# Solving the PM Interview

Definitions

# What Is a Software Product?

PRODUCT TEACHER
Unlocking Positive Impact

# What is a software product?

Digital software products are offerings like:

- Mobile apps (e.g. Candy Crush)
- Social media (e.g. TikTok)
- Productivity platforms (e.g. Salesforce)
- Integrations and plugins (e.g. Shopify)

Digital products have **high fixed cost** due to engineering, but have **zero variable cost** for production and distribution
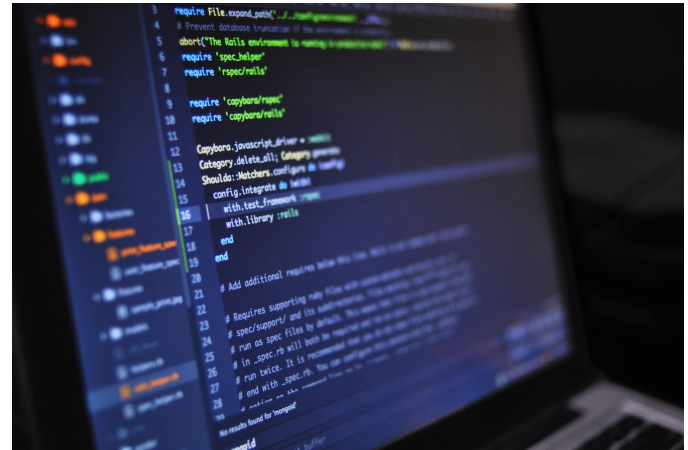
# Why are software products different?

Physical products have to deal with these all the time:
- Competing for limited shelf space
- Dealing with inventory management and breakage
- Recalls for flaws
- Getting customers to upgrade is difficult

With software products:
- Build something once, and you can ship it to all of your users simultaneously
- Iterate quickly and ship updates without worrying about outdated inventory
- Craft different flavors of your product for different audience segments
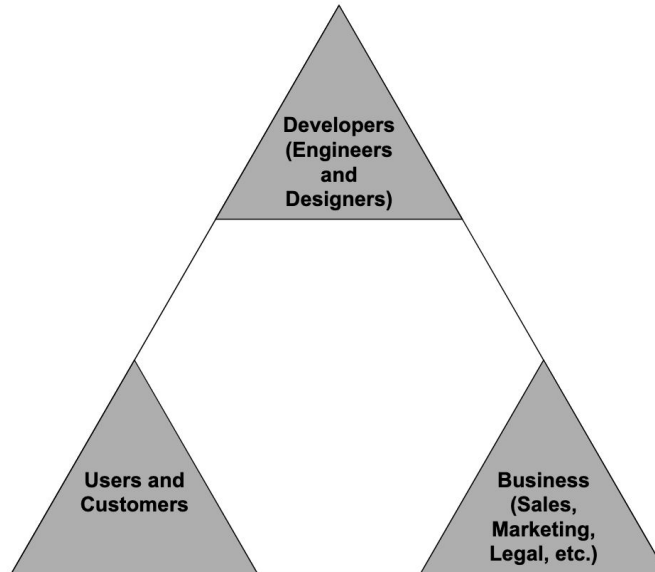
# What Is a Product Manager?

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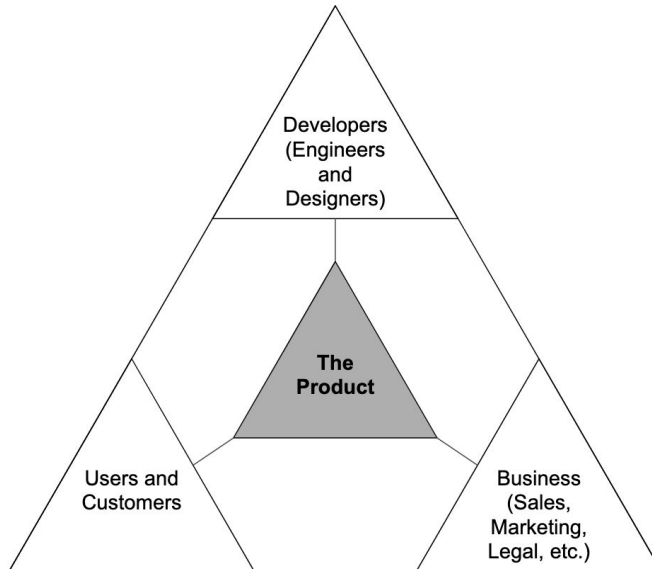
# What's the value of a product manager?

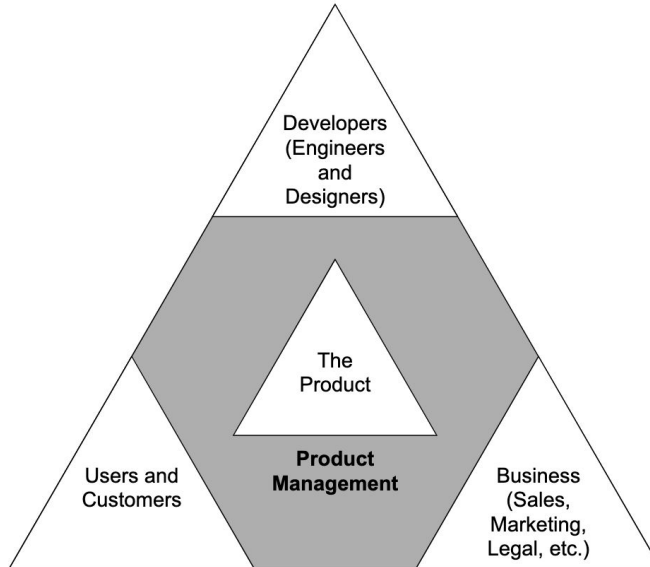Here's what the world looks like without any product managers

# What's the value of a product manager?

The product solves the pain of these three groups

# What's the value of a product manager?

And the product manager fills the white space between the product and the three groups

# What work do product managers do?

What does a typical day look like for a product manager?
- Meetings, to drive decisions and alignment
- Low-level work, such as specs and note-taking
- High-level work, such as roadmaps, pricing, and competitive positioning

*Every day is different because you're filling the white space.*

# What work do product managers do?

Product managers have two hats: coach and janitor.

As a *coach*:
- Empower stakeholders and teammates to deliver the highest possible value
- Define what problem to solve, for who, and why

As a *janitor*:
- Keep the show running and unblock teammates
- Shield teammates from blame and pressure
- Tackle the work that no one else is doing (e.g. note-taking, meetings, bug triage)