

Case Study

Edscha Engineering GmbH

VDA-Compliant Maturity Level Assurance
in International Project Management

Flexibility for Future Growth

Globally active automotive supplier Edscha Engineering GmbH is the world's largest supplier of hinge systems and at the same time one of the leading European suppliers of powered systems and driver controls, such as foot controls and parking brakes. The North Rhine-Westphalian company with production and development sites in four continents has been an innovative partner of almost all big manufacturers of the automotive industry.

The large number of simultaneous projects places high demands on resource planning and scheduling, on system interfaces and on the general overview. Edscha developed the solution EdPro along with TPG The Project Group GmbH. This has provided Edscha with a project management system living up to the international requirements and capable of growing flexibly with future tasks.

INDUSTRY

Automotive

DEPARTMENT

Building, Construction & engineering

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

Microsoft Project Server

Microsoft SharePoint

TPG PSLink



„We were never interested in an out-of-the-box solution to which our company would have to adapt – we wanted a custom solution that would adapt to us.“

Holger Marx, Head of PMO at Edscha

HUNDREDS OF PROJECTS WORLDWIDE

Solutions for Edscha have to work globally. The company based in Remscheid, North Rhine-Westphalia produces and sells products on four continents: “Such a comprehensive requirement for internationality in the project management system – that was a particular challenge on this scale,” recalls TPG project manager Bünyamin Ögdüm.

Holger Marx, Head of Edscha Project Management, illustrates the dimension of the challenge: “We have a global landscape with about 300 projects plus another 200 in the process of being acquired. EdPro – the new Edscha tool – now provides a single system for global use and cross-site project management.” TPG developed it based on Microsoft Project Server with SharePoint.

“The result is impressive,” says Holger Marx happily. EdPro has been in daily use at Edscha since the summer of 2017.



Holger Marx,
Head of PMO at Edscha

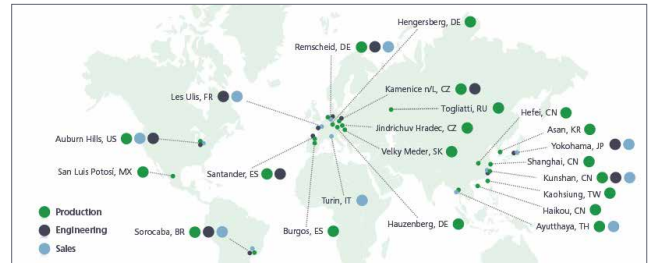
“It has achieved a high level of acceptance,” observes Marx. “The software is extremely user-friendly and provides significant benefits to all involved – project managers as well as team members.” Users are always up to date, both on the project status and on the schedule. The individual user can only guess how high the effort for creating this easy-to-use interface must have been.

“Business and technical requirements for the system were highly complex,” explains Stavros Georgantzis, Founder and Managing Partner at TPG. “Yet, in close collaboration with Edscha, we managed to implement the solution in a simple and user-friendly way.”

EXPERTISE IN INTEGRATING SAP AND MICROSOFT PROJECT

From the outset, Edscha had a whole range of requirements for the new system which far exceeded the combination and configuration of standard components. They were aware that this would not be easy, as a previous attempt with a different software service provider had failed.

TPG’s particular expertise in tailored, integrated solutions was one of the reasons why Edscha awarded the contract to the Munich-based company.



Another decisive factor for Edscha was TPG’s excellent local reference customer. Heating technology company Vaillant is also based in Remscheid and has been working with TPG for many years.

Marx: “Above all, TPG has proven expertise in integrating SAP and Microsoft Project” – an aspect of vital importance for Edscha’s business processes. The IT service provider’s product PSLink for the synchronization of the different system worlds is now an integral part of EdPro.

“It is important for the users to find and edit all relevant information in the tool best suited for them. The corresponding tools are Microsoft Project and SharePoint for project managers and project teams and SAP for controllers,” explains Georgantzis.

This enables Edscha project managers, for example, to do their scheduling as well as their effort, cost and budget planning entirely in Microsoft Project. Necessary inputs are taken from SAP, and the results are synchronized with SAP.



The integration of the two systems also enables insightful and fast reporting. Almost all reports contain data from both sources and allow valid statements about the status of projects. A prominent example of this is the Project Health Report allowing the PMO to see at a glance how “healthy” each project is.

Short Project Profile

The Company: With 23 locations worldwide, Edscha is a strategic development partner of the international automotive industry. It is the world's largest supplier of hinge systems and one of the leading European suppliers of powered systems and driver controls, such as foot controls and parking brakes. 5,900 employees work across the three business units. Since 2010, the company has been part of the Spanish automotive supplier group Gestamp.

The Challenge: Edscha had been using different systems to manage the increasing number of projects, among them Excel and Microsoft Project as pure client tools. What was required was an overall solution to be used internationally, taking VDA-compliant standards into account.

The Solution: TPG developed a custom system architecture for Edscha based on Microsoft Project Server with SharePoint and TPG PSLink for SAP integration. The system called EdPro combines the worlds of the ERP and project management systems. A technically complex tool, the solution simplifies and harmonizes project management across sites and system interfaces.

