edison365 projects

Microsoft announce an exciting set of new services for Project customers
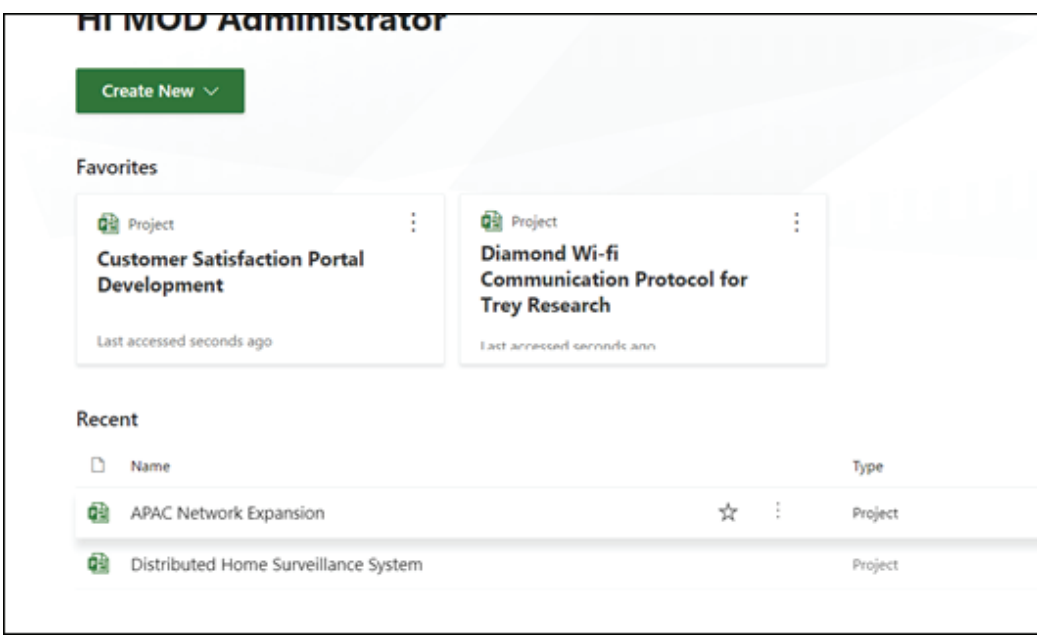
Last week, Microsoft hosted Ignite, their annual conference for developers and IT professionals. We appreciate that this event isn't on all of our client's radar, but it's an important forum for Microsoft to share updates and solutions that they plan to bring to market.

There were significant announcements regarding future developments for Project Online, with three new services announced; Home, Roadmap and Project. These new releases, as they become live over the next twelve months will provide customers with a range of new opportunities.

All new services for Project are built on the Common Data Service for apps:
https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/powerapps/maker/common-data-service/data-platform-intro which will means extending and adding to the services using Microsoft Flow and PowerApps should be very simple. You can use PowerApps and Flow today (if you'd like more information please contact us) but this new service will make their application easier and a lot more powerful.
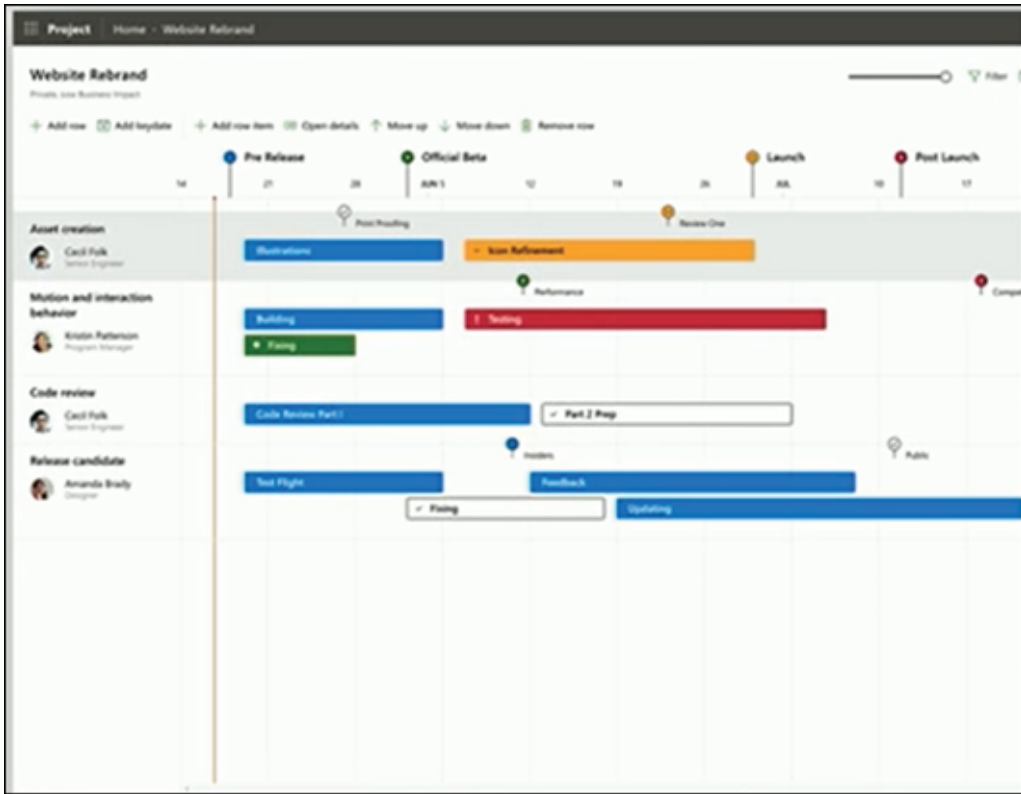
Project Home

The Project Home Service provides the new starting point for all Project Online users and is now rolled out to all Project Online tenants. Project Home provides easy access to your favourite projects as well as recently accessed projects across all PWA instances on the same Office 365 tenant. In addition Project Home provides the route to create new projects.

