The Savvy PMO's Guide to Visibility and Reporting

Provide insights and grow your PMO's impact

Today's PMO leader is in a prime position to enable stakeholders with insights for critical decision-making, ensuring the organization delivers on their strategic goals. Executives look to PMOs to align the portfolio of work to corporate goals, with the right people doing the right work, balancing strategic with keep-the-lights-on work, and managing incoming demand.

Visibility is key to insights that inform a diverse set of stakeholders in making decisions at the rapid pace of change required today. Producing great outcomes starts with bringing together data from portfolios, projects, and programs. Of course, a look into the work being completed and a view of incoming demand also needs to be considered. This same data reflects the PMO's positive impact on the organization. To plan and provide strategic insight, you need the ability to visualize and analyze trends and interdependencies across the business. For the Savvy PMO, visibility extends beyond current project status.

Revealing KPIs helps the business compare trade-offs between proposed decisions and prioritize investments while considering funding and resource capacity. This allows leaders to effectively evaluate areas of opportunity – whether that's growth and innovation, or re-planning in times of disruption and change. When data resides in disparate systems, creating reports to visualize these KPIs becomes a painful, time-consuming process for your PMO team. The Savvy PMO uses modern PPM technology solutions to efficiently provide visibility and a growing set of contextual insights to each stakeholder group, from the team participant all the way up to the executive levels.

"By shifting their emphasis from command-and-control project reporting structures to strategic portfolio analysis, PMOs assist their business partners by providing insight on portfolio strategies to facilitate improved selection of critical initiatives."

– Forrester: Eight Steps To Optimize Strategic Portfolio Management

The PMO has the unique opportunity to enable visibility that elevates the organization's ability to mitigate risk, capitalize on new opportunities, and deliver what customers want faster.

Check out the interactive checklist at the end of this guide and use it to design the set of insights that bring visibility to the business and become a Savvy PMO!

*Now let's get savvy with visibility and reporting!*

GROWING IMPACT WITH SIX KEY AREAS OF VISIBILITY

How does the Savvy PMO leverage the right visualizations for the best insights?
Answer 3 questions:

|	
Audience:	Who will be utilizing the view/focus provided in the visualization?
Purpose:	What is its purpose/what questions will it answer?
Benefit:	What benefits and values will it bring to the business?
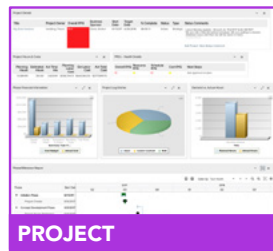
PROJECT

Audience
Project, program, and portfolio managers, sponsors

Purpose
Provide project status and health, including progress, issues and risks, and resourcing, schedule, and financial performance

Benefit
Ensures work is getting done on time and on budget, and if not, identifies opportunities to improve and remove roadblocks
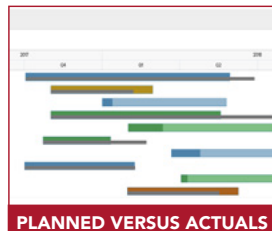
PLANNED VERSUS ACTUALS

Audience
Portfolio managers, resource managers, finance and executives

Purpose
Show planned versus actuals for portfolio and project progress, role and resource assignments, and costs

Benefit
Ensures what the organization expected is happening, and if not, allows stakeholders to course correct

INTAKE AND DEMAND

Audience
Steering committee and executives

Purpose
View of the work intake pipeline, progress of requested work prioritization and flow, and resources and money to fulfill the work demand

Benefit
Ensures the right work is both pursued and pursuable

PORTFOLIO

Audience
Portfolio managers, executives

Purpose
Provide portfolio-level KPIs including strategic alignment, financials performance, and project progress

Benefit
Ensures cross-organizational focus on delivery of high-impact projects, identifies opportunities to improve and remove roadblocks
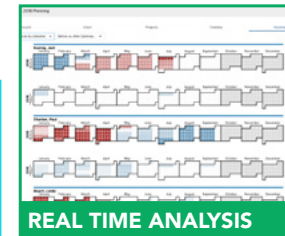
EXECUTIVE

Audience
Executives

Purpose
Provide insights into work intake, portfolios, resources, and financials

Benefit
Ensures executives have the answer to key questions at their fingertips

REAL TIME ANALYSIS

Audience
Portfolio managers, resource managers, finance, executives

Purpose
Real-time relationship impact analysis, KPI trend analysis, what-if scenario planning, and predictive portfolio planning and optimization

Benefit
Empowers decision-makers to evaluate how to effectively make changes to portfolios, projects, and the supporting people and resources

1 PROJECT VISIBILITY: STATUS AND HEALTH

Start by creating visibility with a consolidated view of projects as well as establish the ability to quickly drill into the details. This fundamental level of reporting provides visibility to project sponsors and managers, as well as visibility to monitor the overall project status and health so adjustments can be made when needed. With these insights, you can quickly make decisions to optimize and improve the project, making sure it is delivered on-time and on-budget.

