

BUSINESS CASE – ALTOCHANGE.COM



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A) INTRODUCTION

I was asked to describe how I used the tools within AltoChange.com to provide for massive improvement in project management structure, follow-up, standardizing of data exchange, real-time and online methodology using the latest tools and know-how.

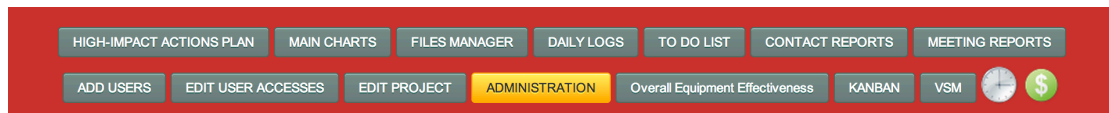


Figure 1 - Main Menu

When you start using the system, you see how massive it is and very quickly you start thinking, asking yourself how did you do before without such simple yet extremely powerful tools set which brings together various team members from various locations and backgrounds using a single simple and powerful system enabling them to speak the same common “language” thus understanding each other practically all the time.



By “language” I mean that very quickly, each and every team member, supervisor and managers all use the same names for the same tools at the same time giving a massive improvement in communication, reducing rework and emotions due to misunderstandings.

The language used is not only in the daily reports with the reminders (start and end of day, or start of week etc.) but also enabling to display on the projector screen Quad charts personalized by various teams and team members, High-Impact action plans, Gantt charts, To Do Lists, etc. when we do our weekly and monthly meetings.


 <div> TEST PROJECT (Peter SMITH) TO DO LIST - Task #90 Call Maria </div>	
REQUESTED BY	Peter SMITH
DESCRIPTION	We need the information about our performance-index for the first quarter. It is extremely important to gain value.
SITUATION	OPEN
SHARED WITH	Willy DANENBERG

Figure 2 - Task in To-Do List

On top of the above each and every document of interest has been exported from the system either as an Excel sheet or in an A4/A3 PDF file and put on the walls of our project room completely covering all the walls with important data easily shareable. This enabled anyone to meet in front of those displayed posters and discuss, write notes on them and update them regularly with new ones when they are provided. If you have ever worked in a high-pressure project you will surely understand the massive value of such tools.

I will provide in a step-by-step description of how I set up the system for my own use to manage an international project in several countries and several sites with the total impact on 1400 users, around 65 projects and over 300 subprojects.

B) RELIABILITY AND SECURITY

The first hurdle was to convince IT and management that the system is secure by showing that all communications are done using SSL, the most powerful encryption algorithm used by payment websites. For some locations there was a request that IP address restrictions will be

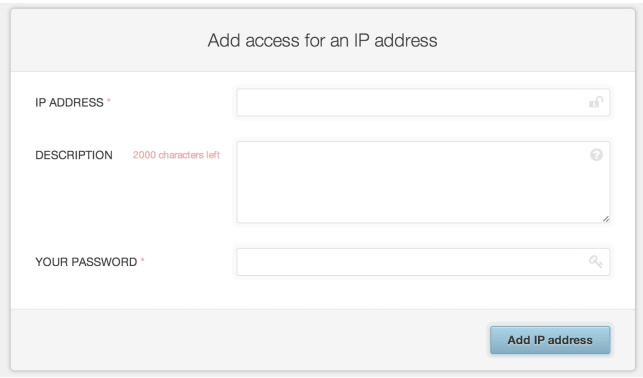


Figure 3 - Secure by IP address

activated so that only users that have the correct username and password and only users contacting the system from certain IP addresses will be able to connect. This was done very quickly and easily since the system also records and displays the user's

IP address. I have made a list, filled in the numbers and the restriction was working immediately.

After some discussions with the IT and management it was decided that the system is reliable and very safe for use by all the members and the configuration with the security tools was implemented in the platform that was created specifically for that multinational company using as well the project logo on all the screens and print out.

C) CREATING THE PROJECTS

The second action was to create a “project about the project” or a meta-project and to list all the actions I needed to do to get everybody on board and also record all the information we exchanged within the project management team and during our weekly meetings.

