PROJECT open

Lexcelera
Translation Management

Web-based Translation Management

The result is simple: "My project managers like it a lot," says Lori Thicke, managing director of Lexcelera. Thicke spoke of the]project-open[project management system the company installed for its 50 employees spread from its Paris headquarters to its offices in the UK and Venezuela.

The Customer

Lexcelera, a leading translation company in France, was the first to receive ISO 9001:2000 quality certification. Lexcelera's centers of excellence manage legal, financial, IT, HR, marketing and energy & environment translations. Lexcelera focuses on translation speed and overall customer service. With translators on five continents in 20 time zones, the company prides itself on quick response to the needs of large corporations.

The Challenge

As Lexcelera opened production offices in Venezuela, Canada and Argentina, and a sales office in the United Kingdom, it became clear that the company was outgrowing its existing, home-built ERP system. The old system had several problems: It didn't have the reporting capability to manage the different legal entities that now form the Lexcelera Group. It couldn't cope with multiple offices in terms of project management or accounting. It would not support the online collaboration processes necessary to coordinate international teams. Lexcelera's management needed deep insight into the efficiency of its processes.

The Decision Process and Open-Source

For Lexcelera, it was crucial to adapt the future ERP system to a number of "proprietary" processes — processes developed over the last 2 decades that set Lexcelera apart from the competition. For that reason, Lexcelera seriously considered writing their own ERP system from scratch. However, when evaluating the possibilities for designing their own program, Lexcelera discovered that]project-open[would be the most complete solution for the best price. "]po[has all the functions we need, and being open source, we can tailor it to fit our processes," says Thicke. "Not having to build our own program from scratch has saved us two years' work. And at the end of the day, it's a better program than we could have ever built ourselves. It's customized to our needs and the extensions we have built remain our intellectual property, so we don't have to share them with the competition."

The Solution

The solution finally adopted by Lexcelera consists of the]project-open[standard product, the configuration template for translation companies, and several extension modules for reporting, HR skill management, data warehousing, and multi-office operations. In addition,]project-open[consultants configured the project and customer information to model exactly the structure of Lexcelera's multiple sales and production offices.

At a glance

Customer

Lexcelera is a leading translation company in France, and the first to receive ISO 9001:2000 certification. Lexcelera's mission is accelerating translation for the world's top corporations.

Business Need

Opening up new sales and production offices on 3 continents, Lexcelera needed a high-performance web-based ERP system.

Solution

Lexcelera implemented]project-open[for translation companies, plus several extension modules.

Results

The new system went live in only two weeks and lead to substantial process improvements.

]project open[

Multi-Office Reporting

One of the most important features of]project-open[for Lexcelera is multi-office reporting. "I get incredibly detailed reports," says Lori Thicke. "Each month, by the end of the first week our Production Manager, Laurence Roguet, is able able to tell us how the rest of the month is going to shape up for each office." The key to the detailed reporting is a unified representation of the company's group structure. In this structure, all information on sales and production activities is stored in a single place.]project-open['s permission system limits access to this information to the central controlling department and the users of each office.

Multi-Office Controlling

]project-open['s financial controlling features were key to Lexcelera's decision, Thicke said. "]po[allows me to see the profit margin of each office, customer, cost center and project manager in my company." Thanks to the built-in timesheet management and the activity-based costing (ABC) approach, each project and key account manager gets real-time information on both the gross and net margins of each project. "We have unsuccessfully tried to increase financial awareness over the years, and now project managers just look at their project's financial summary pages." says Lori Thicke. "Our old homegrown system covered the basics, but]po[now covers a lot more and is still much cheaper."

Reporting and CRM Decisions

Another area impacted by the improved reporting is customer relationship management (CRM). Thanks to the integration between presales, sales and operations across offices, Lexcelera can now compare customer acquisition costs with customer profitability, providing valuable feedback to the sales team. This even works if production is handled by a different office than sales — a key component when dealing with a multi-office enterprise.

Together with customers' CRM information, this has allowed the sales team to focus acquisition activities on more profitable customer segments.

Multi-Office Accounting

Finally, multi-office reporting and multi-currency invoicing allows for the differing accounting activities in each office. "The accounting rules in the UK are different from those in France" says Caroline Dussart, accountant at Lexcelera. "]project open[lets us bill in whatever currency and VAT rate is appropriate. This allows us to use local accounting packages, instead of a complex and expensive central multi-country system."

Implementation Highlight

Replace a homegrown ERP system within two weeks after the project start, followed by a rollout to multiple international offices. Improved process visibility led to significant processes optimization.

Key Modules Used

- ▶]po[Project Management
- ▶]po[Project Controlling
- ▶]po[Translation Workflow
- ▶]po[Timesheet Management
- ▶]po[HR Skills Database
- ▶]po[Issue Tracker
- ▶]po[Multi-Office Permissions
- ▶]po[Reporting
- ▶]po[Data Warehouse
- ▶]po[Calendar
- ▶]po[Discussion Forums
- ▶]po[File Storage
- ▶]po[Full-Text Search

The Implementing Project

"Once we got started, it only took two weeks until the go-live at the head office," says Lori Thicke. During this time, all major rollout activities took place, including process definition,]po[configuration, and training. The other offices followed one by one without time pressure.

The successful import of data from the old system into the new system was key to the]po[transition. "I immediately felt at home when I saw my projects in the new system." says Fleur Bogerd, account manager at Lexcelera.

Business Results

Business results include:

- ▶ Management of a multi-office group structure
- ▶ Improved management insight into translation processes and their parameters, leading to substantial improvements
- ▶ Implementation that was on time and within budget
- ▶ Smooth transition from the old system to]po[
- ▶ The entire system for 50 workstations runs on a standard Intel single-processor server