



**The Pragmatic Institute  
2019 Annual Product Management  
and Product Marketing Survey**





**PRAGMATIC**  
— INSTITUTE —



LIKE ITS 18 PREDECESSORS, THE 2019 Pragmatic Institute Annual Product Management and Product Marketing Survey is filled with valuable, relevant data about the product management and product marketing professions.

The following pages offer a profile of today's professionals as well as insights into their day-to-day pains and gains. This year's survey also examined the effect respondents expect artificial intelligence to have on their role in the next few

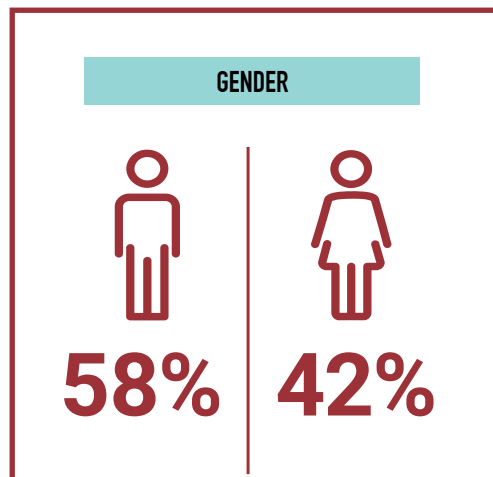
years (and no, no one said they're expecting robots to take their jobs).

As you read through this year's survey, note that this icon  reflects responses to the question, "If you could say one thing to your CEO without fear of retribution, what would it be?" And when you see this icon,  those comments reflect the open-ended responses to the question, "How do you see AI and machine learning impacting your role in the next few years?"

# Inside the Profession

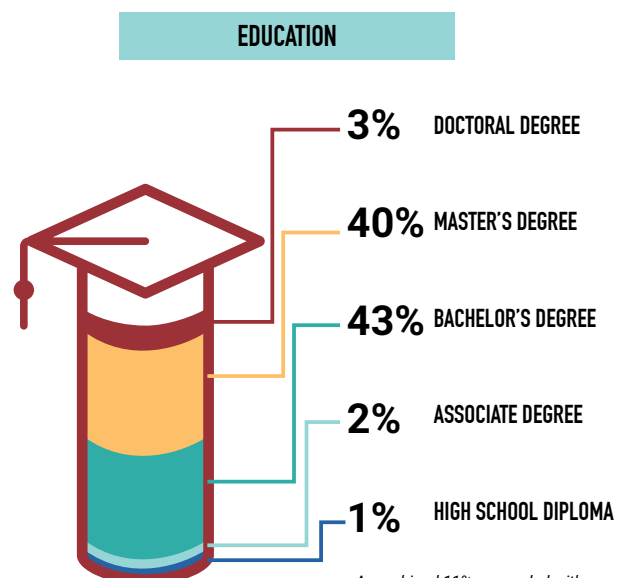
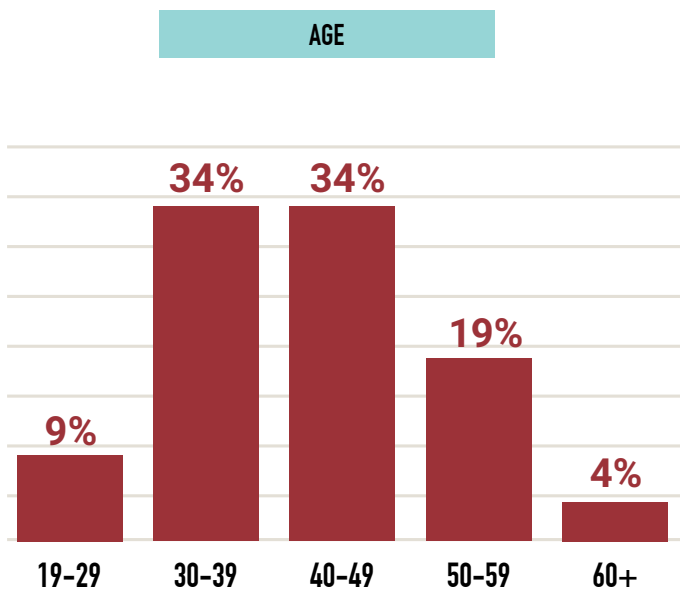
A total of 2,474 respondents participated in this year's survey, representing product professionals of all types and backgrounds from around the world.

*Due to rounding, not all numbers in this report add to 100.*



**"Address the widespread gender bias that permeates the company."**

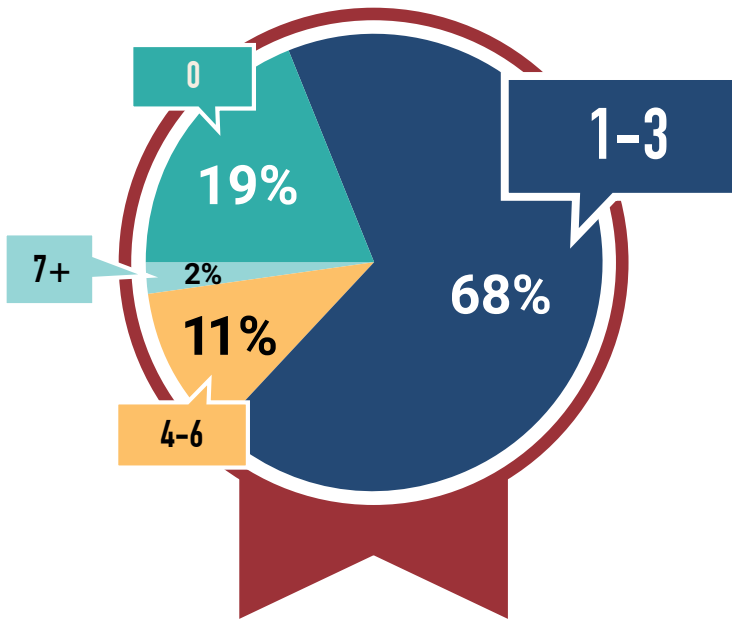
– Senior Product Manager, PMC-IV



*A combined 11% responded with some college or master's education*



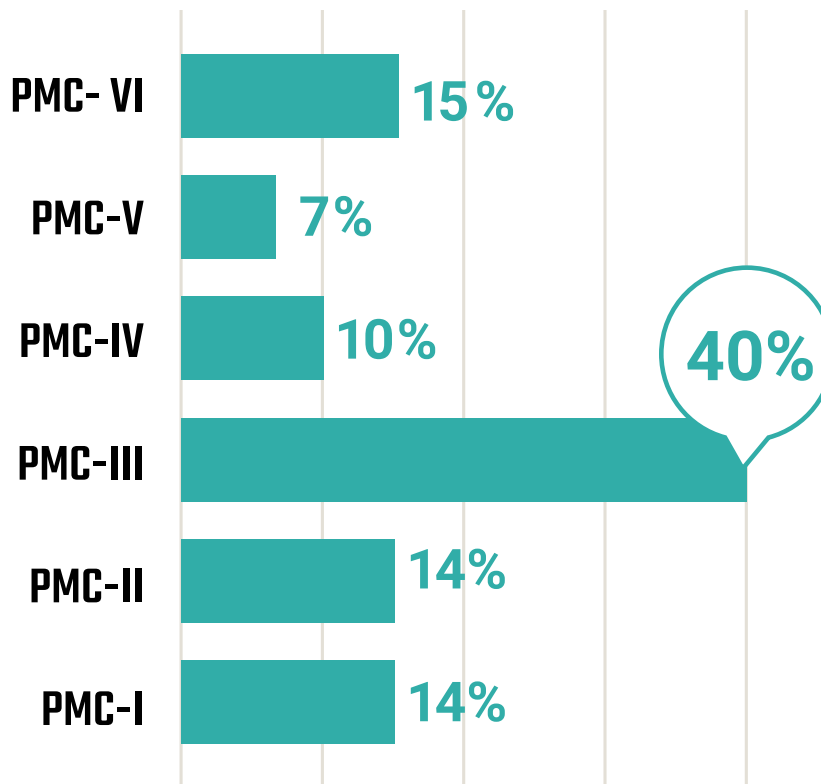
NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS HELD



