Case Study: Volvo Cars Corporation

ProjectHelp automates internal business routines and project management at Volvo Cars Corporation.

The Customer

OWNERSHIP
Since 1999 VCC has been wholly owned by Ford Motor Company. Along with Aston Martin, Jaguar and Land Rover, VCC is part of Ford's Premier Automotive Group (PAG). VCC functions as a "Center of Excellence for Safety" within the Ford Motor Company and as a "Center of Excellence for Telematics" within PAG. This means that safety research carried out by VCC has a strong influence on all car brands within the Ford Group.

MARKETS
Volvo Cars sales and service network covers about 120 countries, comprising some 2,400 sales outlets and service workshops around the world, including about 1,500 in Europe and 400 in North America.

Much of the network is composed of independent companies working with Volvo Car Corporation (VCC) as a business partner.

VCC has major plants in Sweden and Belgium. An independent company, NedCar, was until May 2004 responsible for manufacturing in the Netherlands.

The production of vital components, such as engines, and body components, is mainly based in Sweden. There is also an engine plant in Ghent, Belgium, which was opened in 2002.

Volvo Car Corporation's headquarter and other corporate functions are based in Gothenburg, Sweden. President and CEO is Hans-Olov Olsson.

PARTS AND SERVICE
There are more than five million Volvo car owners around the world. Volvo Cars sales and service network covers about 120 countries, comprising some 2,400 sales outlets and service workshops around the world, including about 1,500 in Europe and 400 in North America.

More than 100 million business transactions involving parts are carried out every year within the Volvo Cars organisation. The Volvo Parts main office in Gothenburg is in round-the-clock contact with all Volvo service facilities by computerised communication and satellites. Volvo Car Corporation handles more than 7,500,000 order lines every year. For emergencies, the organisation in Gothenburg is open 24 hours a day.

EMPLOYEE FACTS:
Total amount of employees, year 2004 (Dec 31): 27,575

The Challenge

Volvo Cars Corporation has started a "Next Generation program" which shall replace most of their existing core software-systems in their factories, like production systems and material planning & logistics.

The Next Generation Program involves hundreds of people over three years.

All projects shall follow Fords project model which is built on RUP. The projects are built in phases and broken down into use cases. A new iteration of the plan for each project is planned every 6 week. The plan is initially planned in MS Project. All involved personnel shall report their time spent on the tasks within each project on a weekly basis.

Project managers track the project “live” and the department managers shall keep constant track of the resource allocation.

The management shall all the time have access to statistics on planned versus actuals on project level, resource level, use case level, phase level, use case level, discipline level and on iteration level.

Time spent on the projects shall be imported into SAP R3.

The Solution

ProjectHelp solved the specific issues identified by Volvo in a single, integrated and fully web-based business system.

Volvo has implemented a full Enterprise version of ProjectHelp, hosted and managed by the ProjectHelp ASP service.
The initial project plan is made in MS Project, using the Ford project model built on RUP. The MS project-plan is imported into ProjectHelp. The original plan can be displayed in the Gantt-chart in ProjectHelp. But during the import-process the tasks are analyzed and specific task-properties are set and all dimensions for statistics are set.

Since the original plan is very comprehensive (seven levels deep) the user needed an easy timesheet for the project. ProjectHelp made this available for the user by analyzing and automating the definition of timesheet reporting level for the tasks inside the project. Now the project structure in the timesheet is simple and easy to understand and use. By developing some special reports, ProjectHelp gave the management all the data needed for their statistics and control of the projects and resources.

The export module in ProjectHelp produces a text-file which is imported into SAP R3.

**The Result**

All projects within the “Next Generation program” at Volvo Cars Corporation are now run according to the Ford project model. All projects are planned in MS Project based on a template built on RUP. When the plan is imported into ProjectHelp it will be prepared for easy timesheet reporting. All resources fill in their timesheets via the web in a browser. The projects are always up to date according to plan, actual and progress. Managers can, anytime and anywhere, see the key values on the business-dimensions defined.

**The Future**

Volvo Cars Corporation have successfully increased the level of professional project management in their business, and the company is continuing to work with ProjectHelp to move even further with automation of their resource management and implement ProjectHelp for other projects outside the “Next Generation program”.

**About ProjectHelp**

ProjectHelp develop and market Professional Services Automation solutions. We offer the technology and the methodology to meet the specific business needs of professional service companies: engineers, architects, designers, IT & business consultants, legal & accounting professionals, R&D, advertising agencies, and many more project-oriented, consulting organisations.

Our software solution is 100% web-based, available in many different languages and includes functionality for project management, timesheets, CRM, expenses, invoicing, resource allocation, skills management and document management. It can be integrated with all major accounts, payroll, CRM and other systems and is available as a local- or ASP-hosted solution.

For a free demonstration, please see www.projecthelp.com or ask your information technology provider about ProjectHelp.