

AI BEYOND THE HYPE

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That
Count**

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NIKKI AHMADI

is a cloud and software product Director who works with a global team of talented engineers and architects in designing and implementing innovative solutions from product inception to production. After spending over a decade working in product engineering and management for multimillion dollar technology and start-up companies, Nikki believes what truly drives innovation is not only a commitment to technological breakthroughs but also people's passion in improving everyday lives by building products that leave a lasting impact, disrupt the industry, and are vehicles of change, while providing the best user experience.

When Nikki isn't working on her next big product release or entrepreneurial endeavors she is spending much needed time with friends and family discussing the latest politics, or simply the meaning of life. She's an adventurous traveler who also enjoys capturing moments through photography.

Nikki also holds a B.S. in Computer Engineering , M.S. in Electrical Engineering and has a corporate innovation certificate as part of the LEAD program.

FOREWORD BY THE HOST

Artificial intelligence revolution has already started and it's transformed several industries. It has already started to change our world, the way we work, the way we form relationships, the way we live, collaborate, decide and act as a society. Ultimately changing how we interact with 'things' around us

Have you ever caught yourself saying Thank you to your smart home device?

With all the excitement and hype about AI, it can be difficult to see how it is affecting our lives from moment to moment. Throughout this series, I wanted to explore the real use cases of AI across diverse industries and cover some of the tough questions around ethics, privacy, accessibility and benefits to name a few.

**Universal Electronics Director of Product -
Cloud & Software**

NIKKI AHMADI

AI BEYOND THE HYPE - PERSPECTIVE #1

FMR TINDER CPO ON AI PRODUCTS

We recently sat down with fmr Tinder CPO, Ravi Mehta, to discuss personalization in product with artificial intelligence (AI). Not only did the episode delve into how AI is improving the algorithms on apps like Tinder, but it covers concerns of trust and privacy as it pertains to AI.

Fmr Tinder CPO, Ravi Mehta, and Product Talk host, Nikki Ahmadi, talked about AI products and how they can bring incredible levels of personalization to the products we're building. You can listen to the full episode of Product Talk above. A few highlights of the episode are available to you below.

ON HOW AI PRODUCTS HAVE EVOLVED OVER HIS CAREER

The possibilities of AI products are only going to continue to grow as the technology improves and the barrier of entry is lowered.

"The scope of problems that you can solve is much wider. The quality of results is significantly better. And today in AI, we're doing things that I didn't think would be possible in our lifetimes. Self-driving cars, facial recognition, content moderation, video moderation. So, all of those things have really come into play. Because the scope of AI problems has fundamentally changed. We now have the processing horsepower to solve those problems."

ON HOW TINDER USES AI


It's always helpful to understand the real-life applications of AI in products. Especially when it's the favorite product of our founder, SC Moatti.

"There are multiple places within the system that Tinder uses AI today. The first one, which I think people are very familiar



RAVI MEHTA
Tinder fmr
Chief Product Officer

RAVI MEHTA IS THE FOUNDER AND CREATOR OF SLIDEVANA, A TOOLKIT DESIGNED TO HELP PRESENTERS CREATE PROFESSIONAL LOOKING PRESENTATIONS IN SIGNIFICANTLY LESS TIME. HE'S ALSO AN ANGEL INVESTOR AND ADVISOR PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON CONSUMER TECH COMPANIES. PRIOR TO DOING THAT, HE SERVED AS THE CPO AT TINDER AND WAS A PRODUCT LEADER AT FACEBOOK, TRIPADVISOR AND XBOX. RAVI HOLDS AN MBA FROM MIT SLOAN AND A BS IN COMPUTER ENGINEERING FOR BOSTON UNIVERSITY.



with is the recommendation algorithm. So, when you open up Tinder as a single user, Tinder has to figure out who are the people to show you so out of the entire universe of people that are on the app right now. Who are the people that you're most likely to swipe right on? Tinder's recommendation algorithm goes through a process and measures a number of different factors to make sure that you're seeing people who you're likely to swipe right on and who are also likely to swipe right on you. So that for each swipe that you do within the system, you're likely to get a really positive social outcome. And the API for that has continually gotten better over time as the number of users has increased, as well as the number of signals that we have about users has increased.


