DP World Leverages Sensei IQ to Manage Multi-Billion Dollar Portfolio

DP World is the leading provider of smart logistic solutions, enabling the flow of trade across the globe. DP World moves 10 percent of all global trade through seamless, interconnected global networks of ports and terminals, economic and free zones, logistics hubs and marine services.

With a growing global network in over 78 countries, employing over 97,000 people, DP World needed a solution that would streamline the time spent by Project Managers in project administrative work, allowing them to focus more on strategic thinking and planning. Their Group Planning & Project Management Department (GPPMD) had to rethink the way it administers infrastructure projects.

With Sensei IQ, the DP World GPPMD has vastly improved the efficiency of its Project Management effort and given both its PMO administrative and leadership teams deep insight across its growing project portfolio.

Sensei IQ is a Microsoft Preferred Managed Solution fully integrated into Microsoft 365, giving DP World a single cohesive view of projects and portfolios.

AT A GLANCE

CLIENT NAME
DP World

LOCATION
Dubai

COMPANY SIZE
97,000 + employees

INDUSTRY
Transportation & Logistics

Client Challenges ───────────

DP World has an impressive infrastructure portfolio. Its GPPMD team is accountable for the management and delivery of DP World's capital construction projects valued at $10M and above. Since the department's inception in 2008, it has consistently maintained a portfolio value of between $1Bn and $4Bn. Like many strong matrix organizations, early on in its journey it established its governing policy document, developed a project implementation manual (project management framework), and developed templates to support its work. But there was no true standardization across its teams.

Initially, a basic tool was developed 'from scratch' that offered some success in standardizing reporting. However, baked into the tool was the need to duplicate data in support of project delivery governance and reports. As the department was growing, other project management departments were being integrated into its umbrella. The department's templates and ways of working were indeed mature and being implemented. However, as the scope and size of the GPPMD grew, each new section brought with it its own processes and methods.

"At a certain point in time, the quantity of emails and processes was rapidly increasing," says Ian Wilcock, Head of Project Portfolio. "The management of data and documents became a task in itself. Double-handling was becoming prevalent and hugely inefficient for our Project Managers."

Wilcock goes on to say that "to support the changing business and expansion of the department, a new department strategy was established." This gave them the focus to put new foundations in place and drive key initiatives to: overhaul project delivery process mapping, unify project data and establish a project and portfolio management system that:
- is driven by a Microsoft powered engine;
- is 'out of the box' and fully tailored to their way of working;
- can lever efficiencies from the genesis of single point of data entry to service all of their governance needs.

Wilcock summarizes that "prior to embarking on delivery of a new PPM system, time invested in reworking our process mapping and data management was time well spent." Mohammad Ragaey, Head of PMO, adds, "We had matured enough with our reporting system that we were ready to expand into a full project and portfolio management system." Then the pandemic hit, and their ways of working changed almost overnight; they could not delay the move to a true Project Portfolio Management (PPM) System.

As Wilcock notes, "Covid made its contribution and a multitude of stars were aligned. We had the impetus to develop new tools in support of our drive for efficiency. The journey for establishing a world class, efficient PPM system was now in hand."

Solution

The GPPMD had a pretty good understanding of what it wanted. A full set of user requirements were developed in-house, and the GPPMD and its IT support team undertook extensive research to find the absolute best fit for its PPM System. While following a full procurement procedure, they quickly realized that Sensei IQ could fully meet its needs.

"The Group is going through a major business transformation, where significant effort is being employed in developing digital tools to better serve our customers and increase the efficiency of our business. As a result, our department was looking for digital solutions that would align with our strategy, while maintaining our project implementation culture and existing processes. We recognized that Sensei-IQ would help take our Department capabilities to the next level," says Juan Sahdala, Chief Planning & Project Officer.

Sensei IQ is an adaptive project and strategic portfolio management solution that aligns, optimizes, and tracks work in an organization. Deployed securely in the client's Microsoft 365 tenant, Sensei IQ utilizes Model-Driven Power Apps, Power BI and the Microsoft Power Platform to give teams meaningful insights into projects, programs and resources across portfolios.

"We shared with Sensei our vision of wanting our Project Managers to be able to work in Dynamics, and for teams to be able to meet, collaborate, and share documents within Teams," says Wilcock. "I really appreciate that Sensei listened to our vision, understood what we wanted and tailored their pitch to fit our way of working."

They didn't want a custom-built solution that would require a whole team to develop and maintain. They needed a "Microsoft-powered", out of the box solution. So, it was a major plus that Sensei IQ was a turn-key solution with a proven track record of success. "Sensei had a working product; they wouldn't build for us from scratch," says Ragaey. "It was great to see what Sensei had already provided to other clients, so we weren't 'guinea pigs' for a solution. Sensei IQ out of the box 'ticked most of the boxes' even before getting into configuration. We got assurance that Sensei could provide all the integration that we wanted, which was a very important aspect for us."

Wilcock knew very quickly that they had found the right partner. "With Sensei IQ, we got an out of the box system that could be fully configured to our way of working, and that was exactly what we wanted."

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- Mohammad Ragaey, Head of PMO

Client Benefits

Everyone knows that a new tool, no matter how good it seems to be, is useless without adoption deep and wide in the organization. Wilcock says, "A key success factor has been the engagement of a core team of PM's from around the globe to work together with us in developing the system." He adds simply, "Adoption of Sensei IQ has been very fast."

To date, the GPMMD has more than 20 projects worth more than a billion dollars in its new system, and less than a year in, they are already seeing significant benefits. "We have a standardized way of filing documentation and project-related information, and visibility across the board throughout the PMO and for top management as well," says Suha Gamal, Project Performance Associate.

Sensei IQ has helped them be more efficient by maintaining one set of input data that is the genesis of all other reporting. Gamal says, "It's a one-stop solution in terms of lots of things: the Microsoft ecosystem, the filing structure, the information that project stakeholders have access to. It's a one-stop solution for the PM's and PMO where we can have different kinds of dashboards and analytic tools. There is a lot more information available compared to what we had before."

Wilcock raves that "the benefits we are already achieving with Sensei IQ are fantastic. It improves communication, standardization, visibility, efficiency, governance. All of that is already happening." The GPPMD has started deploying a relatively small class of projects and programs of work in Sensei IQ (if a billion dollars in projects can be considered small!), with plans to roll out to more project classes and more broadly across the organization. Gamal says, "When we've shown other departments our IQ deployment, they are quite impressed with how mature the product is."

GPPMD is not only excited about the Sensei IQ tool, but they are also pleased with the Sensei Team. "Sensei IQ is not just a 'commercial product'," says Ragaey. "There are people behind it who are passionate about this and about helping people out. They 'go the extra mile' to meet our needs." Gamal concurs: "I've been very happy working with the team at Sensei. They are very responsive to our questions and requests." Perhaps Gamal says it best when describing DP World's relationship with Sensei: "It's been great with Sensei. We feel like we're now family. We feel like we're one company working together to achieve the same goals."

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