



WHITEPAPER

5 WAYS TO PROVE THE VALUE OF YOUR IN-HOUSE CREATIVE TEAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Does your in-house creative team suffer from being treated like a second-round draft pick? Is your team sidelined with too much work, too many rush jobs, and too many reviews and revisions? And no matter how hard you work, is there still a perception by most of the company, even executives, that all your team does is design SWAG and pick out brand colors?

You're not alone. More than 44 percent of in-house professionals said "gaining respect from internal clients" poses the greatest challenge for them in the near future.

You know your team offers real value to the company, but you lack the insights to prove it. And until you can, you won't be able to:

- Get the recognition you and your team deserve
- Justify the resources and budgets you need
- Get the "good jobs" instead of out-sourcing
- Have a seat at the decision-making table

You may think that's just the way it is—no matter what organization you work for. But it's not. You can gain the respect you deserve and the resources you need by following a few simple steps.

Keep reading to learn five simple things you can start doing now to prove the value of your in-house creative team.



1 BUILD TRUST: GUARANTEE YOUR TIMELINES

Trust is a critical part of doing business with anyone. If your clients can't trust you to deliver on time, they won't see why they should use you in the first place. But, meeting deadlines is hard when you have limited resources and heavy workloads. In one survey, 59 percent of in-house professionals ranked managing heavier workloads as their biggest challenge, and 69 percent said they work more than 40 hours per week. As the number of corporate initiatives continues to rise, meeting deadlines will remain a challenge. Your clients need to know you'll deliver when you say you will.

TO GUARANTEE TIMELINES, TRACK YOUR WORK

Build trust and meet your timelines by tracking your time. Start by collecting historical data to gain insight into how long tasks and projects should take. This will help you set deadlines you can realistically meet and keep your workloads under control.

- By tracking the time each task or project takes, you'll:
- Know how long team members spend on each task
- Have the ability to make good estimates based on previous history
- Provide stakeholders with deadlines that are reasonable to both parties
- Know your costs and be able to show your savings vs. outsourcing

With only a little over half of in-house creative teams currently tracking their time, many in-house teams are missing out on an opportunity to use valuable data that will improve their workflows and help prove their worth.

SERVICE OFFERINGS

When you know how long each piece of the project should take, you can create deadlines you can meet without working late nights and weekends. And if it's not the deadline your client wants, you can explain in clear terms how long each piece

of the process will take and why you need more time. According to Rena DeLevie, a creative operations business coach, communicating clearly with clients and consistently delivering as promised will most likely get you “bigger budgets and longer lead times,” because your value, credibility, and proficiency will be more obvious.

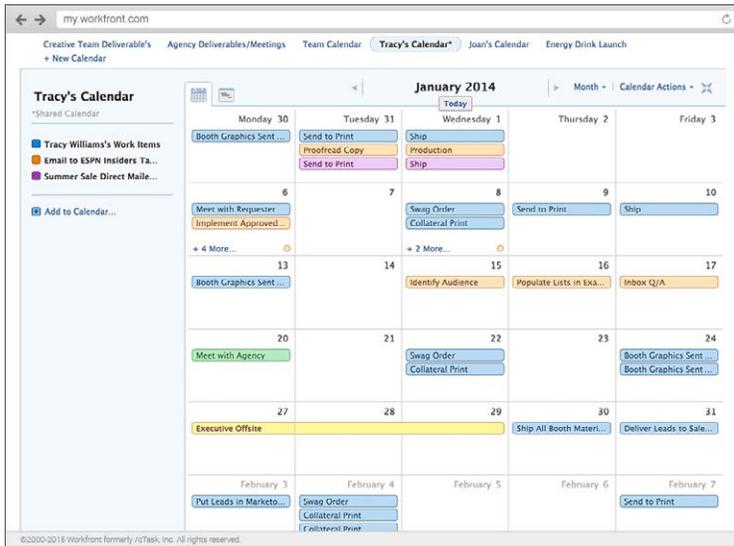
Additionally, you’ll be able to track your cost savings compared to outsourcing by calculating:

- The time it takes to complete specific tasks and your costs
- What a vendor would charge for the same work
- If applicable, your client chargeback rate

An analysis of the margins between the above rates can be an important indicator of the cost efficiencies and value you are creating for the organization. You’ll also be able to justify resources based on your historical data for how long each project takes and the associated costs, which will greatly benefit your team as it continues to grow and gain credibility.

