



The business case for Teamwork Projects

How to get buy-in for big picture project management



The value of big picture project management

Most people have a limited view of why project management matters — they think it's just about keeping things on track and putting out the occasional fire.

But the truth is, project management isn't just about getting things done on time and on budget. It's also about making sure you can deliver the outstanding results that you set out to deliver — the results that matter to your customers, your team, and every single part of your business.

This is big picture project management.

And we believe it's the difference between ordinary teams and high-performing ones.

It's why we designed Teamwork Projects to get out of your way. We've worked with

people who manage projects in thousands of teams so we know how often project management software *becomes* the job — rather than helping you focus on what you're actually trying to achieve.

And it's why we're making this guide.

To help you quantify the value of a project management function that lets you take responsibility for the bigger picture. Like us, you no doubt already know that project management is valuable. In fact, you know it's *invaluable*. But too often, companies fail to see the real, quantifiable benefits of effective project management — until it's too late.

For instance, companies that “underperform”¹ at project management waste 21 times more money than “high-performing” companies. That's no chump change. And it doesn't even take into account all the value these companies have left on the table.


This guide will give you the research, insights, and ideas you need to make a practical business case for big picture project management with Teamwork Projects. So you can demonstrate the value of the invaluable.

Let's dive in.



Section 01

What happens when
project management
misses the bigger picture



When project management struggles, you face problems like:

- Unexpected project overspend.
- Extra struggles to meet deadlines.
- Confusing experiences for clients, with important feedback getting lost.
- Additional administrative work (not just for project managers, but for *everyone*).
- Unnecessary stress for your people (and you).
- And, of course, avoidable time wasted trying to get answers to simple questions.

It's fairly easy to apply a dollar value to some of these issues. But how do you put a price on things like staff morale, or how much it annoys a client to have to deal with vague answers?

They may be trickier to calculate, but they're no less valuable to your business.

To help, we've split this guide into two sections.

In the first section, we'll show you the benefits of big picture project management.

Then we'll show you the dollars-and-cents value for some of those benefits.



Section 02

The five benefits of big picture project management

Benefit 01

Centralize all
project information



One of the biggest obstacles to effective project management is fragmented and siloed information. To make sure everyone stays laser-focused on the bigger picture, you need to make sure they all have simple access to the same source of truth.

Most importantly, this central location should make it easier to get things done — not harder. That is, everyone in the project team should know they only need to go to one place to get all the answers they need. For a few big reasons.

It minimizes wasted time

When people don't know where to find the information they need, they either waste time hunting for it in disparate silos like email, chat, and your server, or they give up and try to move forward without it. Either they suffer or the project suffers.

On the other hand, if all the information they need is stored centrally and all the important conversations about the project are happening in one place, they can get straight to work.

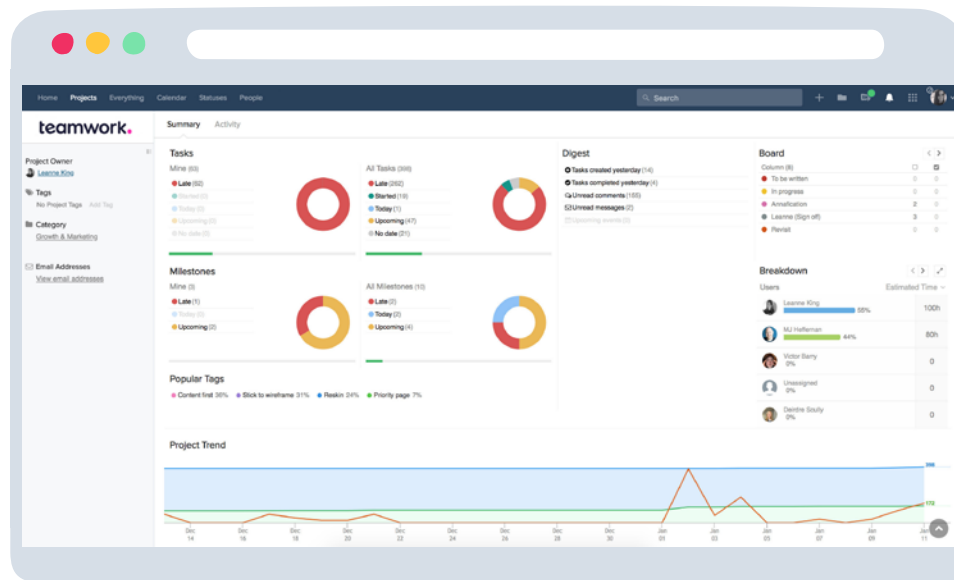
And the people managing the project can trust they're working in the right direction.

