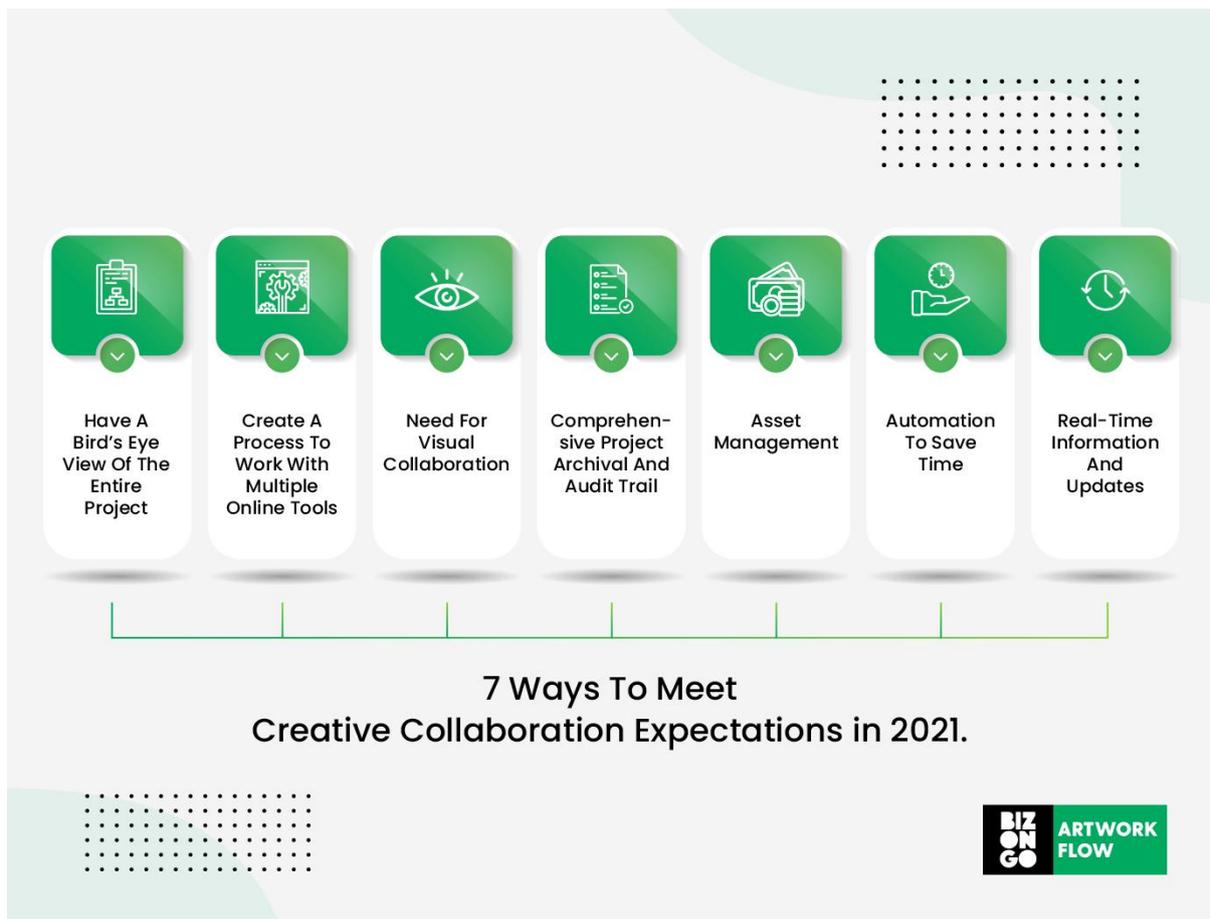


Creative Collaboration In 2021: Expectations and How You Can Meet Them

For a long time, businesses in the labeling and packaging industry have been using emails and phone calls for artwork management. This means loops of emails where information gets missed. Or worse yet, phone calls where information goes out of the system.

Due to these limitations, teams have been searching for a better way to collaborate and achieve faster product launches.

And so emerged a new way of creative collaboration in 2021. This helped teams improve effectiveness, productivity, and communication.



Expectations Of Creative Collaboration In 2021 And How You Can Meet Them

Here are seven things that high performing teams made use of in 2021 to achieve great results:

1. Have A Bird's Eye View Of The Entire Project

Your team might be working on multiple artwork projects at a time. They might be designing festive packaging for the upcoming holiday season and revamping the labeling for the product launch in a different state.

In such a scenario, it gets difficult to track at what stage a project is on. Is designing going on or the review process? How long will it take to move from Stage A to Stage B?

Not only that, tracking accountability gets difficult when there are endless email loops and chat threads.

