



The impact of poor project management

How in-house marketing and creative teams can overcome challenges to produce better work

Poor project management impacts COMMUNICATION

At its core, project management is about communication and making sure everyone is on the same page from the second a project is requested to the moment it's completed and archived.

Without the right communication tools, your team can be out of sync from the start, leading to inaccurate expectations, unclear objectives and poor execution. A lack of communication can cause team members to miss important due dates, managers to have projects come in over budget, and approvals to be “stuck” with someone who didn't know the ball was in their court. Our experience has shown that the lack of quality communication hinders:

- Team members from managing their workload and meeting their deadlines
- Project managers from having an “early warning” on projects that may be delayed or off track
- Senior level management from accessing crucial real-time insights into the overall health of the department and how it's tracking against metrics

SOLUTION:

It's important that any solution communicates the way you want it to and gives you the information you need when you need it. And there's no one size fits all; the communication needs of a marketing manager are different than those of a creative director, copywriter or a VP. Make sure any tool you consider is configurable, especially with respect to how it communicates with you. You should be able to decide what you want to be notified about, how often you want to be notified, and how that notification is communicated to you. Above all else, the right project management software should provide the communication tools you need to get and keep your team on the same page.

66% of organizations use PM software to communicate with clients.

Source: [Capterra](#)

Poor project management impacts EFFICIENCY

Every marketing team would love to be more efficient in their use of resources, right? Unfortunately, efficiency is perhaps the number one victim of poor project management, and the symptoms are easy to spot. For example: Do you need multiple meetings to scope a project? Are you exchanging dozens of emails to make adjustments and revisions? Does it take weeks to get a project approved? Do projects just get “lost”? You get the idea.

Inefficiency can be caused by any number of issues, but the results are clear; when you’re not being efficient in your work, you’re not realizing your full potential as a team. In our 15 years of experience, we’ve found that project management inefficiencies often stem from these core areas:

- Not capturing enough information (or the right information) during the project request process to effectively assess and begin a project
- Having multiple communication channels and tools instead of one source of “truth”
- Not having an understanding of the team’s bandwidth and who is under/over allocated

SOLUTION:

To improve efficiency, consider a project management solution that allows you to create custom project request forms, so you always have the right information to begin a project. Also, examine the ways a solution could replace or augment some of your existing communication tools. For example, RoboHead’s Notes feature can replace disjointed email threads by consolidating all project-related communication in one central location. Lastly, make sure any solution you consider provides an audit trail to help avoid confusion and rework due to redundant requests and revisions.

Improving efficiency depends on how you manage your team’s workload, communication, and collaboration. By finding a solution that enables all three, you can produce a higher volume of work in less time, strengthening your team’s position as a vital company resource.

Poor project management impacts VISIBILITY

Poor project management and inadequate visibility often go hand in hand. Think of it this way, if you don't have real-time information about your team's workload, you might continue to schedule projects that exceed their capacity. This in turn causes delays, creates confusion about completion dates and ultimately leads to frustration among your team members and the customers they serve. Having a tool that provides visibility into workloads could single-handedly help you avoid all of those practical issues while also improving your team's culture.

Team capacity is, of course, only one example where lack of visibility can be problematic. But the metrics don't stop there. Wouldn't you want quick, visual indicators around the health of existing project status? Do you know if common bottlenecks are keeping your team from finalizing work? We've found that visibility problems commonly include:

- Lack of project-specific tracking means zero visibility into KPIs, trends and reports that matter to team leaders and executives
- Inability to gauge individual workloads creates unrealistic expectations and undue pressure
- Lack of visibility into all current projects hinders scheduling and delivery, without an understanding of when, where, and why a project was delayed

SOLUTION:

One of the greatest benefits of project management software is the reporting capabilities that can offer visibility into all areas of the project lifecycle. Platforms like RoboHead come with advanced visualization tools, reporting capabilities and time tracking functionality that allow managers to quickly and easily understand what's happening with every project and every team member. If you're evaluating project management solutions, make sure you understand the metrics that are important to your business so you can ensure that they can be tracked and reported upon.

55% of organizations don't have access to real-time project KPIs.