> How you determine the "health" of a project will vary based on what you are delivering. You'll want to identify the most important metrics to your stakeholders for decision-making, then build reports and dashboards to highlight that health.
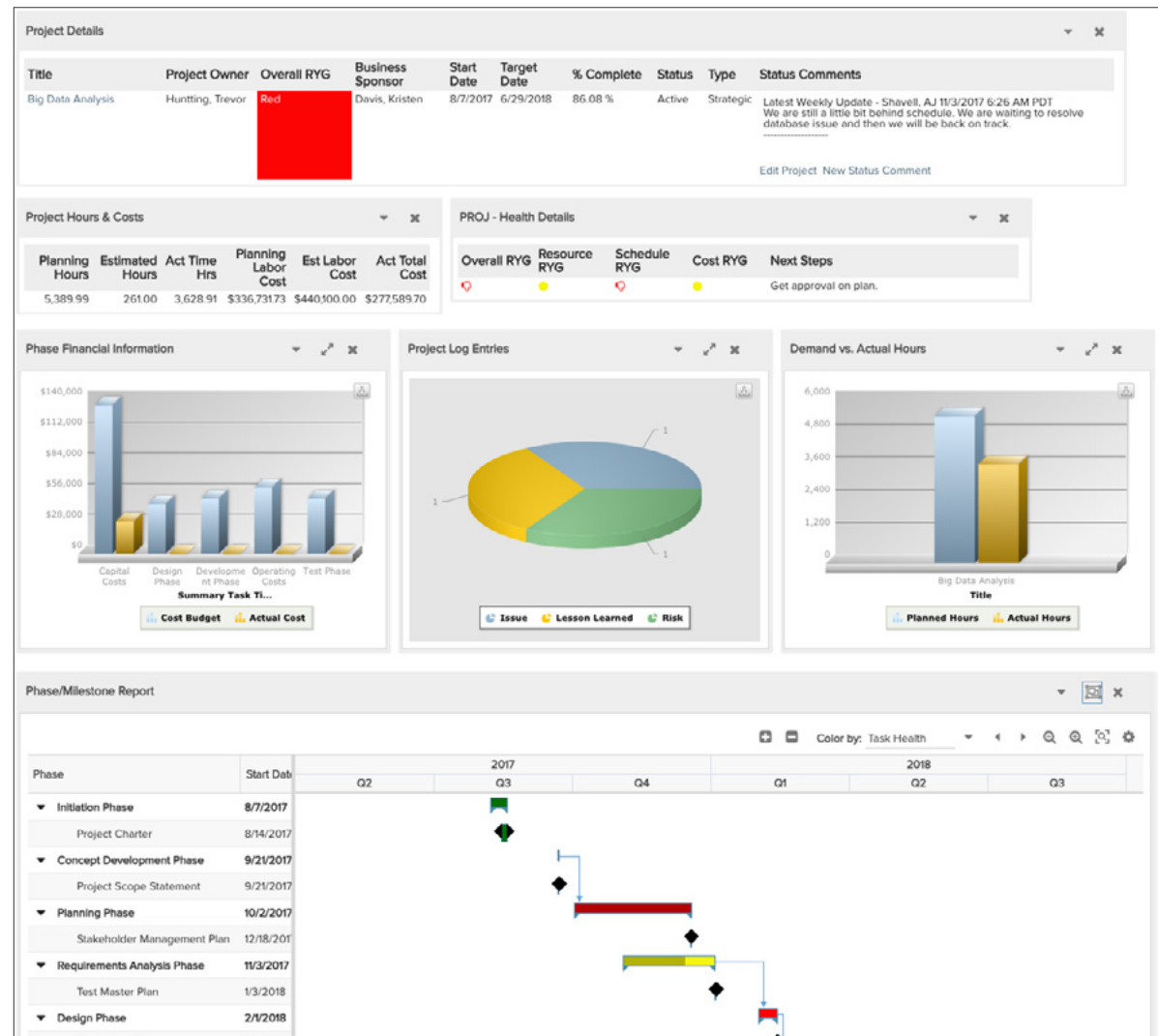
Project Status Dashboard – Overview of Project Health Metrics for Stakeholders

