

Multiple E-learning Projects are Managed 50% More Efficiently



Interview with Helen Whitehead, an award-winning learning consultant at Reach Further

Helen, how did you find Wrike?

Since Reach Further is a company advising on social media, community solutions, e-business and e-learning, we deal with innovative Web applications quite often. We regularly evaluate various solutions that can help our clients save money and time. We were looking for an efficient, Web-based task and project management software when we came across Wrike. We liked the solution so much that we adopted it.

Why did you need project management software?

We have lots of small and medium-sized projects, including online courses, face-to-face training, e-learning, managing online communities and creating social media strategies for various organizations. Our team members rarely work in the same office, as Reach Further has flexible work practices. Our staff often works remotely, and it is essential that we communicate with each other well. We previously communicated on our activities through email, phone and Skype calls. This was often very complicated, as staff members are always very busy, in different places, at client meetings, training or attending conferences. We found it difficult to schedule regular, face-to-face meetings. Junior staff members were not always clear about their tasks. We needed to overcome this problem.

What solutions have you tried to manage your project workflow?

We tried to use Microsoft Project and realized that a traditional project management software system wasn't appropriate for us, as it does not imply online collaborative work. We also have used spreadsheet templates of various kinds and Basecamp. Neither of these could help us run multiple projects effectively.

How did Wrike help you organize your collaboration?

Wrike lets us easily structure our multi-task and multi-project workflow and makes the whole team twice as efficient as it was before. The software lets us break our numerous projects down into tasks, assign these tasks and track them. Now all the active tasks are explained and outlined in our shared workspace, including all the deadline dates. To notify a colleague about a task, we just need to assign this task appropriately. The system lets us update tasks as we exchange emails throughout the day, and by the next morning, everyone is alerted and on track via their daily email to-do lists from Wrike.

What changed in your workflow after you adopted Wrike?

Wrike made the workflow smoother. Staff members have their daily to-do lists delivered to their email boxes and see what tasks they have been assigned for the day. We can click on the links to quickly view details of particular tasks. The tasks

Business:

Reach Further helps organizations adopt & embed Web 2.0 technologies to deliver learning & commercial advantage.

Challenge:

Help a distributed team collaborate over multiple projects.

Solution:

Applied the Web-based system that allowed the team to integrate their daily communications with project management.

Result:

Wrike brought collaboration and control together without making the team members change their ways.



Customer Success Story

may already be prioritized; otherwise, staff members may prioritize their activities themselves. Reach Further's directors add tasks into Wrike (and amend them) while sending emails throughout the day as we create or review projects. By the time everyone receives their daily to-do emails, we're all up-to-date. Using our dashboard helps us review projects and tasks and see what's coming up in the next few days.

What are your favorite features?

We certainly like the way that Wrike works with email. Email is a well-known environment for all of us. That's why we love how we can structure Wrike's folders in a similar way to our email boxes. It's very handy to simply copy an email to Wrike to add a task. There's often no need to add separate text (but that is really easy to do, if necessary). Most of all, those daily emails neatly summarize where we all are. Files can be added simply by attaching them to an email. Wrike's Email Engine is quick to use and doesn't make us change our way of working – which is vital in a busy, growing small company.

We are also fond of Wrike's Flexible Structures, and we use this feature heavily. The fact that a task can be in more than one folder creates an additional advantage for us. We can create overviews of any project in any way, e.g., see all tasks relating to online courses from any client, or all tasks relating to a particular client project, including tasks relating to their online courses.

In addition, we are constantly finding new ways to tweak our use of Wrike so that we're even more efficient -- for example, using the priority flags under an agenda item to allow us to keep overall track of our projects on a "traffic light" system.

What major benefits has Wrike brought to your business?

The main benefits for us are energized communication and control. Tasks are clearly defined, including deadline dates. This helps to maintain time management and organize a team member's working day. In a fast-changing environment, Wrike helps us to quickly tweak tasks and projects and bring everyone in the loop automatically.

Do you plan to extend the use of Wrike?

We are planning to add remote workers and associates to our Wrike network in due course. We love that Wrike development never stops. For us, it's valuable that the Wrike team keeps improving the software and frequently adds new features, which support our routine, just like the Email Engine. It means that we'll be plugging more users into the system soon.