

Full insight into business lets boost productivity and triple the number of customers



Interview with Ally Simons, Marketing Manager, Appulate Inc.

Ally, could you describe your business and tell what the primary need for your company was when you chose Wrike?

Our company is the leading national provider of innovative insurance technologies. To keep our leading position we need to quickly align technology innovations with marketing initiatives. This would be impossible without complete internal visibility. By this I mean that we need to clearly see what is going on in every department, and understand what each member of the team is busy with at the moment. That is why finding the right solution, which would enable us to track all the tasks, including marketing, sales, change requests and bugs in one single place, was vital.

Business:

Appulate is the leading provider of software designed to help insurance agencies better automate their business processes.

Challenge:

Streamline development processes and reduce time spent on manual reporting. Provide the top management with the extensive view of the processes going on in the company.

Solution:

The work of several departments is neatly organized in one place. Even overlapping projects are easy to track.

Result:

Gained competitive advantage due to the visibility brought by Wrike.

The whole picture of the inner processes helps managers to quickly react on customers' requirements and improve business performance.

What was your business like without Wrike?

We used several different applications, including email, Microsoft Project and Excel, for tracking development, marketing and sales. Some of those applications were really hard to adapt to the work process in our organization. All the information was kept in different places. Very often our employees were using spreadsheets, passing them back and forth via email. The project managers were always busy collecting updates and making sure everyone had the right information. The real challenge was to get the whole picture of what was going on in the company. We made the right choice by purchasing the Wrike subscription.

How did Wrike fit into your collaboration and management processes?

Our team runs multiple activities in our shared workspace. Tasks are neatly organized in folders. Wrike not only helps manage projects within one department, but also some folders are shared among developers and quality assurance, some among developers and marketing managers, and some among sales representatives and the marketing department. The owners and CEO of the company have access to all the folders and can drill down to tasks of every employee on the team. The timeline view lets us see the work of every department in detail. The visibility is remarkable – Wrike shows us the whole picture of our business processes. Our whole organization started to move faster.

Could you give us an example of how Wrike helps you quickly react to customers' requests?

Sure. For example, we get a certain feature request from a number of our customers, so we decide to implement it. The task describing the feature is first created by the CTO or by the Marketing Director and assigned to the project development manager, the development manager processes it and reassigns it to one of the programmers. After the programmer finishes his part of the job, he assigns the task to the tester. Wrike also made the bug tracking process frictionless and simple. If



Customer Success Story

the tester finds any problems, he returns the task to the programmer. After all the bugs are fixed and the feature is ready to be released the task is reassigned to the marketing manager, who will be responsible for the feature promotion, which includes site updates sending out press-releases, video tutorials production, etc. At anytime the upper management is able to see the stage the project is at and who is currently working on each particular task.

You've mentioned that Wrike improved the bug tracking process. Could you describe how?

Everything is very easy. The tester writes an email describing the bug. He makes a screenshot, pastes it into the email body, and sends the message to one of the developers, adding wrike@wrike.com to the CC field. Wrike automatically creates an issue in the system, puts it into the correct folder and assigns it to the developer. What's great is that Wrike's smart reminders will never let the developer forget about the bug.

Could you describe the benefits gained by Appulate Inc with the utilization of Wrike?

Absolutely. In the year we've been with Wrike, the tool not only lets us continue to be the leader in our industry, but we've also introduced twice as many features as we did the previous year. Wrike also turned out to be a cost-effective solution. We saved about 50% on project management software. This influenced our business's performance and we managed to grow our number of customers 3 times bigger! The key to our success is that it is now easier to understand the position and performance of our business, as all the inner operations are now visible. Now the top management of our company is able to anticipate business needs, make recommendations, and identify warning signs more effectively. We can more quickly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses inside of the company and adjust our initial development and marketing plan to our customers' requirements.

Do you plan to extend the use of the Wrike services?

The business grows, so we do plan to buy more user-subscriptions. Besides, we are going to explore Wrike's potential for other processes, for example tracking our employees' time. Wrike's new functionality will help us do that. We know that very soon Wrike developers will release more important features which will be able to make our business even more successful.