

The Estée Lauder Companies' Wrike Deployment Story



The Estée Lauder Companies is the global leader in prestige beauty – delighting consumers with transformative products and experiences, inspiring them to express their individual beauty. It is the only company focused solely on prestige makeup, skin care, fragrance, and hair care with a diverse portfolio of 25+ brands sold in approximately 150 countries and territories.

The Challenge

In 2017, the Estée Lauder Companies began a journey of marketing and creative transformation after realizing that its creative processes were antiquated. Without a digital asset management system or digital workspace, teams “were left with physical file folders and sending thumb drives around the world,” recalls Jessica Wolfe, Vice President of Tom Ford Beauty Global Marketing for The Estée Lauder Companies.

The Estée Lauder Companies initially chose Workfront to help them manage their creative operations and projects. But after a year and a half of reviewing adoption metrics, the Creative Center of Excellence at The Estée Lauder Companies began looking for an alternative work management solution. “We wanted to have more automated project management, more transparency between our various creative teams between regions and global. We needed a tool that’s more fit for that purpose,” states Wolfe.

CASE SUMMARY

Customer

The Estée Lauder Companies

Headquarters

New York, New York

Industry

Beauty

Top challenges

- Low adoption of Workfront due to complexity
- Dispersed teams following different procedures
- Working and tracking in multiple systems

Previous solutions

Workfront, Excel, Teams, Sharepoint, Asana

The Solution

The Estée Lauder Companies considered other popular tools like Asana and Microsoft Projects, but Wrike's collaborative work management solution was identified as the winner.

"We went through a pretty rigorous analysis process," reflects Caroline Frangos, Executive Director of Global Creative Operations. "Since The Estée Lauder Companies is so big and so complex and each brand operates differently, we wanted to make sure that the end users were ultimately on board because change management can be difficult, and we really wanted people to adopt the tool."

Tom Alpers, Vice President of Creative Operations and Acceleration at Tom Ford Beauty Global Marketing, also recalls the vetting process: "There was a lot of conversation between not only the creative teams, but also the IT infrastructure to make sure that whatever tool we chose was also going to be safe and appropriate to link with other platforms in our tech stack and meet all of the security requirements."

Because Wrike delivers a simple and easy-to-use platform and enterprise-level security, The Estée Lauder Companies teams were eager to get started with their new collaborative tool. "After working in such archaic ways, the teams were really sold on how visual, intuitive, simple, and flexible Wrike is," says Frangos. "We're a very corporate environment, and Wrike feels a little bit more personal, more creative friendly. Its intuitive nature just felt right for both creative operations and creatives," adds Olivia Legere, Vice President of the Global Creative Center of Excellence.

Simpler UI with better functionality

The Estée Lauder Companies quickly realized how intuitive Wrike was, giving leadership the simplicity and transparency they needed to effectively manage creative work.

"We manage creative projects, and Wrike is a great tool for that because creatives want a nice interface," says Wolfe. "So the UI shouldn't be bulky, clunky, or slow. It needs to be clean, intuitive, and easy to use like Wrike. It's also easy to initiate and load projects in Wrike, which is helping us avoid the adoption issue we had with Workfront."

Why Wrike

Needed an easy-to-use work management platform to streamline global creative operations

Departments using Wrike

Creative Center of Excellence for Tom Ford Beauty, Clinique, La Mer, Estée Lauder, and Bobbi Brown

Integrations

Microsoft Teams, Outlook, Clickbait, Quickbase

Feature highlights

- Extension with Adobe AEM and DAM
- Centralized reporting and dashboards across global teams
- Intuitive UI and easy-to-use native proofing tools

Website

elcompanies.com/en

By using Wrike, The Estée Lauder Companies teams have identified simpler ways of completing the same work. “So teams are willing to move from very complicated templates to Wrike Blueprints because it’s a great opportunity for them to simplify how they’re running their programs in addition to having a simpler tool to run their programs on,” explains Frangos.

Wrike’s simplicity is also paired with powerful and practical functionality that enables The Estée Lauder Companies creatives to develop high-quality assets effectively. “The proofing functionality is just an easier user experience,” begins Alpers. “I love how Wrike saves a new version every time changes are made. It creates an archive, so if you need to see what has happened and why a decision was made three proofs ago, it’s all there in an easy-to-use side-by-side comparison.”

“Wrike’s extension to the Adobe Creative Cloud is also a big thumbs up from our creative design team,” continues Alpers. “The interface and user experience in the extension is very intuitive in Wrike.”