And in today's time with more and more employees working remotely, calling each other to ask, "Hey Sam! What's the status of this project?" or sending email after email every week to keep track of things eats up a lot of time.

This calls for a much-needed change. Online proofing software makes creative collaboration easier by giving you a bird's eye view of your projects. With Artwork Flow, the stakeholders at Havmor, a popular ice cream brand, could view roles and progress on their projects in a single click.

Coupled with the transition from multiple communication channels to a single platform that helped streamline communication and reduce errors, they were able to [improve their retail speed to market by over 70%](#).

2. Create A Process To Work With Multiple Online Tools

Your team does not work on one tool. They might make use of email, Slack, proofing software, and a project management tool. Due to this, information gets siloed, or conversation related to one thing might happen on two platforms.

A colleague then has to check five different platforms to find data on one topic. Information might get missed in this process too. Instead, have a seamless process with strict guidelines on how to use these tools.

For example, all artwork-related processes should take place on the proofing software. And for project-related updates, team members should use the PM tool. Having a process like this with guidelines helps avoid errors and miscommunications that so often happen while collaborating.

But what if you want to collaborate with your external agencies and print vendors? Instead of having them go through the hassle of being a part of multiple tools, online proofing software helps you collaborate with them. You can ensure the labels and packaging turn out to be just the way you designed.

3. Need For Visual Collaboration

Sending an email that says, “This color doesn’t suit the font” is all fine. But what does that mean for the designer? Is he supposed to change the color? Or the font? And what are the grounds for the kind of colors that go well with the font?

A series of such questions start playing in the designer’s mind. Vague feedback in email collaboration is often the cause behind it. It leads to a lot of rework and back-and-forth emails just to understand what the feedback actually means.

Visual collaboration is the need of the hour when it comes to solving problems like this. It can not only help you give precise feedback like “Use this font for the labeling” but also eliminate the need for multiple feedback emails.

4. Comprehensive Project Archival And Audit Trail

A comprehensive project archival and audit trail is the systematic storing of all the records related to an artwork project that can be easily tracked and traced.

It could be the regulatory guidelines for your industry, the artwork designed, the time it took for the project to go from initiation to delivery, and so on. Here are a few reasons why having it is so crucial:

- To identify the recurring bottlenecks in your projects and avoid them in the future.
- Understand which project stages take more time and plan to reduce that time.
- Find the average turnaround time for your projects to come up with better estimations for your future projects.
- A proper history of every marketing or design annotation.

Proofing tools provide you with one platform for all your artwork management tasks. This makes it easier to have an organized history or built-in records that are available for analysis.

5. Asset Management

The traditional way of storing your artworks in either your inbox or files on individual desktops would mean that a team may have to waste a lot of their time searching for that one artwork amongst hundreds. And what if there are different versions of an artwork? This turns out to be an even more frustrating process if all the versions have not been stored.

It may happen that your team may bail out on this entire process and start working from scratch. This, in turn, leads to losing valuable time and effort in the process. Having an asset library helps avoid this problem by allowing you to find and edit your artworks whenever required. Your design team can also draw inspiration and use several elements from previous designs.

Instead of having this library on any platform, online proofing tools allow you to search the artworks by name, date, or even by using project data that is entered into the meta fields.

6. Automation To Save Time

Be it the chemical or the pharmaceutical industry, all industries have a set of regulations to follow. Instead of manually checking for them every time, turn them into a checklist that you only need to tick off.

This kind of automation not only saves time but also ensures errors don't happen. Considering that a single error can mean product recalls, scrapping manual checks and going for automation is the key.

You can automate your workflow by setting up a checklist for all your departments. You can also assign this to different members across teams and make sure things aren't missed in the process. Your teams can then reuse this checklist for every artwork.

