Planview Enterprise®

Case study

Kathrein Implements Planview Enterprise for Improved Product Development Processes

About Kathrein

Established in 1919, Kathrein is the world's oldest and biggest antenna manufacturer. Its products include satellite receivers and antennae for terrestrial reception, radio transmitter, and receiver antennae, analog and digital television, broadband communication systems, mobile radio antennae and receivers, car antennae and electronics, and RFID systems.

Challenge: Inefficient product development processes and slow time to market

Kathrein experienced challenges in delivering products in a highly competitive market. They had software in place that helped facilitate approvals, but had no project management, resource management, or time reporting capabilities resulting in poor visibility into project status and resource utilization. To adapt, the company decided to reengineer its product development processes and replace the existing software. The project management group, headed by Christian Perkonigg and Georg Schell, began setting out guidelines for the new product development process and started evaluating software that would replace their existing tool.

Kathrein operates in a very dynamic and competitive environment developing diverse products varying from highly specific, to mass-produced products, and include both retail and consumer products.

"We execute a wide range of projects at Kathrein," said business development manager Georg Schell, responsible for implementing the new product development process. "The process changes would affect six product divisions, consisting of more than 500 employees in twelve roles, responsible for executing more than 150 projects a year."

Internally, Kathrein created the new product development process that would carry out projects in six phases, from idea to production, with milestones and gates to measure and plan for unknown variables. Product

KATHREIN

Overview

Customer
Kathrein

Industry
Manufacturing

Geographies
Rosenheim, Germany, and at another eighteen production sites on five continents

Planview Enterprise for Product Development enables Kathrein to streamline product development processes with improved transparency for improved time to market.

"Improvements occurred rapidly because the solution provided management visibility into how resources were being consumed and where system overloads and bottlenecks occurred. We anticipate that development projects will be better managed in the long term, and resources put to optimum use."

– Georg Schell, Kathrein

development processes are divided into four types. Type 1: processes related to products intended for the market; Type 2: original equipment manufacturers; Type 3: single-customer orders; and Type 4: fundamental projects. According to Schell, the process creates order and serves as a framework, without imposing unnecessary restrictions. With the process scoped, Kathrein needed to find the right software to support it.

The Solution: Planview Enterprise for Product Development

Before deciding on a software vendor, Kathrein created a three-stage selection process. The software solution needed to be flexible and scalable. It was also important the solution incorporate best practices, and role-based access capabilities. In addition, Katherine required that the software be capable of managing portfolios, documents, resources, costs, and rights.

Kathrein chose Planview Enterprise for two important reasons: The visibility and flexibility of reporting, versioning, and history views; and its intuitive user interface (UI) established a positive user experience (UX) for employees while making information accessible, quickly.

"We held workshops to make the final selection," Schell explains. "Planview was consistent and intuitive to use. It spoke our language, which is very important for our users."

Implementing Change at Kathrein

Now that the software solution had been selected and the product development process in place, Kathrein needed to facilitate change within the organization. With strong communication built into the culture, employees were involved early in the process: from analyzing the current situation, desired outcomes, and tool selection to planning and implementing specific requirements and processes. Management also issued regular progress reports, shared information openly with staff, and chose a creative way of announcing the changes to get the staff on board.

They organized a kick-off meeting for the 600 people, in the form of a stage play at the town hall in Rosenheim, the company's headquarters. This approach incorporated the key messages management wanted to convey to persuade the staff of the project's importance and its benefits—communicating a clear commitment to change. The advantages were then discussed at greater length by the product development process advocates. They met at tables and explained the process to their colleagues in detail. The advocates included both opinion leaders and skeptics, so that even those with concerns about the change played an active part in implementing it.

Training was also a major part in the transition. Workshops were held to carry out tasks such as designing checklists and forms required for each product category. According to Schell, "It was important to provide training of sufficient quantity and quality to everyone involved based on their role." Two other key training aspects were "train the trainer" and determining the frequency of training provided to each employee.

Improved Resource Management and Visibility

After only a few weeks, Planview Enterprise helped Kathrein better manage their resources. According to Schell, "Improvements occurred rapidly because the solution provided management visibility into how resources were being consumed and where system overloads and bottlenecks occurred. We anticipate that

development projects will be better managed in the long term, and resources put to optimum use."

The Benefits: Improved Efficiencies in Product Development and Reduced Risk

Using Planview Enterprise Product Development Portfolio Management, Katherine has realized the following benefits:

- Improved transparency and a reduction in risk
- Better visibility and use of resources
- Faster time to market when developing new products
- Improved product quality with standardized stage gate processes
- User friendly user experience promoted adoption