Helping An Interactive Entertainment Company Build a Project Management Office

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Executive Summary
TEKsystems developed a plan to help an interactive entertainment company build a project management office and mature their project management practices.

Quick Facts

Client
- **Industry**: Media, entertainment and gaming
- **Revenue**: $3.6 billion
- **Employees**: More than 8,000
- **Geographic Presence**: Headquartered in California; sells and distributes products globally

Objectives
- Gain visibility into the client’s project-related costs, time, quality, risk and personnel
- Increase project management maturity by providing valuable governance and advisory services
- Establish an internal project management office (PMO)

Challenges
- Assess the client’s project management maturity in the following areas: infrastructure and technology; people and resources; project management methodology, processes and procedures; and governance and compliance
- Socialize the purpose and value of the PMO to leadership as well as IT and business stakeholders
- Build a project and template repository, metrics program, and governance, risk and compliance (GRC) program

Results
- Recommended next steps to mature the client’s project management practices based on their current project management maturity
- Provided valuable governance and advisory services to establish an internal PMO, thereby impacting future costs and quality
- Delivered a formal strategy, including a PowerPoint presentation, for one of the client’s directors to present to a vice president to gain the financial and leadership support required to move the PMO strategy forward
Client Profile

Founded in the 1980s, our client is a global leader in interactive entertainment software. The company produces, markets and distributes games, content and online services for Internet-connected consoles, personal computers, mobile phones and tablets. The client has partnered with TEKsystems since 2002.

Industry Landscape

Project management practices, or the work tasks and resources required to implement deliverables on time and in budget, evolve over time, but not always in a thoughtful, deliberate manner. A project management office (PMO) is a formal entity that defines, governs and supports consistent use of project management guidelines, processes and templates across an enterprise (e.g., using common terminology across projects and initiatives). PMOs optimize the use of people, processes, tools and technologies to achieve organizational objectives through improved key performance indicators (KPIs), such as on-time completion of projects, customer satisfaction and tracking/reporting.

Most organizations lack the governance and structure that a PMO provides. Oftentimes there are several people within a company acting in project management roles or capacities that are not governed or supported under the same umbrella. Without the unity of a PMO, these team members miss out on opportunities to learn from each other’s experiences and share tools—and this lack of awareness, communication and collaboration can lead to wasted time and resources.

Building an internal PMO can be challenging, as it is difficult to identify opportunities and threats when you are entrenched in the day-to-day needs that large-scale projects and initiatives demand. Working with a third-party partner with expertise in project management, organizational change management and IT Service Management can give organizations an objective view of their project management environment, recommend and prioritize areas of improvement, and define next steps to build out and mature a PMO.

Situation

Our client, a leading interactive entertainment developer, wanted to gain visibility into their projects. Specifically, they wanted a better understanding of their project-related costs, time, quality, risk and personnel, by establishing a PMO. Leadership believed that building out and standardizing project management practices through a PMO would increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and ultimately, the return on investment in their projects. In order to build a PMO and improve their project management, the client first needed to understand the current state of their project management practices by looking at their people, processes and governance.

People

The client had several employees acting in various project management roles across the company. These employees had varying levels of expertise and experience with project management task execution and implementation. And since they were unaware of what others in the company were doing related to project management, they were unable to leverage each other’s experiences and knowledge. They wanted to unite these employees under a PMO structure to improve consistency in their project management processes and methodologies.
Process
There was a lack of standardization and consistency across project management practices, which led to unpredictable and inconsistent results. For example, there wasn't a process for how to select and prioritize projects to work on. The client was not able to consistently report across their project portfolio as to what projects were happening and whether those projects were on schedule and within budget.

Governance
The client had limited metrics, reporting and analysis in regards to project management goals, practices and results. For example, knowledge management was tribal and lacked transferability. This 1-to-1 knowledge transfer put the client at risk of losing intellectual property and institutional knowledge. There was also a lack of governance, compliance and follow-up regarding project management practices. If a project wasn’t meeting milestones, or went over budget, there was no root-cause analysis in place to understand why those things were happening.

In order to build a PMO and improve their project management, the client first needed to understand the current state of their project management practices by looking at their people, processes and governance.

The client knew that if they did not take action to standardize their project management practices, it could impede future success. To begin building out a PMO, they reached out to long-time partner TEKsystems for support. Based on our established relationship and history delivering successful results within their organization—as well as our dedicated TEKsystems Project Management Services practice—they were confident in our ability to support them in this space.

