Inventing the Professional Association of the Future

STRATEGIC PLAN | 2017
Our strategy is simple: deliver value, be relevant, grow. Let’s do great things together.

~ Mark A. Langley
PMI President and CEO
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REFRAMING PMI’S COMMITMENT
LETTER FROM THE 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

For nearly 50 years, PMI has played a significant role in the growth of individuals who call the practice of project, program, and portfolio management their profession. In the last half century, project management has grown into a valued organization competency. As technology impacts the work we do and enables customers to be involved in every part of the business value chain, the Institute remains steadfast in its effort to drive value by making project management indispensable for business results.

PMI has achieved much in its first 50 years. We are proud of our 10,000 dedicated volunteers who are passionate about advancing the profession we share. Volunteers are an essential part of PMI’s guiding star—their work and commitment set the Institute apart from other organizations. While PMI has been global from its start, our impact continues to expand. Three hundred chapters in nearly every country in the world deliver valuable benefits to stakeholders at a local level. Globally, PMI serves nearly 3 million people, as members and certified professionals, through local chapters, live events, academic or other educational partners, and in our active online communities.

To prepare for the future, PMI is redefining what it means to be a professional association, while staying true to our roots. Taking a closer look at the individuals who practice project, program, and portfolio management, we intend to understand their needs more deeply and develop the capability to respond to their expectations more quickly.

The heart of PMI’s new strategy is ensuring that we deliver individual value to our most important customers throughout their careers. Irrespective of industry or geography, PMI intends to provide significant support at key inflection points in our customers’ professional journeys, from their first interaction to their retirement from the profession. This transformation is exciting for all of us at PMI as we look toward the future of our profession!

PMI is embarking on this transformation from a position of strength and an ongoing commitment to our stakeholders and customers: to advance and advocate for the project management profession with the support of our global volunteer network.

The Board of Directors supports PMI’s strategic choices because we know that when we deliver value, we remain relevant. And when we are relevant, we continue to grow. That is the best way to secure the Institute’s success for the next 50 years.

Yours truly,
2017 PMI Board of Directors
THE CASE FOR CHANGE

PMI’s new strategic direction is driven by shifting workplace priorities, evolving demographics and behaviors, as well as emerging technology and trends in business and society.

Due to the speed of change and the fierce market competition, every organization, irrespective of industry, is required to adjust much faster today than in the past. To do so, organizations launch projects and expect them to deliver results. There is also more emphasis on leadership and strategy, two critical skills required to become a more effective project leader.

How work is getting done is also changing. New advances in technology are disrupting traditional industries and thereby changing the functional roles and responsibilities of workers.

As the work changes, so do the workers. Millennials are quickly replacing the Baby Boomer generation and gone are the days of career-long employees climbing the corporate ladder. The new worker wants career choices, control, and a sense of purpose. Career mobility is top of mind and the associated upskilling that is needed to enable it has become more prevalent.

These changes in the workplace and the need for new skills have significant impacts on PMI’s customer demographics.

Nearly half of PMI’s customers do not consider project management their primary profession. Some are strategy consultants or trial lawyers, while others work on developing drugs, or marketing consumer products or services. The common denominator for all these professionals is that they rely on project management best practices, delivery skills, and techniques to be successful in their respective fields.

How our customers prefer to acquire these skills is also changing. Demand is increasing for faster, more flexible, and easier-to-learn project management methodologies and approaches. There is a shift toward on-demand, customized, and problem-specific learning. With technology, it is possible for the new worker to learn anything, anytime, and anywhere.

As an organization, PMI needs to better understand how these changes affect its primary stakeholders and customers so that the Institute can support their career journeys and help them drive business results for their organizations.

1Throughout this strategic plan, for brevity and consistency, the term project management is used to cover project, program, and portfolio management disciplines.
OUR ROADMAP AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

PMI has chosen a three-pronged strategy: the Institute will sharpen its strategic focus, build-out capabilities to be customer-centric, and reorganize to become agile.

