DEISER

HOW A MULTINATIONAL MARKETING COMPANY HAS IMPLEMENTED JIRA, PROJECTRAK, AND OTHER APPS

Learn from a global process setting up Atlassian products and apps for large-scale campaign management

This use case will explain how a large multinational communications and advertising holding company uses Jira and different apps to manage and administrate projects, in the shape of advertising campaigns around the world.

About the company...

What's WPP?

It's the world's largest communications and advertising holding company, it comprises more than 3.500 different individual businesses distributed worldwide, and it's evolving every day.

Let's give you an idea of how significant this company is:

✔ More than 107,000 people in communications, e-commerce, and technology disciplines.

✔ They're distributed in 112 countries through more than 3,600 offices.

✔ **Their clients' portfolio includes:**

- 21 major brands and more than 400 sub-brands.
- 348 of the Fortune Global 500.
- 30 of the Dow Jones 30.
- 70 of the NASDAQ 100.
- 69 of the FTSE 100.

## About the masterminds behind Jira...

What's UHUB?

uhub

UHUB is the team within WPP that integrates a set of industry-leading products (based around the Atlassian family of products -Jira software, Jira Service Management, Confluence, and more...) into a single WPP-wide platform, supported by and for agency staff.

WPP relies on UHUB to function through software.

They're a worldwide team of Atlassian experts working 24/5, providing a continuous service, following the sun around the world. There're nine dedicated full-time specialists and four ancillary staff supporting the entire environment, including business analysis. In short, it's an Atlassian set of software products as a service.

How do the streams of communication flow within WPP?
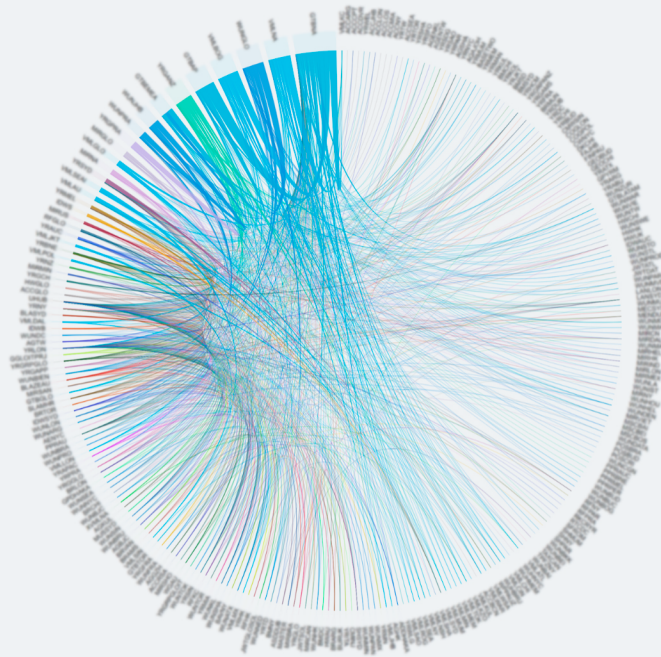
The flow of collaborations happening within a unit of time in WPP's (circa 2018 or 2019).

As the diagram shows, the number of collaborations occurring inside WPP it's monstrous. It's possible to appreciate the number of collaborations between WPP's business units that happen within a unit of time, where the outside ring comprises some of the business units from a particular region of the world, and each of the individual lines represents a line of collaboration between two business units happening daily. Each line might represent:

1 Large swaths of work. E.g., a production studio collaborating with an office.

2 Specialists bringing their talents into an organization to get complex work done.

Conway's Law and the role of UHUB...

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Organizations which design systems ... are constrained to produce designs which are copies of the communication structures of these organizations.

CONWAY'S LAW

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We help you with Atlassian

UHUB's primary role is to host the Atlassian set of products and apps at its Data Center tier in a massive multi-tenant environment and help them leverage through software the agency streams of information around the world. This labor has taken them to **mitigate Conway's Law as a mission**; this law states that organizations will produce systems that mirror their communication structures.

In this situation, the role of UHUB is to align these organizational structures through this smart software stack supported majorly by Atlassian products and apps.

The problem...

