INTRODUCTION TO DYNAMIC PROJECT MANAGEMENT
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1. Introduction: Who Should Read This?

Technology teams are continually being asked to do more work with either the same or fewer resources. From creating and integrating new business applications to enabling new revenue streams, teams are being stretched to the limit. They often have to take on these challenges while dealing with a skills gap, resource limitations and budget constraints. Sadly, that’s not all.

As technology teams scramble to meet these high expectations, competitive pressures, business priorities and economic trends, demands keep changing at an ever increasing pace. And unfortunately, traditional project management systems have failed to evolve with today’s dynamic nature of work.

In this eBook, we’ll introduce you to Dynamic Project Management, a way of managing projects that reflects reality and helps teams adapt quickly to the fast changes happening in and around their teams.

Read on if you are:

- On a technology project team that’s being asked to do more work with either the same or fewer resources
- Part of a team that’s dealing with a skills gap, resource limitations and budget constraints
- Using static legacy PM tools that can’t keep up with project changes
- Worried about losing the respect of stakeholders and team members
- Sick and tired of the status quo—which, if truth be told, isn’t working
2. The Need for Dynamic Project Management

Businesses can’t afford the project drag that comes with traditional PM tools. These days, your business has to keep up with the speed of innovation.

Organizations have to keep up with the needs of project teams who are working faster than ever to meet the rise of a demanding customer base. Using conventional software like Microsoft Project, where rigid plans are built on guesstimates and best-case scenarios aren’t going to cut it. Even Gartner recently published research saying that this new age of digital transformation will render conventional toolsets and processes obsolete.

The right project management solution is fundamental to the success of technology teams and their organizations. If you’re using archaic tools, it’s like going into battle with a hand tied behind your back.

There’s too much at stake
Most organizations can’t afford the cost of using outdated tools. Reasons include:

- Teams don’t function at their highest potential when schedules are out of date the moment they’re updated.
- Teams need tools that capture the uncertainty and changes inherent to all projects.
- As technology teams scramble to meet higher expectations than ever, they can’t afford to have one person manually updating every change. Everyone has to pitch in.
- If project plans are not updated based on priorities, scope and availability, they are effectively dead on arrival.
- Plans built on guesstimates and best-case scenarios are doomed to fail.
- To keep up, organizations need tools that capture changes and update schedules at the pace that projects really move.
3. What is Dynamic Project Management?

Think of a fluid, supportive and responsive way of managing projects that works with the needs of teams rather than against them. The philosophy behind Dynamic Project Management is that projects are living, evolving constructs.

Teams need a way of planning and scheduling projects that maps to the real world. The only way this can happen is through an elegant combination of three key ingredients:

A fluid process
Adaptive methodology
A predictive, automated tool

Because you start with priorities before building a plan, the Dynamic Project Management system helps teams work on the most important priorities at the right time. It also helps teams see and mitigate risks much earlier than they would with a legacy project management tool.

Dynamic Project Management improves on static, unreliable work management tools—or a lack thereof—and helps teams thrive in competitive industries and fast-moving environments.

It’s like going with the current of the project lifecycle, instead of against the current.
The 7 Principles of DYNAMIC PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Here’s a rundown of how a dynamic PM process works:

- **The schedule accounts for uncertainty.**
  Projects and tasks are estimated in ranges based on best case/worst case scenarios, generating predictive finish dates.

- **Risks present themselves early.**
  Predictive schedules let teams see changes coming down the pike so they can respond proactively.

- **Schedules are reliable, realistic and sustainable.**
  They are based on team members’ availability, with resource capacity factored in, so work hours are reasonable and people stay engaged throughout the project.

- **The plan is always in real time.**
  The schedule updates automatically each time a contributing team member makes a change.

- **Priorities are clear.**
  Task priorities drive the schedule, and they’re easy to change, so everyone knows they’re always working on the most important tasks. Your organizational priorities are built into schedules.

- **Teams collaborate in a common platform.**
  This gives projects a transparent quality and provides individuals with easy access to the information they need.

- **Instant project insight.**
  Project information and date is easy to access. This means you have your finger on the pulse of your project portfolio; can update stakeholders as needed, and will know where the project stands every step of the way.

There are a lot of challenges to managing projects. So who needs a tool that complicates things? Here are five tough problems you can solve with a dynamic system.

Trouble managing stakeholder expectations
When you can’t surface competing priorities, resource availability and scope changes, stakeholders are going to set down their own deadlines and demands—and then lose trust in your team when the project doesn’t turn out as planned.

Lack of visibility
When project leads don’t have access to a live schedule, time is wasted corralling updates from team members; and, there’s no way to see incoming risks that let you plan ahead, and alert stakeholders before disaster strikes.

Missed deadlines
When projects are tied to single-point deadlines or ones that are mandated by an executive with no idea how much work is involved, success is a pipedream. And, when the scheduling software doesn’t show how resources are allocated, people get overworked even while blowing past proposed finish dates.

No single source of truth
When project teams don’t have a central location for project work, documents go missing, conversations get lost and hours are spent on work that was last week’s top priority.

Not adapting to change
When you don’t have a schedule that updates in real time, there’s no way to quickly assess the impact of all the constant changes occurring and alert stakeholders before it’s too late.
5. Integrating Dynamic Project Management Into Your Existing Process

What does it look like to manage projects in a new tool, with a new process? Because it helps to see what the new way of doing things will look like, here’s how Dynamic Project Management integrates into the five common phases of managing a project.

**Defining**

- The conception of a project unfolds in one central location. Everyone from stakeholders to project teams has one place to collaborate on the initial requirement documents, make edits and upload changes until the charter is finalized.
- Since a dynamic tool connects all projects and resources within your entire portfolio, you’ll know early in the process whether the new project is feasible based on business priorities and available resources.

