

Outdoor Product Manager

Who are they?

Outdoor product managers are goal-focused designers and strategists concerned with how to manage and build a product¹. They tell engineers why product features are essential for the customer. Outdoor product managers must create user experiences with products that solve problems and provide customer benefit. They are experts in the outdoor product market. They see products from the idea stage through the release of products to the marketplace.

What do they do?

Outdoor Product managers work to develop and implement product strategies for the outdoor product market. They work with the clients to analyze the requirements and features of future products or improve upon current products. They create documentation for the product requirements balancing internal and external customer needs and timelines. They manage the testing and release of the product launch to ensure the product reaches the market as scheduled. Product managers make pricing recommendations for the success of the product in the market. They look at marketing data to develop sales strategies. Outdoor Product managers verify the product complies with all industry, regulatory, and brand standards. They are also responsible for the training, evaluating, and managing the team that works under their guidance.

How do I become one?²

An outdoor product manager must have a bachelor's degree in industrial design, architecture, or engineering. The National Association of Schools of Art and Design have accredited more than 360 schools with programs in art and design. Many schools require some an Art and Design course before entry into the bachelor program is accepted. Building a professional portfolio through course work, internships, or other experiences is essential for job application or bidding on contract work. Prospective Outdoor Product Managers should strengthen analytical skills, artistic ability, computer skills, creativity, interpersonal skills, and mechanical skills.

¹ Aha!, The Product Manager vs. Project Manager, On the Internet <https://blog.aha.io/the-product-manager-vs-project-manager/> (August 16, 2019)

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Industrial Designers, on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/arts-and-design/industrial-designers.htm> (visited August 16, 2019).

In addition to a bachelor's degree, this position requires:

- Experience in outdoor product development and marketing
- Courses in the degree that include courses in drawing, computer-aided design, and drafting (CADD), and three-dimensional modeling
- Business courses in marketing and sales

Salary Ranges*:

Associate Product Manager: \$50,000–\$70,000

Product Manager: \$70,000–\$105,000 + Bonus

Senior Product Manager: \$90,000–\$135,000 + Bonus

Director Product Management: \$130,000–\$190,000 + Bonus

*Salaries given are averages for Stanley Black & Decker. Salaries may vary between a state's urban, suburban, and rural districts and should be adjusted for cost of living.

Job Outlook⁴

Employment is expected to grow by 4% by 2026. Outdoor product managers have the unique opportunity to combine a love of outdoor recreation and sports with a creative employment field in a growing market. Combining advancements in technology and engineering into products that make experiencing outdoor adventures that were never possible in the past for the average consumer.

³ Info Q, Technical Leadership: The Often Overlooked Skills and Responsibilities of a Technical Team Leader, on the internet <https://www.infoq.com/articles/technical-leadership-overseen/> (August 19,2019)