**“Educate and train product management teams to speak the same language and carry out their roles and responsibilities with the same philosophy.”**

– Global Senior Product Manager, PMC-II

PRAGMATIC INSTITUTE CERTIFICATION (PMC) LEVEL

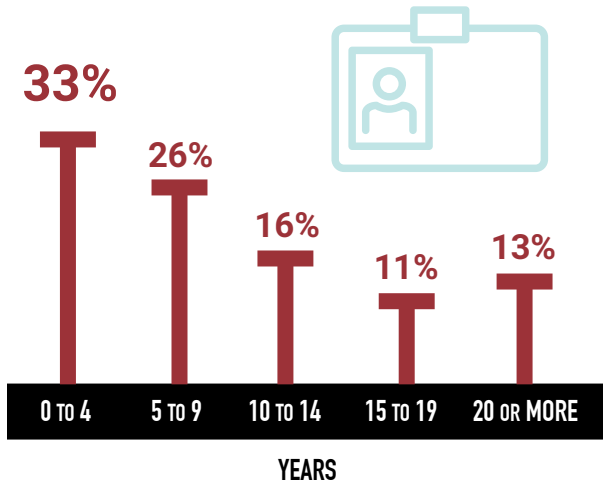


**DID YOU KNOW?**

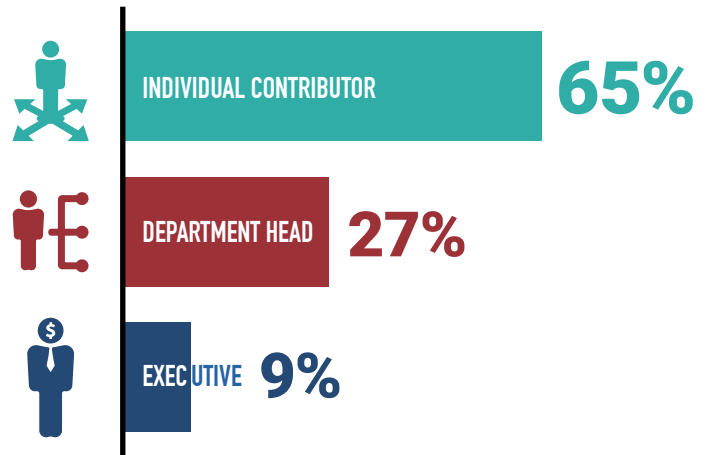
Companies searching for product professionals on websites like Indeed and Monster.com frequently look for candidates with a PMC-III certification or higher. In 2019, Pragmatic Institute introduced the **PMC-VII certification**.

## PROFILE OF THE PROFESSION

### YEARS OF PRODUCT EXPERIENCE



### ROLE WITHIN DEPARTMENT



## PARTICIPATING REGIONS

### NORTH AMERICA

81%

### EUROPE

13%

### ASIA

4%

### OCEANIA

2%

Africa, South America and Central America are omitted because the number of responses did not meet the minimum sample size.

## PARTICIPATING U.S. STATES



### CALIFORNIA

14%



### TEXAS

9%



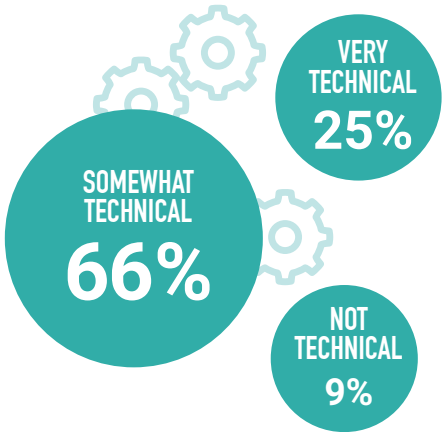
### MASSACHUSETTS

7%

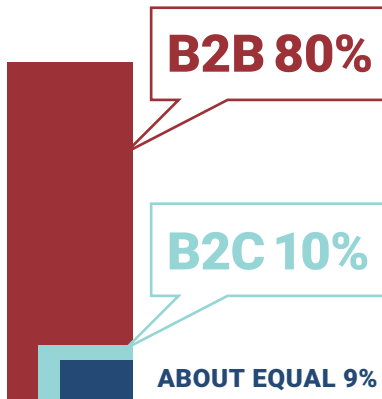
Alabama	1%	Georgia	4%	Massachusetts	7%	New Jersey	3%	Tennessee	1%
Arizona	2%	Idaho	1%	Michigan	2%	New York	3%	Texas	9%
California	14%	Illinois	5%	Minnesota	5%	North Carolina	4%	Utah	3%
Colorado	5%	Indiana	1%	Missouri	1%	Ohio	3%	Virginia	2%
Connecticut	1%	Iowa	1%	Nebraska	1%	Oregon	3%	Washington	4%
District of Columbia	1%	Kansas	1%	Nevada	1%	Pennsylvania	4%	Wisconsin	2%
Florida	3%	Maryland	1%	New Hampshire	1%	South Carolina	1%		

Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Vermont are omitted because the number of responses did not meet the minimum sample size. Other states not listed had zero respondents reporting residence.