The following strategic objectives are those that will help PMI achieve its long-term vision:

**Strategic Focus**

PMI has decided to narrow the institute’s focus from three markets (academic, organizational and practitioner) to one: the individual. Going forward, PMI will offer project professionals all the skills they need to advance in their project management careers.

This focus creates the opportunity to serve our core customer in a more substantive and integrated manner. We will prioritize our work to achieve the following strategic objectives:

- **EXIT NON-PRIMARY PRODUCTS AND MARKETS**
  As PMI has chosen to focus on the individual, it needs to reassess its portfolio of offerings and decide which products it will retire, and which markets it will exit.

- **DEVELOP AND OFFER SEGMENT-SPECIFIC VALUE PROPOSITIONS**
  PMI’s stakeholder and customer base has evolved dramatically over the years and the Institute serves a diverse group of professionals. To effectively serve these professionals, PMI needs to understand what type of segments exist among its customers. This requires a thorough assessment of which segments PMI will serve and what value propositions it needs to develop. The identified value propositions will be developed organically, through partnerships or through acquisitions.

- **TRANSFORM DIGITAL CAPABILITIES**
  Most PMI stakeholders and customers interact with the Institute through online channels. PMI will invest in resources to build the digital capabilities needed to acquire, serve, and retain customers. This also requires significant investments in data and IT infrastructure in order to accommodate the increasingly rich two-way conversations with customers and harvest insights into their wants and needs.
**Customer Centricity**

Customer centricity is about gaining a deep understanding of our primary customers so we can improve what we offer, how we offer it, and when we offer it to them. That requires us to put the customer at the forefront, deliver consistently high-quality experiences irrespective of how they interact with us, and be relevant and valuable throughout our customers’ careers.

It is important for PMI to recognize that everyone has different needs at different points in their career. That doesn’t necessarily mean that our customers know what they need to do. As a professional association focused on careers, PMI will be more proactive with our customers to help them identify which products and programs can help them distinguish themselves in a meaningful way and achieve success for themselves and their employers. PMI will focus on the following three objectives to increase its customer centricity:

- **STRENGTHEN AND INTEGRATE SENSING, RESPONDING, AND PARTNERING CAPABILITIES**
  PMI will strengthen and integrate how it collects, interprets, and makes sense of information to develop offerings that will address the needs of the project management consumers (organizations) and individuals. These insights, and the partnerships we form, will enhance the relevance PMI has with professionals. PMI has pockets of sensing and partnering capabilities, but will act in a more concerted fashion going forward.

- **DEVELOP END-TO-END EXPERIENCES THAT CONSTANTLY EVOLVE, IMPROVE, AND ENDURE**
  PMI will leverage technological capabilities as well as digital and physical platforms to enhance its understanding of stakeholders and customers, what they respond to, and how we can encourage more engagement.

- **TRANSFORM PMI’S CULTURE TO ENCOURAGE LEARNING, OWNERSHIP, AND CUSTOMER CENTRICITY**
  PMI will implement staff training and development programs to increase staff understanding and skills in customer centricity and commercial excellence.

**Organizational Agility**

Organizational agility is about improving PMI’s ability to identify and respond to emerging opportunities. This involves establishing quicker decision cycles, developing new staff capabilities, aligning teams across segments, integrating the voice of the customer, managing risk, and sourcing new business capabilities.

Applying organizational agility will allow PMI to capture opportunities quicker than its competitors and be better prepared for the market challenges and economic uncertainties of the future. PMI needs to organize for success and hire and retain highly capable people to compete. The Institute will focus on these four strategic objectives to increase its organizational agility:

- **LEVERAGE ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIP TO SPEED UP TIME-TO-MARKET**
  PMI will enter alliances and partnerships to increase its share in existing markets, penetrate new markets and customer segments, access new products/value propositions, enhance analytical capabilities, and reduce business and operational risks.

