The PPM Buyer's Guide:
How To Select The Best Solution For Your Unique Business Needs
With fewer than 25% of organizations currently using some form of project management software, it may come as no surprise that the market for PM software is expected to double by the end of the decade.

In fact, today’s dynamic business conditions require more than just a traditional PM tool: they demand an adaptive approach to project and portfolio management and reporting that provides companies and their teams the agility needed to quickly change course if critical business goals demand it (and they often do).
"APMR technology solutions specialize in effective execution activities while also enabling transparency, reporting to the portfolio, and facilitating workgroup-level communication and collaboration."

Gartner

That’s why Gartner predicts that in the next few years, 80% of businesses will integrate a new class of strategic project portfolio management technologies called adaptive project management and reporting (APMR) solutions. These tools provide automated support for multiple scenarios, including the ability to shift priorities, resources and timelines in real time as business needs change.

With so much growth in demand expected, that means there are a lot of options to consider—both established solutions and new entrants—and figuring out which will be a good fit for your organization and its unique needs can be a challenge.
Well-governed integrated project portfolios result in superior organization performance, with an increased return on assets of 30\%\(^1\).

But that doesn’t mean you have to continue struggling with spreadsheets and slide decks.

To help you sort through the options, we’ve compiled these six things you should consider as you select the best PPM solution for your business’s unique needs.

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Over 45% of project managers admit they don’t have access to real-time KPIs to measure project milestones or overall success.

And 50% say they spend one full day or more manually collating project reports from various sources.

That means they not only don’t have a clear view of where projects stand, but even their best estimate is out of date before the report is even completed— to say nothing of the time wasted simply compiling reports instead of managing progress.

Being able to quickly view – and manage – the activities of multiple projects, across multiple teams, on a single collaborative timeline not only provides easier access to real-time status but also tighter adherence to prioritization, increased collaboration and problem solving, and more accurate decision making.
APMR (Adaptive project management and reporting) solutions offer these critical capabilities to provide clarity into your project portfolio:

- **Dynamic and interactive portfolio views** that provide a high-level perspective of cross-functional projects side-by-side on a single timeline. This will help you monitor the progress and health of all projects in parallel and keep resource capacity, business prioritization, and investments in check.

- **Flexible project structure** that lets you define, view, and manage activities (e.g., milestones, dependencies, and tasks) on a collaborative timeline according to how each project is being managed and measured – by team, department, activity, region, etc. This ensures the current status is always immediately clear to anyone interested in that specific workstream.

- **Customizable dynamic views** that permit groups with shared responsibilities, or individuals working across many different projects, to instantly conceptualize their progress and spot potential bottlenecks.
#2 Simplicity

One of the biggest obstacles to implementing any PM software, let alone an APMR solution, is the overall complexity and learning curve of most tools. It’s no surprise then that ease of use ranks in the top three most important factors when choosing a solution.

Today systems need to be simple enough for everyone to use with minimal training. It must be intuitive and integrate seamlessly into users’ everyday workflow without requiring additional steps or cumbersome configuration. After all, you want your teams to spend their time doing work that maximizes company value – not figuring out how the system works. And the easier the system is to use, the better the project data information will be.
The best APMR solution will offer these critical capabilities to make using it a breeze:

- **Intuitive visuals and layered data models** that bring project data quickly to life at any level to instantly highlight key areas of success or concern.

- **Interactive portfolio and project views** with proactive alerts and signals that allow you to easily monitor progress of all projects and confidently adjust existing project plans and any subsequent activities as soon as changes come to light.

- **Custom workflows and agile support** that ensures teams can define the way they want to work. The system should support their individual processes while also automatically aggregating their project status at the portfolio level.

- **Automated workflows** have proven to save time, boost productivity, and reduce stress for workers by eliminating mundane tasks and minimizing errors. With 1 in 5 project managers feeling over stressed and considering leaving the field because of it, automation can be a powerful advantage for both productivity and talent retention.
#3 Adaptability

As Gartner points out, “Strategic leaders enabling adaptive project management in their enterprises need to select tools that support multiple scenarios.” In other words, the ability to adapt quickly to changing dynamics is a must.

Right now, when priorities shift, how well are you able to assess the impact to your existing workflows, budgets, and resources in your project portfolio and how long does it take to perform this assessment?

Ideally, the answer should be, “If we take this action, it impacts our other priorities, our budgets, and our employees, in this specific way.” If it’s not, you need better tools.

The right project portfolio solution will put the right information at your fingertips at all times, so you can quickly respond to executive team inquiries and adapt to change that is certainly known to be inevitable.
To achieve this adaptability, look for these critical capabilities:

- **Customizable business prioritization** that allows you to set your own rules and business drivers in order to automatically rank all projects in the context of their business goals. More importantly, the right tool will let you instantly change the rules and drivers to reprioritize projects when business demands shift—and automatically update the cascade of tasks and timelines in response.

