

# CASE STUDY

## Euronics Deutschland eG

Microsoft-Teams-Integrated Project and Portfolio Management Solution Drives High Level of Acceptance

### Usability as a Success Factor

A cooperative with more than 1200 members across 1400 locations, Euronics Deutschland eG offers specialist retailers a broad range of services. Besides optimum purchase conditions, this includes for instance advice on sales promotion measures, support in selecting the range of products, a wide variety of training and further education programs and, last but not least, professional and nationwide advertising for the Euronics brand.

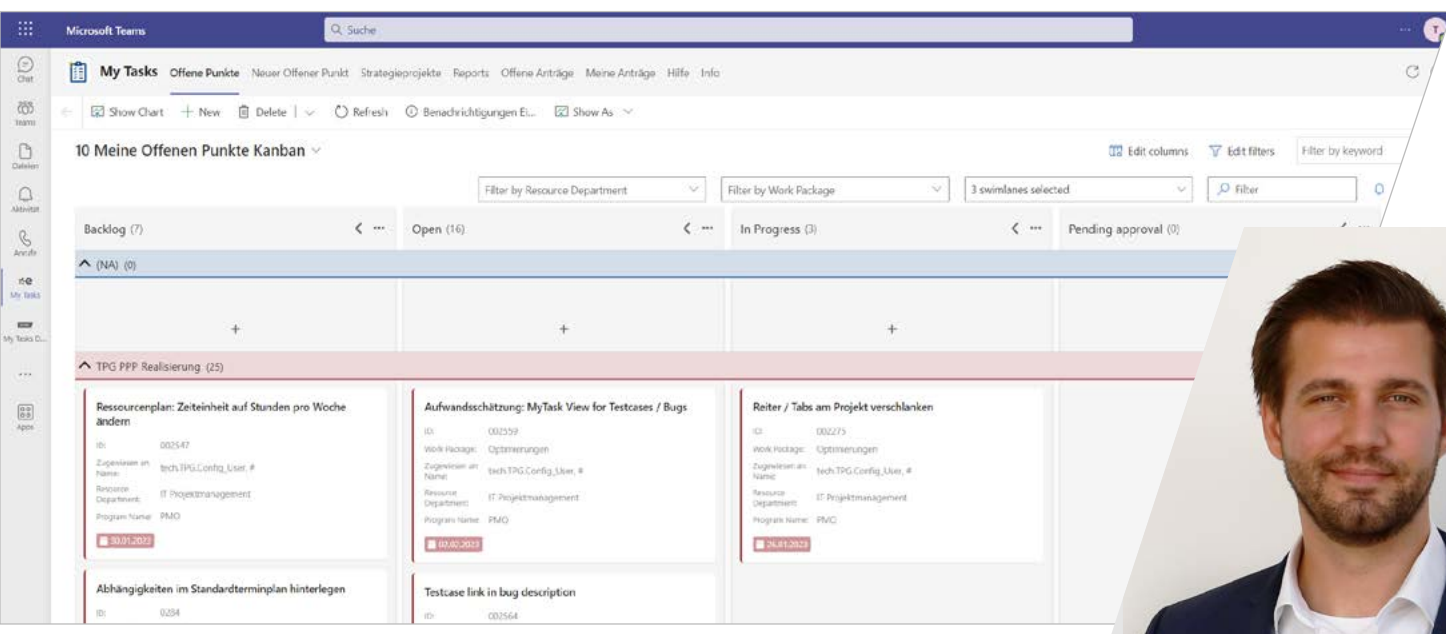
With a strategy program geared to sustainability, Euronics has focused on the three pillars of value creation, customer orientation and process simplification since 2019. For the related project measures, the company required a professional project and portfolio management (PPM) tool.

The first attempt with a different tool had failed some time before due to lack of acceptance among the users. For the second attempt, Euronics chose TPG The Project Group as a partner and the modern TPG ProjectPowerPack tool based on Microsoft technology. With this tool, the company now possesses a widely accepted integrated PPM solution.

Thanks to excellent usability, its level of performance can be fully exploited.



