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Project Collaboration

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Introduction

KaDonk. Yes, it's an odd company name, but we are serious about business. Our solutions are deployed all over the world across a wide range of industries: pharmaceutical, oil, software, construction, manufacturing and mining. You name the industry and we have supplied it with innovative solutions. Companies such as Amazon, Goldcorp, Prudential, Volvo and thousands more use KaDonk products daily to manage their projects. So the question is: How can we help you?

This whitepaper describes our LiveProject Collaboration product, which in a nutshell allows managers across your organization to work closely with their teams, and get live feedback directly into their existing MS Project plans. There is no data to convert or re-enter, and their day-to-day project management can stay essentially the same. Team members can easily see their work tasks and provide feedback with a simple click. Feedback that never has to be copied, pasted or sent via e-mails. Read on and learn how we can make your projects come alive.

Problem

As anyone who has worked in project management can attest, one of the hardest tasks is to track progress accurately and identify project plan issues before they become problems and delays. Today's complicated projects can easily include hundreds or thousands of tasks and resources spread across the globe, but even if your entire team is in the same building, it can be hard to know what the status is *right now*.

A typical project plan status asks all participants to provide feedback, for example, via e-mail, which the manager then uses to update the plan. This approach results in infrequent updates, as well as the risk of cut-and-paste errors and misunderstandings. Often, project plans are made as an initial estimation effort, and later abandoned as little more than relics.

Whatever the state of your project management efforts is today, you most likely require a constant view of the state of your projects so you can react timely to delays, external changes or risks.

Other Options

MS Project does a great job for professional project managers, but it can be daunting for regular team members. Deploying MS Project across an organization can be equally complicated for IT departments and in fact often requires its own project plan to deploy. Some organizations may have site-wide MS Project licenses but the reality is they don't allow team members to work together. A site license of MS Project only allows team members to open project files they are sent, but there is no 'live' aspect involved, just viewing.

Furthermore, projects tend to get large, and as anyone who has ever worked in MS Project can tell you, many people have problems navigating large projects. One solution is to deploy Microsoft

Project Server, which allows users to update their status via a simple web-interface. This provides some visibility, but requires IT involvement to roll out, and can be very expensive. The team needs to be trained, and can typically only get access to changing some of the fields in the project plans. But what if you have custom fields, or want to apply rules to what can be updated? What if you always want your team to update the delivery date when they update their progress, or add a bug number when they report a new bug-fixing task? All this, and much more, is possible with LiveProject. And if your team can download and install an application, you can get started in as little as half an hour.

LiveProject Collaboration

LiveProject Collaboration is an application that managers and team members download and install on their Windows machines. Managers need to have MS Project installed, so LiveProject can access the plans to share and update. Team members simply need LiveProject. This means that organizations don't have to invest in rather expensive MS Project licenses, but instead can focus on adding value with LiveProject which has just the right functionality for each team member.

As a manager, you continue to work in MS Project as you did before. However, when you start LiveProject you select your project plan files(s), and add them to your shared plans. You then add your team members to your LiveProject account. When you start LiveProject, or if it's running in the background, it will automatically scan for project file changes, and ask to share the latest MS Project files found. Managers

really only have to add the files once, the rest is automatic.

Team members that are granted access by a manager can now open their version of LiveProject collaboration. Inside, they will see the shared project plans. As they select a plan, LiveProject will show the plan, including all the details you expect such as tasks lists, Gantt charts, calendar views, dashboards and more. But, in contrast to MS Project, LiveProject will automatically color the tasks to indicate the status, making it instantly obvious if the plan is on time or delayed. Team members also add a filter to show only their own tasks, or any other subset that is relevant to them.

Most important though, is that team members can now start making suggested changes to the project plans they are viewing. They can update their progress, suggest new tasks, comment on tasks, or suggest tasks to be deleted. These suggestions become instantly visible to not only the manager, but also to other team members. So if Joe is waiting for a task to be completed by Anne, then he can be notified instantly when that happens and move ahead with his work.

As the manager receives all these changes, LiveProject lets him click-through each one, accepting or rejecting it. Of course, this can also be done in batches. When done, LiveProject will then update his

project plan automatically, and ask the manager to publish it to his team.