TECHNICAL SKILL



B2B VS. B2C

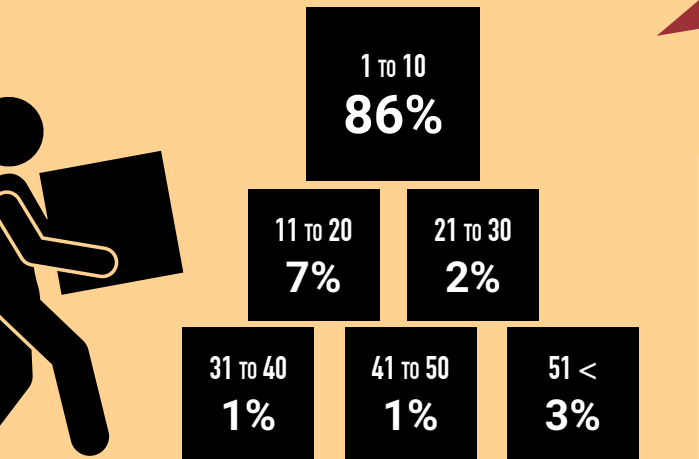


TYPES OF PRODUCTS OFFERED

	SOFTWARE	82%
	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OR CONSULTING	56%
	HOSTED OR CLOUD SERVICES	52%
	HARDWARE	27%

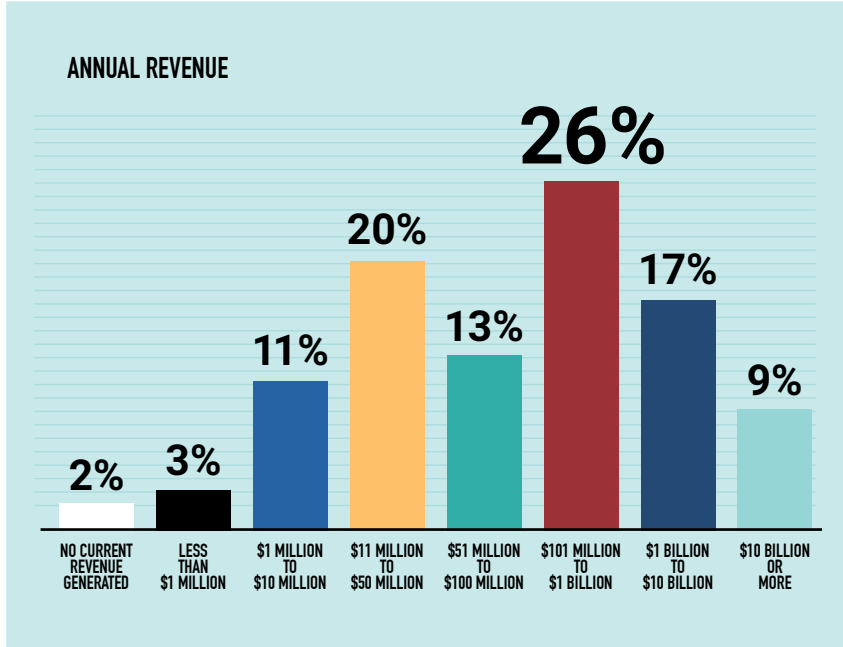
PRODUCTS AND REVENUE

NUMBER OF PRODUCTS MANAGED



**“Focusing on near-term revenue opportunities is hurting our long-term product strategy.”**  
 – Senior Product Manager

ANNUAL REVENUE



**“Focus on employees, help them pursue excellence, and the money will follow.”**  
 – Director, Product Management, PMC-III

# The Pains and Gains

One recurring theme in this year's survey is product professionals' ongoing frustration at spending more hours in their week working on tactics rather than strategy.

**THERE'S NEVER BEEN ENOUGH STRATEGIC WORK DONE**, according to Nancy Rourke, PMC-IV, vice president of product and business development at LIMSABC Technology who has more than 20 years of experience in product management. "There are a lot of factors—a lot of people don't know what our role is," she said. "Often, it's hard to sell long-term strategy to the boss."

The good news is, respondents spent more time on strategic activities this year than last year. Still, the reported split was 27% strategic vs. 73% tactical—well below the desired state.

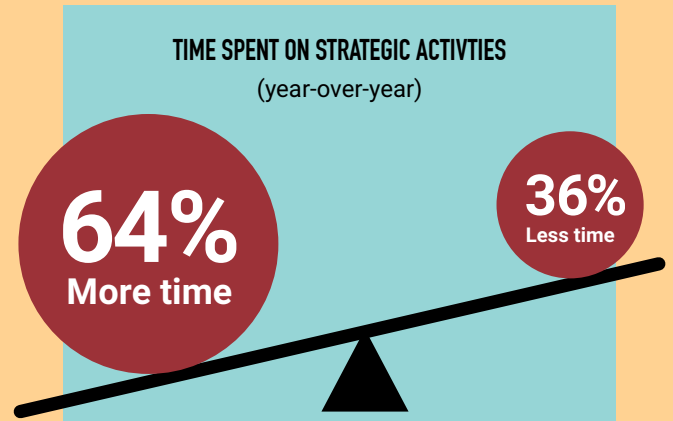
Finding the right balance is "mission impossible," said Stephane Blondin, vice president of product management and marketing for Presagis, the Canadian provider of modeling, simulation and embedded display graphics software.

"There is not a single day that goes by when a single product manager will feel on top of strategic vs. tactical. People expect a magic answer—which feature will have the greatest impact on the company's profits. There is both art and science in these kinds of decisions," he said. "The struggle of strategic vs. tactical is at the core of product management. If you can't wear both hats, you will have trouble being a product manager."

Flexibility also is critical, according to Adrian Makohon, PMC-II, head of product management for Germany-based PRISMA GmbH, which builds and manages capacity platforms for natural gas throughout Europe. He compared product managers to firefighters. "We have to jump in to respond to different situations," he said. "It helps establish our place in the company."

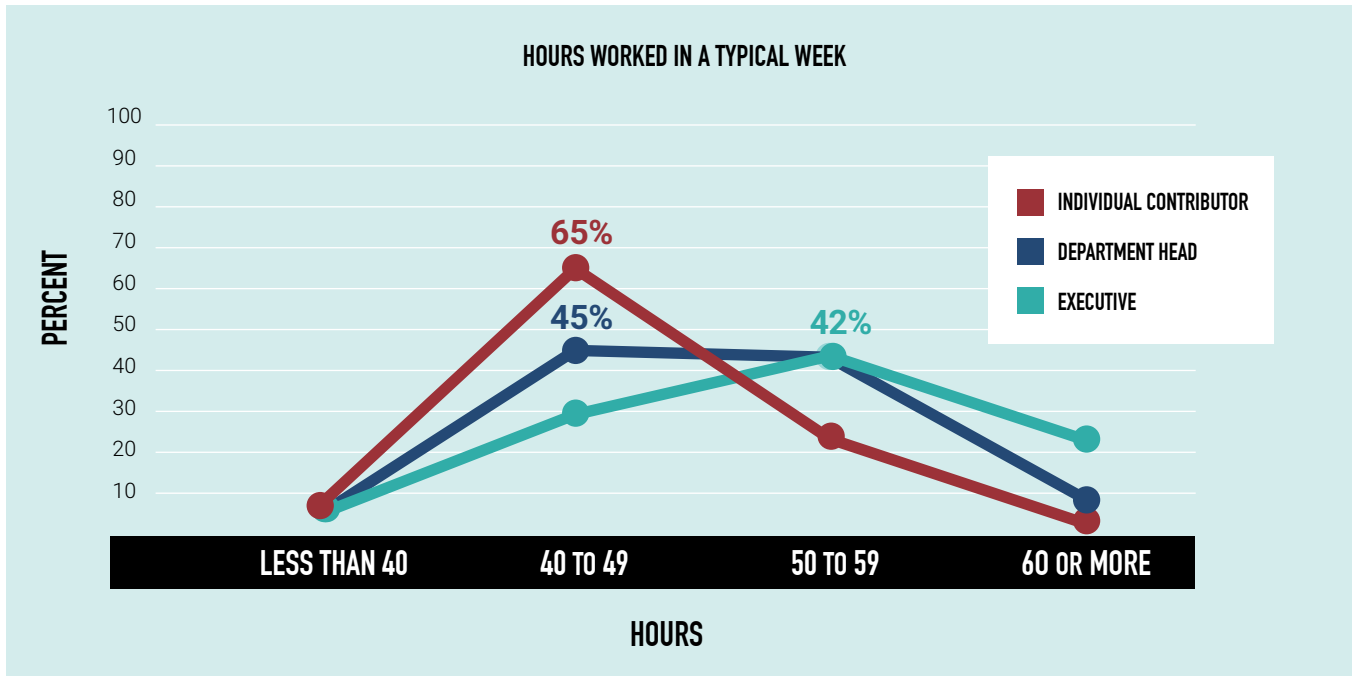
And being able to think strategically often is "a question of carving out time for yourself," he continued. "Sometimes you need to be quite ruthless about it."

