



## CASE STUDY

# GL Education Project Managers Experience 80% Productivity Gain with Workfront

A single work management system gives the GL Education Program Management Office (PMO) and project managers complete visibility, saving time while increasing accountability and trust

When you're in the business of supporting children's well-being, the stakes are high—and the work is never done. To ensure that its project managers effectively keep tabs on assessment projects that span multiple years and four distinct delivery teams, GL Education implemented Workfront. Easy to use, the Workfront work management solution improves visibility and increases consistency across business units, saving employees time and boosting senior executive confidence in project planning and execution.

For more than 30 years, GL Education has provided rigorous and high-quality diagnostic tools for children's education, mental health, and well-being. A leading provider of integrated assessments, stakeholder surveys, self-evaluation systems, and professional development services, its resources and services are used by British, bilingual, and international schools in more than 100 countries worldwide.

## THE CHALLENGE

### Disparate Teams, Little Project Visibility

Historically, GL Education expanded its product lines through acquisition of content providers and IT resources. As a result, external teams were responsible for providing design, editorial, digital development, and other services to GL Education, with internal teams at numerous sites responsible for management of these providers. Yet this arrangement created challenges for internal project management teams because each major business relied on different processes and tools.



- GL Education
- Education
- [www.gl-education.com](http://www.gl-education.com)
- London, UK

## AT A GLANCE

### CHALLENGES

- Lack of project visibility created uncertainty for senior management team
- Inconsistent processes for developing and managing projects made reporting difficult
- Disconnected tools and systems added complexity to tracking team resources

### BENEFITS

- Achieved 80% increase in productivity
- Reduced monthly reporting time by 2 days
- Gained greater trust and autonomy
- Enabled rapid project resource comparison

“When the decision was made to really own our business, we brought the management of strategic projects in-house,” explains Natalie Egan, group program manager at GL Education. “At that point, we knew we needed a person or team to look at all of our projects across the business, whether they were product- or infrastructure-related, and we knew we needed a project management tool that could support that effort.”

GL Education established a PMO to review general processes and evaluate how work was being managed. As a new oversight team, the PMO would be responsible for enforcing processes, discovering issues, and ensuring project success. What the PMO initially discovered was inconsistency across teams and tools. Some project managers were keeping schedules in Microsoft Excel while others preferred Microsoft Project. These different repositories made it nearly impossible to ensure weekly and monthly reports were up-to-date and accurate.

“PRODUCTIVITY IS A HUGE BENEFIT OF THE WORKFRONT SOLUTION. WE’VE SEEN AN 80% INCREASE IN OUR PROJECT MANAGERS’ PRODUCTIVITY.”

–Natalie Egan,  
Group Program Manager,  
GL Education

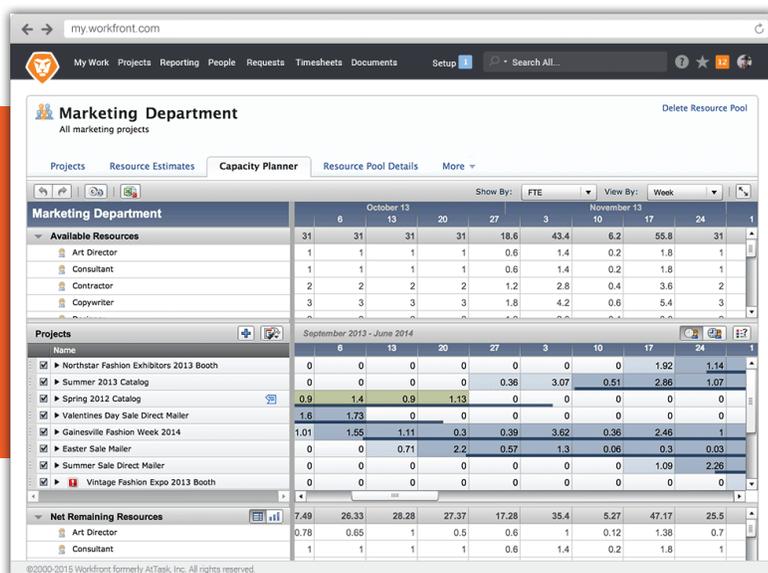
To best understand which projects should and should not be funded, the new PMO knew it needed to implement an effective work management solution that would be easy to use for everyone engaging with it.

## THE WORKFRONT SOLUTION

### Streamlined Workflows and Simple Reporting

After researching solutions, the PMO conducted a three-month trial to gain experience with the cloud-based Workfront solution. During the pilot, project teams provided very positive feedback. Key suppliers were also granted access to ensure the solution worked seamlessly across locations.

“We had very little visibility into projects,” remembers Egan. “Visibility and consistency across the delivery teams feeding into the new PMO were the main drivers for choosing the Workfront work management solution. The PMO and Workfront solution were essentially rolled out together.”



WORKFRONT DASHBOARDS ALLOW USERS TO GET A BIRD’S-EYE VIEW OF YOUR TEAM’S WORKLOAD, INCLUDING PROJECTS, AD HOC TASKS, AND TIME OFF WHILE YOU’RE BUILDING THE TASKS FOR EACH PROJECT.

## Flexibility for Multi-Year Schedules and Planning

Many of GL Education's projects are multi-year development efforts. Before Workfront, project managers had considerable difficulty capturing lengthy schedules in Microsoft Project. Just to review status, project teams had to print out reams of paper. It was also challenging to assign a single task within a huge project. Workfront simplifies the scheduling and task assignments of multi-year GL Education projects. Within Workfront, individuals can easily receive and complete individual task assignments without being concerned about any other aspects of the project, while project managers maintain complete visibility over the entire workflow.

