VOGSY

How Astig Planning Is Growing Sustainably With VOGSY

From scattered spreadsheets to trackable progress, this environmental consultancy is achieving profitable growth

ASTIG PLANNING

The Astig Planning story

Astig Planning is a women-owned and operated community and environmental planning organization focusing on mitigating the impacts of climate change for local to state level entities. Offering extensive services such as resilience, watershed, comprehensive and strategic plans, Astig Planning has been transforming landscapes and communities in Iowa since February 2019 under the leadership of founder and CEO V Fixmer-Oraiz.

With over a decade of environmental planning and community organizing experience, Fixmer-Oraiz promotes outside-of-the-box strategies to engage community members in successful planning processes.

As a young organization, Astig Planning was growing—but how profitably it was growing was not so clear.

The challenge: managing informed growth

Fixmer-Oraiz's primary goal was to achieve "informed growth." For Astig Planning, this meant knowing how efficiently projects and proposals were being managed, how and where to grow its staff and whether projects were meeting budget and margin requirements. Along with these insights, Fixmer-Oraiz would need a breakdown of employees' billable hours from time tracked.

But Astig Planning's disparate spreadsheet system for projects, time tracking and finances could not provide these insights. Billability remained largely unknown and budgets and margins were neither real-time nor reliable.

"I felt sure we were going over on budget and hours in every project, but I didn't know that. We didn't have the data," said Fixmer-Oraiz.

Tracking opportunities

Astig Planning had no way of tracking opportunities or its project pipeline in real time. This made it difficult to nurture opportunities and know which ones would most likely become won deals, which in turn made it hard to anticipate resourcing and planning.

Forecasting resources

Fixmer-Oraiz knew that in order to kickstart business growth, Astig Planning would need to grow a knowledgeable workforce with the right skills in the right departments. But spreadsheets were not capable of clarifying who and when to hire.

Drawing on a diverse pool of graphic designers, community organizers and resilience planners, Fixmer-Oraiz also needed to know which job roles would make most sense for full-time, part-time and subcontractor positions.

Understanding employees' billable vs. non-billable time

Non-billable community-building work is important for Astig Planning's business development as deepening relationships with community organizations leads to more impactful results and potentially funded collaborations in the future.

However, without control of the balance between billable and non-billable work, Astig Planning would struggle to make projects profitable.

> *"We're finally able to grow responsibly, and we wouldn't be able to do it without VOGSY.""*
>
> V Fixmer-Oraiz, Founder and CEO of Astig Planning

Why VOGSY? A trackable system from end to end

At home in the Google Workspace apps they used every day, the Astig Planning team sees a distinct advantage with VOGSY's native integration with Google Workspace and user-friendly interface based on Google's Material Design. But this is just the beginning.

In one unified system, the organization can plan and track it all: opportunities, time, project schedules, estimated vs. actual project margins, billable vs. non-billable hours, project budgets and costs—in real time.

Forecasting resources

VOGSY gives Astig Planning knowledge of trends such as:

- How much projects go over or under budget with real-time budget, hour, cost and sales rate tracking
- Success rates of proposals with the help of VOGSY's easy tracking of won and lost deals
- How efficient and well-balanced team members' time is with a view of billable vs. non-billable hours per employee in a real-time chart

The results: growth-friendly service alignment

Now with VOGSY, Astig Planning has seamless alignment between project sales, planning, financial analysis and its growth objective.

Connecting opportunities to project planning

VOGSY's sales funnel and pipeline progression charts provide insight into deals won, lost and most likely to be won, which sheds light on which projects to begin planning as well as where staffing should potentially grow.

Meanwhile, opportunity status tracking informs team members if and when deals are turning less optimistic and require immediate attention so that they're less likely to fall through.

Efficient and profitable project management

Projects are easy to plan with work breakdown structure templates and track with real-time schedule, completion, budget and margin percentages. Actual vs. estimated budgets and margins on individual deliverables can expand to show resource allocations, hours, costs and sales rates.

With granular project information like this, Fixmer-Oraiz knows who's doing what for each deliverable at a glance and can stay on top of project progress, budgeting accuracy and profitability.

Syncing time tracking, projects and billability

Time tracked in VOGSY's timesheets automatically updates budgets and margins, helping the team to write better proposals in addition to keeping profitability on track.

Billable hours are also updated automatically and can be viewed against non-billable hours in real-time charts, giving Fixmer-Oraiz the data she needs to finally understand where her team's time is going, improve utilization and assess how many hours to budget into other projects.

Comparing billability data with a project planning timeline that shows all projects, both live and pending, Fixmer-Oraiz can also split resources' time between billable and non-billable work more accurately and profitably.

Understanding hiring needs

When Fixmer-Oraiz needs information to power smart hiring choices, she can leverage VOGSY's resource availability heat map, project planning timeline and a database of activities resources are approved to perform. With these tools, Fixmer-Oraiz can quickly separate the skills she has from the skills she needs, when she'll need them and for which projects.

"We're finally able to grow responsibly," said Fixmer-Oraiz. "And we wouldn't be able to do it without VOGSY."

Ready to grow your business profitably?

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