It gives you a data-driven view of all your projects

When you're running multiple projects at once, it's easy to get lost in the details of individual tasks. But occasionally you want to zoom out and see how *everything* is going.

With Teamwork Projects, you can analyze overall project activity based on the metrics that matter to you. That means easily finding answers to key questions like:

- How many tasks are running late?
- How many have been left unassigned?
- What's coming next?
- Are we hitting all our key milestones?



Not only can you avoid wading through individual tasks to figure out how the whole project is going (saving huge amounts of time), but you can solve key problems a lot sooner and proactively remove potential obstacles.

Most importantly it lets you keep an eye on the burn rate, so you know how many of the hours you've budgeted for have been used, and what's left to do with the remaining hours.

It makes version control easier to manage

Nothing saps the confidence from a team like bad version control. Everyone knows they're responsible for delivering at a certain time. But if they aren't sure they're looking at the latest files from their colleagues or messages from their clients, they'll either get it wrong or approach the whole project on the wrong foot.

By keeping all conversations and files in one easily-accessible place, you can be confident that you're always looking at the most up-to-date files and skip all the drama.

It helps you maintain project continuity

If one person goes on holiday, has an emergency, or falls ill, you don't want your whole project team to crumble.

But if they're the only one with access to vital information, that's exactly what will happen.

On the other hand, if your team knows that there's a place where all of the important information is stored, and that they can always trust that place to be a reliable, up-to-date source of truth, then one person going on holiday doesn't have to slow the whole team down.

“Simple yet powerful. All of our users, both internal and external, were able to get up and running with zero explanation. It is one of those unique applications which has all of the power you need, but somehow manages to remain intuitive and easy to use.”

Darrian A. Y., G2 Crowd review

Reduce the complexity of collaboration

Benefit 02



Collaboration is always complicated. But when it starts crossing multiple sites, countries, and time zones, projects can quickly become unwieldy. If you want to make sure your people stay focused on the bigger picture, they need to spend less time *trying* to work together and more time actually working together.

Big picture project management is about making collaboration simpler by reducing the complexity of navigating lots of different tools and documents.

It simplifies permissions

Big picture project management is all about managing your team with trust and transparency. But there are times when you need to make sure only certain people see certain tasks and documents. It might be because you're working with an external company, a separate line of business, freelancers, or just because you've got confidential or sensitive data to protect.

In these cases, you need a simple, secure way to manage permissions for different parts of the project. That is, you don't want to spend ages trying to figure out how they work. But once you've set them, you also need to know they'll stick.

It only notifies you when you're needed

Instead of needing everyone to be in your project management software all the time, big picture project management is about keeping their eyes on the work.

So instead of people being nervous they'll miss something if they look away, you can schedule reminders (by email, SMS or push notifications to the app — whatever they want) for different people to tackle different tasks, at the time that works best for them — wherever they are in the world.

You're reassured that they'll be kept on task by the software. They're reassured they don't have to spend all day tracking the rest of the project.

It allows for different types of conversation

Sometimes you want a message to go to everyone and live in a place where everyone can find it. But sometimes you have a quick question that needs a quick answer.

If people don't have a place within your project management tool to have these quick, specific conversations with each other, they'll find somewhere else to talk. That means another silo and another fragment of a decision lost to the wild.

Big picture project management is about avoiding that unnecessary complexity. Which is why Teamwork Projects balances the need for a single source of truth with that ability to maintain an open dialogue more informally.

For instance, you can tag specific people in posts so that only they get a notification, but everyone can see the answer. And you can comment on specific tasks and details within the tool itself. So no one's jumping into a separate tool to get a specific answer.

This way having those specific conversations is simpler *and* you don't decentralize information inadvertently.



It makes it easy to bring outside people in

If your projects involve freelancers, partner organizations, or even clients themselves, then you need everyone collaborating together in one place.

Not only will you need a simple process of onboarding (more on that in a second), but you'll need flexibility around licenses to give people access quickly and securely.

You may not be in the same business, but you are on the same team.