This included actions such as inviting users, configuring their accesses, creating various projects and subprojects as well as managers for each and every project.

In this case I have configured several super administrators that had access to everything like myself, the stakeholder’s manager at the client and my consulting supervisor at the consulting company I work for.

Then I configured for each project the consultant appointed in each and every site to the project that was relative to his site. Each site had also the possibility to create subprojects. This way everybody had access to what they needed and I also configured that each and every site consultant had access to the meta-project where we shared our weekly meetings and meta project data. Those screens, containing the latest data were either shared on a projector or via screen sharing programs when we met but were also available in the system all the time.

Create a new project/subproject

HOME PROJECT Select home project ONLY if you are creating a subproject -----

NAME * 9 characters left Develop meta-communication in factory XYZ ✓

TIMEZONE * Select a timezone (the same as during winter time)

LOGO .jpg .jpeg .png

DESCRIPTION 1500 characters left ?

Create project

Figure 4 - Creating a new project

Each local consultant started using his own project, adding his team members, creating subprojects, high-impact action items for each project.

Some having very large list classified the actions by importance, impact and urgency. Depending on their needs and assigning different team members for different action items. It is also to be noted that each member could create his own personalized data structure, tools sharing various bits of information and showing progress on each item.





This was extremely interesting as we could very easily see which items were urgent and which where done, and also at which dates certain things had to be finished.

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 [.xls](#) |
 [.doc](#) |
 [.html](#)

ALL ACTIONS (1) |
 PENDING ACTIONS (1) |
 DONE ACTIONS (0) |
 EXPIRED ACTIONS (0)

Show 100 entries

Search:

EDIT	#	ACTION	SCORE	% DONE	CODE	OWNER(S)	CAU
   	1	Buy and install a new machine in the German factory	6	0	E45	Peter SMITH	The current situation the conditions given

Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries

[First](#) |
 [Previous](#) |
 [1](#) |
 [Next](#) |
 [Last](#)

Figure 5 - Part of an High-Impact Actions Plan

Each member started also to use the to do lists which are extremely powerful, can be shared between team members and are closed only when we decide that the action is finished.

We started to make meeting reports on line on a weekly base and every member signed for agreement the meeting reports so that they committed to the meeting's decisions and priorities set.

D) ORGANISATION

The company used to share files using another software.

We replaced it by the system in AltoChange.com which is more powerful and adapted to our needs in attributing users and users rights such as read-only (all in a much more precise and controlled way).

All file formats are allowed for upload

Max. file size = 50 Mb

Formats available for preview

- .jpg .jpeg
- .png
- .gif

Select a **GROUP OF FILES** to upload your files

Select a group of files

OR attach your files to an **High-Impact Action**

#1 – Buy and install a new machine in...

CLOSE

The files will be attached to the **High-Impact Action #1**
(part of the project **TEST PROJECT**)

DRAG AND DROP YOUR FILES IN THE BOX BELOW OR CLICK ON 'SELECT FILES'.

oeo_machine_material.png

SELECT FILES

UPLOAD FILES

Figure 6 - Files uploader

Since I was travelling about 30 to 40% of the time, and I had to manage various sites in various countries and different time zones, I have set up in the system an automatic daily log reminder, twice per day, once in the morning at 7:30 AM local time and another one at 4 PM local time, for each project site, requesting each member of the teams to fill in and send a start of day log outlining what he's planning to do during the day and an end of day log, outlining what each member has accomplished based on his start of day plan for the day and eventually other things he has done or not which were not planned.

START YOUR DAY	END YOUR DAY
<p>A new day is starting ! What are you planning to do?</p>	<p>Did you reach your goals, today? Tell us about the great work you've done !</p>
<p>If you haven't started working today, you should write a "Start your day" log by clicking here.</p>	<p>You can link this end log to an existing start log <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> #1090 • 14 February 2014 (16:04) </div> </p>
<p>#1090 • 14 February 2014 (16:04)</p> <p>Total plan to do:</p> <p>A B C D</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid #add8e6; padding: 10px; min-height: 200px;"> <p>I managed to do:</p> <p>A B C But I replace C and D by E and F</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">5945 characters left</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Once submitted, you will not be able to edit this log.</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Send log</p>

Figure 7 - Writing End Day Log attached to a Start Day log

I have configured the system so that each member of the management team receives a copy of the daily reports of the team members, and also the managers of each site received the daily reports of the managers of the other sites.

