

Kaamos Group Saves Four Workdays per Month per Project Manager with Planyard



Kaamos Group develops and builds real estate. Based on Estonian capital, they are present in Estonia, Latvia, and Belarus. Their total turnover in 2018 was 68 mln euros. They strive to build houses that are impressive to look at and blend harmoniously into the surrounding environment.

They wanted to reduce the amount of manual work involved in budget management. That required something that would integrate with their accounting software and give a real-time overview of the budget and forecasts.

After trying to build custom software on their own, they found the real solution with the help of Planyard. Both project managers and accountants save now several days per month on duplicate data entry. Subcontractors are the only ones who still enter data. The difference is though, that they can't make mistakes anymore.

Challenges

Up until 2018 all the progress reports and approval rounds were done on paper. The same thing when it came to invoices.



"I joined Kaamos four years ago. Like everywhere else, there was a high stack of papers waiting for me on my desk," says Marianne Rand, Chief Accountant.

Purchase orders reached us via post or they were printed out by the project manager. The project codes and cost codes were written on the PDs manually. The calculations were done manually as well. Project managers received a copy of the invoice which they then put between a physical folder. The CEO approved every cost with a signature on paper.

But that was only half the job – the accountant then needed to re-enter data from the purchase order into the accounting software. And the invoice was put into a physical folder after it finally got paid.

Needless to say, it was quite time-consuming and frustrating for everyone involved.

Budget management was done in Excel but that was quite painful as well.



"During busy times some of the invoices tended to get forgotten unless they were dealt with immediately," explains Marek Korbela, Construction Manager.

Later on, when things didn't add up, it was very hard to find where the mistakes happened.

"No matter how small the error, it meant going through a tall stack of printed invoices one by one," adds Martin Kajumäe, Project Manager.

It was obvious to them that something had to change.

Trying To Build A Custom Solution On Their Own

In 2018 the board at Kaamos Group got together and made a decision to decrease the manual labor involved in entering data and to get a better overview of project budgets.

They were already using an accounting software called Directo, so, it felt logical to commission Directo to build the new solution into the accounting software.

"We tried to build a custom solution by ourselves. But just developing the budgeting module took us half a year alone," says Marek.

They did manage to get a better overview of the budget and to make sure that there's a single place for making approvals and for tracking the approved costs.

This meant that they reduced some of the manual data entry work and all the budgets were tracked in one place. They also digitized invoice approvals. But when the month ended, the project managers still needed to enter all the invoices into Directo manually. That took several days and sometimes ran well into the night.

Also, the project managers felt another pain – it was hard to put together a budget review for the construction manager. The data was split between Excel and the accounting software.

"We also wanted to track progress reports and budgets in the same place for all the projects, but we never got to building those modules," adds Marek.

Kaamos Group Starts Using Planyard

When Marek heard of Planyard, he realized that it did exactly what they wanted the software to do without having to build it themselves.

"Our goal with Planyard was to reduce the tedious data entry between Excel and our accounting software Directo," says Marek.

When the decision was made to use Planyard, things happened fast.

"As a construction manager, it was easy for me to transfer all eight ongoing projects to Planyard. It only took two weeks," comments Marek.

He adds, that the team at Planyard was of great help during onboarding. "They answered any open questions we had and built an integration with Directo, our accounting software."

We heard similar comments from the project managers at Kaamos. "I pretty much got how the software works on my own," comments Martin. He says that he didn't even need to look at the training videos.

"The subcontractors have come along with the new software nicely as well," adds Martin.

Results

Kaamos Group has been using Planyard for some months now and the results are in.

"We save four working days each month per project manager. The biggest efficiency booster came from getting rid of duplicate data entry," says Marek.

He adds: "Subcontractors are the only ones who still enter data. But the progress reports and invoices they send us are always connected to a line in the budget, a contract, and a progress report. This means that it's impossible for them to make mistakes in data entry."

His job as a construction manager is way more simple now: "I can check in real time the costs, income, and forecasts for every line in the budget."

Martin Kajumäe, a project manager at Kaamos, is pleased that he doesn't have to work in Excel anymore.

"I spend 50% less time on budget management now. This saves me several days per month," explains Martin.

The calculations that he previously had to do manually are now done automatically.

He estimates that he also saves around half the time it takes to work on bids thanks to Planyard's construction bidding tool. That's several days in total for every object that he has to manage.

He is pleased that as a side-effect, the number of emails he gets has decreased too. Invoices, commitments, and RFQs go straight to Planyard now instead of his inbox.

He sums up the experience as a project manager: "Dealing with paper invoices and commitments seems like the stone age compared to Planyard"

Marianne, the head accountant at Kaamos Group, agrees: "We have taken an even bigger step forward thanks to Planyard." She explains: "We have reduced the time it takes to process purchase orders several times over."

She continues: "Today, a few seconds for a quick visual check is all that's needed by the accountant to approve a purchase order in Directo."

"We have gotten rid of copy-paste completely," says Marianne, Chief Accountant.

The invoices are sent now by the project managers from Planyard directly to Directo as pre-approved. All the information is already included – which costs are associated with which project and line-items and with which construction codes. The pre-approved invoice has approvals both from the project manager and CEO.

She says she doesn't have to check anymore, which costs are related to which project and line-items. "Nor do I have to enter this data myself anymore," she adds.