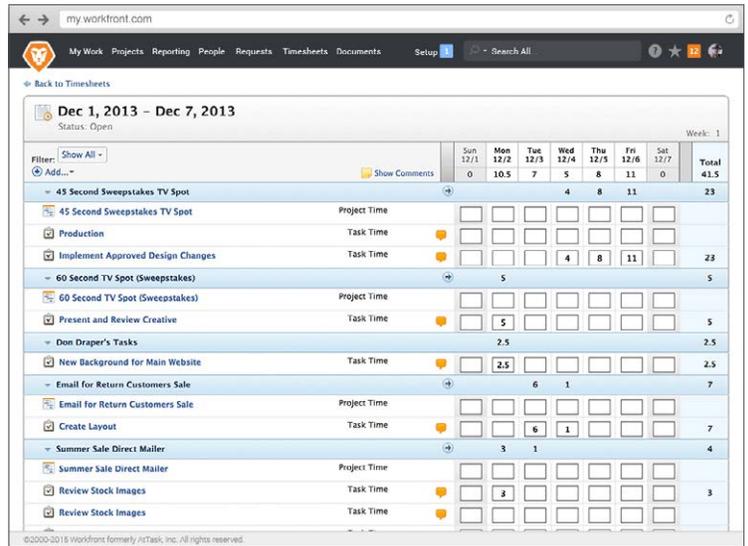
HOW WORKFRONT CAN HELP

When you enter and track all tasks in Workfront, you can:



CALENDAR

Easily see when each portion of your project is due. You can also share these calendars with team members, stakeholders, or any email address to give additional visibility into dates and status when needed.



TIME TRACKING

Each of your projects and reference it for future cost and time analysis as well as spotting bottlenecks and holdups. Team members can also update the time they spend working on individual tasks as they go.

2 BE STRATEGIC: PRIORITIZE YOUR WORK

Your team is overwhelmed with requests and constant interruptions—everything from small informational flyers to large lead generation email campaigns. You're working hard to get it all done, but the requests keep coming.

Unfortunately, there is no good system for prioritizing or evaluating jobs based on strategic value, current workloads, or other important parameters. The current default is to say yes to everything in the name of being helpful or for fear of creating enemies. But always saying “yes” can carry a high price. According to Jon Weinstein, a leading project management expert, “the price of a ‘Yes’ goes up with each green-lighted project, following the law of diminishing returns. The more projects an organization undertakes at one time, the less focus it retains, the less speed it acquires, and the less resources it has to put to any single project.” When you don't prioritize and can't say no, you end up working on whatever project has the next deadline or the client who nags the most, not necessarily the projects that have the highest value. And when you're not delivering high value projects, your own value diminishes.

TO BE STRATEGIC, STANDARDIZE YOUR WORK REQUEST PROCESS

By understanding the organization's strategic goals and prioritizing work accordingly, your team will be better able to show their value. Start by standardizing your work request process so that everything goes into the same pipeline. Once you have the whole picture in one easy-to-view location, you can understand what the trade off is between projects when one gets pushed ahead and another back. Then, you can say “no” to non-value added requests or activities and be able to give a good reason. This way your team is always working on the right work—the work that will deliver the most ROI for the company—instead of on pet projects or projects from the clients who nag the most.

WHAT YOU GAIN

When you gain control of the work request process and can see all requests in one place, who's working on what, and where it is in the process, you'll be able to:

