Michael Heystek

Product, Program & Technical Program Leader

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SUMMARY

Product and program leader with 10+ years across automotive, energy, real estate and enterprise SaaS. Leads 0→1 products from concept through launch to scaling a paying customer base. Uses Copilot with agents at work, and AI agents daily. Dual citizen of the United States and Ireland, with full right to work in the US, UK and EU.

EXPERIENCE

Toyota — Product Strategist

Nov 2024 – Present

Plano, Texas

- Establish product strategy and define baseline requirements to scale globally and automate lean evaluation frameworks.
- Lead new feature requests from ideation through intake, using AI tools to automate standardized requirements documents for executive stakeholders, enabling faster approvals.
- Launched new global mobile app features for next-generation vehicles and expanded the charging network to include Tesla, IONNA and ChargePoint as new providers.
- Build stakeholder relationships to shape a digital roadmap focused on prioritized, revenue-maximizing initiatives.
- Manage feature and bug backlogs, develop roadmaps, and align priorities to ensure high-quality, data-driven outcomes.

Torq — Senior Consultant

Feb 2024 – Nov 2024

Plano, Texas

- Led product strategy for a major energy provider, driving the launch of a new customer portal that delivered a seamless digital experience and won an industry innovation award.
- Designed, prototyped, and developed digital and analytic products, benchmarking industry-leading features for customer experience.
- Ran A/B usability tests in Maze on Figma prototypes, comparing two designs at a time, for an energy management customer onboarding portal.

Toyota — Program Lead

Jan 2021 – Nov 2023

Plano, Texas

- Standardized processes for 10+ squads, implementing automated project management and reporting to surface risks and blockers.
- Managed 4 squads of software engineers maintaining and developing microservices; prioritized backlogs and integrated enhancements into roadmaps.
- Enhanced developer velocity and workflow efficiency through Agile and Scrum, aligning team efforts with value-driven outcomes.
- Facilitated sprint planning, backlog grooming, retrospectives, and demos to ensure consistent value delivery.
- Developed predictive analytics models for proactive customer service recommendations and scheduling.
- Led chatbot development with rule-based support and live-agent integration, alongside video/image vehicle damage recognition for condition certifications.

CBRE — Product Owner

Aug 2017 – Dec 2020

Dallas, Texas

- Led development of machine learning models for property selection, bid suggestions, and valuations, improving win rates and turnaround times.
- Helped develop a CRM bid-automation tool that auto-bid on appraisal quotes, cutting turnaround time by 50% and raising win rate by 25%.

- Led development of a mobile inspection app that automated appraisals for thousands of internal business users across the US.
- Managed a Tableau Server site with 60 workbooks and 160 reports used by 500 stakeholders.

CBRE — Product Owner Aug 2013 – Aug 2017

London, UK

- Led the EMEA implementation of a global CRM, onboarding 10+ countries, including the UK, for 1,000+ users.
- Managed the EMEA support team, ensuring seamless administration and stakeholder engagement across diverse cultures.
- Project-managed Insight Portal SharePoint sites for 20+ global clients, developing Tableau dashboards, document workflows, and HTML interfaces.

Novartis — Sales Analyst Feb 2012 – Aug 2013

London, UK

- Co-led an ROI project, building an Excel model and SharePoint approval workflow; earned the European Excellence Award.

Carnival — Analyst (Placement Year) Sep 2009 – May 2010

Southampton, UK

- Coordinated preparation and review of EOC reporting for all cruise ships, ensuring timeliness, accuracy, and reconciliation with management accounts.

SIDE PROJECT

Ancient Empires — Personal mobile strategy game Ongoing

- Run as a producer would: own the roadmap, and coordinate design, art, engineering and QA with AI agents. ancientempiresofdragonkings.com
- Built with Grok Build (xAI's AI coding tool) and Meshy (AI 3D asset generation).
- Used playtests and long simulations to fix battle access, siege pacing and army upkeep; held the interface to phone-reach and accessibility rules instead of adding more buttons.

SKILLS

Product: Strategy and roadmaps, continuous discovery, requirements and user stories, prioritisation, launch planning, A/B usability testing, partner and provider onboarding, Agile/Scrum.

Program / delivery: Program planning and operating cadence, risk and dependency management, intake and prioritisation frameworks, executive status reporting, Scrum Master practice, cross-squad process standardisation, global CRM rollout.

Technical / AI: Predictive analytics and ML model delivery, chatbot delivery, AI-assisted requirements documentation, Copilot with agents, AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, Datadog, SageMaker, Jupyter, microservices, Tableau, Power BI, Alteryx.

Tools: Jira, Confluence, Azure DevOps, GitLab, GitHub, Figma, Maze, Lucidchart, Salesforce, ServiceNow, SAP, PeopleSoft, SharePoint, Argus.

EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree, Business with Finance — Bournemouth University, United Kingdom (2007–2011).