ProChain Solutions Inc.: Better Live Meetings, Virtually

As a Senior Project Management Consultant at ProChain Solutions Inc., Travis Glaze and the team's project manager would often spend hours each evening, after the rest of the team had already left, in front of their computers. They needed the extra time after regular hours to transcribe all of the hand-written notes from the latest sessions, and then input that data into another software program. In an effort to get back their evenings, the consultants at ProChain began searching for alternative solutions to hand-written notes and data. The team landed on Stormboard as the solution to their collaboration problem — and the impact to ProChain's business was immediate and far-reaching.

"It was COVID that made using Stormboard possible, and now that we've been here, I can't imagine us ever going back. "

The Challenges

Several years ago, Travis Glaze and the other Senior Consultants at Pro Chain Solutions Inc. were trying to solve an all-too-familiar problem: working with teams spread across vast distances and different time zones was inefficient. Even the best-structured and well-run meetings end with the same challenges; one person in the working group is tasked with accurately transcribing and inputting every note, idea, and outcome of a meeting into some digital platform. "All data entry happens with one set of fingers on one keyboard, and so we spent hours manipulating [other software programs] as people would feed us information one person at a time." Travis explains that even before COVID-19 turned his work remote, he was searching for "something where we could collaboratively input data simultaneously."

Back in 2017, when the group at ProChain first started searching for a way to make these team meetings better, there was some initial resistance from those who worried about the burden to the team that may come with adding an additional piece of software. "We were making progress implementing the new process using Stormboard, but at a cautious pace." However, when Covid-19 struck the ProChain team (and their clients) were forced   to conduct their business virtually, things changed. "For us, when we realized the problem we were facing, it was an immediate, 'well, let's use Stormboard.'"

The Solution

After some trial and error, Stormboard became the go-to tool for Travis and ProChain "So, it took some tweaks to the original process that we had created, but fundamentally what we are doing now is what we did live before Covid. Now everyone is calling in from their own house and we are able to work collaboratively, simultaneously." Having found the right tool for the job, the ProChain team developed a unique process to enable their team engagements to reap the full benefits of this new approach. They wrote a conversion macro that allowed the Stormboard data to be ported directly into Microsoft Project.

This new method of using Stormboard isn't quite what the team at ProChain envisioned when they first started the search for a collaborative meeting tool. As Travis explains, "Our process has changed, but it's doing what we need... we will certainly continue using it as we are." As a project management business first, ProChain has their own software and processes in place to fit the specific needs of their clientele, but after coming in as a solution to fill a gap caused byCOVID-19, Stormboard has become an integral part of that process: "We spend the first month in Stormboard and then transition over to our ProChain software and Microsoft Projects." ProChain no longer needs to fly people in from Australia, Europe, or different parts of North America to truly collaborate, they can leverage Stormboard to eliminate inefficiencies and have better live meetings, virtually.

The Result

Born out necessity, the partnership between ProChain and Stormboard has revolutionized the way that Travis handles his work. "If we hadn't had this tool [during COVID] we would have been able to still complete our work, but it would have been extremely frustrating for me and the team, and they would have been doing it because they had to, not because it was a better way to go. I think now people see that this is a better way to go — they want to do it — [Stormboard] is not something we are forcing on them, it's a process they are excited about."

Once the decision was made to go with Stormboard, the team at ProChain immediately leveraged their years of experience into making this Stormboard-based, collaborative experience a success.

The impact for both ProChain and Travis himself has been tangible. Not only does he now find himself with more time and fewer frustrations, after the initial push back he felt in 2017, his team now tells him, "we are going to use this [Stormboard] internally, even when we are back in the office together."

Company Background

ProChain Solutions Inc. has been delivering advanced project management solutions to thousands of organizations across the globe since 1996. ProChain's Critical Chain approach and A5 Project Management System is trusted by hundreds of Global 500 companies to improve overall project performance and reliability, while reducing cycle times and time to market.

Travis Glaze, a Senior Consultant for ProChain uses Stormboard for building complex project schedules for a variety of large clients spanning dozens of industries, complementing ProChain's own software as a viable alternative to time-consuming and inefficient meetings with remote clients and team members.

Testimonial

"It saves me a lot of time. I think the other thing it [Stormboard] brings to the table compared to our original process of getting everyone into a room for four days, is that we can have meetings with who we need to meet with when we need to meet with them. People feel their time is well used."

— Travis Glaze, Senior Consultant, ProChain Solutions Inc.

Stormboard