5 ways digital work management is driving a **new productivity revolution**

Team projects

This month

	Owner	Status	Time Tracking		Due Date
Launch new website		Working on it	⏸	08:45:00	Sep 1
Podcast kickoff		Done	▶	01:37:10	Sep 29
Q2 summary - Mobile app		Working on it	⏸	00:48:30	Sep 18
Sales training		Done	▶	03:09:40	Aug 25
Security report		Done	▶	02:12:40	Aug 28
Marketing plan			▶	02:09:12	Aug 6
Create onboarding for new hire			▶	00:28:32	Aug 8

Why Is It So Hard to Get Things Done?

It's a reasonable question — especially for a busy executive like you.

A typical day may go something like this...

You sit at your desk and groan as you look at your jam-packed calendar. You're stuck in meetings for hours. You have a running list of projects to check on. You have team members to connect with. Somewhere in between, you have to take a strategic look at how the business is performing and how close you are to meeting annual objectives

That is, when you're not bombarded by emails, chats and text messages from colleagues asking questions and requesting your immediate attention.

The day-to-day grind is a lot to handle, especially when you consider all of the bigger-picture issues impacting your business. Employee retention is down. A competitor is making a big splash with a new product launch. More employees are relocating and requesting more flexible work-from-home policies.

You need the time and freedom to tackle all of these issues (and more) head-on. But that feels impossible when you're juggling a hacked-together group of tools to understand what's really happening in your business.

Feel the Pain?
You're Not Alone

Companies of all sizes and across industries are struggling to keep pace with the hustle of modern work life. Executive teams—just like yours—are trying to keep their businesses operating optimally, while also keeping employees of all ages happy and engaged.

See the data for yourself:

Disruption is unavoidable.

51% of executives think their organization is at risk of being disrupted by startups or incumbent companies.[1]

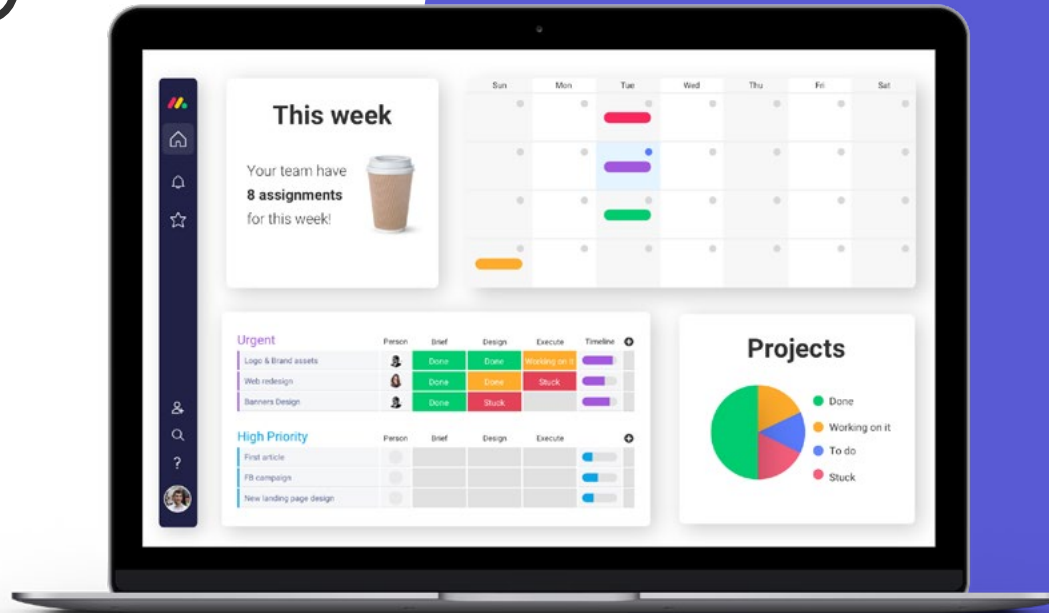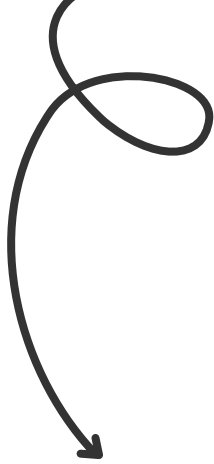## The modern workforce has changed.