BEST PRACTICES AND METRICS FOR YOUR PROJECT STATUS AND HEALTH VIEWS

Project Details	Provide key summary details for each project to orient stakeholders who may be accessing the project status from a higher-level dashboard. For example, include a simple list of the:

- project title
- owner
- business sponsor
- start date
- target date
- type of project
- status
- percent complete
- overall health
- most recent project comments

Project Schedule	Ensure your sponsor and project managers can easily see how the project is progressing by including a Gantt chart of at least the project phase and milestone tasks. Indicate overall task health by color-coding the Gantt bars. Include the project percent complete measure from the Project Details report, as well as a specific Schedule Red-Yellow-Green (RYG) or health indicator that is based on an out-of-the-box calculation given proposed, open, and closed tasks.
Staffing	Demonstrate staffing health by including a specific Resource RYG or health indicator. The indicator can consider each project team member's allocations and available capacity. Include list and graphical reports for data such as planned, estimated, and actual hours.
Financials	Identify which financials your stakeholders need to monitor and include them in the project status dashboard. Include cost information, but don't overlook revenue as needed. For example, including an overall Cost RYG or health indicator and budgeted versus estimated versus actual costs for labor, non-labor, capitalized, non-capitalized, and so on. You can also break this information out by phases or some other meaningful categorization. Elevate the financial data your stakeholders care about.
Issues and Risks	Include issues and risks data on your project status dashboard. These are concerns that could jeopardize successful completion if your stakeholders are unaware of them. A Savvy PMO might also provide a graphic representing the numbers or priorities of these. With a click, a viewer can drill down into more details.

# 2 VISIBILITY TO STAY ON TRACK: PLAN VERSUS ACTUALS

How is the organization performing against the plan? This is often a common question you hear from your executives. The Savvy PMO provides actuals compared to planned for portfolio and project progress, role and resource usage, and costs. This enables the ability to rearrange work, promote on-time delivery, and manage financials.

REPORT ELEMENTS INDICATING PROJECT PROGRESS VERSUS PLAN

Portfolio and Project Progress

Demonstrate project progress for planned (target) versus actual (completion) with a simple Gantt chart. For example, show the main Gantt bar with start and target dates, shaded like a progress indicator based on percent complete.

Then, include a secondary bar based on start and completion dates. Stakeholders can quickly see which projects are complete and those that are ahead, on, or behind schedule.
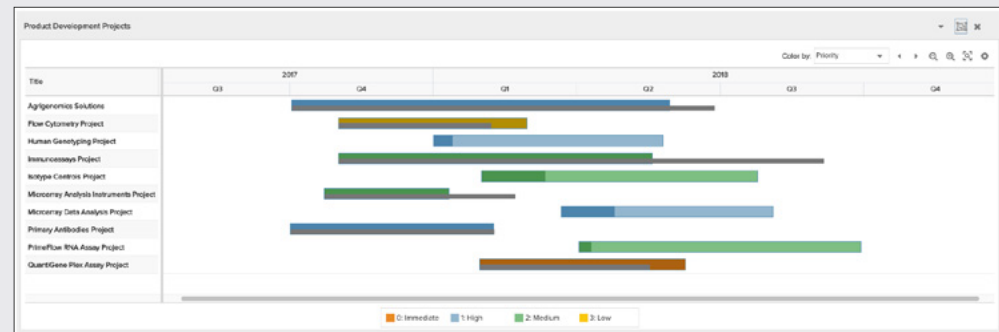

Gantt Chart with Target and Completion Bars – Show Planned versus Actual Progress

Roles and Resources

Include planned versus actual role and resource utilization in your project dashboard to show over or under-utilized resources and if additional skills are needed. Optimizing resource capacity will help prevent employee burnout.

Check with stakeholders and resource managers to find out at what level and timeframes they need to see role and resource allocations and demand.
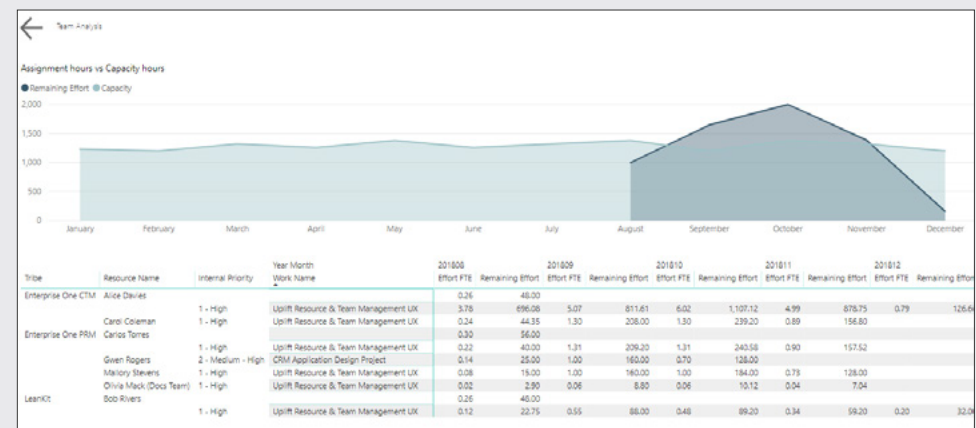

