“Meisterplan opened our eyes to resource constraints.”

Felix Willing, PhD, CIO, Nordex SE
Identify and resolve bottlenecks early with Meisterplan

01 CHALLENGE
With more than 2,500 employees and consolidated sales of about 1.43 billion euros in 2013, Nordex SE is among the top 10 companies in the wind power plant construction business. Due to a rising number of projects, the need for professional management of IT resources and projects increased in 2013.

02 SOLUTION
After evaluating a number of project portfolio management solutions, Felix Willing, PhD, CIO of Nordex SE, chose Meisterplan, the dynamic PPM solution from itdesign GmbH. With this interactive and powerful PPM software, the IT department was able to quickly create a project portfolio based on their existing data. The tool’s simulation and analysis capabilities helped to make the right project and resource decisions.

03 BENEFITS
The new tool fits well into both the IT department as well as in the field. It answers the two most important questions of Willing’s team: Where are the bottlenecks in the project portfolio and how can they be resolved? Willing sums it up for his organization: “Meisterplan is an eye-opener.”
Since 1985, Nordex SE has been pioneering the use of wind energy. Thanks to nearly three decades of experience, the company is well positioned to handle an increasingly challenging regulatory environment and competitive industry. That is why it is as important as ever for Nordex SE to focus on their main goal – to develop plants that produce electricity at the same cost as conventional power plants.

**IT DEPARTMENT AS THE INTERFACE AND “HEART” OF AN ENGINEERING COMPANY**

Nordex has consistently aligned itself with this goal in recent years. To achieve this, management has implemented a bundle of new strategies:

- the development of cheaper facilities with intelligent solutions in less windy areas
- the reduction of production costs and general operating costs
- the initiation of operational excellence programs
- the focus on technical advantages and how to exploit them when positioning itself against competitor’s promises in the industry.

Nordex’s IT division is a key component in many of its activity and program packages. IT is central to achieving ambitious business goals, sound processes, transparent interfaces and efficient project and portfolio management. In order to ensure perfect collaboration, a company must have a solid project portfolio management (PPM).

This is where decisions are made regarding which planned projects are really carried out now and at what cost. It is also where the determination of sufficient resources and time to engage the envisioned project portfolio takes place – and whether, or to what extent the projected outcome of the portfolio will meet the overall goals of the company.

**THE KEY INGREDIENT TO SUCCESSFUL PPM — PROPERLY IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT PROJECTS**

A Project Management Office (PMO) has taken over the task of managing the IT project portfolio. To do this, the PMO uses specific software solutions. At Nordex, a PPM committee of IT executives is in charge of this responsibility. PPM is a key focus of Felix Willing, PhD, CIO of Nordex SE since 2012. Prior to his arrival, too many scheduled IT projects were neither selected nor prioritized, but were more or less implemented ad hoc as required by the requesting departments.

“It was obvious that we would not reach the future requirements of the holding company with such an approach,” reflects Willing upon the situation at that time. “As an essential lever, we focused on project portfolio management and applied that first,” Willing continues.

In addition to the great challenge to create a coherent project portfolio from the large number of IT projects, the entire IT division suffered from staff shortages. This was in spite of established project management and possessing detailed project data.
Unfortunately, an overview of the entire portfolio was missing. Resources were not utilized optimally and projects could not be planned transparently.

In their search for a solution, Willing’s team evaluated various options — including the use of complex, enterprise-wide project management software. However, the team did not pursue this because of the effort involved. Willing explains: “The well-designed approaches failed in practice due to the great expense needed to integrate new projects or the inherent differences in project applications and organizational details.” The question of how to realize transition from professional IT project management to an equally professional and successful project portfolio management in IT still remained. In 2013, the Nordex IT division ventured a second attempt to answer this question.
Nordex’s IT department introduced a new portfolio process which incorporates itdesign’s PPM solution Meisterplan at a crucial point. Today, the new PPM process is comprised of only a few steps. For Nordex, the following three aspects were of particular importance when choosing Meisterplan:

1. the simple transfer of data from various sources, in this case MS SharePoint and MS Excel,
2. the intuitive possibilities for simulation of different scenarios and
3. the significant, intuitive management reports. With a few clicks, they are created quickly for the decision-making bodies.

