Harald Kirschner

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Summary

Customer-obsessed, deeply technical, and collaborative product leader. Two decades track record in product management, developer tools, design, platforms, data analytics, and open source. His super power is connecting the dots between user, developer, partner, business, and technology needs into one clear product vision and hypothesis-driven execution from 0-1-2.

Highlights

Curious, analytical & creative
Quant/qual research practitioner
Public speaker & writer
Fullstack engineering background
Open-source community builder
Prototyper and code contributor

Experience

Microsoft, Developer Division, VS Code

Principal Product Manager, VS Code & GH Copilot — Aug 2023 – Now

Strategy and execution on GitHub Copilot Chat in VS Code.

- Key partner in launching the technical preview (and later GA) of Copilot Chat in VS Code, coordinated with multiple teams across GitHub and Microsoft.
- Drove the development and launch of key GitHub Copilot features in VS Code, including custom instructions, knowledge bases, code review, codebase context, and multi-model/multi-modal AI capabilities, directly boosting developer productivity, enterprise-readyness and adoption.
- Established a comprehensive feedback ecosystem for GitHub Copilot in VS Code, integrating user surveys, issue reporting, sales/support reports, and advocacy inputs to prioritize high-impact roadmap initiatives and improve product quality.
- Led investments in telemetry, experimentation, AI experience metrics, and dashboards to drive data-informed innovation in foundational AI domains (e.g., LLMs, RAG, RAI, UX), ensuring iterative product improvements aligned with user needs.
- Owned Rhythm of Business updates on VS Code's Copilot OKRs, workstreams, research, etc.
- Showcased GitHub Copilot innovations in VS Code through high-impact presentations, including GitHub Universe keynotes and industry events, driving awareness and adoption among millions of developers.

Senior Product Manager, VS Code — Oct 2020 – Aug 2023

Owned user and GitHub growth for VS Code.

- Lead VS Code's new-user onboarding experience with a new "Getting Started" flow that directly drove growth for core VS Code, strategic user segments (students), GitHub sign ups, and partner extension teams. Later applied these learnings to GitHub Copilot's getting started.
- Spearheaded product-led growth for GitHub adoption in VS Code, driving cross-team collaboration to integrate key GitHub initiatives (e.g., actions, security, enterprise) and optimizing onboarding flows to improve developer retention and engagement.
- Build out user and market research insights for VS Code with data from across Microsoft and partners to bring industry and competitor trends into the roadmap planning.
- Drove a data-informed culture by building out the user telemetry and experimentation platform for VS Code and the web properties – enabling usage correlation analysis, PLG work and a/b-driven core product iteration.

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- Lead the addition VS Code in the Microsoft MVP program to build out our community-driven advocacy, and seeded the first community members into the program.
- Represented the team's work with presentations and keynote contributions at GitHub Universe, Microsoft Build, VS Code live streams.

Mozilla

Staff Product Manager, Developer Experience — Aug 2017 – Aug 2020

Owned vision and strategy for Firefox's cross-organizational Developer Experience (DX).

- Led a data-informed retention-focused growth strategy for Firefox DevTools (17mil MAU); successfully stopping user decline.
- Managed a multi-product portfolio that balanced inbound and outbound channels from users, community, engineers, leadership, platform, browser vendors, and partners.
- Expanded the DX program into partner integrations (e.g. VS Code, Cypress), automation/testing (e.g. Puppeteer, WebDriver), and content growth loops (Firefox Profiler).
- Built out in-product surveys and analytics (behavior, quality, and satisfaction) to drive a data-informed process across the full product lifecycle.

Manager, Platform Product Intelligence — Feb 2016 – Aug 2017

Led organization-wide performance KPIs for the 2x faster Firefox Quantum release.

- Coordinated exploration and validation of user-centric performance metrics.
- Led the initial development of https://health.graphics as the leadership-approved KPI dashboard (later continued by release management as diagnostics dashboard).
- Supported marketing to create user-centric performance narratives and assets.

Manager, Platform Partner Engineering — Oct 2011 – Feb 2016

Managed entrepreneurial engineering work that solved challenges at the intersection of business & innovation.

- Enabling key global applications (*Facebook, Pinterest, etc*) and games (*Cut the Rope, Disney*) to integrate with Firefox OS and as Open Web Apps (aka PWAs).
- Supported partner outreach for Mozilla's Game Initiative, driving early adoption of asm.js/WASM.

Poken *(by GES)* Lead, Product Engineering — Aug 2009 – Oct 2011

Leading end-to-end product development lifecycle for Poken's web front-end and partner integrations.

Education

Dipl.-Ing. (FH)[1], Multimedia Engineering — 2009
Hochschule Mittweida, Germany

[1] B.S. equivalent