Resource Utilization and Planning – Identify Opportunities and Gaps

Costs

Identify budgeted versus actual costs for your stakeholders. A dashboard view that includes this helps to determine which financials to track and adjust in the future. Also, find out if your stakeholders need to monitor over time and slice /dice by project, portfolio, capitalized/non-capitalized, or in another way. For example, you can automatically take weekly and monthly snapshots of key actuals fields.

Then, show trend reports that stakeholders can evaluate against budget to anticipate course-corrections, or provide graphical charts that depict budget versus actual costs across portfolio projects.
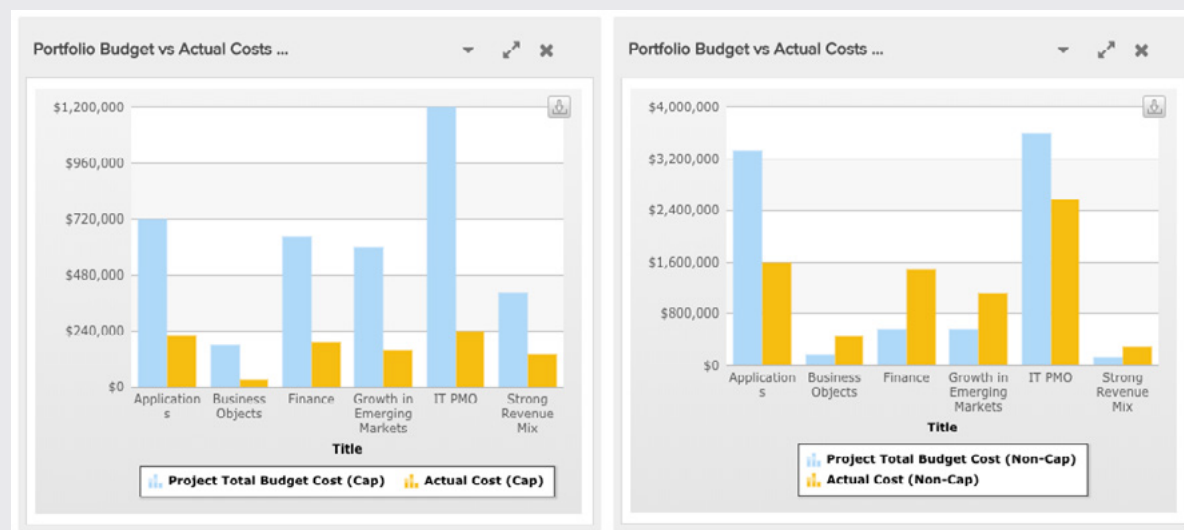
*Budget versus Actual Costs, Capitalized and Non-Capitalized*

A biotech development company's PMO produced dashboards to easily track portfolio progress and forecasts, monitor progress of program milestones, identify projects or particular phases to focus on for improvement, and compile projected revenue for upcoming years based on individual program data.

Insights from these reports gave leaders the ability to identify, monitor, and improve key performance indicators (KPIs) related to time-to-market on R&D new product development projects. This resulted in better understanding as to where resources are spending time in R&D versus non-R&D activities.

