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

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GETTING STARTED

- Negotiate firm deadlines
- Draft schedule considering vendors’ operations and workflows
- Assign roles considering the person’s expertise
- Delegate tasks to appropriate people

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

NEGOTIATE FIRM DEADLINES

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

PREPARE SCHEDULE

DEFINITE SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Delegate tasks to appropriate people

- Set goals | benchmarks
- 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

- 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

WORKFLOWS

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

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

- Work segmentation
- Adequate scheduling; remain flexible
- Time management
- Risk management
- Statistics for decision-making and assessment
- Iterative workflow development

TOOLS

- 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

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HOW? WHY SO IMPORTANT?

OUTSTANDING PRODUCT

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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 resources
- Maintain written shared records of all communication | decisions
- Frequently send memos, updates, work reports, statistics

Team and time management
- Adapt 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
- Constantly monitor the project, address unforeseen circumstances promptly
- Develop response plan – alternative/parallel workflows, buffer time, adapt flexibility and reprioritization, establish contingency. Use it if necessary

Workflow efficiency and work segmentation
- Parallel workflows increase efficiency and delegate responsibilities
- Digitization workflow – Digitization workflow – QC workflow
- Dividing workload in batches allows easy tracking & improved communication
- Breaking work down & assigning deadlines to segments helps stay on time
- Analysis, assessment, re prioritization and iteration lead to perfection

Case study of the Nevada Digital Newspaper Project, an extension of the National Digital Newspaper Program

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