- **INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY**
  PMI will review its own internal work productivity with the goal of decentralizing decision authority and increasing productivity and agility.

- **STREAMLINE PROCESSES AND WORK**
  PMI will assess its processes and simplify them to remain lean and agile. In addition, PMI will also eliminate unproductive tasks and initiatives that are not helping the organization to achieve its aspiration.

- **MAINTAIN NIMBLE PLATFORMS**
  PMI will maintain nimble business system platforms that enable the Institute to adapt to and lead the evolution of the market and profession.
CHOOSING A WINNING STRATEGY

To inform the strategy and future direction, PMI has adopted the *Playing to Win* framework globally used by many leading organizations\(^2\) to develop and communicate strategy.

**Strategy is About Choices**

Applying the *Playing to Win* framework has helped PMI to make several choices about the type of organization the Institute wants to be. To be successful, PMI must focus on the customer, build a connected community, deliver transformative experiences, and measure the impact of the choices made.

We believe that if our customers succeed in their careers, and if project managers continue to be essential resources to deliver business results, then PMI will succeed as an association.

Today PMI is operating in a new market environment compared to when it was first formed. On a global level, competition is becoming more intense, especially in high-growth markets. On a national level, the expectations of professionals are changing and their needs are becoming more personalized.

PMI can adapt to this changing market environment by customizing our offerings as individuals’ needs and wants change. For instance, an integrated certification framework may provide early career professionals the foundational support they need, and a digital-based continuing education program may support our core customers as they advance their careers.

However, this strategy will only be successful if PMI embraces and leads new ways of thinking about projects and work. PMI needs to focus on building a more robust channel approach to take the products that we develop to market. This will require PMI to rely on alliances and create offerings that develop business, strategic, and leadership skills to help individuals make key career transitions, reach their professional goals, and deliver value for the organizations in which they work.

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\(^2\) For more information on the framework, please see *Playing to Win* by A.G. Laffley and Roger Martin.
1. **What is our winning aspiration?**
   - "Empowering people to make ideas a reality."

2. **Where will we play?**
   - Offer PPPM certifications, learning, and networking events to PPPM professionals.
   - Expand worldwide and prioritize high-growth markets.
   - Invest in expansion into adjacencies and transformative offerings.

3. **How will we win?**
   - Develop champions by focusing on career inflection points.
   - Develop segment-driven offerings with impact.
   - Relevant, on-demand, and easy-to-use digital experiences.
   - Leverage alliances and joint go-to-market models to develop and market offerings.

4. **What capabilities must we have?**
   - Strong understanding of career development and customer needs.
   - Enhanced sensing capabilities to operationalize insights about trends and new ways of doing work.
   - Ability to acquire or co-develop industry and problem-specific material.

5. **What management systems do we need?**
   - Culture of strategic focus, customer centricity, and organizational agility.
   - Metrics that will drive impact, value, and quality.
   - Active quality control systems for partners.
   - Build staff capability.
Empowering people to make ideas a reality.
OUR ASPIRATION

PMI’s aspiration—empowering people to make ideas a reality—focuses on our customers and the Institute’s ability to help them achieve their ideal future. We realize that to be successful and achieve our goals we need to empower customers to commit to amazing results and help them make those results a reality.

Behind every project is an idea. Some organizations are trying to improve efficiencies, while others are trying to increase margins or drive innovation. Regardless of the benefits, organizations are using projects to achieve their objectives.

For our customers, the projects they manage at the organizations they work for are about taking these ideas and turning them into a reality.

At PMI, we want to empower our stakeholders and customers to be leaders and true business partners in their organizations; to ask the right questions and deliver the business benefits of the projects they manage.
OUR VALUES

PMI’s aspiration—empowering people to make ideas a reality—reinforces our commitment to advocate and represent the project management profession and nurture a diverse organization that helps individuals distinguish themselves in their careers.

Even as a diverse organization, we share a common set of values that are fundamental and deeply held.