③ VISIBILITY INTO INTAKE AND DEMAND

As your PMO surfaces categorized requests for new work, your steering committee can see how each is being scored and prioritized. This makes it easier to determine which projects will bring the most value to the organization and, given resource and financial constraints, ultimately become approved. Establishing an efficient demand management and work intake process will allow your PMO to bring focus to the work that drives business value.
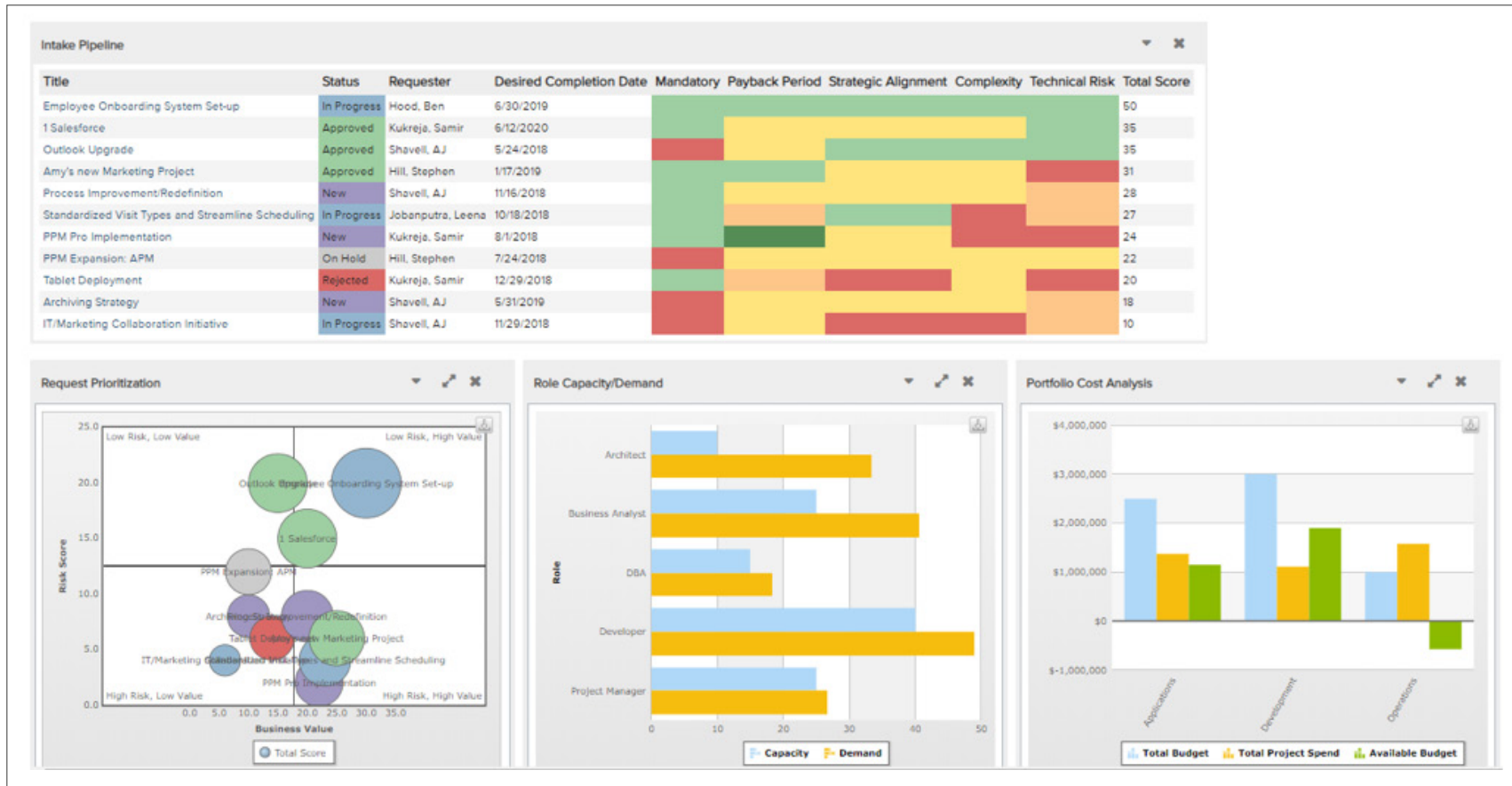
Intake and Demand Dashboard – Invest in the Right Work

# INSIGHTS PROVIDED BY INTAKE AND DEMAND PROCESSES

Intake Pipeline	Provide a simple list of the work requests currently in your pipeline. Show the request titles, current status, who is making the request, and desired completion date. Then, offer scoring criteria, which is weighted and rolled into a single score that informs your stakeholders and allows for objective and standard comparison. For example, here's how you might evaluate the requested work given your organization's strategic goals and requirements:

- Is the work mandatory?
- How large or long is the payback period?
- Is the work aligned to a strategy?
- How complex is the work?
- Is there any technical risk?

