

HARVEST GUIDES

RALLYING YOUR TEAM FOR TIME TRACKING



MAKE THE CASE FOR TIME TRACKING

Whether you need time tracking because you bill by the hour or because you want to better understand how time is spent across your projects, helping your team understand why you are implementing a time tracking system will make a big difference. Before the first minutes are tracked, it's a good idea to think about explaining to your team why you are implementing time tracking. Being completely transparent is key to maintaining trust and encouraging good time tracking behavior -- including submitting timesheets on time!

Often, the need to implement time tracking is driven by one or a combination of factors:

Understanding Time Spent

Organizations with a growing team and increasing projects encounter the challenge of keeping track of where their valuable time goes. By understanding how people spend their time, better informed plans and decisions can be made moving forward.

Timesheets for Payroll

You are using a time tracking solution for payroll purposes. Using a web-based solution is easier for project managers and accounting because all timesheets are aggregated in one interface. This streamlines submitting and approving timesheets, and allows automation of sending timesheet reminders.

Invoicing for Billable Time

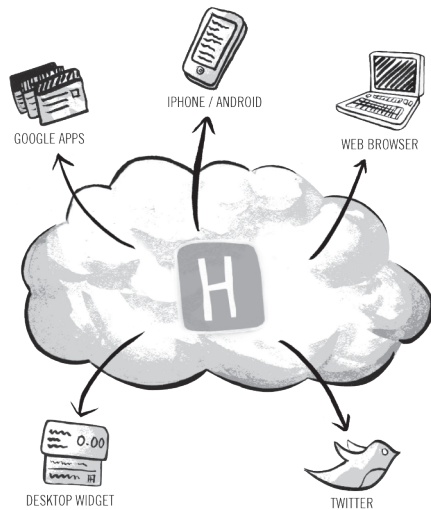
If your company bills clients for time, using an application that includes invoicing or integrates with an invoicing solution reduces time spent on administrative tasks. In both cases, high-quality, detailed invoices can be produced quickly. Before invoicing, sharing time reports with clients can reinforce the message of accurate billing. This is effective in building trust and transparency between your company and its clients.

Why you chose a particular time tracking tool is also important to explain. A good place to start is the 'About Us' page for the tool you selected. Beyond the philosophy of the company and product, design and usability are important to communicate, especially to designers and developers, and for companies in the IT industry. A product that is easy to use, requires minimal training, and does not interfere with an employee's workday is critical in minimizing resistance.

GIVE YOUR TEAM FLEXIBILITY

For employees not familiar with time tracking, or who track time differently, it is good to give flexibility with how people enter their time. Some people might prefer to track time via a web interface, while some will use a desktop time tracking widget. Other employees might prefer entering time at the end of the day instead of the beginning.

For distributed teams working from different locations, a web-based solution works well because the same account can be accessed from anywhere around the world. Mobile companion applications for iPhone and Android with offline syncing are also great solutions for teams working from a client site.



Pick a solution with your user's experience in mind. Your team will be happy that you went with an option that understands time tracking does not have to be a hassle.

ENCOURAGE GOOD TIME TRACKING PRACTICES

While there are multiple ways to track time, encouraging the use of a daily timer is the most accurate. Entering time at the end of the week can lead to errors due to omitted and forgotten tasks. While this may be the preferred behavior of the team, it's a good idea to encourage the use of a daily timer. The precision of the daily timer allows people to see exactly how long different task takes. This method is also great for staying focused – it is harder to pull away from what you are working on once you are in the habit of starting and stopping timers between tasks.

At the macro level, accurate time tracking is better for planning and forecasting of time and resources. Project managers can see with accuracy how much time is spent on certain projects. If necessary, time and resources can be allocated to other projects.

USE TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEAM AND CLIENT

During a project, you may need to ask members of the team what they're working on, and how far along they are on a

task or project against a set budget. Each inquiry pulls your team away from their work and can be a source of continuous undesirable interruption.

If your team is using daily timers, managers can see what each member is working on in real-time. This is helpful when managers need a quick update on the status of a project, and it avoids distracting employees from their work.

Online time tracking also makes it easy to communicate with others in management internally, and clients externally. You can send a time report showing how much time has been spent on a project or task, and even how much work has been done in a given time frame. This communication and transparency will foster a feeling of security, trust, and accountability between your team and clients.

GET STARTED

Harvest offers simple, online time tracking and powerful reporting relied on by thousands of businesses in over 100 countries worldwide like Volkswagen, Happy Cog, and Burton. Track time anywhere - on the web with your web browser, mobile device, or our widget. Take Harvest for a spin with a fully functional 30 day free trial today at: <http://www.getHarvest.com>

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