blink

By [Sarah Amos](#)

I joined Blink about six months ago, and one of my early goals was to increase the financial transparency between the back office and the front. My background is in numbers: I studied accounting in college and earned my CPA designation shortly thereafter. Financial qualification and measurement is a focus and a passion in my project management.

This isn't only an issue facing Blink: I've yet to work at a company where some form of the reflect – measure – analyze – improve lifecycle wasn't critical… and difficult to put into practice. From busy schedules to internal politics, there are so many things than can disrupt this process.

At Blink, we had a leg up because everyone, top down and bottom up (a funny expression when we are a fairly flat organization) was supportive of this process. Our culture is one of constant improvement. We hold ourselves responsible to do great work for great clients. We were struggling, however, in getting detailed information, like specific financials, communicated. Teams often had "no idea" where their projects ended up. This was a problem.

As I rolled around my fairly vague goal of "increasing financial transparency," in my brain, I realized I needed to go up a level. Make it even bigger. I wanted to increase project transparency. Financials would be a part, but not the only part.

With that in mind, my first step was to determine my audience. That would drive the information that I would want to include. I sketched out the three primary audiences:

1. Researchers, designers, collaborators: The people who worked on the project would want to see a summary of how the project turned out.
2. The Business Development team: They could use this information to better scope future work.
3. The Blink Partners: They could use these one-page summaries to keep a pulse on projects

in a manageable way.

I wanted to be deliberate about what I chose to include. I asked myself if the information made sense for the audience. Information that made the cut was:

1. Relevant
2. Actionable
3. Insightful

As I thought about how to achieve increased transparency of projects, a key for me was to figure out what the front office needed to know. What do they care about? It needed to be relevant. A killer financial KPI (key performance indicator) for our CFO might not be very interesting, meaningful,—or more importantly, actionable—for an interaction designer.

In answering those first two questions, I inadvertently answered one of the biggest questions: What did I want people to do with this information? Not to get all existential, but what was the point of it all?

I thought how I would present this information in a positive, relevant, actionable, informative way:

- I'd want it to be concise and digestible (One page!) that comprehensively summarized the project
- I wanted to capture financial information but within the larger context of the project
- I wanted this to clearly line up to [Blink's vision](), so we could answer two important questions at the end:

1. How did this work go?
2. Is this the work we should be doing?

I knew I was on the right path, and that my foundation was strong. Next I needed the execution. In Part Two, I'll go through how I developed a summary sheet that captures the big picture items I listed above plus the project nitty gritty, in a way that could be compared cross-company and used intra-departmentally… in just one page.