



habemus!
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Cost Transparency in Complex Customer Projects

Boosting Client Trust and Increasing Customer Loyalty

Habemus! electronic + transfer GmbH, an engineering and manufacturing service provider for electronic components, uses InLoox for multi-project controlling of very complex customer projects in order to be able to make internal calculations more transparent with dashboards and to increase customer loyalty with reports.

E²MS - which may sound like a formula to laymen - is an abbreviation for electronics service providers who take on comprehensive tasks on behalf of their customers, the electronics manufacturers. "Electronics Engineering and Manufacturing Services" encompass many other services besides production, including development, engineering, obsolescence management, packaging, and even 3D printing. E²MS providers act behind the scenes, so to speak, as a driver of innovation in the electronics industry. The market is highly competitive. Hence, it is crucial for any company to be competitive in terms of quality, price and cost. Those who can achieve cost transparency gain a strategic advantage in terms of business data.

As an E²MS full service partner, habemus! offers its customers complete solutions ranging from device development, digitization (Internet of Things), electronics manufacturing and logistics. To be

Challenge

At habemus! Electronic + transfer, 15 to 20 projects are planned and managed in parallel. More than 95% of them are customer projects, which are very heterogeneous in terms of size, duration and complexity. It was challenging to implement a differentiated reporting for internal as well as external recipients quickly and easily.

Solution

The company was looking for a solution that could not only be integrated as seamlessly as possible into the existing tool landscape, especially Microsoft PowerBI, but that could also be operated intuitively while offering a high level of functionality. In addition, it had to be possible to map the PRINCE2 project management methodology, and it had to be versatile enough to be used for multi-project controlling.

commercially successful, the company needs to overcome several project management challenges. It has also established standardized processes according to the PRINCE2 project management methodology, so project members have some agency when it comes to implementation.

On the way to multi-project controlling

For habemus!, multi-project controlling is important to ensure the planning and monitoring of between 15 and 20 projects running in parallel. At peak times, it is even necessary to control 30 projects in parallel. Programs consist of up to seven projects - depending on the contract - so that project groups also need to be managed.

Since the habemus! experts implement more than 95 percent of customer projects, the company has very different projects in its portfolio in terms of size, duration and complexity. Depending on the respective area of development and the customer's wishes, these projects are processed using agile or traditional methods.

To calculate the profitability of projects, habemus! has recently established a differentiated reporting system in project controlling to obtain an internal overview as well as an external perspective. "Our project controlling differentiates between dashboards to internal recipients and reports to external recipients - our customers," says Nadja Miller, who, as project manager and controller, has also been responsible for the project management solution InLoox at habemus! since 2020.

An easy to integrate and versatile solution

InLoox has been used for project management at habemus! since 2013. According to habemus! managing director Gottfried Fischer, the solution was initially chosen because of its integration into Outlook and because it is less complex than comparable products despite its comprehensive range of functions. Today, the other advantages of the solution are particularly important for Miller: the integration into the existing system landscape - for example, into Excel and Power BI - as well as the versatile possibilities of how InLoox can be used in multi-project controlling.

Dashboards for internal controlling

One of the dashboards Miller has set up at habemus! provides classic operational overviews, for example, to display and evaluate workload and costs. Project managers and developers use these to keep track of time and tasks. In accordance with PRINCE2 rules, they can implement their projects as independently as possible. Accordingly, intervention is only required in exceptional cases, for example when threshold values have been exceeded.

Results

Since 2013, habemus! has been using InLoox for project management and controlling. The dashboards are used for internal controlling, and the reports are used for customers. In project management, not only has the collaboration between executive management, development management and project managers improved in quality.

A continuous improvement process is taking place, which is reflected in increased efficiency, time savings in controlling and higher acceptance with regard to planning cycles among project managers.

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The transparency gained in terms of the budget situation and budget utilization, as well as the possibility of detailed cost estimates, has also increased the profitability of complex customer projects.

For customers, the added value lies in the transparent reports, which build trust and strengthen customer loyalty. In addition, habemus! uses the reports as an acquisition tool for acquiring new customers.

Apart from the classic overviews of workload and cost evaluations, the dashboards also provide an important overview of the overall status of all projects and programs.

