Getting it right with a project and portfolio management solution
Better control, higher value

Orchestrating a portfolio of projects, and the resources for execution, challenges leaders at organizations large and small.

A project and portfolio management solution clears the chaos. No longer a nice-to-have, these solutions are becoming a need-to-have. Collective insight aligns the investment agenda with the organization’s strategic plan. Project planning tools and direct oversight maximize the potential for achieving targeted outcomes and objectives. Collaboration capabilities remove organizational and geographic boundaries for faster, better decision making.

Avanade recommends a rich, flexible solution to help organizations deliver greater value throughout the ecosystem of project participants, business decision makers, and customers and clients.

From chaos to clarity
Do the right projects. Do the projects right. Use resources right.

The use of project and portfolio management solutions is accelerating as project delivery times are squeezed, resource demand and availability fluctuate, and existing planning tools underperform.

A project and portfolio management solution supports the process of choosing the right projects to commit to and then completing those projects in the best ways possible using resources effectively.

In many ways, it’s the data that matters most. A project and portfolio management solution delivers information in context as projects move forward, helping ensure that execution and strategy remain aligned. Rather than buried in personal spreadsheets and delayed in distribution, critical information is readily available to everyone who supports and makes project and portfolio decisions.
Do the right projects

The right projects are those that align with the organization's strategic goals. The right mix of projects maximizes the value derived from fixed budgets and limited staff capacity.

A project and portfolio management solution provides a consistent process for prioritizing projects and the decision making rigor for ensuring that only high value initiatives move forward in the pipeline.

Demand creation and portfolio selection

Enter demand

Quality strategic goal alignment

Analyze portfolio

Maximize budget

Maximize resource capacity

Commit portfolio

Do projects right

Doing projects right can mean more than on-time and on-budget performance. With an effective project and portfolio management solution it can mean improving the organization's metabolic rate to shorten timelines and applying automation to lower overhead and total budget.

Creating a collaborative environment across all phases of a project increases throughput for all projects. Team-wide clarity on goals, tasks, budgets and timelines keeps projects moving forward in the right direction. Easy and ongoing communication generates insights and ideas for enriching projects and improving processes.

Project planning and management

Project baseline

Published project plan

Task and timesheet updates

Approve or reject updates

Update project plan

Metrics tracking

Use resources right

Visibility into project status and staff availability helps managers use resources right. And striking a balance between resource supply and demand drives decisions for the right time to start a project.

A project and portfolio management solution provides a quick view into who’s working on what across the organization. Project managers have the insight to make redeployment decisions at the right time—before under-utilized staff add unnecessary costs or over-stretched staff threaten the project timeline.
Leverage your Microsoft technology investments

Major considerations when choosing a project and portfolio management solution include costs and fit within the organization’s broader set of products and software. Microsoft Project Server, coupled with SharePoint and leveraging Microsoft Office, provides organizations with a flexible, cost-effective solution for project and portfolio management.

This highly rated solution is in place in 10,000 organizations, supporting more than 20 million people. Offered both on-premise and via Office 365 as Project Online, the solution provides easy access for users wherever they are and on the device they choose—along with familiar interfaces for ease of use.

In terms of functionality, Project Server allows businesses to define and prioritize their portfolio, as well as manage and track projects to completion. Collaboration capabilities, a common user interface, integrated data, document management, advanced workflows, search functions, reporting tools, scalability and security all add to the value.

Move to project and portfolio management maturity in phases

Forrester analysts estimate that roughly 50 percent of portfolio management implementations fail. Avanade typically recommends deploying a project and portfolio management solution in a phased rollout to give the organization time to absorb change and help ensure adoption. Microsoft Project Server has the flexibility to allow organizations to move to greater maturity at their own pace.

Real-world examples

Any organization eager to increase the value and decrease the risks across its portfolio of projects has much to gain from a project and portfolio management solution.

Project and portfolio management solutions bring value to projects of every stripe: capital projects, product development, service delivery, IT. For example, at Avanade, Project Server is integrated into our sales and delivery process. The project manager executes the project plan out of Project Server. Team members collaboratively update project status. Risks and issues are centrally managed. Through a set of standardized reports, project managers easily visualize schedule and cost performance. Organizationally, we have visibility into the health and status of all projects.

Beyond our own internal solution, we have helped organizations realize the benefits of Microsoft Project Server solutions across multiple industries, including consumer goods, resources and energy, and healthcare.
Consumer goods company

A global consumer goods company lacked end-to-end visibility into the process for bringing products to market. The company set a long-term goal to digitize the running of projects for better transparency. The solution, built by Avanade on Microsoft Project Server and SharePoint, has simplified project management and promotes collaboration across teams. Integration with SAP and other backend systems provides a holistic view into the projects.

Results

• Reduced staff time spent in daily status meetings
• Streamlined new product development
• Strengthened ability to act with a single source of truth for all projects
• Shortened time to identify and respond to issues and risks

Resource and energy company

This global resource and energy company wanted to bring more consistency to the execution of capital projects and more centralized management. In particular, the company needed to improve its ability to conduct what-if analyses to assess the effects of project changes and breaks on resource demand.

Avanade designed a solution with Microsoft Project Server, SharePoint and SQL Server Reporting Services that facilitates end-to-end portfolio analyses. Our user interface and experience team created an intuitive way to enter stage-wise demand and manage resource pools. What-if scenario creation and analyses allow the company to slate projects for maximized resource utilization. Intelligent project prioritization helps ensure the right projects are executed, minimize resource pinch points and reduce the risk profile of the portfolio.

Results

• Supports planning of $50 million to $5 billion dollar projects
• Mitigates risk of highly contractor-dependent projects through the balancing of demand
• Reveals resource pinch points under various execution strategies
• Enables proactive responses to gaps in resource supply

Healthcare IT department

The IT department of a healthcare provider supports a large and complex environment of discrete projects and ongoing support activities. The department needed a robust project management toolset to assess the resource needs of current projects and to plan future projects accordingly.

Avanade used the timesheet functionality in Microsoft Project Server to give the department answers to the fundamental questions of who’s working on what and how long it takes to complete the work. Avanade leveraged the reporting capabilities of Microsoft Project Server and corresponding business intelligence tools to redefine the department’s models for estimating and tracking the costs of technology enhancements and vital supporting activities.

Results

• Provides visibility across the organization into resource capacity and utilization
• Serves as the critical system for billing by leveraging timesheet actuals
• Reduces the staffing and skillset needs of the project management office
Measuring success

Through our own use of Microsoft Server and in helping others apply this solution, we have seen companies measure performance and achieve success in the following ways.

**Portfolio Management**
- Reduce portfolio operating costs
- Reduce portfolio reporting costs
- Increase portfolio value
- Terminate misaligned projects
- Reduce time to process new demand

**Project Management**
- Reduce project management costs
- Reduce project reporting costs
- Reduce late and over budget projects
- Reduce time to process change requests

**Resource Management**
- Improve resource utilization
- Reduce contractor headcount
- Reduce resource management reporting costs
- Reduce time to mobilize new projects
Why choose Avanade?

Many of our clients have turned to us for help creating a highly customized solution on Project Server to address complex business processes. Avanade offers Project Server expertise in conjunction with knowledge of the entire Microsoft stack:

- We are the largest global systems integrator on the Microsoft platform.
- We maintain a Microsoft gold competency in Project and Portfolio Management among our 24 gold competencies.
- Over 20,000 employees are specialized in Microsoft business intelligence, collaboration, technical infrastructure, application development or change enablement.
- Our global delivery model is worldwide, with more than 60 locations.