**User Interview – Male, Front End Developer**

**Me:** So how do you feel about having to follow a project plan?

**Interviewee:** Umm, yeah, I make sure I know what I’m doing before the day or the week. So I think project plans are very important just as your daily schedule.

**Me:** Cool, and what do you think makes it a good experience or a bad experience?

**Interviewee:** So that’s when everything is thought through and you have a got a lot of things planned out in advanced. And so you have a clear cause of action.

**Me:** Cool, and do you feel that having a project management tool that works responsively is necessary, and if so why?

**Interviewee:** Yeah completely, it’s got to work on all screen sizes because you might check it on your phone in the morning or your watch when you’re out and about. Or you might pop it up on your iPad or the big screen.

**Me:** And do you think that being able to integrate apps with the tool will be useful? And what apps do you think would be valuable.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, um if it could integrate with services that people use I mean definitely. It’s got to work with things like calendars, Google calendars is a great one. And maybe stuff like emails and messaging services like Slack. Then you could get daily updates and things which is perfect.

**Me:** Cool, and what tool do you currently use for your projects?

**Interviewee:** At the moment we’re using Teamweek, which is cool. That at the moment integrates with Slack and emails and things as well.

**Me:** And what features do you like and dislike about the tool?

**Interviewee:** It’s nice and easy to use. It’s got a couple of different views, so you can go down and see what your schedule is or more of an overview or like a month view. So you can check out different projects and time ranges.

**Me:** Yeah, but you can’t have dependencies can you? So I guess that’s something its lacking?

**Interviewee:** Yeah Teamweek is very focused on a person kind of view. So it’s not a typical Gantt kind of thing.

**Me:** Are there any features that you feel should be a part of a new project management tool that’s being designed, specifically for creative teams?

**Interviewee:** Specifically, for creative teams?

**Me:** That would be like small to medium sized teams as well

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think a good thing there is applying details such as time tracking because that’s very important in I’d say the smaller industry at the moment, so that you can relay that back to clients. Other than time-tracking, I’d say just integrating with the services that teams use to communicate. That’s about it really for me.

**User Interview – Male, Full Stack Developer**

**Me:** How do you feel about having to follow a project plan? Do you find they become quickly outdated?

**Interviewee:** When you say ‘follow a project plan’ do you means as a developer or someone managing a project?

**Me:** As a developer

**Interviewee:** It’s super useful to have one, especially for bigger projects. We always have some form of plan for a project, even if it’s just a conversation in the office (for smaller jobs). They remove some of the stress of having to deliver a project on time as it’s often broken down ahead of time with sensible deadlines. As long as I hit those, I don’t need to worry about the impact of other projects on scheduling.

**Me:** Yeah, that makes sense. Have you had any experiences where a projects plan has gone really bad and impacted significantly on other projects in the pipeline?

**Interviewee:** Yes. That’s normally due to underestimating how long something will take and not the fault of the project plan directly. We had a project run 2x longer than it should have. Was difficult delivery all of the other projects we promised.

**Me:** Do you feel that having a project management tool that works responsively is necessary?

**Interviewee:** Responsively as in media queries or automatically pushed projects back?

**Me:** As in media queries. So being able to access project schedules on mobile / tablet devices.

**Interviewee:** I would say there is a use-case for it. Whether it needs exactly the same functionality it a different question. I don’t do this, but it might be that Joe or Susan are with a client and they ask “When can we expect this done by?”. Being able to look at the schedule on your phone or iPad may be useful. Realistically, we would probably just get back to them later. But we should be able to view at least some of the information on mobile in my opinion.

**Me:** Yes, so I’ve got the idea of having full functionality to create / edit project schedules on desktop and laptop devices, but only provide overviews of schedules on tablet / mobile. So it’s great to hear what you think on that. The next question is about having the ability to integrate apps with a project management tool. This could be anything from time tracking software to Slack. Do you think this is beneficial and what apps do you think would be essential?

**Interviewee:** It’s a bonus being able to do those things. I’d probably avoid time tracking tools as I think they will be unrepresentative of how much work has been done or is left to do. Especially as estimates are never 100% accurate. For example, on a current project I’ve spent 155 hours of 210 hours. The project management tool then thinks “Oh, we are 74% complete” but realistically I have another 70 hours left on it. We find it easier putting in high level progress percentages, which is given from the developer. So in this case, I’d say we are 60% done. Slack could be a good integration. Maybe ping a message to a project specific channel with messages like “X deadline in 14 days or X task completed ahead of schedule”.

**Me:** Cool, what tools do you currently use to manage your projects? And what do you like / dislike about them?

**Interviewee:** That is a question for Susan, as she actually does a lot of that now. We don’t have access to it, because I don’t think we need access to it.

**Me:** Okay cool, that’s interesting. So you don’t even see an overview of a project timeline or anything? How do you know your schedule?

