

QUINLAN SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVE Fall 2024 CASE STUDY



CLIENT BACKGROUND

The Quinlan Social Impact Initiative (“QSII”) is an interdisciplinary committee of faculty, staff, and students at Loyola University Chicago aiming to build a program to support community-owned businesses in Chicago. The project was formed in late 2021 and, in the summer of 2023, was granted \$625,000 by the government to aid its mission of helping local businesses gain access to existing resources and facilitate stronger collaboration. QSII aims to create a Minority-Owned Business Dashboard over the next three years, connecting businesses to vital services and fostering networks for success.

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SITUATION

Following RCG's work in 2023, QSII leadership reached out for assistance in developing efficient project management processes for internal operations and streamlining external updates. The number of stakeholders and complexity of tasks had increased and necessitated new processes to ensure the maximum impact of QSII on the community.

RCG aimed to evaluate and benchmark QSII's current project management tools and workflows to identify inefficiencies, evaluate new tools, and implement new project management processes. RCG planned to conduct stakeholder interviews, research project management tools and best practices, and receive continuous client feedback to create and implement more efficient processes while remaining cognizant of future QSII team growth to ensure system adaptability.

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ANALYSIS

RCG first conducted interviews, created stakeholder surveys, and gathered responses to understand the current workflow stakeholders, tasks, goals, efficiencies, and pain points. Next, RCG evaluated various project management tools considering QSII's current state to create a list of tools, outlined by costs and benefits, to present to QSII stakeholders for simple evaluation.

After further discussion, stakeholders shared that they had previously worked with paid project management systems and found that it was not utilized to its full potential or to justify the cost. With this information, RCG explored cost-free alternatives, ultimately deciding on Microsoft Teams, where multiple project management tools could be customized and embedded.

RCG evaluated all necessary data inputs, such as Research Assistant (RA) names, dates, RA tasks, RA task descriptions, and updates, developed an entity relationship diagram, and considered governance and user-friendly design features, such as automatic updates, simplicity for various technical abilities, and customization for different user roles.

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RCG Solution

The Microsoft Teams system created by RCG aims to streamline communication between the RAs, optimize the reporting of metrics and KPIs, and centralize information for stakeholders.

The Microsoft Teams system is comprised of 5 front-end components:

1. Microsoft Form One: Collects inputs of new tasks and due dates
2. Microsoft Form Two: Collects updates on tasks based on the RA Task ID
3. PowerBI Dashboard: Joins Microsoft Form inputs to display two pages of holistic progress tracking with drill-down capabilities, enabling streamlined analysis and informed decision-making for leadership
4. Outlook Calendar: Communicates all events to users
5. Sharepoint: Holds forms, user guides, and other materials in one centralized location

Finally, RCG implemented the system for use in January 2025 and provided in-depth guides for user and admin roles to ensure the continuation of full use regardless of team growth or change. RCG looks forward to seeing QSII grow with its new streamlined processes!