At PMI we believe in:

- **Project Management Impact**
  Project management is a critical competence that has a positive influence on organization results and society at-large.

- **Professionalism**
  Accountability and ethical behavior ensure our commitment to PMI stakeholders.

- **Volunteerism**
  Volunteers and effective volunteer partnerships with staff are the best way to accomplish the Institute’s goals and objectives.

- **Community**
  Bringing members of the global project management community together is the best way to facilitate their growth and the advancement of the project management profession.

- **Engagement**
  PMI encourages diverse viewpoints and empowers individuals to contribute to the project management profession and to the Institute.
FOCUSING ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Historically, PMI has positioned itself as a membership-focused professional association responsible for the development of professional certifications, educational programs, thought leadership, volunteer programs, advocacy, and networking opportunities. These offerings are a critical component of PMI’s brand and will continue to be a part of the PMI experience.

To create the type of engagement that will help us to continue to shape the profession and remain relevant in the future, we must acknowledge that professionals have changed, reassess the value propositions that attract them, and decide how best to deliver value.

Throughout its history, PMI has demonstrated an ability to evolve and successfully launch and expand offerings that were embraced by the market. When leaders in every industry across the globe began using “projects” to change their business, the people tasked with leading the projects ranged from trained and certified professionals to qualified individuals reassigned from other functions. We endeavored to serve individuals, organizations, governments, and academic institutions at all levels to advance the profession. Thus, over time, our customer base has diversified and sprawled.

To redefine what it means to be a successful professional association in the future, we started by redefining our most important customers. PMI’s primary customers are individuals who consider project management their main profession and look to PMI for support as they advance in their careers. Our customers are in the middle of a quickly changing work environment, where old ways of doing work are being replaced with new thinking, methods, and approaches. This creates a unique opportunity for PMI.

PMI needs to be the connection point to enable our customers to acquire the knowledge and skills to drive business results in a global marketplace, and to leverage that experience to achieve their professional goals and objectives. To accomplish these goals, we must focus on engaging individuals at their first touchpoint with PMI and continue to interact with them through our shared experiences in a meaningful way. As we continue to better serve our core customers, we must also continue to serve others who do not consider project management their profession but need valuable project management skills in their own career development.

Establishing a support system that follows our customers from their first experience with PMI, and provides opportunities to achieve both personal and professional goals, will inherently expand our network of
customer champions—those who believe in our mission, our values, and will promote PMI membership in their professional circles and organizations.

Our network of 10,000 volunteers are our most important and effective customer champions. They help influence key decision making and spread PMI’s message globally. Volunteers will continue to play a significant role in the future. To transform PMI into the professional association of the future, we must focus on delivering exceptional value to all volunteers and our customer segments so that they become loyal to our offerings, and have the tools to deliver quality results on the projects that they manage for their organizations.

That is why organizations are more important than ever to PMI and our strategy for the future.

As PMI hones its focus on individuals, we must also engage the organizations that employ our customers and embrace the important role they play in our value chain.

Organizations benefit directly from the certifications, skills, experiences, and training PMI provides to individuals, so it is extremely important for PMI to understand:

1. What are an organization’s project management needs?
2. How are those needs changing and evolving?
3. Are there new methodologies emerging to complete projects more efficiently?

To help answer these questions, PMI looks to partner with a select number of leading businesses and governments that are at the forefront of their fields. These partnerships will be created based on a deep understanding of organizational needs and best-in-class offerings that will truly advance the thinking of our practitioners.

By tightening our focus and partnering with trusted organizations, PMI can research and develop new products that target individuals and deliver exceptional value.

