Better Overview in Project Business

Identify dependencies in multi-project management

Ketek produces silicon drift detectors which are even used on Mars. Before they started to use multi-project management software PLANTA, the manufacturer used Microsoft Project, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote for its research and development projects. This working method, however, did not allow for a complete overview.

Different studies prove that more than half of the companies in the mid-sized sector does not use a professional project management software and many work steps are handled manually. Like Ketek, many companies are, however, ready to invest in a sustainable project management solution. The benefit of such software for business success has been proven for a long time now: meeting deadlines more easily, reacting more quickly to changes in the project, adhering to the budget, and organizing project tasks in a more efficient way.

Objective of the Software Implementation

Besides increasing the transparency of their projects, the centralization and standardization of project data were important objectives for Ketek: everything should be planned in one single tool. Furthermore, they wanted the company-specific processes to be mapped via process models. A third objective, namely resource management, was eventually discarded.

Ketek employs 110 people and intents to use the new project management software for a volume of 15 project managers and five multi-project managers, 80 reporters (50 recipients of instructions), and 15 stakeholders in the company areas of plant and product development (F&E), product change management (very small projects), time recording for development departments, as well as innovation or idea management.

An average of 30 projects was planned in parallel for a run time of about two to three years, and in addition 130 very small projects with a run time no longer than six months
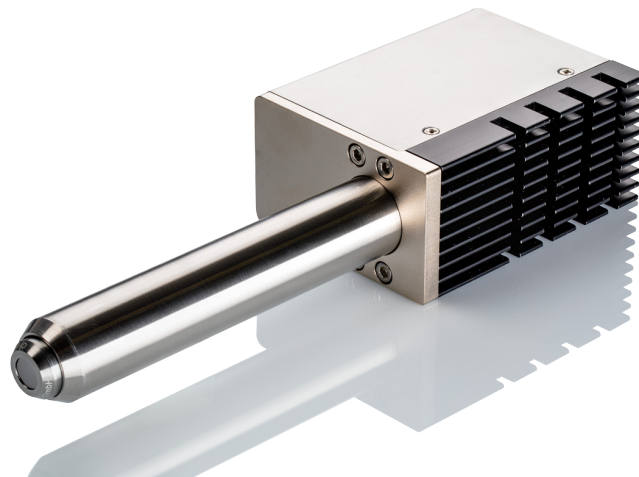
were planned. The development of semiconducters takes a great deal of time but requires few resources, resulting in a large number of parallel projects.

An internal competence team searched for a solution

An internal competence team was formed in order to find the right solution on the vast market for PM systems. The team consisted of one person each from the sector of quality management, project management, product management, as well as a reference project

manager. The focus was on the solution of three central problems: Each project manager uses its own tool; finding project information without talking to the project manager was virtually impossible; and since they lacked of a comprehensive overview, it was extremely difficult to harmonize project plans. The initial plan was to use the software in three areas of application: generation of a project overview, efficient project and task management, and time recording.

Rapid Software Implementation

After having defined the problems, six months passed until a decision was made to use the new project management software. After another 12 months, with the participation of about a dozen employees, the implementation of the new PM system was completed. The software went live in January 2020. The creation of an own solution was out of the question. The company took a close look at different products available on the market and eventually decided in favor of the project management software of PLANTA. The existing solution was abandoned and only the internal wiki for documentation and Microsoft Business Central (BC) will still be used as ERP system for accounting (orders, storage, costs, budget, etc.); the time recording of all employees (including those who do not use PLANTA) are collected there. Hours recorded via PLANTA *link* are exported to BC. BC is also used for an approval process for absence as well as for the recording of extra hours.

Different Components

The PLANTA *project*, *portfolio*, *customizer*, and *link* components were implemented. *Project* and *portfolio* are tools for operative and strategic multi-project management, *pulse* is a tool for agile project and task management as well as hybrid project management, *customizer* and *link* are used for customer-individual adjustments and interfaces.

The software provides Ketek with extensive options for embedding their own company processes via configurable interfaces and individually adjustable processes. Interfaces to

the ERP were created for project numbers, time recording, and vacation calendar. Customizings were created to increase convenience and enhance processes. An own project type was created for very small projects while a distinction was made between change projects, preventive and corrective projects.

Benefit of Software Implementation

After having used the new project management system for two years, the benefits have long become apparent and the users are quite satisfied. The main reasons for which Ketek made its decision for PLANTA in the selection process, are the following:

- Range of functions and basic structure
- Support from the company from Karlsruhe
- Adjustability

Apart from file storage, all relevant project information and meeting protocols are stored in PLANTA, making projects more easily accessible. Project time recording works well.

Wolf-Georg Pichler (responsible for project management at KETEK) described the benefits as follows: „*Our greatest benefit is to have a "clearly structured" multi project management. All projects are stored centrally in PLANTA. The colleagues now have a better project overview and can plan dependencies between the projects.*"

Extract of List of Customers

PLANTA customers come from a wide range of economic sectors. These are primarily:
IT, banks, and insurance companies, engineering and plant construction, as well as automobile manufacturers and suppliers.