

00:00:00:03 - 00:00:23:24

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Are you just getting started in product management or would you like to learn how someone from Microsoft learned the ropes? This is Chris Reader from Center Code. And today I'm joined by Jalen McGhee from delivering speeches at a local high school about how to be an impactful student leader to interning at Ben within Microsoft. Jalen is now the PM for Azure Ark.

00:00:23:27 - 00:00:29:02

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

In this episode, Jalen reflects on his early days as an intern at Bandwidth and Microsoft.

00:00:29:04 - 00:00:51:22

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

So one of the first things that I had to do as a product management intern was to test out the product, try it out, look at our documentation, look at how folks are talking about it in the news and read it for things like that and really get a well-rounded understanding of how folks think about our product and how our product is intended to be used by customers.

00:00:51:25 - 00:00:55:16

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Skills that help you as a product manager.

00:00:55:18 - 00:01:15:25

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

But now the advice that I would get myself coming in would be to prioritize learning over knowing and prioritize making sure you can ramp up quickly on things because there's always going to be new things that you encounter, new technologies, new concepts, new ways that customers are using your products.

00:01:16:00 - 00:01:20:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

And the roles that customers play in product development.

00:01:20:24 - 00:01:41:24

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

A misconception is that the preview is just about finding what's ahead, because it's not it's not just about identifying the businesses as something that we've already put out. The preview is actually about getting real feedback to make sure we're making something that works and that fits the needs and addresses what our users want.

00:01:41:26 - 00:02:04:18

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Hey, let's get into it. Lift off, everybody. Thanks for joining. Today, I'm joined by Jalen McGee. I met him at the North Carolina Road show. He met at a product management networking event. It was a great time talking with them and I thought he'd be a great guest to bring on to the podcast. So today I'm joined by Jalen.

00:02:04:22 - 00:02:06:00

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Nice to meet you, John.

00:02:06:02 - 00:02:08:15

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yes, thank you. Glad to be here.

00:02:08:18 - 00:02:28:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, definitely. So the first question I wanted to start off with was I looked at your LinkedIn profile. I saw that you've been an intern at a few places and that you've managed to get your way to product management. So I'd love to hear how internships really like shaped your approach to product management. Like, what did you learn from those internships that you brought into product?

00:02:28:24 - 00:02:50:15

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah. Yeah, that's a great question. So the main thing that I'd say as an intern, especially as a product management intern, you're you're kind of introduced to a team and a product that you don't have a lot of interaction with every day unless you're working on like a very popular product or one that you use as a college student, for instance.

00:02:50:17 - 00:03:22:18

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

But in my case, I was introduced to a product that I had never heard of before that I'd never worked on before and that I had never used before. So one of the first things that I had to do as a product management intern was to test out the product, try it out, look at our documentation, look at how folks are talking about it and the news and read it for things like that and really get a well-rounded understanding of how folks think about our product and how our product is intended to be used by customers.

00:03:22:21 - 00:03:46:25

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And that's something that I really take. It has shaped how I continue to do product management. Going in with that beginner mindset and going in with an understanding of have no preconceived notions, especially as I talk to customers even today about how they're using our product, not going in and kind of kind of predetermine how I think a customer should be using our product in a certain way.

00:03:46:27 - 00:04:02:11

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Kind of going in with that beginner mindset, kind of clearing my mind and understanding that this customer could be using our product in a way that I never thought before and really got it going in with an open mind. So that's how my internships have really shaped how I continue to do product management today.

00:04:02:13 - 00:04:13:26

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, I love that. That outside in perspective, when you go out to like where are the customers that. What are they saying right. How are they using it and just trying to learn from that perspective. It's.

00:04:13:26 - 00:04:14:28

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft
Exactly.

00:04:15:00 - 00:04:27:03

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Definitely enlightening. I had I had a a buddy who worked at a company. We actually had him on the podcast. His name is Paul Chan. He worked at Microsoft at some point. He was one of the product managers for the surface.

00:04:27:06 - 00:04:27:28

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

00:04:28:00 - 00:04:50:29

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

And he always told me the story about when he first came on as a product manager. His first task when he got onboarded was to field like 100 something customer support calls, and he had to sit there on the phone and just listen to everybody's complaints, everyone's problems and his working what was not working. And I always thought that was insightful.