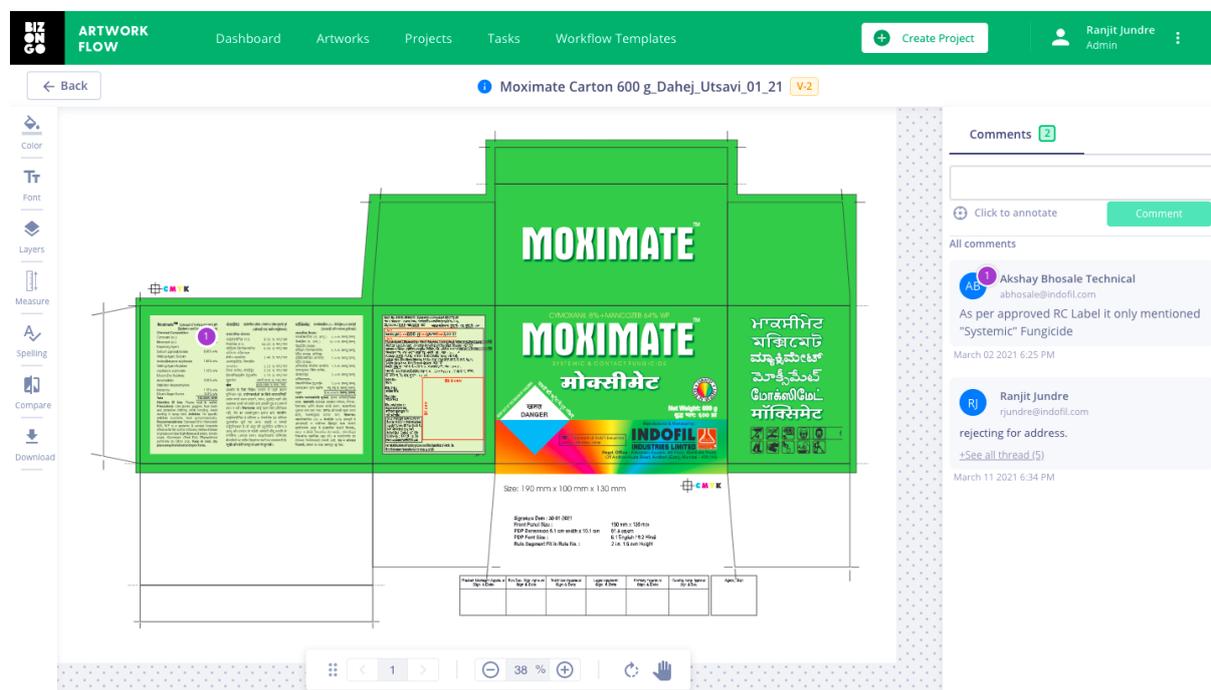
7. Real-Time Information And Updates

With remote work on the rise, it can be quite possible that you have team members working in different time zones. You can make use of this time advantage. How? By having some members work on the artwork during the day and then hand it over to the other team.

Instead of having email loops to share these daily updates, teams now need tools that update these changes as soon as someone makes them.

Online proofing tools make this possible. Every time someone makes a change, the concerned person receives a notification. This ensures that work doesn't get stuck if a team member is on leave or busy on some other project. Everything is right there on the platform.

These seven changes to your collaboration process can do wonders. Let's take a real case study to understand what benefits these changes can bring to your business.



How Indofil Used Artwork Flow To Enhance Their Creative Collaboration?

[Indofil](#), a manufacturer in the agrochemicals industry, deals in a range of products. This includes insecticides, herbicides, bactericides, surfactants, and plant growth regulators among others.

Here's what the collaboration process before Artwork Flow looked like:

- They didn't have a company-wide artwork management system. They made use of emails and phone calls.
- Every time the agency created an artwork, a printout was sent for review to various collaborators across five teams.
- The collaborators would then mark their feedback on the printout and sign it to signify approval. This would be again sent back to the design agency.

Their process was simple but it had a lot of inefficiencies.

- Every time the artwork was sent for review, the collaborators would've to remember the changes they had asked for.
- This process might have worked if it were one project. But with more than 70 products, they had to constantly follow up and didn't know which artwork everyone was reviewing unless they asked them. The worst part was the answers they received were true only for the moment. It could very well be that in the next moment, the concerned person would be working on another artwork.
- On a large scale, this led to a lot of confusion, errors, and a loss of accountability and visibility.

Here's how they used Artwork Flow to change the scenario:

- Getting feedback from collaborators across various departments at the same time was easy because of a single platform. Thus, they managed to have parallel workflows instead of staged workflows. This shift helped save time as all the departments could now work on the same artwork simultaneously instead of waiting for the other departments to finish reviewing the printed documents.
- Accountability and visibility became possible as everyone could view tasks on the platform. The project manager could view the status and keep a track of who is doing what.

The result of this was a reduction in the number of revisions per artwork from 5 to 3 times.

Conclusion: A New Standard Of Creative Collaboration In 2021

As remote work is gaining prominence, we're seeing many creative teams not just maintaining their earlier ways of working but also finding ways to improve their collaboration standards.

A reason why creative collaboration has come a long way, be it by finding better platforms or automating repetitive tasks.

The adoption of online proofing tools in such a scenario is not a luxury anymore. It has become a necessity to quicken the approval process and ensure product recalls don't happen.

[Try out Artwork Flow for free](#) and join the list of companies who achieved success by shifting to the modern way of collaboration.