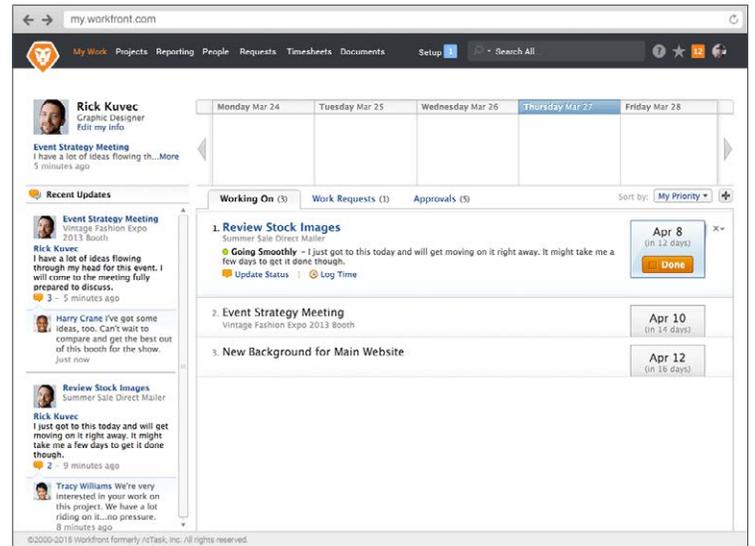
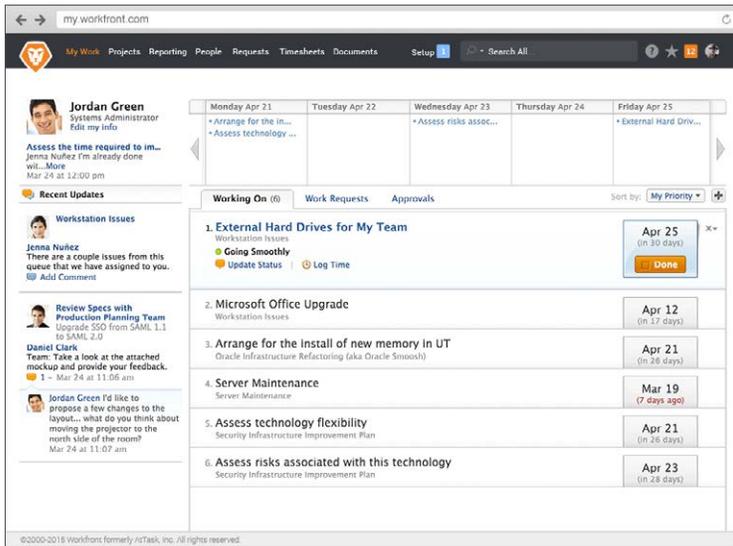
- Evaluate which projects offer the most value and score according to their priority level
- Better allocate resources and move strategic projects to completion more quickly
- Create a higher ROI for the organization by completing the most strategic projects first
- Save time by eliminating confusion, fire drills, and requests that aren't priorities

In a recent study, 65 percent of best executors—organizations that successfully completed 20 percent more strategic initiatives than others—reported well above average financial performance and strategic implementation, compared to just 18

percent of peer organizations.” By setting priorities, such as working on an important new product campaign that will increase your company’s market share over designing an internal newsletter template, you help add to the bottom line and create the kind of value everyone in your organization can respect.

HOW WORKFRONT CAN HELP

When you enter and track all tasks in Workfront, you can:

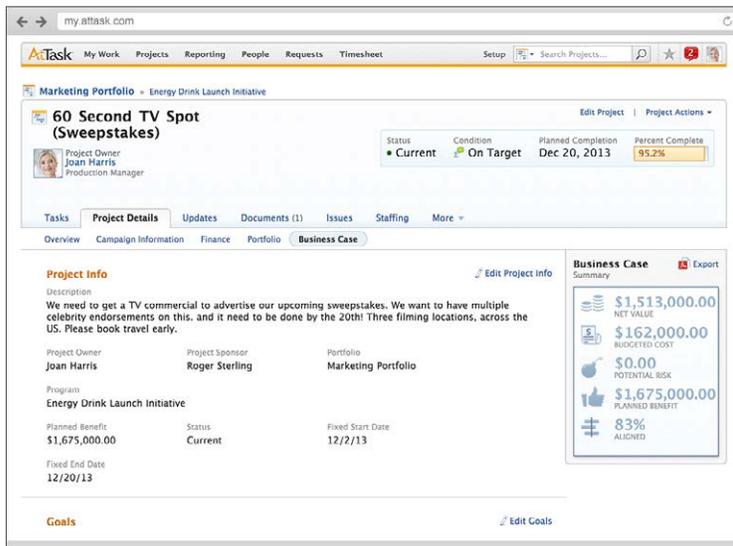


MY WORK

To see all of your individual work in one spot, including ad hoc work, new requests, and pending approvals. Here, you prioritize your tasks by due date or project, or you can drag and drop to reorder your list as needed.

TEAM SPACE

Quickly see your team members’ most recent updates, what they are working on, and how they’ve sorted their priorities. Then, if their priorities need changing, you can comment on those tasks and let them know.