00:04:51:01 - 00:04:55:08

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, very insightful. That's phenomenal exercise to start with when you join.

00:04:55:10 - 00:05:15:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, definitely. So now that you've gotten to your end product, you've you've grown now, what would reflecting back on that, what would you what would you have given yourself as advice when you first started at a big tech company? So day one. Jalen is talking to Jalen hears advice for for going forward.

00:05:15:25 - 00:05:38:27

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah. My primary advice when I was coming in as a fresh PM, one of the things I was really focused on is like knowing as much as I can and kind of showing off how much I know and making sure that I'm established and making sure everyone knows that I know a lot and that I'm well versed in technology and product and things like that.

00:05:39:00 - 00:06:25:16

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

But now the advice that I would get myself coming in would be to prioritize learning over knowing and prioritize making sure you can ramp up quickly on things because there's always going to be new things that you encounter, new technologies, new concepts, new ways that customers are using your product. So I would advise myself to prioritize how I'm learning about our product, about our industry, and making sure that I always have a kind of mindset that's a growth mindset, which is something we talk about all the time at Microsoft, not so much being focused on gaining my understanding of every single thing and kind of proving to everyone that I know everything, but really making

00:06:25:16 - 00:06:50:27

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

sure that I know how to learn in a in a good way, making sure that I don't just focus on all the information that I know, but making sure I'm focusing on how I attain knowledge and how I are showing our customers that I'm able to kind of learn from the scenarios that they are introducing to us. Because I encountered that a lot where customers are using our products in ways I didn't expect.

00:06:50:27 - 00:06:58:18

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

So that's the main piece of advice that I give myself. Really prioritize the learning over kind of proving that, you know, so many things.

00:06:58:20 - 00:07:12:20

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

I well, it's it's I, I had not heard that, but I definitely felt that same thing in my early career. I just wanted to show off that I was that I was that I'm allowed to be here. I'm allowed to.

00:07:12:20 - 00:07:14:24

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Be. Exactly. Exactly.

00:07:14:25 - 00:07:26:11

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

I've gotten a little bit further along and that learning is like aptitude to learn, right? Like showing your peers that you don't know everything, but.

00:07:26:11 - 00:07:27:06

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

You exactly.

00:07:27:06 - 00:07:30:27

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Like to you'd like to learn and figure out how to do that.

00:07:30:29 - 00:07:46:02

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

That's a really that's a really insightful thing that I think you point out early on. I would when I would folks would ask questions I would be worried about, you know, do I know the answer to this? No, I have to really I have to know that the answer to all the questions that I that I've been asked.

00:07:46:05 - 00:08:09:04

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

But now, as I've grown in my career, I'm much more comfortable with saying, you know, I don't know the answer to that, but I find that I'll find it out. You know, so now when folks come to me and questions I'm not so worried about, you know, I answer, not if I know the answer. Great. But I'm much more comfortable now saying to my peers, you know, I'm not quite sure, but I'll figure it out.

00:08:09:04 - 00:08:30:23

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And that second piece is really your strength when you're able to say, But I'll figure it out. And knowing how to go in and get that information so that you can see that you don't have to show off everything you know in the moment, you're really you should be able to show up how well you can obtain information from from your peers and from, you know, various places.

00:08:30:25 - 00:08:55:00

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, very good. Interesting thing that you said was technology and everything is moving so fast. So it's you're not you're not going to be the foremost expert in everything. And it's always going to be something new. Someone is always going to have more information than you. So great stuff. And I'll I'll take that into the this next question that we have.

00:08:55:02 - 00:09:09:07

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

What's skills like? I feel like learning. You're saying learning what skills are essential for when you're looking to get to get started and a PM. So talk of learning is a good one to get through there. Yes. Yeah.

00:09:09:09 - 00:09:39:04

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Skills. So the number one skill that I've continue to work on myself, even today, is adaptability. I'd say being able to adapt to different situations, different contexts is is really huge. Being able to the context, which is something that I run into every single day at work, I could have one meeting about one topic, one feature, one product, and then go to the next meeting and right after is something completely different.

00:09:39:07 - 00:10:05:16

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And I have to context switch and that can be really, really challenging. And one of the things, one of the skills that I think that really helps with that is being able to be adaptive. So that could look like being really organized with your notes that could look like, you know, getting a little space between meetings when you can to kind of give yourself some time to context switch if you need to be if you need to do it that way.

