

Bohemian project management for the digital agency

Bohemian project management might sound like the strangest oxymoron since 'friendly fire', but bear with me for a minute. Bohemian is all about the disregard of conventional rules, standards and behaviours, while project management is governed by the rules and guidelines set by other But is it really?

 By [Reghardt Marais](#) 10 Apr 2012

It's time for project managers to hop on out of their boxes and start demonstrating the courage to act on unconventional solutions which work in specialised environments. The 'digital agency' is one of those - a space where new-age solutions and a mix of old and new methodologies shape and grow the quality of the products, as well as the journey.

Project managers vs zoo of talent

The digital race is made up of an emotional and passionate bunch of misfits creating some of the most cutting-edge work in history. It is only fitting that we, as project managers (PM), adjust the way we do things to better suit our zoo of talent.

So what am I blabbering on about?

For starters, the question of methodology. The debate about what's best is "unwinnable", which tends to leave PMs in a spot where they simply continue to enforce their favourite - not best-suited - methodologies

It seems that quite a few digital agencies are enforcing [SCRUM](#) because this agile approach is best suited to development houses. That said, we are developing digital marketing assets and not typical Microsoft-type applications. [Agile methodologies](#) are not best suited to some of the typical waterfall stages of the search engine optimisation (SEO), copy and design processes, where each is dependent on the complete signal of the previous stage.

Client expectations

The agency environment is all about strict deadlines and specific requirements, and our clients expect the to be met. Makes you wonder...how agile is Agile, really?

Well, on the one hand, let's not kick Agile out the door quite yet. It is one of the most successful and widely implemented methodologies on the market and can definitely fulfil a role within the 'digital agency'.

[Prince2](#), on the other hand, is predominantly seen as a strict non-flexible methodology with no room for continuous deviation in a development environment. The strict controls that come with this methodology do not alleviate this argument. Prince2 does, however, bring some useful tactics to the table and the solid framework provides a controlled environment which is a definite must for the 'digital agency'.

Each methodology has tools, techniques and stages which you can use. So, why not mix and match a bit to create a bespoke methodology?

Experience of complex projects

In my experience during complex projects, using the Prince2 framework and integrating the Agile approach SCRUM during the development and engineering stages have proved successful and highly efficient.

Prince2 provides the controlled environment for planning, risk management, business cases, scope and resource management, quality control and management of waterfall type stages. SCRUM, though, provide a scalable Agile environment within the complex development stage of the project.

Development and engineering, for example, can work in parallel with set weekly sessions and measurable goals. If the teams are ahead of schedule, the next session's actions moves forward (the same goes for the reverse when work is delayed). This can all live within a Prince2 container, with a set deadline and objectives.

Looking at the above example, it can be argued that the lack of agility found within Prince2 is not due to the methodology itself, but with the PMs who practise it.

Be brave

Bohemian project management might be the niche you're looking for if you want to streamline your processes and outputs to better complement your clients and culture. So be brave, break the rules every now and then, and allow yourself to discover the perfect mix of methodologies.

ABOUT REGHARDT MARAIS

A long line of project management roles precedes Reghardt who walks tall at Synergize as Operations Manager. Using his past experience he has steered the marketing efforts of a number of high profile clients in the past and continues to do so at Synergize. His passion and knowledge makes him a leader in his field and a force to be reckoned with on the floor. His systematic approach and unbridled enthusiasm makes him a key enforcer of Synergize's ethos.
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