“I can just turn Workfront on in the morning and there it all is, exactly what I should be working on. It’s version control. It’s comment control. You can see that, ‘Okay, we’re still waiting for feedback from this person’...I know exactly where a project is. I think right now I have about 112 tasks in my Workfront. And that’s not overwhelming. If I had 112 little things on a spreadsheet, I’d be freaking out.”

JACQUELINE COMER
Senior Copywriter/Creative Director, ATB Financial

BUSINESS CASE BUILDER

Weigh or compare individual requests against what’s already in the pipeline as well as your company or department’s strategic goals. This way, you can ensure that your team only work on the most valuable jobs.

3 **SAVE TIME: REDUCE REWORK**

Roughly 70 percent of creative professionals say they need more “creative time.” But that’s not easy to provide. For example, your team is already putting in 60-hour weeks and is still getting pressure to get things done. Managing approvals and revisions is a major headache. You can’t get the people you need to sign off when you need them to, and when tasks get out of order—a designer adds copy to a web page before its been approved—you end up with unnecessary rework. What you need is a way to reduce time by managing approvals, dealing with rework, and keeping track of it all, so you have more time to actually be creative.

TO REDUCE REWORK, USE CREATIVE BRIEFS AND TEMPLATES

Using templates and creative briefs may seem counterintuitive—more forms, more time—and you may encounter some initial pushback. But putting processes in place and using templates will help build team consensus, align expectations, and clearly define who is responsible for what and when each step in the process should take place. Similarly, using creative briefs to capture all of the relevant job or project information before your team starts working, will help reduce the number of iterations you do due to rework and mismanaged requirements and expectations. Keep in mind that creative briefs are called “briefs” for a reason—they should be as brief as possible while still gathering any important information you need to start on a new job request.

According to Gary Evans, a project management consultant, “project templates, when properly designed, are one of the most potent tools that a project manager can use. For very little to no cost, the project manager obtains a device that can simultaneously save time, promote good communication and contribute significantly to project success.” The same is true for creative projects; using templates for your repeatable work, like brochure design, website design, billboard design, etc., will save loads of time, keep your team productive, and streamline processes so rework and multiple iterations become less of an issue.

WHAT YOU GAIN

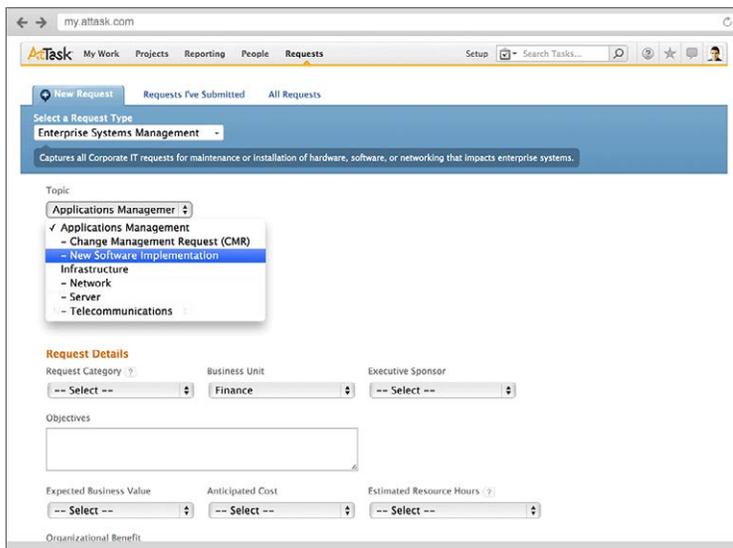
With 25-40 percent of all spending on projects wasted as a result of re-work, using creative briefs and templates can add significant value by saving both time and money, allowing you to:

- Get the feedback you need at the right time from the right people
- Set clear expectations and reduce the amount of time spent waiting on approvals
- Eliminate unnecessary rework that occurs because steps get done in the wrong order
- Ensure no steps in the process get missed

When project steps are clearly outlined and communicated, your approvers can see the schedule and understand how their delays impact the entire project timeline and team members can see when to start specific tasks (or to wait). For example, your graphic designer can now see that the copy hasn't been approved and will wait to insert it into the web page, saving rework time. Most importantly, you'll free up more time for other valuable creative tasks such as developing a killer concept for a new product ad campaign. By using templates to streamline your workflows, your productivity will improve, your outputs will increase, and you'll be able to use those numbers to prove the value of your team and their work.

