



The most practical project management software

Project Management 2.0: Catalyzing Changes in Project Management

Article at a glance

Enterprise 2.0 software is entering different spheres of business, and project management is not an exception. However, the new technologies bring changes in processes and practices. Does traditional project management need to be innovated? What will the innovations bring? Is a new approach, known as Project Management 2.0, capable of helping organizations complete more projects successfully? This article will help you find out.

Project Management 2.0: Catalyzing Changes in Project Management

The buzz about traditional project management software being inefficient is pretty loud nowadays. The basic problems associated with this software are:

- E-mail communications bypass the project management software, making plans outdated and information siloed in individual mailboxes.
- Lack of collaboration puts the enormous burden of routine operations on project managers.
- There are many single-view documents, instead of one multi-view plan covering different roles, levels and projects.

Agile project management processes, accompanied with collaborative project management software, promise to improve this situation. These fast-spreading tools and practices are changing the traditional project management discipline and are often called [Project Management 2.0](#).

Can these tools influence a process and accelerate change? What are the main advantages of the new-generation tools over the old ones? Why are more and more companies adopting these tools? What are the results of this adoption? To answer all these questions, we'll need to examine Project Management 2.0 tools and find out what they have to offer.

Project Management 2.0 is powered by the same source as Enterprise 2.0 – freeform collaboration. The power of many, also known as collective intelligence, helps to build, maintain and evolve an up-to-date picture of operations. Flexible Project Management 2.0 tools merge this picture from various pieces, giving a perfect example of what enterprise social software researchers call “emergent structures.” Let's take a more practical look at this process.

Communications integrated into project management

There are more than 60 billion e-mails sent each day. Many of those e-mails contain tasks, status updates, change requests and task discussions, so it's hard to overestimate the knowledge buried in e-mail mailboxes every day. This knowledge often bypasses project management tools like Microsoft Project, making plans in static files outdated and thus useless. Somebody has to connect the dots in order to see where a project stands. Today, project managers take a hit and assemble e-mail pieces into a project picture on a daily basis. This explains why even the simplest tool that is integrated with e-mail and is capable of tapping into that knowledge becomes more powerful than traditional project management tools focused on

individuals and complex schedules. With a good project management 2.0 tool, plans emerge from separated e-mails in the course of continuous interactions of people. In this case, applications demonstrate the phenomena of emergent structures in action.

Merging of separated to-do lists and project plans into one master plan

Project management 2.0 tools employing the principle of [emergent structures](#) enable organizations to successfully combine top-down guidance with bottom-up collaboration. Team members organize their daily tasks in to-do lists, which the tool merges into a bigger picture that is aligned to an organized by project managers. Project plans become part of a bigger picture that is aligned by upper management. This structure reflects the bottom-up field knowledge brought in by the people on the team level. At the same time, this structure is easy to coordinate and adjust from the top, as it is totally transparent to managers. The flexibility and openness of Project Management 2.0 applications allow organizations to harmoniously [combine](#) field knowledge coming from the bottom up with leadership and guidance coming from the top down.

Multiple views of the projects

Besides giving an up-to-date picture of internal operations, the new-generation technologies enable managers and other members of the project team to [view projects differently](#). People can pick any reasonable sub-set of tasks, create a view with these tasks and share the view with someone who needs it. It means that more people can collaborate and contribute to the project work productively.

Each of these views can be changed by team members as the organization and its environment changes. The whole structure evolves with time. Managers, who have access to more views and to bigger views, can avoid scheduling conflicts, set priorities and align multiple projects. Flexible, many-to-many structures that allow creating, sharing and easy merging of views are an important part of Project Management 2.0 approach. This approach enables collective intelligence and leads to collaborative planning. In turn, collaborative planning makes organizations more [agile](#), productive and transparent.

Automation of routine operations

Yet another advantage of the new software is that it eliminates a great amount of routine work that distracts project managers from important things like leading and motivating their teams. There is less need to manually copy information from e-mails, pull information from employees, update plans for somebody else, notify people about updates and remind people about deadlines. The real-time visibility increases velocity in decision-making, helping organizations move faster and respond to changes quickly.

Summary

All the above listed Project Management 2.0 benefits become a catalyst to important innovations. Software will not do the whole job alone, but it empowers people and multiplies their efforts. Project Management 2.0 democratizes project management, bringing it outside of enterprise project management offices to other departments, as well as to small and medium businesses. It makes companies more agile, projects more controllable and people more productive. More projects will be completed successfully for everyone's benefit.

Author: Andrew Filev

Since 2001, Andrew Filev has been managing software teams in a global environment. His technical expertise and his management vision are reflected in online and offline articles that have had hundreds of thousands of readers. His ideas on new trends in project management are published in the Project Management 2.0 blog. Andrew has given speeches on new trends in project management and deployment of the next-generation, Web-based applications on deferent events, including the PMI Silicon Valley Tools and Techniques Forum and the Office 2.0 Conference (Project Management panel).

Andrew's innovative ideas and passion to improve project management tools are applied in Wrike, a leading online project management solution. Andrew now leads the company as a founder and CEO.