Boomers will only account for **6%** of the workforce by 2020.[2]

Flexibility is not a nice-to-have. It's a requirement.

73% of employees say flexible work arrangements increase their satisfaction at work.[3]

Now more than ever, efficiency and collaboration are critical to keeping your business moving like a well-oiled machine.

Operations must run seamlessly and deadlines must be hit flawlessly. This is where technology plays an invaluable role. But not just any platform or app will do.

And a mishmashed stack of tech solutions? That's not going to cut it.

Digital work management is setting a new standard in business productivity and collaboration, giving everyone in the organization the visibility, accountability and control they need to get things done.

Problems with the Collaboration "Tech Stack"

If you nodded incessantly as you read the introduction to this E-book, there's a good reason why. Complexity is an inherent issue in most organizations today—especially for leaders forced to manage workflows with a hodgepodge of different tools and apps.

Consider this: Most managers spend 85% or more of their workdays jumping between e-mail, meetings and phone calls.[4]

Rank-and-file employees are not safe from multi-tasking mania either.

In addition to juggling a slew of conversations and projects within their teams, they're working more with colleagues in different functional areas.[5] This has made tasks like day-to-day communication, collaboration and product management more complex.

31% operate mostly or almost wholly with teams.

65% do some cross-functional team-based work.

Deloitte

Many organizations have implemented a variety of point solutions to help streamline team collaboration and boost productivity rates. On the surface, this seems like a sound strategy. Chat, messaging and task-management apps all have their unique benefits but as tech stack grows larger and more complex, major issues arise that seriously hurt your business' productivity and success:

Lack of visibility:
When teams use different tools to serve different needs, executive leadership fails to get a comprehensive view of projects and broader productivity rates. They need to understand which projects are completed, which are stalled and how that impacts business performance. Without that insight, the C-suite is unable to determine if the organization is on track to meet quarterly or annual goals.

Inefficiency:
As employees hop between different tools and platforms, it's easy for information to get lost in the shuffle. They may forget where critical project updates are shared and what progress has been made on a specific project. Not to mention, it's difficult to stay productive when you're trying to respond to a flurry of emails, chats and requests throughout the day.
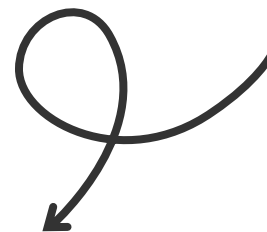
Version and quality control issues:

If teams can't keep track of document versions and editing rounds, they're more likely to refer to—and even use—outdated drafts.

This not only leads to a flawed product; it can also have a profound impact on brand perception, team performance and in some cases, client satisfaction.

