



Podium Data

Product Launch Plan Podium 3.0

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1. Executive Summary

In four months, Podium Data is positioned to release its latest major product revision. While this new version will be more evolutionary rather than revolutionary, it's still important that we use this opportunity to strengthen our momentum and cement our strong presence in the marketplace.

One of the key aspects that separates our holistic data lake platform from our competition is the strength of our data governance. This new version of Podium further strengthens this position so we must ensure that our messaging conveys this. In addition, we need to effectively communicate with the technical users and administrators who have the most to gain from the improved reporting and usage-gathering information that this new version brings.

Included in this launch plan is a list of tasks, deadlines, and owners which, in addition to predetermined milestones, will allow both management and the marketing team to track progress and identify problems early on.

Ultimately, our objects are to ensure a smooth launch in four months followed by revenue growth of xx% by September 30. Hitting this number is an important milestone for our investors; it will help ensure our next round of funding. By the end of 2017, we project that the new Podium product launch will allow us to reach a(n) xx% market share as well.

2. Go To Market Strategy

Despite being an incremental update, the upcoming launch of the new version of Podium represents an excellent opportunity to re-examine our overall marketing and sales strategy. For example, our marketing team intends to both generate internal excitement within the company as well as to stimulate buzz within the marketplace through targeted advertising. Along with updating the product information section of the website, we will simultaneously redesign the page as well.

While the primary metric of success will be revenue, we should also look at our performance within the data lake market as a whole. With an estimated size of \$2.5B and a projected CAGR of 28%, our current and projected revenue represents a small fraction of this market at only xx%. There is thus significant growth potential for Podium, not only through taking away market share from existing competitors but also



by acquiring customers who are exploring data lakes for the first time. While the focus of this product launch plan is on the upcoming Podium release, which is projected to result in year-over-year revenue growth of xx%, the marketing team's goals need to be fully in line with those of the company overall.

3. Product Release Milestones

Beta Test

Beta testing should start on February 20 and will run for 3 months. If appropriate, some customers should be chosen to help participate in testing this new version of Podium.

Release Candidate

The first release candidate should be scheduled for testing no later than May 15. The final candidate should be ready before the GA date.

Ad Campaign

In conjunction with Grove Marketing, Podium will begin work on an ad campaign starting on February 27. The initial advertising ramp-up will then begin on April 3 and will be in full gear on release day, June 12.

Website Update

In conjunction with our web developer, Podium will start the website reevaluation process on March 6. The newly redesigned site should be ready no later than May 1 in order to allow sufficient time to promote the release.

General Availability Date

GA is set for June 12. While this is a moving target more than a strict deadline, the technical timing of the product release is a determining factor for the other deadlines. This date was given to marketing from the development team.



4. Plans & Deliverables

Below is a more detailed list of activities, divided into internal and external tasks. Included are metrics, where appropriate.

Activity / Task	Description	Timing (due date, execution date or completion date)	Who
Prelaunch Activities and Calendar			
Internal			
Launch Plan and Budget developed and approved	A preliminary version of the budget is included in this document; see section 5 for additional information.	2/24/2017	
Press Release prepared and approved	Should include list of new features; see appendix for additional information.	3/31/2017	
Press contact list prepared	List of publications goes here; presumably there is a standard list, but we can explore adding others if deemed necessary.	3/31/2017	
Promotional Materials Prepared and delivered	This includes any pamphlets, brochures, data sheets, promotional fliers, etc. that need to be updated or created.	5/1/2017	
Website Content developed and completed	Update SEO settings, splash page, data sheets, product features, videos, etc.	5/1/2017	
Advertising Campaign developed and completed	To be coordinated with Grove Marketing. Should include print advertising, email, Google keyword advertising, publication advertising, and trade advertising	4/3/2017	
Event locations selected and booked	Includes two trade shows and a launch party. Registration for booth at Strata Hadoop World for March already confirmed but still required for Big Data at Cloud Expo. Launch party venue still needs to be decided.	3/10/2017 for Big Data at Cloud expo and 4/14 for party venue	

