

Siemens Russia

Flexible EPM Tool Helps Russian Subsidiary Support Employees and Manage Expenses

Siemens Russia works in partnership with companies from a diverse range of sectors —from telecommunications to advanced hearing technology. Siemens relies on its project management systems to record billing data and guide planning and developments. The company decided to pilot the Microsoft® Enterprise Project Management system and expects to improve project reporting across its departments.

Business Needs

The Corporate Information and Processes (CIP) department is responsible for providing project planning and management data to the various business groups at Siemens Russia. Project management data includes employee timesheets for project billing and invoicing, and project-task information to help managers plan employee availability and resources for new contracts.

The Siemens Russia IT team found it increasingly difficult to gather accurate information about projects. Employees using the company's existing system were unable to incorporate all the tasks involved in a project. Vadim Bogdanov, Managing Director, Bogdanov & Associates, says: "If a new task emerged within a project, it had to be created and then confirmed with the project manager. Only after the task had been included in the project was it possible to record the time an employee had spent completing it. It was a complicated, time-consuming procedure."

The delivery of information to invoice completed work or plan employee workloads accurately was also limited by the project management system. Labour costs could only be established by a relevant project manager, and managers could not view amendments to a project timeline during its life cycle. Dmitri Sidnev, IT Services Manager, Siemens, says: "There was no opportunity to show any changes made to the project. The manager only saw the original and final versions of the project."

Siemens was unable to plan employee workloads effectively or gain an accurate view of all the costs incurred by a project. The CIP team wanted to introduce an enterprise project management system that would help the company view all employee project contributions. The team also wanted to increase operational efficiency and reusable processes to help it develop future projects.

Solution

With the help of Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Bogdanov & Associates, Siemens chose to take part in a pilot of the 2007 Microsoft Enterprise Project Management Solution, which includes Microsoft Project Server 2007, Microsoft Project Web Access, and Microsoft Project Professional.

With Project Server 2007, in conjunction with Project Web Access and Office Project Professional, Siemens' employee workloads, project progression, and all other project-related data are more transparent to project and section managers. Managers and planners can view billable and non-billable work, the time their teams spend on completing specified tasks, and the categories employees have created themselves as the project progresses.

Microsoft Enterprise Project Management 2007, supported by Microsoft Office Project Server, allows a Siemens employee to create a new project task easily.

"In Project Server 2007, an employee can enter tasks into a weekly timesheet that may not form part of a single project," Bogdanov says. "These tasks will be confirmed by the employee's immediate supervisor, not by the project manager." If a particular project requires extra meetings, phone calls, and other resources, for example, these details are updated quickly to the project timelines and billing system.

Sidnev says: "Microsoft Project Server 2007 makes it possible to calculate the same task twice in two different time categories—profitable and unprofitable, for example." With Project Server 2007, managers can also cancel a sequence of actions, instead of cancelling a scheduled action step by step.

Siemens Russia now plans to adopt all of the Microsoft Enterprise Project Management features, along with Microsoft Project Server 2007, on a full-time basis. "Microsoft Office Project Server 2007 represents a new evolutionary stage," Sidnev says. "Now, the finance department can obtain information directly from the projects. It is likely that planned changeover by all sections of Siemens to Microsoft Project Server will be initiated in the near future."

Benefits

Siemens Russia can now track all employee time contributions and tasks relating to projects. And with a comprehensive view of employee activity, managers can plan and develop projects more cost effectively and with maximum support for employee workloads.

Transparent Project Details

Finance managers now have the tools to view all the changes and amendments made to a project life cycle as they occur and are better able to manage teams and current projects more effectively.

Simplified Task Creation

The new solution now makes it easy to create and add new tasks as required to project management data. Employees can simply ensure all their work is seen and accounted for. Less time is spent having to explain and account for gaps of information because of an inability to enter legitimate data such as extra client meetings or phone calls.

Easily Monitored Expenditure

Managers can now view all employee contributions and manage costs more effectively. Unscheduled work can be incorporated into a project and recorded accurately for both department and client analysis.

Employees can record all the actual tasks undertaken in a project, and client estimates are based on a realistic understanding of the billing hours needed to complete a project.

Workloads Monitored

Project leaders are now able to record all issues and role-related activity, enabling better managing of workloads for their employees. This helps teams focus on what they do best.

In addition, managers can view project data more easily, and project teams across Siemens Russia can collaborate better and use other company resources as required.