CASE STUDY

Trinity College Dublin
Enterprise Project & Portfolio Management

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN - Unlocks Project Profitability with Project & Portfolio Management.

Casestudy: TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Elevating Project Management Across Trinity College Dublin with Project & Portfolio Management

Strategically located in the heart of Dublin City, Trinity College (TCD) has, since opening it's doors in 1592, been a centre for research and educational excellence, inspiring generations of world-famous writers, politicians, scientists and actors.

A shining light on the educational world stage, TCD is home to 17,000+ undergraduate and post graduate students across all the major disciplines including arts and humanities, business, law, engineering, sciences and health sciences. To strengthen research and educational capabilities as well as safeguard the quality of service delivered for years to come, TCD has committed to significant expansion and modernisation projects.

To better service this ongoing expansion and meet the growing requirements of Ireland's most iconic and visited campus, University Provost Dr. Patrick Prendergast sought to elevate project governance across the campus to hold project management to the same high standard as the educational service delivered. This decision led to the establishment of a dedicated Project Management Office (PMO) led by John O'Sullivan, and the introduction of an Enterprise Project Management approach, underpinned by a modern digital Project Portfolio Management (PPM) solution.

Challenges / Situation

Speaking on the decision to digitalise the project management process, O'Sullivan stated "*While existing processes were built on a sound project approach and stage-gate model, it was clear from initial investigation that the existing systems would struggle to deliver an enterprise view of the whole portfolio, and limited the possibility to drive the standardisation, transparency and governance necessary to raise Project Management Maturity at TCD.*

The overly manual nature of template-based project reporting processes impacted upon data quality and reliability, creating a time lag between data collection and reporting. While offering some insight into the individual project performance, data consolidation at enterprise level was at best, nebulous. We couldn't offer the level of flexible reporting or the level of detail

requried by the various stakeholders in a timely fashion.

Constantly chasing and nagging Project Managers for data by the PMO led to it being perceived merely as a policing body by the teams it sought to support, rather than a value-adding organisation."

The Solution

To change this perception and provide an enterprise view of Portfolios, Programmes and Projects while optimising processes, improving data quality and gaining internal buy-in and acceptance, a step-change to a digital solution was conceived. One which would arm the university with the transparency, collaboration and reporting capabilities across the whole portfolio required by a University implementing €400M in capital projects currently.

Following a 6-month requirements development and public tendering process, Storm Technology was selected as the preferred solution partner, delivering not only upon the solution functionality but with the compliance requirements of the Universities IT and Cloud 1st protocols. Trusted project partner for MS Project Online, Storm Technology provided the technical skills to not only ensure effective implementation but enhancement with the creation of bespoke PowerBI dashboards.

A robust project portfolio management solution, Project

> "The introduction of Project Online eliminated the top project manager's complaint, the manual spreadsheets, templates and reports, digitising the whole process and transforming the way we manage and govern Projects and Pro-grammes at TCD"
>
> Carlos Mandolesi,
> PMO Portfolio Manager,
> Trinity College Dublin

Online, integrates with the existing ERP platform to pull financial and procurement data daily and consolidate project insights from across the entire University portfolio in real-time. Smart forms are backed by a robust data structure to create an individual environment for each project, within which all relevant documentation and project data is catalogued and stored. Document change-tracking and enhanced visibility of project schedules, risks and issues, action-tracking, project diaries, and other important project meta-data is available from each project environment to support the enterprise level view, and aligns with internal and external auditing requirements.

Layering on powerful reporting functionality with Power BI, Storm was able to deliver upon the vision of an enterprise approach with the ability to slice-and-dice or drill down to the most granular level using various lenses or filters, e.g. by Portfolio, by Programme, by Project, By Sponsor, By Project Manager, By Department, by Portfolio Manager, By Project RAG (Red / Amber / Green) Status, By Risk, By Issue, by Risk Owner, By Project Milestone, By Project Key Dates etc. in order to get to the data needed for meaningful discussions.

At executive level, rather than discussing individual details for each project, consolidated real-time dashboards enable at-a-glance management by exception.

"Working with Storm allowed us to go beyond the out-of-the-box functionality of Project Online. Their practical experience and business know-how across the Microsoft ecosystem allowed us to build a solution that leverages the capabilities of Project Online while incorporating best practice document management on SharePoint and real-time reporting on PowerBI. The result is a Project Management platform that not only addressed the day-to-day business challenges of enterprise-scale project management but aligned with the Programme Management Office's vision for the future of project management at TCD.

Using the Executive Dashboard built on Power BI to drill down to the smallest detail is like looking through a microscope, highlighting potential risks or project slippage at a glance. This enterprise-level view combined with the flexibility of reporting and consistency of data captured provides the University with a sustainable and scalable future proof solution for Project Management." explained O'Sullivan.

Managing Change

Shifting project management perceptions and placing enhanced emphasis on governance and transparency, the introduction of Project Online challenged the status quo, requiring cross-functional project teams to re-think existing processes and project accountability. As with any digital transformation project, success would not come through technology change alone, but through cultural and process change.

Speaking on this cultural change, O'Sullivan stated "*Despite buy-in from the senior management team, driving user adoption is a hard and relentless push, one requiring a shift in employee mind-set not only with regards to the role of the Project Management Office, but also the PRoject Managers self-perception as the 'owner of a project' with all its facets, including planning, scheduling, monitoring, controlling, reporting,*

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> Director of PMO
> Trinity College Dublin

technical, financial, contractual, stakeholder management, marketing & communications and change management, all the components necessary to raising Project Management Maturity in an enterprise.

A key element of this change was breaking existing habits and tackling individual fears around transparency, skills and competency. Storm proved invaluable in supporting this change, providing practical tips and tricks for driving user adoption and delivering the right user training at the right time."

The Result

A collaborative project between Trinity's Programme Management Office and Storm Technology, the introduction of Project Online has successfully delivered upon initial objectives of providing Enterprise level visibility of the ambitious portfolio of capital projects at Trinity College Dublin, and in the process is helping to raise standards of governance and transparency across the whole portfolio.

Today the solution has grown far beyond the initial scope of 25 project managers running capital projects to include 150+ users across campus, with future plans for deployment across in other parts of the organisation currently under review.

"The introduction of Project Online, eliminated the top-one project manager's complaint, the manual spreadsheets, templates and reports, digitalising the whole process and transforming the way we manage and govern Projects and Programmes at TCD. The PPM system provides a one-stop shop to our entire project management community, providing a single source of truth for our projects." explained Carlos Mandolesi, PMO Portfolio Manager.

Managing by exception, rather than discussing every detail has shifted perceptions of the Project Management Office from a policing function to project enablers. While smart linking of project documentation within the dashboard ensures we do not compromise on the level of detail required from a governance, transparency and auditing perspective." concluded O'Sullivan.

Looking to transform project transparency and governance within your organisation? Speak to a member of our Project Management Team today!

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Gold DevOps
Gold Data Analytics
Gold Data Platform
Gold Project and Portfolio Management
Gold Aplication Development
Gold Collaboration and Content
Gold Cloud Platform
Silver Cloud Customer Relationship Management

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