

Across Group

Control of the business became forward-oriented



Bart Hamers
CFO
Across Group
Belgium

An easy, manageable system changed a business' attitude towards time tracking, and helped gain better insight into billing rates.

Across Group had a complex project management system that gave more information based on past events, rather than giving a good forecast of the future. This became a real obstacle when trying to gain insight into projects and consultants' cost-effectiveness. By choosing TimeLog Project as their new time tracking and invoicing system, Across Group regained access to these fundamental figures.

Consultants working on-site

Across Group is a full-service consultancy firm, containing three departments, and a total of sixty consultants. Some staff work on a freelance basis, and the remainder are on the regular payroll. All consultants work predominantly at clients' sites, and not at the office.

"We are a people company. HR expenses are the largest, and therefore, the most important to keep an eye on. We don't invest heavily in buildings or similar costs," explains Bart Hamers, CFO, Across Group.

This means that Across Group needs a high percentage of billability from their consultants. "We work around a project for each client, and we expect our consultants to be 70-90% billable at all times. Key figures for us are billability of the consultant and profitability of the project."

Easy access and easy to use

Before Across Group was introduced to TimeLog Project, they used another system

that was so complex to use that consultants didn't track their time.

"Actually, we used it more as a backward-oriented database, where we generated a project and attached a description and a short comment to compare with potential future projects. But this was not enough for us, so I started looking for a new system. Our main goal was to find a solution we could use for time tracking to gain insight into our billability. The system should be easy to use for our consultants at clients' sites, so they don't spend unnecessary time on administration", explains Hamers. He continues, "I learned about TimeLog Project through one of our clients. They were our first large customer, and they used TimeLog Project, which we became familiar with along the way. In the process, we looked at a couple of other systems that all had the features we were looking for: Easy access and easy use – but our choice for TimeLog Project was finally based on quality compared to price. Initially, we didn't see price as an important parameter, but it ended up that way. TimeLog Project has a very reasonable price compared to what you get. All in all, it took us four to six months to finally decide on TimeLog Project."

Made check-list for new system

The following is a list of crucial factors that Across Group needed in a new system if they should convince consultants to register their time:

“ By gathering time tracking and invoicing in the same system we gain huge advantages. ”

– Bart Hamers,
Across Group

“ **The fact that we now can see the profitability per project, the billability per consultant, and that the web-based structure permits us to see what our consultants are doing worldwide, have confirmed that TimeLog Project is the right choice for us.** ”

– Bart Hamers,
Across Group

1. Worldwide access
2. Easy to use
3. Easy access
4. Easy time tracking
5. Easy to fill out
6. Easy data access

All were fulfilled with TimeLog Project.

Access to billability per person and profitability per project

It was of high importance for Across Group that it was easy to quickly set up a consultant in the system, for that consultant to register their time, for an account manager to easily follow up on a project, and for management to see the consultants' billability level.

“When we first started using TimeLog Project, my immediate impression was that it was easy to access and easy to use. We now have world wide access to our consultants' data and projects. Our consultants are able to track time globally. We work all over Europe, the USA and in the Philippines, so the international aspect of the system was very important for us.”

Time tracking and billing in one system

Since January, 2009, everyone at Across Group has registered their time in TimeLog Project. A year later, all three departments' invoices were also collected in the system.

“TimeLog Project is robust for time tracking, and generating invoices is easy. Our invoicing was previously collected in another system, but to see profitability, we had to export the information to Excel and build the reports there, which was both costly and time consuming. By gathering time tracking and invoicing in the same system, we gain huge advantages. Most importantly, we have access to key figures that we didn't have access to earlier. The fact that we now can see the profitability per project, the billability per consultant, and that the web-based structure permits us to see what our consultants are doing worldwide, have confirmed that TimeLog Project is the right choice for us. All in all, the total profitability of our business is much easier to analyze now. We are quite happy with TimeLog Project, and we continue to improve our use of the system.”



Across Group is a management consultancy and marketing group, helping organisations around the world to be heard.

Across Group helps clients target a diverse audience: internal stakeholders, investors/shareholders, media, EU regulatory bodies and customers. The three divisions are: Across Health, who help clients in the health industry' to manage, improve and build customer relationships, Mach Media advise clients on online marketing, communication and strategy, and Across Technology are active consultants within the IT Strategy, Business IT Alignment, and change management.

Results

TimeLog Project convinced Across Groups consultants that time tracking can be done quickly and easily. This has provided Across Group access to important key figures, which give insight into the business profitability.

- 1 By choosing TimeLog Project, Across Group got a web-based, straightforward, price-conscious solution.
- 2 Access to important key figures, e.g. project profitability and consultants' billability.
- 3 Convinced consultants that time tracking doesn't need to be an administrative burden, but can be done quickly and easily, wherever and whenever.

Solution

TimeLog Project

Industry

Consultancy services

Customer since

April 2008

Further information
Call +45 70 200 645