Source: [Wellington 2018](#)

Poor project management impacts MORALE

Morale can be one of the hardest things to quantify, but it's the easiest one to sense among a team when things are headed in the wrong direction. Often the roots of low morale can be traced back to ineffective project management. When people are overworked because projects are assigned unevenly, it can create resentment. When team members aren't communicating effectively, it can lead to confusion and disagreements. When there's no system for keeping team members accountable, people get unfairly blamed for issues or delays. All of these things create a culture that can be counterproductive and unpleasant.

People don't do their best work when they're unhappy, and a [study](#) found that happy employees are 20% more productive than their more miserable counterparts. Having implemented RoboHead for over 1,000 in-house marketing and creative teams, we've learned that common problem areas include:

- Poor communication and collaboration among the team and the customers it services, leading to frustration and aggravation on both sides
- Lack of visibility into project operations, leading to misunderstandings about what's causing delays

- Poor visibility into workloads, leading to some team members being over-assigned and overburdened while others don't have enough to do

SOLUTION:

Software cannot directly address emotional issues, but the right project management software can help you avoid the problems that cause morale to decline. Specifically, you want to find a solution that provides transparency for each project team member (including the customer) in the form of enhanced visibility, communication, collaboration, and scheduling capabilities. When team members are clear about their roles, responsibilities, deadlines and desired output, problems tend to disappear. By enabling transparency through your project management system, you'll foster a community spirit among your team that's as productive as it is enjoyable.

Happy
employees are
**20% more
productive.**

Source:
[Social Market Foundation](#)

Poor project management impacts PROFITABILITY

It can be challenging for in-house creative and marketing teams to think of their work in terms of profitability. After all, your clients are within your own organization and usually they aren't being charged for the creative deliverable. But this mindset can be dangerous. In the big picture, everything is about profitability and executives will surely view your team in those terms.

"Are we getting the expected ROI from our marketing and creative services team? Are their projects actually helping us sell, or should we shift work to an outside agency?" When leadership asks these kinds of questions, you want to be armed with data to justify your efforts and value. However, if you don't have detailed insights into your department's project operations, you can't tell that story.

When working with new customers, we often see profitability-related problems popping up in these areas:

- Lack of comprehensive reports or insights into project operations KPIs
- Inefficient processes hinder team efficiency and hurt overall profitability
- Inability to attach a cost/value to either the deliverable being produced or the specific work required to produce it

SOLUTION:

With the right project management tool, you'll not only increase productivity and efficiency (thereby improving profitability), you'll also have the visibility of operations and reports to tell your story and prove your value. You'll also be able to identify any potential issues that need to be addressed, allowing you to justify your existing resources and make the case to add resources and employees in the future. When you start viewing your team's work in terms of profitability, it becomes clear how important a comprehensive project management system is to your team's success.

Poor project management impacts PRODUCTIVITY

For creative and marketing teams, productivity is the top priority. If you're not producing outstanding projects on a regular basis, your team might not be around for much longer. Productivity encompasses many of the topics already discussed in this eBook, and there are lots of strategies and tools for improving productivity. But the key to driving productivity is to create a culture and a process that eliminates obstacles so your team can produce great work. Unfortunately, we commonly run into teams that face the following productivity problems:

- Too many individual work-management apps/systems, making any process disjointed and untraceable
- Unintuitive systems forced upon marketing and creative departments that weren't intended for the creative process, making it harder for team members to accomplish their projects and goals
- No single source of "truth," hindering your team's ability to understand and optimize processes as a whole

SOLUTION:

The right project management tool can empower your team to create and deliver projects that no one else could. The right tool is one that adapts to your established processes and further enables those processes, rather than creating entirely new ways of doing things. A configurable solution like RoboHead—which is already designed specifically for marketing and creative teams—allows you to create custom workflows based on your most common project types and centers the entire team around communication, collaboration and delivery of great work. The right project management tool will empower and optimize all aspects of your process, from project initiation to delivery, allowing your team to be as productive and efficient as possible in achieving your ultimate goals.

For help identifying and solving the inefficiencies and challenges you face in your organization, contact [RoboHead](#) today and schedule a complimentary demonstration of our powerful project management and collaboration software.

