



CASE STUDY

Consultwebs: Making the Case for Agile Marketing

Law practices that want to attract more clients through their digital platforms look to Consultwebs to create and manage their online presence. Since 1999, the niche marketing company has focussed on providing law firms with strategic campaigns that integrate web, SEO, social media, content creation, and PPC advertising. The company has seen steady growth in its client portfolio in the US and Canada over the past decade and has more than ninety staff who work in distributed teams.

The Challenge

The Client Services department at Consultwebs is responsible for account management, SEO delivery, and campaign management. The busy department handles dozens of client campaigns at a time.

When the department's director, Eric Welke, joined the company several years ago, Client Services had a consultant model structure. Individual Client Services team members handled all of the roles for a few clients each. Project management included a lot of multitasking while working through a checklist of tasks with completion of those tasks dependent on the time and availability of individuals from other teams, such as those handling content and digital development.

With its continued growth, the company was seeing challenges that its consultant model had difficulty addressing, including the following:

- With one person being responsible for all the tasks associated with Client Services, it was a difficult position to fill because of the broad skill set.
- The consultant structure didn't support deep specialization, which would deliver more value to clients.
- Multitasking resulted in less focus and productivity. Each day started with time sorting out which items to attend to next.
- Item checklists were inefficient and difficult to manage from a workflow standpoint. Bottlenecks were becoming more common.
- Communication did not flow as easily as it could because people were working in silos. Requests to work on new tasks came without context leaving people to wonder which items should take priority.

AgileSparks Solutions

Consultwebs was off to a good start with their move towards a more Agile approach by creating multidisciplinary teams. With managing dozens of clients at one time, it's not surprising that workflow was challenging. Each team had to navigate 12 to 18 projects each with multiple task lists. Getting the department oriented to the Kanban strategy, which offers robust tools to visualize work and manage work in progress (WIP), was a good next step.

Consultwebs engaged AgileSparks in December 2017, and together with AgileSparks coach Yuval Yeret, they undertook the following components from the AgileSparks Way:

Yuval led the Consultwebs Client Services department through The AgileSparks Way, which is an Agile approach to discovering an organization's or team's challenges and goals followed by training and implementation in the Agile frameworks and strategies that suit best. Components of the AgileSparks Way include:

- **Plan and Initiation** - Understanding the challenges, establishing goals, and an Agile workshop for management.
- **Kickoff** - Getting the initial building blocks for a new way of working in place, establishing clear metrics to monitor progress.
- **Stabilize** - Coaching and support while tweaking processes.
- **Recharge** - Integrating and maintaining stable operation.
- **Improve** - Identifying areas for continuous improvement.
- **Timeline:** 12 sessions (facilitated virtually) over nine months.

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Results

- Productivity has increased with clients getting value faster.
- An increased ability to be responsive to clients emerging needs.
- With better management of workflow, team members have experienced a reduction in feelings of stress.
- Implementing twice-weekly virtual standup meetings fostered increased team cohesion.
- An increased capacity for cross-team collaboration as a result of the improvement and visualization of workflow.
- Closer relationships with clients, who are more trustful because of the improved turnaround time.
- As a result of increased trust, clients are investing in more services.
- Improved communication has resulted in greater work satisfaction due to deeper awareness of client feedback and achievements. There's a closer connection to the value of what team members provide.



Our teams needed a specific kind of Agile coaching help with marketing campaign management. Most Agile consultants focus on software development. After reviewing various firms, we chose Yuval at AgileSparks based on his marketing knowledge and personality fit.

Eric Welke,
Director of Client Services

The transition to an Agile work environment was necessary for our team, even if we didn't realize it at the time. We were having issues tracking larger projects and initiatives, it was difficult for our team to stay as organized as we would have liked to with so many different types of responsibilities. When we reorganized our team structure to accommodate an Agile approach, we became more laser-focused on client priorities, and streamlining tasks.

Joel Morrison,
SEO Strategy Manager

Yuval spoke to our marketing agency in 2017. We had grown as a company, and we needed help to manage the larger workloads we were facing. With Yuval's help, we transitioned to an Agile framework that we still use today-- over 3 years later. It helps us identify and focus on the important bits so we can strategically decide on what needs to be worked on now. Thank you, Yuval.

Eric Reiss,
Digital Marketing Manager

Previously as a digital strategist, the transition to Agile was more than just keeping myself, and the team organized. It meant that I had to think past the moment and look into the future for what tasks/opportunities would keep my team moving across the Kanban board. Now as a digital marketing manager, Agile meant that I had to learn to trust team members to keep the pace that my strategist and I are setting. As a former strategist, I loved the details of a task. Yet, embracing Agile meant I had to think on a different level and see the "big picture" for not only the clients but the team too.

Monica Tarantino,
Digital Marketing Manager

I was apprehensive about transitioning away from using due dates at first. However, we've been pleasantly surprised that we can complete more tasks and our teammates feel they have more autonomy in the process since switching to an agile workflow.

Rachel Latson,
Digital Strategist