Market Research and Product Shortlisting

I conducted end-to-end product research based on multiple customer, operational, and business metrics to identify the most promising products for online expansion.  
  
Product Selection Criteria:  
- Low Volumetric Weight → Reduces shipping costs and increases profitability.  
- Product Familiarity → Deep offline experience helps in positioning and customer support.  
- Own Manufacturing Unit → Enables flexibility, quality control, and custom design.  
- Low GST Impact → Better margins and competitive pricing.  
- Repair & Sustainability Option → Enhances customer loyalty and brand trust.

## 4. Finalized Product Lineup for Online Launch

1. Travel Shoe Bag  
2. Waist Bag  
3. Foldable Shopping Bag  
4. D-Cut Cloth Carry Bag  
5. Ladies Slim Small Purse  
6. Travel Bag  
7. Jute Bag  
8. Lunch Bag

## 5. Customer-Centric Thinking

Through this certification, I learned to think like a customer first. I studied seller success stories, analyzed top-rated products, and also identified high-risk categories (e.g., food and cosmetics) that require multiple compliance layers — enabling me to build smarter product decisions.  
  
Using keyword analysis (via Helium 10, Google Trends, and manual keyword planning), I evaluated demand, search intent, and seasonal trends to ensure data-backed product decisions.

## 6. Product Management Mindset Applied

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| PM Area | How I Applied It in My E-Commerce Project |
| Market Validation | Conducted data-based product screening using keyword research and competitor analysis. |
| Customer Discovery | Understood pain points via reviews, feedback loops, and offline customer conversations. |
| MVP Thinking | Starting with 8 validated products as a lean test market before full-scale rollout. |
| Metrics & Measurement | Tracking CTR, conversion rates, returns %, and profitability per SKU. |
| Strategic Prioritization | Focused on high-margin, low-risk SKUs aligned with customer demand. |
| Brand Experience | Building consistent product stories and listings to strengthen brand recall. |

## 7. Key Metrics I Will Track

- Product Conversion Rate (CR%)  
- Profit Margin per SKU  
- Repeat Purchase Rate  
- Order Fulfillment Efficiency  
- Customer Feedback Score  
- Search Ranking and Impressions

## 8. My Vision Ahead

I plan to expand Walky Baggy’s digital footprint by creating a scalable e-commerce ecosystem, focusing on:  
- Data-backed product decisions.  
- Strong storytelling and branding.  
- Seamless user experiences and logistics excellence.  
- Applying Product Management frameworks (AARRR, OKRs, RICE) for business growth.  
  
This journey from software engineering to product management reflects my analytical mindset, customer obsession, and business acumen — essential qualities of a modern product leader.

## 9. Conclusion

Through this certification and hands-on application, I have evolved into a customer-focused, data-driven professional ready to take on Product Management roles. My blend of technical background, business experience, and e-commerce strategy uniquely positions me to bridge the gap between technology, design, and business outcomes.