Vendor soup and other **productivity** drains

Collaborate more effectively in an increasingly complex workplace

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If your marketing department is like ours, the number of players on your roster keeps growing.

- **Digital content**
- **Marketing automation**
- **Sales enablement**
- **Branding**
- **Strategic messaging**
- **Research**

Simply managing the quantity of meetings these relationships require is overwhelming. Now add the internal folks competing for your attention along with deadlines, answering emails, keeping track of documents, and the constant stream of requests Yeesh!

It's no secret that the role of a marketer is increasingly complex. Marketing is now the hub of information; the custodian of the brand; the keeper of the customer; the window into the world. Our jobs require more cross-functional collaboration and cooperation than ever before.

## So how well are we doing on the collaboration front?

Well, the results are mixed. According to the results of a new project collaboration survey of more than 200 business professionals conducted by independent consulting and research firm *Appleseed Partners,*

"Survey respondents believe they waste more than seven hours per week per person of productivity time because of collaboration issues, adding up to 350 hours or nearly nine weeks per year."

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Reasons cited include "partial" legacy tools or point solutions ill-equipped to handle modern collaboration needs, and non-certified project managers, who cite the following top three as their tools of choice — email (73%), spreadsheets (62%), and phone calls (53%).

73%

62%

53%
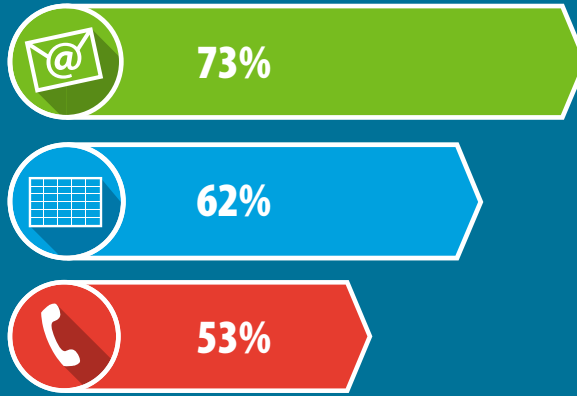
For many of the marketers that we talk to, this is how collaboration looks:

- **Email overload:** Tons of emails from various team members, most featuring identical subject lines (preceded by re:) that make it difficult to separate crucial responses from irrelevant ones.

- **Limited version control:** Just when you think the document is final, you find out two different people made extensive edits to different, older versions. Or somebody critical to the project was inadvertently left off the review process.

- **Chaotic project management:** It's hard to track which pieces of information are still missing and where approvals stand.

- **Document ends up in the ether:** The documents final resting place is on someone's PC, never to be shared again. In fact that person left the company a few months ago, so you have no chance of retrieving it.
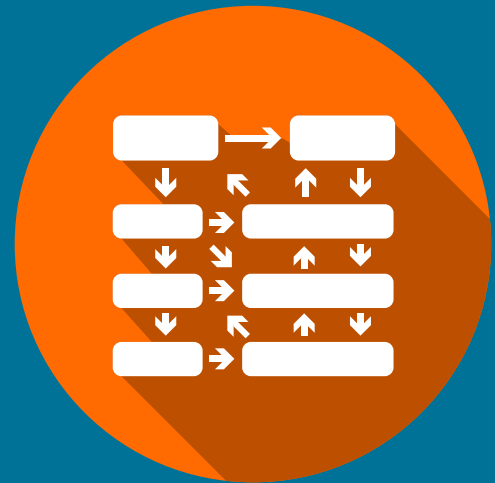
The good news is that when you implement next-generation collaboration technologies — like integrated document, content and project management, you fare much better, and your performance can actually improve. According to an Aberdeen survey, respondents report significant business performance improvements compared to ad hoc users:

71% higher operational efficiency

71%

51% greater on-time project delivery

51%
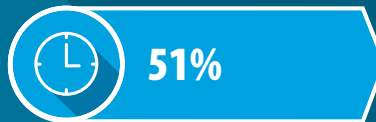
28% greater success in acquiring business information in the required time frame

28%

Here are some characteristics of a next gen strategy and tools that will help manage the chaos of marketing in a centralized environment, safe and secure in the cloud. Ultimately organizing people with different roles, responsibilities, and objectives toward a common goal — finishing a project together!

- **Streamlined communication:** Instead of endless email, team members can participate in discussion threads that efficiently summarize and/or segregate important topics and thoughts. Project managers are able to schedule meetings directly from the workspace, saving time.

- **Separated workspaces:** Keeping content separate for each department or project eliminates clutter and speeds access time when having to search through numerous folders.

- **Document management:** Everyone has access to the latest document draft, which is automatically locked when being revised. The system saves all work automatically and timestamps every action by each user. A flash viewer lets users quickly browse files without having to download files and open MS Word or PowerPoint every time just to get a quick look.

- **Project management:** Team leaders can assign tasks to the team and easily track who's done what. They can add tasks from wherever they are — in the office, at home or on the run — by adding them directly or by emailing them to the folder. Built-in workflow assigns tasks, notifies staff and routes files to various approvers.

- **Searchable files:** Documents are stored and sorted properly. You can tag files to make them easy to find later. Great search tools are available which means you can quickly locate that file from six months ago when you need to.

As the world's largest dedicated provider of collaboration software and services, PGi can help your marketing organization improve performance and reach its goals through better collaboration.
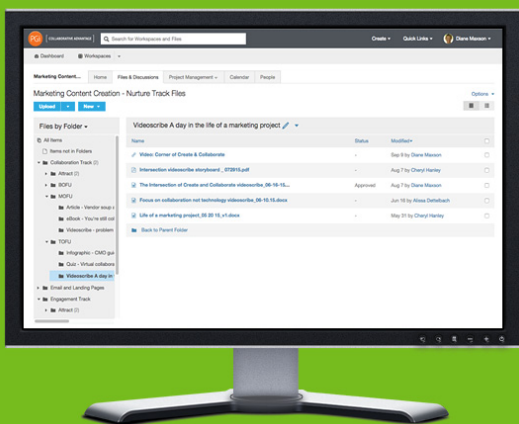
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