PMI will strive to serve individuals so well that they become champions in their organizations and professional circles

1. Collaborate closely with organizations to understand their pain points and how best to serve individuals
2. Provide products, services, and experiences to support individuals along their career journey
3. Ensure customers are so satisfied that they become PMI champions in their organizations
4. Support champions as they influence leadership and the back office to push PMI offerings down to staff

Virtuous circle
DEVELOPING SEGMENTED OFFERINGS AND DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

PMI has more than 100 different products and programs in its portfolio of offerings. By retiring products that no longer align with our strategy, we can make much larger investments in a simplified product portfolio that is available to our target market on demand, in a variety of formats, and accessible across our key geographies.

PMI’s new product approach is about setting a new standard for quality, increasing accessibility, and establishing a connection to PMI that lasts throughout our customers’ careers. Developing these products will require a deeper understanding of our customers’ needs and the distribution channels that introduce new people to PMI.

We also need to look beyond our general target market of project managers and begin to segment our customer base into high-level groups:

1. individuals who view project management as a career; and
2. individuals who view project management as a skill.

Segmentation will help inform our priorities as it relates to these customer segments and focus our resources on creating customized products and experience journeys that are relevant to the individual.

Instead of creating additional products within a category to meet short-term demands, we will continually enhance our select list of products with industry context and additional capabilities as innovations, market trends, and partner insights dictate.

Expanding product distribution to reach those customer segments will require PMI to invest in new technology as well as better define and utilize our channel partners. This expansion includes establishing strong relationships to increase incentives to sign-up new customers, support marketing and business development efforts, and collaborate to improve content quality.

Executing PMI’s targeted product strategy will help us achieve a closer relationship with our customers throughout their careers. The key to achieving success in this area is a need to simplify and improve the purchasing experience for new and returning customers so that engaging with PMI is productive and enjoyable, regardless of the channel that brings the customer to PMI.
SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS AND ENGAGING ORGANIZATIONS

PMI’s success is built on significant expertise in credentialing, community building, branding, and advocacy.

To these four, we have identified five additional high-priority capabilities that we must master to transform how our core customers engage with PMI. By investing in and focusing on these capabilities, we will significantly improve the customer experience and begin to nurture new customer champions as we support them in their careers. All nine capabilities are described in detail on the following pages.
1 Sensing and Responding

Organizations launch new projects every year that are managed and led by people. That will never change. What is changing are the types of projects that organizations are undertaking and the ways in which projects are getting completed. Gaining deeper intelligence on what is changing in the practice of project management is critical to PMI’s ability to stay relevant.

Our sensing and responding capability will allow PMI to collect important insights into what is changing at the project level and how that is changing the profession. With those insights in hand, PMI can also identify what is changing at the individual level as it relates to learning and development. We need to be at the forefront of how learning is changing. The value that individuals expect to receive from PMI needs to be optimized based on those changes. This critical information will influence the development and enhancement of PMI offerings and in turn help our customers be better at what they do.

To get the insights we need to redesign offerings, PMI has built and will continue to build trusting relationships with key businesses and governments.

2 Partnering

Partnering is about gaining access to new markets, customers, capabilities, and resources—while reducing risk. PMI will look to partner with a select group of leading organizations to address the changing world of work and how it impacts projects and initiatives. The incentive for companies to partner with PMI is that we can work together to develop tailored offerings and insights that will prepare the future workforce for these changes.

The success of our partnerships will be predicated on our ability to deploy highly capable human resources to continue building deep relationships with the leadership at select partner organizations and collaborate on developing insights or product offerings for a wider audience of professional project managers.

3 Business Development

An integrated business development program will support PMI’s strategic relationship-building and operational objectives. It will also give PMI access to new channels, a wider audience, and additional value-add offerings and services to enhance our existing relationships.

PMI will work to enter agreements with complementary organizations that can help us reach new segments and drive traffic to PMI’s streamlined product portfolio. For example, PMI may focus on engaging academic institutions and academics to leverage the academia channel to reach students who are interested in entering the profession. We may also identify service providers that offer products outside of our product portfolio strategy, but offer value to our stakeholders and customers and create alliances that will enhance our ability to develop people in a meaningful way.