It simplifies onboarding

If you're giving more people access, you'll need to get them up to speed easily.

Teamwork Projects is built to be comprehensive, but easy to use (more on that in a second, too).

When you first join us, we offer a customized onboarding plan so that you get resources unique to your workflows and processes so that existing employees get started in a familiar and easy way.

Then for new hires or those accessing externally we offer:

- **Tailored demo sessions**
Direct training in how to use the system, with tips and tricks from our experts.
- **Free daily webinars**
Live webinars so you can get answers to your exact questions, and be assured that you're up to date with the latest features and insights.
- **Comprehensive support documentation**
To answer common questions that might come up.

“As a former loyal MS Project user, the biggest limitation was always the inability to collaborate with those outside the organization without spending a fortune for a project server and exposing it outside of the network. Teamwork Project solves this problem, and others I'd never previously thought of. I love being able to easily brand each project for our external clients, send automated and manual email notifications, as well as easily manage and view internal and external products in one screen (the dashboard).³”

Adair T., G2 Crowd review

Case study

An alternative to costly silos and embarrassing mistakes

Scopic Software is one of the largest virtual software companies in the world. They have almost 250 remote team members across 30 different countries, working with a wide range of industries including finance, fitness, health care, manufacturing, and more.

That's a lot to keep track of. They tried a few different project management tools, but they always outgrew them. That all changed when they started using Teamwork Projects because it empowered them to get the fundamentals of big picture project management right.

They could communicate with clarity — internally and externally.

Information used to be either siloed in personal inboxes or available to everyone, with no middle ground. This led to embarrassing mistakes, like accidentally sharing internal messages to partners and clients (yikes). Now, thanks to the privacy and permission options, they choose how to talk (and what to share) in one central location.

“We have seen projects move more swiftly and our clients now take a more active part in the project lifecycle. As a result of our more efficient processes, we’re taking on more projects, which has allowed us grow our business — and our profits.”

Tim Burr, Founder and President

Case study

An alternative to costly silos and embarrassing mistakes

They could focus on the stuff that actually matters.

Where it used to take hours to schedule tasks, create reports, and cross-reference everything, it can now be done in a few clicks.

“Teamwork Projects has made it possible for us to plan and manage over 150 projects for clients internationally. The software has made our process so effortless, we can’t imagine working without it.”

They could scale their business.

This adds up to a system that lets them scale at a rate that would have been impossible before. More projects, across more countries, with more staff to handle that extra workload, all working together seamlessly.

“Basically, Teamwork is our one-stop shop when it comes to efficiency in projects both externally and internally. You can’t find a better system for a virtual business that comes close to what Teamwork Projects offers in features and price.”⁴

Benefit 03

Work the way
that works for you



No two businesses are the same, no two teams are the same, and no two project managers are the same. Teamwork Projects gives you the flexibility to work however you want to — rather than forcing you to learn to do things how some software wants you to.

Because, at the end of the day, you decide if Projects has a great user experience or not — we don't. All that matters is that you have the ability to stay focused on delivering the outcomes that matter to your business.

It lets you look at things however you want to

There are times when you need Gantt view to analyze your projects. And there are times when you need a board view.

In Teamwork Projects, you can use both or either depending on what you need and when you need it. In addition to the cross-project analytics we talked about earlier, this means you can basically look at your projects from a number of different angles.