Other really interesting ways that Tinder is using AI is in content moderation and safety. So, these are two worlds where we're combining uses of AI to provide a better, safer, less toxic experience for people on the platform."


PERSONALIZATION IN PRODUCT IS POSSIBLE WHEN THESE THINGS ARE ACHIEVED

AI can make our products feel more personal. Here's how:

"I think one of the things that we're seeing today is that the amount of information that users are sharing is rapidly increasing. And that, for many companies, is opening up opportunities but also potentially creating risks are creating challenges in terms of how users perceive a company is using that data. There are two things that are really important in terms of building trust with the user from the perspective of how their data is being used.

The first one is, are you using that data in a way that improves the user's experience? One thing I've seen, especially in the last three or four years with conversations with younger users, is that people do understand that they're sharing a lot, they do understand that these companies are going to use that data. Now with voice assistance, people know that their voices are being recorded. And so there is this overall understanding that there is, you know, potentially less privacy than there was before. But there's an implied contract there.





People are okay with that exchange, as long as they're getting value from it. So, if ultimately the sharing of information from a user to a company results in that user having a better experience, then they feel good about it. And if they don't value the thing that they're getting in return, they can walk away from the product. I think the first thing where companies get into trouble is by using that data in a way that benefits the company but doesn't benefit the user. And those are cases where users do feel violated."

ON THE VALUE PRODUCTS DELIVER WITH AI

Great product managers know what kind of value their products are delivering to customers.


"It's really up to app developers to figure out what is the thing within our app is delivering value. It could be social value, entertainment value, other types of value to the user. Then, build a subscription product or microtransaction products based on that value."

ON ADVICE FOR PRODUCT LEADERS

Customer empathy is one of the most important traits of a great product leader.

"Product management is empathy. And I think that's really important for us as tech leaders and product leaders. Ultimately, the products that we're creating are having a pretty profound impact on people's lives. How they communicate, what they think, the news that they see, how they relax. All of those things are, you know, firmly in the hands of tech leaders.

It's really important that we not just build to increase the short term results that our company is trying to optimize for, but build from a very empathetic standpoint so that we're creating products that are truly in long-termly, durably, valuable to people, and that ultimately improve their lives. So that's the thing I would leave people with. It's really our responsibility to do that. And by doing that, I think it's both the right thing for our users as well as the right thing for the industry and the businesses that we're in."



AI BEYOND THE HYPE - PERSPECTIVE #2

DEMOCRATIZING AI PRODUCTS

We recently sat down with Microsoft Central Product Management, Mixed Reality & Artificial Intelligence Engineering, Nate Yohannes, to discuss the democratization of AI products. It's an awesome conversation for anyone interested in learning about how we can lower the barrier to entry for AI products.

Building AI products isn't necessarily what Nate Yohannes set out to do from the start. In fact, he's a New York licensed attorney. However, it's now his mission to democratize AI technology and put it into the hand of millions, if not billions, of people. You can listen to the full episode of Product Talk on iTunes or Spotify.

UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE MOVE THROUGH THE WORLD

Yohannes and his team understand that whether it's a person with a disability, or a task anyone faces in everyday life, it's important to consider how people interact with the world. That's an important viewpoint for **A GREAT PRODUCT MANAGER** to have.

"One of our lead PMs on our fixtures access team who's helping us use facial recognition and biometrics to go through the journey of buildings and infrastructure. He actually is missing an arm. So he always articulates how holding a laptop or in a cup of coffee and looking for this key tag had been a hinder to his life because of the fact that he only has one arm. And so we think about a lens of computer vision, helping us reason through people to get to providing us access into buildings.

When I think about it from the lens of document extraction and filling in forms. There are millions and millions of forms out there that require a lot of manual labor of lift and shift from one document to another. But what if we just had object character recognition, extracting data from these documents and entering them into forms? You know, these are not the most exotic use cases around computer vision. But these are ones that we need to democratize first."



NATE YOHANNES

Microsoft Director of Central Product Management, Mixed Reality & Artificial Intelligence Engineering

NATE YOHANNES IS THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL PRODUCT MANAGEMENT, MIXED REALITY & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ENGINEERING. AFTER AN AMAZING STINT ON THE TEAM LEADING THE LARGEST AI BUSINESS DEALS, YOHANNES TRANSITIONED TO MICROSOFT'S CLOUD & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ENGINEERING GROUP. AS A MEMBER OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM, HE LEADS THEIR CENTRAL EFFORTS OF PRODUCT STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT ACROSS AI COGNITIVE SERVICES AND MIXED REALITY: SPEECH, COMPUTER VISION, LANGUAGE TRANSLATION, MIX REALITY CLOUD.

