Doubling through Automation

How High 5 Media Partners used new technology to double their business in 9 months.

It was 2 am on a Tuesday morning, and Jason has had enough. When he joined High 5 Media a year and a half prior as their first Director of Digital, he knew that he had a special opportunity to build upon the great work of a storied agency and help drive their transition to digital. The hard work was expected - even relished - but what wasn't okay was the amount of time he was wasting trying to make an antiquated, inflexible and manual management system work. Especially not in 2017.

Soon after joining High 5, Jason realized their Salesforce system, while good for selling, wasn't well suited to managing client work and ongoing relationships - critical for any service business. "It was basically just an order tracking system - a job was built and it just sat there," explained Jason. "It was all very manual - you had to pull a report to see where anything was. It was very time consuming and difficult." To help their business scale, Jason set out to find a system to help run their workflows and automate their operations.

After evaluating a number of tools, including Accelo, Jason decided to go with Advantage, a software product that has been around for over 40 years. "They touted it as very agency friendly

software - that they only work with ad agencies," Jason recalled from the sales process. Unfortunately for High 5, this long history turned out to be a disadvantage. "Their system was not very user-friendly, not very intuitive, and not easy to manage. It took hundreds of hours on my part personally to set up the system, to get it all working and to maintain the system."

The Workflow Difference

In the process of trying to make Advantage work for the business, Jason realized the importance of configurable and automated workflows. "When I came on board, workflow management was pretty much my number one priority. I noticed that there's a lot of duplicated work, no tracking of where things are within the process, so there's no visibility for all parties to see," explained Jason. "With Advantage, we were told there was a lot of automation, but our agency is focused on execution and while Advantage was built for a full-service ad agency, they didn't customize to what we do, which meant a lot of workarounds which in turn just created a lot more hassle on our part."

Challenge:

High 5 Media Partners needed a powerful software to support the growth of their business, but was limited by very manual reporting and management systems. Even after implementing to other softwares, they were too inflexible for the agile nature of a digital agency.

Solution:

High 5 Media Partners switched to Accelo and was instantly impressed by how easy it was to build and maintain automated workflows. Each team member is now able to see what the other is working on and can easily track performance with real-time reporting.

Results:

In just 9 months, High 5 Media Partners has more than doubled its business. Accelo has been invaluable to their business in terms of efficiency and visibility for growth. They can see the progress of every sale, client, project, and service ticket at any time every single day.

Without a system to manage the workflow in the business, Jason and the team were stuck - their business could only grow so fast because everything was so manual. "People didn't know and couldn't easily see and find out where things are in the process, whether it's being designed, whether it's being scheduled, we're awaiting vendors or things like that. There was no tracking - it was basically, I'm going to pick up my phone and call you or send you a text message and say, 'Hey, where are we at with this, the client's asking.',", explained Jason. Unfortunately, the legacy of such old, inflexible technology was something Jason couldn't overcome despite his best efforts - "I worked until two o'clock in the morning some days, trying to work on building out the system because it was so difficult." After spending hundreds of hours, Jason realized he needed a system which was configurable, automated and easy to use.

Moving to Operations Automation

With the hard lesson learned still fresh in his mind, Jason went back to the market to find a workflow-focused platform - and he knew just where to go. When making the fateful decision to go with Advantage, Jason had looked at Accelo. "It had gotten so much better in just 12 months since I last looked at it," said Jason. While Accelo helps a wide variety of service businesses - including, but not limited to agencies - Jason realized how valuable it was to have a modern platform with a focus on automation. He could see how Accelo would be a true system - not just another tool to force his colleagues to use that would ultimately bring zero value.

Since no two businesses are the same, any business system you requires configuration, but Jason was impressed by how much easier Accelo was than

anything he had tried previously. "With Accelo, I have been able to go in there and build out our workflows and continue to maintain and manage those with a snap of my fingers. If we have new products, I can go in there and add that product to Accelo and I can be done in less than ten minutes. It's incredible how customized and easy it is to use." After finally finding and implementing a system for their business, High 5 Media Partners could now focus on growing, confident that their system would be able to support that growth. "The efficiency Accelo has given us is huge," Jason explains. "With Accelo, everyone knows exactly where to look in Accelo to find the status of a job."

"Accelo has been the centralized source for ad operations to get tasks, as far as what you need to do, what you need to do today, what you need to do tomorrow,"

Doubling Business with Accelo

High 5 Media Partners has more than doubled its business in less than 12 months since implementing Accelo. "Accelo has been the centralized source for ad operations to get tasks, as far as what you need to do, what you need to do today, what you need to do tomorrow," Jason explains. In addition to given the business a system, Jason and the team have seen massive efficiency boosts as well. "We have sales reps, designers, project managers and ad operations. The whole company can see transparently where things are at in Accelo. With the projects and the statuses, absolutely allow for that more than any other system we utilized in the past. It has improved our efficiency insurmountably more than I could ever describe."

While having a system to manage workflows and track the business performance in real-time has been a relief, what Jason has found more impressive is that Accelo has become their business. "Once we came onto the platform, I've actually learned so much more about where our company has grown," Jason says. "We've grown just by laying out everyone's tasks, and we could actually build out the automation so we don't have to think about it."

High 5 Media has been able to build workflows while maintaining and managing them with ease and agility. He's been able to go in and train his own team on how to customize jobs, and they've been able to pick it up with relative ease. "I've actually trained people on my team go in and customize, and they've been able to pick it up fairly easy," Jason explains. "And these are people who don't normally work in any type of computer systems."

With dozens of high-value clients and a predominantly remote team, Accelo has given High 5 Media a system to support their growth with confidence - they now know where every client, project, and operation is at any given time without the need to manually update people. "In just my time alone, I can sincerely say that Accelo has easily paid for itself."

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