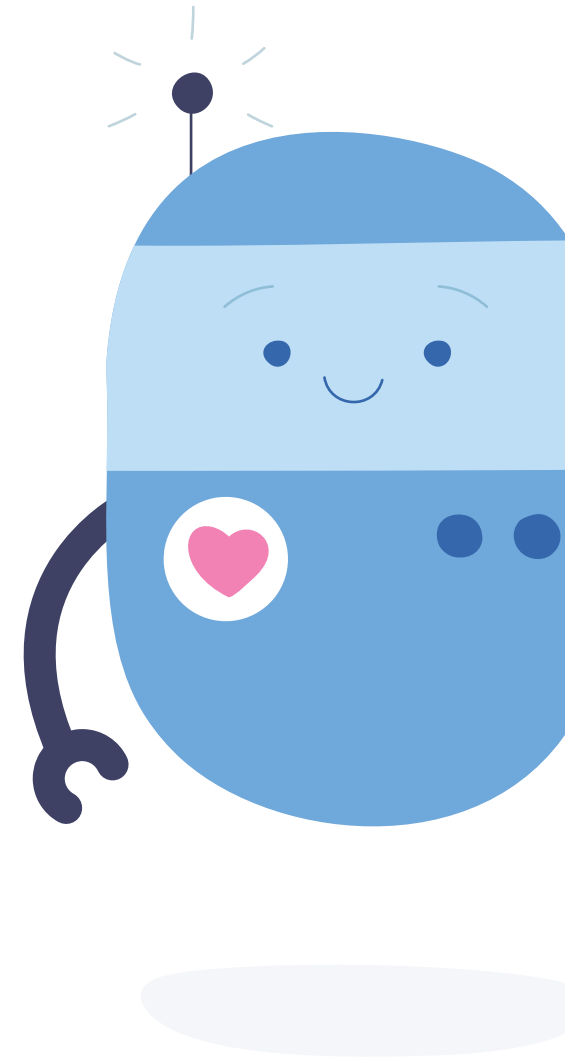
And you never have to switch tools to do it.

It helps you prioritize effectively

All tasks are not created equal. So the people managing a project have to be able to organize and prioritize various tasks in the most sensible way. The most important thing here is that you have the space to make those decisions — and your software simplifies the process of communicating them.

In Teamwork Projects, you can:

- **Set priorities**
So people know which tasks are the most important.
- **Create dependencies**
So certain actions can't be completed before other necessary steps are taken.
- **Trigger recurrences**
So you don't have to manually create tasks each time.
- **Break tasks down**
So bigger tasks can be divided up into smaller, more manageable actions.
- **Clarify ownership**
So you can set a single person as owner, or even shared ownership for when it doesn't matter who does a task, as long as it gets done.

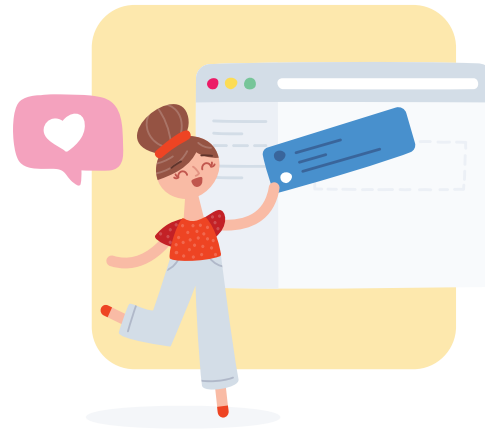


It integrates with all the other tools you use

Your project management software needs to be a single source of truth for all your projects. But it also needs to connect to the other tools that keep your business running — like your email, CRM, and calendars.

Teamwork Projects offers a comprehensive system of integrations and APIs that allow you to continue using the tools you know and (hopefully) love, rather than fundamentally changing every aspect of your business.

And if you're using a tool that doesn't have an integration yet, you can work with us to build the integration, like we did for FCR Media (take a look at page 26 for more information about that).



“What I love about Teamwork is how customizable it is, while still maintaining an aesthetic that feels clean and efficient. I can manage which tabs and functions are available to which people, and I can edit privacy settings so that I can comfortably work with both clients and employees within the platform.”⁵

Britt S., G2 Crowd review

Scale high performance deliberately

Benefit 04



Scaling a business always feels like building an airplane as you fall from the sky. It's hard and no one ever has enough time to do it as well as they'd like to.



But when you're trying to manage a high-performing team — one with high standards and a robust operational ethic — you have to make sure you scale *the right way*. Instead of just empowering people to figure it out, you have to guide them with clearly defined operating principles and ideal workflows. Big picture project management is about clarifying what those principles and values are, communicating them in a way that makes them practically useful and then measuring the success of your projects in that context.

Teamwork Projects helps you:

Set targets

Big picture project managers set manageable, realistic targets, while still remaining flexible enough to know when a project may require a bit more time. You can set performance targets for individuals and teams (and still give them the freedom to meet those targets however they see fit).

Then milestones throughout the project will help to keep you on track, and show you if you're not.

Embrace templates

When high-performing teams find the right way to work — a way that gives everyone the time they need to do great work without harming the organization's ability to deliver — they double down on it.

Teamwork Projects lets you set up templates for key processes. For instance, a marketing team can have a predefined template for specific kinds of content formats and a consultancy might have one for client onboarding.

