

Media Management – Pragmatic Case Study



The client description

ZaPOP are specialists in the in-store marketing arena. The company provides marketers with an exciting opportunity to promote their brands directly to the target audience at the "moment of truth" (when the purchase decision is actually made), thus stimulating shopping interest and increasing sales in store. ZaPOP provides their clients with printed media, radio and digital media in-store tools to enable them to convey their message directly to the target audience where it counts.

ZaPOP has access to more than a thousand stores in 7 countries and multiple media services to choose from. This Media includes Category Banners, Basket Defenders, Bread Boards, Eye Catchers, Freezer Dividers to name a few.

The Problem

The problem faced by the organization had many aspects which were inter-dependent, in our discussions with the management as well as the functional heads at the rapidly growing company we came across complete lack of synchronization across various departments. The three main areas that were causing the problems are summarised below

1. Operations – the nature of the business that ZaPOP is in requires a very tight control on project execution and tracking for results that help in providing documented results for ZaPOP clients. It was required that a high level of visibility be maintained on inventory, various tasks being performed by employees, and the status of each vehicle in the fleet that the company owned. The tasks assigned and performed by every store were to be tracked effectively to provide a comprehensive picture of business operations.
2. Finance – lack in appropriate consolidation and tracking of expenses as well as profits from projects being executed was a constant headache which led to ambiguity for the top management. ZaPOP was using Pastel to manage their accounting which was not providing information related to Asset management as well as managing assets cost centre wise. Managing stores/cost centres independently with intra-company accounting transactions was becoming a major challenge; the organization needed the flexibility to manage multiple companies with their independent as well as consolidated Chart of Accounts.
3. Human Resources – the constant attrition and the pain of not having enough people to take charge of very important functions was putting an additional burden on the HR department that was already struggling to make the correct salary remunerations to the employees at the end of the month. Calculating the payroll had become a cumbersome task as the company provided overtime pay as well as deducted an appropriate amount for absenteeism.

The management in an effort to correct the trajectory of the growing organization had institutionalised a reporting structure as well as excel based reports that were being completed by all the employees on the field. The employees over a period of time had realised that completing all the excel sheets and providing the information to management in a clean and concise format was a challenging and time consuming task. Hence more than 80% of the middle management relied on

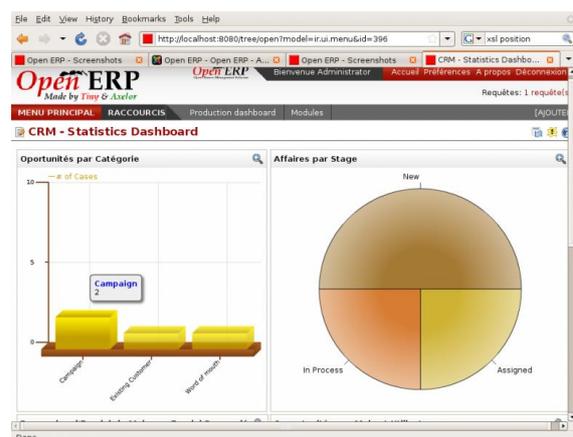
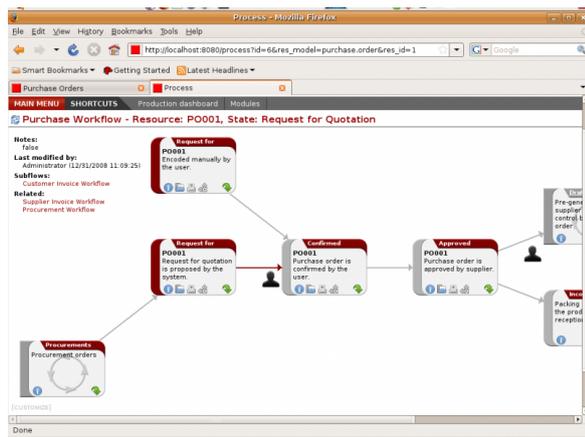
data compiled by their subordinates which was taking up too much time for the lowest level of employees. But this had another cascading effect of data integrity which reflected in the ultimate data that was provided to the management.

As the number of projects as well as the geographical spread of the company was increasing rapidly this problem was causing a lot of time being spent by employees in mere co-ordination, with simple daily tasks consuming more than 60% of the time being spent by employees at work.

