Ensure Project Confidence
The ‘80s Called...

... And they don’t want their enterprise Project and Portfolio Management (PPM) tools back.

If your Project Management Office (PMO) is still relying on the same or similar processes and systems used when neon and mullets were trending, it will never keep pace with today’s market demands or shifts in technology. Six-month deployment schedules and command and control models of yesteryear are actively being replaced with continuous delivery methods and practices like agile and lean—all in the interest of driving greater customer engagement.

Competitors and app-centric start-ups ready to disrupt your industry are rushing to enhance their offerings with better experiences. And, in this race to delight customers, speed to market is everything. It’s putting the squeeze on software lifecycles and PMOs everywhere are feeling the pressure to:

- Support the rapid, iterative development necessary for the future growth and success of the business
- Replace legacy-based systems that make tasks like data collection and issue resolution an operational nightmare
- Implement and enhance reporting, analytics and dashboard tools, as well as resource planning, forecasting, portfolio management and governance processes
- Shift from a command and control approach to one that fosters relationships and collaboration

So, how are organizations adjusting to this new world order? How do all of these changes impact the investment they’ve made in their current PPM solutions? We decided to find out.

94% of line-of-business executives feel pressure to release new applications faster, citing “customer demand” and “competitive actions” as their top two drivers.1

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1 CA and Vanson Bourne, Application Economy Research, 2014.
We Re-examined How Projects Get Done in the Application Economy

We took a hard look at how companies operate the day-to-day nature of their work in managing projects, programs and portfolios.

In order to get a clear picture, we utilized ethnographic research, which is a technique used to interview and observe users in their work settings. Rather than ask formal survey questions, we encouraged interviewees to tell stories about their experiences which allowed us to reach beyond generic work patterns to find their underlying motivations and identify specific pain points.

We spoke with and visited over 150 project management professionals from a wide range of organizations in their place of work. Everyone from portfolio, program, project, resource and financial managers to team members, data analysts, process owners and administrators were interviewed so that we could better understand their behavior, their goals and criteria for success. We listened and left our opinions out of the equation.

Here’s what we found ...
For Team Members,
It’s a Lot like Doing Their Taxes

Project teams view daily or weekly time entry and status collection tasks a lot like they do their taxes—as a painful exercise. These tasks are mandatory, however, so teams begrudgingly comply. But, instead of tracking actual time expended, they enter their best guess or whatever is mandated into the company’s work management tool to check off the box on their to-do list. Just getting to the point where they are able to enter their time is burdensome and frankly, annoying.

What ensues is garbage in, garbage out where poor project accounting leads to unnecessary overtime, blown schedules, bad estimates and even cancelled projects.

Take Mike, for example, an enthusiastic team player who likes to challenge himself by constantly learning and taking on multiple tasks at once. He sometimes gets frustrated with processes and data requirements that slow him down or don’t make sense. His priority is getting the day-to-day work done, so he complies as best he can and stays focused on completing his responsibilities by their respective deadlines. “I wish my managers didn’t force me to treat time like I was an accountant ... if I just did stuff like that I wouldn’t get my job done,” says Mike.

The problem is employees, like Mike, have such an aversion to status reports and time recording because these are extra steps in an already busy workday that aren’t easy to access or integrated into their daily routine. Plus, they have no idea what the outcome is from their input. To them, it’s as if big brother is watching their every move. They don’t understand how this information helps managers juggle various project demands, charge profitable rates, make accurate forecasts and ensure all team members have balanced workloads.

28% of companies cite inaccurate task time estimates as a primary cause of project failures.²

Convenience Is Key

The fact is your teams represent the biggest daily user population of PPM software, but they get the least value. To them, it feels as if they are the low man on the totem pole forced to use cumbersome status and time tracking tools as a means of individual accountability. They don’t see the impact to their daily work, let alone the project or business as a whole.

CA Project & Portfolio Management (CA PPM) has been reimagined to help empower team members to understand the return from their contribution. For them and everyone else involved in important projects, convenience is key. So, we’ve designed an elegant and intuitive timesheet interface that makes it easy to enter time, add notes and stay on top of which timesheets have been approved and which are still pending approval. Likewise, we’ve enhanced the user experience for project managers so they have better access to people and a greater capability of keeping projects on pace to completion.

Our goal is to give managers a simple way to connect with the teams they support, so everyone remains engaged and satisfied across the life of a project. From the contributors doing time entry to stakeholders that need to stay informed, the objective of CA PPM is to be an intuitive and natural extension of how work gets done. It will:

- Give teams the confidence to be truthful
- Promote conversations over compliance
- Grant control over how information is dispersed
Project Managers Are in the Relationship Business, but Their Tools Are Not

Project managers (PMs) are constantly communicating with team members, key stakeholders and clients to keep resources on track and projects running on time and in budget. And they’re not only doing it through email, conference calls and meetings, but also ad-hoc collaboration tools like Skype and Google Docs. The problem is all of these channels are creating a contextual nightmare in which nothing is tracked or integrated with the actual project. So, managers end up spending a ton of time just chasing down the information they need to do their job.