Of course, it's not realistic to completely abolish tools once they're implemented within the organization. Employees are comfortable with them and use them daily. The best solution is to have a system designed to integrate, centralize and streamline digital workflows and conversations from all those tools to address common collaboration pain points and drive tangible value for your business.
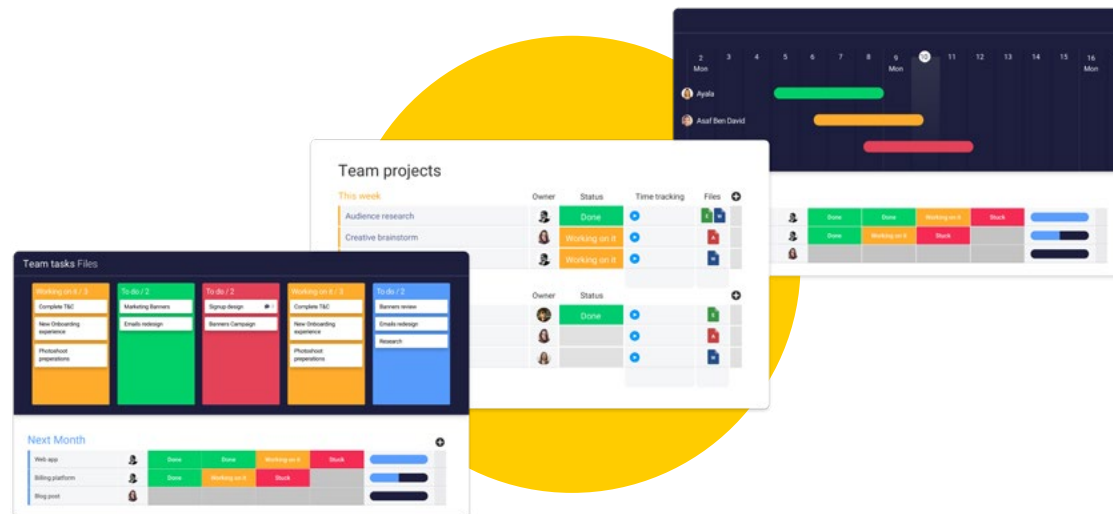
The **5 Benefits** of Digital Workflows
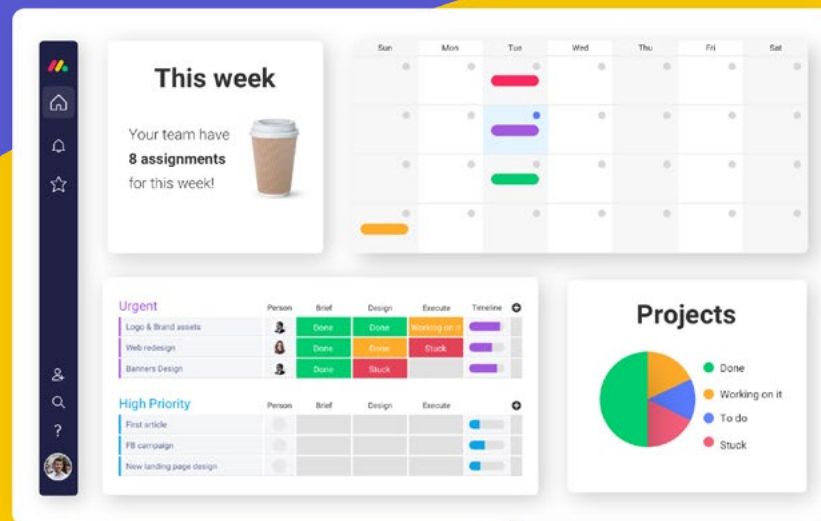
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Transparency & Insight

Digital workflows centralize teams and projects. Through one platform, users gain an end-to-end view of all related tasks, deadlines, documents and even conversations. These insights pack a powerful punch for companies that live or die by their team's productivity, and they benefit all areas of the organization differently.

The Executive Team: Every year, executive leadership gathers around the conference table to finalize their key objectives. But once they leave the meeting, big ideas and goals are often left behind. In fact, **half of organizations can't even hit 60% of their strategic objectives**, according to the *Harvard Business Review.*[6]
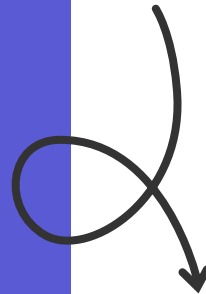
When an organization embraces digital workflows, executive leadership gleans powerful insights into critical projects and milestones in all areas of the business. This 5,000-foot view of the business can help them better plan for the future and determine if their goals are still attainable. Flexible reporting dashboards can also help them dig into different functional areas and uncover trends and tactical takeaways that are ultimately delivered to managers and employees.

