Techniques for Successful Management of a Large-scale Newspaper Digitization Project with Outsourced Digitization

Marina Georgieva
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, marina.georgieva@unlv.edu

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Getting Started

- Negotiate firm deadlines
- Draft schedule considering vendors’ expertise

Stakeholders

- Assign roles; set expectations
- Set goals | benchmarks
- Establish communication channels

Tools

- Formal communication with vendors and stakeholders
- Email
- * Conference calls
- * Ongoing informal communication
  - * Basecamp
  - * Trello
  - * Google cloud products

Project Team

- Select passionate, self-driven people
- Provide thorough initial training
- Encourage on-going training
- Assign roles considering the person’s expertise
- Delegate tasks to appropriate people

Stakeholders

- Know the project stakeholders
- Establish communication channels
- Find their interests and areas of expertise
- Engage them actively
- Assign appropriate tasks if needed
- Keep them in the loop | reports, meetings, stats

Vendors

- Select reputable vendor; review rating
- Select vendor based on reputation and rating
- Review vendor’s work samples
- Establish communication channels

Workflows

- Outline major project goals
- Consider multiple production lines
- Divide responsibilities: in-house vs. outsourced
- Get to know your vendors’ workflows
- Develop in-house workflow; revise often for maximum efficiency (iterative approach)
- Consider all steps involved to design parallel workflows for each workflow segment

Communication

- Discuss | share | raise concerns | follow up
- Set standing meetings
- Schedule on-demand meetings
- Reach out for help | offer help
- Clearly articulate responsibilities
- Set clear, specific expectations

Effective Collaboration

- **Project Team**
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- **Strategies for communication with vendors**
  - * You are the client! Be demanding, yet respectful!
  - * Understand vendor’s structure, roles, workflows
  - * Directly communicate with the people assigned to your project
  - * Maintain written shared records of all communication | decisions
  - * Double-check the invoices!

- **Strategies for communication with stakeholders**
  - * Utilize stakeholders’ expertise! Advisory board and PIs are great resource
  - * Maintain written shared records of all communication | decisions
  - * Frequently send memos, updates, work reports, statistics

- **Team and time management**
  - * Adopt more liberal managerial style
  - * Form skilled, collaborative, supportive and motivated team and trust them!
  - * Set deadlines and milestones and allow team to manage their time
  - * Adopt Scrum meetings; frequent updates; iterative approach to maximize your time and efficiency
  - * Know the team expertise to delegate most appropriate tasks to each member. Consider efficiency, quality, experience and workload

- **Techniques for risk management**
  - * Identify potential risks – vendor delays, sick staff, quitting staff, technology
  - * Continuously monitor the project; address unforeseen circumstances promptly
  - * Develop response plan – alternative/parallel workflows, buffer time, adopt flexibility and reorganization, establish contingency. Use it if necessary

- **Workflow efficiency and work segmentation**
  - Parallel workflows increase efficiency and delegate responsibilities
  - **Divide work into batches**
  - **Divide workload in batches** allows easy tracking & improved communication
  - **Breaking work down & assigning deadlines** to segments helps stay on time
  - **Analysis, assessment, reprioritization and iteration** lead to perfection

- **Case study of the Nevada Digital Newspaper Project, an extension of the National Digital Newspaper Program**
  - Effective collaboration, increased productivity and outstanding final product

- **Case study of the Nevada Digital Newspaper Project, an extension of the National Digital Newspaper Program**
  - Successful project + future grants

- **Why so important?**
  - Grant funding institutions do care about the product quality
  - Frequent check-ins with grant partners is encouraged
  - *** Strictly follow program rules | guidelines—it’s a guarantee for success!***
  - Build a reputation for future grants

- **Outstanding Product**
  - Quality + on-time delivery = successful project + future grants

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