Solution
A TEKsystems practice architect went to the client’s headquarters to perform the assessment. While on site, he interviewed several organizational stakeholders and held executive-level meetings to talk through leaders’ challenges. Based on the information he gathered during the interviews and meetings, our practice architect assessed the client’s current project management state as well as steps to mature their project management practices and build a PMO. The assessment covered the following areas: infrastructure and technology; people and resources; project management methodology, processes and procedures; and governance and compliance. The current state maturity measurement would be the benchmark to compare maturity after recommendations were implemented.

We recommended that the client take the following actions:

1. Establish critical project management roles and fill with full-time employees or contractors.
PMO manager: This position is responsible for the overall project management function, providing leadership, coordination and management of PMO processes and functions. The PMO manager supervises the team that provides project management support functions and administrative support to project managers.

Project manager(s): A project manager is the person who has the overall responsibility for the successful initiation, planning, design, execution, monitoring, controlling and closure of a project. This position leads a team of resources charged with successfully completing a project and delivering the products or services for which the project was chartered.

Metrics analyst(s): This role measures key performance indicators (KPIs) and critical success factors (CSFs) for the PMO and individual projects. This position determines what KPIs support each CSF. Then, the metrics analyst defines the metric they need to measure each KPI and evaluate performance.

Customer satisfaction analyst(s) and technical writer/manager: This role performs internal customer satisfaction surveys to determine if projects are successful in the customer’s eyes (versus the IT department’s eyes). The technical writing skill set is required to document processes and maintain the knowledge base.

Infrastructure/technology administrator(s): This role focuses on the client’s specific project management applications and tools.

2. Establish a project repository PMO.
   This is a crucial step, as the repository would house all project information and templates for projects across the enterprise. It would serve as both an archive and an audit source. Once all the information is gathered, it would be easier to mature the PMO into a center of excellence with consistent processes, governance and portfolio management.

3. Establish a metrics program.
   A metrics program would help the PMO monitor its performance as well as project-based CSFs and KPIs, and report vital project information. We also recommended creating a governance, risk and compliance (GRC) program to monitor, analyze, recommend and improve project-based practices.

4. Establish a short-term organizational change management (OCM) team.
   This team would implement an OCM program to support the PMO strategy, including communications and training. The team would include an external OCM consultant / team lead, plus internal training specialists, communication/marketing specialist and business process specialist or ITIL® expert.

Establishing a project repository PMO would be a crucial step, as it would house all project information and templates for projects across the enterprise, and serve as both an archive and an audit source.
The PMO and OCM support teams would be integral to helping socialize the purpose and value of the PMO. Once the project management team, project and template repository, and metrics and GRC programs were in place, TEKsystems’ support and the temporary OCM team would be phased out. Following his on-site work, our practice architect provided remote advisory services as needed.

Results

TEKsystems helped increase project management maturity at the client by providing valuable governance and advisory services to establish an internal PMO, thereby impacting future costs and quality. Our practice architect helped the client’s senior manager by supplying him with the necessary information he needed to present to his vice president. We helped formalize his strategy and objectives for communication up to the vice president, including a PowerPoint presentation, to help garner the financial and leadership support required to move the PMO strategy forward.

Thus far, the client has put a PMO manager in place. If the client continues to implement our recommendations, their improved project management processes, structure and governance will help them realize multiple efficiency, effectiveness and ROI goals. We are in discussions with the client to help with implementation work for the full PMO structure.

Key Success Factors

Scalable delivery model.
The client wanted to build a PMO but didn’t know where to start. TEKsystems was able to provide advisory services to help them understand what they needed and how to get there. As the client moves forward in building a PMO, we will be able to continue support with a delivery model that fits their exact needs and budget. Our scalable services include providing skilled project management and OCM professionals, consulting, implementation support, and continual service improvement and maintenance.

Subject matter expertise.
We have a dedicated Project Management Services practice, as well as complementary services in IT Service Management and Organizational Change Management. Plus, our TEKsystems Global Services® division is comprised of experts in applications, infrastructure and learning development, enabling us to tap into specialized experience where required.

Trusted partnership.
Our relationship with the client has lasted over a decade because of our commitment to quality and doing whatever it takes to meet their business and IT needs.
About TEKsystems®

People are at the heart of every successful business initiative. At TEKsystems, we understand people. Every year we deploy over 80,000 IT professionals at 6,000 client sites across the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and Asia. Our deep insights into IT human capital management enable us to help our clients achieve their business goals—while optimising their IT workforce strategies. We provide IT staffing solutions, IT talent management expertise and IT services to help our clients plan, build and run their critical business initiatives. Through our range of quality-focused delivery models, we meet our clients where they are, and take them where they want to go, the way they want to get there.

Visit us online at TEKsystems.com