An important management tool for habemus! are dashboards that illustrate and evaluate the profit and budget situation of all completed projects on the one hand and ongoing projects on the other.

Regular evaluation of ongoing projects by executive management and development management

The executive management and the development manager review the dashboard for ongoing projects once a week in a status meeting. The aim is to analyze current developments and their impact on the budget, and to initiate appropriate measures if necessary.

Being able to evaluate the current overall status of all projects is initially the most important benefit. For ongoing projects, for example, the following questions can be answered: What is the current budget

About habemus! Electronic + transfer GmbH

Founded in 1995, habemus! electronic + transfer GmbH now employs almost 100 people and generates annual sales of 18 million euros.

The electronics service provider based in Münsterhausen, Bavaria, sees itself as a solution and system provider that not only produces electronic devices according to customer specifications, but also works with its customers to develop individual and innovative solutions for their products.

In addition to electronics development and production, the focus lies particularly on finding innovative solutions for complex developments in the field of IoT, Industry 4.0 and "smart" networked products.

Quote

"Investing time in dashboards has paid off. Habemus! saves a lot of time both in data collection and in meetings. We save about 1 hour of research per dashboard in project controlling. Meetings can also be shortened. Instead of 1 to 2 hours, a meeting only takes about 30 minutes on average. Because this increases project managers' acceptance that project controlling and meetings are necessary, habemus! becomes more efficient overall."

Nadja Miller, project manager and project controller, habemus! Electronic + transfer GmbH

utilization? How big would the margin be if everything went according to plan? In this way, the calculation becomes more detailed. If, for example, sub-projects have exceeded their budgets, it is possible to see whether and where there is still room for maneuver in the allocation of resources. For example, it can be determined where and when additional costs were incurred in which sub-projects, and to what extent any higher costs in a project can be covered or absorbed by the budget of a related project belonging to the same program.

Better collaboration

Based on the information gained with the InLoox dashboards the executive board, the development management and the project management can collaborate better. Secondly, habemus! benefits in many other ways: financially with regard to the respective project, organizationally with regard to the corporate culture, and operationally with regard to more efficient processes in controlling. Thirdly, there are also lessons to be learned for future projects, as the above-mentioned example shows.

Investing time in dashboards has also paid off. According to Miller, habemus! saves a lot of time in both data collection and meetings. She saves about an hour of research per dashboard in project controlling. Meetings can also be shortened. Instead of one to two hours, a meeting now only lasts about 30 minutes on average.

About InLoox

Munich-based InLoox GmbH was founded in 1999 and develops innovative, ready-to-use project management solutions that simplify and accelerate business processes. The convenient integration options with other systems make InLoox the central platform for both project and day-to-day business. The easy usability simplifies the daily work and project managers, teams and decision makers can rely on the powerful planning, controlling and monitoring features of InLoox - on the desktop, on the web and on mobile devices.



Over 60,000 users in over 65 countries trust InLoox. InLoox customers include AVIS, CHRIST Wash Systems, German Red Cross, LIEBHERR, Novartis, Pentax Europe, STOROpack, SEAT, Siemens, US Airways, Verizon and many more.

Because shorter meetings increase the project managers' acceptance that project controlling and meetings are necessary, habemus! becomes more efficient overall, so that the status meetings now actually take place regularly every week. According to Miller, the prerequisite for this is always that the quality of the data is good and the quantity of data is significant enough: "If you have a lot of good data, you can evaluate well."

Transparent reports create trust and increase customer loyalty and new business

Habemus! uses InLoox reports instead of dashboards to communicate with customers, for example as a planning overview at the beginning of a project or to document progress. Large amounts of data from different areas can thus be presented in a decidedly clearer way. "For example, an hourly evaluation report is always used when a fixed price cannot be offered for a development activity: During the project initiation phase, say, when requirements are still very unclear, or when something has to be changed later on during software development, for example," says Miller. For customers, it's important to have documentation of who did what, when.

"A report provides transparency, which builds mutual trust. It also allows habemus! to win new customers during the acquisition phase as well as strengthen existing customer ties," says Miller. In the meantime, it has become common practice to always attach a planning report to offers.

Further expansion of dashboards planned

In future, Miller plans to continuously expand the scope of the dashboard views at habemus! and also to make greater use of the InLoox integration in Power BI for future evaluations.