Innovation in a Jobless Recovery = Strategy + Process + Technology + People

by Amy Kenly

In late September, Aberdeen will host a Leadership in Product Development summit in Boston. This year’s summit theme is Innovation Strategies for a Jobless Recovery. Obviously, if the recovery is jobless, it means we all have a ton of work on our plates. So how can leaving the office for two days to attend this conference actually help you?

Getting better at innovation, especially when times are tough, requires companies to take a closer look at how they can improve in four key areas: strategy, process, technology and people. Leave out one of them and your efforts are lopsided at best. This summit brings together executives from across many industries to discuss what they’ve done and share their results. I took a look at the summit agenda and picked out some interesting opportunities to learn more.

**Strategy** – Coming up with an overall strategy for innovation success falls squarely on the shoulders of product development leadership. Aberdeen’s summits are known for attracting some of the most forward-thinking leaders out there, and with plenty of networking breaks built in, it’s a ripe opportunity to pick the brains of other attendees and speakers about strategies that have worked for them.

**Process** – While it’s obvious that creating better, more efficient innovation processes will help companies do more with less, some of the most successful examples may be unexpected. I’m looking forward to participating in sessions, discussions and debates on some of the more cutting edge ways to streamline processes, like social media. And I don’t mean Facebook.

**Technology** – Bob Conrad, Executive VP and GM at Fairchild Semiconductor, is presenting a session called “Increasing the Innovation Value of your Portfolio with Product Portfolio Management.” Should be cool to hear what Bob has to say about the specific tools Fairchild uses for portfolio management and what they’ve achieved so far. Product Portfolio Management (PPM) is such a critical component to aligning development investments with business strategy. Now does not seem like a great time to invest in products or services that nobody actually wants to buy.

**People** – It seems that people are always the last dimension companies think about when it comes to innovation, yet these are the folks we expect to implement the strategy, process and technology. Oh, and while the expectations are going up, so are their crazy workloads. During the summit coffee breaks, lunches and receptions, the Solution Zone will be open. Kalypso will have experts available to talk to you about a service area we have called Innovation Leadership & Learning, which has helped many companies bring their people along on the innovation journey.

And if that’s not enough, on September 1st, Aberdeen announced an Award for excellence in product development and innovation, to be announced at the summit. [http://bit.ly/8ZZEDY](http://bit.ly/8ZZEDY)

This summit is free for executives, and you really can’t beat that. Learn more at [http://bit.ly/93O5dc](http://bit.ly/93O5dc), and look for me when you are there!

Originally published on September 2nd, 2010

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