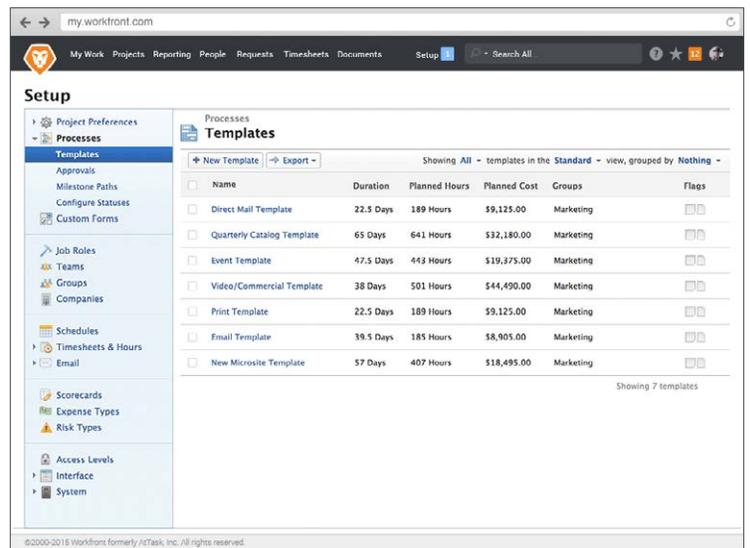
HOW WORKFRONT CAN HELP

Workfront can help you:



CUSTOM CREATIVE BRIEFS

Your request forms so incoming work requests arrive complete with all the information you need to get started, reducing the amount of back-and-forth typically needed before new jobs can begin.



CUSTOM TEMPLATES

For each type of job or project your team does so you don't have to waste time starting from scratch each time. Then, streamline your approval process by creating templates that designate and track who and when approvals will occur in your workflows.

4 STOP CHAOS: KEEP EVERYTHING IN ONE PLACE

One of the key reasons you can't prove your worth is because your data is a mess. Some of it is stored in Excel spreadsheets, some in Google docs, others in Word documents, not to mention you've got a time tracking program, a project tracking program, a collaboration tool, and a digital asset management system. And with the average person using 13 different methods to control and manage their time, it's no surprise team members are using different tools to communicate or track their own projects—everything from email to instant messaging to Google calendars or Outlook—depending on their own personal preferences.

TO CONTROL CHAOS, CONSOLIDATE TOOLS

To successfully manage teams, multiple campaigns, tight deadlines and budgets, you need streamlined work processes and tools that keep your teams connected and make collaboration easier. According to one Senior Analyst at Forrester Research, “consolidating tools offers many benefits, including real tool integration, better service perspective, quicker incident resolution, and higher service reliability.”

To eliminate excess tools and improve data sharing:

- Standardize the tools your team members are using so all work stays in one system
- Look for a tool that has multiple functions so you can consolidate as many tools as possible into one
- When you must use multiple tools, look for solutions that allow integration between the tools

Additionally, standardize your version registry and have the team use the same subfolder structure to store the different kinds and versions of your files. By implementing these best practices you'll find you have less headaches and confusion, less scattered work data, and a better understanding of the exact status of each project.