Team Leaders & Managers: Digital workflows give managers the power to access as much—or as little—information as they need at a moment in time. Gone are the days of drilling into complex spreadsheets and getting TMI updates from managers. With digital workflows, they can easily gauge team productivity and individual performance. For example, the

VP of marketing can assess progress on campaigns that include several functional areas, including sales, branding and content. Or, they can drill into the performance of their individual team members to gauge whether they're meeting all deadlines. Plus, employees are increasingly requesting ongoing, transparent conversations with their managers, so having this granular view will only become more critical.[7]

Employees: Every day, your employees are juggling a multitude of tasks. They have to work towards larger goals established in their reviews, and also tackle the last-minute deadlines and to-do's that dominate their tasks list. Digital workflows take the pain out of managing so many different deadlines and conversations. They know what's coming down the pike, receive alerts for new tasks and have full clarity on deadlines. Productivity challenge, accepted.

2

Cross-Functional Collaboration

For decades, enterprises have been plagued by functional silos. Different teams sit in their own worlds, with their own tasks and even their own sets of metrics. Every day, they plug away at their work and have little to no insight into what their colleagues are working on and why. Imagine sales' surprise when they find out their marketing peers decided to change the theme and messaging for their latest campaign. Or finance's frustration when they find out that HR significantly went over its budget in their effort to attract new hires.
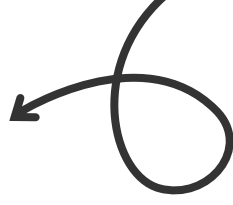
The good news is that more companies are adopting tools and business practices that break down silos and empower people from different functions to work together more efficiently. In fact, 65% of executives believe that shifting from a "functional hierarchy" to a "team-centric" organization is important or very important. But there's a catch. **Only 6% of executives believe they're "very effective" at managing cross-functional teams.**[8]

Digital workflows help make the leap to team-based working less overwhelming. Teams are established based on specific projects and objectives, and people from all areas of the business can participate. Within each workflow, team members can see all tasks, responsibilities and deadlines.

If employees are involved in several projects at one time, a digital workflow solution helps them easily switch to different projects throughout the day, manage and complete tasks and even get a quick glance at all deadlines for the week.
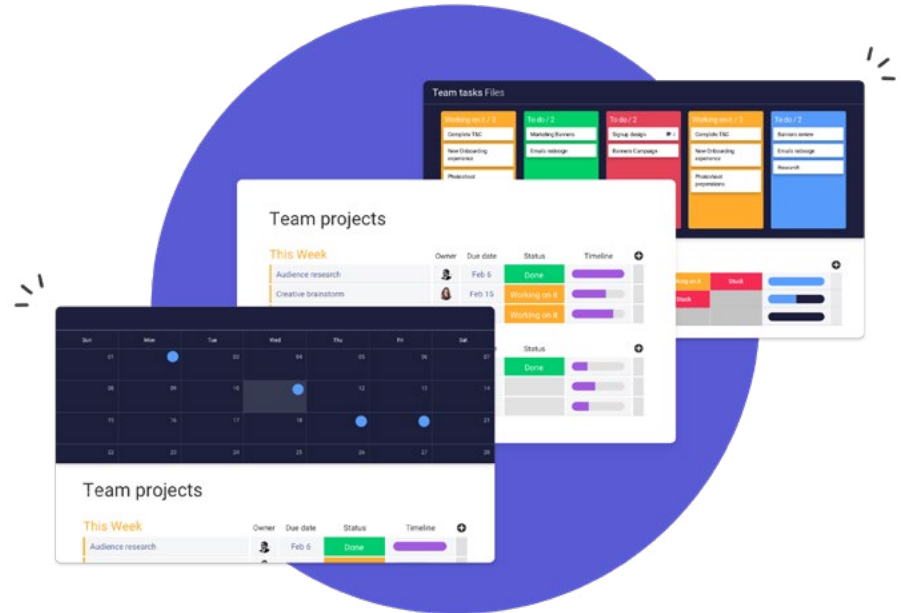
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Integration & Centralization

Sure, communication and collaboration tools have their perks, but they're also a real time suck. **During the average workday, employees only have 1 hour and 12 minutes free from communication tools.** That means 76% of your day is stolen by e-mail and chat.[9] And that doesn't include all the time you lose toggling between tools and looking for information scattered across these different channels.

