How QuinStreet Enabled Employees To Work Better Together and Get More Done

The right place at the right time

"Location, location, location!" is true not only for real estate professionals but also for counsumers making educated comparisons among insurance, mortgage, education, and other products and services. QuinStreet's performance online marketing platform has been delivering to consumers high-performing offers from its branded clients for almost 20 years.

As QuinStreet's proprietary technologies developed over two decades, the amount of data it generated and had to manage grew exponentially, driving the need for a resource planning tool that could enable prioritization and optimization across a five-hundred employee organization operating across half of the world's time zones.

"Clients entrust their performance marketing to us, and consumers trust us with their data," says Marty Collins, QuinStreet's Senior Vice President of Corporate Development, Legal and Compliance. **"Our previous processes didn't give us the visibility we needed to plan and manage our work, so we needed a new system to deliver on our commitments."**

Little project and workflow insights equal big challenges

At any given time QuinStreet engineers and business personnel may be managing campaigns for existing clients, optimizing its publishers or developing new products and services. QuinStreet CEO and founder Doug Valenti set a directive to find ways to ensure the company worked only "on the right things," requiring cross-company choreography of both personnel and resources.

In the past, QuinStreet had managed this via a task management solution, but found the features and functionality too limited to effectively manage its rapidly growing business. Collins says that the financial services line of business, which grew over 50% to $185.8 million in annual revenue from fiscal 2015 to fiscal 2017, was a particular area of focus and a driving force behind the search for a new solution.

"Our ticketing system didn't allow us to modify workflows to reflect our changing business,"

"Over half of our employees are engineers, and they were demanding to see how their efforts mapped to the company's strategic objectives."

In talking to employees across the company, Collins discovered that employees tracked their efforts using spreadsheets, Microsoft Project, or even email. The various systems were used inconsistently within business units, making tracking projects across multiple business units with existing tools impractical and particularly challenging.

The right partnership

As QuinStreet's workforce grew, new employees arrived eager to use resource planning tools to help manage their work, only to find out there were few available. Existing employees, meanwhile, kept hearing about the Atlassian product suite - Jira, Service Desk, Confluence, Fisheye, Crucible - and asked the company to explore it as a possible solution for the entire company. In response Collins sought and obtained the CEO's approval to evaluate available solution options as well as implementation partners.

At the same time, Collins understood his and his team's limitations. Collins wasn't the company's formal head of operations and his teams did not have the bandwidth or project management skills to execute a company-wide deployment on their own, meaning they had to look outside the organization for help.

"General counsels generally don't lead Jira implementations at 500 employee public companies," Collins said. **"But our CEO's view is that we're not here to be reporters; we're here to do business. And so if you break it, or even just found it broken, he's fine if you fix it."**

With input from employees and trusted advisers across the company, Collins's team crafted an RFP and solicited responses from a number of vendors. After consideration, Collins' team with input from engineering determined ServiceRocket made the most compelling pitch for the work. In particular,

Collins says that QuinStreet chose ServiceRocket because of its demonstrated familiarity with Atlassian products, extensive background in IT operations - key at QuinStreet, as product and business development almost inevitably involves IT - and customer references from similarly sized and organized companies.

"You need a partner who is not only experienced with the underlying tools, but also familiar with how to implement 21st century business processes at a company that had been succesfully doing things the same way since 1999."

"Most integrators wanted to run their standard play. ServiceRocket took the time to learn our environment, listen to each team's concerns and create a roadmap for configuring each product to the needs of our internal constituencies."

In other words, ServiceRocket proposed a business partnership instead of a one-off technology implementation.

Greater insight, productivity, and care

Employing Atlassian products has been a revelation for QuinStreet. Using Atlassian Jira, the company can now map the effort for each person at the company to campaigns and initiatives, including cross-company initiatives laid out during the company's annual strategic planning process. Atlassian enables managers to better address backlogs, allocate resources to higher - value business opportunities, and load balance across business units, all while creating a more granular audit trails as required for public companies.

"With Jira, everyone can view everything in production across the enterprise. Teams can see

what others are working on and reuse codebases or other work products to accelerate project delivery and improve efficiency,"

"More importantly, it's empowered our people to note where their expertise can address issues arising in other parts of the company, meeting a company mantra to never solve a problem you can avoid."

Atlassian software has also made the entire organization more responsive to both internal and external support requests - and has given them the ability to track it. **"We've raised more than 10,000 issues and resolved over 8,000 of them in under six months,"**

"That kind of productivity wasn't possible before Atlassian and without ServiceRocket support we would have been drowning in new data." Collins says that despite the newfound visibility, efficiency, and productivity, the implementation services - not the software itself - proved to be the most valuable aspect of the engagement.

"There's no shortage of integration teams that would cash QuinStreet checks to roll out an Atlassian suite for us,"
"But ServiceRocket did much more than that, and they continue to be involved as we drive Atlassian tool adoption and reporting deeper in and across the organization. ServiceRocket proved from day one that it was big enough to serve us, but small enough to actually care about our business."

Results at a Glance

Challenges

- Replacing outdated task management system with an integrated solution for greater visibility
- Properly mapping backlogs to company initiatives and priorities
- Enabling better collaboration and communication among functional teams and departments
- Partnering with a software integrator capable of deploying solutions appropriately configured for the company's existing personnel and organizational structure

Solution

- QuinStreet selected ServiceRocket to plan, execute, and manage the deployment of Atlassian Jira Software, Jira Service Desk, Confluence, Fisheye, and Crucible to gain essential insight and control over its project and issue management operations

Business Outcomes

- Provided project and activity visibility across the enterprise for stronger collaboration and faster delivery of new tools and services
- Enabled mapping projects to corporate initiatives to ensure employees working on the right things, and in the right order
- Improved project prioritization and resource allocation for greater efficiency
- Raised more than 10,000 issues and resolved over 8,000 in under 6 months for the company's existing personnel and organizational structure

About QuinStreet

QuinStreet specializes in performance marketing products and technologies. The company serves clients in high-value, high-consideration market verticals, including financial services, IT / technology, home services and education. Clients in those markets include some of the world's largest companies and brands. While the majority of QuinStreet operations and revenue are in North America, the company has growing businesses in Brazil and India.