This reduces the time it takes project managers to get the ball rolling. But crucially, it ensures every project follows the best practices your team has uncovered.

And as they're *your* templates, you can constantly test, edit, and improve them so you know you're always offering the most effective assistance.

Simplify reporting

Reporting on projects is often underutilized.

It's often left until everything is finished, to see what can be learnt after-the-fact.

And because everything is finished (and the report is often being shared externally), these are usually cherry-picked, best-foot-forward reports, involving numerical gymnastics to make every project sound like a huge win.

But what if, instead of being hours of work to generate, reports could be spun up in minutes, or even seconds?

Not just summaries of individual projects, but cross-project analyses. Things like which project types are most profitable? Which work often runs over budget (and needs to have the price put up, or be cut altogether)?

That would mean strategic-level insights were only ever a few clicks away. The bigger picture is always within view.

“After using a handful of other project management SaaS solutions and being overwhelmed with unnecessary amounts of clicking and slow load times, Teamwork was a breath of fresh air.”⁶

Kevin B., G2 Crowd review

Benefit 05

Manage with trust
and transparency



This last benefit is huge, but is often underappreciated — teams work better when they're given the space and clarity they need to do great work. This is one of our core principles at Teamwork.

We don't take screenshots while people are working, we don't track them minute by minute. Not because it's creepy and weird (it is), but because it actually hurts your business in the long run.

Now, a lot of what it takes to empower and trust people has nothing to do with your project management software. It's about your company culture, your management approach and how your company's used to being run.

So it bears saying: Teamwork Projects isn't for everyone

It works best for businesses that want to hire great people and then free their talent. This is a bigger picture principle that we live by ourselves, and it's baked into our product.

One important example:

Time tracking

Of course you need to track time without micromanaging it. That gives you the data you need for analytics, and gives employees the recognition they need for how much effort they've put in.

The key is to make this process as simple as possible — give people multiple options for how to enter time, like manually at the end of the day, or with a timer employees can start and stop while they work.

We believe that if you're open and honest with employees about why you track time, and what you do with that info, they'll be open and honest with their timekeeping.

“Love the function and flow of this program! We are able to communicate through the application and we are able to keep track of our deadlines. I love the feature where we can track our hours! If your company charges based off hours, this is a plus! You should definitely try out the free trial and see what you're missing. That is what our company did and we were happy to continue with the program.”

Tiffany H., G2 Crowd review



Case study

Benefits at scale

FCR Media delivers local search, media and website solutions to thousands of SMEs across Ireland and the UK. They've been around for more than 50 years, and over that time they'd built their own project management system.

It was... clunky. Complicated.

Now? They're using Teamwork Projects to power 15,000 projects. And they haven't looked back since.

Less waiting

Moving to Teamwork Projects gave them a lot of time back. They used to spend huge chunks of time setting up new projects even though the majority of these projects involved the same set of steps. Now they're using project and task templates so they're not building everything from the ground up each time.

Better tracking

Before, they had no way of tracking time, so it was difficult to create accurate project timelines and distribute the workload effectively. Now, time tracking is easy. With access to more information on hours worked, managers and team leads can make sure they're meeting deadlines and plan more effectively for crunch times.

Case study

Benefits at scale

Simple integration

Their old system was built in-house around other tools which were invaluable to the business — like the sales team's CRM.

But thanks to the vast array of existing APIs, they were able to integrate in no time.

And when they found a tool that wasn't already set up — their scheduling tool — we worked with them to build a custom integration so that all the information would automatically sync with their Teamwork Projects calendars.

And they even found other Teamwork tools, like the customer support tool Teamwork Desk, which helped to build a more comprehensive system that freed them to focus on the big picture.

“Teamwork’s software allows us to actively manage 15,000 projects and all of the customer support requests that go with them. We finally have one platform where we can manage our workload, collaborate as a team, store shared documents and communicate with customers.”

Ciaran Morris, Chief Operations Officer

Section 03

5 ways to estimate the impact of big picture project management

Ok, so you've read a lot about the benefits of big picture project management and why they matter to businesses. But not all those benefits are exactly quantifiable.

The good news is that if you can calculate and measure these five factors, you'll get a lot closer to understanding how big picture project management could impact *your* business.