Laurie McBrierty, a consultant who spent 15 years as a vice president of product management in various healthcare-related businesses, agreed it's up to the product manager to establish time for strategic thinking. She used to allot two



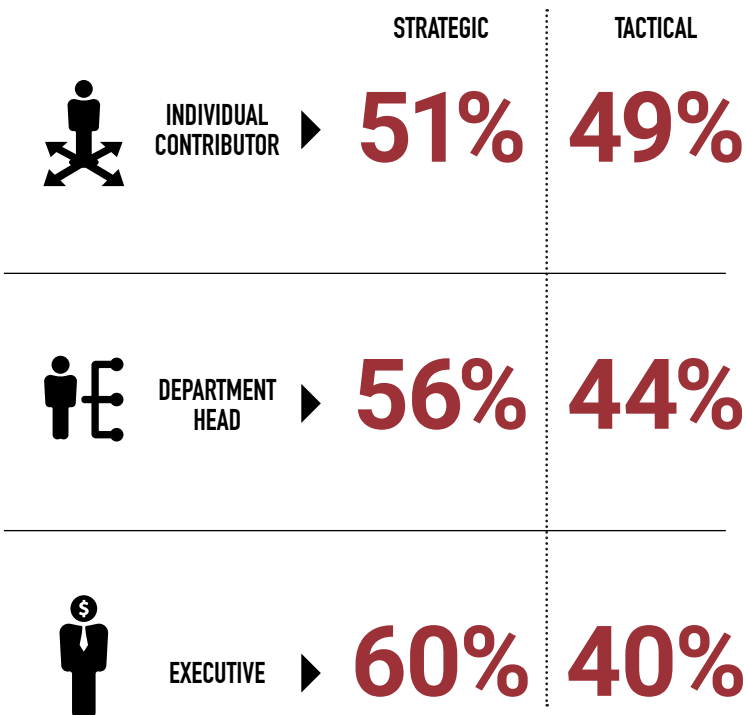
hours per week for her product managers to be totally free to think strategically.

"If you don't set aside the time, the tactical will always win out," she said. "Product managers owe it to themselves to take the time. Take responsibility, don't play the victim. If you aren't getting the time, you need to have a conversation with your manager."



### STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL BY ROLE

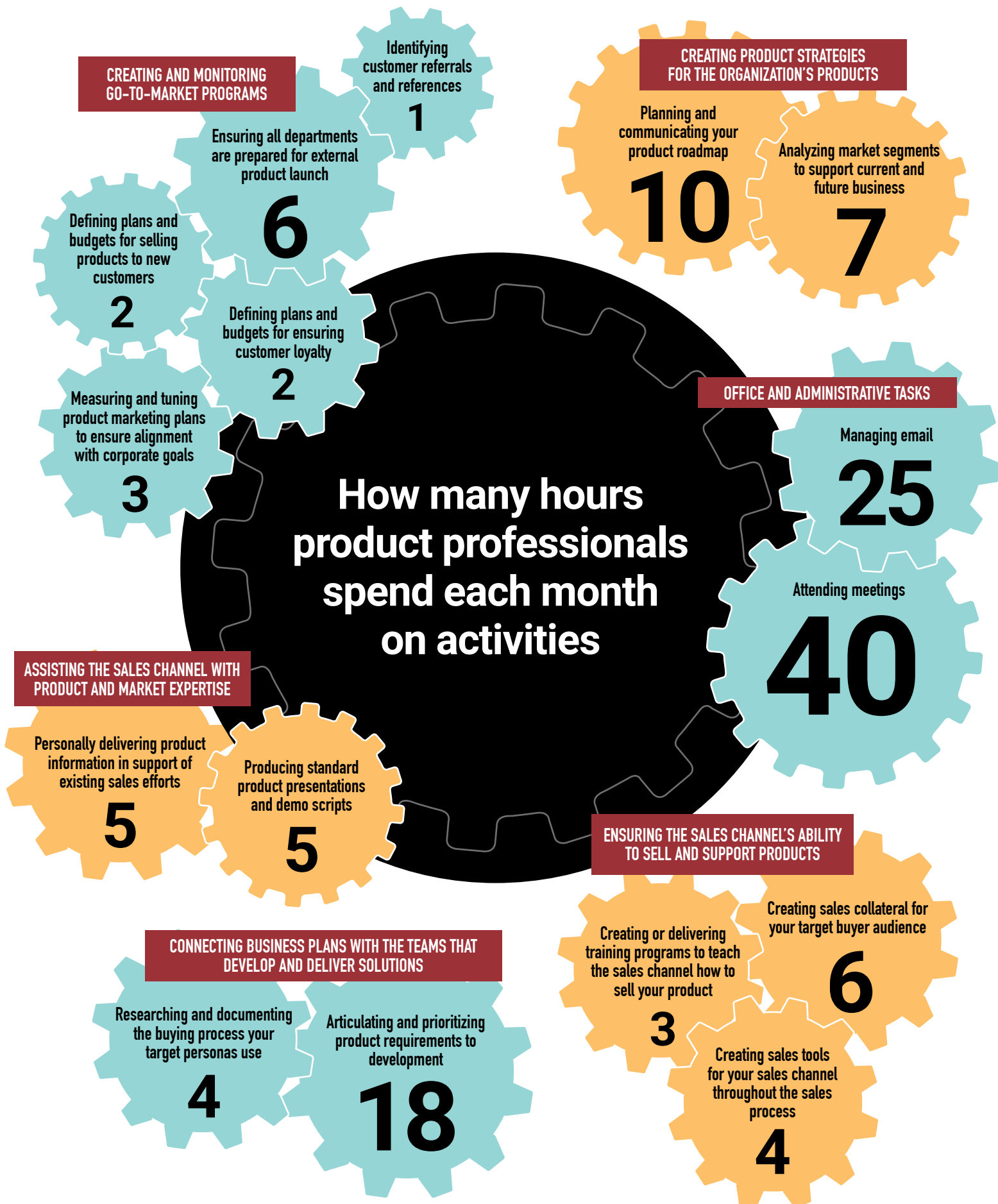
Average percent of time respondents *believe should be spent* on both strategic and tactical activities



**“Allow product to be more strategic and solicit input from the market rather than allow business to dictate solutions.”**  
 — Senior Product Manager, PMC-III

**“Allow us time to do our research and our work to deliver on the outcomes you require and accurately and completely solve market problems with our product.”**  
 — Product Manager, PMC-VI

**“Be suspicious of product managers who spend more time with PowerPoint than with customers.”**  
 — Manager, Product Management, PMC-III





# Leveraging Artificial Intelligence

**THERE MAY BE A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE STRATEGIC TUNNEL** as more organizations look to artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve the way work is done. This year's survey introduced a new question, "How do you see AI and machine learning impacting your role in the next few years?"

