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CUSTOMER INTERVIEW

Wienerberger AG

INTERVIEWEE
Anton Julius Moser

INDUSTRY
Construction and infrastructure solutions

WIENERBERGER AG

Wienerberger – founded in 1819 – is one of the leading providers of innovative, ecological solutions for the entire building envelope in the areas of new construction and renovation, as well as for infrastructure in water and energy management.

With more than 20,000 employees and more than 200 production sites in 28 countries, the company is the world's number one brick manufacturer and the leading supplier of clay roof tiles in Europe. It is also one of the leading suppliers of pipe systems and surface fixings in Europe.

At Wienerberger, pm-smart is used in the project management office of the central engineering department, which is headed by Daniela Petrova. This department uses pm-smart for the group-wide management of large, strategically important, critical investment and innovation projects. Another area of application for pm-smart is the IT department at Wienerberger headquarters, which deals with the central application environment.

INTERVIEWEE

We have achieved all of our desired goals and eliminated all of our weak points in terms of transparency, clarity and global visibility with pm-smart as our single source of truth.

Anton Julius Moser
Head of Demand Management & PMO
pm-smart contact person – IT department

INITIAL POINT

How would you describe the project landscape at Wienerberger?

My department deals with the IT application environment.
Another area of application for pm-smart is the investment and innovation projects of the central engineering department, which is headed by Daniela Petrova.

In my department, we have hybrid projects that are handled using classic project management methods on the business side and agile methods on the IT side, especially in development.

What does a typical project workflow look like at Wienerberger?

The typical overall project process within Wienerberger, in my environment, is driven by classic PM methods, as cost management and risk assessment are also important success factors. As described above, when it comes to the development departments, agile PM process models are used in the specialist departments.

How many projects are running concurrently in your company?

There are approximately 100 projects running in parallel in my area.

How and with which tools did you manage your projects previously?

Previously, we had MS Project, Excel, and unstructured documentation. Today, we have pm-smart and Jira.

WHY PM-SMART?

How did you go about your search?
How did the decision-making process work?

This process was initiated and driven by Daniela Petrova in the engineering department. The engineering department was looking for a software solution for project management because their previous solution was purely a documentation management solution that managed project metadata and PM documents in any form. With pm-smart, an integrated project management solution (single, multi and project portfolio management) was selected that was also to be connected to SAP – our group-wide ERP system. This meant that a tool proposal was in place. After a critical evaluation by my department, pm-smart was chosen. As the IT application project manager, it was very important to me that with pm-smart there was chosen a PM tool, that could also be used by all other departments because of its flexibility. Methodologically, there was an elimination process with criteria, points and weightings, i.e. a decision analysis, and pm-smart came out on top.

Why did you specifically choose pm-smart?

It was high time to provide a professional tool for these business processes as well. In addition to the points mentioned above, we also chose pm-smart because I particularly liked the **multi-project management tool** and urgently needed it at the time.
Looking at my area now, the depth that pm-smart offers is not necessary for my projects. With 100 parallel projects, I have a lot of breadth and need to maintain an overview. In the engineering department, it's exactly the opposite: there are fewer projects, but they are much larger, more detailed and more complex.
Here, the **configurability of pm-smart**, which provides all the necessary features in individual project management for complex project planning, is very important.

TOOL INTRODUCTION

How did the introduction of pm-smart go?

I would say normal to good.

Were there any specific requirements arising from your PM processes, and how were these taken into account or adapted in pm-smart?

Yes, there were, they were taken into account and adjustments were made.
Examples of this include the somewhat more complex internal accounting processes for investment projects within the group, different project currencies across the entire group, and much more.

Have your requirements been met?

Yes.

What difficulties did you encounter?
Where do you think EVOLOSO needs to improve?

There were challenges during the introduction itself. This had nothing to do with the tool itself. It was a challenge for us to distinguish between single project management and multi-project management processes, as we had not done this before.
It takes a while to understand these two worlds of single and multi-project management, as well as to establish the transition between the two worlds and the opportunities and necessary changes that result from this.

