

Astonish Results Outgrows Basecamp and Grows Exponentially by Adopting Clarizen

Astonish Results is a digital marketing, training and consulting company focused on helping insurance agencies find, sell and keep more customers profitably. Astonish develops, maintains and markets hundreds of websites for independent insurance agents who are looking to expand their business online. Their expertise includes, SEO, PPC, email marketing, CRM, social network marketing, website design and development.



With over 85% of consumers going online before making their final insurance buying decision, demand for the Astonish Results business model has exploded over the past year. Astonish's workforce has grown over 2,000% in the past year and they continue to grow!

Every one of Astonish's customers is hand held through the entire process from initiation to going live. The process of going live includes not only designing and building each custom website but also the planning and execution of a 'go to market plan' that includes collaboration by almost all of Astonish's departments. Keeping all of these balls up in the air at once for every customer has proven to be very challenging.

Astonish had turned to Basecamp to manage their projects but found it lacking in core project management functionality and too simple for their needs. Basecamp provided no way to view what tasks were outstanding across clients without signing in and printing each and every client's To-Do list and then manually marking and assigned tasks using good old fashioned pen and paper. Unbelievably, this took at least one full day a week and was obviously not an efficient way to be working, not to mention staying up to date.

Mitch Sliwa joined Astonish 9 months ago as Production Manager. It was his responsibility to manage the design and build the websites that are the lifeblood of Astonish's business model. With more than 50 clients in the works at any one time, he quickly realized he was in need of a better platform for him or for his team. As Mitch put it, "The problem with Basecamp is also their strength. They are a great collaboration tool but they are not intended to be used for core project management functionality such as dependencies, hierarchies and budget and resource management."

Astonish decided it was time to find a platform that could support their growing business. After researching both online and traditional project management platforms, Mitch was asked to take a look at Clarizen to see how it could improve communication, workflow and execution within the departments.



Immediately Mitch was impressed by the robust functionality and supported the move to Clarizen. Within weeks, the entire team was up and running using Clarizen. The amount of time saved, the ease of task assignment and the ability to collaborate with the other team members on the project made it an easy sell to the team. Today the team of almost 40 members have Clarizen open on their desktop at all times.

Mitch is most impressed by the depth of visibility he now has on all 50+ projects his team is working on at any time. Within seconds he can find where a bottleneck is in any project, review the notes and correspondences associated with the task and go directly to talk to the person responsible for the task. He has found that his team is more responsible and responsive now that they are being held accountable.

Adopting Clarizen has also increased client satisfaction at Astonish. Not only are projects delivered on time, but when a customer calls mid-project for a status update, Mitch can locate where the project is, identify what still needs to be done, and report on and deal with any issues there might be.

“When I say that Clarizen literally saved my life, I mean it because it really did. It cut down task assignments from taking a full day to taking several minutes,” said Mitch. “I would say we are at least 20 times more productive than before we started using Clarizen but it is almost impossible to quantify, basically we are exponentially faster than before. “