1. Calculate the increased bandwidth it gives your project managers

Between cutting time looking for the right information, saving on chasing things up, and using templates rather than rebuilding everything from scratch, the right tool can help your project managers save a huge amount of time — and as a consequence can simplify scaling your business.

Ask them to estimate for themselves how much of their days are spent in total doing all these now-unnecessary tasks per project. Then multiply that across projects.

Once you know that, you can figure out how many more projects they could be working on.

2. Calculate the time it saves your team

There are two stats that keep project managers up at night:

- Knowledge workers spend an average of over a third (**36%**) of their day looking for and consolidating information from the various platforms they use.
- What's worse — nearly half the time (**44%**) they don't find it at all.⁸

Look at your knowledge worker staff — programmers, engineers, designers — and estimate what 36% of your total staffing spend adds up to across all of them.

Even assuming they don't get all of this time back, if we estimate that we could cut this down to, say, **16%**, that means you get close to a fifth of your staff time back — essentially like adding another day in the week.

3. Estimate waste reduction

On average **9.9%** of every dollar is wasted due to poor project performance during a project's lifecycle.⁹

Take a look at your waste — you might find you're over this average. But even if you're not sure, if you take that as a baseline and then halve your waste, that still means nearly **5%** more revenue for you on each and every project.

What does **5%** of every project you run add up to for you?

4. Boost employee performance and reduce new hire acquisition costs

Employee engagement is a huge problem. Studies have shown that **70%** of staff feel unengaged at work.¹⁰

But it's also been shown that companies performing in the top **25%** on employee experience report nearly 3x the return on assets and more than 2x the return on sales, compared to organizations in the bottom quartile.¹¹

Now no one wants to think of themselves as being in the bottom quartile, but it's worth looking into a) the reality of your people's engagement levels and b) how much the tools you're using are getting in their way.

5. Charge appropriately with more accurate timesheets

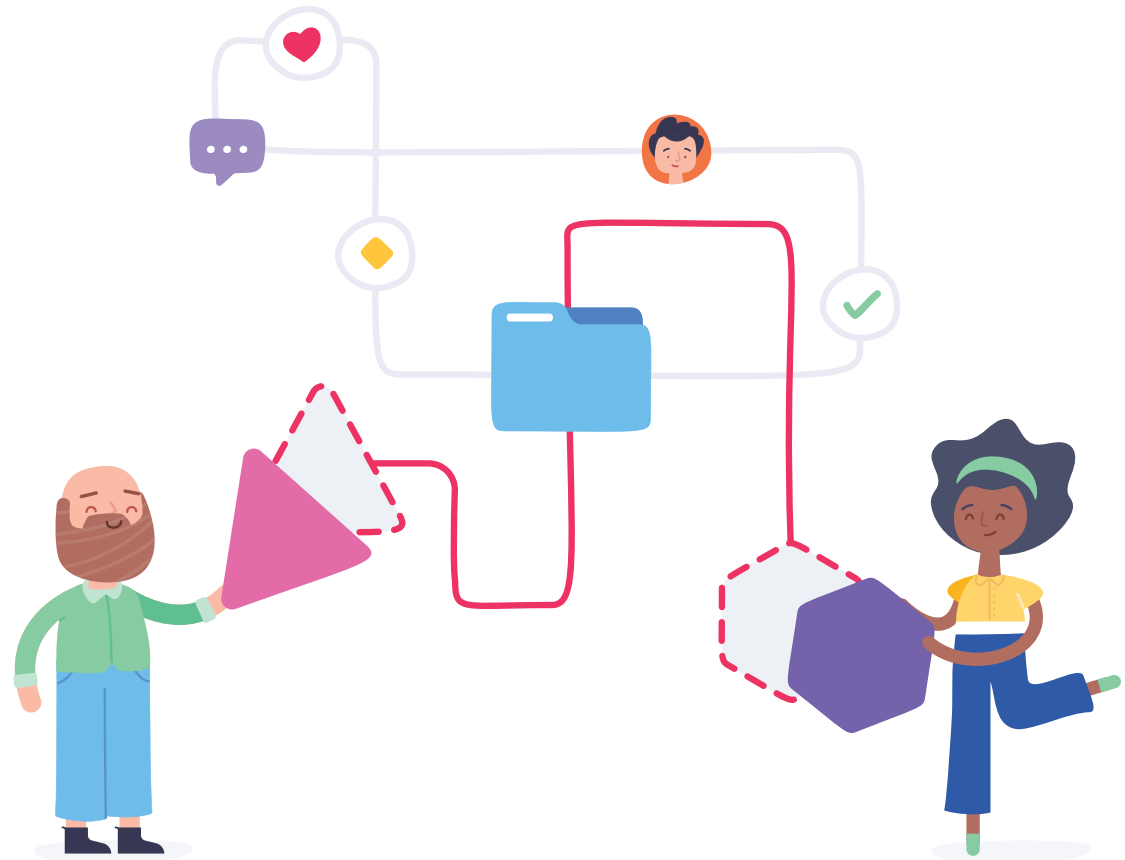
You might think timesheets are a small thing, but the impact of getting them wrong is *huge*.

