Cloud Product | Project Definition Workshop

Project Definition Guidelines

The goal of this workshop is to brainstorm with stakeholders in order to:
- Define the problem we're solving.
- Establish success criteria for the project.

We will not be defining how we're solving the problem in this work shop.

Attendees

- Jon Seiffert
- August von Trapp
- Kanth Gopalpur

Agenda

Project Summary
- We are going to deliver a new cloud experience to our customers and the market.

What do we think we are solving?

We are going to build some, or all, features of the on-premise application in a cloud product or products.

Analytics, Repricing, and Channel Management differentiate us from our competition. These modules are in the scope of this project.

- The channels the product will manage is marketplaces, not shopping carts, and Amazon marketplaces are the primary marketplaces.

- Inventory and order management (OM and shipping solution) are designed for large used condition books, music, videos, and DVDs sellers. Our general merchandise sellers typically sell new condition product with a smaller number of SKU use a different inventory and order management solution than the on-premise product. These modules are out of scope for this project.

Who are the stakeholders?
- Kanth Gopalpur (Primary Stakeholder)
- Genny Rapp (User Stakeholder)
- Dave Hersh (Business Strategy)
- Matt Wilkinson (Business Strategy)

Who will be doing the work?
- Jonathan Seiffert (Product Owner)
- August von Trapp (Lead Front End Engineer)
- ????? (Lead Back End Engineer)

What is the project schedule?
- This project is kicking off in January 2018.
- The definition and design will will be done in January and February of 2018. The design includes user experience and architecture.
- The project will enter development by March 2018.
- ????? (The goal is to have an MVP of our first module in production by end of April 2018.)

Business Needs

What business needs are driving this project?
The current product that we build new features in, sell, and maintain in is an on-premise application that runs on Microsoft Windows.
- The product is over 10 years old.
- The codebase is monolithic. The product is bloated with features, and some features aren't used.
- The features, such as repricing, require the user to make an investment in hardware and maintaining that hardware. That makes the product hard to sell, and users may not be able to use new features if they're not on appropriate hardware.
- These limitations of the on-premise product make it difficult, and expensive, to maintain and innovative.
- The release process is manual which means releases are expensive to create and roll out. We only release the on-premise product once a month in order to manage this.
The cloud infrastructure that integrates with the on-premise product today isn't stable.
- The infrastructure wasn't designed to be extensible.
- There is a lot tech debt.
- Issues were fixed with reboots and bandaids.
- This infrastructure requires resources to maintain and outages often interrupt planned work.

If successful, what's the impact on the business?

- We can build and release new features to users frequently with lower overhead.
- We can leverage new technologies to build innovative products.
- Our product will be more flexible in its ability to integrate with third parties.
  Our product will allow us to attract prospective customers, especially general merchandise.

  - The lack of a need of robust hardware will remove a selling hurdle.
  - Our product will be perceived as and will be modern and innovative.
- Our product will be more attractive to prospective employees.

What's the revenue model for the project?

- The current revenue model is transaction based. We take a % of the customer's eCommerce sale.
- The revenue model for the new product will be transactional, but it may not be based purely on revenue like today.

What measurable impact will improving the product have?

- We will be able to sell to customers in every product category.
- We will be able new customers up and running faster.
  There should be a lower number of technical support issues and questions.
  - Due the nature of our current product being on premise, we end up being our customer's IS&T staff.
  - We don't expect that the number of functional support tickets will decrease.
- We will spend less time recovering from outages.
- We will be able to release more features and fixes.
- We will spend less overhead releasing features and fixes to users.

User Needs

Who are our users for this solution?

- Business Owner
- Channel Manager

What are their primary needs?

- They need to be able to list a product on one or many channels.
- They need to be able to manage features available on a channel or listing in order to make their product attractive to buyers.
- They need to be able to change the price of their products listed on a channel based on their competition and their business needs (i.e. margin).
- They need to able to integrate their inventory and order management system in order to get products in and orders out.
- They need a resilient product that is up 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year.

What do we know about them?

- They want to expand their eCommerce channel reach.
  They want to increases sales and profit.
  - They want visibility into the performance of products they're selling, channels they're selling, and vendors they're buying from.
  - They want to know what products they should be selling, for how much, and where.
- They want to be able to manage their eCommerce business from anywhere.

What don't we know about them?

- We don't know what features are most used in the on-premise product and which are most important to them.
- We don't know if all customers are using the features of the on-premise product in the same way.
- We don't know if, or how often, the business owner and channel manager personas are switching between the Settings and Reports sections and the My Inventory, Receiving, and Orders sections of the on-premise product.

What assumptions about them need validating?

- We assume the users may be frustrated that they'll need to view or manage inventory and orders in the on-premise product and perform channel management, pricing management, and analytics in a cloud product.
- We assume the users may be frustrated when the design of our cloud product strays from the on-premise product.
- We assume the users will want this to be mobile-friendly and not mobile native.

Goals

How do we know if we are successful?
- The user can view and manage their channels in a cloud product.
- The user can publish and manage listings in a cloud product.
- The user can view and manage pricing in a cloud product.
- The user can use the product with minimal training and documentation.