00:10:05:19 - 00:10:34:11

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

But really finding out the best way to to adapt to the different contexts that you'll be in as a team because as you grow in, your scope grows. That's one of the things that PMS encounter. You have much more areas that you own. There's much more different contexts that you'll be in. So being able to adapt to different scenarios, it's a different context, I think is the number one skill that I would point out as been really important for teams.

00:10:34:14 - 00:11:12:27

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Well, yes, I agree. And before it, before stepping into the marketing role, I was I was in product management and I felt that's where I struggled probably the most. We only have one one product, so we have one platform that we're working on at Center Code. And I would find myself having a context which between talking to, say, engineering and marketing and sales and, and those well, it's all the same product that the audience of who I was interacting with because I was relying on each of these teams to get some work done was it was rough and like my meeting went from 1 to 1.

00:11:12:27 - 00:11:21:08

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

It's like, I have to turn off my the way I'm talking to engineers in order to talk to this sales team or this go to market team or anybody like that.

00:11:21:08 - 00:11:49:08

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

So exactly. You need. Yeah. So really, I think you pointed out a really important piece, not just like a being adaptable from like talking about one area in one meeting to another area in another meeting. But actually the people you're actually talking to, you know, you have as a peer, you have knowledge of the product. But as you mentioned, like marketing knows your product as one thing, your engineering team knows your product is another thing.

00:11:49:08 - 00:12:09:21

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

The US team knows your product in a whole different way. So I think that's a really crucial thing that you pointed out, whereas not just like the context of the meeting, it's actually the people who you're chatting with throughout the day can very widely. So that's another like really important context thing that you need to be able to be adapted to, to, to make sure you're good at.

00:12:09:23 - 00:12:13:05

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, especially if you have to throw in customers into the mix. Like if you have the.

00:12:13:12 - 00:12:28:20

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Big and radical users exactly like you're talking, you talk to internal folks one second and then you turn around or you're talking to customers and you have to make sure you keep all your all your ducks in a row. You're talking internal versus external. Absolutely.

00:12:28:22 - 00:12:46:07

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Don't say these things. You have to refer to it. This turn off. It's when you get like engineering and it's like you can turn on the jargon hat a lot because most of the time, like that's how they communicate, like a lot of engineering is communicated through technical jargon, right? If you were to talk to anybody in marketing, it's like they have I don't want to call it jargon.

00:12:46:07 - 00:12:53:17

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

It's like marketing slang. Like they have they have their own version of it. A customer is it's like, I don't know exactly what they don't know or what.

00:12:53:23 - 00:12:56:08

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Exactly, exactly.

00:12:56:11 - 00:13:19:25

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah. So this, this goes in lines with that. It's a little bit about knowing your audience. You're you're still pretty fresh into the product management. What what do you think that a seasoned or like a veteran or senior product manager, how could they benefit from interacting with and learning from early product managers?

00:13:19:27 - 00:13:55:22

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, yeah, that's a great one. So I think what immediately comes to mind for me is energy, energy and tie, you know, early, early in career PMS most likely have more time been seasoned pants and I would say seasoned PMS can kind of leverage that time and energy where the early career PMS can chat with multiple customers and learn from them and take in all the latest information about how our customers are feeling about our product, how our customers are feeling about the space.

00:13:55:24 - 00:14:26:22

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Early in career, premiums can kind of leverage that energy to go and do loads of research and kind of understand how the market is feeling about our product, how our product is presented as compared to our competitors. I'd say that's one of the primary ways that these seasoned PMS can really leverage on their early career premiums is by kind of recommending, Hey, go talk to as many customers as you can, kind of take, take some notes, let us know how our customers are thinking about our products right now.

00:14:26:24 - 00:14:50:25

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Let us know what you see in the competitive landscape, how our product is comparing to up to others, because a lot of times seasoned PMS are kind of focused on the high level strategy. They're focused on what is our future going to be, how are we strategizing our product right now? What do our how our how are our stakeholders looking at us and who do we need to interact with?

00:14:50:25 - 00:15:15:13

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

What do we need to be introducing next? So season PMS may not always have the bandwidth to go out and have five customer calls on a day or go out and look at how I look at the new things our competitors are introducing. But earlier in career PMS, they have that time, they have that energy and if they're led in the direction of pay, go out and learn as much as you can and present it to us.

