wrike

Wrike Enables the University of Oregon to Do More Work That Matters

The University of Oregon (UO) is a public university founded in 1876 in Eugene, Oregon. It has grown to include nine schools and colleges, including the College of Education, College of Design, School of Music and Dance, and School of Law, with more than 22,000 students. Its student-athletes compete in the Pac-12 Conference and are known for football, track and field, and basketball. UO is a Tier 1 public research institution with faculty who have received Pulitzer Prizes and a Nobel Prize, as well as MacArthur Fellows, Guggenheim Fellows, and National Medal of Science Recipients. Alumni of the UO are leaders in business, industry, education, the arts, government, NGOs, and their communities. The Alumni Association keeps the more than 231,000 Ducks around the world connected to their alma mater and to each other through events, networking, service opportunities, and more.
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The Challenge

The University of Oregon's Marketing teams needed a better way to communicate assignments, priorities, and deadlines. George Evano directs Alumni and Development Communications, which provides communications services to both the UO Alumni Association and fundraising teams. A large part of their work is managing iModules, the CRM platform for the Association, which is the launchpad for all alumni email communications. His team was struggling to manage the rising tide of email.
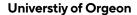
"Email traffic more than doubled in a three-year period, from about 400 emails sent per year to more than 1,000. That's three emails every day," said Evano. "My team is responsible for the production, quality assurance, and release of all emails. And while the demand tripled, there was no increase in staff. We were managing the calendar and details of email distribution via spreadsheet and meetings, and it became painfully clear that was not scalable."

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

SUCCESS STORY FACTS

250 hours
Saved per year by reducing meeting time

275 users
regularly using Wrike to collaborate

Up to 600
Collaborators regularly using Wrike at any given time

The Alumni Association tracked its email needs on a loosely maintained Excel spreadsheet, which worked until the number of emails scaled up. Then tracking became an issue. There was a weekly traffic meeting attended by Evano's team and the Alumni Association team to review the email schedule, which took 60-90 minutes every week.

"Picture 12 people at a conference room table, each with a copy of this spreadsheet or looking at it on a laptop," said Evano. "As changes happened, updates were made on different versions, and it was hard to follow the record of who was supposed to do what to get everything done. We didn't have one central location to manage everything. Things fell through the cracks due to a lack of clear accountability. Deadlines were missed. As a result, there was chaos, blame, and rising tension between the teams."

UO began the search for a comprehensive platform that could help them:

- Increase visibility
- Manage resources effectively
- Reduce confusion and better facilitate collaboration
- Provide clarity into status and deadlines
- Easily create reports

The Solution

The University of Oregon tried multiple tools. Wrike was already deployed at UO but wasn't being used consistently. When Evano's team determined that Wrike met all of their objectives, they began an effort to drive widespread adoption and engagement across departments. They also set some goals:

- By September 9, 2017, 90% of all email projects will be requested at least two weeks in advance
- All email will be tracked in Wrike to see at a glance who's responsible, when the email is going out, and the target audience

"The vision was to adopt Wrike to manage all of the Association's work, not just email," said Evano. "But managing email was a great start! Wrike drastically improved the whole process and made everyone's life easier."

CASE SUMMARY

Customer
University of Oregon

Headquarters
Eugene, OR, USA

Industry
Education

Number of Employees
5,000

# of Users
275 with 600 Collaborators

Wrike Products
Wrike for Marketing
Wrike Resource

Departments using Wrike

Content Strategy,
Advancement (Fundraising),
Marketing Communications,
Photo and Video Production,
Publications,
Student Recruitment
& Success, HR,
The UO Alumni Association

Top Challenges

Lack of visibility into project status and timelines,
Scaling project delivery without adding resources,
Coordination between departments and priorities,
Robust reporting

Wrike is the Single Source of Truth

Wrike became the single source of truth for the Alumni Association, with a well-organized folder structure and Space. The feature used most frequently is the visual calendar, a.k.a. "flight control" for all email communications.

"After much tuning and refining, it came down to one essential action: Enter your request through Wrike," said Evano. "Our weekly meeting now averages 30 minutes, because we can look at the calendar and move things around and see the potential impact. We can see the project status view or create a quick report right in the meeting. It's more efficient and clear, which means it's not a meeting we dread. Just shortening that one weekly meeting saves 250 staff hours a year. We are much more productive."

Streamlined and Simplified Reporting

When Evano's team needs to report on a certain element, they can grab just the part of it that they want. Reports can be customized for a manager to get the information they need or one of the staff members to very clearly see the work that they're assigned to do at any given time. "The level of organization is dynamic and flexible enough to be able to give you the information you need about your work, as well as being that every day to-do list for everything — it's fantastic," he said.

Resource Management Clarity

Wrike's variety of workflow view options helped Evano make decisions on assignments and deadlines. "It was a matter of being able to accurately track work and report back to a number of different clients across the university," he said. "We needed an easy way to say, 'Yeah, we're doing this project for that person, and writer or producer A is on that job, and this is the timeline.'"

"We can clearly see who's assigned, status, due date, and custom fields that can be used to analyze, group, or filter work," said Evano. "It's much more than plotting it on a calendar. You can drag and drop to a new date, and the dependent tasks automatically shift. It saves so much time and reduces the need to have six conversations with different people about the same information. Everyone can see it in Wrike."

"Wrike enables us to do more of the work that matters instead of spending time in meetings. We can focus more on impactful activities, like brainstorming new campaigns."

George Evano, Director of Alumni and Development Communications, University of Oregon

Results

Wrike has transformed work management for the Alumni Association, but that's not all. Overall at the university, what started as 20 licensed users working on just a few communications tasks has grown to 275 regular users and upwards of 600 collaborators at any given time, all using Wrike to collaborate on UO's marketing and communications projects.

"Wrike helps our teams work together better, and it's easy to bring somebody in so they can see what's happening," said Evano. "We've invited people as a client or approver or reviewer or for expertise and comment, which results in more powerful communications with those additional perspectives. That means we can make a greater impact and drive UO programs forward."

Wrike has grown from a platform focused on communications tasks to a tool that's used in departments across the university. The Student Success department uses Wrike to manage multitudes of projects from simple graphics to full-on recruitment campaigns and enjoys the visibility Wrike delivers.

"Wrike enables us to do more of the work that matters," said Evano. "We have better insight into the work we're doing, and with the extra 30 to 60 minutes we're 'regaining' from that shorter weekly traffic meeting, we can do impactful work. The Business Development manager can brainstorm new campaign ideas, and the Executive Director can make more phone calls to Board members. We all see the value of Wrike, we all want to use it, and now it's become a habit in our daily work lives."

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Find out how Wrike can help your business.

Visit www.wrike.com