

## Business

# How Intelligent PM Software Can Enhance Business Performance in 2017

The current competitive environment calls on us to increase the output of teams and set priorities by applying software algorithms. The intelligent software for project management is likely to spur business growth over the next year, says **Irina Viter**, researcher at Epicflow.

The necessity to handle multiple projects on a regular basis is a given in the current business environment. According to a 2016 Project Management Survey on the State of Project Management<sup>1</sup>, almost 40% of project managers admit that their greatest challenge is attempting to run too many projects simultaneously. C-level managers also suffer from juggling too many projects at once. Overwhelmed with this burden, project managers and C-level executives alike are badly in need of Project Portfolio Management (PPM) software that can efficiently allocate resources and prioritise tasks on demand. Cutting-edge software proves the possibility of enhanced business performance by simply monitoring optimised resources and priorities, thus spending less efforts on re-planning while increasing output.

### Improving Task Prioritization and Resource Allocation

In 2017, web-based services for business forecasting and planning promise to help businesses grow. But more than 25% of project managers who have tested existing web-based PM applications still complain about

the difficulties of shuffling resources between projects and setting priorities. As such, it seems probable that shortcomings in current PM software with regard to task prioritisation and resource allocation are a handicap to nearly every fourth company, placing business assets at stake.

### The End of Spaghetti Networks and the Rise of Flow Reality

Having studied the primary causes of failed projects for years, experts are convinced that the ability to ensure smooth project completion in dynamic environments would bring profit to enterprises. In collaboration with scholars at the Open University of the Netherlands and the Eindhoven University of Technology, Jan Willem Tromp and Albert Ponsteen developed an alternative Flow method based on automatic rescheduling of task priorities. The Flow method was primarily adopted to replace the Gantt chart and avert the chaos of "spaghetti networking," allowing for a carefully structured distribution of tasks and 50% greater on-time project delivery.

In-depth research in the field of multi-project management has indicated that the problem of endless planning and rescheduling can be solved by integrating the Flow method into intelligent software. Albert Ponsteen and Jan Willem Tromp interviewed more than 4,000 subject matter experts and carried out thousands of meetings with business owners, CEOs, and project managers from small to large-sized enterprise companies to explore their current needs. This research grew the theoretical and

practical foundation for an online project management tool that incorporates the Flow approach and adds value to other PM systems, such as MS Project, Primavera, Trimergo, CA, and Jira. Requiring as inputs only a sequence of tasks, the group of people assigned to these tasks, rough work estimates, and deadlines, such a tool applies a scientific algorithm to provide PM experts with the answers they need. It prioritises tasks, allocates resources, controls future workload, and performs continuous critical assessment.

## Restored Business Focus Means Increased Working Capacity

Project management tools are designed to bring all processes under control for business owners. But we also have to consider how they may affect employee performance. Employees often lose focus when projects are not baselined. A lack of clear priorities is confusing for workers, and suggests that they should sort them out on their own. Project managers should be aware that smart software for project portfolio management not only tracks time to improve overall productivity, but also prevents work overload and thus results in increased working capacity.

## New PM Philosophy Underpins Business Success and Operational Progress

Enterprises that work on many projects at a time can generate revenue only with an excellent balance between planning, implementation and results. Before the appearance of the Flow method, many companies used more traditional technologies, expecting a solution that would enhance their business processes. Adopting the new management philosophy embodied in the Flow method, Pilz, a company that develops innovative security systems, won the National Business Success Award in 2015. As a matter of fact, Pilz was not the only Flow success story. It also optimised the work of engineers at the TKF cable factory, improved the efficiency of DSM Dyneema, and aided the development of technical systems for the ship construction firm De Keizer.

Intelligent project management software is primed to spur business growth in 2017. Thanks to new PM software, project managers will be able to return their focus to employees and avert the risks of management collapse. Smart systems that schedule and plan based on demand can significantly lower the risk of failed projects.

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