Overall responses indicate that AI and machine learning will solve for repetitive and tactical duties, thus freeing brain power for strategic thinking.

"With AI, we can spend less time on the routine and more time focusing on developing meaningful strategies," said Lisa Quinn, director of global product marketing for inRiver, an international provider of SaaS-based product information management systems. "It will enable us to be closer to our customers and capture a larger share of their wallets."

Nick Benecke, a product manager at an Australian digital media and advertising company, said AI is the perfect tool for providing scale in a digital transformative age.

"It can help us look for patterns in the data we've gathered and makes for much more valuable requirements for product enhancements," he said.

AI can also eliminate built-in human bias, said Greg Council, vice president of marketing and product management for Parascript, a document automation business.

"It can provide more accurate information than surveys—people are in a different mindset when they take a survey than they are while performing a task. They don't remember things accurately," he said. "Therefore, a survey wouldn't be as accurate as AI-generated data. Observation is valuable but is a huge expense and is time-consuming. AI can work all the data then develop and present insights."

However, it will be important to balance the integration of AI and machine learning in a way that makes sense for the business.

"An old company I used to work for violated something that I learned at Pragmatic and I worry that it might be the same with AI," said LIMSABC Technology's Nancy Rourke. "Instead of developing a product outside-in, they were thinking inside-out. 'Here's a shiny new toy. Now figure out how to sell it.' But it should be the opposite—find a problem to solve using our technology."

Ultimately, the intelligent use of AI likely will determine the market strength of the business.

"AI will separate those who have invested in tech and those who have not," said Ross Reynolds, PMC-I, vice president of product marketing for Marketly, a Bay Area media and software company. "Going forward, players who have made investments into data analytics will be comparable. The difference will be those who develop strategic uses."

The term "augment" came up frequently in relation to how AI will affect respondents' jobs. "AI will not replace product managers," said PRISMA's Adrian Makohon. "It is a set of tools that will augment what we do."

That augmentation will assist across a variety of functions. For example, it can examine different data points to identify outliers, markets that haven't been identified or things like patterns in recorded conversations that may not have otherwise been seen. With AI, "humans will have the capacity to free up time," said Agile Coach Rob Shea, PMC-VI. "Time to problem solve, show empathy."

At the same time, it's important to remember to focus on the human factor. "It's the people, leadership, vision and execution that will determine how well you perform," Shea said. "5% is the hard skills, data and science. All the rest of it—the squishy stuff—will determine if you make a dent in the market."



**"I see AI and ML making it much easier for me to spot trends, identify potential risks and quantify opportunities. The hardest part of these exercises is gathering, collating and culling the data needed to conduct the exercises in the first place!"**

— Senior Product Manager, PMC-III

**"Providing more user/customer insights via data usage patterns that can help guide customer research and market insights/trends. Helping product leaders to spot new market problems or design retention plans."**

— Director of Marketing, PMC-III

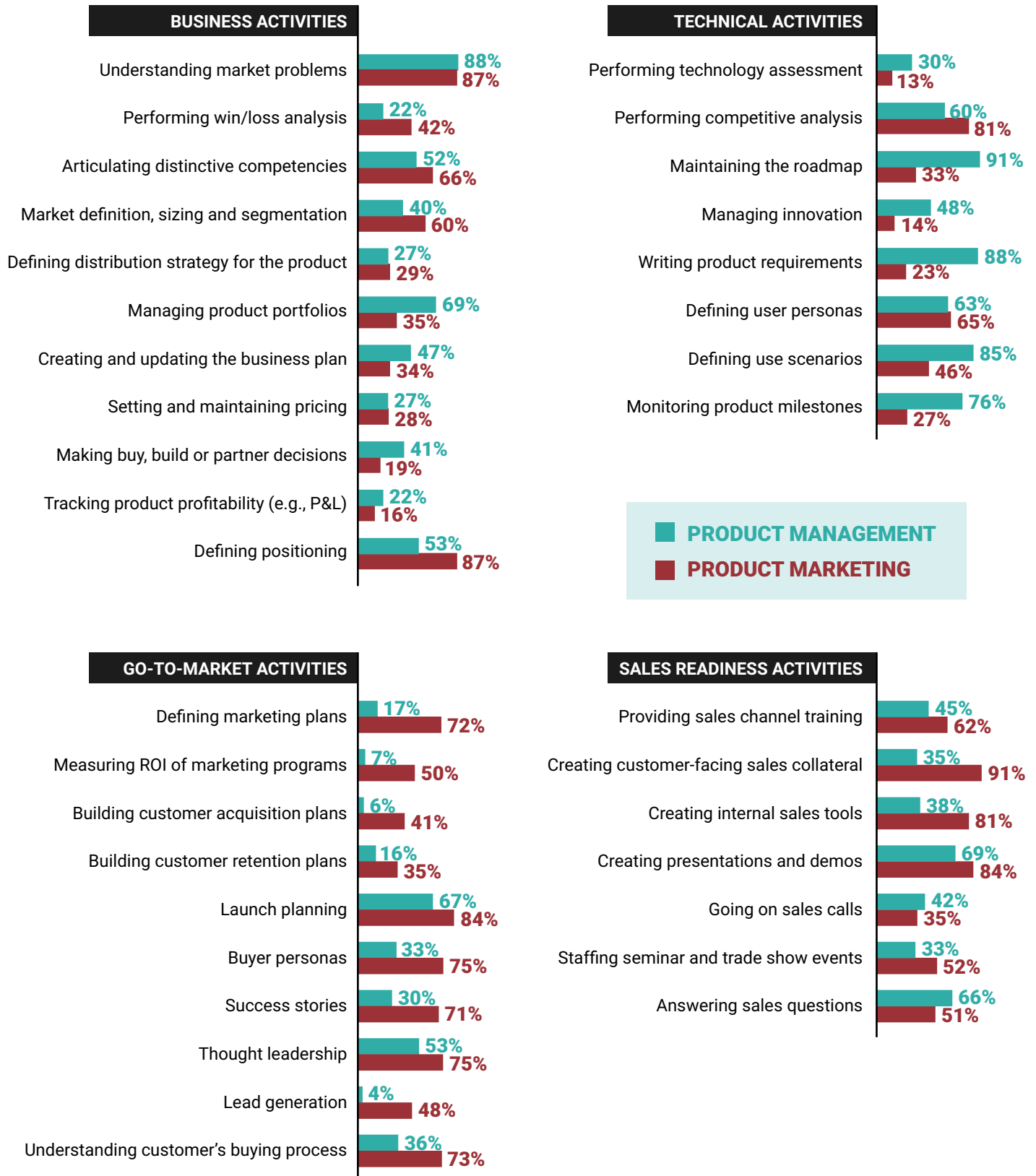
**"With the proper implementation of AI we can flip the 80/20 model from 80% tactical to 80% strategic."**