External			
Press Release	Recipient list for Press Release goes here	3/31/2017	
First Look Reviews	While the nature of the product precludes the need for providing reviewers with pre-release version of the software to test, providing publications with early technical material is an option. Another option would be to deliver a live demo with Q/A to a qualified technical review team in order to generate favorable press reviews.	4/10/2017	
Analysts; Press; Consultant Event	A community reception/breakfast, including a presentation and Q/A session, would be a good way to generate local buzz within the Boston area. A location, budget, and invitation list needs to be created.	3/27/2017	
Print Advertising (Newspaper, Magazine)	Advertising to appear in the following publications: List Publications; Issue; Street Date	3/27/2017	
E-Mail	Marketing emails need to be generated for general, targeted, and customer-specific recipients	4/28/2017	
Web Advertising	Advertising to appear in banner ads and, if applicable, web videos.	4/28/2017	
Website Content Posted	New data sheets and other downloadable collateral need to be updated to reflect the new product updates. If possible, we should hire an academic to write a whitepaper as well.	4/15/2017	
Website Redesign	While technically separate from the new product release, harnessing this momentum to update the website would be wise.	5/1/2017	
Outdoor/Indoor Advertising	While billboards are clearly out, there is the possibility of airport advertising. Again, probably not, but in the interest of	5/1/2017	

	being thorough I'm putting this here.		
Buyer Promotions	I don't think that this is the right market for buyer promotions, but it might be at least worth considering.	5/15/2017	
Customer Evaluations and Beta Testing Sites	Oracle (and other software companies) often provide customers with access to pre-release software for the purpose of beta testing. If Podium does that, we should decide who would be good candidates. List Customers:	2/21/2017	
Launch Activities and Calendar			
Internal			
Sales Aides	The following selling aides and collateral materials will be prepared for the reps: Product Spec Sheets Competitive Product Comparison Sheets Product line positioning sheets Color reproductions of new ad campaign Updated battle cards	5/15/2017	
Program Kickoff event	Internal even/reception to get everyone in Podium pumped up about the product release. Venue TBD.	4/15/2017	
Company Wide Promotion	T-shirts, stickers, any sort of Podium Data swag that we can distribute to get people excited about this release.	5/7/2017	
Sales Training	Salespeople will need to be given a training session, perhaps as much as half a day or more, to be delivered by product management/marketing. They will also need new battle cards and updated objection handling training. The highlighted features should include improved data governance and the updated reporting. If possible, salespeople should create lists	5/1/2017	

	<p>of target customers/leads most amenable to newly released Podium features.</p> <p>More information on these topics is available in the appendix.</p>		
Technical Training	<p>Sales engineers need to have appropriately updated talk tracks prepared for discovery calls/customer visits.</p> <p>They also need to create demo tracks/scripts that highlight the new features ready to show to customers.</p>	4/7/2017	
Sales contest or spiff program, etc.	I'm not sure what the sales culture is like at Podium or the commission structure, but depending on the scope of this product release we could use this opportunity to reexamine the pay structure.	5/1/2017	
Customer Support	Existing customers will be interested in knowing not only how to upgrade but whether or not they should expect any problems. Customer support should also be ready to encounter an increase in service requests.	4/15/2017	
Product Delivery	Our software delivery mechanism should be ready to accommodate an increase in traffic (I'm not sure if this is applicable to us or not, but I'm sure you've encountered many situations where companies haven't been prepared to deal with sudden spikes in demand, so I included this point just in case).	4/28/2017	



5. Launch Budget & Revenue Forecast

The following budget is for the time period leading up to the release date on June 12, 2017. While some of the listed expenses are fixed costs, others are variable and might be recurring past the product release date.

<i>Date Range</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Budget (\$)</i>	<i>Comment/Details</i>
April – June, 2017	Google AdWords	xxx	Words and phrases that we should consider bidding on include data lake, big data governance, and NoSQL
March – June, 2017	Trade show expenses	xxx	This includes travel, booth, accommodations to two trade shows (Strata Hadoop World and Big Data at Cloud Expo)
March – June, 2017	Publication ads	xxx	While primarily online, we should possibly consider print as well. Publications to think should include both blog sites like InfoWorld and news aggregators like Datanami.
June, 2017	Launch party and other customer-facing events	xxx	While a venue still needs to be decided, the location will probably be in Boston or Cambridge
March – June, 2017	Campaign design assistance from Grove Marketing	xxx	In addition to campaign design, any advertising purchased with the help of Grove Marketing should be included as a subcomponent of this budget



I would characterize Podium's sales process as low volume and high price tag with a relatively long (six month or so) sales cycle, so traditional marketing-lead revenue forecasting is probably not applicable. Nevertheless, I created a quick revenue forecast template, just as a reference. **The numbers are just placeholders.**

Task	Cost	Forecasted Impressions	Lead Conversion Ratio	Leads	Sales Conversion Ratio	Expected Number of Purchases	Revenue	Expected ROI
Media Relations	\$25,000	10,000	1%	100	1%	1	\$100,000	300%
Print Advertising	\$100,000	15,000	2%	300	1%	3	\$300,000	200%
Online Advertising	\$65,000	20,000	2%	400	1%	4	\$400,000	515%
Trade Shows	\$150,000	3,000	2%	60	3%	1.8	\$180,000	20%
Newsletter	\$5,000	100	5%	5	5%	0.25	\$25,000	400%
TOTAL	\$345,000	48,100		865		10.05	\$1,005,000	
Average revenue per customer		\$100,000						
Est. Revenue							\$1,005,000	
Minus Costs							\$345,000	
Profit							\$660,000	
Estimated ROI:							191.30%	

6. Risk

Due to the incremental nature of this new Podium release, risks are minimal. Nonetheless, there are some to be mindful of. The most obvious is missing the scheduled GA date. For this reason, until we've been given the green light from product management, the marketing and sales departments need to refrain from externally discussing timing specifics for the release.