The Harvard Business Review published some research showing that across the entire economy the cost of forgetting to include certain work on timesheets (such as reading emails) was estimated to cost companies an average of **\$50,000 per employee**.¹²

That's a mind-boggling number.

Now that includes some of the biggest, highest-paid people in the world. But the reality is that almost every business will be losing something to this problem.

By making sure you're considering all staff time on projects — even the little chunks of work — you'll be making sure you price your work accurately.



How do I make sure people use it?

Talking about the benefits of software in theory is all well and good. But if no one adopts the tool, there won't be any benefits to measure.

Getting employee buy-in is tough, but we offer a lot of ways to make it as easy as possible for your people to get set up and start using Teamwork Projects.

Here are just some of the ways we help:

- **Dedicated Customer Success Manager**

With a Teamwork Projects enterprise plan you get a single point of contact to help you with everything, from technical questions to best practices.

- **Custom onboarding**

Support to get your people set up and excited to use the new system.

- **Workflow and architecture support**

We can provide technical support too, including transferring your existing database, integrating software, building solutions specific to your needs and reviewing security and technical requirements you may have.

- **Simplified workloads**

Everyone's life can be made easier by setting up customization and templates, so they aren't reinventing the wheel every time.

- **Secure permissions**

You can limit access and actions for different users, so employees can feel more confident experimenting with the system without worrying they might bring the whole thing crashing down.

If you want more information on how we can help your people hit the ground running with Teamwork Projects — [get in touch](#).

Section

04

Table stakes

Teamwork Projects was designed for big picture project management. So no matter how you like to work, or what project management methodologies you like to use, we're here to take care of the fundamentals — leaving you to focus on the bigger picture. Here are some of the features of the product that, as far as we're concerned, are table stakes in project management software:

For IT

- Enterprise-class security, such as end-to-end encryption on a single database instance (using AES-256 managed by AWS KMS with Transport Layer Security and 2048-bit key length).
- Single sign-on via commonly used authentication protocols such as SAML, ADFS and Okta for easier online collaboration.
- Two-factor authentication.

Compliance

- HIPAA compliance.
- GDPR-compliance.
- Constantly updated to ensure the latest standards are being met.

Finance

- Simplify purchase orders.
- Track expenses and freelancer hours.
- Easier reporting.

Top-level executives

- See which projects are most profitable.
- Access strategic reporting and insights.
- Track (and improve) performance.



Conclusion

Project management
software doesn't manage
projects. *You* do.

We've talked a lot about the five benefits of big picture project management and all the ways they impact your job, the people in your team and your business as a whole.

To us, it's natural and obvious that project management should be responsible for the bigger picture — and not just the details like tasks and timings.

But there's something we should clarify: tools and software don't transform teams. People do. *You* do.

It's why we don't believe that the job of a project manager should be to make the project management software work. Your job is to make *the team* work.

Which is why we built Teamwork Projects for big picture project managers. So that the projects you run don't just finish on time and on budget.

They're run in a way that makes the people who work on them happy to work on them. In a way that makes collaboration as simple and straightforward as it should be.

In a way that demonstrates project management isn't some side-function — but essential to the way your business gets the results that really matter in the long run.

So you and your team can work together, beautifully.



teamwork.

We're Teamwork.

And we make project management software for people who want to own the bigger picture. We do that by working with people who actually manage projects.

Interested?

Sign up for our 30-day free trial and you can try Teamwork Projects yourself. See what it's like to manage the bigger picture.

[Sign up now](#)

teamwork.

Sources

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