



5 SIGNS IT'S TIME TO UPGRADE YOUR **PROJECT MANAGEMENT** **SOFTWARE**

INTRODUCTION

Using effective project management software is crucial to successful project delivery. Even though there was a 25% increase in the use of project management software between 2022 and 2023, **xxx** are not using an up-to-date cloud-based PM software.

Many project professionals still use Excel for projects, despite most spreadsheets having errors. This is somewhat understandable: they are easy to access and use, making them familiar to people. We have found that spreadsheets are commonly used for a range of critical tasks including cost estimating, work package planning, WIP tracking and many more key project processes. Although Excel is a fantastic tool, it was not made for running complex projects. As projects get more complicated, spreadsheets become less helpful and can harm project success.

In their top tips for project managers in 2024, Forbes stressed the importance of embracing new technologies and best practices in project management. Moreover, 37% of project portfolio managers said that digital transformation is their top priority in 2024.

In this guide, we explore why investing in fit-for-purpose project management software is important to help streamline your key workflows and improve your project outcomes. We also run through this checklist to guide you through the main things to consider when choosing project management software for your organisation:

- Pain points
- Budget
- Scalability
- Integration requirements
- Involve your team
- Data security
- Onboarding process





1) USING OUTDATED DATA

When it comes to running projects, you can't beat access to real-time data. Organisations need accurate and timely data to respond quickly and confidently with the right decisions to stay competitive. Yet, 47% of project managers do not have access to real-time KPIs and lack of visibility is consistently reported as one of the biggest challenges in project management.

If you are running all your processes on the back of spreadsheets, it can be extremely difficult to know if you are working on the most up-to-date version of the document even with cloud-based tools like Google Sheets. Project management software organizes data and centralizes information, allowing you to oversee all project aspects on one interface. It helps eliminate data silos and keeps everything up-to-date.

Over 70% of organisations said after investing in PPM tools they could gain access to the data they needed and share valuable insights easily. Real-time data helps businesses make better decisions and allows project managers to address issues earlier, improving overall efficiency.



2) LIMITED FEATURES AND FUNCTIONALITIES

PMI's research found that 42.2% of respondents predominantly working in large-scale engineering and construction projects were using spreadsheets for risk and change management. PMI highlights this as inefficient, ineffective and stresses that it actually increases the risks they are trying to control.

People are using inadequate systems instead of project management software. The software is designed to meet demands throughout the entire project. This includes writing proposals, managing changes, people, time, and resources.

Significantly, companies are beginning to realise and accept the benefits of digital transformation to streamline their ways of working and to improve their bottom line. A key example of this is project management software's ability to automate repetitive and time-consuming tasks. For example, 50% of project practitioners admit to spending 1 or more days manually collating project reports, whereas with project management software this is automated so that project teams can focus on more complex and demanding tasks.

Another key benefit of upgrading to project management software is the improved collaboration among project teams.



Collaboration is extremely difficult on systems not specifically developed for managing projects, for example some spreadsheets are unable to be edited simultaneously or there is uncertainty as to how up-to-date the data actually is. Cloud-based solutions, such as Proteus, let project teams work on projects anytime, anywhere with certainty that they are working with real-time data.

It is so important to embrace software specifically tailored to the modern demands of project management. This can be reinforced by the fact that 77% of high-performing projects use project management software.



3) DISCONNECTED SYSTEMS

In 2023, 16% of project managers said that visibility and reporting were their biggest challenges which highlights the inefficiency of the continued reliance of running projects on spreadsheets and disparate systems. On big projects, it's clear that spreadsheets have limitations. They can't connect with other software or systems. This makes it hard to track tasks and deadlines when different teams use various tools.

Integrations with other software streamlines workflows, increases efficiency, improves communication, and provides real-time data synchronisation. Proteus integrates seamlessly with your existing ERPs and CRMs, providing a fully integrated platform from pre-bid all the way through to invoicing so that all the information is in one place, improving the efficiency of all stages of the project management lifecycle.

4) ERRORS AND DIFFICULTY OF USE

As projects become more complex, so do the spreadsheets project teams work on. At Proteus, we recently onboarded a client who worked completely on spreadsheets, but they had become so difficult to use that only senior members of staff were able to use them, plus the sheer size of the files caused them to crash frequently. Project management software is cloud-based, user-friendly and makes data accessible to the whole team, making it easy for all PMS to make confident data-driven decisions.

