How to Remain Relevant in a Digital World

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June 26, 2019 - Washington, DC
Welcome

What we’re going to accomplish in this session
Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN)

- C&EN is the world's most comprehensive and authoritative news source about chemistry and related fields.
- C&EN has been published by the American Chemical Society since 1923.
- C&EN publishes daily news online, a weekly magazine in print and digital formats, weekly email newsletters, a video series, a podcast, a daily Alexa briefing, and more.
- C&EN has ~100,000 print and digital subscribers
Why relevance matters
Communications circa 1920
Communications circa late 1980s
Communications circa early 1990s
WHAT IS THIS YOU SAY

ABOUT CHANGE?
2019 Gold Circle Award Winners

E-Magazine: Institute for Credentialing Excellence
E-Newsletter: Associated Builders and Contractors
Video: Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
App: American Society for Microbiology
Are your efforts working?
Case Study: C&EN’s first roadmap

Chemical & Engineering News introduced its first newsroom wide roadmap in 2018.
How we built our first roadmap

ACS VISION & MISSION

C&EN VISION & MISSION

MISSION-RELATED GOALS FOR 2020

Culture & Skills
- Improve internal communications
- Grow product thinking skills

Audience Development
- Launch C&EN-led careers event
- Expand int’l coverage

Product Updates & Launches
- Launch Stereo Chemistry podcast
- Introduce Alexa skill

Operations & Process
- Improve project and team awareness
- Create resourcing flexibility

Revenue
- Refine / improve BrandLab offerings
- Host science marketing event
What we learned

- We can get more done if we pace ourselves.

- It’s hard to act on big ideas, so break them down into actionable pieces.

- Start dates are just as important as deadlines.

- It takes time to get everyone interested and onboard.
Process improvement
Case Study: C&EN’s approach to product

Chemical & Engineering News began to put greater emphasis on product development in 2018 following the launch of its fully redesigned website.
Meet our product team

Editorial & Product

Engineering

Creative

Operations

Revenue
What we learned

• Regular, consistent meetings* can break silos.

• *Running a good meeting takes practice.

• We can work faster if we prioritize our work.

• It takes time and team buy-in to make large cultural shifts.
Let’s talk about project management

“We’ll figure it out”

VERSUS

“We’ve got it covered”
Case Study: Project management at C&EN

Chemical & Engineering News began to experiment with editorial project management in 2017.
Our project management pilot

**Project Planning:**

1. Create ‘10 Start-ups to watch, 2017’ backlog (click for subtasks)
2. Backlog review, Editor + Production + Creative
3. Kick-off meeting
4. Retrospective
5. Distribute project report
6. Update project documentation
7. Create preliminary ‘10 Start-ups to watch, 2018’ backlog

**Editing and Production:**

8. Update candidates list
9. Select candidates
10. Assign candidates to writers

**Description:**

Chemical & Engineering News each year highlights ten young companies powered by chemistry with its 10 Start-ups to watch feature. These start-ups working across the chemical enterprise are tackling the world’s big scientific problems and finding... See more...

**Status:**

Jessica Morrison  Nov 3

GO TEAM! 10 Start-ups is a package with lots of moving parts, and because of your dedication to the project and commitment to teamwork, we reviewed and finalized the web presentation earlier than ever. It looks fantastic in print and online.

Planning and scheduling for audience engagement... See More

Update status
What we learned

• Documented project timelines help with transparency and accountability.

• But a project timeline alone can’t do the work of a skilled project manager.

• It all works best if everyone on the team adopts the software.

• Tasks must be specific and action-oriented.
Research and testing

One Size Does Not Fit All
Case Study: C&EN Reader Lab

Chemical & Engineerings News began to make product research a critical part of product development in 2018. Nearly 400 C&EN “super-readers” have joined our product research group, C&EN Reader Lab.
C&EN Reader Lab (as of February 2019)

LOCATION
- US
- International

SECTOR
- Industry
- Academia

AGE
- Under 45
- 45+

GENDER
- Male
- Female

ACS MEMBER*
- Yes
- No

*Self-reported, unverified

= 36 people, N = 385 participants
What we learned

• Don’t waste time arguing about assumptions. Test them.

• Our readers are very smart, and they have specific needs and wants.

• Just five people can help you identify most usability issues.

• Our readers get satisfaction from participating in research.
Q&A

Thank you!