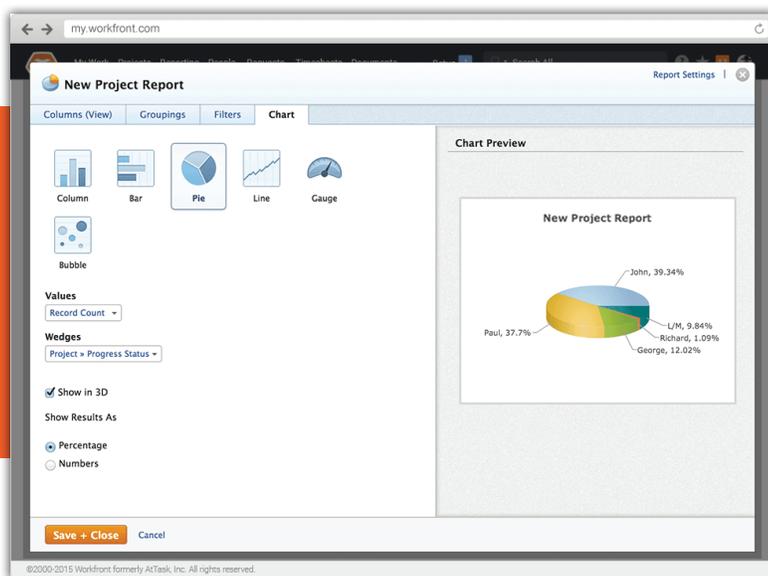
## Intuitive Interface for Collaboration and Resource Allocation

GL Education project teams and suppliers use Workfront daily for all types of work and all work requests. Because all project-related information--like issues--is documented in a single system and visible to other team members, no time is lost when an employee is out of the office. Workfront also provides project managers with more information to make assignments because they can easily see whether an entire team or just certain individuals are overburdened with tasks. Workfront provides an intuitive way for everyone to see what work is coming, which has positively affected the way the company performs resource planning.

"With more information readily available, there is greater accountability. We also have the ability to forward plan," says Egan. "We can see who is overloaded and assign tasks to others. Better yet, we can see what additional training we might need to provide so that certain tasks that are always delegated to the same person can be shared among more team members."

"MANAGEMENT HAS GREATER CONFIDENCE THAT PROJECT MANAGERS ARE IN CONTROL OF THEIR PROJECTS. THEY CAN SEE WHAT IS GOING ON AND ONLY GET INVOLVED IN SIGNIFICANT ISSUES. BECAUSE WE ARE SPENDING LESS TIME REPORTING, WE HAVE MORE CAPACITY TO RUN PROJECTS MORE SMOOTHLY THROUGH THE SYSTEM."

—Natalie Egan,  
Group Program Manager,  
GL Education



WORKFRONT DASHBOARDS COME WITH MORE THAN 50 REPORTS OUT-OF-THE-BOX, GIVING YOU SIMPLE WAYS TO ANALYZE THE HEALTH OR STATUS OF YOUR PROJECTS AND TASKS. AND IF YOU NEED TO CUSTOMIZE, JUST USE THE SIMPLE DRAG-AND-DROP INTERFACE AND HANDY IN-BUILDER PREVIEWS.

## Customizable Reports

The senior management team at GL Education was always fairly certain that its development team was busy, but not until the PMO implemented Workfront could project managers provide tangible evidence of all of the projects and individual tasks underway. GL Education uses Workfront to run weekly project management reports and monthly budget reports that include information about key milestones and budgets against spend.

“Reporting used to be an absolute nightmare,” recalls Egan. “I’d estimate we spent 48 hours every month across the business just on reporting—and even then, we knew we had lots of duplicated information and that what we’d just reported was already out of date. Because reporting is completely automated in Workfront, it takes just minutes and we can validate reports in one place, which makes us more confident about what is going on with projects around the business.”

## BENEFITS

Workfront has enabled GL Education to experience the following benefits:

- Productivity increase of 80% – Project managers no longer waste time understanding the current status of projects or whether a problem has been solved.

Egan says, “It’s taken some time, but teams have moved away from email and are now putting everything in Workfront. As a result, project managers are able to better plan for projects and engage the right people quickly to fix issues. Project managers are so much more productive.”

- Reduced monthly reporting by two days – It used to take 48 hours every month for project managers across the business to compile data and reports from Excel spreadsheets and Microsoft Project. With Workfront, detailed reports by task and project are produced instantly.

“We used to hold meetings just to update team members,” recalls Egan. “Now, they’re no longer necessary. With Workfront, we get accurate reports, instantly.”

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–Natalie Egan, Group Program Manager, GL Education

- Greater trust and autonomy – Because Workfront provides an accurate, updated record of tasks and projects that is easily visible through a web browser, teams are empowered to do their work without having to continually report on their progress.

“Management has greater confidence that project managers are in control of their projects,” believes Egan. “They can see what is going on and only get involved in significant issues. Because we are spending less time reporting, we have more capacity to run projects more smoothly through the system.”

- Faster project resource comparison – Before Workfront, GL Education found it difficult to both manage and compare the level of resources required across its numerous projects. Now all of that information is easy to track and view, so teams can more accurately forecast future activities.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Like many enterprises, GL Education relies heavily on its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system for financial operations. Because Workfront now provides accurate resource management information to the PMO for individual development projects and programs, the goal is to integrate the two systems.

“Egan concludes, “everyone in our business—from the PMO to project managers to our senior management team—can see the benefit of Workfront.”

# Devour Your Team's Work Chaos With Workfront

Meet the King of Work Management. With real-time work planning, tracking, collaboration, and reporting, Workfront enables enterprise teams to:

- Drive greater productivity by automating repetitive manual tasks
- Increase communication and transparency through social-style updates and dashboards
- Reduce project failure with real-time views into project progress and resource workloads
- Provide data-driven insights for constant improvement



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