

## [SkyBound Designs Improves Productivity by 300 Percent with Clarizen](#)

[SkyBound Designs](#) is a regional leader in marketing, Web development and e-commerce solutions. Located in the heart of North Carolina, the SkyBound team believes the "sky's the limit" when it comes to creative design and innovative marketing solutions. With projects ranging from half-day affairs to 18-month-long undertakings, the company relies upon a demanding organization to deliver on promises to clients.



SkyBound's creativity and dedication to customer service sparked rapid and significant growth in the past year, presenting new opportunities and challenges for the firm. Its designers, programmers and developers work remotely, which increases the difficulty of maintaining clear visibility into project progress.

Prior to adopting Clarizen, SkyBound used a mix of Google Apps (calendars, docs, e-mail), color-coded Excel spreadsheets, whiteboards, blackboards, chalkboards and countless sticky notes to manage projects. SkyBound's small core staff devoted its weekly meetings to reporting project milestones and then churning valuable client hours communicating those same updates.

SkyBound executives knew they needed to address their project management needs, but staff members were reluctant to embrace yet another solution that would require extensive training, and the firm had already spent 95 percent of its IT budget for the year.

Early on in its search for a project management solution, SkyBound decided a software-as-a-service (SaaS) approach would best meet its needs. SkyBound has a widely dispersed workforce that includes both PC- and Mac-devotees. With those needs in mind, SkyBound narrowed its options to approximately 10 hosted solutions.

Managing Partner Kyle Held found most of those 10 options too clunky, too expensive or too difficult to use. Held decided immediately on Clarizen after seeing a demo.

*"I did not have a lot of bandwidth to get buy-in from my team on learning another platform for the third time in a year. We found Clarizen and we said, 'this is it,'" said Held.*

Clarizen's work management technology met SkyBound's needs for a robust, intuitive solution, and fit well into SkyBound's budgetary constraints.

**The option to scale incrementally or quickly based on company growth was another reason SkyBound selected Clarizen.** The firm has both internal employees using Clarizen, as well as external contractors at any given time. It plans to increase its internal users in the future, as well as extend the Clarizen offering to some of its larger clients. Already,



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SkyBound finds Clarizen helpful in keeping clients engaged in project progress. Rather than having to bill clients for time spent delivering status updates, SkyBound's clients can view that information themselves via Clarizen.

That time savings is apparent in internal meetings, as well. **SkyBound's core team estimates it saves 15-20 hours per week with Clarizen.** Staff meetings now focus on meaningful topics such as process improvement, strategic planning or the next big idea, rather than on project updates. "Clarizen takes care of that," said Held. "Now, we can do what we do best and keep our heads in the clouds."

Clarizen has removed the need for most of the double or even triple data entry work SkyBound employees had been doing in e-mail, calendar and billing systems. Additionally, the time tracking functionality of the Clarizen solution provides SkyBound with the ability to identify true process flaws and unexpected bottlenecks. **By collecting this data over the course of many projects, SkyBound expects to fundamentally improve the way it does business. This data also enables SkyBound to look at efficiency and improve resource utilization, rather than spending time training new staff it may not yet need.**

Held estimates **the Clarizen implementation has increased SkyBound Designs' productivity by about 300 percent**, but its value extends even further. Many of the company's clients, Held said, have spent enormous sums of money in the past with competing firms and received poor results.

*"They were underwhelmed with [other firms'] inability to stay in budget or meet deadlines,"* said Held. ***"Clarizen is our secret weapon for managing our projects, communicating our progress, and ultimately, delighting our clients with work they love."***