— Product Manager

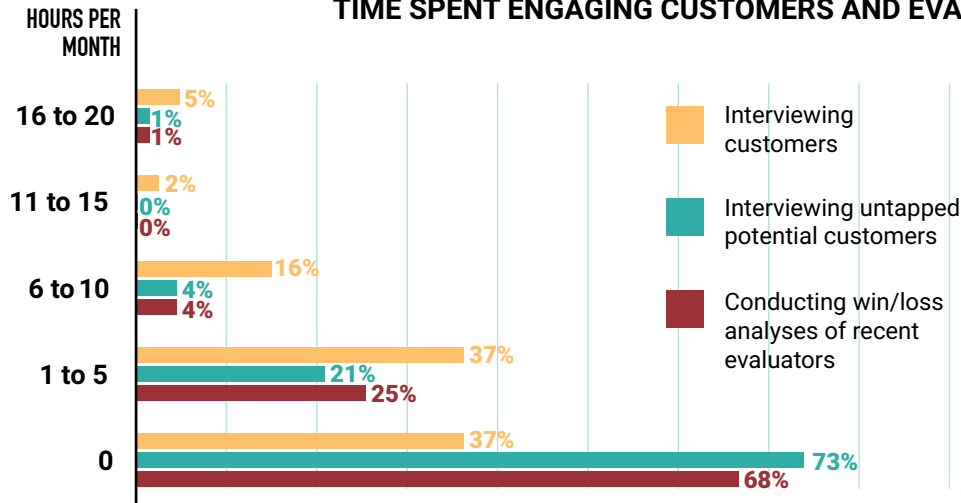


# Activities

Despite AI's abilities, it won't replace product professionals. Rather, it will develop areas where the astute product professional who knows how to use it will have that "aha" moment.

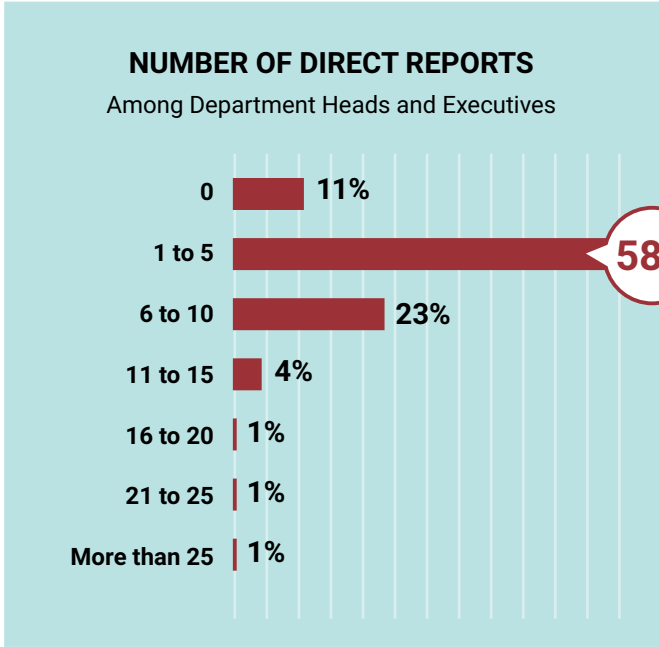


**TIME SPENT ENGAGING CUSTOMERS AND EVALUATORS**



Customer and evaluator feedback is critical for making market-driven decisions. Yet the vast majority of respondents spend less than 5 hours a month gathering feedback.

**“Adequate staffing is critical for the future potential of the business.”**  
 — Product Manager, PMC-II



**EMPLOYEES BY DEPARTMENT**

For every **ONE** product manager there is:

Engineers/developers		<b>7.1</b>
Salespeople		<b>5.3</b>
Sales engineers or pre-sales consultants		<b>1</b>
Engineering/development manager		<b>1</b>
Quality assurance		0.9
Project management		0.6
Product marketing		0.4
Business/systems analyst		0.4
Product-level architects or designers		0.4
Marketing communications		0.3
Product owners		0.3
UI/UX/human computing designers		0.2
Data scientists		0.2

**“For the past several years we have achieved our goals. Please realize that we also need a significant increase in staffing to continue to support such aggressive growth targets.”**  
 — Product Manager

# Salary

WHEN LOOKING AT HOW PAY STACKS UP IN THIS YEAR'S SURVEY, it's important to remember that several factors affect employers' compensation plans. Company characteristics like industry, size and its philosophy about why it pays what it pays all factor in—and ignoring those company-specific factors can produce misleading generalizations, according to Catherine Hartmann, a compensation expert with global consulting firm Willis Towers Watson.

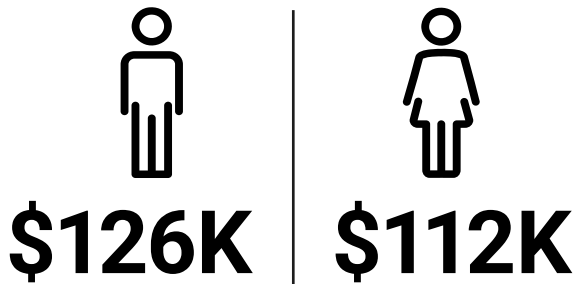
"We are finding more and more that an employer's compensation philosophy influences where the numbers come out," Hartmann said. "They are thinking more strategically with their compensation."

Overall, Hartmann said the numbers in this year's survey follow national trends. The overall average salary was \$120,633, with male respondents averaging \$126,044 and female respondents averaging \$112,189. All salaries shown are in U.S. dollars.

**"Empower women in this company. Empower young leaders. Empower the product team beyond having a weekly meeting with us."**

— Product Manager, PMC-III

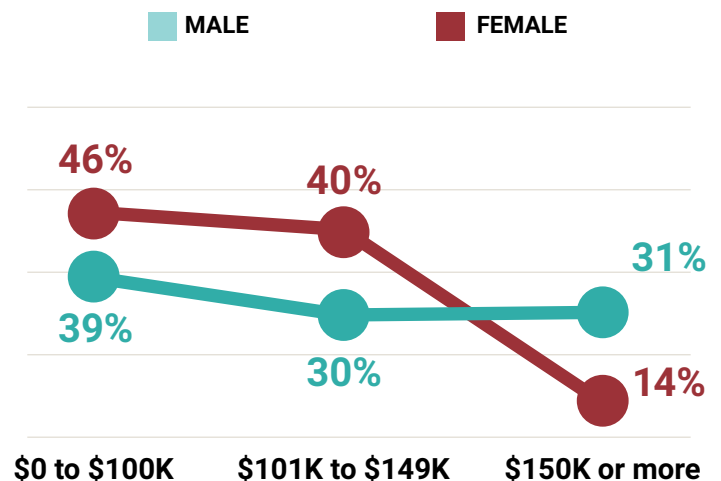
## AVERAGE SALARY BY GENDER



**"Align compensation based on value a product manager brings and spend more on marketing activities."**

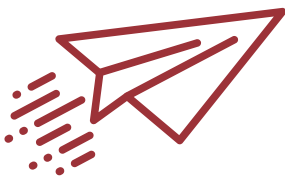
— Market Owner, PMC-IV

## SALARY BREAKDOWN



## SALARY BY ACTIVITIES

Average salary based on where respondents spend the majority of their time



Creating and executing go-to-market strategies for products (e.g., working with sales and marketing, channel support)