**Industry** Consumer Electronics  
**Department** Project Management Office  
**Solution** TPG ProjectPowerPack,  
MS Power BI



*“Now, we can control our project and portfolio management soundly.”*

*“On its own, a tool is not the cure-all. You need to make it as easy as possible for people if the tool is also to be accepted and used.”*

Martin Sprenger, Head of Strategy, Expansion and Transformation  
at Euronics Deutschland eG

## NO ADJUSTMENT PERIOD FOR EMPLOYEES

“Usability beats functional diversity,” states Martin Sprenger. Thereby, the Head of Strategy, Expansion and Transformation at Euronics Deutschland eG emphasizes that powerful software will only bring benefits if the employees actually use it. Sprenger has learned that this cannot be taken for granted. In 2021, he examined the PPM situation at Euronics as it had been up to that point in the context of a comprehensive analysis of the current situation. In the process, it quickly became clear to him: “We need a new solution.”

Meanwhile, the latter has been implemented and accepted by all team members. TPG ProjectPowerPack is fully integrated in Microsoft Teams and has proven to be just as user-friendly to Sprenger as he had desired. “This is especially important for our warehouse employees who tend to have little exposure to IT software,” reports Sprenger.

### PPM IN THE FAMILIAR LOOK AND FEEL OF THE MS OFFICE WORLD

With about 330 employees at the company headquarters in Ditzingen, Euronics is a medium-sized company despite the large number of affiliated specialist retailers.

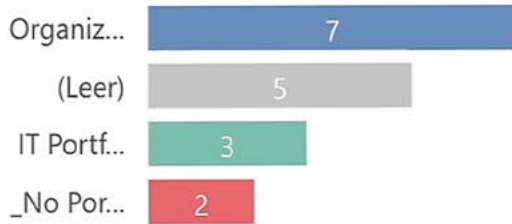
“In the individual divisions, we have few trained project managers. That’s the way it is in medium-sized companies, emphasizes Sprenger. That’s why the new software isn’t the only adjustment screw we are turning. Change within the company is just part of the game if you want to be successful,” former management consultant Martin Sprenger knows.

Previously, projects were managed in Excel. The employees at the cooperative headquarters are familiar with Microsoft Office programs. And this is precisely what makes the acceptance of a PPM solution with the look and feel of the Microsoft Office world particularly high.

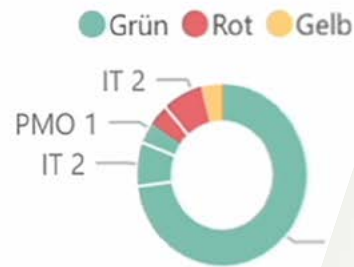
“The full integration of the PPM solution in Microsoft Teams is a great advantage for us,” illustrates the Head of Strategy. “The PPM tool can be managed directly in Microsoft Teams without the need to change to the browser or a different app.”

Microsoft Teams maps the 12 strategic programs in its structure. They contribute to the three overarching strategic program lines of Euronics: value creation, customer orientation, process optimization. Within these programs, the associated projects are arranged. The familiar Microsoft Teams structure of Teams and Channels is used for this purpose. Each program is a “Teams team” and each project a “channel”.

## AKTIVE PROJEKTE NACH PO...



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*“TPG ProjectPowerPack works for medium-sized as well as for big companies. Changes are comparatively easy to make.”*

*“Users receive notifications in Microsoft Teams, which can be flexibly adjusted, or by e-mail when a new project request should be approved or a new task is assigned to them. They do not actively have to look for them.”*

Matthias Jäger, Director TPG Switzerland

For users accustomed to working with Microsoft Teams, this is not only a seamless and almost entirely self-explanatory transition from their familiar work environment to handling the new tool. It also makes remote collaboration easier – and that became especially important at the time of the PPM transition. In addition to the software transition, there are further changes under way in the company. “Of course, it doesn’t stop at the software. That’s the only way to remain successful,” says former management consultant Martin Sprenger.

### OPTION FOR ONLINE COLLABORATION REQUIRED DUE TO PANDEMIC

“We started the transition in the summer of 2021,” Sprenger recalls. “Back then Covid was a big issue.” Due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, many employees worked from home and cooperated with each other via Microsoft Teams. That is why it was all the more fitting that the new PPM tool likewise became part of Microsoft Teams.

Matthias Jäger who was responsible for the Euronics project on the TPG side adds: “It was important for the customer to involve external employees in addition to internal ones.” To this end, the access permissions in the extensive security concept of the PPM tool had to be adapted accordingly. “The external staff can use Microsoft Teams to access the lists with open issues that are relevant to them. Other information, such as costs, remain accessible only to internal staff with the appropriate authorization level.”

