



# Turner Broadcasting Sales Case Study

Published: March 2001

For the latest product information, please see [www.microsoft.com/office/project](http://www.microsoft.com/office/project)

---

*The team in charge of the migrating the commercial-broadcast process at Turner Broadcasting Sales from analog to digital is using Microsoft® Project 2000 and Microsoft Project Central to help manage a project that will affect dozens of business processes and change the way hundreds of people do their jobs. Among the capabilities that are proving most valuable are the ability of Microsoft Project 2000 to handle a constantly changing set of subprojects, the ability of Microsoft Project Central to provide easily accessible status reports at a central location, and the interoperability of Microsoft Project 2000 and Project Central with technologies such as Microsoft SQL Server.*

## **Situation**

A system in place for 20 years takes some doing to undo. That's what IT executives at Turner Broadcasting Sales are learning as they proceed to replace a videotape-based approach to the broadcasting of commercials with one based on digital media and the Web. Known as AdTrax, the two-year-long project could change the way Turner Broadcasting Sales approaches dozens of business processes and the way hundreds of engineers, technicians, programmers, and developers do their work. Right now, however, what matters most to the people managing AdTrax are the processes driving the project itself and the work of the core project team. To help ensure success in both areas, Turner Broadcasting Sales is relying on Microsoft® Project 2000 along with its Web-based companion product, Microsoft Project Central.

According to Andrew Drooker, vice president of R&D at Turner Broadcasting, Project 2000 was the only project-management solution his team seriously considered. This is because they had used Microsoft Project in the past and liked its feature set, and because of what they knew

about the nature of AdTrax before they even began work. Because the AdTrax project would affect so many different operations, the team knew it would spawn numerous subprojects, so they needed a solution that could handle those subprojects dynamically. In turn, those operations would take place in multiple divisions and offices all over the world, and that would require a solution enabling people to access project status from a centralized location. Finally, Turner Broadcasting Sales had recently implemented some applications based on Microsoft Office 2000, so the team wanted a project-management solution that would integrate smoothly with them.

## Solution

Drooker says Project 2000 and Project Central seemed to fit all these requirements. “With its dynamic capabilities we knew Project 2000 would be an ideal tool for handling new subprojects, and Project Central would give us the centralized, Web-based project-status reporting we wanted,” he explains. “Moreover, in our past use of Microsoft Project we had found it integrated well with Microsoft Office 2000. So we were confident Project 2000 and Project Central would be the right choice.”

Now one year into AdTrax and counting, Drooker says that Project 2000 and Project Central have proved to be indispensable tools for managing the project, starting with the challenge of subprojects. “With Project 2000, it’s as if you have a ‘living’ project,” he says. “You simply define a new subproject and Project 2000 inserts it into the overall project. Then it automatically and dynamically updates the main project file so you don’t have to go in and try to manually update schedules in multiple places.”

## Key Features of Microsoft Project 2000 and Microsoft Project Central

- **Resource allocation.** Along with more subprojects on the AdTrax project comes the need for more resources, and for this Project Coordinator Janice Carson appreciates Project 2000’s powerful resource-allocation features. “Resource allocation helps me to see what’s feasible while automatically updating my allocations,” she points out. “This means I can save the original design of my project as a sort of baseline, so even if things keep changing I have something to compare them to all the way through the project. This helps me to stay on top of how much more in the way of resources I’ll be needing as the project progresses.”
- **Web-based access.** The centralized communications capabilities provided by Project Central have proved valuable for the AdTrax team and others throughout Turner Broadcasting Sales. To take advantage of these capabilities, the team built an AdTrax Web site that includes a hyperlink to Project Central where users can access project status information in their choice of views. AdTrax team members, for example, can see what task they are responsible for next, while executives can review overall budget and schedule information.
- **Per-user portfolio view.** Carson says that within the Web-based access, team members find the per-user portfolio view especially handy. “This gives them their ‘own workspace,’

where they can see where they stand with respect to tasks done, tasks to do, and when they need to do them,” she points out.

## Benefits

- **Time savings for managers.** When Carson adds tasks and assigns new resources to the project, she can automatically update individual resources' task lists on the Microsoft Project Central site. “This saves me the time of having to send out multiple e-mails every time I add a task or make a new resource assignment,” she says. “Even better, because people know they can go to the Web site for any status update, I can keep in-person meetings and phone queries to a minimum. This makes my job a lot easier.”
- **Streamlined status reporting.** As for those executives accessing the Project Central Web site, Drooker says that's handy whether you're talking about AdTrax or any other major corporate endeavor. “The bottom line is, it's just easier to distribute status reports on the Web than on any other medium,” he says.
- **An easy fit into existing management infrastructure.** To provide executives and others with even more detailed project-status information, Drooker and his colleagues are using Microsoft Visual Basic, COM+, and SQL Server to develop a dashboard-style system. “The idea is to use SQL Server as the back end for a Project Central site and ultimately pull information into tables for reporting,” he explains.

As for other enhancements to the AdTrax project-management solution, Drooker can't say exactly what or when, only that they are sure to follow. “Our use of Project 2000 and Project Central is gaining so much steam and momentum it's hard to know at any given point just what we'll be doing next,” he remarks. “That's the nature of a project of this magnitude, which is another reason we're glad to have tools with the power, flexibility, and reach of Microsoft Project 2000 and Project Central.”

**For more information:** [www.microsoft.com/office/project](http://www.microsoft.com/office/project)

© 2001 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

This document is for informational purposes only. MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY. Microsoft and Visual Studio are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.