

AutoTrader

PPM Customer Cloud Success

“We are very, very pleased with Project Hosts’ PPM Custom Cloud service. Their quality of service and personalized support has allowed AutoTrader to fully meet our Project and Portfolio Management needs, and with only one internal IT person allocated at 50%. We think of Project Hosts as our virtual IT department – managing our PPM infrastructure while assuring world-class availability and uptime.”



*Donna Woodruff
Director of IT Planning and Governance, AutoTrader*

SITUATION

AutoTrader lacked a centralized solution to facilitate the overall management, visibility and control over of hundreds of ongoing projects by its employees and external contractors. Many groups had implemented their own on-premise and ad-hoc project management solutions using an aging on-site platform that was not well maintained and nearing the end of its warranty. The company lacked a standardized Project and Portfolio Management (PPM) application that could be implemented consistently throughout the organization, adopted quickly by its users, that was easy to use, and which adhered to corporate governance policies

CHALLENGES

AutoTrader wanted to run IT more as a business, and needed to rationalize and carefully select the specific applications that the company would directly support within their IT organization. AutoTrader decided that back-office applications, such as PPM, were too IT resource intensive and cost-prohibitive to support internally with its own staff. It needed to place internal IT resources and efforts on front-office applications, like their consumer website, that are essential to generating revenue. This application rationalization would eliminate duplicate efforts, optimize their IT staff and costs, and enable the company’s IT organization run with a business focus.



PPM PLATFORM SELECTION

AutoTrader searched for a leading Project and Portfolio Management platform that was cloud-based, cost-effective, could be customized to support their specific business needs, and wouldn’t take a lot of IT headcount to support. The selection narrowed quickly to Microsoft Project Server, the industry’s most established and widely supported PPM system. It was also decided that AutoTrader did not want to use its own IT department for the ongoing management and support of the solution, nor did it want to host the solution on-premise. As such, AutoTrader needed to enlist the support of a trusted hosting partner who could work as a virtual IT department. AutoTrader chose Project Hosts at the recommendation of Microsoft and other vendors. With nearly a decade of hosting experience, deep knowledge in Microsoft Project Server and SharePoint systems, Person-2-Person support capabilities and a broad partner ecosystem, Project Hosts had the depth and breadth to be AutoTrader’s trusted PPM hosting provider.

IMPLEMENTATION

AutoTrader implemented the PPM solution over a period of time, allowing it to phase in new operational policies as they were being defined and approved. The hosted PPM Custom Cloud environment was operational within weeks and modified over time to accommodate AutoTrader’s required customizations and specific applications integration needs. For reasons of control and security, AutoTrader decided on a dedicated server solution with single sign-on capabilities and specialized applications. The system initially provided project status reporting, however, AutoTrader quickly added new capabilities including workflow (governance), dynamic project status reports, and resource & capacity management planning. Over time, the system was also connected to AutoTrader’s financial forecasting tool, enabling bi-directional feeds

to enable predictive forecasting and improved resource management. Project Hosts delivered a customized PPM Cloud solution that was highly secure, fully centralized, provided built-in business continuity, and was backed by a 99.9% uptime guarantee. The system also achieved success in that it required less than ½ an IT staff member from AutoTrader to manage; using Project Hosts' operations team as a virtual IT department.

RESULTS

Now in operation for more than 2 years, the PPM Custom Cloud solution continues to meet AutoTrader's growing needs and functional capabilities. The system provides worldwide visibility and control over all projects, teams and vendors in accordance with corporate governance and policies. The PPM solution is becoming fully integrated into AutoTrader's IT system with many data ties, enabling dynamic real-time dashboards, the ability to perform complex what-if scenarios, and deliver master views. "We look at Project Hosts as part of our IT Team, and because of this great relationship and their expertise in PPM hosting it enables us to meet our customer needs and business goals more effectively."



Custom Cloud Advantages

-  Your Dedicated **SOLUTIONS** IT architecture
-  Your Trusted **APPLICATIONS** support
-  Your Specific **SECURITY** requirements
-  Your Real-Time **REPORTS** & customization
-  Your Access to **PERSON-2-PERSON** support
-  Your Company's **BUSINESS** flexibility

ABOUT AUTOTRADER

AutoTrader Group operates America's largest digital automotive marketplace and provides marketing and software solutions to automotive dealers throughout the U.S. AutoTrader's mission is to dramatically improve the way people buy and sell new and used cars. AutoTrader's two businesses — Digital Media and Software Solutions — have transformed the retail automotive industry, reducing friction between dealers and consumers and allowing them to transact with greater ease, confidence and efficiency.

ABOUT PROJECT HOSTS

Project Hosts, Inc. is the worldwide leader in Custom Cloud™ hosting of Microsoft Project and Portfolio Management (PPM), CRM and SharePoint solutions. A Project Hosts' Custom Cloud delivers the business and technology advantages of both a Public Cloud and a Private Cloud. Our PPM, CRM and SharePoint Custom Cloud solutions benefit enterprise organizations, government agencies and partners by supporting: A dedicated IT solutions architecture, custom code and third-party application integration, specific security requirements, and real-time custom reporting. Backed by our Person-2-Person™ support, 99.9% uptime guarantee, and flexible business terms, many of our customers report that their solutions and users are up and running in one-half (½) the time, and at one-half (½) the cost as compared to similarly configured on-premise Private Cloud environments. www.projecthosts.com - info@projecthosts.com

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