



Telfer School of Management reimagines marketing in higher education with Asana

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RESULTS

Accelerated production

Faster production times thanks to streamlined incoming requests that collect critical project information up front

Enhanced efficiency

More trust and efficiency between team members and external stakeholders due to increased transparency

Consolidated processes

Consolidated processes and tools ensure the entire team can work together effortlessly in the same place

Automated communications

Automated follow-up communication with stakeholders for all marketing requests using the Asana API



TELFER



REGION

Americas

COMPANY SIZE

Enterprise

INDUSTRY

Education

KEY WORKFLOWS

[Event planning](#)

[Program management](#)

KEY FEATURES

⚡ Rules

👁 Project views

What does digital transformation look like for a marketing team in higher education? At the Telfer School of Management at the University of Ottawa, the marketing team is a trailblazer, creating a strategy for digital transformation that other departments and schools can follow. The Telfer School of Management—which has 4,500 students, 200 faculty, and 25,000 alumni—has a dedicated marketing team that

promotes the great work the school is doing and strives to move with the agility and speed of a smaller organization.

In the summer of 2018, a new marketing & communications director was appointed at the Telfer School and they brought a new vision to the department. Also during this time, the marketing team grew to include new members and Carla De Ciccio joined as their Content Strategist to develop a story-driven marketing approach.

With a fresh beginning, the marketing team was eager to perform and implement their new vision. However, they lacked historical and institutional knowledge since many team members were new. While some may find this daunting, the Telfer marketing team saw it as an exciting opportunity to implement a new strategy and develop new processes to help them produce more impactful campaigns and content.

As they began creating these new processes, Carla and the team quickly realized they needed a tool to centralize everyone's work so they could collaborate in one place and have visibility into each other's projects to allow for better collaboration.

Luckily, members of the team had used work management tools in previous roles and knew it would help them execute the content-first strategy they envisioned.

Becoming a digital leader

Carla, who came from the tech industry before moving to higher education, had used Asana before and introduced it to the team in the hopes of streamlining their marketing campaigns, content production, and website updates.

As the marketing team mastered the basics of their new tool, they also used it as an opportunity to shift their processes into a more agile way of working. Although they implemented two big changes at once, the team picked Asana up quickly because the user experience and functionality were similar to consumer apps they use every day.



Agile project management in higher education

Shortly after the team launched Asana, they had their first big win when they brought their colleagues from the engagement team into the tool to collaborate on the School's annual Gala, an event that takes months of cross-functional planning. The engagement team previously tracked the enormous project in a spreadsheet where it was easy to lose track of details or get lost, but Carla and the marketing team knew there was a better way.

They worked with the engagement team to put their marketing requests into Asana so responsibilities and deadlines were clear. Plus, the team could attach examples from previous Galas to tasks so marketers had more context on what had been done in the past. As a result, the project went better

than ever and people throughout the school got to experience a new way of managing projects in Asana rather than spreadsheets.

Now, the marketing team uses Asana for all of their projects—from small tasks like event flyers to huge projects like their website redesign—and the tool is fully integrated into all their workstreams. Their biggest wins have come from revamping incoming marketing requests with Forms, campaign management with Timeline, and website updates and developments with the Asana API.

In particular, Joey Beland-Kilbride, the School's Web Developer, has leveraged the Asana API so the marketing team can collaborate with stakeholders throughout the organization and beyond who don't use Asana. Now, when a marketer comments on a task, the requester (who doesn't use Asana) receives the update via email. Then, when the requester replies to the email, their message is automatically added to the task as a comment. All of these communication wins have enabled the marketing team, thanks to Joey's integration, to produce more high-quality work for the whole school—helping with everything from student recruitment to alumni engagement.

“

Our stakeholders are now asking more from us, so having tools like Asana is very important to make sure that we don't let anything fall through the cracks and so that we can prioritize and really clearly see our goals.”

—CARLA DE CICCIO, CONTENT STRATEGIST

The shift in the way the marketing department functions with Asana has made the day-to-day less stressful and allowed the team to achieve larger goals more quickly and seamlessly. Now, the marketing team:

- Can better prioritize work since everyone has visibility into all projects in flight.
- Stakeholders have more insight into the work the marketing team is doing and can see how their request fits into the larger picture, establishing trust in the team and their capabilities.
- Work doesn't fall through the cracks since it's centralized in one location, making it easier to finish projects quickly and simply.
- The automated request intake process has saved them time and significantly increased efficiency since all the information they need is collected upfront.

“

Asana allowed us to see the overall amount of work that we were actually doing, and then it allowed us to be able to reprioritize and re-strategize the types of work that we were doing.”

—CARLA DE CICCIO, CONTENT STRATEGIST

Looking ahead at Telfer's marketing strategies

Looking towards the future, the team is focused on eliminating the bottom 20% of tasks that previously consumed their time, like work coordination and communication, so they can reinvest their time into more impactful work.

Ultimately, the marketing team's goal is to be top of the class in digital transformation, making it a competitive advantage for the school and the team. Asana will be a key piece in achieving that goal.