<p>Daily logs START of day</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activate reminders from <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> 2014-01-23 </div> </p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> First day of the month ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Last day of the month ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Specific calendar days in a month any date from 01 to 31st (numbers, comma separated) <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 15px; display: inline-block;"></div> ✔ </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monday ▲ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; min-height: 30px;"> Please let me know what you plan to do this week. </div> </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">07:30</div> ▾ </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Friday ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday ✔ <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday ✔ </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">06:30</div> ▾ </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="font-size: x-small;"> By default, the settings are repeated indefinitely. Unless you check the box on the right and enter a day. </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat until the <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">2014-02-22</div> </div>
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Figure 8 - Reminders configuration for the Daily Logs

The power and efficiency of the daily logs was enormous.

It was such a powerful tool that I gave the members and managers the capability to know what each one and in every moment in each and every site what another team member was doing, to react to it in real-time, to issue priority changes that were needed to attain the objectives of the project.

This system is so powerful that it also enables to give immediate feedback about the daily logs submitted by the team members.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Contact/report". At the top right, there are four checkboxes: "Read", "Contact me", "Report to me when done", and "Contact me immediately". Below these, there are seven text input fields, each with a question mark icon in the top right corner. The labels for these fields are: "Various...", "Contact...", "...at...", "Risk of...", "Check...", "Do it with...", "Stop immediately...", and "Start later and do this first...".

Figure 9 - Feedback options immediately sent by email

It happened many times that after receiving the morning reports I would change the priority areas and actions of individual team members and teams to make sure the coordination was perfect. This was really a lifesaver.

E) USING THE TOOLS

After the structure of their project data and the user access were all in place and the users were able to do their Daily Logs, High-Impact action plans, Quad charts, Gantt charts, etc., I started to use the process improvement tools in the system to analyze the current state and start making a plan of future state regarding various processes in the company's industrial sites and offices.

Printable version - Download A4 (.pdf) - Download A3 (.pdf)
Last edition on 14 February 2014 at 15:55 by SMITH Peter

Edit Quad Chart

Quad Chart

Accomplishments Design decided and approved for the advertising to be launched all over Europe.	Planned Activities Meet with the communication service to plan the new campaign.
Concerns / Open issues / Road blocks We need a bigger budget for the TV spot	Recommendations Decide with the shareholders what they are ready to do

Figure 10 - Quad Chart

Table Format Edit

B *I* U ~~S~~ [List Icons] Paragraph Font Family

Font Sizes [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons] [List Icons]

Design decided and approved for the advertising to be launched all over Europe.

p Words: 13

Figure 11 - Text editor for the Quad Chart

One of the first tools I have used was the value stream mapping to map all the actions, steps, flows, standard operating procedures, etc. in the value stream mapping system you can map on various levels such as production, security, quality etc.

Then using the Value Stream Mapping (precision going from years to the second!) I've started to map various “Kaizen’s” - actions to improve on problems found during the value stream mapping analyses.

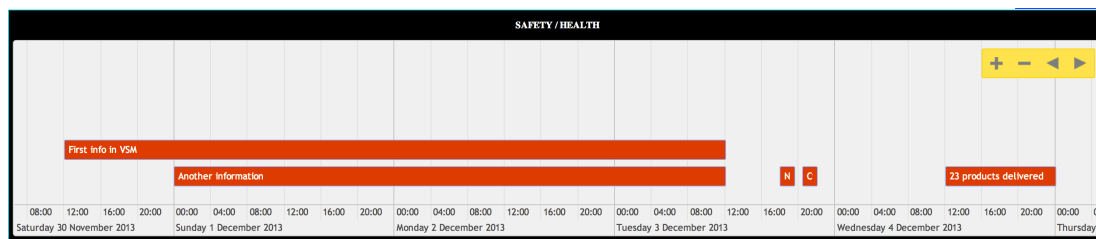


Figure 12 - One of the 8 timelines available for the Value Stream Mapping

A very nice option is the possibility to print the value stream mapping, to put them on the wall and have the whole team look at it, discuss various steps, shared activities and distribution of roles as well ideas for improvements.