UHUB needs to align the different organizational structures and the communications between the different roles implied by implementing the Atlassian software stack, supported by Atlassian Marketplace apps.

E.g., A Campaign Program Manager has sent a client's brief for a big campaign, and three creative teams are working on that brief to produce an advertising campaign. One of those teams didn't have the same direction, given the creative brief's information didn't have all the data aligned, resulting in a waste of time for the creative team and a large client, unhappy.

The main characters...

During the whole collaboration process, different key roles come into play when working in large campaigns for large clients within WPP. Those are:

- ✔ The client: The brand or company working with a WPP agency that needs a creative piece or campaign for marketing, advertising, or communication and transmits those needs through a brief.

- ✔ The agency: One of the WPP hold companies' that offers creative solutions for marketing, advertising, or communication ends.

- ✔ Program Campaign Managers: The person on charge to run the campaigns for large clients, on charge of gathering and distributing the information about each campaign to the creative teams.

- ✔ Project Managers: The person coordinating the different teams ensures all the campaign timelines and deadlines are met.

- ✔ Planner: The person creating and forecasting a plan of action in advertising, and placements, based on the needs of the client and the creative team indication.

- ✔ Creative Director: The person in charge of the creative team supervising the work is aligned and creatively fulfills the client's brief needs.

- ✔ Copywriter: This person creates compelling and creative solutions, solving clients' brief needs.

- **Designer:** The person in charge of complementing, crafting and finishing, the speech previously compelled by copywriters.

- **Developer:** The person involved in a creative campaign when it required any development at the web or app level, working side-by-side with the copywriter and designer.

- **Human Resources:** Is the department of a company in charge of managing all things related to people management.

- **Finances:** The company's department takes care of all the financial responsibilities.

The starting line...

UHUB providing software for a complex collaboration work-flow for WPP and its companies?
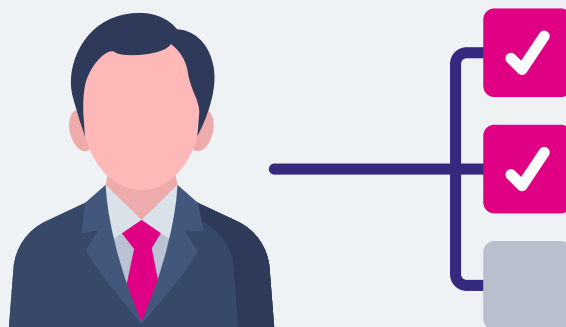
UHUB realized that the main source of information, where all the workflow of collaborations starts, it's with the Campaign Program Managers. They represent the main knowledge foundations about each campaign/project and authority when setting a campaign direction; that's why UHUB chooses to treat them as a single source of program truth.

They're in charge of organizing, controlling, tracking, and distributing the project (campaigns) information to people, providing the means to input the data.

The main challenge UHUB was facing was how to help the Campaign Program Managers to reduce the risk of providing wrong inputs and avoiding polluting other projects or processes in motion with inaccurate information.

It was a complex collaboration process where different Atlassian tools and apps came into play to work it out right:

The three leading Atlassian apps that have helped UHUB

Boosting the collaboration within a multi-national worldwide company

They have used Jira as a base and the main motor to centralize their information, powering up the tool by using three apps:

This app for Jira allows to get external data sources and leverage them during the project or issue creation in Jira. Here, Elements provided UHUB for:

- ✔ Querying and fetching data from external sources allowing teams to manage data in source applications and visualize it Jira.

- ✔ Setting up multi-level lists and dependencies between connected data fields. See a specific example for this practice, for a large banking company.

- ✔ Customizing how data displays in custom fields with HTML and native AUI components.

  E.g., the specialists need to query a financial system to check the available job codes or to query a time tracking system to examine the worked hours versus the planned hours; Elements Connect allows UHUB to effectively calculate the planning-related data.

This situation is still a blocker because this raw data is now spread across thousands of tasks and projects, entangled in messy data branches.
Realizing that having this information pulled out of their systems outside Jira isn't enough, they choose to integrate another app into the formula:

Initially, UHUB implemented this app with various custom scripts to automate issues transition from the project creation process, augmenting usability, and it evolved consequently using it to:

- ✔ Automate workflows & issues, extend Jira functionalities, and improve the user experience by implementing custom scripts.