**\$118,571**



Deciding what should go in products (e.g., gathering requirements from the market, prioritizing, working with development)

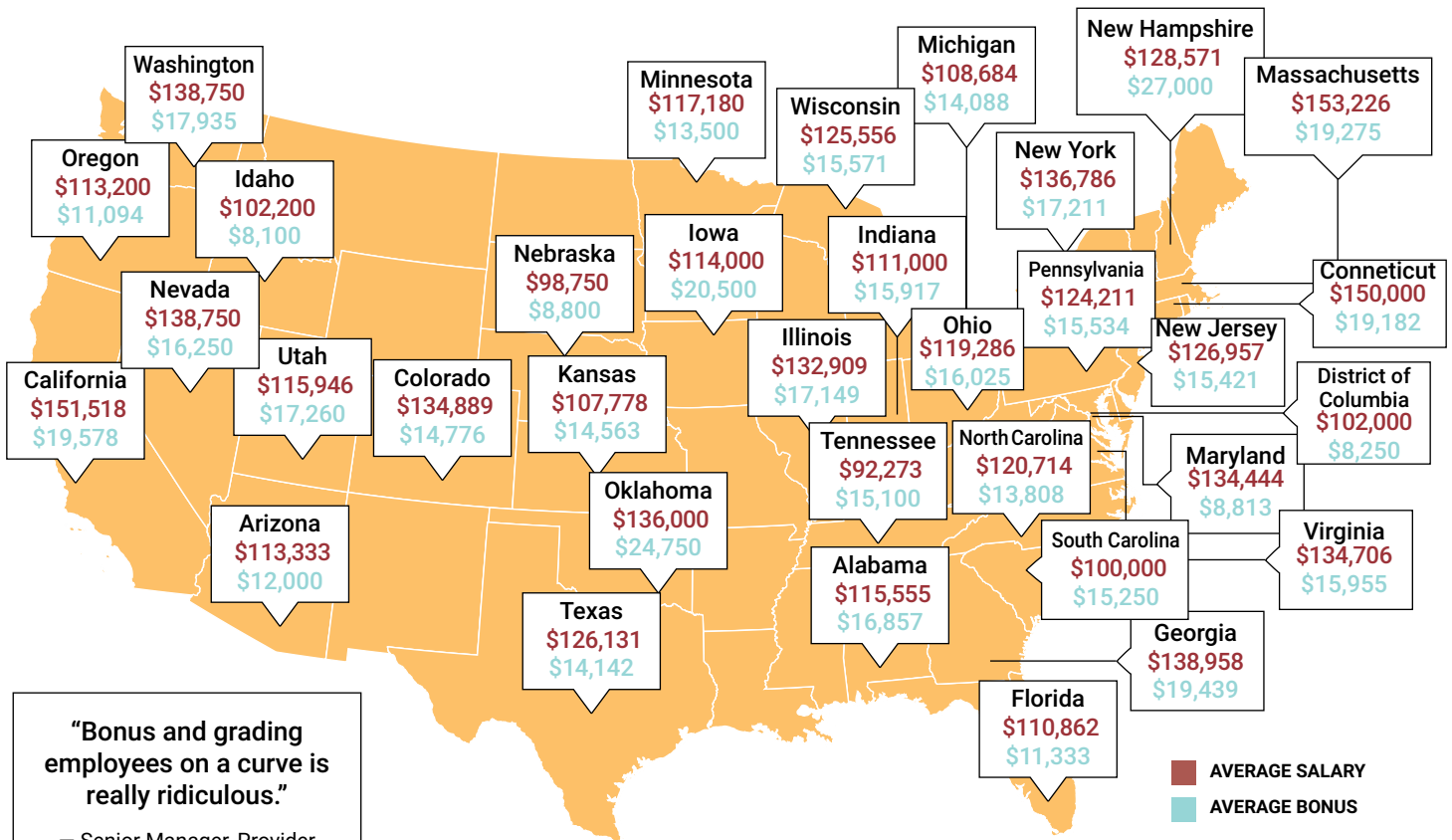
**\$117,829**

**"Focus on the product rather than getting caught up in the politically correct trend of the day."**

— Product Manager-  
Aftermarket Marketing

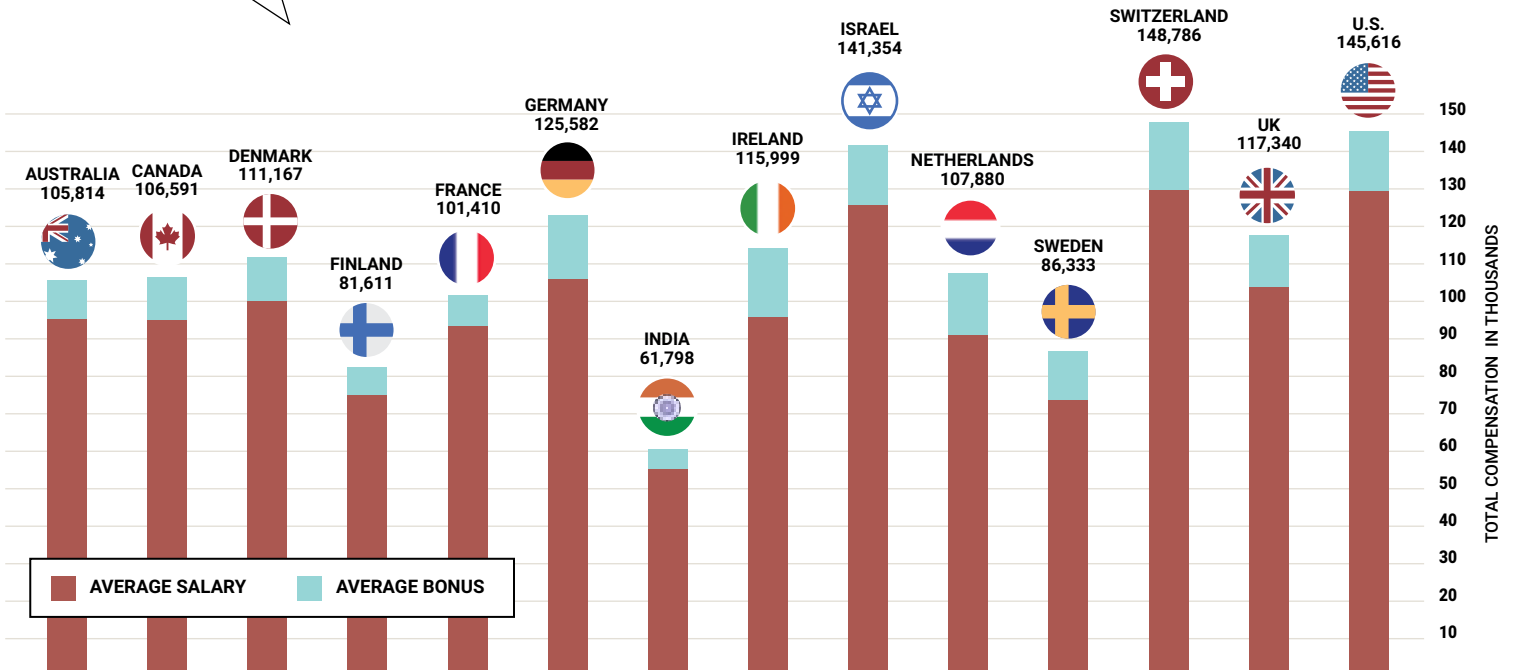
## SALARY BY STATE

As with most professions, salaries average higher on the coasts, with Massachusetts (\$153,200), California (\$151,500) and Connecticut (\$150,000) leading the way. Hartmann said there are some hot spots inland, such as Dallas, Houston, Austin and Denver. "Generally, it takes only one or two high-paying companies entering the market to cause a hot spot," she said.



"Bonus and grading employees on a curve is really ridiculous."  
 — Senior Manager, Provider Portfolio Marketing, PMC-III

## SALARY BY COUNTRY

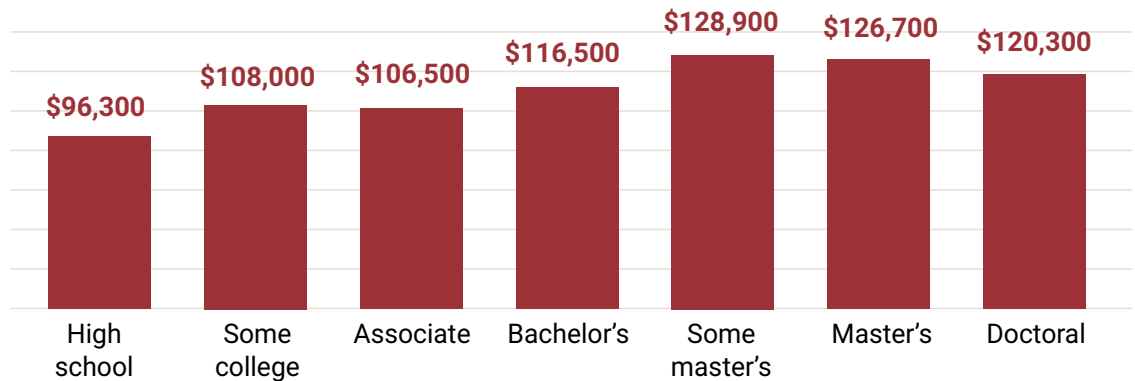


## WHAT YOU'RE WORTH

There also is a difference in pay from the lowest level of education in the survey to the highest-paying category. Respondents with completed master's degrees averaged slightly less than those with "some master's," while doctorates averaged about \$8,000 less—possibly affected by a smaller sample size.



### SALARY BY EDUCATION

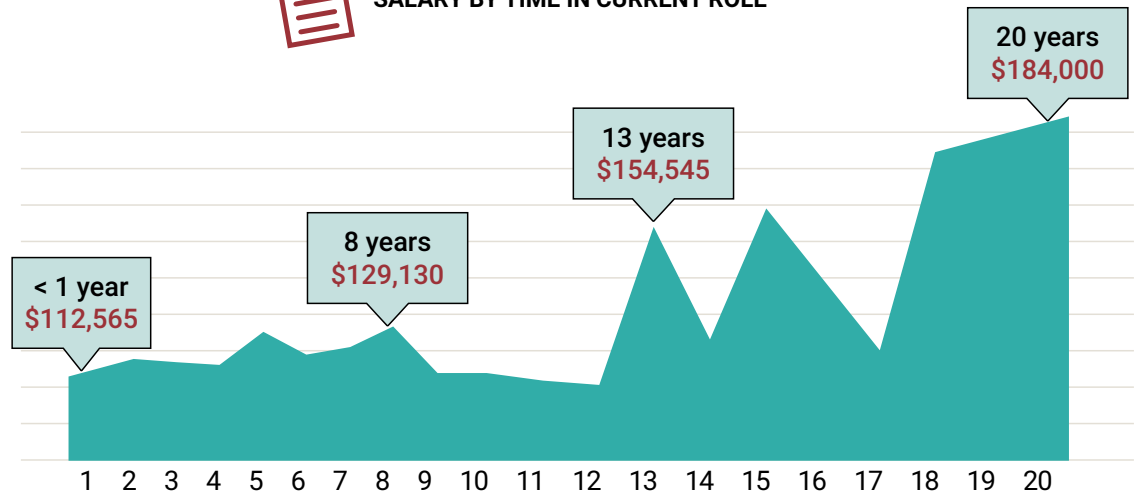


### Average salary based on number of years in current role

Not surprisingly, there is a sizeable difference from respondents new to their current role to those who have been in their position the longest.



### SALARY BY TIME IN CURRENT ROLE



### THE MORE PEOPLE ARE PAID, THE MORE SATISFIED THEY ARE:

"Total rewards (compensation packages that include benefits such as healthcare, retirement investment, work-life balance, flexible work arrangements) are important," Hartmann said, "but competitive pay is still the major driver. It's what makes people take jobs and leave jobs."



**Very satisfied**  
\$146,400



**Satisfied**  
\$121,592



**Somewhat dissatisfied**  
\$106,601



**Very dissatisfied**  
\$100,698