AI PRODUCTS CAN HELP US TEAR DOWN THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

According to Yohannes, one of the biggest challenges we face is that of a language gap.

“We can democratize and break down the barriers of language. I think that’s one of the biggest barriers that we all face is our inability to communicate across different borders across the world because of the language gap. And I inherently believe that once we break the language barrier down, it will open up net new billions or even trillions of dollars worth of commerce and cash. But all this was net new ideas for us to advance human ingenuity. So that’s one of the things I’m thinking about every single day.”

IT’S IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN TRUST AND PRIVACY

Microsoft, Amazon, Google and many other businesses are building AI products. Yohannes notes that for his team at Microsoft, maintaining trust and privacy is essential.

“How do you create net new business models around this, while respecting the privacy of the end customer and their data? And at Microsoft, we run on trust and privacy. And we want to make sure that when we’re working with customers, that their data is always going to be their data unless you know there is an explicit or implied agreement. But we talked on the notion that we run on trust as well as the fact that that a lot of customers are, as they transform their businesses to an AI-first, cloud-first business, look at net new ways to drop and commercialize a software business model.”

ON ETHICS IN AI PRODUCTS

For all the conspiracy theorists and real fears around AI, it’s nice to know that people like Yohannes are out there with the best intentions in mind.

“These are some of the best and brightest people, their designers as well as ethicists, whether philosophers, as well as just some of the top tier engineers that are making sure that as a company within our product groups, that we’re following our sensible pillars in regards to facial recognition ethics. That’s really keeping us on our toes in regards to making sure that we think consciously about the greater good of society and try to mitigate as many unintended consequences as possible.

Let’s use this stuff to apply it in the most ethical manner as well. Use it to advance humans. But there are some bad actors out there that certainly will take advantage of technology not in the best way possible. And so I’m really, really, really cautious. And I want to always make sure, on the product side, that we’re not addressing a customer scenario, or we think is a big bet, based on dollars, but based on thinking about the greater good of society. It goes down to my principles. At the beginning, I think about my personal upbringing and my family as refugees and being victims of persecution and torture. I certainly don’t want to see technology apply that to other humans in a negative way possible.”

AI BEYOND THE HYPE - PERSPECTIVE #3

BUILDING AI PRODUCTS FOR THE HOME

We recently sat down with Universal Electronics SVP Product & Technology, Arsham Hatambeiki, to discuss building AI products for the home. It's an interesting discussion on how AI can improve your home life and the concerns that can arise with AI products.

You can listen to the entire conversation on building AI products for the home in Arsham Hatambeiki's episode of Product Talk. Otherwise, the highlights are detailed below:

ON THE FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUILDING AI PRODUCTS FOR THE HOME

It's important to consider this point when building AI products for the home.

"So like every other technology, it's usually not the hype that's making meaningful change. It's actually the implementation of technology. And overlooked areas, things as simple as when you buy a new device and you bring it home. How's your experience? How much time are you working to get the system working versus the system is there trying to help you get to do what you want to do?"

Whether it's watching your favorite show, or it's making the home a little bit warm or saving a little bit of energy, or just securing your home, or these simple use cases. It's a question of how much of your time can be saved for you and if you save enough time, and for big enough portion of the population and starts becoming meaningful."

ON THE ADVICE HE'D GIVE ANYONE BUILDING A PRODUCT

This is great advice whether you're building AI products for the home or any other product.

"Highlight differentiators. Iterate the key points of the product and stay away from work that can be achieved through partner-




ARSHAM HATAMBEIKI

**Universal Electronics SVP
Product & Technology**

ARSHAM HATAMBEIKI IS THE SVP OF PRODUCT & TECHNOLOGY AT UNIVERSAL ELECTRONICS. HE'S CONSTANTLY WORKING TOWARDS DEMOCRATIZING TECHNOLOGY THROUGH PRODUCT INNOVATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES; WITH RESEARCH BACKGROUND IN AREAS OF DATA COMMUNICATION NETWORKS SPECIFICALLY M2M COMMUNICATIONS (IOT) AND MACHINE LEARNING WITH SPECIAL PASSION FOR SMART HOME APPLICATIONS OF CONVERSATIONAL AI.





ships. Try to focus on what makes you different in the long run. That's where your value is. That's where the equity is."