Figure: Portfolio planning process at Nordex SE
These three key functionalities of Meisterplan were integrated into Nordex’s portfolio planning with minimal implementation effort. The imported project portfolio can now be displayed according to company-specific ranking. With much less time and effort, a transparent and weighted project portfolio of Nordex IT was created.

SAFE, FAST AND TRANSPARENT: MAKE THE RIGHT PROJECT PORTFOLIO DECISIONS
Meisterplan helps the decision makers at Nordex get a clear overview of project costs and the interdepartmental employee workloads. Via the graphical user interface, members of the PPM committee are able to simply simulate possible planning alternatives with a few clicks. They can compare and select different plans using the scenario functionality. While planning, the results of adjustments to projects and resources are visible interactively. Thus, precise portfolio plans can be created and comprehended. After the committee selects the right strategic plans, they can easily convert them into their existing reporting structures or display them via integrated Meisterplan reporting.
“Today our IT department is equipped better than ever to do our part to achieve the business goals.”

Willing considers Meisterplan to be the ideal solution for executing professional project portfolio planning: “We intensively studied a variety of approaches and concepts for PPM. Meisterplan was very attractive with its slight learning curve and short implementation time. Our first project portfolio plan using our data within MS SharePoint was available within a few weeks. Meisterplan was seamlessly integrated into the IT planning process at Nordex.”

However, quick and easy implementation is only one of the advantages. According to Willing, “The decisive factor is that Meisterplan gives us a powerful tool for project prioritization and analysis. We now have an overview of our entire project portfolio within minutes, and with interactive analysis included! IT departments often have complex project dependencies and resource constraints. Now with a glance, we can pinpoint our portfolio weaknesses. Best of all, we are able to simulate various scenarios and prioritization when presenting portfolio decisions to the board.”

Employee well-being has greatly benefited from the adoption of Meisterplan. “A well-planned project portfolio can prevent bottlenecks early on. My employees seldom work past their limits which ensures good project results. Meisterplan quickly answers the most important question: Where are the portfolio constraints and how can we resolve them?” Willing easily sums it up: “Meisterplan is an eye-opener.”
Felix Willing, PhD has been the CIO of Nordex SE in Hamburg since January 2012. He began his professional career as a chemist and in 2001 gained experience in business administration as a consultant for Trecon management consulting. In 2003 he joined MEDION as Head of Organization. At the end of 2007 he took a position with Siemen’s subsidiary Winergy AG as IT manager. From 2009 until the end of 2011 Willing was the CIO of manroland AG.

About Nordex SE
Since 1985, Nordex has been one of the pioneers in wind energy plant engineering. The Rostock company has set new standards with the development of ever larger and more economical turbines. Today more than 5,500 Nordex wind turbines with a total rated output of more than 9,000 megawatts are rotating in 34 countries. The group-wide management and coordination of subsidiaries Nordex Energy GmbH and Nordex Energy BV happens in Rostock at the headquarters of Nordex SE. With more than 2,500 employees and consolidated sales of about 1.43 billion euros in 2013, Nordex is among the top 10 in the industry.

About Meisterplan
Meisterplan is a software for interactive project portfolio management. It enables management to understand complex dependencies and restrictions. Meisterplan significantly improves the quality of management decisions by prioritizing, budgeting and scheduling resources.

About ITDesign
Software manufacturer itdesign GmbH has incorporated more than 15 years of experience in project and portfolio management into Meisterplan. Long-term, direct relationships with satisfied customers are the foundation for itdesign’s performance.

Are you ready for more effective PPM?
Call us at +1-888-908-5834 or go to www.meisterplan.com for your free 30-Day Trial.