- ✔ Create reactive and scheduled automation to save time and reduce the risk of errors.

- ✔ Enforce business logic throughout the organization by scripting conditions, validators, and post-functions.

At this point, UHUB already has covered the individual data points for Campaign Program Managers administer, allowing them to replicate this information on a large-scale basis.

With these two apps, UHUB already had covered the individual data points, which are incredibly valuable for those Campaign Managers and can replicate those on a large-scale basis.

Now the challenge missing was to help Campaign Program Managers to distribute these individual data points to other collaborators, which is already organized and automated with Elements Connect and ScriptRunner.

The third Atlassian app that will help UHUB to shape this enormous worldwide flow of information across different stakeholders and teams, is Projectrak:


PROJECTRAK
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It's an app meant to track projects and help users organize data at the project level. In this context, it will allow stakeholders to act on their work and make decisions based on the data provided by the Campaign Program Managers. Specifically, this app helps UHUB to:

✔ Customize project-level fields and properties, allowing easier tracking of essential metadata.

✔ Standardize and reuse Layouts, which are a customizable set of project fields to display information in a standard way for different teams and stakeholders.

✔ Implement the Project Navigator, which is a collection of different views for projects -displayed as if they were issues, to help users find their way amongst WPP's thousands of projects.

✔ To track specific and relevant project information based on the data Campaign Program Managers introduce for other stakeholders to kick-off the creative processes through the previously mentioned standardized and reusable Layouts.

The Layouts are the primary reference and standard view for all team members when checking campaign details. E.g., if a new creative joins a campaign, the Layout provides him with the job codes, such as the briefing, project overview, who's the Project Manager, important dates, other teams implied, budget, etc.

This information it's displayed in the Layouts by the Campaign Program Managers as the unique source of truth they input the data in, that information has been implemented with ScriptRunner to automatically cascade -here's where Elements Connects plays, creates many campaign projects for different stakeholders across different teams distributed worldwide.
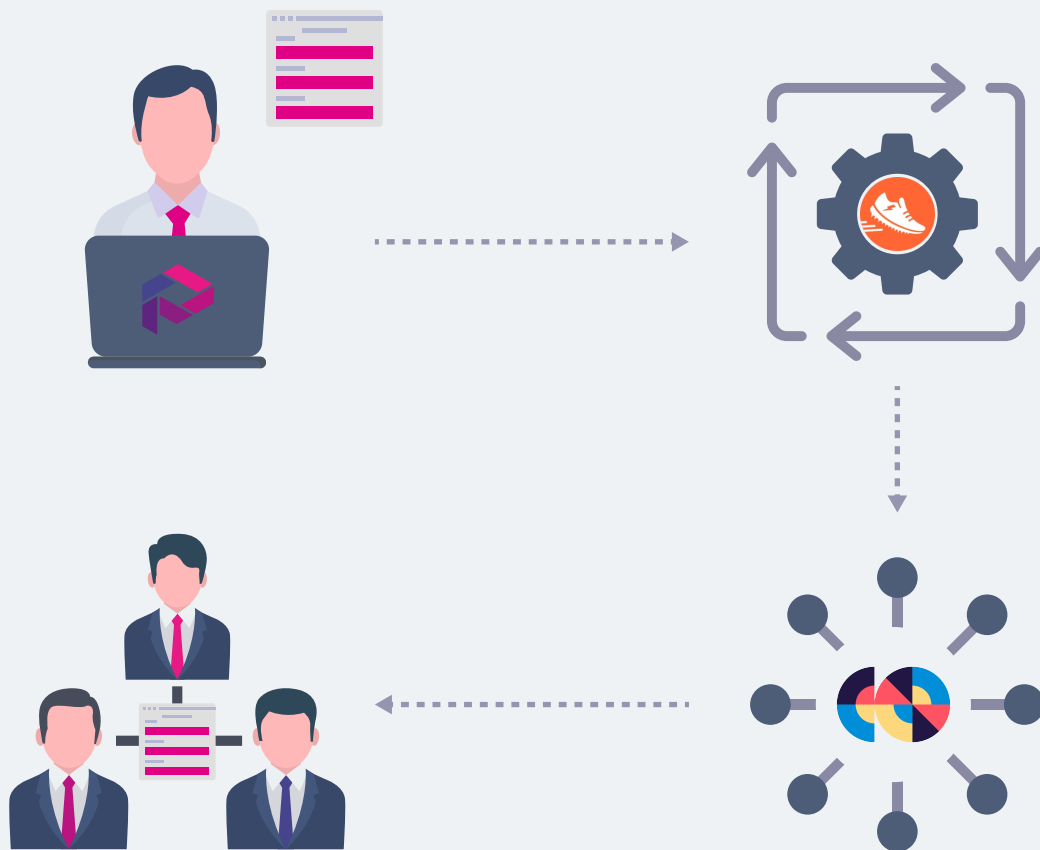
Grouping campaign information to distribute it to Campaign Program Managers