Those days are numbered. Using the right digital work management solution centralizes all communication and collaboration in one place, making it a one-stop-shop for everything your team needs to get things done.
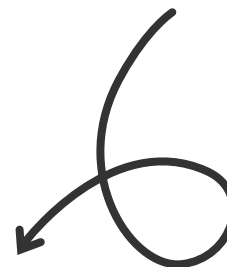
Within each project or team, users have access to chat and commenting capabilities, can attach documents and images, and create and update timelines. For example, rather than sharing the latest ad mock-up through email, the graphic design lead can easily upload it to the workflow, so everyone can review and share their feedback. It's a win-win: everyone on the team feels like they're contributing to the project and the graphic designer has an aggregated view of all edits and comments. No more confusing, ad-hoc feedback!

Users can even integrate messages and information from other platforms like Gmail and Outlook, so all critical information is in one place. The best part? Everyone has access to all information at all times, so projects can keep moving—even if employees are on vacation or leave the business altogether.

Team projects

This week	Owner	Status	Time tracking	Files	➕
Audience research	👤	Done	▶	E W	
Creative brainstorm	👤	Working on it	▶	A	
Brand personas	👤	Working on it	▶	W	

Next week	Owner	Status			➕
Presentation	👤	Done	▶	E	
Launch campaign	👤		▶	A	
FB image testing	👤		▶	W	

4

Flexibility

Every person in your business has a unique way of working. They consume information differently, learn differently and complete tasks differently. That's why a one-size-fits all collaboration platform or a hastily strung together stack of solutions won't work. You need to give employees the power to access project information, timelines and tasks in a way that's most relevant and valuable for them. That flexibility is possible with a digital work management solution.

For example, some employees prefer to look at all their deadlines at a high level, using a timeline or calendar format. Other, more visual workers in web design or app development tend to see and prioritize tasks using a Kanban layout. Flexibility goes a long way when you're trying to drive adoption — especially because **43% of people get stressed when new communication tools are introduced to their workflows.**[10]

