

Acolad uses Craft.io to plan, prioritize, and deliver its global technology-enabled language services more effectively than ever

The industry's top provider of language and content solutions leverages Craft.io to improve dependency management, team collaboration, and product prioritization.

WEBSITE	FOUNDED	HQ	EMPLOYEES
acolad.com	1993	Paris, France	2,500

“Of all the benefits we’re receiving from Craft.io, for us the most significant is being able to view, analyze, and share the same data in many different ways. That lets us present the right content to each audience, and filter out the rest. It also helps us uncover business intelligence we might otherwise miss.”



Petra Angeli, VP of Products, Acolad

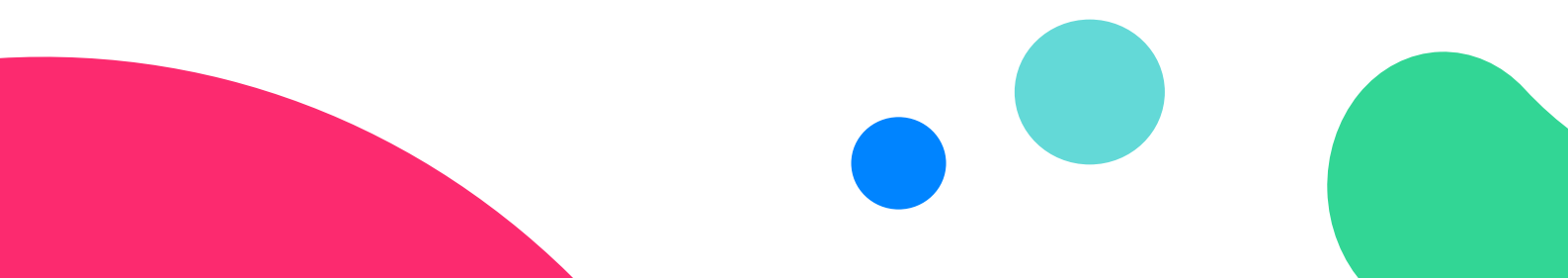
The company

Providing technology-enabled language services to help businesses turn content into value.

When a business needs its content localized for a new region – or globalized to resonate with numerous audiences around the world – finding the right language service provider is essential. That’s where Acolad comes in.

The global leader in technology-enabled content and language solutions, Acolad maintains a presence in 25 countries, on 3 continents, and serves business customers around the world.

From a manufacturing company that needs a product manual translated into a new language, to a global organization that needs its entire website available in many languages, Acolad’s 2,500 employees – and global network of 20,000 linguists – have the technology solutions and expertise to make it happen.



The challenges

Planning and coordinating complex projects with unique customer requirements calls for modern technology solutions. Managing several product roadmaps and the overall strategy, it is essential to have tools empowering the product team.

Petra Angeli, VP of Products at Acolad, explains that the company's technology solutions often spans several teams, involves multiple Product Managers, and creates numerous dependencies across the teams. "Often we'll develop functionality that affects both our internal applications and a customer-facing solution," Petra says. "Each of those products have their own dedicated product and development teams, and we also have a third team building the interoperability piece to connect the solutions."

As Petra points out, prior to deploying Craft.io, the product department did not have a digital solution that would reliably surface these dependencies and enable her teams to show them clearly and intuitively to the various stakeholders involved. That meant teams were often at risk of getting out of sync and inadvertently delaying mission-critical progress of other teams throughout the company.

"We couldn't create a single view to visually summarize all of this work, including the dependencies between teams, and then have that view update automatically if, for example, we had to reprioritize.

That made it very difficult to keep stakeholders up to date on how each team's work could impact other key initiatives."

In fact, Petra notes, the dependency management issue underscored a broader challenge her team was facing as a result of not having the right digital platform to manage their work.

"Without having a dedicated roadmap solution, it was difficult to dynamically create the right content views for each stakeholder audience — not unless we had the time to manually build and rebuild our roadmaps, team progress views, and other assets for every meeting"



Petra Angeli, VP of Products, Acolad

The solution

Rolling out Craft.io to create a unified, highly customizable digital hub for all product-related content.

When she began deploying the Craft.io product management platform, Petra explains, the feedback she received from her Product Managers and other stakeholders made clear that she had found the solution to many of the previous obstacles to data sharing, dependency management, and prioritization.

"Craft.io makes it so easy for my Product Managers to share just the right details for each audience — whether that's sales, marketing, development, or another team — and filter out everything that's not relevant to that discussion or that we're just not ready to share yet. This is having a very positive effect on our planning and collaboration efforts across the company."

The results

Simplifying the creation, analysis, and sharing of product content improves workflows and outcomes.

As Petra explains, using Craft.io to manage Acolad's product management efforts has led to numerous process improvements — improvements that the team simply could not have achieved with its previous solution.

1 Identifying, communicating, and managing dependencies more easily than ever

Petra's team now maintains all of its product-related data in Craft.io: features, epics, products, stories, timelines, personas, objectives, etc. And because Craft.io allows the team to display dependencies with a few clicks — even among items that span multiple teams or products — Product Managers can now easily identify and share intuitive views of the dependencies connecting items.

"The dependency visualization in Craft.io makes it so much easier for us to recognize and share with stakeholders how work on one product will affect other products. Identifying and understanding the implications of these dependencies is so valuable to us, in fact, that we've added them as a scoring category to our RICE prioritization framework — which we can also easily do in Craft.io."

2 Customizing metrics for more effective prioritization

And speaking of the company's use of RICE prioritization, Acolad leverages Craft.io's Guru layer, which includes many built-in prioritization methodologies, including RICE. Now when Product Managers need to weigh competing initiatives and present an evidence-supported case to stakeholders, they use the RICE model built into their Craft.io environment. In fact, Petra took prioritization a few steps further — customizing Craft.io's RICE fields to suit her company's needs.

"I originally used standard numbers for the components of our RICE framework, but I found they weren't resonating well with Product Managers. So I applied intuitive pictograms — basically emojis, through which our Product Managers specifying these values can relate easier to the options without having to think about the numbers they represent. This also helps stakeholders intuitively understand what goes into the product prioritization and how we end up with the RICE score," Petra explained.

She also added a few extra fields to Acolad's RICE prioritization environment, such as the number of dependencies as well as the feature's long-term potential value. "These data points aren't part of the standard RICE score, but for us they add value for decision making and prioritization," says Petra. "And Craft.io is so flexible that creating these additional fields is very easy!"

"The products we're building are complex solutions, and managing their strategy can be challenging. With Craft.io as our unified hub for planning and prioritizing that work, we've been able to manage much easier than before — and I'm convinced it's helping us deliver better products as well."



Petra Angeli, VP of Products, Acolad

3 Keeping all teams synced by integrating Craft.io, Jira, and Confluence

Finally, Petra points out, because Craft.io works seamlessly with Acolad's development and task-management tools, all teams' work and progress is now synced more reliably than ever.

"We do a lot of our business analysis on potential new products and features in Confluence, and our developers track their tasks in Jira," she explains. "Because we have all of that data synced with our Craft.io environment, we know everyone is always up to date and on the same page. When we're showing the development team or our stakeholders an updated version of our roadmap in Craft.io – and they want to know why we've selected one strategy over another – we can show them all the relevant information without ever leaving Craft.io, something we simply couldn't do if we were using a different tool."

Acolad's favorite Craft.io features

1

Strategic roadmapping

To easily share the relevant details with each audience.

2

Prioritization engine

To apply standard factors to weigh competing initiatives.

3

Jira integration

To sync all strategic and task-level progress.