Jira's first focus is on software development, naturally, basing the work around tasks rather than projects. However, the considerable advantage of this tool is that it can be adapted to work across many ways and industries.

As software development has the recurrent task of watching bugs, Jira intends to primarily open bug tickets containing information about it (this is the issue or task), with additional data like versions, fixed versions, and allowing to group those bug fixes into releases. And basically, that was everything Jira does.

Jira didn't have a way to group campaign-based information logically as the one UHUB needed.

Jira's tasks focus has difficulty grouping, processing, and delivering groups of work for the ways agencies work. Agencies works are distributed from a macro perspective: project/campaign based. By default, the information contained there must be attached to tasks, which applied to a standard context of Jira, it results in errors, data duplication, and data bloating.

Picture this: Different Creative Directors are working on a big project for a large clothing manufacturer. This project is destined to be placed into a wide range of markets, which among other actions, it requires translations, product teams, and all sorts of placements for different channels. The teams working on this project will align around standard metadata such as image standards, like applying CMYK to a particular picture, creating dynamic assets, and other standard variables assigned to different global teams. This information needs to be tracked by the Campaign Program Managers, and the Projectrak Layouts allows it.

The solution...

Projectrak is key during the campaign creation process

Helping the main stakeholders

What's a Workspace?

A workspace is what UHUB has internally defined as a Jira project, a Confluence space, a Bitbucket project, an Opsgenie team, and a Statuspage.

When any team member joins at a campaign, refers directly to Projectrak's Layouts, which is the main center of knowledge displaying information about the campaign, providing enough data to get their hands onto the collaboration process.

As new deliverables keep arriving from those clients with high volumes of work, Projectrak allows Project Managers to upload further information accurately for ongoing campaigns into the correspondent workspaces, displaying an updated visualization of the campaign in Jira containing the requirements specified on the client's brief.

Interacting with other business areas for campaign success

Besides serving as a project central and a source of campaign information, based on the primary source of knowledge, the Program Campaign Managers and their representation in software, Projectrak for Jira, and its Layouts, provide different backstage dynamics, mainly by feeding it with information from other organization areas.

Introducing a timesheeting system with data extracted from Finance, HR, or Resourcing, this metadata is leveraged into the campaign information we already have, providing:

✔ To the **agency**, the information about the work resources they will need to work in the campaign, allowing them to invest appropriately in the resourcing and stakeholders' skill set required for the campaign.

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✔ To **Planners** oversee the overall campaign statuses, e.g., those placed in 27 markets, the amount of worked hours, the staff needed, from which areas, etc…

✔ To **Creatives** organize and forecast their work based on accurate planning.

This workflow occurs without support, centralizing and creating as many projects as required, as needed, from small to very large campaigns.

Projectrak allows a shift in paradigm for Jira, which has resulted handy for management using project-based data in Jira.

Most of the time this situation ends with happy customers.

Going beyond Jira:

To keep the whole process running tight and seamless, the Campaign Program Managers have special needs, on specific campaigns, other Atlassian products fulfill; in those situations, going beyond Jira have been needed using:

✔ **Confluence**: To describe, document, and/or add further explanation regarding the work occurring in Jira or the campaign.