How satisfied are you with pm-smart? In which areas is there still room for improvement?

It does what it's supposed to do.
One area for improvement: I work extensively with the multi-project management overview lists, and we have configured a three-stage project life cycle status system to date, but I still have difficulty grasping the overall picture. But perhaps this is not an EVOLOSO issue, but rather a matter of definition, requiring us to refine our process and thus also adapt the project life cycle model in pm-smart for my area. This can be freely configured in pm-smart. But even the definition itself is a major challenge in our large company.

What has been your experience with EVOLOSO's services? How satisfied are you with EVOLOSO's service and support?

Overall, it worked very well. We had a good experience. I am also satisfied because – perhaps we are privileged users – **we always received immediate assistance**. One can only express praise for this.

How has employee acceptance of the introduction of pm-smart developed?

Those who use it accept it. However, we are competing with a few other tools in the country organisations across the group.

EFFECTS OF THE INTRODUCTION

Have there been any changes in your company since the introduction of pm-smart? If so, what were they?

[...] No, I wouldn't say that. The advantages have come to fruition. That's why we chose it. [...] But if we still had MS Project and the version chaos today, we would still be doing project management.

What advantages has pm-smart brought to your company?

We have an **overview of what is happening, where everything stands, and a better overview of the money**. That is why we chose the tool, and these advantages were generated. It has already paid off. That was not the case before, because everything was a bit more unstructured and took place in different tools. It was always difficult to figure out what everyone was actually doing and who was where. That is no longer a problem. Everyone can take a look. We also generate reports from pm-smart and say, 'This is what we're doing. What's in there is what matters.' By and large, everyone looks at it and it provides information and status updates for everyone. No one has to spend days asking people questions or merging various tools and Excel lists. It's now available online.

In your opinion, has sensitivity to the topic of project management changed since its introduction among management and employees?

Yes, it has, and it has improved. Thanks to pm-smart and the transparency it brings us, we are also more visible to top management. The constraints we introduced with pm-smart, e.g. 'if you sign a request, you have to bring us a BRD beforehand and not afterwards', have spread among the employees and have also increased sensitivity and acceptance. [...] The percentage of projects we handle in the right steps and in the right order has definitely increased.

FUTURE

What are your plans for the future to further optimise project management?

When we look at the project landscape, we have established the topic 'What do I need to do in project implementation?' with pm-smart. I consider that to be done. Everything we use in terms of planning methods in project management is done in pm-smart.

We have also solved the problem of closing projects in the true sense of the word and not just stopping in the tool when we have finished implementation, after which they continue to roll around in the tools.

We are currently in the process of optimising the processes prior to the project. So, an idea arises and a request or demand is made, as we say in our field. We are not yet at the implementation stage or the quotation or cost estimation stage, but rather the steps prior to that. A side issue is the question of whether we have a budget for it. To this end, we have developed the **CAPEX Management Tool (CMT)** with EVOLOSO, an integrated budgeting system for the entire group. Budgets are approved in CMT. Complex projects can be transferred to pm-smart for processing in the form of a project. Project controlling data can then be automatically transferred to budgeting controlling as a forecast.

We see further potential for optimisation within our group in the management of critical resources. Our goal is to be able to identify bottlenecks even earlier. I know there is a capacity planning module in pm-smart that could be used in the future. This could also happen in Jira, so we are still thinking about where and how we can do this most quickly. No decision has been made yet, only ideas and discussions about whether and how.

The third topic is the further dissemination of pm-smart to the country organisations, because pm-smart and project management are currently mainly driven by headquarters. There are more and more requests from the countries, which appreciate the overall view of their project landscape, which is managed by HQ. This is definitely a topic for expansion.

How do you see the future cooperation between Wienerberger and EVOLOSO?

We use the tool and if we want something, we tell you, you do it and we get an invoice for it. In my view, this works straightforwardly and I hope we don't have too many annoying little things to dump on you. [...]

Thank you very much
for the interview,
Mr Moser!