Advanced search and filtering capabilities amplify that power even more, and help users see the most urgent deadlines and all corresponding information. This is especially valuable for managers and executive leadership who may want to see tasks, deadlines and updates for very specific projects.
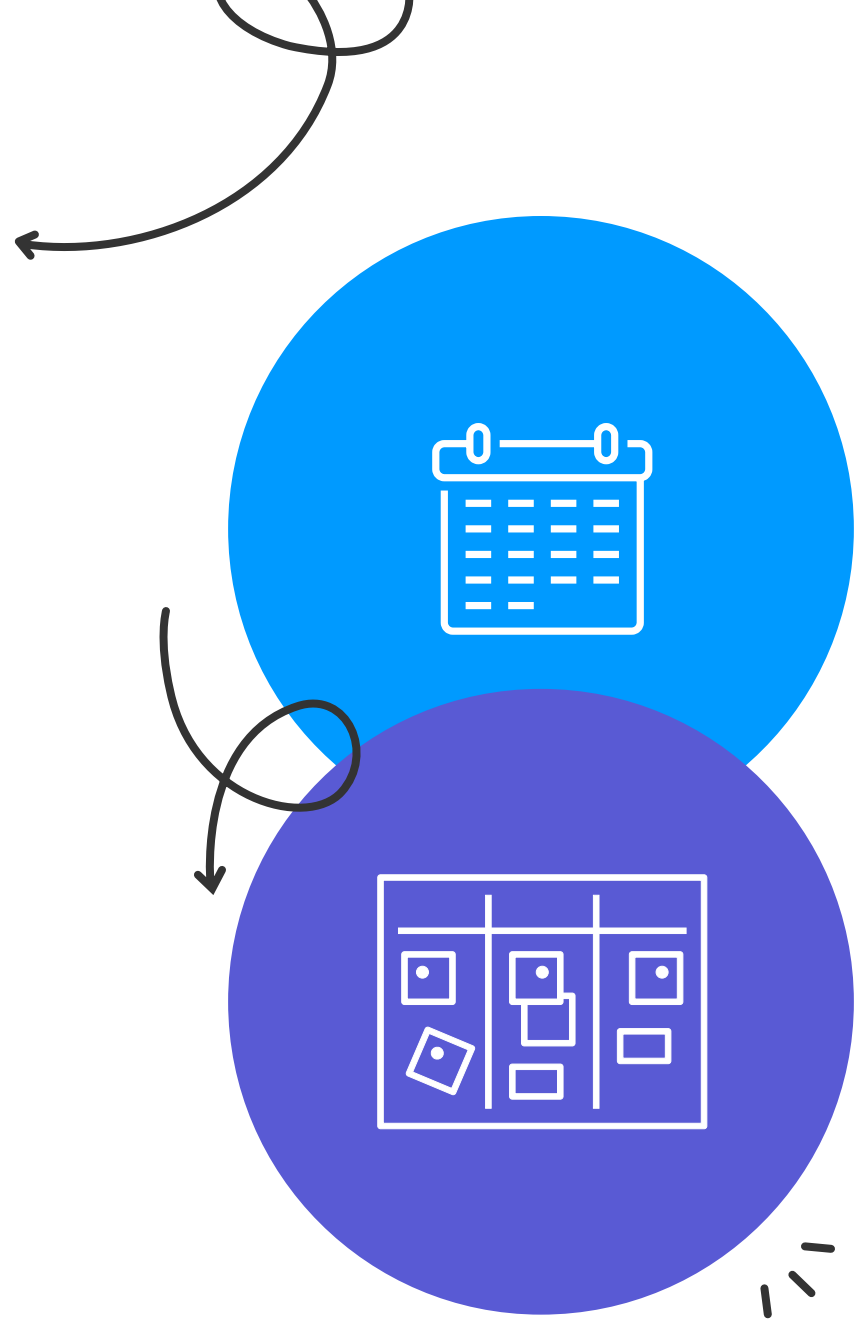
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Ease of Adoption & Ease of Use

Sure, millennials and Gen Z are dominating the workforce, but you still likely have Gen X and Boomers in your organization. That means you have at least one person who struggles to adopt all of the tools and apps at their disposal. A best-in-class digital work management solution, however, makes it easy for even the most technology-averse employees to get up-and-running.

Moreover, team members can easily update tasks, timelines and progress within their workflows. This helps them feel like they're in total control of their work life. Those who don't want to be as hands-on can embrace automation to eliminate some of the manual, arduous tasks that take them away from creative and strategic work.

Making Digital Workflows Work for You: How to Get Your Team Excited & On Board

Embracing a new way of working is no easy feat. But part of embracing a new and better method means convincing employees to change the behaviors they've established and abandon the tools and apps they've grown to know and love. By following these quick tips, you can set yourself and your teams up for success as you embrace digital workflows:

Focus on the benefits first: Tell everyone how embracing digital workflows will not only benefit the business as a whole but them as individuals, too. Explain how it will make their lives easier and their days more productive.

Provide examples and inspiration: As you communicate the value of digital workflows, try to spotlight different use cases and examples. Walk through a hypothetical day for a team and the benefits they'll see.

Be transparent about the rollout: No detail should go unturned. Provide insight into when the rollout will happen, how team members can get up-and-running and how they can access customer service and support so they get the most value out of the investment.

Offer ongoing training and education: Who doesn't love a good productivity hack? IT and HR should collaborate on a series of training resources and tools that will support employees once the implementation is over.

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Sources

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