WHAT YOU GAIN

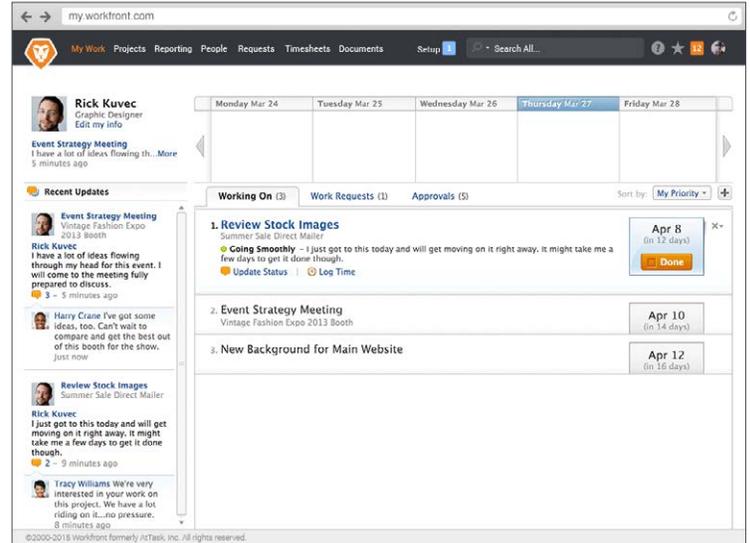
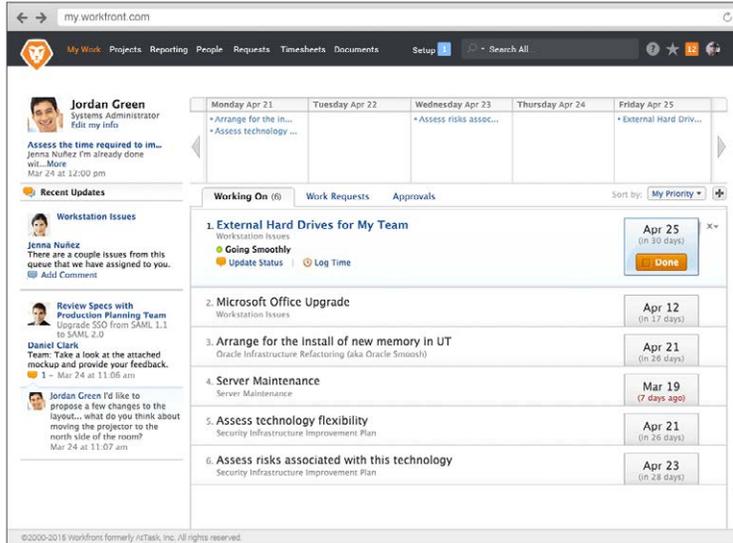
Data disparity practically ensures that an organization cannot tap into the true meaning of all the information it has captured—or use it to enhance performance. By consolidating tools, you'll be able to:

- Get data, generate reports, etc. in one place
- Save time gathering important information
- Stop having to enter data manually
- Eliminate team and informational silos
- Improve collaboration and visibility

According to recent research, for every \$1 billion spent on a project, 56 percent, or \$75 million is at risk due to ineffective communications. With stats like this, consolidating tools to improve visibility and reduce the time it takes to gather important data isn't just a smart move, it's essential to boosting your credibility with executives and ensuring you're using your resources wisely to provide the most value.

HOW WORKFRONT CAN HELP

Workfront provides a centralized location for all of your workflow needs, including:

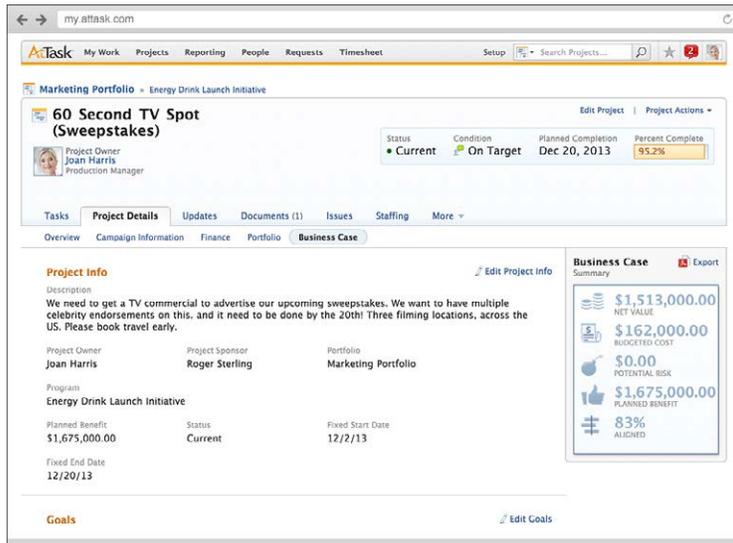


WORKFRONT DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT

To store, view, proof, and approve all of your documents and digital assets in one place and within the context of the specific task and project they are tied to.

DIGITAL PROOFING

Upload creative assets to a task and then use the Digital Proofing and Approvals features to view drafts, request and provide feedback, share assets, and get approval in one place.