✔ **Bitbucket**: It's used when there's the need to save the information about website repositories that belong to a campaign.

✔ **Bamboo**: A Bamboo plan is needed when developing a dynamic website, and it's being used a Bitbucket repository.

Which benefits does Projectrak report?

⬆ **Better productivity** by eliminating bottlenecks for the IT/Support Team and providing a smoother campaign flow production; this is possible by allowing Program Campaign Managers to create workspaces directly, as they need it.

⬆ **Time-saving actions and better information resourcing.** The automation actions (in this case, automated with ScriptRunner) allow extracting additional information from other systems to Projectrak's projects/campaigns into Jira, enhancing each campaign request information and allowing better resourcing and visibility providing quality forecasting and planning.

⬆ **Remote friendly.** This system allows an integrated and centralized place to go to where to place the essential knowledge to kickstart different campaigns.

↑ Native project reporting. Once the data is rolling on this system, it is possible to get that information out by using Projectrak's native possibility to create Dashboards for projects in Jira, based on five different gadgets this app provides. It's possible to generate specific reports at the project level as health status, project sizes, statistical information, and more, getting a sizeable holistic view of work getting done.

↑ Democratization of data-driven decisions. From the creative teams to the Finances team, they all get benefited from the built-in reports Projectrak gadgets embed into Jira Dashboards. As reports are central for executives and day-to-day line managers, they benefit from seeing individual health statuses of projects/campaigns, or the financial team overviewing billing codes, and from which system of them it's linked.

↑ Work visualization. Every team member from any area can oversee all the work done in any piece of business (creative item or campaign) goes through. Keeping this information in one spot will make it available for every team to visualize at any time by reporting or the different views the app offers.
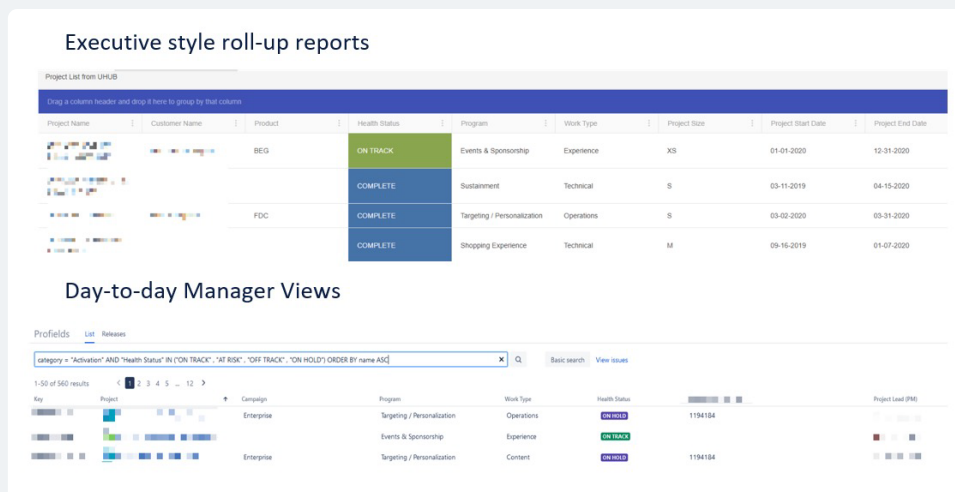
The future...

What's next for UHUB?

UHUB is always looking to improve its systems. After rolling out any system to production, there's the imperative drive to improve it further. In the case explained here, they have detected with user feedback help that they should focus on templating features.

Currently, they're exploring a way that allows the Campaign Program Manager to facilitate the creation of deliverables they've done in the past, which Project Managers frequently ask. They're evaluating resourcing systems, team-based systems, or even a test management suite. Demonstrating that way, UHUB is a team of passionate Atlassian experts dedicated to improving WPP's processes and helping their teams to succeed at work through software.

Learn more about Projectrak

The solution that fits your needs, to organize, track, and control your Jira project information:

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[☁ Cloud]   [🖳 Data Center]

Contact us

Contact us if you need further information or assistance implementing the apps mentioned in this use case.

[🎧 Contact us]