More power to enforce standards & encourage agility

To effectively manage 30 different creative teams across multiple regions and time zones, the Creative Center of Excellence at The Estée Lauder Companies uses Wrike to strike a unique balance: standardize global processes to maximize efficiency while still empowering each team with the flexibility to work how they want.

“Our brands have individual ways of working, but we’ve discovered that our creative development processes don’t differ that much,” elaborates Legere. “We’ve just all been talking about things in different languages and using a different taxonomy. So Wrike’s demystified that by allowing us to standardize our approach in Wrike. It alleviated a huge pain point for us because now a ‘task’ means the same thing to every team. Wrike has shown us that we are more common in our ways of working than we thought.”

Even though The Estée Lauder Companies brands’ general processes are relatively similar, every team and region does work a little differently – and Wrike’s versatility helps everyone follow structural best practices while working how they work best. “Our workflows are standardized, and the Blueprints have required steps in them that all teams have to adhere to,” explains Frangos. “But they’re able to add on to them the specific nuances and steps that they need to. We also have a standardized request form that every brand can tailor to exactly what they need.”



“Each of our 30 brands has their own way of working. Wrike gives us consistency across our enterprise so we can report properly, but also allow for individualization.”

Jessica Wolfe,
Vice President of
Tom Ford Beauty
Global Marketing,
The Estée Lauder
Companies

Wrike's flexibility also increases the creative teams' agility. "Our business priorities are continuously pivoting," says Alpers. "Because we all follow the same processes and have everything in Wrike, we can implement any changes to the creative processes quickly and update everybody in real time. This used to be a manual process, but now it's very easy and transparent with the visual timelines and Gantt chart."

Superior onboarding & support during COVID-19

Deploying a new tool can be challenging under any circumstances, and 2020 was anything but normal. As teams shifted to remote work during the pandemic, The Estée Lauder Companies relied on their existing partnership with Wrike's Professional Services team for support.

"We had done so much work on deployment, and then all of the offices closed," recalls Alpers. "We didn't know how remote training would work for our teams, and how we could do the final stages of configuration for the brands when we can't be in the same room together. But I was both extremely pleased and grateful for the Wrike team sticking with us during this whole nightmare."

"The agility of the Wrike team to guide us through these wild six to nine months is a huge win," boasts Frangos. "Wrike staff are used to operating in the tool and working and collaborating remotely; whereas, our teams are not. We have a big in-person meeting culture. The way the Wrike team has partnered with us and shown us a different way of working has been tremendous."

"The more Wrike works with us, the more we trust that we're developing a long-term strategic partner," adds Legere. "Their agility, nimbleness, and ability to pivot when chaos happens has been and will continue to be very valuable."



"With Workfront, we still needed Excel to track work. But with Wrike, everything's going to be in one place. That is what's going to make us more efficient."

Tom Alpers,
Vice President of
Creative Operations
and Acceleration at
Tom Ford Beauty
Global Marketing,
The Estée Lauder
Companies

The Conclusion

As The Estée Lauder Companies continues to deploy Wrike's collaborative work management system across its global brands, the beauty company is eager to experience and experiment with more of the platform's versatile features.

"We're looking forward to the reporting functionality," says Wolfe. "We want to know that our teams are working successfully to develop, create, and execute campaigns on time, on budget, and with highly effective assets. Having a way to visualize and report how our creative teams across brands and regions are performing and identifying which stages of our processes need fixing will help us use data to improve."

"I'm excited to see how the workload function comes into play. We haven't worked with brands yet to put in estimated hours against each task so that we can help them refine resourcing," notes Frangos. "I'm also anxious to see how they're able to forecast timelines where they could actually raise risk against programs coming in — so leadership can see a forecasted view of when work should start versus when it actually does."

"I'm looking forward to launching Analytics to see where we can improve our processes," says Alpers. "I can't wait to be able to retroactively look at a program, see what works, see what didn't work, and share that data with other teams to help them solve those problems. With Wrike, all of that data will be there to inform our processes moving forward."

Overall, The Estée Lauder Companies is excited to have an easy-to-use work management platform that will empower teams to work better and deliver better results for the enterprise as a whole. "One of the primary objectives of choosing Wrike was to reinforce global and regional ways of working. That to me will be the sign of success. We're very confident that we've selected a tool that will improve work between our global teams," concludes Legere.

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