This scenario sounds all too familiar for PM, Nicole, who prides herself on managing multiple projects simultaneously. She uses the skills she’s picked up from volunteering to inspire her teams, which has led to more open and regular communication. And while they’ve gotten better, she still has to remind them to keep her up to date on the status of tasks and the time it takes for completion. Nicole explains, “I don’t expect my team to track every detail, so long as I know we’re moving forward.”

Like Nicole, project managers are in the relationship business and work with people at all levels to figure out the best way to complete projects in a timely manner. They require tools that enable collaboration, but that also support team dynamics and integrate with work processes. Information can’t be stashed in siloed chats and spreadsheets; it needs to be accessible in one unified view.

Project managers spend up to 90 percent of their time communicating.3

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Engage the Team (Not the Timesheet)

Disparate tools may provide a short-term collaboration fix, but ultimately they cause PMs to hunt down team members for answers, documents, decisions, statuses, etc. This often creates internal conflict, which is something project managers are, in fact, trying to avoid. They want their teams to be happy and productive, and to let them own their work.

In conceptualizing the future of CA PPM, we wanted to provide a better way—one that would enable teams to connect and openly communicate throughout the life of a project. Such collaboration results in more of a social project, where teams work together more freely and ‘self-correct’ as needed. Team members no longer need to rely on disconnected collaboration tools, but instead one solution that harnesses their collective power to produce successful outcomes.

**CA Technologies is designing the next generation of CA PPM with PMs in mind, allowing them to:**

- Build trust within teams
- Share knowledge and updates
- Get to know each other on a more personal level
- Engage the team (not the timesheet)
- Support team-based project ownership
Companies seeking more efficiency and tighter monitoring of projects are opening PMOs in growing numbers. In order to fulfill their purpose, however, PMOs need access to accurate data they can use to drive better business decisions. But as we’ve already discussed, most team members make false status and time entries. And the bulk of information sits outside of reports in live discussions, emails and online documents.

The Band-Aid for many PMOs, like the one in this example enterprise, has been to export project data to Excel or PowerPoint because it’s easier to massage and manipulate. While these are familiar tools, they are not designed for team collaboration or communication with senior leadership around a myriad of other work activities. “These disparate spreadsheets and presentations provide great data, but useless information,” says one executive.

The problem is not a shortage of data. Rather, it’s a matter of cohesively bringing reliable data together in a collection that is searchable or in a system that pushes insights, metrics and notifications.

Insights are decentralized and difficult to consume

72% of business leaders aren’t satisfied with the time it takes to derive insights from data

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Let the Data Tell the Story

Based on our research, we found that users of PPM want a system that can help them learn and improve project delivery, while management requires insights that they are making the right decisions and have the correct investment strategy. To support this goal, the accuracy of data and the accessibility to the data are essential. Typically, users don’t want to be limited to Excel®, churning data to produce insights. If inaccuracy does occur, it’s usually from poor status updates or time entry, creating distrust that causes management to question the validity of the data they receive.

Instilling trust back into the data is a primary objective for CA PPM. Using this solution, management will be able to get accurate answers, knowing that teams are engaged and entering data correctly inside a tool where features are designed to capture insights at the right point in the process. The more the solution is used, the more accurate the information, resulting in less hall tackles and time chasing down information. The vision for CA PPM is to act like a GPS by providing smart notifications that will help guide PMOs to avoid issues down the road.

PMOs will get data that tells an accurate story they can trust to stand behind their decisions. With the help of CA PPM, teams will be able to:

- Reduce reliance on Excel for the basics
- Perform advanced analysis with other business intelligence tools
- Build in exception reporting and alerting
What our research told us was that when it comes to project management, most organizations put their practices before their people. They overemphasized rational factors like processes, policies or procedures, and undervalued emotional drivers, such as team engagement—the real crux of project delivery excellence. While quality control, budgeting, schedules and critical path analysis remain a focus, human, emotional and social factors—the less tangible project management efforts—will need to be more equally weighted.

Unfortunately, even with all the communication and information technology breakthroughs, PPM tools surprisingly still support a traditional PM framework, rather than delivering services that encourage team engagement. The result is many PPM tools act similar to the tools delivered in the past few decades, while culture and connections have changed.

Poor management combined with bad tools is causing a tipping point where projects are getting squeezed between a hybrid of traditional and agile methods.
Ensure Project Confidence

With the results of our study in hand, we’ve been on a mission to ensure project confidence. Our users demand a tool that is convenient and easily keeps everyone informed and connected, as well as simplifies collaboration throughout the life of a project. They want a PM system that engages the team and becomes an intuitive, natural extension of how they work. And management expects no surprises and data that tells an accurate story so that it can be trusted to make sound business decisions.

So, we’re designing our next generation CA PPM accordingly.
When we design software, we don’t see features—we see the people who use our software. Our methodology has been and continues to be rooted in research. Real-world application of our solution and evolving demand helps us deliver an amazing user experience that engages teams at all levels and enable successful project outcomes now and in the future.

Learn more about CA PPM

CA Technologies (NASDAQ: CA) creates software that fuels transformation for companies and enables them to seize the opportunities of the application economy. Software is at the heart of every business, in every industry. From planning to development to management and security, CA is working with companies worldwide to change the way we live, transact and communicate – across mobile, private and public cloud, distributed and mainframe environments. Learn more at ca.com.