Product Operations Manager

Department	Product Operations
Brand	VIVA Cruises
Reports to	Senior Product Manager
Location	Düsseldorf, Germany, with regular coordination with the Baar, Switzerland office

About VIVA Cruises

Behind the VIVA Cruises brand is the renowned Swiss shipping company Scylla AG, which currently owns a fleet of 40+ ships. With VIVA Cruises and our company headquarters in Düsseldorf, we are establishing ourselves as an international river cruise operator on major European waterways. We take pride in our commitment to quality, customer satisfaction, and continuous growth.

Position Summary

We are seeking a Product Operations Manager to translate VIVA Cruises' itineraries, excursions, and onboard programs into consistently high-quality guest experiences. The role focuses on operational readiness and live delivery: bringing ships, shore teams, and local partners together so that each sailing runs smoothly and the guest experience reflects our brand.

You will be the day-to-day link between the Düsseldorf and Baar offices, Cruise Directors, internal teams, and external suppliers. You will respond to changing conditions, maintain service standards and cost discipline, and use feedback from guests and colleagues to improve future departures. Reporting to the Senior Product Manager, you will also bring practical operational insight to the development of new itineraries and experiences.

Key Responsibilities

Operations and delivery

- Coordinate pre-departure readiness and daily execution of excursions, transfers, events, and onboard programs with Cruise Directors, ships, and shore teams.
- Confirm supplier schedules, capacity, transport, guides, meeting points, accessibility information, and guest-facing details; keep operating records accurate and current.
- Respond to changes in itineraries, port access, weather, water levels, or supplier availability by arranging practical alternatives and communicating decisions promptly.
- Serve on the emergency duty rota, including outside regular office hours. When incidents affect a sailing, coordinate with shipboard and shore teams, arrange practical guest alternatives, and escalate decisions under VIVA Cruises' procedures.

Guest experience and quality

- Monitor excursions and guest programs against VIVA Cruises' service and brand standards through onboard visits, site inspections, reports, and partner reviews.
- Review guest feedback, complaints, participation, and operating data; work with the Senior Product Manager to address recurring issues.
- Partner with Cruise Directors and Customer Services on guest concerns, recommending solutions or compensation within policy and delegated authority.
- Provide practical input on new excursions, itineraries, and onboard concepts, including timing, capacity, accessibility, costs, and responsible use of local resources.

Commercial and supplier partnerships

- Develop productive relationships with tour operators, guides, transport providers, ports, and other local partners; agree service expectations and monitor delivery.
- Support supplier selection and contract negotiations, address service failures, approve invoicing and solve discrepancies, and track partner performance.
- Prepare and monitor operating budgets and forecasts for assigned activities; explain variances and recommend improvements that protect value and guest quality.

Team and cross-functional collaboration

- Provide timely operating instructions, product updates, and handovers to onboard and shore teams, including follow-up after significant disruptions.
- Develop practical briefings and training materials for excursions and guest programs; coach colleagues or coordinate training when needed.
- Work with Onboard Teams, Product Development, Operations, Guest Services, Marketing, and Finance to align published descriptions, guest communications, and actual delivery.

Role Success Criteria

- Excursions, transfers, and programs are ready for departure and delivered consistently to agreed service standards.
- Disruptions are handled promptly, with clear communication, suitable alternatives, and appropriate follow-up.
- Guest feedback and operating data lead to visible improvements in quality, reliability, and satisfaction.
- Supplier performance, operating costs, invoicing, and budget variances are monitored and acted on with the relevant teams.

Key Individual Traits

- **Adaptability:** Adjusts plans calmly when conditions change and keeps guest needs in view.
- **Attention to detail:** Checks the information and logistics that make each experience work.
- **Collaboration:** Builds trust across office teams, ships, and local partners.
- **Sound judgment:** Makes timely decisions and escalates issues appropriately.
- **Service orientation:** Responds to guest concerns with care and practical solutions.
- **Improvement mindset:** Uses feedback and results to make the next departure better.

Experience and Expertise

- Several years of experience in cruise, tour operating, travel, or hospitality operations; European river cruise experience is a strong advantage.
- Experience coordinating multiple suppliers and departures, handling short-notice changes, and tracking budgets or costs.
- Strong communication, negotiation, planning, and analytical skills, with confidence using Microsoft Office and booking, scheduling, or operations systems.
- Fluent written and spoken English and German; Italian or French is an asset.

Travel and Other Requirements

- Travel within Europe and time onboard as required by the sailing and product review schedule.
- Flexibility to work outside standard office hours when operational needs or the scheduled emergency duty rota requires it.

Equal Opportunity

VIVA Cruises is an equal opportunity employer. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and consider qualified candidates without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, or age.