### SOLUTION FOR LARGE AS WELL AS MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

Besides its usability, the second key advantage of the new solution is its flexibility. “The system can be adapted to any project size,” explains Sprenger. Individually adjustable filters make it possible to adapt the display to the requirements of the project. Matthias Jäger emphasizes: “TPG ProjectPowerPack works for medium-sized as well as for big companies. The solution, which is based on the new Microsoft Power Platform with Power Apps, Power Automate, Power BI and Dataverse as the database, can be adapted comparatively easily.”



## ARBEIT PRO ABTEILUNG VS. RESSOURCENKAPAZITÄT



For instance, these adaptations include the option of a dependency matrix. With the latter, it is possible to display the predecessor-successor relationships between the individual projects in the portfolio. Due to further specific requirements of Euronics Deutschland, several functions of the PPM package were even completely re-developed. “The collaboration was very cooperative and constructive,” recalls Martin Sprenger.

### THE MYTASK APP PROVIDES A COMPLETE OVERVIEW AT ALL TIMES

Sprenger calls the MyTask App in Microsoft Teams the key result of this. “We wanted a standardized task management system for the whole company. All employees should be able to see their tasks – from regular team works as well as from the projects – at a glance at any time.”

“These are basically lists of Action Items, i.e. open issues, right across the entire project portfolio and the tasks within the regular teams,” explains Jäger. “This gives each of the program managers of the 12 strategic programs of the company the full overview of all open issues. This is narrowed down to the level of the project managers and then to the level of the individual employee.”

The presentation can be both as a list and in the form of the Kanban Boards commonly used at Euronics. In the process, the open issues move from left to right with every processing step through a series of vertically arranged categories. Horizontally, so-called Swimlanes separate the individual projects or departments with employees from each other.

### NEW TASKS ARE ACTIVELY REPORTED TO THE USER

“Another customer requirement which we implemented was flexible notifications,” Jäger continues. Instead of a “duty to fetch” for the employees, there is now a “duty to bring” for the software: you receive a notification once a new task is assigned to you and do not have to actively look for it.”

Another new element is the Timeline, a sort of diary with open issues. It enables a continuous overview of the development of the processing statuses and thus visualizes, for instance, different speeds and the latest status in the processing of open issues.

### EASE OF USE KEEPS THE TRAINING EFFORT LOW

The usability of the implemented solution meant the training effort for the users was low, explains Sprenger. “We were able to do this ourselves.” In-person sessions were not necessary, which would have been impossible anyway due to the pandemic situation. There was also little need for Microsoft Teams sessions. “We were able to cover most topics with short videos, that was quite enough,” outlines Sprenger.

“On its own, a tool is not the cure-all,” summarizes Martin Sprenger. “You need to make it as easy as possible for people if the tool is also to be accepted and used.” Thanks to user acceptance, the features of the new solution contribute to the company’s success: broad functionality, flexibility and meaningful reporting. Sprenger’s verdict: “Now, we can control our project and portfolio management soundly.”



## SHORT PROJECT PROFILE

### THE COMPANY

Euronics Deutschland eG is a cooperative of specialist retailers for consumer electronics. Under the umbrella of the group, more than 1200 retailers of different sizes have joined forces, ranging from specialized retail outlets to comprehensive specialist stores. The members of the cooperative benefit from optimum purchase conditions as well as diverse services. Euronics Deutschland is a partner of the European association Euronics International in Amsterdam with locations in 34 countries.

### THE CHALLENGE

In the face of growing requirements in the context of the newly launched strategy program, controlling project measures with Excel proved to be no longer sufficient. When implementing the powerful project and portfolio management software, the focus was on usability. It was important to have a tool that was fully accepted by the users and used in the day-to-day business, not least in the context of online collaboration required by the pandemic.

### SOLUTION PROVIDER

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### THE SOLUTION

With the TPG ProjectPowerPack, Euronics Germany received a best-practice solution based on modern Microsoft technology with Project for the Web, Power Apps, Power Automate and Dataverse. It fulfills all requirements regarding usability and flexibility. In addition, it is fully integrated with Microsoft Teams, which also facilitates remote collaboration and gives a full overview of the processing status of pending tasks. What is more, Power BI is part of the implemented solution as an additional tool for reporting.

### THE BENEFITS

With its broad functionality, the new PPM application can be easily adapted to a wide variety of project sizes. The integration with Microsoft Teams and the optimum usability ensure that the software is used by all project participants. The meaningful reporting is likewise easy to understand and opens up a wide range of control options at the same time. As a result, the usability of the PPM solution ensures that the company benefits fully from the power of the PPM software.

### CUSTOMER

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