



Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: Taming Timelines - Managing Project Schedules

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PBS Schedule Management Resources:

View our [August 22 Session Recording](#)

View our [August 22 Session Slide Deck](#)

Visit the [Kahua / GSA Project Management Tool website](#)

Q1. Do you simplify the schedule for the agency to provide only milestones and not detail information?

A. You can ask your project manager for a schedule where the tasks are consolidated. They should be able to create one for you.

Q2. Do GSA Project Managers have a preferred Project Management tool? I've often found myself starting projects with MS Project, but ultimately relying on MS Excel due to ease of use, group familiarity, etc.

A. GSA uses Microsoft Project the majority of the time, as it is the program that links to Kahua. Some PM's use other tools, but the important thing is that a schedule is developed and updated regularly regardless of the tool being used.

Q3. Where can I go to learn more about Kahua, and how to request access, so I can look at project schedule milestones for my projects?

A. You can learn more about our project management information and collaboration tool, Kahua, on our [website](#). You'll need to complete a [“Request Access”](#) form. There are [training resources and reference guides](#) available on our site, and a recently recorded [Client Enrichment Series class on Kahua](#), that can help you get started.



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Q4. When requesting access to Kahua, do you have to put in a specific PM etc. ... What if you have more than one project ongoing?

- A.** When first requesting access, you should be listing a specific GSA project manager for one particular project in Kahua. Once your access is established, the project managers from all your projects can provide you access to each of the projects tracked in Kahua. Project by project access rights have been established as a data security measure.

Once you have Kahua access - in the App Launcher section - you'll see an option for Schedule Management, and under there is the Milestone application that was demonstrated during our class.

Q5. I'm not ready to request Kahua access. Is there any other way to get a copy of my project schedule?

- A.** Your GSA project manager should be sharing your project milestone schedule as a PDF, so even if you don't have access to Microsoft Project - GSA's standard tool for project management - you will be able to view the schedule information.

Q6. How often should a PM be sharing schedule updates with a customer?

- A.** The size and complexity of your project will likely influence how often schedules should be updated and shared - but the most important element is to establish a regular communication rhythm with all project stakeholders. Initially, a preliminary schedule, based on the best information available at that time, will be shared at the project kickoff meeting. The schedule should be updated as conditions change, and shared at each of those regular project team calls. Your project team call notes or minutes should accompany the updated schedule.

Q7. My projects are usually fairly small and not complex. Should I still expect a schedule from GSA?

- A.** No matter the size or complexity of the project you should always receive a schedule from GSA. For small/non-complex projects, the schedule format is likely going to be something other than MS Project such Excel.

Q8. It always seems that the project finish date changes every time GSA shares a schedule. Why do the dates change so often?

- A.** When the PM generates a schedule it is based on the best information available at the time. As more information becomes available this may affect the project finish date.



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Whenever a schedule changes the PM should provide an explanation. The PM will always try to mitigate date slippage but sometimes it is just not possible.

Q9. On some projects I receive a schedule. Others I don't. How can I ensure that I receive a schedule on all my projects?

- A. When the GSA PM is determining communication at the start of the project, confirm with the PM that you will receive each schedule update.

Q10. What happens to the schedule if my agency wants to make scope changes?

- A. It depends. Inform the PM as soon as possible about the possible changes. This will allow the PM maximum opportunity to determine if there is an adverse effect to the schedule timeline. Once assessed, the PM will be able to provide you with their assessment on the impact, if any, to the project. This in turn, will allow your agency to make an informed decision on moving forward with changes if they have a critical impact on the project.