Microsoft 365 Teamwork

Partner Case Study – IT-Improvement

Putting processes and collaboration on the right track

IT-Improvement's Improvement Workshop helped rail-freight supply-chain expert FORWARDIS choose Microsoft Teams as its customer-centric teamwork and quality-management tool.

A roadmap for success

As an expert in European rail freight and supply chain logistics, Forwardis operates freight traffic flows throughout Europe, shipping millions of tons of goods each year. Managing complex logistical details demands a highly trained, collaborative staff to ensure optimal performance.

Because efficiency is critical to Forwardis's success, its leadership team makes it a priority to have a thorough understanding of the company's operations and is always looking for opportunities to improve. That's why Forwardis engaged Germany-based Microsoft partner IT-Improvement to conduct an assessment to uncover areas where changes would have the most impact. IT-Improvement's versatility and deep expertise across industries enables it to deliver tailored IT solutions built on coordinated, iterative, and integrated processes. The partner developed an improvement map to help Forwardis understand its current status and to plan its digital transformation journey. Based on IT-Improvement's recommendations, Forwardis decided to implement a customer-centric teamwork approach that focused on optimizing its quality-management processes.

Forwardis specializes in developing customized logistics solutions that require intense cooperation among a given customer, Forwardis, and various regional railway companies. This ensures that consignments, contracts, appointments, and other details are in alignment, and all customer information is available in one place. Using Microsoft Teams has enabled Forwardis staff to centrally manage all documents and arrangements, along with all email and chats with customers and partners associated with a particular project, more efficiently.

At the same time, IT-Improvement is working with Forwardis to deploy a customer-specific quality-management solution based on Microsoft SharePoint and Microsoft Teams. The goal? For users to reach any

Partner profile

IT-Improvement works with companies large and small to design, develop, and deploy tailored IT solutions that are flexible, sustainable, and cost-effective.

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"Because it's easy to get started with Microsoft Teams, we're able to help our clients realize results more quickly."

– Heinz Brommundt, *General Manager, IT-Improvement*

quality-management area or topic they choose within three clicks. New process automation workflows are in development to help funnel work through tasks rather than email.

Insight that delivers impact

The IT-Improvement engagement has three phases. Phase 1 focuses on quickly assessing the customer's current situation. Questionnaires are used to gather information about the customer's goals, strategy, and culture. This helps IT-Improvement understand the company lifecycle and competitive landscape. An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) and interviews with key personnel round out this phase.

In Phase 2, IT-Improvement conducts the Improvement Workshop. An IT-Improvement team works with the customer to create a focus group tasked with identifying the organization's challenges and how those challenges might be addressed with Office 365. What makes this so important, says Heinz Brommundt, general manager for IT-Improvement, is that "Most of our customers are licensed for Office 365, but they don't really know what they can do with all the tools inside it. We give them examples to think about based on our experiences with other customers and the insights we've gleaned about their businesses and processes."

Everything comes together in Phase 3, with the improvement map. Through this tool, the IT-Improvement team shows the customer strategic business areas where making even small changes can have significant impact. Then, using the Microsoft IT roadmap as a guide, the team helps the customer identify priority areas. According to Dominik Marin, lead architect at IT-Improvement, "Not only does the IT roadmap enable us to work with each customer to identify more areas to increase productivity and efficiency, it also helps us focus that customer on the most solvable problems." From there, IT-Improvement works with the customer to develop a solution that addresses the challenges they've prioritized—and delivers results quickly.

Discovering new areas for efficiency

A key trigger for Forwardis was an observation made by IT manager Dominik Kruszynski: "We've been using Office 365 for some time now, but we don't really know what's possible. What can we do?" According to Philippe Golder, general manager at Forwardis, "The opportunity to explore the capabilities of Office 365, based on our unique business challenges, is ultimately what convinced me of the value of the Improvement Workshop." Together, the workshop and improvement map have highlighted many instances beyond quality management, such as information flow and knowledge management, where Office 365 can be used to increase Forwardis's productivity and to help accelerate its digital transformation.

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