"Before Workfront, we were bouncing between so many different systems, between our internal portal and our project management software and using email way too much and trying to get approval on graphic design work and managing budgets within Excel and emailing those to executive management. All that stuff took time we didn't have."

CASEY FLOYD
AVP/Campaign Manager, Nevada State Bank

REAL-TIME UPDATE STREAMS

Embrace the collaborative capabilities—commenting, real-time update streams, and notifications—to keep work, communication, updates, and data in one place, in the context of the work being done.

5 GET THE BIG PICTURE: IMPROVE YOUR VISIBILITY

Research shows 76 percent of companies' biggest priority is to improve the visibility and awareness of projects across the organization, and there's a good reason. Right now, without complete visibility into all your work processes, there's a general lack of insight into how efficient your team is being or how you are adding value. You can't show your value, because without the proper context, you simply don't know how many projects you've completed this month, the number of billable hours you spent on a certain task, or how your projects create cost savings and strategic value to the organization.

TO IMPROVE YOUR VISIBILITY, ADD CONTEXT

Companies empowered by increased visibility into everyone's work, complete with all relevant conversations, negotiations, and actions, can align business strategies with execution, so managers can continuously plan and monitor strategic, operational, and tactical goals.

To increase your visibility into work processes now, start by:

- Managing your team's work in one tool so all data is tracked and collected in one place
- Make sure collaboration is occurring within the context of the work, not in email or IMs, where important information is easily lost with the closing of a window.
- Then, with all of this information all in one place, rolling it into your reports and dashboards is simple—making it easy to equip the right people with the right information at the right time.

When you have more visibility into the context of the work being done, you'll be able to provide real data about what your team is doing and how your team is creating value through improvements to the bottom line or through increased revenue and/or reduced costs.

WHAT YOU GAIN

According to one study, 70 percent of marketers believe access to in-depth data and the ability to translate it into insights is a competitive advantage. With full visibility into all your processes, you'll be able to:

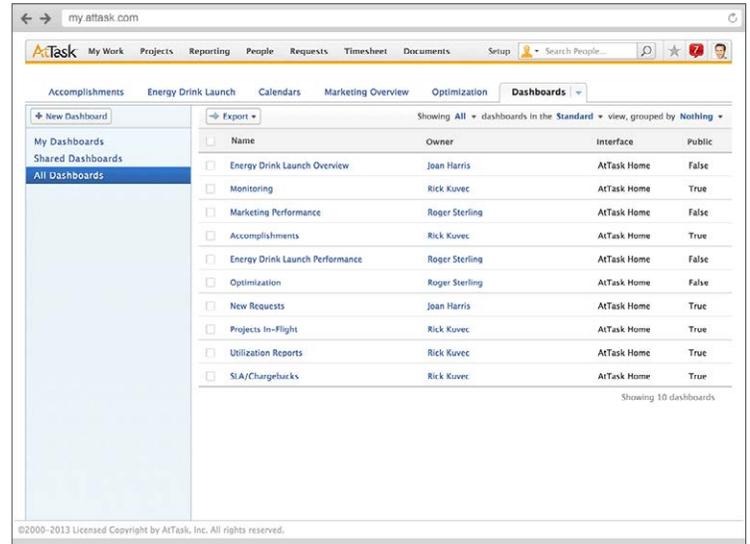
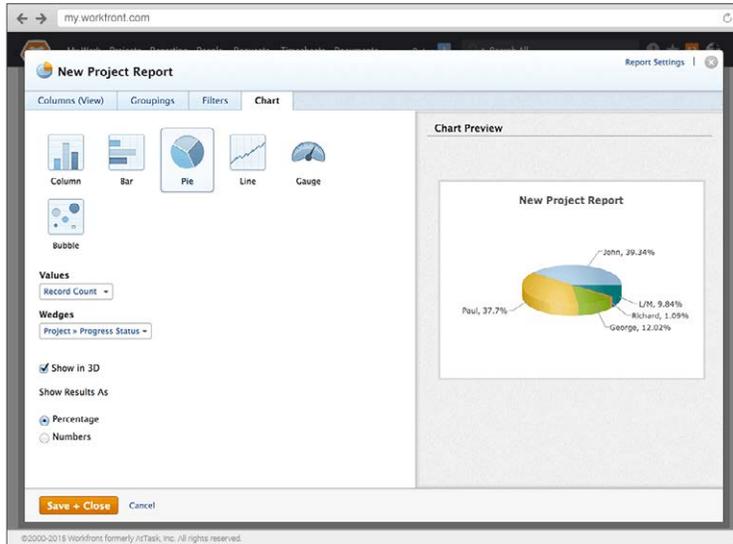
- Have an easy way to create reports and dashboards for executives
- Know who is working on what to ensure it's the best/right work, know when they'll be finished and where there are dependencies
- Be able to track and prove how much your team has done in the last quarter or year (how many projects, how many clients, and in what categories)