Request Prioritization: Value Versus Risk	Once you have the requested work scores, you can provide a visualization of the anticipated business value versus the risk, considering the total request score. This data supports your stakeholders in effectively deciding what project work makes sense to pursue further. See the Savvy PMO's Guide to Prioritization for best practices on scoring and deciding what to work on next.
Role Capacity / Demand	The Savvy PMO determines whether or not the organization has the people to support the requested work. You will want to highlight the available capacity compared to the requested work demand. This will allow your stakeholders to determine if additional people will be needed or if the requested work may need to be adjusted.
Portfolio Cost Analysis	Last but certainly not least, show your stakeholders whether or not there is budget to support the requested work. You can easily provide a visualization of total budget, project spend to date, and differences between the two that would be used to accommodate the requested work. These can be broken up by portfolio, strategic objective, or however your organization needs to bucket the financials.
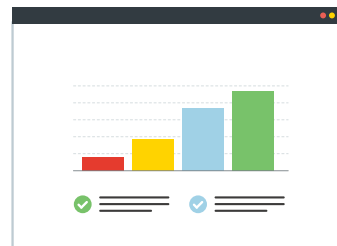
4 PORTFOLIO VISIBILITY: DRIVING ALIGNMENT AND VALUE

Provide your team and stakeholders instant visibility into portfolios, programs, and projects aligned to objectives, correlated with KPIs and costs at multiple levels. This allows the organization to better track and balance financials, remove obstacles that are impacting project health and progress, drive business alignment, and plan and execute on the most important initiatives across growth and innovation, cost reductions, regulatory, and run-the-business.

Strategic Alignment	Demonstrate strategic objectives the portfolio is meeting: What set of approved project investments align to these objectives? This helps the program or portfolio manager ensure all work ties into the strategic plan.
Financials	Highlight actual costs versus the budget, resulting revenue, and other financial metrics. Break down spending for the portfolio in a meaningful way, by portfolio project, capitalized versus non-capitalized, and so on. Capture financial key performance indicators for trend analysis to identify improvement opportunities.
Health and Project Summary	Share the portfolio's overall health and key project information to help stakeholders understand if projects are being delivered on time and on budget. Take advantage of graphical reports to emphasize project health indicators for schedule, cost, and resources. From here you can drill down into individual project status and health reports.
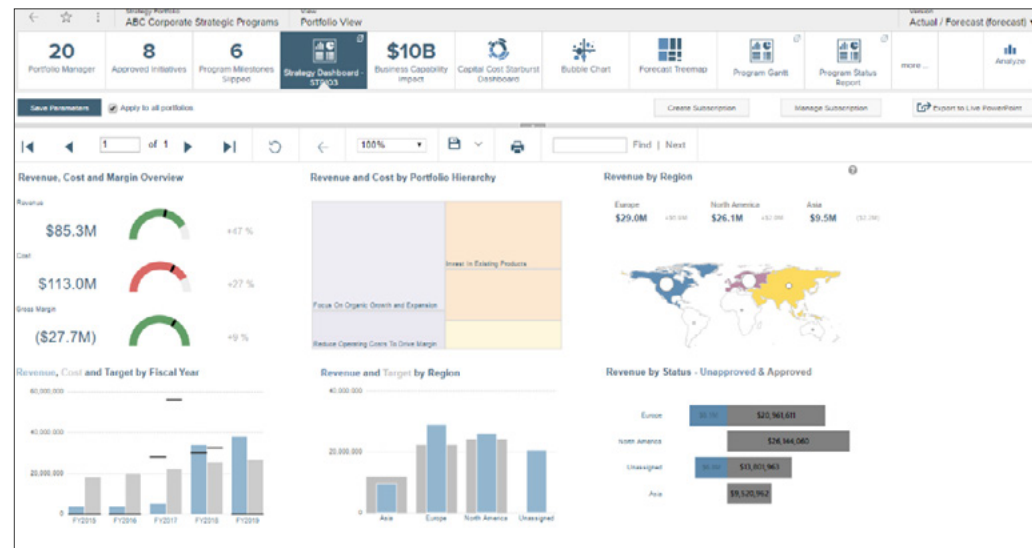
Portfolio Dashboard – Highlight Portfolio Alignment and Performance

5 EXECUTIVE-LEVEL VISIBILITY

The Savvy PMO informs their executives to make strategic decisions via fast access to new levels of visibility. Consider not only the impactful reports and visualizations you've already created, but also new views that will provide answers to questions your executives are asking: Are we working on the right projects to support our business goals and objectives? Do we have enough people with the right skills available to complete the work? Are we within budget and getting the expected return on investment? Do we have the right mix of projects and products to meet our strategic initiatives? And so on.

Work Intake: What is the volume of demand coming into my organization, and where is it in the overall governance process?

Resource Capacity versus Demand: What is the current demand on my organization and at a macro view, can we take on any new work? If so, when?

Top Projects Health: How are my top projects performing? If a project has red health and is at risk, then why (be able to drill down to see open issues, percent complete, schedule, etc.)?

Work Type by Budget: Is work balanced across strategic initiatives versus keeping the lights on? Are we focusing spending in the right areas of work?

Portfolio Hierarchy: Whether I'm the CFO or CMO, can I just see my portfolio view and the projects associated to it?

