Discussion Thread 3.docx

Why is it difficult to use project management software well?

Project management software, like most business software, is developed to track and record events and attributes of business functions for reporting purposes. It particularly is used to manage the core functions of scope (for a requirements specification), time (for a schedule), cost (for a budget), and quality (for performance) reports, all summarized by milestones. The difficulty of using project management software begins with an understanding (or lack) of general project management, the practice (or lack) of using the software, and inherent complexity of the project.

The quality of the project management software is appreciated by how closely it mimics actual occurrences in the life of a project. But of course, as we expect more from the software, we also require a commitment to communicate higher-level ideas to each other (team members). One set of examples of these ideas is the Gantt chart and its elements of activity sequencing, predecessors, resources, and tasks dependencies.

I have used project management software for actual projects: Microsoft® Project© (downloaded with a student account from DreamSpark) for the remodeling-construction of my home. It included tasks and a 30-day timeline for exterior upgrades: a patio cover (building permit) and construction, concrete pour of an enlarged patio and walkway, the erection of a retaining wall, and construction of new fences; and interior upgrades of bathroom fixtures, lighting, painting, floor tile and linoleum, and wall-to-wall carpeting.

And I used (free) Freedcamp.com with a small team, for the project management of our Coleman University BS degree Capstone course of a web-based software product. The Freedcamp does not offer a Gantt chart but it has a good way of tracking files, tasks, timelines, resources, milestones, phase completions. It is free and each team member logs into it. Commercial products of project management software are expensive and robust.

Here is a good resource for further information on some Project Management Software Tools at <http://www.pm-essentials.com/5000-pm-tools.html> (Project Management Software Tools, 2015).

# References

*Project Management Software Tools.* (2015, Nov 3). Retrieved from http://www.pm-essentials.com/5000-pm-tools.html

Reply to:

Project Management Software Handling Issues

by [Megha Bhagat](http://webclass.coleman.edu/user/view.php?id=2899&course=2657) - Thursday, November 5, 2015, 9:22 PM

What do you mean by project management? Do you need to map out project plans and schedules? Collaborate on documents? Track tasks? Time? Documents? Issues? There are many software applications that can help with project management tasks - but also many different opinions about what types of functionality you might want.

         Managing Tasks

         Sharing and Collaborating on Documents

         Sharing Calendars and Contact Lists

         Managing Issues or Bugs

         Tracking Time

         Tools that Do It All

o   Microsoft Project

o   Basecamp

o   Central Desktop

o   DreamTeam for Salesforce (Quinn, 2010)

As with any area, it depends primarily on team needs. A lot of questions fall taking team need into account:

It all depends on team’s view of project-management software.

         Does team need a single tool that can provide a bit of functionality in a number of different areas?

         Or strong, single-tasking applications for an important area like issue-management or time-tracking?

         Or a tool that will allow your internal team detailed control over tasks and workflow?

         Or get PM Software that will allow external stakeholders to easily get in and know what's going on?

Talking about the different types of Project Management software comes the execution issues when relying on automated alerts. While alerts are helpful to remind team members that tasks are due, a problem develops when more time is spent on setting up the alert than the task itself. The main challenge with using desktop software to manage projects is that these applications were not designed for collaboration. At worst, the file is shared by emailing the file to all parties on the team. At best, the file may be posted on a network or on an extranet and shared from there.

One typical scenario that arises from using desktop software for project management is file 'version control.' (Hooks, 2013)

Another issue with using desktop applications is that the minute they are emailed to the project team, the project data is outdated, the information is not available in real-time. Projects are inherently dynamic efforts that change by the hour and sometimes minute.

So Like many other applications, project management programs often have a learning curve that varies based on the program's complexity. It usually costs money to purchase quality software or use online management applications. Project managers’ needs to learn how to use a program's major features and ensure that team members learn to use the components they need to perform their work. It takes time to plan a project, define milestones, enter everything into the system and allocate tasks to team members (Lee, 2014)

# References

Hooks, J. (2013, 02 13). *Project Management Software Advantages and Disadvantages.* Retrieved from Business2community: http://www.business2community.com/strategy/project-management-software-advantages-and-disadvantages-0412921#IM8CQo3TrOLuOxx4.97

Lee, K. (2014). *Project Management Software Pros & Cons.* Retrieved from Chron: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/project-management-software-pros-cons-70003.html

Quinn, L. S. (2010, 06). *Six Views of Project Management Software.* Retrieved from Idealware: http://www.idealware.org/articles/six-views-project-management-software-0

Hi Megha. You have a great point – that what matters in the software is what you decide you need for the project. There are many products and the each do somethings well and better than others. I have used Freedcamp which is made by the same people as Basecamp and it is good for collaboration because it is web based with user-accounts.

Your discussion is very information about execution issues of automated alerts and outdated content, usually mitigated with version control. Very interesting read – good job.

Reply to:

Why is it difficult to use project management software well?

by [Pradeep Chalmani](http://webclass.coleman.edu/user/view.php?id=2881&course=2657) - Thursday, November 5, 2015, 6:36 PM

**Why is it difficult to use project management software well?**

            In my view project management software is the best tool to track and validate the project status, there is much project management software in the market and many are free. The main concept of project management software was introduced when it became very hard to maintain the project status by means of many documents. There are many reasons that show it is very difficult to use project management software difficult.

            There is much software in the market right now and many of them are based on certification and when a project manager wants to learn a tool, it needs to study the best tool which mainly the client is using, need to learn the whole process and the develop a whole new plan which is very time taking process and thus this is one of the issue with the project management software. (Michael M. Marti, 2005)

            Other main reason why it is very hard to maintain the project management software is, after any project is created on the project management software, it has two properties which are one the project is auto scheduled and the other is a project manager needs to fill the schedule manually and this is a big situation and very time taking process. The next reason is if there is any process or task needs to be added in the project then with the automatic schedule property it will be a big problem to include the task but it is easy to maintain it manually.

            In conclusion I would like to say that it is better to learn any one tool and become expert in using that tool so that it will be easy to use in any company even though the company is not using that software and it will be very useful for any person who wants to become a project manager is the future. (Schwalbe, 2015)

# Reference

Michael M. Marti, P. L. (2005). PROJECT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR IMPROVED PROJECT MANAGEMENT . 1 - D-5.

Schwalbe, K. (2015). Information Techonology Project Management .

Hi Pradeep. You make a good point about working for a company and the need to know which project management software that is being use and to have knowledge to be proficient with it. That is the best case scenario but next to that, someone can learn another, popular product that is probably similar to many others. I agree that most products are easy to use and there can be time to learn of the advanced features as one’s tenure endures.

Discussion Thread 4.docx

Choose one of the theories (Maslow, Herzberg, McClelland, McGregor, Covey etc...) and discuss why you think it is a useful theory in helping to understand a project team?