00:15:15:16 - 00:15:23:24

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

They can really, really be valuable to to help out the team in that way. So that's how I see, say seasoned teams can benefit from fresh ones.

00:15:23:27 - 00:15:30:06

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Interesting. Definitely. That sounds I mean, they they will have more energy and eagerness to.

00:15:30:12 - 00:15:31:16

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Do exactly.

00:15:31:18 - 00:15:37:09

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

That. I want to I want to help. I want to be part I want to I want to get the exactly.

00:15:37:11 - 00:16:02:19

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And I think also there's luck in trying out the product as well. I think when a new PM comes in like like we've been talking about, one of the best ways to get started is just by trying out the product itself. And a seasoned PM can give a new pitch of like certain tasks to do with the product and say, you know, how would you accomplish this with our product?

00:16:02:21 - 00:16:18:09

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

What steps would you take? You can they can even leverage them as a potential for new user that's new to the product use of the platform. So there's multitude of ways that that early attribute can be leveraged. And I think those are really good for you.

00:16:18:11 - 00:16:43:16

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah. One one that came to mind, just as you were kind of talking about like leverage as a new user, was as we work with products, as we become more senior, we we start to I'll say this in a weird way, we obtained baggage. We have a history. We know we know too much sometimes for our own good, and sometimes it gets like kind of etched in stone or gets really dusty.

00:16:43:16 - 00:17:01:10

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

We just keep it there. It's like, Yeah, that's. That's the way it is. That's just that's the way it works. And if you like, sometimes you can get those, those newer PMS that challenge that we're like, is that actually how it still is? We said that, you know, 15, ten years ago, three years ago, maybe six months ago.

00:17:01:13 - 00:17:03:29

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Is that that's still real?

00:17:04:01 - 00:17:23:09

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, absolutely. That's like that's the that's the curse of knowledge that can come. You know, you have your season, you have so much you have so much background context and if a new person comes in and questions, you know, why can I just do it that way? And you say, if only you knew why you can't do it that way.

00:17:23:12 - 00:17:35:27

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And it's like you have so much background context. So yeah, I definitely agree with what you're mentioning there that that can really be kind of better, a better way to leverage those early in career folks. So yeah, totally agree.

00:17:36:00 - 00:17:59:06

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Gives you perspective being on now more product on the marketing side so I get more than two. It's a different stuff but we're like in conversations about positioning, product positioning there's I've been at Center Code now for eight over eight years, so I have a I have that curse of knowledge, but it's also it's a curse and blessing, right?

00:17:59:06 - 00:18:23:13

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Like so, you know, exactly right. There's a lot a lot to it. But we bring in that that fresh perspective of someone that's like a newer PM to help like challenge some of that and they bring up stuff and it's like if you are still if you still adopted that mindset of like, I'm willing to continuously learn and maybe no one's pointed out to you recently, like you made that decision a while ago and like, you know, that probably wasn't a great decision.

00:18:23:15 - 00:18:45:25

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

But now that I'm looking back at it was probably okay for the time. But we should we should address that now or we should fix that. So I have some fresh perspective going going to this next question. I know you've had some you've talked about interactions with customers. I'd love to hear. Like what role do you think that customers play in your launching?

00:18:45:25 - 00:18:49:12

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Like launching products? Like what role are customers playing?

00:18:49:15 - 00:19:17:11

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, that's a great one. So customers are vital in my view. They're vital at every step of the launch process, every phase, even in the beginning with ideation, where you're kind of just putting things out there and kind of responding to what as a PM, what you feel maybe needs to be introduced next. Customers play a crucial, crucial role and kind of validating or invalidating some of the hypotheses that you may have.

00:19:17:13 - 00:19:48:13

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

So as you have a new idea, you always you don't always have to present it to customers directly and say, This is what I'm thinking of doing. Would you use this? In fact, that's probably not the right approach. But if you can find out a way to kind of indirectly test your customers to validate or invalidate some of the hypotheses that you have, then I think that's a really, really valuable thing to do because it can save you time on making investments and things where maybe you don't need to invest it.