Other technical risks include upgrade headaches that customers might encounter or bugs related to the new (or possibly even existing) features. While outside of the direct control of marketing, we need to be prepared to deal with any potential PR problems related to a poorly executed release.



Finally, while our relationship with Grove Marketing is strong, there are inherent risks when working with an external services provider. Should Grove Marketing become unable to deliver, we should have one or more contingency agencies at least up for consideration.

7. Launch Status Communications

The primary metric that will be used to evaluate the success of the product launch is revenue. It will be broken down into recurring, net new, and service expansion categories in both dollar amounts and percentages on an ongoing monthly basis. More granular analysis will also take place every quarter. Our growth targets are as follows:

Revenue						
	30-Jun	31-Jul	31-Aug	30-Sep	31-Oct	30-Nov
Renewals \$						
Expansions \$						
Net New \$						
Month to date % growth						
	30-Jun	31-Jul	31-Aug	30-Sep	31-Oct	30-Nov
Renewals %						
Expansions %						
Net New %						

Other metrics to consider are **pipeline conversion ratios**, **average sales cycles**, and **average deal sizes**. The specific goals will be evaluated with the assistance of the sales team.

Weekly checkup meetings will be held every Friday with the marketing and product management groups. The key takeaways from each meeting will be prepared for delivery to the executives. Status updates will go out in a company-wide email every two weeks. Meetings with the development team will continue as scheduled.

Reports and updates on key milestones will also be sent out as needed to either key stakeholders or the company as a whole.



8. Appendices

I. Feature/Function/Benefit Table

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Value to Customer</i>
New Reporting Module	This new feature allows more in-depth analysis of usage rates for users and groups	Geared towards an IT audience, this feature expands further validates Podium's position as an enterprise-grade solution.
Improved Data Governance	This update allows for better data lineage and history management as well as improved secure data publishing	Similar to what is written up, the improved data governance capabilities of this new Podium release makes it easier for us to differentiate ourselves in the data lake marketplace.
Miscellaneous Bug Fixes	While Podium regularly releases scheduled patches (and occasionally releases emergency patches), new product releases are another opportunity to fix software bugs.	List of major fixes here

II. Target Customer Profiles

<i>Buyer Category</i>	<i>Customer Role</i>	<i>Value Proposition</i>
Economic Decision Maker	Executive, such as CFO, or COO, or CTO (perhaps in some cases, an executive VP)	<p>While the improved reporting modules are more geared towards the technical administrators or possibly CTO/CIO, other decision makers should feel confident that this new version of Podium includes much better data governance. This is important especially for larger organizations that might be wary of security issues sometimes associated with data lakes.</p> <p>While not specific to this product release, salespeople should be prepared to deliver ROI presentations to qualified customers. These calculations should be based on cost savings compared to traditional data warehousing environment and revenue generation thanks to</p>

		better analytical decisions.
Business User	Marketing analyst, business analyst	This new version doesn't contain many new features for the business users, so our messaging shouldn't change much. The focus is still faster decision times, easy access to the entire data structure, and simple connectivity to existing reporting/dashboarding tools (Tableau, PowerBI).
Technical User	Data scientist	Again, data governance is not top of mind for the technical users, but they can feel more confident knowing that they're operating in an IT-approved environment. This means that they can collaborate more easily with the business users.
Technical Administrator	DBA, IT	The primary users of the new reporting features will be the IT administrators of the data lake environment. They should be targeted more than usual with information related to this product release.

III. Competitor Background Information

<i>Competitor/Product Name</i>	<i>Strengths/Weaknesses</i>	<i>Our Counter-Positioning</i>
Informatica	<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established market position 2. Time-tested technology <p>Weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data integration can be time-consuming and costly 2. Poorly positioned to deal with a company's rapidly growing number of data sources 	<p>For existing Informatica customers, emphasize that a Podium data lake can leverage the existing data warehouse structure while still being able to quickly incorporate other data sources. This is all possible while still maintaining data governance.</p> <p>For customers considering Informatica, remind them that ETL is just one part of a data warehouse. Mapping, organizing, and creating the structure of the environment is both time-consuming and costly. Let the customer know how Podium Data's approach is unlike a traditional data warehouse project.</p>