**Planning**

- All plan items are entered with ranged estimates based on best case/worst case scenarios—so the plan instantly captures risk and uncertainty from the get-go.
- After you build out a version of your plan, you’ll see a predictive finish date. From here, you can make adjustments as needed.
- The project schedule is based on team members’ availability including their current commitment, so no over-promising.
- Once the project is built and tasks are assigned, you’ll see how the new project might affect other initiatives and work in progress.
- Build out a draft of the project then show stakeholders and project teams the plan before sign off. This way everyone knows what is agreed to, and what’s expected.
### Executing

- With every project change, the schedule automatically updates and shows the most up-to-date plan. Bye-bye manual updates!
- You can select the type of data you want to show specific audiences using analytics and dashboards. The information refreshes itself with every update and is always live.
- Since priorities can be changed with a simple drag-and-drop, you don’t have to reinvent the wheel to reflect changes in resources and scope.
- Time tracking is embedded into the dynamic system which means logging time is seamless and easy to manage.
- The tool shows who’s doing what, and each person’s progress. No need to micromanage or chase anyone down for an update.

### Measuring

- A Dynamic Project Management tool alerts you of any risks well before the project gets too far into the danger zone.
- You can access reports that show project trends over time. As the project team gets better at estimating how much effort a task takes, you’ll notice uncertainty decreasing. And better overall estimates going forward.
- Reports are built in to the tool, and provide information based on historical and current data.

### Completing!

- Since your PM software has been collecting project data—from budget to burn-down charts—your final project reports are all ready for you.
- All project documents and deliverables are already stored in one place. No time spent collecting all pieces of the project into one place.
- An archive of the project can be referenced any time, so final documentation is minimal.
6. Customer Snapshots

Here’s what some of LiquidPlanner customers have to say about managing their work and businesses in our dynamic system.

“LiquidPlanner is on the forefront of a new way of doing project management. It’s a fluid part of the process. Every time a person touches a task, they get new information and a more accurate estimate. The tool makes it all part of a process—keeping you constantly updated of what’s going on.”

– Ian MacDuff, VP of Client Engagement
Product Creation Studio

“With Liquid Planner we now have the ability to ensure that our resources are not over booked; that team members are able to work on several tasks/projects at the same time and also be aware of the priority of each work item compared to everything else on their plates. The dashboards have provided us with different views of the data and let us see where we stand at a glance.”

– Ketan Baluja, Senior Director of Program Management at The Advisory Board Company

“LiquidPlanner’s dynamic scheduling engine has allowed my teams and the internal business clients we serve to have more visibility into the impact of changes to scope, effort and prioritization. In the past it was much harder to know ahead of time when you were going off the rails. Now we see potential risks unfolding early on. Consequently, we’ve gained more trust from our clients by sharing dashboards and being transparent with our plans and project status.”

– Greg Davis, Director, IS Application Development at VWR International

“Simply put, Liquid Planner’s dynamic scheduling system is at the heart of our customer operations strategy and execution capability. Our journey with Liquid Planner allowed us to live our dream of customer excellence and take planning, timely delivery, transparent reporting, and team morale to their next level directly contributing to happier customers.”

Benoît Dubouloz,
Delivery Director at Knowledge Expert
7. The Importance of a Dynamic Project Management Tool

Dynamic Project Management doesn’t work without the right project management tool – one that is supportive of teams and processes.

Unlike traditional tools that are incompatible with the reality of how people really work and how projects really go—a dynamic tool is a progressive and common-sense alternative to managing technology projects with a lot of shifting demands, and in environments fraught with uncertainty.

Dynamic Project Management software provides a platform that helps organizations scale growth and create innovative work. Dynamic PM tools aren’t tolerated, they’re indispensable parts of an organization’s success. They allow teams to be adaptive, and respond nimbly to shifting priorities and fast-changing market demands.

How do they do this? For starters, Dynamic PM tools are where teams actually work, not simply something to update as an afterthought or as a painstaking duty. And as priorities change, and team members make updates, the schedule changes accordingly, updating status, progress and top priority work. And all of this occurs because everyone is using the same tool to organize tasks, and everyone is responsible for updating their portion of the work.

Here are some ways LiquidPlanner puts Dynamic Project Management into motion:

• Predictive schedules that auto adjust with change
• Priority-based scheduling
• Resource-based planning
• Ranged estimate planning

Get ready for a better way to manage projects!
8. Are You Ready for Dynamic Project Management?

How do you know—really know—if your project management tool is standing in the way of success?

As technology teams scramble to meet higher expectations, traditional project management systems have failed to keep pace with the dynamic nature of work.

Do your projects run late and over budget more often than you’d care to admit?

You’re good at your job, and your team’s doing great work, so what’s wrong with this picture? Stressful, isn’t it?

Where Do You Stand?
Most teams are using the wrong project management tool—and it’s killing their chances of success. Our Project Management Health Check is a nine-question multiple-choice quiz that can help you get to the bottom of what’s wrong with your PM system.

Answer the nine questions and you’ll get a score based on the performance of your project management solution in three areas: Predictive Scheduling, Insight and Collaboration. Not just that, but your score comes with an analysis of your results, and suggestions for improvement—including our eBook on the nine most common project management challenges.

Where do you stand? Complete this project health check now to find out.

Ready? Take the quiz.
LiquidPlanner is project management software for technology teams that need reliable solutions to complex problems. We help teams thrive in the face of common challenges by turning plans into real-time schedules that everyone can trust.

To learn more and get a demo, contact us!

1.888.881.2561

www.liquidplanner.com
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