00:19:48:16 - 00:20:10:28

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

So even at the early phase, customers are critical. But as you continue to go along, see, your hypotheses are kind of validated and you kind of have a you know, you have a private preview that you're introducing, but customers are vital at that phase as well. They need to you need feedback to test out the thing that the things that you're doing actually fit their needs.

00:20:11:01 - 00:20:34:24

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

You need to make sure that the things that you're introducing, they fit the way that they expect to use your product and the way they expect to interact with it. And then also continuing on all the way through your official watch. Customers should be involved at every single phase. If they're not that you risk kind of putting out something that folks don't respond well to.

00:20:34:26 - 00:20:55:18

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, I agree. I had this like so long time ago. I came up with like a weird analogy about like this. It was a snowball, but I don't think that snowball is right. Someone thought that out. Like when we have like so we talk about products at different stages. So you have like your ideation and you have, okay, this is the fidelity that I have, I have ideas, I have concepts, those features.

00:20:55:20 - 00:21:11:15

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

And that opens up a list of questions. Here's questions that we can ask or here's questions that I have about my product at the stage. And you come up with a weather hypothesis and then you go test those things and you say, okay, cool. And then you go get, say, some designs and that opens up another set of questions.

00:21:11:15 - 00:21:37:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

I got I got more questions I need to answer and I go out and do that and it's just as the product gets more higher, fidelity gets it gets more real, it becomes real and working. It unlocks questions. And I feel like that's sometimes we lose that gap of the I, I asked that question already. But the problem is like if I asked it there and they said, yes, I have this problem, I have this challenge, but now I built something that does it.

00:21:37:24 - 00:21:42:18

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Does it do they still have the challenge one And does that solve that? That challenge?

00:21:42:21 - 00:21:44:03

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Exactly. Exactly.

00:21:44:03 - 00:22:10:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

So I feel like that that can be rough sometimes if definitely. Yeah. And I one other thing is I sometimes struggle with this. Like customers play that role after launch, right? Like they're they're they're slow. If you got feedback from somebody early on and they're adopting this product already, like how that influences the other customers around them, right?

00:22:10:22 - 00:22:27:20

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Like you can shape the way that people are using this feature, this new, this new product, depending on which one you have coming out. Yeah, it's like they are the guiding light. Like here's the here's the person that's using it already and they can like help shape other people and push that that direction.

00:22:27:22 - 00:22:43:27

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah. And that can like, that can really strengthen the relationships that that you have with customers when you say to them, you know, hey, we're, we're thinking of introducing this new thing, we'd love for you to try it out. We'd love for you to develop it or not develop it alongside with us, but in a way really influence it.

00:22:44:00 - 00:23:04:11

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

You have you have the ability to really give your input and influence the direction of a future that we're going to be releasing that can really strengthen the relationship between the customer and yourself and your company, because it shows them that you believe in their words as you believe in their perspective. And that's just another way to really build a really good trust with the customer themselves.

00:23:04:18 - 00:23:32:13

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

You kind of develop your your products alongside of them. And like you said, they can evangelize to other customers, like when you come out, when you release a product and you already have some use cases, you already have some customer testimonials to say, you know, I try this out, I love it like that. That's a perfect thing to add to kind of your go to market is if you're able to say, you know, these customers are already using it, they've already given these rave reviews about it.

00:23:32:15 - 00:23:46:27

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

And if you have customers involved early, then that's a really good way to kind of make sure that you get some good information to give out about how customers using it, even as you watch it for the first time. So I absolutely agree.

00:23:46:29 - 00:24:09:03

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Like greases the adoption wheels, Like then it's like we're we're aiming for adoption of this new feature set. And look, we already have somebody that's doing it and they can make it up and go evangelize for us. Great stuff. All right. So I have now to wrap up the podcast. I've got a rapid fire round. Okay. So just going to I'm going to throw these questions out here.

00:24:09:03 - 00:24:16:14

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Let's see, let's see how they go. So first, what's your favorite activity and product management?

00:24:16:16 - 00:24:22:15

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Big picture painting. I love big picture thinking, those brainstorming sessions that come with it.

00:24:22:18 - 00:24:26:14

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

The most challenging thing about product management.

00:24:26:16 - 00:24:36:00

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Most challenging thing is balancing priorities from customers, from stakeholders, partners, leadership, so many different priorities. It's challenging to balance sometimes.

