

REA Group Virtualizes Work Status Updates for Faster Cycle Times and Greater Transparency



Industry:

Digital advertising

Geographies:

Australia, Europe, and China

Employees:

Approximately 900

Planview Solution:

Planview LeanKit™

CHALLENGE

The Technology Services team at REA Group was finding it challenging to manage the increasing number of work requests, unable to properly prioritize work or understand the status of existing work using physical card walls. Cycle times were long and communication was lacking, motivating the CIO to create an initiative to approach work with a more Lean-Agile approach.

SOLUTION

By integrating Planview LeanKit™ into its ticketing system and its workflow, the Technology Services team was able to automate and virtualize work request management. With requests now prioritized based on business impact, the team knows where to focus its efforts and has full visibility into work status. Work data is now used to drive conversations and inform decisions.

"Simplicity is the nirvana for any successful system rollout, and it was clear from the start that Planview LeanKit met that criteria."

- Damian Fasciani, Technology Services Manager at REA Group

About REA Group

REA Group Limited is a digital advertising company that operates Australia's leading residential and commercial property and real estate property websites in Europe, Asia and the U.S., with the majority of the sites ranking number one in their respective markets. Headquartered in Melbourne, REA Group is a top Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) company valued at \$6.78 billion and employs more than 900 people worldwide.

Challenge: Keeping Up with Demand without Proper Visibility

The Technology Services team at REA Group juggles the day-to-day operational support with larger engineering projects that are on a timeline. The team was challenged to meet delivery dates while also managing an unpredictable number of incoming support tickets. They used physical card walls to visualize work, but the boards were difficult to modify and were not portable or accessible remotely. Webcams helped for a time but were not scalable. The team's decision to go digital was ultimately prompted by the lack of space for physical card walls as REA Group continued to grow.

Solution: Managing Work with Transparency and Clarity with Planview LeanKit

As part of their Lean-Agile adoption in 2010, the CIO wanted to place greater emphasis on self-organized teams and individual accountability. The leadership team chose Planview LeanKit as a cloud-based solution that fits into its overall corporate technology strategy. "We were looking for a tool that would enable us to re-create the interactive feel of our physical card walls," says Damian Fasciani, Technology Services manager at REA Group. "Simplicity is the nirvana for any successful system rollout, and it was clear from the start that Planview LeanKit met that criteria."

Users were able to quickly transfer work from the physical card walls to the newly-created digital card boards in Planview LeanKit. A Scrum card board was created which shows all the work currently in process. They also have a board they use to capture and prioritize requests based on their business impact. Upcoming work is reviewed and discussed during Lean Coffee Meetings.

Fasciani and his team integrated Planview LeanKit with its ticketing system, ZenDesk, enabling them to separate break-fix work from enhancement requests and automatically generate a new card. The company is experiencing additional efficiencies with the mobility they now have with the tool, including an iPad app that allows users to work from anywhere with the same functionality.

REA Group is using Planview LeanKit to manage the design and build-out of its new headquarters. "It's a real hats-off to LeanKit that we're using it for such a high-profile project," says Fasciani. "With the many aspects to coordinate and the number of teams involved, LeanKit has made it easy to see what needs to be done, when and by whom."

Results: Greater Transparency and 30% Faster Cycle Times

Planview LeanKit is helping the team articulate more clearly how its agile process works, both internally and with its customers, and ensuring work flows more efficiently. "LeanKit has become an integral part of how we work at REA Group, improving our cycle time by 30% and keeping everyone informed," says Fasciani. "It's particularly useful for cross-functional teams as it provides better work visibility and minimizes hand-off confusion. It has worked so well, our HR, legal, procurement, sales and marketing teams are now using it."

Future: Scaling Planview LeanKit

The success of the Planview LeanKit implementation is leading the company to expand its use to its international offices, providing global visibility into the status of requests and work. REA Group is also planning on integrating Planview LeanKit with Jive, its social business portal, and Okta.com for single sign-on. "We are redefining our internal Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for different types of work," says Fasciani. "LeanKit will play an important role in helping us adhere to those SLAs using card types and class of service."

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