WFYI Public Media Project Pipeline Tool

WFYI Public Media, Indianapolis' PBS and NPR member station, is in need of a system to act as a central collection point and tracking tool for the varied types of work and projects we do. These projects vary from community events attended by as many as 60,000 people to a TV program broadcast premiere.

An initial outline for the major components of the project is:
1) Information collection/management interface. The information collection interface would allow various staff members to create, edit and delete projects. The project would have a specific owner and that owner would be able to assign other contributors. The owner would define key pieces of the project such as title, main description, due date/deadline elements, etc. Contributors could add and edit parts of the project and add project components. Examples of components might be digital documents, images, etc. Also, project owners and contributors would be able to create and edit deliverables. A deliverable might be an e-mail communication, an airdate for a program, or the launch of a Web page, among many other things. Many deliverables will also have goals assigned to them, e.g. specific number of RSVPs for an event, or sell X tickets, etc.

2) Display interface to show projects in various formats. The project display interface will show basic information (snap-shot) about the projects in a few layouts. Some initial layout types to be supported would be a traditional grid calendar and a sequential time-line. The calendar and time-line formats would be based on a project's deadlines and/or specific deliverable due dates. We would also like to investigate other interesting ways to display project information in a useful manner. The 'snap-shot' would also offer linking to see the full project information.

3) Task assignment and completion tracking for specific components of a project. Task assignment would be available to the admin and contributors on a project, with the general idea being that a specific person (or people) would be assigned to a project deliverable. This way staff knows who to go to with questions and who to make aware of changes. A component of this would be notifying the assigned admin and contributors when items are added or changed within a project or deliverable to which they are assigned.

4) Project reporting components. Project reporting could provide after-the-fact report generation of project details and deliverables. What deliverables were done on time? What additional comments were generated around deliverables? Were goals met for deliverables, e.g. did an e-mail communication achieve a certain amount of opens?

This basic description represents a complicated system that will aid WFYI by helping us work smarter and better as we strive to serve the central Indiana community through our TV, Radio and Digital platforms. The system will offer the station something we have not had before, a central 'repository' of the work we do. The centralization of this information gives staff from different departments access to and knowledge about projects that was not available in one place before. As WFYI strives to work more closely, across departments, a tool such as this Project Pipeline will greatly aid in the information-sharing required for a cross-departmental environment to flourish.