All these changes are trackable, visible and create a history of project-progress that can be exported to Excel and examined later.

At this point we have just scratched the surface of what LiveProject can do, but our other whitepapers explain other features in greater detail.

Sharing Information

The greatest benefit to using LiveProject Collaboration is that team members are always on the same page. As long as your process involves getting people to update their tasks, everyone across your organization can gain visibility to your project status *right now*. Communication is no longer between each team member and the manager, but rather between everyone on the team. This means anyone can spot delays and act on relevant data.

Our customers have told us they see great benefit in empowering the team. Team members feel more responsible, and often act on their own to resolve and fix blocking issues. The other side of the coin is accountability, which is achieved because everyone now can see what everyone else is doing. These two factors act together to become great motivators for everyone to do a great job and deliver high quality work on time.

Managing and reporting

As a project manager, you start saving precious time instantly since LiveProject removes the tedious work of copying and

pasting progress reports from your team members. The automated updates allow you to be sure that your plans are updated with the actual information from team members, without any chance of copy and paste errors. Best of all, the updates can happen as frequently as necessary based on your management needs.

Built into LiveProject are powerful reporting tools that further spare project managers the hassle of creating PowerPoint slides or exporting and importing to excel sheets. You can simply select a subset of tasks and with one click create a slideshow based on a template. You can, for example, create a slide for each task that is late, complete with information pulled straight out of your project plan. Add a slide for each resource involved, and you can create reports for management in just a few minutes. Most fields can be exported, and you can create your own templates and let LiveProject replace and insert slides at the location you decide.

Similarly, LiveProject can export named ranges to Excel. Named ranges means that even if you later export new or more data to the same Excel sheet, the name remains the same, which means your formulas still work. LiveProject will just export to the named ranges, without touching the rest of your excel sheet. No more CVS export/import manipulation with all the error-prone activity that entails.

For quick communication, LiveProject can generate 'mini-reports,' based on templates, straight to e-mails. You could for example select three tasks that are late, and export the information, including e-mail addresses of the resources on those specific tasks, and ask to get more information.

LiveProject is designed to *save you and your team time* and puts everyone on the same page.

Unmatched support

You probably use a lot of software in your daily life; most of it works sufficiently most of the time but sometimes there can be problems. If you have ever tried getting help from Microsoft, you probably know how complicated that can be.

LiveProject Collaboration pricing includes support and maintenance, and, at KaDonk, we emphasize *support*. We have built-in menu items to contact support directly with error logs, or by cleaning projects you are working on (scrubbing them) and sending them to us for analysis. We know that time is valuable, and we are ready to help you when you need it. Because of this we have fixed all known bugs. Our software is stable and reliable, which allows us to offer personal support instead of endless Google searches for solutions.

Should you run into a problem, we are available and ready to help, typically with a solution within 24 hours. Occasionally, we will offer an entirely new version of LiveProject if the issue is critical to you. We need your feedback because it helps us to know what matters to our customers, and



because our software only gets better from your input.

Now what?

If you are ready to learn more, want pricing options or would like to set up a live online demonstration of LiveProject Collaboration, contact sales@kadonk.com.

You can also explore the many features of LiveProject on our website, kadonk.com, which is loaded with information about all our other features.

LiveProject Collaboration contains **all** of the features found in our other LiveProject products.

We do offer a dedicated server if your organization requires an internal solution. If you are interested or need input for your IT department, contact support@kadonk.com to get a technical guide explaining the requirements and setup.

Summary

LiveProject Collaboration is a powerful tool that can augment Microsoft Project.

It is a significantly more affordable solution than deploying Microsoft Project to everyone, both in terms of pure cost, but also in terms of the time savings you can realize from both a manager and team perspective. Sharing your project

plans and making them not only visible to team members but interactive as well can increase productivity exponentially

The powerful export functions of LiveProject allows project managers to redirect their efforts to things that truly matter, rather than spending it on endless exporting and importing, cutting and pasting, and generating PowerPoint and Excel sheets again and again.

Our solution is trusted worldwide, and our support is the best you will find in the industry today. We dedicate ourselves to your success.

Contact us at sales@kadonk.com to learn more.