- **High-level visual of resource load** at all levels (portfolio, team, skill area, or individual). This ensures you can immediately determine which resources might be available to be reassigned and which projects will be impacted as a result.

- **Ability to model different “what if” scenarios and see the impact** before implementing changes. This predictive forecasting allows decision-makers to make better informed choices, mitigate risks and reduce regret.
Projects that are not aligned to strategic priorities waste valuable resources and can delay the achievement of critical goals and business objectives.

That explains why three of the top seven biggest project management challenges relate to ineffective alignment, including poor resource management, frequent changes to the scope and working on the wrong projects.

It's shocking then, that 1 in 3 project managers do not regularly engage in risk management—they're essentially waiting to see how things work out, rather than working proactively to optimize the outcome.

Obviously, the quicker everyone is aligned after priorities change, the sooner the goals can be achieved.
To get everyone on the same page faster, look for these critical capabilities:

- **Interactive project planning from the top down.** This ensures that once portfolio adjustments have been approved, the changes—along with clear prioritization—can quickly be deployed across all projects and teams impacted.

- **Visual cues that highlight areas of misalignment**, which will help to easily identify what's causing any disconnects, so they can be quickly understood and addressed.

- **The ability to set strategic goals** and link them to their associated activities to monitor progress and keep teams on track.

- **Workload awareness notifications** to ensure that when tasks are automatically adjusted, all relevant stakeholders are notified of the changes.
# 5 Engagement

Research studies over the past decade have shown high employee engagement correlates with higher average revenue growth, net profit margin, customer satisfaction and earnings per share. And when people understand how their work contributes to a larger goal, they care about more than their own work — they feel part of something bigger and more meaningful.

With today’s distributed workforce, it’s absolutely essential that everyone stays informed as things change in order to foster collaboration and increase accountability. Yet, 21% of companies say weak or poor user adoption is a challenge with their PM tools, which means they’re lacking the engagement and cohesiveness their teams need to be successful.

These critical capabilities can remedy that and bring everyone together:

- **End user ease of use.** Rather than demanding employees use the tool through mandates and discipline, the right tool should make them want to use it by making their job easier.

- **Project information feeds** can provide rapid updates about relevant project-related activities in real time without waiting until the next status meeting to celebrate quick wins or launch escalations.

- **Centralized project notifications** can eliminate using a multitude of other tools to share status and provide greater context to other team members and stakeholders.

- **Flexible workstreams** can simplify the project structure so all stakeholders can quickly and easily remain focused on only what they need to know in order to manage their tasks and provide status updates.
One in four project managers say lack of support from their solution vendors is a big challenge, which means finding a partner who understands your needs and is willing to invest in your success is crucial.

Whatever solution you select, it will be used to manage mission critical work – work that will contribute to the success or failure of key business initiatives. Consequently, it’s essential that your long-term business needs align with the vendor’s vision and that you can build a long-term relationship. After all, your success will also be their success.
A true partner will offer these critical capabilities:

- **Rapid time to value.** Enabling you to derive value beyond Day One. The right vendor will continue to work with you over time to ensure the solution is scalable to your business needs.

- **Customer support that aligns with your expectations.** Choose a partner that can provide dedicated resources along with the availability your staff needs, not only at implementation and deployment, but for long-term adoption, engagement and innovation.

- **A sense of synergy.** Consider what the discovery process has been like throughout the sales cycle. Has the vendor fully listened to and explored your unique business issues and offered solutions to solve them? Your gut feeling will provide key insight future success.
Proggio: The Adaptive PPM Solution

At Proggio, we know all too well about the pain points of conventional PPM because we lived them ourselves. After struggling with Excel and trying several PPM tools on the market that just didn’t give us the visibility and clarity we wanted, we decided to build one ourselves.

Proggio is a truly adaptive PPM solution that gives you the real-time clarity, visibility and simplicity you need to navigate complex PPM tasks in a fast-paced dynamic environment. With our interactive and dynamic visuals, Proggio gives team members, PMs and stakeholders easy-to-understand real-time project status and the ability to clearly see strategy vs. execution for every project in the portfolio.

It offers the seamless, comprehensive data you need at-a-glance with the ability to identify risks and opportunities and act on them quickly with confidence, thanks to a clear understanding of how changes in resources, timelines and priorities will force adaptations. Ready to get a clearer picture of your project portfolio and adapt better to the inevitable changes as they come your way?
The adaptive project portfolio management platform.

Get started now