On many occasions we created subprojects, which enabled us to address the various actions and Kaizen corrections to solve the issues we needed to solve.

These may include machine stoppage, products and work in process issues, quality, security and other issues in such a way that we could really focus on repairing the business processes in probing the flow, improving it, bringing increased speed, efficiency and quality to the production processes.

In this particular project, we had over 300 Kaizen's (i.e. opportunities for improvements out of which around 250 were successful or brought some new ideas and the rest was postponed to another round of process improvement).

The fact that anybody could see the value stream mapping of one site even if they were in another site depending on their access authorizations parameters which were given or not enabled us to share success stories, solutions and team specialists to solve

Make your selection and click on Save

☒ Synchronize the dates range between the timelines when changed

Display the following timelines:

☒ Safety
☒ Environment
☒ Quality
☒ Cost
☒ Delivery
☒ People
☒ Process
☒ Action

Figure 13 - Settings for the Value Stream Mapping

various problems in different places giving us a major time, effort and means savings using best practices from one place in another as soon as we could.

AltoChange.com also contains tools that enable you to fill online timesheets, which can be used to calculate salaries, budgets and invoices. These timesheets can be managed in such a way that the whole approval process is managed within the same system with the same users and managers.

This also means that the timesheets can be attached either to a specific project or to the meta-project. This is interesting because sometimes expenses are invoiced to one site internally or to another site or at a fraction of the centralized account.

All those mechanisms are managed in the system and simplified tremendously the creation, the correction, the transfer and the approval process within one centralized system.

I found the timesheets tools within AltoChange.com extremely powerful, easy-to-use, precise and clear on all levels. It saved me countless hours chasing the various timesheets I needed to approve or get approved reducing the amount of administrative overhead to a minimum, reducing reworks and enabling each and every signatory to use the same tools and language overall.

This is a tremendously useful tool since it also structures the data in an easy-to-understand manner by all those who need the data within those

DEMO

TEST PROJECT (Peter SMITH)

EXPENSE REPORT #1

Version #2

Saved on 28 Dec 2013 - 15:25 (GMT) by Peter SMITH

Person

Dates

Client Name

Division

Location

Peter SMITH

01 December 2013 to 31 December 2013

ABC

Production chain

UK, Belgium, France

Mission XYZ

PAID

	First week	[unclassified]
Airline Ticket	197.04 GBP	0.00 GBP
Restaurant	0.00 GBP	51.94 GBP
TOTAL	197.04 GBP	51.94 GBP

RECEIVED

	First week	[unclassified]
Train	45.00 GBP	0.00 GBP
TOTAL	45.00 GBP	0.00 GBP

DETAILS

Show 50 entries

Search:

Group	Type	Description	Method	Account	Amount	GBP
[unclassified]	Restaurant	Offered meal to CEO to discuss change to make	Cash	Out-of-Pocket	85.00 USD	51.94 GBP
First week	Airline Ticket	To Poland	American Express	Out-of-Pocket	235.95 EUR	197.04 GBP
First week	Train		Mastercard	Company	~ 45.00 GBP	~ 45.00 GBP
					TOTAL	203.98 GBP

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries

First

Previous

Next

Last

TOTAL ACCOUNTS

Account	Amount
Out-of-Pocket	248.98 GBP
Company	45.00 GBP

EXCHANGE RATES

Currency	GBP
1.00 EUR	0.8351 GBP
1.00 USD	0.6111 GBP

FILES

Download	Size
proof of payment restaurant cso.png	11.46 KB

Figure 14 - Expense Report generated by AltoChange



documents and when it is needed. The timesheets can be exported in various file formats as well.

Additionally, AltoChange.com contains the expense reports module, which is multi-user, multi-currency with automatic exchange rates, capture and with manual input of exchange rates optionally available as well.