**Interviewee:** Nope! My brain doesn’t need to be filled with that information as it doesn’t gain anything. I can’t do anything else as a developer. My job is to deliver work on time. I shouldn’t have to know about all the projects we have on, including ones that I am not involved in. We have a catch up in the office where Susan outlines what she would like people to work on. If things start to get behind, then she can see the impact of that and manage client expectations. A typical conversation is “Adam, you’re on project X for 2.5 days and project Y for 2.5 days. Joe we need A, B and C done this week. Do them in any order that suits you but we need them done. Tom, you’re doing designs this week for X client.”

**Me:** That makes sense! I hate knowing the ins and outs of every project. Especially when you aren’t involved at all.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, one person needs to. And that person also needs to know what expectations have been set with the clients.

**Me:** Last question. Are there any features that you think should be part of a project management tool specifically for creative teams?

**Interviewee:** Do the actual work for them too? Again might be a question for Susan as she uses it more. But being able to set hours-per-day (per resource). We work 7.5 hours a day. But we might have someone else on the team who works half a day (like an intern). Maybe being able to list the skills required to complete a task in a project. Might make it easier to assign resource to it for a bigger team.

**User Interview – Male, Project Manager**

**Me:** So how do you feel about having to organize and follow project plans?

**Interviewee:** Organising and following project plans are essential to ensuring a projects success, without a plan the project would essentially be a nebulas amount of work that needs to be completed but there’s no expectations of when or how it’ll be done.

**Me:** What makes this a good or bad experience?

**Interviewee:** Undoubtedly the software that you use will result in a good or bad experience, using no software and relying on scraps of paper is almost definitely going to end badly. Good software on the other hand can speed up the process and give clarity to all involved in the project. That said it does rely on all involved in the project to be onboard with the software, otherwise it’s just another point of failure.

**Me:** Do you feel having a project tool that works on tablet and mobile devices is necessary? If so, why?

**Interviewee:** Definitely from a from high-level, I’d want to be able to look at tasks or add notes on a mobile or tablet device. Otherwise these small tasks will need to wait until I’m at a desk or force me into pinch, zoom and drag hell assuming the tool isn’t mobile friendly.

**Me:** Would you find value in being able to integrate apps into a project management tool useful? And if so, what apps would be valuable?

**Interviewee:** Absolutely. Where possible we’d like the tool to integrate with all the other software we use to communicate as a team. For us the most important integrations would be Slack and FreeAgent.

**Me:** What current tools are you using for your project plans?

**Interviewee:** Right now we use Teamwork, previously we used Trello but moved away from it because it became a big soup of projects with no real clarity as to what needed to be done per project without forcing you to dive into a particular project.

**Me:** What features do you like and dislike about these tools?

**Interviewee:** As of yesterday Teamwork released Boards within projects which gives us the same flow as Trello. This is really important to us as we are now able to visualize progress to a client without producing old school Gantt charts (which it will produce for your as well). We love this tool and can’t think of any functionality we dislike.

**Me:** Are there any features you feel should be part of a new project management tool that’s specifically for small – medium sized creative teams?

**Interviewee:** Aside from the integrations mentioned above Teamwork does everything we need it to do for us right now.

**User Interview – Female, Indie Developer**

**Me:** So how do you feel about having to follow a project plan at work?

**Interviewee:** I’m not sure what that means. So how do I feel about following a Trello board or something?

**Me:** Yes, so you are given deadlines etc for your work and how do you feel about having to follow that? Is it organised or do your Trello boards become outdated quickly?

**Interviewee:** It’s quite organised and I like having things like them as I find you can break down your project into small sections and tick something off when you have completed them. It makes me feel like I’ve done more in a day and I can see what I have left. I use an online tool that’s called Week plan and I use that every day and it’s been very helpful.

**Me:** Awesome! Sounds like you have everything organised. What could be improved in the tools that you are currently using to make your project management more effective?

**Interviewee:** Maybe a Dropbox type thing on each board so one project has all the image files in that board etc. Then I wouldn’t have to go to another website or link to get more files etc.

**Me:** Yes, that makes sense. Do you think there is value in online project management tools being responsive so they are accessible on your phone or tablet as well as desktop?

**Interviewee:** Most of my work is done on my laptop as phones and iPad aren’t as powerful. Might be more useful for clients perhaps.

**Me:** Would be able to integrate apps into a project management tool be useful?

**Interviewee:** Erm, not so much for me as I don’t really use apps apart from games and social media.

**Me:** So you wouldn’t find being able to integrate time tracking tools, staff holidays or Slack beneficial?

**Interviewee:** Slack definitely and yes they would be useful. I was thinking of phone apps, sorry.

**Me:** That’s okay. Only a few questions left. What current tools are you using to manage projects?

**Interviewee:** Slack, Trello and Week Plan.

**Me:** Awesome, and what features do you like / dislike about these tools?

**Interviewee:** The sense of achievement when you get a tick etc and dislike that they can get cluttered if too many people make boards.

**Me:** Cool, last question. Are there any features that you feel should be a part of the project management tool I’m designing? Baring in mind this tool is specifically for creative teams.

**Interviewee:** Gifs! Only joking, although they could be fun. Erm, being able to see who is working where like in Google Docs you can see who is typing where maybe the boards could show up a colour for someone so you know what they are working on.

