

## Case study

# Mentor Connects Global Teams and Improves Project Communication

## About Mentor

Mentor, a Siemens Business, is a leader in Electronic Design Automation (EDA), developing software and hardware tools to enable companies to manufacture electronic products faster and more cost-effectively. The IT department is globally distributed with approximately 250 members supporting 5,500 employees located in 29 countries across 86 locations. The IT PMO consists of eight people.

## Challenge: Disconnected Teams and Reporting

With a widely distributed workforce, Mentor IT groups found it challenging to collaborate and report on projects efficiently. Varying time zones made it difficult to communicate and their existing collaboration tool, SharePoint, was not being used consistently. The result was siloed IT groups who each did their own thing, spoke their own language, and had their own project management style. Tasks were managed through Excel spreadsheets and email. Project managers spent more time chasing down status updates and scouring emails than actually managing projects.

Without efficient project collaboration and task management, they lacked reporting into the status of projects. Reports were inconsistent and ad hoc, often pieced together in PowerPoint. "Our reporting was uneven and had no single source of truth," says Brian Tharp, IT PMO Manager at Mentor. "Without any visibility into projects or resources, we struggled with resource management and project prioritization. There was no departmental or strategic alignment and zero portfolio management."

Mentor's CIO, Ananthan Thandri, recognized the handicap and began an initiative to change course. The goal was to find a project collaboration tool everyone would use. The CIO outlined several requirements and challenged the PMO with finding "a 21st century project management collaboration tool." The requirements included:

- Mobile, social, intuitive and have engaging experience
- Cloud-based, out of the box with no customization



## Overview

### Customer

Mentor

### Industry

Electronic Design Automation

### Employees

5,500 worldwide

### Geographies

29 countries across 86 locations

Mentor chose Projectplace to significantly improve project collaboration, task management and team organization for 437 active users dispersed around the globe.

- Flexible to track all projects, strategic to operational
- Eliminate email for project related activities and slides for status reporting

## Solution: Implement a Simple, Effective Project Collaboration Solution

The PMO dedicated three months to evaluate more than 20 solutions and trialed three products. "Projectplace literally ticked every single box our CIO outlined - collaboration, task management, mobility, and ease of use," says Tharp. "IT introduced a common tool and language and we're finally out of the PowerPoint business."

Mentor uses multiple templates to provide high-level plans that can be drilled into for more detail. Kanban boards are used to visualize the work that needs to get done. It has facilitated full, real-time team participation in determining work efforts. "Kanban is an equivalent of a white board," explains Tharp. "Everyone gets logged in and posts their cards in real time without having to be in the same room. Everyone can see who is responsible for a card, what deliverable the card contributes to, current status, and drillable contextual history. No more sorting through emails and trying to figure out who is going to do what."

With rich reporting features, reminders and alerts – nothing is missed. The company also uses the mobile app, a feature that sold the CIO instantly. Users can have and see conversations, notifications, and much more in a snapshot view, still with the capability to drill into any detail in real time. Everything needed can be seen in the app so users can work virtually anywhere.

Projectplace has been universally adopted across Mentor's IT department for all projects over 100 hours, which are the ones that appear on their dashboard and executives see. The tool also introduced organization and collaboration to

"non-projects," such as event management, personnel recruiting, operational maintenance, and personal "to do" lists.

Tharp said adoption was rapid because Projectplace was so easy to use and offered so much functionality the users didn't even know existed. "We consider it our 'Killer App'", says Mary Kay Petersen, IT director at Mentor. "It lets us stay engaged with all of the projects we care about and never have to go to email. From individual contributors to our CIO, we all use Projectplace."

It's an excellent solution for project collaboration, task management, and team organization. Very rapid adoption and the more people you invite into it, the more people are going to want to use it. The team started with IT only (250 people globally) and has reached more than 437 active users in less than a year.

## Benefits: Improved Team Communication and Project Visibility

Since implementing Projectplace, Mentor has:

- For the first time, a tool to manage all 414 projects, including 127 "non-projects"
- Ability to upload documents from other apps and invite external business resources
- Reporting and metrics it "didn't know existed"
- Knowledgeable and responsive support from Projectplace experts
- The foundation in place to successfully launch [Planview Enterprise](#) to optimize portfolios and resources

To learn more about what Projectplace can do for you, visit [Projectplace.com](#)