The expense reports module permits the user to use the same data but in different ways since very often the same data is used in different situations for example: I may invoice my customer for my true expenses plus a certain amount per kilometre for my car usage but when I will put my expense reports into my company's accounting I would only count the petrol I bought because the car is owned by the company. Furthermore, the same data can be split into various sites: each site is taking over a portion of the expenses whereas internally I may need to invoice the full amount.

The system can handle company credit cards, debit cards cash payments personal credit and debit cards, advanced cash payments by the company and many other payment facilities such as E Wallets / PayPal etc.



Figure 15 - All currencies are available

The tool enables the user to introduce the expenses at their exact amount and local currencies and converts automatically into this centralizing currency of your choice

all the amounts and all the currencies. All expenses can be divided into different groups and types, and those are centralized on various centralization accounts to be able to see how much money a person or project or team spends on various items or expense categories.

The system calculates automatically how much money you need to recuperate and a much money has already been paid by the company (eventually via company credit cards).

For each expense item you can upload a picture of the corresponding receipt for easy filing, verification and acceptance. Each and every expense report can be replicated then modified and used for other purposes. It is an extremely powerful system that saved me countless hours getting all the data from all the consultants in the field, the teams and get all the approvals from all the stakeholders.

I have used the expense reports and the timesheets as a tool to prepare budgets whether in time or expenses to be approved BEFORE the expenses have been incurred and to easily compare the budgeted expenses compared to actual incurred.

This really is a hugely helpful tool and the fact that those documents are attached to a project, have enabled me to manage very complex accounting, budgeting, payments and approval chains under control without ever losing any expense or miscalculating and exchange rate.

This is a tremendous time-saver, which reduces the stress at the end of the month when all the month's accounting has to be provided thus saving countless of expensive hours and reducing stress by all members of the teams.

F) LEAN MANAGEMENT AND MANUFACTURING

Another major part of the process improvement initiative was the AltoChange.com Kanban system which enabled us to regulate the supply chain within each plant and included regulating logistics of pallets, raw materials, packaging, tools transfer and

use, work in progress, semi-finished goods as well as the finished goods logistics and the data flow within the various buildings in the different sites and contacts.

The system is so powerful yet very easy to use and also provides for an instant messaging system so that for example the warehouse which is 300 m from the production site can send messages to the production site saying that their order is ready or something else.

The Kanban system also manages the use of groups, operators and production managers. Each one of them having different access rights and possibilities. The only thing that is needed is a network access where data is introduced or needed. Part of the Kanban was eventually connected to an internal MRP and SAP ERP system streaming the process even further.

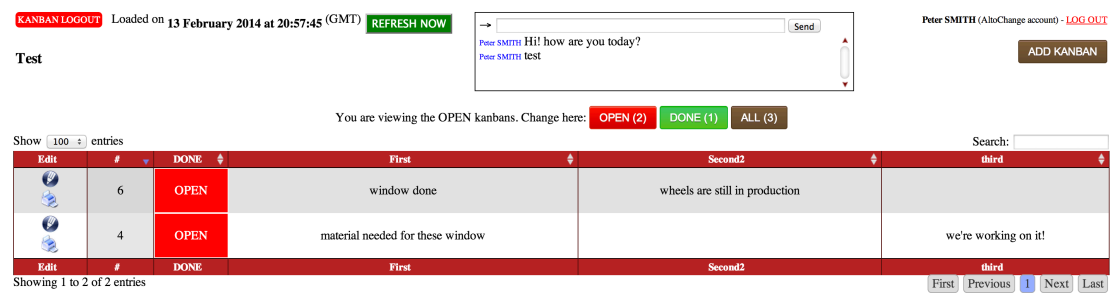


Figure 16 - Kanban

We also used the AltoChange.com system in different sites to manage projects such as early equipment management, TPM - Total Prevented Management which included autonomous maintenance, planned maintenance, quality maintenance, training and education, safety, health, environment as well as TPM in administration all part of world-class manufacturing initiatives.

In some sites, we used the full features of the units and extremely powerful OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) and the production management system.