# Product's Point of View

Respondents had a lot to say in response to the question, "If you could say one thing to your CEO without fear of retribution, what would it be?" Here are some additional insights into the minds of today's professionals.



## A Look Forward

**ON THE SURFACE, THE RESULTS OF THIS YEAR'S SURVEY** seem similar to past years' results. However, a deeper dive shows that product management and product marketing are developing and growing as professions, requiring today's professionals to also develop and grow.

For example, this year's respondents reported having more professional certifications than in 2018, thus reflecting an increased focus on professional development. Likewise, 83% of respondents said continuing education and certifications are either "somewhat" or "very" important to their future career growth, compared with 79% of last year's respondents.

And, while the expected effects of artificial intelligence and machine learning aren't viewed the same among participants, advancing technology and demands on time are undeniable. For companies to not only survive but also thrive in a changing world, product professionals must arm themselves with an understanding of and appreciation for data and how it can be leveraged to make better decisions.

Pragmatic Institute thanks this year's respondents for participating in the 2019 *Annual Product Management and Product Marketing Survey*. The insights gained continue to support this survey's reputation as not only the longest-running, but also the most credible report in the profession.



## About Pragmatic Institute

Pragmatic Institute is the world's leading authority on product management, product marketing and data science. Founded in 1993, the company's courses—taught by accomplished product professionals with real-world experience—are based on a proven framework for creating market- and data-driven products people want to buy. With more than 150,000 alumni around the world, Pragmatic Institute has created one of the largest and most prestigious product communities in the world. For more information about our public, online or onsite training, visit [PragmaticInstitute.com](https://PragmaticInstitute.com) or call 480-515-1411.



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