Ian Whiscombe - Product Manager

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Product manager with five years of end-to-end product experience. Shipped seven products across job boards, B2B SaaS and AI tooling, sustained over 150 B2B customers, and ran a stock-ordering app pilot that cut food waste by 10%. I've owned every stage myself, from discovery and validation through pricing and growth to knowing when to pivot or sunset. Now I want what a product team gives you that I can't get alone: peers who challenge your decisions, an established product practice to build on, and problems at a scale one person can't reach.

I work fluently with AI tools across the product process, using them to accelerate discovery, build quick prototypes, and test the riskiest assumptions against working software before backing a direction. I formalised these foundations with the King's College Product Management Career Accelerator (Distinction).

Behind the product work sits over a decade in senior operational leadership, where I scaled processes and aligned teams to deliver measurable outcomes, including a £250m P&L at Majestic Wine. I pair that with a hands-on approach to continuous learning, through rapid, functional and fun side builds.

KEY SKILLS

Product: Product strategy, roadmap prioritisation, continuous discovery, MVP validation, go-to-market, pricing strategy, product-market fit, experimentation & A/B testing, usability testing, two-sided marketplace design, layered metrics design, AI-assisted product management.

Tools: Jira, Notion, Confluence, Google Analytics, PostHog, Hotjar, Miro, Balsamiq.

Technical: AI-assisted development & prototyping (Claude Code, Claude Design, AI Studio), workflow automation (Zapier, Make), Front-end web development, GitHub, Supabase, Stripe, Webflow, APIs.

Process & Leadership: Agile delivery, stakeholder management, influence without authority, cross-functional leadership, incident response, team coaching.

PRODUCT EXPERIENCE

Founder & Product Manager at Wine Jobs UK (2022 - present)

- Ran end-to-end product discovery and built the platform, scaling the two-sided marketplace to 10,000+ monthly job seekers and 150+ paying employers (30% repeat rate).
- Grew conversion by 15%, restructuring complex pricing into three tiers, driven by qualitative user research.
- Replicated the growth playbook across four more verticals, rebuilding a combined 14k+ monthly users, 23k+ monthly page views and 36k+ social followers. The demand side scaled repeatably; paying employers didn't transfer, so I'm now testing a job-seeker revenue model.
- Automated marketing, customer service, and end-to-end operations so the business now runs hands-off.

Co-Founder & Product Manager at StockBuddy (2022 - 2025)

- Drove the zero-to-one development of a predictive stock-ordering product for restaurant chains, designed to reduce food waste.
- Secured a two-site MVP pilot with a major hospitality client (900+ global sites), defining waste reduction as the primary success metric.
- Delivered a 10% per-site waste reduction during the pilot. User observation revealed that empowering junior staff to execute orders reclaimed manager time for team coaching.

- Executed an evidence-based product sunset after continuous discovery revealed rapid AI commoditisation and feature integration by incumbent hospitality platforms.

Freelance Product Builder & Web Developer (2022 - present)

- Managed the end-to-end product lifecycle for over 30 small-business clients, taking web products from discovery to launch on an average four-week cycle.
- Directed a strategic digital pivot for an executive coaching consultancy, aligning UX and content hierarchy with new business goals to generate a 15% increase in post-launch inbound enquiries.
- Established post-launch feedback loops via analytics integration, driving iterative, data-led product improvements rather than relying on assumption-based design.

SELECTED PRODUCT PROJECTS

AI Document Transcription Tool - Family History Society (2026)

- Audited legacy workflows to define the problem space, then designed and launched a web application that converts old handwritten records into searchable text for the society's members.
- Accelerated delivery using AI-assisted development to prototype and deploy a Python backend, leveraging Gemini API and palaeography prompts to overcome OCR limits.
- Designed and deployed a front-end portal for the society's 'human-in-the-loop' verification process, continuously refining the UX based on feedback to deliver an estimated 90% reduction in transcription time across 2,000 records.

Sky Voice Assistant - Product Accelerator Capstone at King's College London (2025)

- Led product discovery and design within a cross-functional King's College team of six on a live Sky/Comcast brief, scoping the evolution of Sky OS voice control into an accessibility-first conversational assistant.
- Evaluated 73 opportunities against desirability, viability, and feasibility. Deprioritised one of the three top-scoring features to maintain focus on a validatable MVP, a pivot Sky stakeholders commended as a 'smart balance between current and future thinking'.
- Designed a layered metrics framework (Voice Preference Score plus 3 leading indicators), praised by Sky reviewers as 'clear, focused' and demonstrating 'careful thought about how success should be measured'.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Head of Operational Incident Management at UKHSA (2020 - 2022)

- Led a 6-person response team to ensure the reliability of the UK's COVID-19 testing operations, resolving daily high-severity incidents at a national scale.
- Influenced without authority to secure cross-functional buy-in, collaborating with internal departments and contractors on bespoke response protocols that reduced incident stand-up time by 60–75%.
- Built a shared triage framework enabling junior team members to independently classify incidents and allocate responders, eliminating sequential bottlenecks in incident stand-ups.
- Managed the incident response system as a product, utilising post-incident retrospectives to continuously iterate on triage flows, SLAs, and stakeholder communications.

Head of Operations & Retail at Majestic Wine (2016 - 2019)

- Managed a £250m annual P&L and 12-person regional team across 212 stores in the UK and France, establishing a quarterly experimentation cadence to validate initiatives before national rollout.
- Led the requirements-to-adoption rollout for enterprise stock and CRM systems, delivered £1.5m in annualised cost savings and secured a 2019 Retail Week Awards shortlist nomination.
- Bridged the gap between user research and third-party engineering by translating frontline operator feedback into actionable, vendor-facing CRM requirements.

Regional Manager at Majestic Wine (2012 - 2016)

- Turned around an underperforming 20-store, 90-person region, delivering 15% like-for-like sales growth and £25m in annual revenue, diagnosing root causes from data and scaling only what proved measurable lift.
- Aligned staffing to trading patterns, ran targeted sales competitions, and tailored each store's range to its local customer base.

QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING

Product Manager Career Accelerator (Distinction) King's College London (2025)
Full-Stack Web Developer Bootcamp The Jump Digital School, London (2020)
BA History University of Essex

CONTINUOUS LEARNING & PERSONAL PROJECTS

I love growing my technical capabilities by building and deploying apps to solve everyday problems and create moments of fun. Recent projects include an automated garden frost-warning app, a clear sky star gazing app, a bespoke bilingual word game, a 3D game and a one person job board, all built to test new tools, APIs and practical workflow automations (and to help family and friends).