ON WHAT MAKES A GREAT PRODUCT

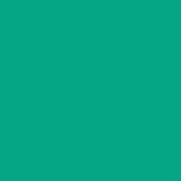
You really have to believe in your product for it to become great.

"A great product is something that you believe in that's scaling and increasing revenues and recognition. All the hype is great, but that fades quickly. You'll fail more than you'll succeed. The only way to push through that is if you wake up thinking, alright, this is worth it."

ON WHAT MAKES A GREAT PRODUCT MANAGER

The ability to listen is a recurring theme in the world of product and great product managers. Listen to your team, to your customers, just stop talking and listen.

"A product person needs to be able to communicate with many different backgrounds. Listen more than you communicate, always. Listen more than you say, always. Listening is not just hearing it's listening with context with what their background is. Read between the lines on what their actual need is versus what they're asking for, which is usually not representative of what they really need."



AI BEYOND THE HYPE - PERSPECTIVE #4

AI PRODUCTS AS A SERVICE

We recently sat down with Advanced Intelligent Systems CEO, Afshin Doust, to discuss viewing the AI products we build as a service. It's a great conversation for anyone curious about the future of AI.

You can catch the entire conversation with AIS CEO Afshin Doust on building AI products and viewing AI as a service in the full episode of Product Talk. Otherwise, the highlights are detailed for you below.

ON HIS LOVE FOR BUILDING AI PRODUCTS

For Doust, the ability to affect change in our world is a driving force.

"I love change, I love making technology accessible, and I love the impact technology's making on our lives. We see small kids being able to do things that scientists wouldn't have been able to do 20 years ago. So, when I see how things are more accessible, how the world around us is changing, and how we are impacting the quality of life of everyone through technology, that's what keeps me going and keeps me interested."

ON MACHINE AS A SERVICE

Building AI and framing it as a service is an interesting take from Doust.

"I get really excited when we talk about machine as a service. What we did was when we wanted to offer our services to nursery and greenhouse owners, we went out there and we asked what they were willing to pay for it. And one of the hesitations was, well, when it works, we would love to pay for it. But because it's a new technology, we don't know how well it's going to work and what the impact is going to be on our environment.



AFSHIN DOUST
Advanced Intelligent
Systems Inc. CEO

AFSHIN DOUST IS THE CEO AT ADVANCED INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS. HE IS A BIG BELIEVER IN EMPOWERING TEAMS TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS. AFSHIN LOVES NUMBERS, PEOPLE AND BUSINESS CHALLENGES. ADVANCED INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS STARTED WITH A TEAM OF TALENTED AND DEDICATED ENGINEERS FOCUSED ON THE DESIRE TO PROVIDE CUSTOM ROBOTIC SOLUTIONS TO INDUSTRIES FACED WITH AUTOMATION CHALLENGES, AND HAVE SINCE GROWN THE COMPANY TO COLLABORATE WITH FIVE UNIVERSITIES AND MANY INDUSTRY PARTNERS, UNITED IN A VISION TO CREATE INNOVATIONS IN AUTONOMOUS ROBOTS TO SOLVE LABOR SHORTAGE PROBLEMS.





So we said, okay, what if we charge you by the amount of impacts we create for you? I'll give you a very simple example. We went out there and we said, you pay a very small fee for licensing our technology on a monthly basis. And you pay for the amount of work it does, or the impact it creates in your environment.

Unless we choose the right customer to deploy our technology, we won't get paid because we will have to be able to conduct proper work and to create an impact in order to get paid for it. So, machine as a service is something that's enabled through our system, where we can see what we're doing for the customer, how we are helping their bottom line, and how we build them for that impact is created on their bottom line."

ON WHAT MAKES A GREAT AI PRODUCT

The same basic tenants of a great product also apply to building AI products.

"I think a great product has to have impact, but it has to be practical. It shouldn't lose its novelty and it should be a pleasure to use. You should also alleviate a real pain and add real value to people lives."

