

SUCCESS STORY

Black Tie Digital Marketing Increases Profitability by 40% with Mavenlink



THE BLACK TIE DIGITAL MARKETING STORY

Scott Brazdo and Steve Buck founded Black Tie Digital Marketing (BTDM) in 2011 to provide superior, sophisticated websites and internet marketing services that deliver results for small businesses.

In just five years, BTDM has grown from two people to over fifteen at a full-service digital marketing agency with two offices in central Florida. At any given time, BTDM manages more than 400 projects and 200 clients nationally.

BTDM offers custom solutions at a great value. To deliver on their promise, they employ skilled designers, developers, writers, paid search specialists, SEO experts, and more — in house.

“We never compromise on quality, and yet also have to offer value,” said Buck. “It would be easier to create templates and sell those. Customizing unique solutions that meet clients needs is the hard way, but the results are better – our clients are happier.”

INDUSTRY

Marketing | Full Service Digital Marketing Agency

COMPANY

Black Tie Digital Marketing

SIZE

10-50 employees

WHAT MAVENLINK REPLACED

Basecamp, Spreadsheets

BENEFITS

Increased project revenue 125%

Increased profitability 40%

Eliminated admin tasks by 75%

FAVORITE MAVENLINK FEATURE

Project Templates

With Mavenlink Project Templates, BTDM creates frameworks for common projects including tasks, timelines, milestones, and required resources. Thanks to these cloneable templates that take just clicks to create and customize, BTDM has eliminated 75% of admin time at project kickoff so that they now focus on billable work.

THE CHALLENGE

Unreliable Timelines and Inefficient Resource Management

Before Mavenlink, BTDM was using Basecamp for project management, and spreadsheets to track time and plan resources. These legacy systems made it increasingly difficult to track hundreds of shifting project timelines, and manage a growing number of resources across multiple offices.

Basecamp Doesn't Have Dependencies

Dependencies are critical in BTDM's business. You need a wireframe before you can work on copy, and you need copy before you can go into final design. As a project changed, it required either a lot of time-consuming work to update the timelines, or the timelines became unreliable.

Spreadsheets Lack Accuracy

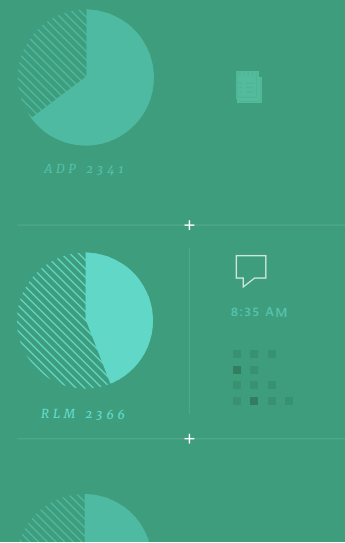
Billable employees tracked their hours in spreadsheets. The process left room for error, and tasks weren't always accurately logged. They knew they were not capturing all billable work.

FROM THE SOURCE

"There were leaks in our business. We were not fully aware of how many resources we were putting into projects."

Steve Buck,
Co-Founder

“ We estimated we were spending around 100 hours to create a custom website. With Mavenlink, we discovered we were spending 130-140 hours per website — we just weren’t tracking time well. ”



THE SWITCH TO MAVENLINK

Immediate ROI, and Opportunities Revealed for Revenue Gains

BTDM found Mavenlink in its search for a robust project and resource management solution. Immediately they saw improvements.

Trustworthy Timelines

BTDM now sets up Gantt dependencies on projects. As timelines shift, the remaining tasks update. Every team member sees changes and works from the updated deadlines.

Efficient, Single-Click Project Creation

BTDM clones its most frequent projects, such as website builds, thanks to Mavenlink templates. Each new project contains the necessary tasks, dependencies, milestones, and resource allocations. These features drastically drive down non-billable work, which frees BTDM managers for more strategic and creative work.

Newfound Visibility into Critical Business Performance Issues

BTDM gained newfound visibility into previously unknown issues. For instance, analytics revealed BTDM was significantly under-estimating time spent on projects. “Building a bootstrapped business means you learn a lot through trial and error. And building an efficient business requires the right tools.”

FROM THE SOURCE

“Mavenlink allows us to get projects up and running faster and has saved us an immense amount of non-billable admin time in project set-up.”

Steve Buck,
Co-Founder



“ With Mavenlink we have tighter processes. We can spend more time on things that matter and create better client experiences. ”

THE RESULTS

Tighter Processes and Business Insights Increased Revenue and Profitability

Increased Project Revenue by 125%

With better time-tracking, BTDM realized it was underestimating time for completion on certain projects by 30 to 40 hours. They realized they could either charge more or decrease the number of hours per project. “You either work less or charge more,” Buck said. “We don’t want to create less great work. With visibility into the true cost of projects we are able to more accurately scope projects and ensure profitability.”

Eliminated Project Admin Hours By 75%

By creating project templates, BTDM cut three hours of setup time per project, resulting in more than 1,200 hours of non-billable work across their 400 projects. They are able to move from proposal to project delivery with increased speed.

