



# Farnborough Projects Limited

## Farnborough Projects Limited

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## Resource Centric Project Management

### Problems with traditional Project Management Tools?

Any project manager will tell you that most task based project tools are pretty similar, you enter the tasks and dependencies and then when you are happy with the tasks you add the effort required and check the critical path. Making any adjustments necessary you then enter the resources you require to do the project.

At this time everything looks perfect but there are problems hiding in the detail and in the way that these tools are created that will lead to problems later. Not least of these are the issues caused when resources have been over booked, perhaps on other projects. It is not easily clear to the Project Manager that this has happened and it may not be clear until the point at which a particular critical task does not get completed on time. This leads to late surprises, missed schedules and project failure. Any changes in the organisation and any change in priorities need to be modelled, reviewed and the plan updated often by means of a number of wizards in the tool but more often through hard work and analysis by the project manager.

### Features of Today's Organisations

In the past projects were single, stand alone entities, resources were allocated to projects and available for known periods of time. Today, resources are involved in many projects in addition to having to undertake their day to day, business as usual activities. Keeping track of what each individual is doing can be a logistical nightmare involving timesheets, resource requests, virtual pools and resource managers are often pushed from one crisis to the next trying to allocate suitably skilled and available resources to different projects each with its own high priority.

Typically, project managers face other issues with resources including:

- Holiday bookings
- Training course
- Other commitments (meetings etc)
- Staff leaving
- Interference with business as usual activities
- Sharing resources between other projects and project managers
- Stolen and "do me a favour" missing resources.

Even in small to medium sized organisations these can prove to be difficult to manage so a tool that helps the organisation see this at both a strategic and detailed view must be considered as a positive answer to this perennial problem. This is where a resource centric approach will always beat a task based system as all resource activity is visible. Work cannot be undertaken if there are no resources available to do that work. Additionally by controlling how the resource is made available to the various calls on that resource's time, there can be no double or over booking. Resources can be loaned to projects or assigned business as usual work on a % of their availability. If a project manager has 20% of a resource on his/her project then only 20% can be used, the software will not allow you to plan or book more than that available. Resources can be loaned between plans and operate within their own work pool as required and the

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software fully supports all business models including the matrix organisation. Anyone misusing resources can be easily seen through the timesheet feedback process, each resource having to book time to appropriate planned work. Unplanned work is noted and flagged for action.

### **Why should organisations adopt Resource Centric Management?**

Too many surprises have rocked today's organisations. Management must have full visibility of what their people are working on and how they are operating. Resource Centric project management allows Senior Executives to easily see how their organisation is performing. A clear view of the portfolio of projects together with the BAU work is available together with detailed reports and visual dashboard indicators. The ability to extract key MIS and the one touch drill down feature means that problems are easily identified, easily understood and appropriate action can be taken to solve these far earlier than under traditional methods as in the resource centric model data is current and realistic.

Using a Task Centric tool cannot provide the advanced indication of problems as (often) there is no full connection between the people doing the work and the people planning and overseeing it, indeed many organisations run stand alone versions of project plans and attempt to consolidate these monthly. The resource centric model automatically consolidates plans and provides key data including capacity and demand on the organisation's resources. Administrative and reporting effort is massively reduced and errors are minimised because data is automatically consolidated within the tool available for export if required.

Another feature of today's organisation is the need to change priorities quite often at little notice to suit market or legislative changes. In a task based environment this would mean a lot of work trying to change and compare plans. In the Resource Centric world, "what if" planning shows what happens to the portfolio of projects when one project becomes more important than another. The impact on the resources is shown immediately.

The ability to clearly see what is going on across the enterprise also benefits the organisation at all levels. Management are confident knowing that bad news is visible quickly, changes can be modelled and decisions can be tested to demonstrate the impact on the whole organisation prior to making that decision. Project managers can be confident that the resources allocated to them will perform on their projects and not be used elsewhere. The resources actually undertaking the work have a plan of work visible to them and can see their part in the overall project, they can submit their timesheets but, more importantly they can feedback the effort to complete their tasks thereby giving the project manager and the business an accurate view of work in progress.

By having a resource centric approach, management will be able to closely check the accuracy of projects and the work that is undertaken on different business as usual work, project work etc. Using the data built up in the tool allows management to estimate future workloads and plan for the additional skills that may be required or re-training etc.

### **Typical Issues with Resource Centric Planning**

Bad news arrives very quickly. Because the tool doesn't allow over allocation it is easy to see where there are missing resources and skill sets.

Plans become extremely accurate and using the top to bottom and feedback approach of the tool, accuracy on estimates improves with tool usage. Initially it can be difficult to come to grips with the accuracy of the information available. Impacts in one project which affect another project or series of projects can be quickly seen and appropriate action can be taken.

The tool uses feedback to track the work done and (most importantly) the work to complete. This empowers the resources doing the work to continue to provide their estimate of remaining effort thereby making the tool extremely accurate and highlighting problems (such as underestimation) quickly.

### **Implementation**

A resource centric tool does not need as much administration to make it work as a task based one. Because it accurately reflects the organisation it is being implemented into it takes less time to install, pilot

and roll out. Using its skill based resource system it maps the skills of your organisation to the work that needs to be done and clearly shows shortfalls and over capacity.

Farnborough Projects Limited are specialists in the implementation of the resource centric tools. Please contact us for more information, prices and a demonstration of the tool's capabilities.

## About Farnborough Projects Limited

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Farnborough Projects Limited is a privately owned Project and Programme Management company specialising in Project and Programme Management in the Finance (Retail and Investment), Telco, Logistics and Insurance markets. With in excess of 25 years experience in managing projects, using project tools and project and programme recovery, Farnborough Projects Limited experience is helping project teams and customers improve the way they deliver, track and plan business change.

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