Roadmap

The Roadmap Service is planned to be available early 2019. Roadmap enables organisations to visualise projects from a range of project management tools in one timeline view. On the first release it will support Project Online projects as well as Azure Board projects (Agile planning, formerly known as VSTS but now known as Azure DevOps) with a view to supporting other types of projects in later releases such as Planner projects and new Project Service projects.
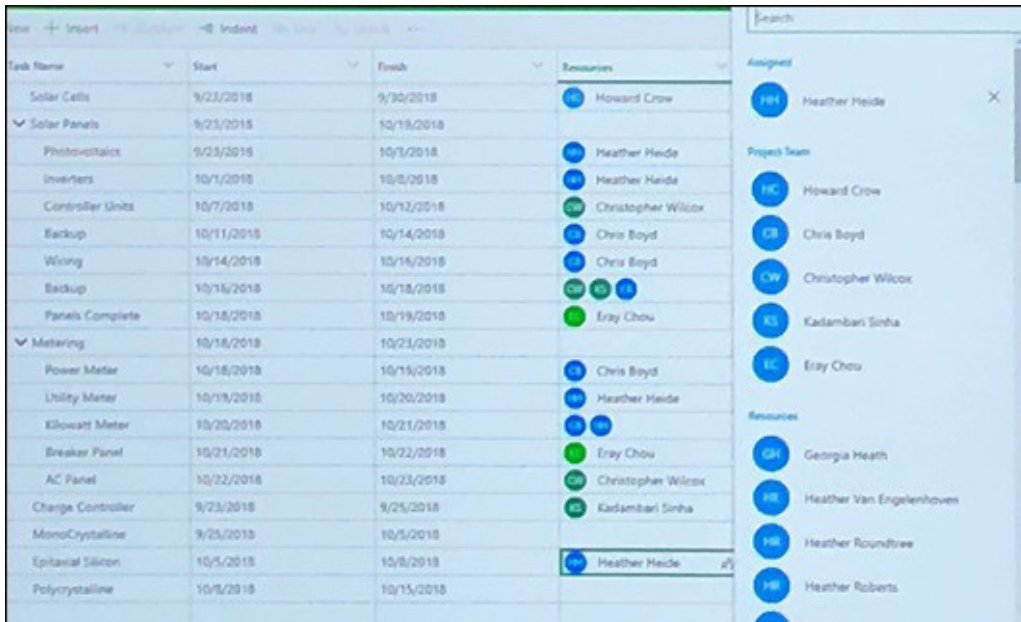
Roadmaps will be created and accessed in the Project Home Service. Roadmap will make use of all the features Office 365 Groups enables such a SharePoint site, SharePoint document library, Shared Inbox, Calendars etc. Using Office 365 Groups means Roadmaps can either be private or public.

In additon to creating project sumamries in Roadmap you will also be able to add tasks from the constituent project entities. Roadmaps will provide a great way to view portfolios of projects and understand high level delivery timescales.

Project Service

Scheduled for first release during 2019, this is not Project Online but rather a new Project experience written from the ground up. The intention is that this new service will supersede the scheduling experience in Project Online. The new service has significant focus on being a modern UI with a great user experience, being simple to use yet powerful. Under the covers all of the great scheduling features are there; Microsoft have totally revamped the scheduling engine that is used today in Project Online, re-engineering at the same time to be scalable and optimised.

There are many ease of use changes such as no need to build a team anymore, you can just type user names from the organisation into a people picker, these are added into the resource pool.

Co-authoring will also be possible in the new project and no check in check or save / publishing actions required.

The new Project Service will make use of the Universal Resource Scheduling service to enable better resourcing across the organisation:
https://blogs.msdn.microsoft.com/crm/2018/05/07/whats-new-in-universal-resource-scheduling-for-dynamics-365-may-2018-update/

Alongside the new web-based Project Service, the familiar Project Desktop is still a first class citizen that project managers can continue to use.

Next steps

Prior to the release of all new Microsoft services, the edison365 team will evaluate the detail of each product and provide customers with recommendations for appropriate use cases and short, medium and long term strategies for implementation if appropriate.

As Microsoft's number one partner for PPM, having been awarded worldwide partner of the year two out of the last three years, the team behind edison365 are tightly aligned with Microsoft on the releases of the three new services. The edison365 product development team are working closely with Microsoft to ensure that the edison365 suite takes maximum advantage of the new Microsoft solutions with the objective that customers will be able to use edison365 with both the existing Project Online solution and/or the new Services when released.

As we work with Microsoft over the coming months, we will continue to offer more detailed updates.

Should you have any queries regarding the new announcements, please contact us at hello@edison365.com and a member of the Internal Account Management team will contact you.

Exciting times ahead for the Microsoft Project space!

About the Author

Paul Mather

Paul Mather, Lead Architect for Project Online and edison365 is acknowledged as one of the world's leading experts on Project Online and has been working with Project Server / Project Online and SharePoint deployments since 2007. Paul has worked with all Project Server versions as well as supporting Microsoft technologies and has worked on implementations of all scales and across most industries.

Paul is very active in the Project online community and has had his contributions recognised by Microsoft Community Contributor Awards 2011 and more recently the Project MVP award in April 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Paul is very active on the Project and Project Server forums and regularly contributes scripts relating to Project Server and Project Online on the Microsoft gallery.