

# PMA Case Study:

## *Building a Solid PM Foundation*

### About Getfused

PMA sat down with Jason Gates, COO of Getfused, a full-service digital marketing agency located in Boston. Gates is focused on implementing a strong organizational structure across his firm, which in turns helps its 25-person team better create and execute strategies for clients that include the New England Patriots, Legal Sea Foods and the Ultimate Fighting Championships (UFC).

The self-described “quasi-utility infielder” favors a hands-on approach across Getfused’s teams, which comprise engineers, marketers and designers. During times of change or rebuilding at the company, Gates says,

*“ I will wade into a team, take it over, rip it apart and then put it back together again, giving it back to the team and going off to my next project. ”*

Such was the case with project management at Getfused. After a long-time team member had moved on, Gates saw a need to step in and truly figure out what his team needed in order to facilitate the smooth transitioning of projects. “That’s when I said, ‘Alright, I need to know more about project management.’” Gates says his goal at first wasn’t necessarily the Project Management Professional (PMP)<sup>®</sup> certification—it was how he could effectively, and quickly, consume content revolving around project management.

### Establishing the PM Groundwork

*“ As an operations person, I have my hands in a zillion different things. I needed to educate myself rapidly so that I could speak intelligently, and help foster project management team growth at my company. ”*

And where else does a digital marketing maven start his research? The internet, where his search led him to PMP courses, which he felt would give him an “operational overview of virtually everything project management because they’re testing me on everything.”

Gates selected Project Management Academy (PMA) for his training and earned his PMP 6 months ago. “From my initial research, I could tell they had good content on their site, and that they were the authority. Once I concluded that, I signed up.”

After earning his PMP, he wanted that training for the rest of his team as well. “I’m a firm believer in managing from doing. I want all of my project managers to become PMP certified.” Getfused has three project managers—two of which are certified with a third working on accumulating her project management hours. “Once she has those, I’m going to send her to PMA as well.”



COO Jason Gates

**getfused**

#### The Company:

- Getfused
- Digital Marketing Agency
- Boston, MA

#### The Challenge:

- Getfused needed to implement project management to “facilitate the smooth transitioning of projects”

#### The Goals:

- Improve PM communications and skills (internal and external)
- Managing a portfolio of projects

#### Solution:

- 4-Day PMP Boot Camp through Project Management Academy
- Encouraging team certification

## The Results:



Common understanding of project management processes and best practices



Speak the PM language and increased communication among teams



Better communication with clientele, increasing overall customer satisfaction



The Getfused team in action

## Gathering Results

Gates says training from PMA has changed the way Getfused approaches projects, from when to get a project manager involved—the earlier, the better, usually—to fostering better communication within the firm.

“We use project management as a tool to help all of our groups talk. Whether it be our usability group, our design group, our development group, our front end group, our marketing team, or our video production team—all these teams need to be able to communicate. The new tools that we've been learning to help foster those communications have been very valuable.”

Further embracing the basic pillars of project management—from managing scope to lessons learned—has been key. “Ultimately, we want smoother running projects,” he says. “It's the reduction of communication issues both with the client, and across the internal team. That's what project managers are: We're expert communicators—or at least learning to be expert communicators—and facilitators of projects.”

## Their Journey Has Just Begun

Gates will be looking to see where his newly certified project management team captain takes their firm's project management education next.

“It is something we talked about: how do we want to iterate that knowledge?”

“*I look at passing the PMP as crossing the starting line. You have started your career as a professional, and now you have a whole host of various options in knowledge areas that you can dig into. Some of that is your own training, and some of that can also be in the form of classes and future growth in the form of PDUs from PMA.*”

He adds, “if you just take the PMP, and think that you are good, you've essentially just fluffed your resume up and you haven't grown your career. I think that would be a waste.”

For Getfused, says Gates, the return on investment (ROI) is already clear. What would he say to other firms considering certification? “If they are from my competition I'd encourage them not to because I like having the leg up,” he laughs. “But in all seriousness, project management—as a function of organization and process and operations—is an investment. Anybody who wants a fairly decent sized project to run smoothly and performs projects on a regular basis should make an investment.”

He adds: “If you don't invest, what do you think's going to happen? Chaos, and chaos costs money. You invest so that you can save that money, and you can have a better team.”

Are you looking to find out more about project management for yourself or your company?

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