The Solution Proposed

The Top management by this time had the second generation of business owners waiting to take the organization to the next level in becoming a global brand across seven countries. It was one of these persons that happen to look at the video prepared by the Pragmatic team to optimise operations by building visibility and accountability in the project execution.

After initial discussion the Top Management was convinced about the simple yet problem solving approach that Pragmatic Techsoft uses to implement business applications globally. The implementation methodology emphasises on the business enablement and thus empowers the functional employees to complete their tasks as well as projects in the pre-defined optimum manner.



The top management understood the relevance of utilizing a quick go to market approach which is inherently present with OpenERP. The integration capabilities of the Pragmatic team proved to be an additional advantage as the solution fit the operational needs through OpenERP as well as the reporting needs using JasperSoft. The implementation methodology proposed was based on developing a comprehensive understanding of the problems faced by the organization and then architecting a solution to work around these black holes caused in the operations at ZaPOP.

The Implementation of the Solution

The dual shore implementation coupled both the teams in a tight cohesive unit, with information as well as concerns being discussed and documented. The business operations understanding

developed by the Pragmatic team was complete with-out any stone being left un-turned. The Pragmatic team functional consultant’s advice was many times tested as ZaPOP employees accepted only things that really bore a result. The solution/technical architecture was only a by-product of the strong understanding developed by the Pragmatic team; the actual value addition was also a change in the business processes that enabled the ZaPOP team to build more accountability in project executions.

The usual implementation cycle followed by the Pragmatic was broken to provide the most optimum solution for the ZaPOP team. The existing application of OpenERP was implemented at the head quarters, with the functional heads spending time with almost 4 Pragmatic functional consultants on-site to minimize the loss information transmitting.

The implementation lasted for almost a year with even the smallest of concerns being addressed by the Pragmatic team and work arounds being explained to the ZaPOP team. The UAT phase lasted for almost a month, ending only with the ZaPOP team conducting a trial run with live data to understand the application and its working comprehensively. The Pragmatic team functional consultants were always present on-site providing real time solutions and explanations to the users.

The application was released across the company and employees in all the branches were provided with two months of training which helped the functional heads to drive the use as well as the adoption of the application within the organization. The constant presence of the Pragmatic consultants helped the complete team at ZaPOP ease into the cultural change of using an application to optimise daily functions.

The Benefits of the Solution

Pragmatic has developed a robust post implementation program that includes feedback about the system as well as a quantitative rating of the project execution. When the ZaPOP team was asked to opine their responses were bundled with many employees as well as the top management thanking the Pragmatic team with personal feedback as well as feedback related to the system and how it had helped the organization grow.

Project Tracking – The systematic process of planning which was brought in by the “Work Break” Down structure for every project had helped the ZaPOP execution team



understand and prevent pit-falls associated in executing complex projects spread over a huge geographical distance. The “Cost Break Structure” helped the organization to get an understanding of the dry cost as well as track the margins to meet monetary goals set by the top management.

Efficient Resource Allocation – The methodical break down of the new assignments allowed the project leaders to visualize exactly the requirements of the assignment. This led to better resource

allocation as each task was now being tracked with completion being sent as a notification to team leaders. The formats provided were based on PMP standards which inherently allowed the project leaders to utilize all their resources well and optimally.

Good Inventory Tracking – The central system that was being used by all the teams in the execution had become a back-bone of the company. The flexibility with which the team could not only locate but also track the transfer of various media had led to a lot of time savings in the execution of projects. The materials available and the status of the physical assets required to execute assignments helped the project managers which led to a direct contribution on the bottom line results.

Payroll – The HR and Leave management system helped the human resources department to re-aligned themselves to the core competency of the organization. The optimization in the processes along with the right information at the right time helped the Human Resource department to transform from a cost centre to a profit centre for ZaPOP.

Finance – The OpenERP based solution allowed the finance department to integrate multiple companies and their chart of accounts together. The flexibility and the interlink of finance with project management provided, two very important functions at ZaPOP the insight required to make profitable business decision.

Better Control on Operations – The OpneERP and Jaspersoft integration provided the management the required detailed insights about the business operations. The easy to understand dashboards allowed the top management to track projects and the flow of new assignments. The knowledge of cash inflow as well as outflow led better profitability. The bottle necks in execution were better addressed by the top management; hence the top management become a facilitator of work form middle management and the employees.