Moreover, faults in spreadsheets lead to unforeseen costs and compromised project outcomes. If you are working off Excel whilst completing bigger projects with multiple stakeholders and large datasets, the margin for error is incredibly high. Excel relies on manual data entry, making it incredibly susceptible to human error. Unfortunately, the structure of spreadsheets makes these mistakes incredibly easy to make and very hard to detect. Forbes says digital transformation reduces errors and boosts productivity. They emphasise the importance of investing in project management software that fits your needs.

5) DATA SECURITY

A well-known spreadsheet horror story is the accidental leak of 36,000 Boeing employees' information. Although this was due to human error, the most concerning thing is how easy this was to do. It is unwise to have your project data this easily accessible and shareable. Even with companies beginning to actively create policies for spreadsheet development, there is an easier way.

Nowadays, data security is crucial. Project management software ensures your data is safe, giving you peace of mind.

For example, Proteus ensures your data is protected meeting the highest standards with ISO 27001 accreditation. Through its hosting infrastructure, encrypted sign-on and multi-level user permissions, you can be confident that your data is secure. Many project management platforms also offer the provision of additional and specific security control solutions through bespoke integration solutions.



HOW TO KNOW WHICH SOFTWARE SOLUTION IS BEST FOR YOU

Investing in project management software is a big decision and with so many options available it can be incredibly overwhelming. It takes a lot of work to figure out which of the many software solutions out there is right for you and your organisation. It is beneficial to do a full and comprehensive search for project management and portfolio management software. Companies that use these tools are more likely to align with business priorities.

This 7 point checklist covers off the main things to consider when choosing a project management software for your organisation:

1) Pain Points

Selecting a software that has all the features and functionalities you need is imperative to identifying the best fit. A great starting point is to note down your biggest pain points whether it's a lack of visibility, scope creep or resource management, recognising which issues are the most pressing and causing the most problems will be crucial in selecting the best solution.

2) Scalability

Cloud-based project management software is subscription-based, meaning you pay per user per month. Therefore, you can easily increase your subscription as your organisation grows rather than straining the capabilities of your current software.

3) Integration Requirements

What software are you currently using? What integrations are key? This is extremely important to consider when selecting your software solution so that you and your team can rely on a single source of truth and eradicate data silos.



4) Onboarding Process

Ensuring that the software solution you select offers expert assistance to support a smooth transition for you and your team is crucial. At Proteus, we understand that the onboarding process of your new software is just as important as the selection process and offer a dedicated customer support expert to ensure you get the most out of our powerful tool as possible

5) Budget

How much you are willing to spend on your software is another key factor. Many organisations are reluctant to upgrade their project management software because of costs. For example, excel is about as low-cost as you can get, but if you consider how much money is lost through its ineffectiveness for managing complex projects then the low-cost benefit of this solution is quickly undermined.

On the other hand, engineering consultancies have typically invested a substantial amount of money into their CRMs and ERPs and do not want to replace them. However, project management software like Proteus does not replace these tools and instead enhances them. Proteus integrates seamlessly with your existing third-party software, overcoming data silos and pulling everything into one place. By investing in project management software alongside your other softwares, you can enhance your decision-making capabilities, accelerate workflows and ultimately increase your successful project outcomes.

Finally, there is a wide range of options available depending on budget. For instance, typically cloud solutions are less expensive as you save on hardware costs. Moreover, KPMG reported that 56% of technology executives said the return from digital transformation investments exceeded their expectations.



6) Involve your Team

Forbes emphasises the importance of people in ensuring a successful digital transformation. It is crucial to guide your team through the entire onboarding process and provide training to support the transition. For instance, appointing specific staff members to become well-trained in the software to eventually support the rest of the team is a beneficial practice. Project management software can bring many benefits from improved efficiency to greater collaboration but having a team willing to embrace its use is fundamental to experiencing these benefits.

7) Data Security

It is important to select a software where your data will be secure and protected. In addition, consider whether you require any specific security control solutions to be implemented and make sure that your project management software solution can meet these requirements.



ABOUT PROTEUS

Proteus is an end-to-end project management solution developed for the energy and engineering industries.

Proteus is industry-proven and enables consultancies and operators to meet project demands across the full lifecycle, from proposal development to project delivery. Proteus helps its customers win more business, increase efficiencies, manage expenditures and improve project controls.

Critical workflows, automation and controls are integrated into Proteus. These include opportunity evaluation, proposal building, resource planning, budget tracking and forecasting, real-time multi-level restricted dashboards and project performance analytics. Third-party integrations and customised solutions allow Proteus' users, which include c-suite, project leads and engineers to get the exact software solution needed for their business.

We offer a free onboarding consultation service to ensure your company account is set up to your company's needs.

Proteus keeps work simplified.



Proteus

xergy.com/proteus

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