

swissgrid

Project Management Office for Ultra-high Voltage Power

Power utility Swissgrid AG implements portfolio, project and resource management

Swissgrid AG set up its PMO as a company department in its own right, enabling it to make significant improvements to the efficiency of its planning, management and monitoring of its projects in a very short timeframe. It achieved this by implementing a powerful, integrated project and portfolio management solution. One of this system's top features is the sophisticated solution that provides more visibility for resource planning and approvals. It enables the company to meet resource requirements within projects and line departments in a transparent way, while ensuring optimal capacity utilization for all the resources involved.



Swissgrid is Switzerland's national electricity supplier. As the owner of the supply grid, it is responsible for a non-discriminatory, safe, reliable and profitable operation of the country's ultra-high voltage network. It employs over 400 highly qualified staff from 17 countries at its offices in Laufenburg, Frick and Vevey. It is also a member of the European network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E) and handles various tasks in the area of coordination and grid usage for European electricity. Several Swiss electricity companies own 100% of Swissgrid's share capital.

Swissgrid took over running the electricity transmission network in 2013, at which point the complexity of its mission and responsibilities increased significantly. The company is in charge of all of the maintenance, expansion and replacement of the

supply network. As a result, the company needed to accelerate the transformation it had already kicked off in 2010. An important part of this change was adopting a more professional approach to its portfolio, project and resource management in order to keep pace with sudden growth in the size of its project portfolio. This was why it set up the new division "Project Delivery" with its PMO in good time. The PMO is the centralized management location for strategies and policies that form the foundation of professional, efficient and standardized project execution. Another of the PMO's missions was to revise and update project methodologies and processes and implement the appropriate IT tools to facilitate this.

Enterprise-wide integrated PM solution

Working in these new conditions, Swissgrid wanted to manage its entire project portfolio (except net construction and maintenance projects) with the new solution, and to run all its detailed cost, schedule and resource planning with it. A particularly important focus for managers was to significantly improve the efficiency of planning, management and monitoring processes for all its projects. They also wanted to accelerate the generation of project reports and boost their quality. In order to achieve this, the company planned to integrate its existing SAP system and Prevero with its project management solution and needed a service provider with the appropriate level of methodology and technology expertise.

Industry:

- Energy

Department:

- Strategy & Development

Solution components:

- Microsoft Project Server 2013
- Project Professional 2013
- Project Web App
- TPG PSLink
- TPG ResourceLink
- TPG TeamManager

"The integrated PPM system has enabled us to manage our portfolio and projects in a much more professional way. Our resource planning is also much more efficient now."

Thomas Dinkel, PMO Manager
Swissgrid AG

Swissgrid had already chosen Microsoft Project Server as its centralized project management solution before it turned to TPG for the implementation. Compared with other solutions, this tool impressed Swissgrid with its flexibility and ability to be personalized quickly. The product extensions from TPG would also ensure that the solution could be integrated into the company's existing system infrastructure.



The right system in just six months

The project began with a detailed requirements analysis of processes and infrastructures. This was achieved in several workshops run by Swiss specialists at TPG The Project Group and made a big contribution to helping the customer to define the right solution. The implementation, pilot and rollout phases followed the workshops. It took just six months for the Microsoft Project Server system to be fully operational at Swissgrid.

Today, the project managers and their teams, along with management, all work with the enterprise-wide platform that is also integrated with SAP. Project teams use the Microsoft Project client for their detailed cost, resource and schedule planning. General information and responsibilities are managed with the Project Web App. Managers also use the app to update standardized reporting information on status, trend, risks, risks management measures, and interdependencies with other projects. The inclusion of a unified look and feel for data entry screens has considerably improved data quality compared to how it was prior to the new system.

Resource coordination between project and line management

Project managers need knowledge workers – or resources – from line-of-business departments to implement their projects. These employees need to work on important tasks for their department as well as for the PMO, in order to keep the departments running efficiently. As a result, the first thing project managers have to do – before they even start the project – is to coordinate resource utilization with LOB departments. This generally takes some effort, as they need to ensure they are meeting the requirements of their project as well as of the relevant department, while carefully balancing the capacities of each resource. To accelerate this process, Swissgrid has recently started using an integrated solution for resource planning and approval. Using the TPG TeamManager, line managers can plan their departments' activities using internal orders imported from SAP. They can also import resource requests from Microsoft Project, assign the tasks to the relevant employees, and approve the availability of the resource to the project manager. The relevant employee's workload is automatically checked first to ensure they have the capacity required.

Another benefit of the system for line managers is that they can access important information about up-to-date activities per line function, project and staff member as well as the available capacity and planned absences of each team member. The combination of these details lets managers see each employee's real availability for projects. As a result, line managers always have an overview of their plans and compare them to the actual work performed by their staff. Through this process and the documentation stored in a tool, Project managers' planning is way more reliable now.

Increased transparency and data quality

Swissgrid's new project management system uses the middleware product TPG PSLink to integrate Microsoft Project Server with the SAP modules PS, CO, HR and CATS as well as with Prevero, a business intelligence system. The integration

“Working with TPG has been professional and straightforward, from the requirement definition phase through to the system handover and operation. Customer challenges are no problem at all for TPG staff, whose experience meant they could implement requirements quickly in the appropriate solutions.”

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The challenge: Swissgrid took over running the electricity transmission network in 2013, at which point the complexity of its mission and responsibilities increased significantly. The company is in charge of all of the maintenance, expansion and replacement of the supply network. As a result, the company needed to accelerate the transformation it had already kicked off in 2010. An important part of this change was adopting a more professional approach to its portfolio, project and resource management in order to keep pace with sudden growth in the size of its project portfolio.

