

Avasant, LLC

Replacing an Outdated PSA with Projector Drives Visibility and Accountability at Avasant

AT A GLANCE

- **SUMMARY:** Avasant needed a reliable, trustworthy partner whose product and services could ensure the successful rollout of a system that would enable them to grow their business.
- **INDUSTRY:** Management Consulting
- **LOCATION:** Los Angeles, CA
- **CHALLENGE:** Implement and integrate a system for a fast-growing consultancy whose expertise is in services strategy, enterprise optimization, and shared services implementation.
- **SOLUTION:** Replaced outdated PSA solution with Projector's Professional Services Automation software.
- **RESULTS:**
 - Improved project margins, especially on fixed price engagements.
 - Increased resource productivity by 15% through streamlined interfaces and strong user adoption.
 - Deployed a PSA/general ledger integration that supports multi-currency, inter-company transactions today and that can continue to adapt as the organization grows in the future.

“With our old PSA system, we spent way too much time correcting for known inconsistencies in much of our data and questioning the integrity of the rest. With Projector, we can finally get back to running our business.”

– Bob Randolph, CFO, Avasant, LLC

COMPANY PROFILE

Avasant is a management consulting firm that specializes in helping organizations select managed services partners and optimize technologies to transform operations and streamline business processes. The company has provided its strategic sourcing and consulting services to clients ranging from fortune 500 corporations to national governments and global NGOs. As a strategic IT consulting firm, Avasant understood how their internal business systems could have a dramatic impact on the company's performance.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Avasant believes in a data-driven approach to keeping their project managers accountable and evaluating the health of their delivery operations—an approach that they need their business systems to support. The firm's executive team pays close attention to key metrics like resource utilization, weekly burn rates, project budgets, and forecast variances. In the past their former Professional Services Automation (PSA) tool lacked adequate visibility because of a myriad of product limitations, especially its inability to produce reliable, real-time project data in a way that was easily digestible and sufficiently actionable. “We entered all of the raw data into our old system, but making sense of it felt like it required a PhD in data forensics,” explained Bob Randolph, CFO of Avasant and former VP of Strategic Sourcing at Gartner. “We needed to be able to see the status of any project at any time and get an answer we could believe in.”

Avasant also understood the importance of making sure the right systems integrated in the proper ways. To ensure its finance and delivery teams were able to work from a consistent view of the company's performance, they asked the vendor's consulting team to integrate their old PSA with the firm's accounting system. While they were partially successful in establishing an initial integration, as soon as they tried to make some simple changes, the strategy fell apart. “As the market evolved and Avasant's business grew, we discovered that the integration was simply not flexible enough to adapt,” said Chris Kiyohara of KT Advisors, Avasant's CPA. “We actually held off on modeling some strategic business changes in the system because we were confident we would break the integration.” After several attempts, the application vendor's consulting team failed to get the integration to stabilize. Instead of seeing improved efficiency, the Avasant team found itself spending untold hours on account reconciliation and data validation.

Compounded with an outdated user interface that drove low adoption, limited visibility into fixed price projects, and ineffective product support and consulting services from the vendor, these issues made Avasant quickly realize that they needed a better solution.

PROJECTOR PSA PROVIDES:

- Trustworthy and actionable financial and operational data
- Configurable, scalable, and flexible integrations with popular accounting systems
- Excellent implementation consulting and support services

To learn more, visit www.ProjectorPSA.com or call us at 1.617.431.4111

“After replacing our old PSA with Projector, we now see how a PSA tool can be the foundational system to optimize our operations and support our growth, rather than just thinking of it as a necessary evil.”

– Bob Randolph, CFO, Avasant, LLC

SOLUTION

As Avasant started searching for a new product to help them run their services business, they put a heavy emphasis on their need for a SaaS solution that provided robust organizational visibility and tight integration with existing business systems. After reviewing several solutions, Avasant chose to implement Projector as their core operational system.

Projector’s professional services team led a rigorous requirements gathering, configuration, integration, testing, and cutover process to configure Projector and integrate it with Avasant’s SaaS-based accounting system. This process ensured that Projector’s pre-built integration seamlessly handled the firm’s current needs, and could scale as the business grows in size and complexity. Just as importantly, Projector’s consulting team ensured that the Avasant team and their accounting partners, KT Advisors, fully understood how to manage the current integration as well as how to model future changes as necessary.

RESULTS

Once Projector was implemented, Avasant immediately started seeing a difference in how well they could deliver current projects and forecast future work. “With Projector we can now put together project plans and forecast resourcing needs in a way that we can actually trust,” said Randolph. By using Projector, Avasant has been able to strengthen their project margins noticeably and increase the productivity of their resources by 15%. These productivity gains, when reallocated to billable work, have the potential to generate enough revenue to pay for Projector 5 times over.

Additionally, Avasant can easily monitor their key operational metrics through Projector’s flexible dashboards and analytical reporting engine to know exactly where each project stands. This helps Avasant keep their PMs accountable and allows senior management to spend more time focused on the business. “Projector allows us to identify issues with projects much earlier when corrections are just gentle nudges rather than last-minute, disruptive, and costly course changes,” Randolph pointed out. “Plus, the fact that we can actually trust the data now allows me to utilize my time much more efficiently.”

Projector’s integration is robust enough to handle Avasant’s complex multi-currency, multi-company accounting needs and also flexible enough to adapt as the business changes. Avasant no longer needs to struggle with a partial integration and endless account reconciliations, or deal with all the distrust in the data that it had experienced in the past.

Projector has positively affected every person at every level of the organization. Billable consultants have an intuitive, streamlined time and expense entry interface. Project managers have the data they need to ensure on-time, under budget delivery of great work for their clients. The finance team can focus on work that adds value rather than monotonous data entry and validation. Executive management has the visibility required to deal with problem areas quickly and focus on growing the business. By adopting Projector, Avasant established the scalability needed to support growth for years to come.

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