- Show how much ROI/value you've contributed
- Track your time to show productivity or improvement

With these kinds of insights in hand, it's easy to show both clients and executives what you do all day long (and no it isn't just picking colors) and how it's positively affecting both the bottom line and the strategic goals of the organization.

HOW WORKFRONT CAN HELP

Workfront provides a centralized location for all your work and data, including:

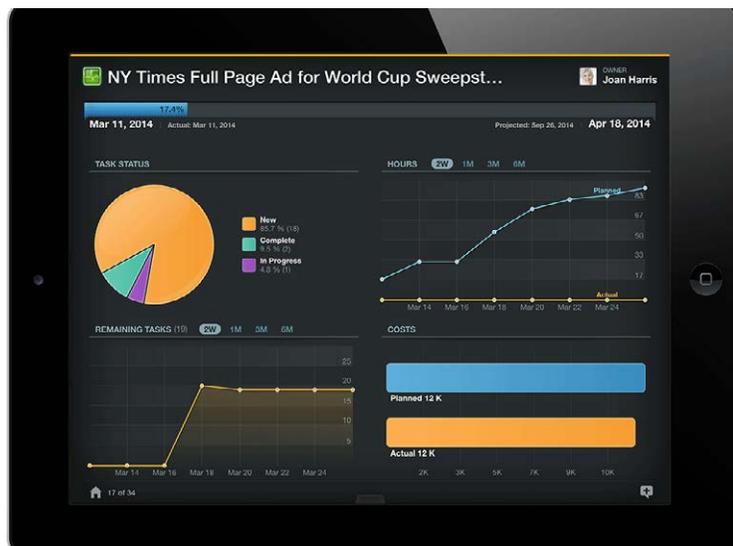


REPORT BUILDER

Use the Reports function in Workfront to easily track and prove budgets, timesheets, planned vs. actual comparisons, approvals, revenue, and more.

DASHBOARDS

Use customized Dashboards to help you and your executives or stakeholders stay up-to-date on all your creative projects at-a-glance.



IPAD APP DASHBOARD

Stay updated while you travel using the executive-friendly Workfront iPad app that provides instant, portable access to reports and dashboards.

STOP FEELING LIKE SECOND PLACE. START PROVING YOUR VALUE TODAY

In-house creative teams bring a unique value proposition to organizations—the ability to provide quick turnaround, lower costs, and quality work combined with a deep knowledge of the organization’s brand. You’ve known this for a long time; you just haven’t had the tools to prove it. Now you do.

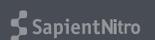
By implementing these five ways to prove your value, you’ll be able measure your efforts and easily develop real-time reports that benchmark your successes. That way, everyone knows that you’re not just designing SWAG and picking out colors. By proving you’re adding profitability to the bottom line and increasing brand awareness through strategic initiatives, you’ll get the respect you deserve. You’ll also be better able to justify resources and have a seat at the decision-making table—meaning, you’ll have some say in strategic initiatives and in what work your team does versus what gets outsourced.

ABOUT WORKFRONT

Workfront is a cloud-based Marketing Work Management solution that helps in-house creative teams and agencies, marketing departments, and external agencies conquer the chaos of excessive email, redundant status meetings, constant rework, and tedious approval processes. Unlike other tools, Workfront Marketing Work Cloud is a centralized, easy-to-adopt solution for managing and collaborating on all creative work through the entire work lifecycle, which improves team productivity, credibility, and executive visibility. Thousands of enterprise marketing teams and agencies trust their work to Workfront, such as Adobe, Cisco, HBO, Covario, Ralph Lauren, SapientNitro, REI, Trek, Schneider Electric, Tommy Hilfiger, and ATB Financial.

To learn more, visit workfront.com/marketing or follow us on Twitter @Workfront_Inc.

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ENDNOTES

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