00:24:36:02 - 00:24:46:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Yeah, I'll rephrase this one for you because I know this is maybe closer to your language. The most challenging thing to do in beta or those technical previews where we have gone out early versions of customers.

00:24:46:24 - 00:25:09:07

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, yeah. The most challenging thing to do in those previews, the most challenging thing is we get so much feedback and prioritizing that feedback because we're kind of getting it from all angles. So we're trying to figure out, you know, which feedback is feedback we should take and which feedback and feedback we should kind of defer to maybe a later phase or just not take it all.

00:25:09:09 - 00:25:12:01

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

That's what I'd say is most challenging.

00:25:12:03 - 00:25:15:12

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Easiest thing about beta or technical preview.

00:25:15:15 - 00:25:30:24

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

The easiest thing is watching customers try it out. It is really easy to get that feedback because everyone's going to have something to say, positive or negative. So the easiest thing is really just like receiving the feedback itself.

00:25:30:27 - 00:25:39:22

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

And this one's going to be interesting from your perspective because you get all the stakeholders around you. One misconception about beta or the technical preview.

00:25:39:25 - 00:26:09:01

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, good one. A misconception. A misconception is that the preview is just about, you know, finding bugs because it's not it's not just about identifying the deficiencies as something that we've already put out. The preview is actually about getting real feedback to make sure we're making something that works and that fits the needs and addresses. What our users want is not just about, you know, we have this idea, we're going to put it out.

00:26:09:08 - 00:26:16:22

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

We need some folks to go ahead and find the bugs so that we can release it and we can make it go. It's not about that. It's much more than that.

00:26:16:24 - 00:26:24:27

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Go Well, that last one about bad. And then we got some other ones. Favorite thing about about beta testing your products. When you get your products in the beta, what's your favorite thing?

00:26:25:05 - 00:26:49:14

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, my favorite thing is seeing customers use it. I love something going from an idea to an actual implementation. Like that's what I love about the job in general. Seeing something go from an idea to something that brings value to customers and something that customers love to use. That's my favorite thing I believe is just that first phase where we actually give something tangible to them.

00:26:49:16 - 00:26:52:00

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

All right. Coffee or tea?

00:26:52:03 - 00:26:53:21

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Tea? Absolutely. Teas.

00:26:53:23 - 00:26:55:04

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

What's your favorite tea?

00:26:55:06 - 00:26:56:21

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Chai Tea. I love chatting.

00:26:56:21 - 00:27:01:26

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

And. All right. Morning person or your night owl?

00:27:01:28 - 00:27:08:12

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

I know. I am a night owl. Definitely more of a night owl.

00:27:08:14 - 00:27:13:05

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

I'm the complete opposite a morning person, but my wife is very, you know, so, like.

00:27:13:08 - 00:27:15:06

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

It's a good match.

00:27:15:07 - 00:27:18:20

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

How how do you how do you unwind?

00:27:18:22 - 00:27:31:25

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

How do I unwind? And I love watching TV. I really do. That's my main way to unwind. I after a day of work, I just go on the TV. I watch something good.

00:27:31:27 - 00:27:36:18

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

All right. The next question is perfect. Right up that alley. What are you watching right now?

00:27:36:20 - 00:27:40:17

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Okay. Abby Elementary is my favorite show right now. That's sort of the main thing I'm watching.

00:27:40:19 - 00:27:48:24

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

Okay. Now, best piece of advice you've been given, just like generically, like, what's the best piece of advice you've been given?

00:27:48:27 - 00:28:10:13

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

Yeah, the best piece of advice. You can learn anything. That's the best piece of advice that I've gotten. Any any information that's out there, anything you want to do, you can do it. It's just a function of how much you're willing to learn to be able to do that. That really helped me with my with my confidence with things that I didn't know.

00:28:10:15 - 00:28:13:15

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

That's what I say. You can learn anything.

00:28:13:17 - 00:28:25:00

Chris Rader, VP of Marketing, Centercode

All right. All right, Jalen, That's all the questions. I have a lot appreciate you coming on. I felt like I've connected with you much more because I felt a lot of that pain and a lot of I learned a lot of the same lessons that you've learned.

00:28:25:02 - 00:28:29:14

Jalen McGee, Product Manager - Azure Arc, Microsoft

As the. We. Absolutely. Yeah. It was such a pleasure. Thank you so much for having me on.