»With Blue Ant we have a system that has enabled us to streamline our key processes.«

Bosch.IO GmbH, the software and systems house of the Bosch Group, designs, develops and operates innovative software and system solutions worldwide in the classic enterprise environment as well as on the Internet of Things and Services (IoT). The company employs approximately 800 staff at locations in Germany (Berlin, Cologne, Immenstaad and Waiblingen), Bulgaria (Sofia), Singapore, China (Shanghai), Japan (Tokyo) and North America (Chicago).

Bosch.IO GmbH has been managing its product development projects with the multi-project management software Blue Ant, a solution from Berlin's proventis GmbH, since November 2013.

We spoke to Michael Weber, team leader for systems and processes in the commercial department, about the introduction of Blue Ant.

Case Study

Mr. Weber, what is your position at Bosch.IO GmbH and what are your areas of activity?

I am responsible for systems from the commercial department. This includes Blue Ant, the project management tool, which we use for our invoicing and controlling as well as project management. The focus of this use is on commercial processes and their optimization.

Why did you want to introduce project management software?

We were looking for a leading project management tool for Bosch.IO worldwide. The core element was project management, but integrated travel cost calculation, project implementation with billing and the closing process were also important for us. The right combination with the corresponding ERP system was, of course, of utmost im-

portance. These requirements were also met as a result of the further development of Blue Ant.

How did the introduction of the software go?

I got the impression that the employees accepted Blue Ant pretty much from the beginning. Training was necessary in certain areas, but Blue Ant was accepted very quickly. The key element in the introduction of a system is the well-prepared training.

What led you to Blue Ant?

It began in 2007, when inubit AG introduced the Blue Ant project management tool in Berlin. Bosch took over the company after purchasing another company, Innovations GmbH. Over time, our project management issues had accumulated. In 2013 the questions of which system we wanted to work with and which should be the leading system arose. We opted for the Blue Ant, already established in Berlin. Due to differing requirements, the software had to be reinstalled and extended. In November 2013, we introduced Blue Ant for Bosch.IO worldwide. An important reason for this was that a large group of employees already knew the functionality. The step into a whole new environment for all stakeholders involves more and more effort and risk than trying to expand an already established system. In addition, flexibility and user friendliness were decisive aspects for our decision-making.

What are the typical application scenarios supported by Blue Ant?

The whole issue of the time recording is a big area, which we cover with Blue Ant. Added to this are the areas of travel cost management, project planning, structuring and the billing process. This is very commercially focussed, as we use the time re-

cording not only for customer projects, but also for product development and internal projects. As all work effort is recorded in Blue Ant, this facilitates transparent reporting. We are currently investigating how we can better structure the functions of Blue Ant. The entire project management process is always the focus of our work and is constantly being refined.

Michael Weber, Team leader for Systems and Processes

Can you say a little about the different locations of Bosch.IO where the projects are also implemented with Blue Ant?

The main locations of Bosch.IO are Germany, Singapore and Chicago and since May 2017, Bulgaria. In addition, there are other regions where employees of Bosch.IO are based, such as China and Australia. As globally spread out as we are, we all use all Blue Ant for our project management.

Blue Ant Case Study

Bosch.IO, Berlin

Are there ad-hoc projects as well as the standard projects?

Yes, administrative, maintenance and support projects are also recorded in Blue Ant. Smaller projects with little effort, however, do not have to meet the regulations or project management requirements of larger projects.

How has the introduction of Blue Ant affected your project management?

With Blue Ant, we have a system that has enabled us to streamline all our key processes. We used different systems before, so the processes were not completely unified. The current status is a great step forward, considering the size of our company.

Has Blue Ant changed the value of project management in your company?

Project management has always been important to us. We are subject to a steady change, based on regulations, guidelines, central directives and changes in central processes. We try to anchor these not only in our processes, but also in the related sys-

tems. The challenge here is to combine this with Blue Ant in the future as well - and to make our project management even better.

What would you recommend to other companies in your industry for the implementation of multi-project management?

Training is, in my opinion, an essential success factor in the introduction of software. Initial training is effective, but a sustainable supply of training courses in order to understand the changes in the processes is also essential. In the end, the practical work with the solution shows what has been worked out theoretically in concepts. Interfaces are also important. If you need a lot of interfaces, I recommend keeping to the 100% solution to achieve the desired process improvements. The test version for the interfaces should be made available quickly (80% completion) and built up gradually to the 100% solution using tests by the users. User-friendly software design is also important.

With systems is Blue Ant currently connected to or will be connected to in the future?

We currently use the "Navision" ERP system, an HR system, a procurement system and our "inubit suite (BPM)" company system, which helps us develop our software solutions. In the future, we are aiming for an exchange with SAP.

Thanks for talking to us, Mr Weber.

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