Executive Dashboard – Executive Insight for All Key Aspects of the Organization

> "Doing a spot check with the project or program manager, especially those in a red or yellow state, tends to encourage full disclosure and reduce risk."
>
> – Gartner: Four EPMO Styles Are Evolving From Visibility to Transformation

# 6 VISIBILITY AND REAL-TIME ANALYSIS: A GAME CHANGER

Provide stakeholders the ability to evaluate status of key work and progress towards company objectives in real-time and quickly determine effective changes to portfolios, projects, and resources to ensure timely delivery against business goals. The Savvy PMO empowers these stakeholders by selecting a PPM solution that drives insights beyond status, such as Impact Analysis, KPI Trend Analysis, What-If Scenario Planning, and Portfolio Optimization.

Impact Analysis: Visualize dependencies between portfolios, projects, people, and assets. Determine impacts and ripple effects when these entities are no longer available or associated to each other.

KPI Trend Analysis: Capture weekly and monthly snapshots of portfolio and project fields vital to your organization. Perform trend analyses to ensure progress is heading in the anticipated direction, and if not, make changes to correct the course.

What-If Scenario Planning: Understand the impact of unplanned work on the portfolio, toggle resource and portfolio scenarios without impacting production data, and instantly access information for forward-looking resource scenario planning and resource optimization by portfolio, project, role, or individual. Experiment by shifting resources, adjusting project dates, and excluding projects and/or roles.

Predictive Portfolio Analysis (PPA) and Optimization: Avoid time-consuming manual analysis by automatically building the highest value project portfolio based on your resource and budget constraints. Re-plan your portfolio when resource needs or availabilities change.
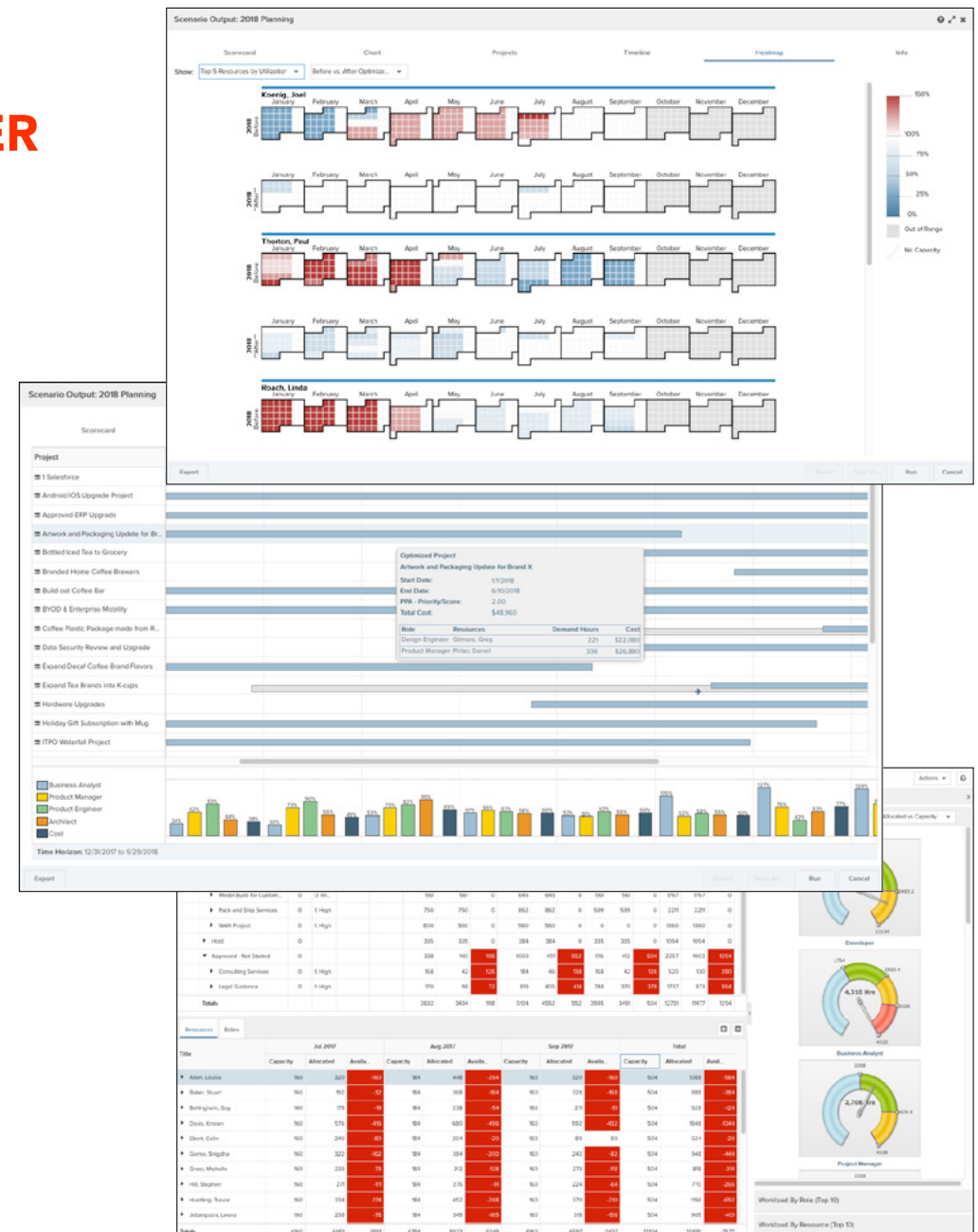
What-if Scenario Planning – Visualize Resource Constraints and Analyze Trade-offs Through Scenario Planning