ON WHAT MAKES A GREAT PRODUCT MANAGER

It takes a special person to be a great product manager.

"They have to have talked the talk and walked the walk, and they should be able to understand the processes and the pain points in different environments so they can produce a product that will hit the bullseye, and will be something exciting to use and will be something that's a pleasure to use."



ABOUT US

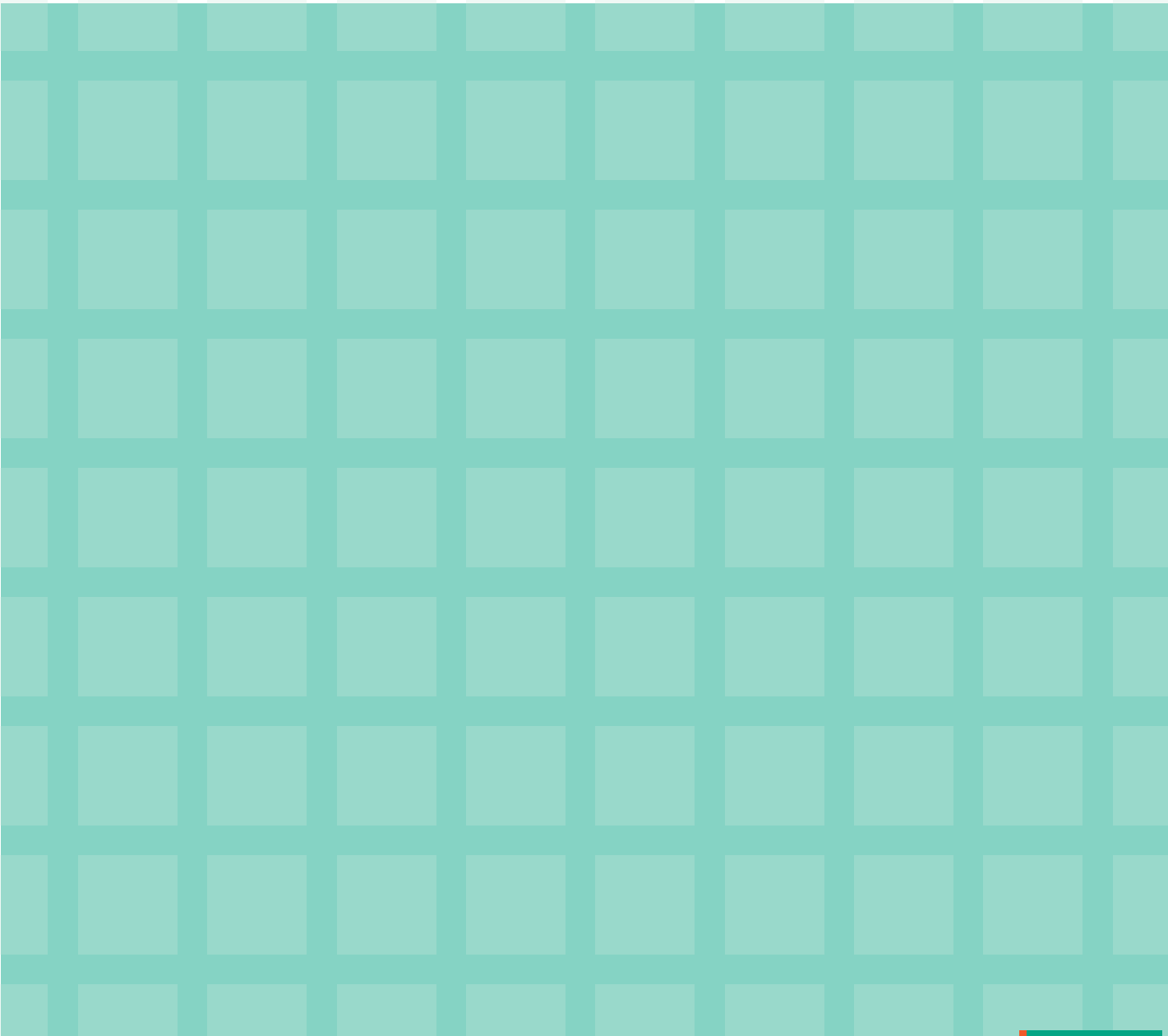
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