



Sibiu Community Foundation,  
Romania -

**Adapting tools and processes to  
work collaboratively and  
remotely as a team**

“We have better clarity about our day to day activities, better work-life balance and boundaries, better team dynamics and better general productivity”  
Ana Bugneriu, Sibiu Community Foundation

### Our digital transformation challenge

Due to work from home and the change in our work dynamic, at the beginning of 2020 we realised that we were in need of new processes and tools to keep track of things and to ensure the communication and collaboration that was so easily done in our office setting before the pandemic hit. We quickly realized that despite the fact that we are quite digital as an organisation, we needed to adapt and to discard some old tools and habits in order to make space for new ones that serve us better.

Also, we realized that we need to adapt our fundraising platform for our main event, Sibiu International Marathon, in order for it to better fit the Internet users that are our public and to create better, more qualitative experiences that would eventually translate in more money raised for the projects that raise funds through our Marathon/platform. It was clear to us for some time that we needed to invest into our platform and that we needed an app since our users were mostly using the site from mobile phones, therefore the mobile user experience (which was not a focus in previous iterations) should become a top priority. 2020 served us as the best context for that.

Failure to address this would have impacted on our team and our work we probably would have had severe consequences in our productivity, credibility and inner dynamics. It is possible that we would have lost valuable team members and reputation and that is something that none of us was willing to risk. It was a great thing that we finally had the time and resources to start the app development and platform update process. Every step that we make about this makes us more aligned and represents a step in the right direction

for fulfilling our vision of offering our community a well-rounded, high quality event and experience regarding our Marathon.

## Our solution

We made a team effort to assess our current needs, the things that are not working, what new needs were there to be addressed, and what established habits were now irrelevant or counterproductive. Based on the assessment we decided to use G Suite, have all our meetings via just one platform, respectively Google Meets, to exclusively use Drive for working documents (using Drive exclusively was something that we have tried for years but there were always exceptions). We stopped using facebook messenger for group texts, or as a way to communicate to colleagues (about work) all together and started using Slack. This was a big game changer. Slack was especially helpful because it enabled us to use different channels (like chats) for all our projects and programs therefore we were able to keep the discussions regarding each project separated in a different channel but using the same app. This way the conversations are easier to keep up with, it's easier to find specific information and if not everybody is working on a topic at some point, they can simply not check that respective channel for a while instead of reading everything on an irrelevant topic on a general group chat. It also became easier to separate our work discussion from the more personal ones.

One of the changes that we also made was downsizing and changing the way we were using our project management tool Monday.com. We migrated to a more individualized management style rather than a centralised one, and we started using Agile principles for our work such as working in Sprints and having Stand up meetings. Furthermore, we started using Monday to document processes and procedures regarding our main programs and practices as an attempt to document as much as we can from our work. We focused on improving the autonomy of the staff and we created spaces for colleagues to interact with each other in a casual way, in order to foster the good quality relationships that we have in our team even though we can't meet in person.

For the Marathon app and platform we selected a team of experts that could help us develop such a project. We started assessing our wants and needs regarding these tools that we want to develop and we created specifications for the development team. We also consulted with the stakeholders of the new products and gathered feedback that we are going to integrate in the development of the app/platform.

Regarding the adaptation of the team management efforts for these challenging times, we feel like we have reached a very good place. Of course, this will always be an ongoing process for us, but we are glad that we were able to be supported in our explorations and we are happy that this process has had a positive outcome.

The development of the app/platform has a slow pace, also due to the complexity of the task at hand. We are determined to do it right, so we try to be comfortable at a slower than ideal pace. We had some challenges with the development team, and we still need time to figure out how and when we are going to deliver this project to its final version.

Nevertheless, we have better clarity about our day to day activities, better work-life balance and boundaries, better team dynamics and better general productivity. Regarding our app/platform, improvements in the quality of what we put out for our stakeholders helps us maintain our reputation, impact and recognition in our community by our constant attempt to get better and to surpass ourselves with each year that passes.

### **Takeaways from the action learning process**

Organisational development is just as important as results and impact. Identifying and assessing stakeholders' needs alongside thorough research are the pillars of success

### **Issues that remain unresolved**

The complexity of the product that we are trying to create for the Marathon and the fact that we have only somewhat limited experience about software development as a general team (even though some team members may have a better understanding than others about this subject) and more limited resources makes this a considerable challenge.

Find out more about the Sibiu Community Foundation here:

<https://fundatiacomunitarasibiu.ro/>