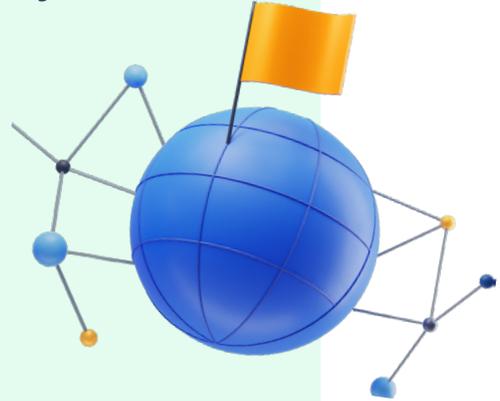


ATLASSIAN + KIVA

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BRIT HEIRING
Director of Communications

kiva



Microloans, macro impact: How Kiva collaborates to fund ambitions with Atlassian

See how Kiva, a global microlending non-profit, uses Atlassian to manage complex work, collaborate, and stay aligned on their mission to fund ambitions.

INDUSTRY

Non-profit; Financial Services

LOCATION

San Francisco, CA

NUMBER OF USERS

145

ATLASSIAN PRODUCTS & APPS



Jira Software
Project and issue tracker



Jira Service Management
High-velocity ITSM



Confluence
Document collaboration



Statuspage
Incident communication

Ambition is more than a feeling – it’s a force. Each of us has unique goals and dreams of our own, but working together enables us to achieve greater things than we could alone. It’s this belief that brought Kiva and Atlassian together to unleash the power of Kiva’s teams, so they can do the same for aspiring individuals around the world.

Kiva was founded in 2005, with a mission to expand financial access and help underserved communities thrive through crowdfunded loans supported by individuals around the world. This capital enables mothers like [Salao in Cambodia](#) to start a coffee cart and feed her family, [students like Meerim in Kyrgyzstan](#) to get an education, and people like [Pamela in Nairobi](#) to channel their own struggles into support for others in need.

It’s easy to understand how microloans change lives, but managing the borrowing and lending process is far from simple. With over four million borrowers and over two million lenders in 77 countries and counting, Kiva’s organization has grown increasingly complex. They need the right people, processes, and platforms to drive their non-profit’s success. With Atlassian as their go-to work management system, Kiva has increased collaboration, visibility, speed, and employee engagement – all adding up to an even larger force for good around the globe.

Sparking collaboration with a cross-functional platform

In 2005, Kiva launched by making a few microloans to women in Uganda, supported by lenders from the San Francisco area. Now, they're helping fund a new microloan somewhere around the world every two minutes.

Many startups experience growing pains when they rapidly scale like this. For Kiva, the process has been even more complicated due to the nature of their work: a hybrid financial services non-profit with roots in the tech business. As the organization expanded their team and their reach, they needed a better way to onboard new employees and volunteers, gain visibility across silos, work smarter, and deliver faster. Since Kiva implemented Atlassian in 2007, Head of Engineering Matthew Flaming says employees across the entire business (referred to as "Kivans") have adopted the tools as "the backbone" of their work.

"Both Jira and Confluence are among the core tools that we use to coordinate work, keep track of ideas, and understand the status of projects," Matthew says. Kiva's team of engineers and their stakeholders use Jira Software for the full spectrum of agile product development and management: turning user feedback into epics, stories, and tasks; collecting feature requests and bug fixes; and managing backlogs of future projects. They also connect Jira Software tickets with Confluence pages to elaborate on stories and tasks. With these tools, teams can work iteratively and independently while staying in sync. "Jira is how we get visibility around what the whole organization is doing, and then on a

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DEEPIKA HEARN

Senior Marketing Manager of Acquisitions

macro level, how we manage workflows and move work between teams," Matthew says.

Beyond Engineering, Kivans throughout the organization also use Confluence to document and store information in a centralized place. "Confluence is very much our single source of truth, with documentation for all of our workflows internally and externally with borrowers and lending partners. It's our institutional memory where people find answers to their questions and get ghosts of wisdom from people in the past," Matthew explains.

“ Atlassian serves as a natural center of gravity that attracts teams together.

MATTHEW FLAMING
Head of Engineering

Kiva even invites new hires to make edits and additions to pages as they go through onboarding to augment the organization’s living library, while reinforcing to new Kivans that their voice matters.

Deepika Hearn, Senior Marketing Manager of Acquisition, adds that Confluence has been a “game changer” for teams throughout Kiva.

For example, her Marketing colleagues rely heavily on the tool to collaborate with each other, document processes, and track performance across marketing campaigns. “Confluence gives us an opportunity to travel back in time and understand the nuances of each past campaign – the challenges, goals, process, and results – so we don’t have to reinvent the wheel every time,” Deepika says.

When cross-functional groups work together, such as Deepika’s co-workers in Marketing and Matthew’s in Engineering, Matthew says that “Atlassian serves as a natural center of gravity that attracts teams together.” Kivans collaborate using Confluence to document and share information, Jira Service Management to request service from each other, Jira Software to move projects forward, and Statuspage for system status and incident communication. “We give our teams quite a lot of autonomy. Atlassian is the ‘lingua franca’ and cross-functional workflow between teams,” Matthew explains. “It’s the way they connect to gather each other’s work, give each other insight into what they’re doing, and often if there’s a task that spans teams, that will either be done by linking tickets or by passing a ticket between teams.”

Kiva has integrated their Atlassian platform with other go-to tools to streamline workflows and communication. For instance, IT integrated Jira Service Management with Slack so employees can submit and manage support tickets through chat. Engineers have also connected Jira Software with Jenkins, Github, and Miro to power their development work, and employees across Kiva can embed Google Sheets in Confluence for easy spreadsheet searching.



“ Without tools like Atlassian, we would be a bunch of ambitious people who want to make an impact, scattered in different directions. Atlassian allows us to create a shared understanding where it wouldn't be possible and work as one team with one set of goals and one shared reality.

MATTHEW FLAMING
Head of Engineering

Spending less time searching and switching between tools means more time for meaningful work. Deepika says, “Atlassian...allows us to focus our time and effort on furthering our mission rather than searching for information.”

One platform, one shared reality

While teams across Kiva use Atlassian products in different ways, Director of Communications Brit Heiring says having centralized, integrated tools has improved communication and engagement across the board. “Any tools that are intuitive and help people connect are invaluable. We're a global workforce, and Atlassian helps us stay in sync while doing async work. It's been a big win for us,” she says. “For example, by compiling information for events and announcements via Confluence, plus a variety of other tools, internal communication has increased across the organization. Initiatives like these are showing early signs of success, such as employee engagement increasing from 74% to 78% in the last eight months.”

The more engaged employees are, the more of a difference they'll make together. “Without tools like Atlassian, we would be a bunch of ambitious

people who want to make an impact, scattered in different directions,” Matthew says. “Atlassian allows us to create a shared understanding where it wouldn’t otherwise be possible, and work together with one set of goals and one shared reality.”

As Matthew points out, Kivans (and the borrowers they serve) have never been short on ambition – but ambition isn’t the only ingredient of success. With the right work management tools to complement their passionate people and agile processes, Kiva’s team is collaborating more than ever to make an even bigger impact worldwide.