PROJECT]open[

„We were looking for a central place to store project information. With]project-open[we found an Internet collaboration platform with full project controlling capabilities."

Andrea Heup
Project Manager VAW-arvato, Spain

VAW-arvato S.L.
Seamless collaboration between external and internal workers

The Customer

VAW-arvato Spain is a subsidiary of VAW-arvato, the international full-service provider for technical documentation within arvato AG (Bertelsmann Group). Services provided include the production of descriptive documentation, parts catalogues and technical illustrations as well as translations in more than 30 languages. In addition, VAW-arvato provides data-management solutions, software development and training in the area of technical documentation to its customers.

In its strong affiliation with arvato logistics services, VAW-arvato realizes integrated solutions for clients from the media-independent production of documentation to intelligent content management systems to printing and the distribution to any target group.

The Challenge

After two years of rapid growth, the process infrastructure of VAW-arvato Spain had reached a critical point. A decision was made to implement an enterprise project management application to cover the technical documentation process chain from authoring and illustration to DTP, translation and printing.

The main challenge was finding a system covering both the internal and outsourced processes at a price level suitable for a company with about 60 inhouse employees.

„We need a system to integrate our translation and non-translation departments, provide a single point of access for all our employees and to produce financial reports according to the Bertelsmann accounting standards" says David García, managing director of VAW-arvato S.L.

Open-Source Advantages

An open-source based application was preferred during the tool selection process because of the price aspect and flexibility usually associated with open software.

VAW
arvato

At a glance

Customer

VAW-arvato S.L. is the Spanish subsidiary of VAW-arvato (part of Bertelsmann Group).

Business Need

VAW-arvato S.L. needed a central ERP system, integration of external workers and a workflow support for the translation process.

Solution

]project-open[was selected with additional modules for translation management.

Results

► Centralization of dispersed information into a single ERP system.
► Integration of external workers into the project workflow.
► Operational use of]project-open[started two months after kick-off.

"Technical documentation processes require a lot of flexibility to meet our customers' needs." explains David García. "We knew we would have to adopt the system to our company culture."

"The open-source based]project-open[system was technically equivalent or superior to its closed-source competitors. However, the open source code allows us to modify the code ourselves as if we had written the software ourselves."

The Solution

The solution installed at VAW-arvato S.L. consists of the]project-open[base products for "Translation" and "Consulting" companies plus several extension modules.

Each VAW-arvato project consists of a number of phases to be executed by different departments using different processes. These project phases are modelled in]project-open[as subprojects, each with a different project manager and a different cost center. For controlling,]project-open[sums up all related costs on the main project, allowing to determine precise profit and loss figures per project and department.

Decentralized Information Workers

The project cycle of VAW-arvato includes external personal in a number of ways:

► Part of the VAW-arvato staff is located offsite at the customers' technical documentation department. These staff members need full access to the VAW-arvato project management system.

► Some technical documentation core processes such as translations and desktop publishing are frequently subcontracted to vendors in different parts of the world. These vendors need access to the VAW-arvato system, but are limited to specific functional areas and projects. Additionally, provider management tools are necessary to supervise the vendor's performance/price ratio.

► Printing and logistics at the final project phase need access to potentially huge documents produced during the process.

Internet & Security

Managing the security implication of a distributed environment exposed to the Internet causes several challenges to administration and system administration. To tackle these concerns,]project-open[provides a number of mechanisms that in combination allow to minimize IT security risks.

"The onetime password (OTP) module was an important factor for us to allow direct Internet access to the system" says Bartosz Zarzycki, the Bertelsmann system administrator responsible for the implementation of]project-open[. "The OTP extension module manages a list of Transaction Numbers (TAN) per user, similar to the method know from online banking systems".

Implementation Highlight

Seamless integration of external information workers with internal staff

Key Modules Used

►]po[Project Management
►]po[Portfolio Management
►]po[Translation Workflow
►]po[HR Skills Database
►]po[Timesheet Management
►]po[Project Controlling
►]po[Request Workflow
►]po[Reporting
►]po[Data-Warehouse "light"
►]po[SAP Import Interface
►]po[Calendar
►]po[Discussion Forums
►]po[Filestorage
►]po[Full-Text Search

"Exposing an application to the Internet is always a risk" says Bartosz Zarzycki, "However,]project-open[security mechanisms convinced us that the efficiency benefits are far more valuable than the remaining risks."

The Project Rollout

"We took the opportunity and rearranged the internal structure and some responsibilities during the project. In particular we decentralized the management of quotes and purchase orders" explains David García. "The implementation project itself went smoothly. However, the combination of new responsibilities and a new system required some extra training effort.

Business Results

12 months after the rollout a number of results have become visible:

► Centralization of dispersed information into a single ERP system

► Integration of external workers into the project workflow

► Project controlling (profit & loss per project) provides improved visibility of cost drivers.

► VAW-arvato customers are impressed by the technology and process sophistication.

► Many efficiency improvements (time and cost) as well as soft factors like higher identification with the company