The solution: Swissgrid's PMO is a department in its own right and the centralized management location for strategies and policies that form the foundation of professional, efficient and standardized project execution. The PMO's responsibilities also included the revision of methodologies and processes, as well as the introduction of a PM tool and ensuring operation, staff training and expansion plans for it. The integration of Microsoft Project Server with SAP, along with the products used for resource planning and coordination between project and line managers, has created a highly professional environment conducive to successful projects.

The benefits: Team managers always have a complete overview of the workload, tasks, actual hours worked and absences of their staff. Project managers can plan their projects better as they have much more reliable resource data. And the integration with SAP means that master data are always up to date. Project monitoring is easy with a variety of reports generated from information in various databases. The solution used at Swissgrid enables the company to produce project reports about deadlines, costs and resources reports much faster and in more detail.

ensures that structure and cost information, as well as master data, only need to be entered once and are shared between the two systems automatically. In addition, the integrated solution provides team members with data tailored to their role and in far better quality, facilitating well-founded decision making.

"The combination of Microsoft Project Server and the TPG products can be used in many ways and meets all of Swissgrid's needs," says Thomas Dinkel, Project Management Office manager at Swissgrid. Tommy Völkle from the PMO adds: "The straightforward and solution-oriented collaboration with TPG has generated some innovative results and has opened up potential new development opportunities for Swissgrid." Against the backdrop of his many years of project management consulting experience, Matthias Jäger from TPG notes: "Swissgrid is a great example of what a committed PMO – with management support – can achieve. It's a department in its own right with staff who have a lot of stamina, helping the company ensure really sustainable and operational processes that I believe will support the firm for a long time to come."

Matthias Jäger adds: "The solution established at Swissgrid is a unique and very sophisticated integration of the various systems. It enables end-to-end resource planning that forms the foundation of flexible yet meaningful reports for management."

Swissgrid solution architecture

Swissgrid operates as a matrix organization. The users of the new project management solution based on Microsoft technology and the SAP integration include project managers, team leaders and project team members. The project managers use Microsoft Project Server 2013 and the associated Professional client for project planning. The integration via TPG PSLink automatically imports resources, with their RBS code, from the SAP system into the Project Server resource pool and places the PSP elements in a lookup table. The project managers plan their projects by assigning tasks to named or generic resources and the correct PSP elements to the tasks.

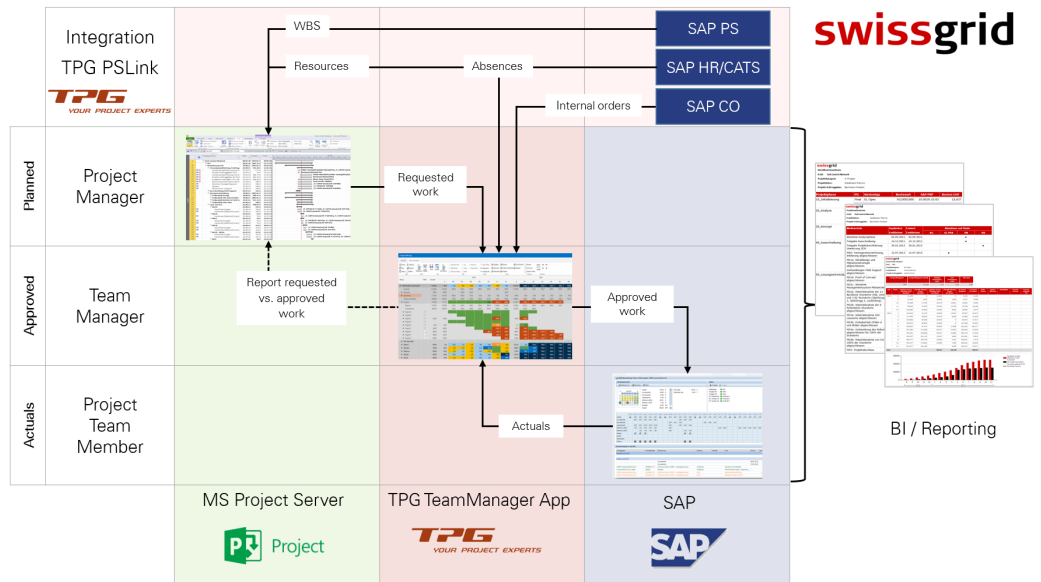
The TPG TeamManager gives team leaders a transparent overview of resource availability in

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their teams. They update this with all booked time for each of their staff, composed of individual and group tasks from SAP as well as absences due to vacation, offsite training etc. that makes it easy to see free capacity at a glance. By importing planning data from the Project Server, team leaders can view resource requests from project managers. The team leader can use the TPG TeamManager to answer these requests and confirm the allocation of team members with the necessary capacity to the project manager on an informed basis.

The advantage to both teams is that the project manager's and team leader's data are stored in different systems, so neither side can change the other's data. The role of the TPG TeamManager is to bring both sides together and display them as a comparative chart, making it quicker and easier to agree on resource allocation.

The project team members view their project-related tasks in the ProjectWeb App and enter their actual hours worked in SAP CATS, which includes the ProTime add-on. They can only enter their hours when their team manager has assigned them to the project. The actual hours worked by team members are also imported into the TPG TeamManager.

With this integrated solution, team leaders always have a complete overview of plans, line and project activities, and the actual time worked by their staff. And project managers can plan their projects better because they have more reliable information as a basis. The integration with SAP means that master data are always up to date. Team leaders and project managers can generate a variety of reports that include data from Project Server und TPG TeamManager, giving them a better basis for decision-making. And great decision making creates the right conditions for successful projects.

Reference customer

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