The Benefits: EdPro has provided Edscha with a single system for global use and cross-site project management. It enables global reporting and provides all participants with an overview of the actual status of projects, resources and schedules based on current data available at the touch of a button.

COST AND BUDGET PLANNING LIKE IN SAP – ONLY EASIER

For many years, Edscha had been using an SAP application called ZPEP for planning and monitoring efforts, costs and budgets. During the workshops, it quickly became apparent that this tried-and-tested method had to be retained. No longer in SAP, however, but as part of EdPro.

A planning form was developed based on the ZPEP application. Not only did this form make effort, cost and budget planning easier, it also linked it to scheduling. Today, it is one of the central planning components of the EdPro solution.

The screenshot shows a complex planning form with multiple sections:

- Header:** Project name, client, and status information.
- Phases:** A Gantt chart showing project phases: Phase 1 - Angebot, Phase 2 - Entwicklung, Phase 3 - Realisation, and Phase 4 - SOP Support.
- Costs:** Tables for 'Kosten' (Costs) and 'Erlöse' (Revenues) broken down by phase and category (e.g., Material, Personnel, Quality).
- Summary:** Overall project metrics and status indicators.

User-friendly EdPro planning form

CHECKLIST MAINTENANCE WITH SHAREPOINT

“In our view, the open SharePoint system was another aspect that convinced us in favor of the TPG solution,” reports Marx.

Microsoft SharePoint has a very high significance for Edscha. This is mainly due to the checklists, which can be maintained there and linked to other systems.

The screenshot shows a 'Tasks/RGA' dashboard with a checklist for monitoring project phases. The checklist includes:

- Changemanagement:** Change in Phase:
- Risk Rating:**
- Team List:**
- Overall Assessment:**
- Gateview:** Gate closed:
- Due Date:** 10.08.2017, 18.12.2017, 16.07.2018, 14.08.2018, 19.10.2018, 01.02.2019
- Gate Delay (Weeks):** No Delay, No Delay, No Delay, No Delay, No Delay, No Delay
- Open / Total:** 0 / 37, 0 / 15, 2 / 60, 4 / 50, 6 / 36, 31 / 31

Checklist for monitoring the current project phase

Checklists are used for projects that are planned in phases. The end of each phase marks a so-called stage-gate, as a gate for the transition to the next phase. The checklist helps check whether the project has reached all the defined goals of the phase it just passed through.

Depending on the project classification, EdPro provides the checklist questions relevant to the project. Approval of the subsequent phase is subject to the successful final check of the checklist of the preceding phase.

Further functions, such as access permissions, lock mechanisms and the automatic synchronization with the milestone dates in the schedule, are important for the secure use of the checklists.

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VDA INDUSTRY STANDARDS MET

“What made Edscha a special case was the requirement that the checklists had to have a specific format – the process needed to be VDA-compliant,” explains Bünyamin Ögdüm. The German Association of the Automotive Industry (Verband der Deutschen Automobilindustrie, VDA) has defined a whole range of standards that are mandatory for German automotive manufacturers and suppliers.

“The VDA term for this is maturity level assurance,” clarifies Holger Marx. “We used to work with different systems, such as Excel and Microsoft Project, to track and check the maturity of our projects. But EdPro makes it easier to keep track. At every milestone between two phases, the project manager can now see whether all responses are green or whether there are still yellow or even red ones among them.” The IT solution ensures compliance with the VDA process.



EXPLOITING ALL THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE SOFTWARE

Probably the biggest challenge in developing and introducing the new system solution was to understand Edscha’s complex processes in detail and to integrate them into the system architecture.

CLIENT

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“TPG were quick to come to grips with our requirements,” reports Marx, adding that the learning process had been reciprocal. “In the process of development, we adapted our requirements for the software, because we were keen to exploit all possibilities that the software offers.”

Marx emphasizes that TPG’s reaction to any changes was always flexible and competent. In general, Edscha saw flexibility as a key characteristic of the Munich-based company. “We were never interested in an out-of-the-box solution to which our company would have to adapt – we wanted a custom solution that would adapt to us.”

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

And the same goes for the future. “After the software introduction, the project teams continue to make suggestions as to what could be improved or which additional functions would be useful,” observes Holger Marx. “We evaluate these suggestions. Depending on our decisions, we implement them in consultation with TPG.”

A future field of application could be the product development process, for example. In this process, Edscha assesses, for customers from the automotive industry, whether the desired product is feasible. They also establish if the necessary quality can be guaranteed, which parts and materials would have to be purchased, which costs would accrue and much more. “So far, many participants have worked on different Excel sheets,” says Marx, “We see a chance to simplify this with EdPro.”

“We are in a continuous improvement process,” says Ögdüm summing up the successful collaboration with Edscha. “The system is running well and growing steadily.” Holger Marx makes it even shorter: “EdPro lives and thrives.”

SOLUTION PROVIDER

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