Visibility and Reporting Checklist for the Savvy PMO

Complete this checklist to design your own set of reports, analytics, dashboards, and KPIs that unlock visibility for your organization.

When looking to establish a new set of insights for the business, consider:

1. Who do you intend to be the audience for the visualization and reports?

2. What is the purpose? What are the outcomes?

3. What are the benefits and impact to the business you anticipate?
   (Segment each by benefits and business impact)

1. PROJECT VISIBILITY: STATUS AND HEALTH

Ensure stakeholders are engaging with relevant information and project health is reflected to drive on-time and on-budget delivery. Include these metrics in your report:

Project Details   Financials

Project Schedule   Issues and Risks

Staffing

2. VISIBILITY TO STAY ON TRACK: PLAN VERSUS ACTUALS

Indicate the project's chance at forecasted value by including these elements in your dashboard:

Portfolio and Project Progress

Role and Resources

Costs

3. VISIBILITY INTO INTAKE AND DEMAND

Include these data points in your dashboard to provide a view into work intake and demand management:

Intake Pipeline

Request Prioritization: Value versus Risk

Role Capacity or Demand

Portfolio Cost Analysis

4. PORTFOLIO VISIBILITY: DRIVING ALIGNMENT AND VALUE

Portfolio visibility is critical to strategic decision-making at the executive level. Arm your leadership with the insights they need by including these in your dashboard:

Strategic Alignment

Financials

Health and Project Summary

5. EXECUTIVE-LEVEL VISIBILITY

Connect business leaders with the right information that gives them insight into the areas that matter to them:

Work Intake

Resource Capacity vs. Demand

Top Projects Health

Work Type by Budget

Portfolio Hierarchy

6. VISIBILITY AND REAL-TIME ANALYSIS: THE GAME CHANGER

Drive insights beyond status that allow you to model scenarios and highlight opportunities:

Impact Analysis

KPI Trend Analysis

What-If Scenario Planning

Predictive Portfolio Analysis and Optimization

Bonus! To increase reporting usage adoption:

Provide clear communication and access to administrators

Offer one-on-ones with executives and users

Schedule training and drop-in sessions for all-levels

Establish and distribute clear procedures

Consider different forms of communication to ensure the message is clear

Listen and adjust based on feedback

Partner with Planview and Be Savvy with Visibility and Reporting

The Savvy PMO identifies and creates the reports and dashboards that will have the most impact for their organizations. As you move from using disparate tools to centralizing projects and work, use this step-by-step guide to set up the right visibility for your organization. This promotes a single source of truth for accurate and up-to-date information on portfolio and project work, resources, demand, financials, and comparative data for prioritization.

With visibility into state of the project portfolio and performance into how the enterprise is aligning work to strategy, stakeholders have access to high-quality, timely information that they need to make decisions. PMOs and others can ensure the portfolio supports strategy, balances capacity against demand, links plans and resources to execution, and course-corrects as needed.

Now that you've learned about visibility and reporting, read the other Savvy PMO Guides in this series:

- **Savvy PMO's Guide to Resource Planning**
- **Savvy PMO's Guide to Prioritization**
- **Savvy PMO's Guide to Demand Management**

One more thing…with over 30+ years in the market, Planview has gained the knowledge and experience from working with thousands of PMOs who have been in your shoes. These Savvy PMOs integrate planning and delivery and confidently deliver high-value work that matters to their business. Get Savvy – With Planview by your side and take advantage of best practices, guidance, frameworks, and support for your constantly improving organization and connect strategy to delivery across the business.

Want to learn more about how you can become a Savvy PMO?
Visit **Planview.info/savvy-pmo**.

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