**Me:** Gifs would definitely make tight deadlines less stressful, that for sure!

**User Interview – Female, Project Manager**

**Me:** So the first question is about how do you feel about having to plan projects for a team and what makes it a good or bad experience?

**Interviewee:** Good things is that you know what’s happening in the near future and who is working on what and when. You can see what projects are on track and on budget. It also helps to plan future work and update clients on the progress of their project. Bad things would be when you hit a couple of problems and a project overruns. Or when a team member is unwell, you then need to find solutions and rework the schedule. This can be stressful.

**Me:** Cool. Do you think that having a project management tool that works on mobile and tablet devices would be useful? It may not have the same functionality as the desktop site but just provide an overview of schedules.

**Interviewee:** Yes definitely. Especially when having a meeting with a client and you’re out of the office. Can answer any scheduling queries there anre then.

**Me:** Would being able to integrate aps into the project management tool be useful? This could be anything from time tracking to Slack.

**Interviewee:** Yes, I think so. Slack especially. What I’d love is an all in one tool. Instead of having 4 – 5 different applications that you have to pay for and jump between.

**Me:**  Yeah definitely! Makes it all easier to maintain. What current tools are you using? And what do you like / dislike about them?

**Interviewee:** So I currently use Slack, Flow, Pipedrive, Hub Planner, Toggl and Team Gantt. Slack is used to talk to the team and send links etc. I like that its quick to communicate and share files and I dislike threads. These sometimes hide content, which means I miss it. Flow is what I use for my to do list. I can set reminders for future dates and make sure I finish my checklist for the current day. I like that it allows me brain dump all my jobs I need to do for the day. I can set recurring weekly / monthly / annual to do’s so I never forget tasks. This tool is only really suitable for small reminders. Sometimes I need notes with the task, but limited by the word count. Pipedrive is where sales leads and records of meeting notes or important points from calls. A CRM that has all contact details and project updates. So if I’m away Joe can see where we are with each project and last contact etc. I like that it is easy to find projects and update their statuses. I dislike that sometimes it’s hard to find previous emails attached to a client. It can take a while to find what I need to reference. Hub Planner is used to schedule all the work and assign to each team member. It’s great to see an overview of what projects we’re working on and when. I can also easily move things around. Allows me to see if we have capacity to take on another project. I dislike that there is a limit on how much detail you can add to the phases. Hence why Team Gantt is needed to break these down further. Toggl is what we use for time management. It allows me to see how much time has been spent and keep an eye on budgets. I like how I can see detailed reports for each project and their various tasks. Although the summary report is lacking and usually wrong. I always have to go to the detail report to get the correct data. And we also use Team Gantt for Gantt charts with milestones and detailed proposed timelines for each element of a project. I like how it allows you to break down all phases into tasks and add dependencies based on previous tasks. You can put percentages on each one for their completion status. The design is outdated and horrible to use though.

**Me:** This is really helpful. The last question is what features do you feel should be part of a new project management tool that’s aimed at small – medium sized creative teams?

**Interviewee:** What I’d love is an all in one piece of software that does the following. Be an easy, flexible planner for ongoing projects, provide an overview that shows what projects are booked in and scheduled. This should then offer a more detailed plan (Gantt chart) for the project. Having channels for each project that allows for quick file sharing / chats to the team. A to do list would also be good so that you can add to any date and recur if necessary. Being able to integrate with the CRM to see client details and all correspondence. The ability to manage time like Toggl. This would show what time has been logged against each project. So, not much! I hope that helps and let me know if you find a solution.

**User Interview – Male, Project Manager and Designer**

**Me:** How do you feel about having to organise and maintain project schedules?

**Interviewee:** I feel great. It’s a core part of a running a team. It’s not an easy task, especically in client services.

**Me:** Awesome, what makes this a good or bad experience?

**Interviewee:** The tools play a huge part in this. The user experience, including performance of the tools we use make such a big difference.

**Me:** Do you feel that having a project management tool that works on mobile and tablet devices is necessary? And if so, why?

**Interviewee:** Yes! Schedules change all the time and we need the tools to be able to adapt whenever we need to. It’s not essential that a planning tool doesn’t work on mobile but it can help.

**Me:** Would you find value in being able to integrate apps into a project management tool useful? And if so, what apps would be valuable?

**Interviewee:** Yes! I’d love this! I’d love to be able to integrate with our staff holiday app (timetastic). Also Basecamp (our PM / Project Comms app) and also Slack (our team internal chat tool).

**Me:** Cool. What current tool(s) do you use to plan projects?

**Interviewee:** Apple Calendar, Teamweek and Basecamp.

**Me:** What features do you like and dislike about these tools?

**Interviewee:** Teamweek is okay but would prefer something which can provide greater integration, bigger picture views and an understanding on billing and missed plans.

**Me:** Are there any features you feel should be part of a new project management tool that’s specifically for small – medium sized teams?

**Interviewee:** Project filtering is important. Understanding a difference between planned commitments and also TBC commitments. That would be sweet.