4 Career Development

A key component of PMI’s new strategic direction is taking a more proactive role in advancing the careers of our customers. Project management is a broad and crowded field and we want to maintain our role as the most trusted source of information. Revising and improving our existing programs like Continuing Certification Requirements (CCR) will help individuals improve their skills and capabilities and distinguish themselves as they reach their career objectives.

Investing in our customers’ careers creates a shift away from our current transactional focus, and moves toward building meaningful, long-term relationships with our customers to deliver value at key inflection points during their careers.
5 Customer Experience

Our relevance is a function of the value we deliver and the experience our customers receive from our offerings and their engagements with PMI. We must deliver on what our customers need and desire. Those are not limited to the products and programs they consume, or the events they attend, but include how they interact with PMI both online and offline, as well as their use of our channel partners. In today’s environment, we must deliver integrated experiences of the highest quality.

Understanding the end-to-end journey for each segment will help PMI stay focused on our strategy, positively impact customer loyalty, and inform our decisions for building additional capabilities around the needs of our customers.

In addition to focusing on the high-priority capabilities above, PMI will continue delivering value through the four capabilities listed below that the organization has mastered in the past.

6 Brand Building

PMI has been extremely successful in building its own brand as well as product brands. Our new strategy to focus on individuals necessitates cementing customer voices, value delivered, and loyalty into our brand. We need to highlight the great experiences professionals have with our offerings, the knowledge they obtain, and how the communities that our committed volunteers build are integral to delivering value at local and national levels.

7 Community Building

PMI is a global community of members, volunteers, customers, and other stakeholders. Our most active customers engage with PMI through their chapters as well as through online channels. To ensure that all customers receive the support they need we must ensure that we deliver high-quality experiences throughout our communities. To do so we must actively improve the community-building capabilities of our staff and stakeholders, build integrated digital experiences, and leverage shared assets to encourage more collaboration and communication.

8 Advocating

We believe mature project management practices increase the efficiency of projects and benefits realization. PMI is committed to continuing to support project management application within governments worldwide and has achieved significant progress in disseminating knowledge around project management. We will continue our efforts globally to advance the application of project management knowledge, concepts, and theory with governments, non-profits, and educational organizations.

9 Credentialing

As the world has become increasingly projectized, organizations are continuing to rely on the peace of mind they get from hiring professionals who hold a widely recognized certification. PMI has been tremendously successful in developing certifications that meet the needs of various organizations. We will continue to ensure that our credentials reflect the best thinking as it relates to project management knowledge, trends, and practices.
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

PMI has adopted the Balanced Scorecard to help better communicate strategy to its staff and to guide and monitor the execution of its strategy. The Institute will continue using the Balanced Scorecard as the method for measuring progress against strategic objectives.
THE FUTURE OF PMI IS BRIGHT

Significant changes are happening in the workplace that directly impact the members, certification holders, volunteers, and interested practitioners of PMI.

PMI’s new strategic direction is about defining our core customer, the individual, and shifting to a one-market strategy, where we maintain focus, discipline, and alignment to inform product and go-to-market strategies. We will continue to engage with organizations, but as partners instead of buyers.

The one-market strategy is about serving our core customers in a more substantive and integrated manner. We need to take a proactive approach in guiding stakeholders through the PMI experience. This means creating multiple touchpoints with stakeholders to stay connected to their ongoing professional development.

The one-market strategy is also about recognizing that within our core customer group, there are different segments that have different wants and needs. Not everyone who comes to PMI considers project management their profession. There is a growing population of professionals who place high value in project management skills and PMI needs to be a leader in connecting those individuals to the programs and resources that will enable them to develop those skills.

PMI’s future is bright. If we can make it easier for our core customers to do business with us, we can more effectively help them distinguish themselves in a meaningful way for their employers. By bringing value to our core customers’ careers, they will become champions for our organization, thereby allowing us to impact more individuals in the project management field, as well as individuals using project management skills in other industries.