Scribe Media

Helping Scribe Media collaborate with hundreds of writers and editors

Challenge—Managing a Distributed Network of Professional Writers

With a growing global network of more than 150 freelancers, including contract writers — lovingly called "scribes" in homage of the dutiful penmen who helped brilliant authors such as Socrates, Jesus, and Buddha record their thoughts and create some of history's greatest works — and other creatives such as cover and graphic designers, Scribe Media struggled to keep track of every individual and their current and upcoming projects.

"I used to be the Freelance Manager, so I worked really closely with our quickly-growing pool of freelancers. I did all the admin work, onboarding, assignments, payments, and was the point person when questions would come up. It became clear that there was no cohesion to how we were managing freelancers," says Justine Schofield, Operations at Scribe Media.

Prior to deploying Shortlist, Scribe Media used a myriad of fragmented systems, including Trello, which had been jerry-rigged to keep track of personal information, performance, and project assignments, among other things. Crucial onboarding information was obtained using a system of Wufoo and Google forms, then fed into the improvised Trello system, and eventually stored in Dropbox. Projects were assigned based on feedback and informal conversations on Slack, where information was

ABOUT SCRIBE MEDIA

Founded in 2014 in Austin, Texas, Scribe Media radically simplifies book creation by using a process of author interviews to structure and organize the author's ideas into high-value content, circumventing the resource-intensive process of traditional writing and publishing. The company utilizes a world-class team of publishing professionals who guide authors through every step of the journey, from content creation to publishing to selling on Amazon. To date, Scribe Media has worked with hundreds of authors to create more than 600 non-fiction books.

Justine Schofield
Operations, Scribe Media

not organized or kept for future reference. "There was a lot of room for error there, to say the least," Schofield added.

Because the process was distributed across a number of different systems, the process of onboarding freelancers and assigning them to projects was taking a lot of time and manual effort. Ongoing management and operations, such as tracking and processing payments, also became challenging as the pool of freelancers grew.

"It was just taking a lot of time for every step of that process: from onboarding freelancers; to helping to make sure that we were accurately tracking all their personal and performance information; to making sure we had their payment information up to date and then actually using that to initiate payment; to ensuring I was making the right assignments to freelancers — that is, I was assigning projects to peoplewho were a good match and could handle the work that we were giving," Schofield adds. "All of that was just taking an incredible amount of time, and it basically required me going in and out of multiple different systems in order to create a cohesive whole. It was very, very inefficient, and that's the point where I was like, 'There has to be a better way to do this.'"

Solution—Shortlist Streamlines Freelancer and Contractor Onboarding and Management

"I went on a research rampage," Schofield says. "Quite a few popped up, so I checked out a couple of different platforms. Shortlist had all the key factors we were looking for to manage onboarding, getting freelancers to sign all of the documentation we needed, storing information, and more."

Shortlist's workflow also aligned seamlessly with the 'bidding' process that Scribe Media used to assign projects to its available freelancers. When a new writing assignment is received, Scribe Media opens it up to its pool of qualified scribes to bid on, from which one expert scribe is chosen based on a combination of their credentials, closeness to the topic, and personality match.

"We need freelancers who are going to complement our authors and engage with them in the creative process to get the best possible results. No freelancer management system offers this particular type of assignment process, and Shortlist does. So that was a really big value add for us," Schofield added. "The whole Shortlist team was really great, and definitely met all the needs and filled all the gaps in our system, and most importantly, centralized everything into one location. Shortlist was the one that I felt fit our needs the best."

Scribe Media was also looking for a solution that was easy to deploy internally and seamless for freelancers to use. "Since change can sometimes be scary, we wanted to be very intentional about how we were rolling out to our internal staff as well as freelancers. It was important to be up and running quickly and without a lot of pushback or confusion. It was very seamless; we sent the Shortlist team our database of freelancers and they uploaded into the system so it was ready to use immediately — and it was beautiful."

Results—"It's given us our time back"

Since Scribe Media deployed Shortlist in August 2017, the company has been able to dramatically reduce the time and resources needed to manage its growing pool of

freelancers, resulting in a much smoother book creation process for Scribe Media and its network of freelancers.

Instead of using a mix of systems, Scribe Media now enters a new freelancer's email address into Shortlist, which sends them an email that automatically guides them through a custom self-service onboarding workflow. This process enables Scribe Media to monitor freelancer progress through onboarding and offers ways for freelancers to communicate directly with Scribe Media if they get stuck along the way. As soon as freelancers onboard onto Shortlist (submitting and signing all required documentation) Scribe Media can begin to send them new assignment requests, offering freelancers an intuitive and instant way to begin work.

Get in touch to find out what we can do for you

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