

KAAN RAFAEL BALI

Senior Product Manager | B2B SaaS, API & Integrations

kaan.r.bali@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/kaan-rafael-bali | 01701170915 | Berlin

SUMMARY

Senior Product Manager who builds structure where none exists, and stays composed when others don't. Track record owning B2B API products end-to-end, writing specifications engineering can build from independently, and delivering in resource-constrained, cross-functional environments without formal authority over the teams involved. Led time-critical projects at two of Europe's leading digital marketing agencies (Havas, VML/WPP), where tight deadlines and client-side crises were routine rather than exceptional, and built a hands-on leadership style out of that: close to the work, not managing from a distance.

EXPERIENCE

Product Manager, mrge

07/2022 – 03/2024 · Berlin

- Led cross-functional engineering and design squad, setting priorities, managing tradeoffs, and maintaining delivery pace across competing customer escalations, stakeholder requests, and long-term product bets.
- Owned end-to-end product lifecycle for a B2B affiliate marketing platform from discovery and customer research through roadmap prioritization, development, and post-launch iteration.
- Built a product documentation framework that reduced team onboarding time by 83% (6 months to 1 month), accelerating time-to-productivity and eliminating knowledge silos across product and engineering.
- Defined requirements and delivery roadmap for 3 core API products including billing, publisher, and advertiser APIs, partnering with engineering to ensure data accuracy and integration reliability for 20+ large-scale platform partners.
- Ran continuous discovery with engineering and platform partners to validate feature ideas before committing delivery effort, reducing rework and improving release quality across 3 core API products.
- Defined requirements, acceptance criteria, and edge cases directly with engineering for 3 core API products, ensuring implementation-ready handoff without a dedicated business analysis function.
- Established and facilitated weekly cross-functional rituals with staff engineers, designers, and senior leadership using Miro to align on priorities, communicate decisions clearly, and unblock cross-team execution.

CX/Project Manager, Havas CX

01/2021 – 04/2022 · Istanbul

- Inherited ING Bank's new in-app insurance feature project five months behind schedule after a leadership gap had stalled it. Took over project management, rebuilt the delivery plan and stakeholder alignment, and drove it to a successful, on-schedule launch, improving in-app adoption and customer satisfaction. **[ING Bank, Insurance]**
- Managed simultaneous product and CX delivery across 4+ clients and multiple sectors including automotive, banking, FMCG, and NGO, coordinating design, engineering, and data teams in parallel while adapting rapidly to different domain contexts and stakeholder requirements.
- Managed multinational email marketing campaigns for Unilever across 17 countries and 30+ brands, coordinating cross-functional and multicultural teams, optimizing workflows, standardizing documentation, and improving campaign efficiency and budget alignment. **[Unilever]**
- Delivered end-to-end Contactless Purchasing platform, leading customer research, competitor benchmarking, UI design, and journey mapping, launching across all dealerships within 6 months during COVID-19. **[Hyundai]**
- Supported C-suite leadership (CEO, GM, Operations Director) in defining brand strategy and CX roadmap direction, contributing thought leadership content and industry data analysis to reposition the agency's service offering.

SKILLS

Product Management:

Product Management: Product Strategy, Product Roadmap Prioritisation, Fintech, Payments, Squad Leadership, Continuous Discovery, Beta Programme Management, Roadmap Prioritisation, API Product Management, B2B SaaS, Platform Products, Stakeholder Management, Governance, CRM, Prioritization

Design & Research:

UX/UI Design, Service Design, CX Design, User Journey Mapping, Customer Research, Competitor Benchmarking, A/B Testing

Data & Analysis:

Data Analysis, Customer Segmentation, Data Literacy, SQL, Google Analytics 4, Benchmark & Trend Research

AI, Dev & Productivity:

AI Output Quality Standards, Governance Frameworks, Git, LLMs, AI-Assisted, Development (Claude code, Cursor),

TECH

Project & Product Management

Atlassian Jira, ClickUp, Odoo

Design & Collaboration

Figma, Adobe XD, Miro, Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, Affinity, Canva

Data, Analytics & CRM

Google Analytics 4, intermediate SQL, Looker Studio, Salesforce

AI, Dev & Productivity:

Git, LLMs, AI-Assisted Development (Claude, Cursor), MCP Servers

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EXPERIENCE

- Business Manager, VML (WPP)**08/2019 – 01/2021 · Istanbul
- Designed UI for AXA Insurance web services, translating regulated insurance workflows into simplified customer-facing interactions. **[AXA, Insurance]**
 - Served as VakıfBank's dedicated digital consultant for [18 months / 2 years – confirm], advising on and delivering against whatever digital service need the bank raised, spanning CMS operations across 7 banking websites, UX improvements, and engagement initiatives. Managed 20% of VML Istanbul's branch revenue, drove a 70% engagement increase across six web services, and secured a two-year contract renewal through sustained delivery.
 - [VakıfBank]**
 - Managed simultaneous digital strategy and delivery across 6+ enterprise clients in financial services, pharma, automotive, and consumer electronics sectors, leading cross-functional teams of designers, analysts, and consultants.
 - Led go-to-market strategy for the Ford Ranger Raptor launch, conducting customer experience research and segment analysis to define positioning and maximise commercial impact. Conducted product research for the Ford Vehicle App, identifying feature enhancement opportunities that improved user satisfaction and in-app engagement. **[Ford]**

EDUCATION

BSc. Product & Service Design, (Honors Degree, Scottish Masters)
2014–2018
Glasgow University

PROJECTS & TECH EXPLORATION

- Currently building TIMEDEX, a structured watch reference and comparison platform, designing and implementing a custom data architecture, database schema, AI-driven data extraction pipeline, UX concepts, and a multi-phase business roadmap.
- Authored an internal AI product strategy case study for a leading European mobility platform, designing the semantic layer architecture, RAG pipeline logic, tiered governance model, and a 12-month roadmap to production-ready AI, produced during the final stages of a leading European mobility platforms AI Product Manager hiring process.
- Voluntary Agricultural Sustainability Project, Khemara Kampot Pepper Gardens, Cambodia (2024): Advised on water preservation strategy during the dry season in a highly water stressed environment, managed a well construction project from site targeting through to completion, and produced company introduction and pitch documentation to support business development. Gained direct exposure to the operational and environmental challenges facing small scale agricultural producers.

LANGUAGES

English	C2
Turkish	C2
German	B1(Improving)
Spanish	B1
French	A2

CERTIFICATION / COURSES

Data Literacy
DataCamp

Understanding Prompt Engineering
DataCamp

Building Scalable Agentic Systems
DataCamp

Generative AI concepts
DataCamp

REFERENCES

Elif Cerit Soylu
Managing Director– Havas CX

David Reed
CEO – mrge

INTERESTS

F1 · Wood Work Design · Technology · Horology · Sketching · Frisbee · Roller Blading · Surfing