Figure 17 - Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) menu

This system enables the production manager to define operators, teams, machines, products, standard operating procedures (SOP's) for production security cleaning etc.

as well as production runs to be assigned to a machine to an operator, to a team in the factory, etc.

The production management system can be linked automatically to a machine, to record all machine stoppages as well as production speed automatically; or in our case what we did was to install a cheap 150€ tablet (or less) near each machine enabling the production manager to assign various productions runs to different machines, different teams and operators and enabled their real-time follow up of the actual production compared to the plan by pushing large on screen on the tablet buttons and text zones to fill in when necessary. An example was a start/stop button and at each stop we recorded the number of pieces produced, the number of pieces that were defect to analyse and to reduce defects. The system recorded the time stamps (start/stop) automatically and only the numerical data was introduced manually.

The system is very easy to use and for the first time we were able to measure the true OEE of the machine in the plant, which was in fact much lower than what was believed to be because for the first time all stoppages and quality issues were recorded and we saw how much improvement space we had (something which was for the first time visible and enabled us to more than double -in some cases even triple- the production).

The fact that we had a common multi-site tool to calculate OEE enabled us for the first time to compare different plants, different machines, different teams and different shifts. We were able to find many issues that very quickly became Kaizen's initiatives (subprojects) to improve production on the various lines.

The system also provides for a graph for each production, which is extremely useful and very easy to understand even for some operators that are not very educated.

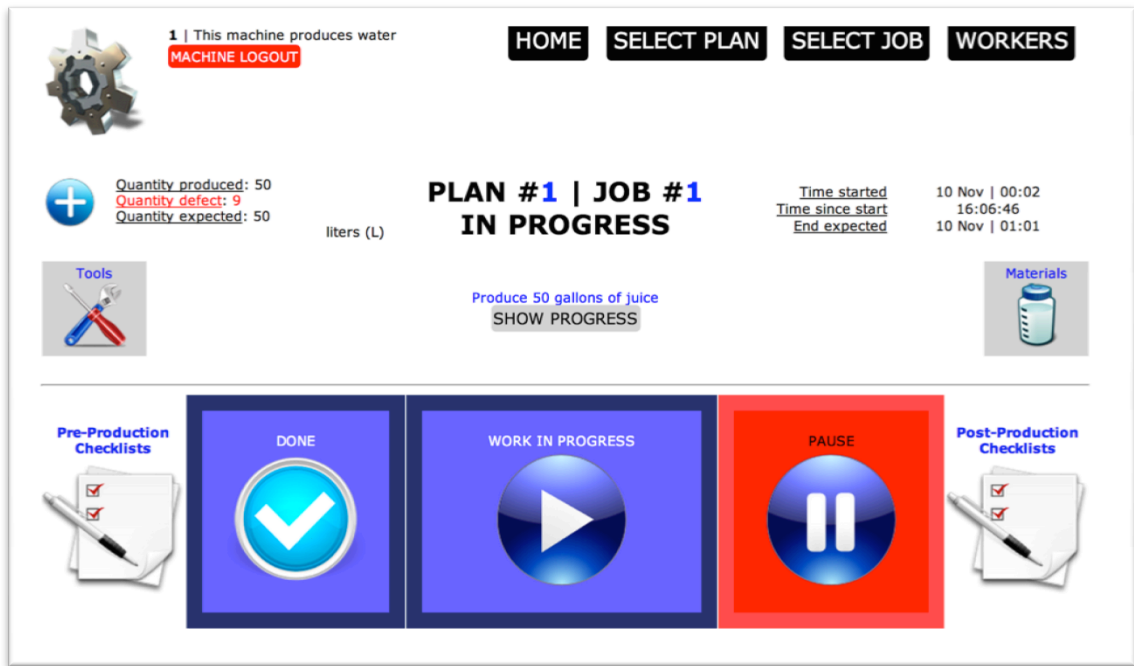


Figure 18 - Tablet side, next to each machine in the factory

We quickly went to OPE – Overall Production Efficiency, studying all the individual OEEs and creating a factory level OPE that takes into account all individual OEE parameters.

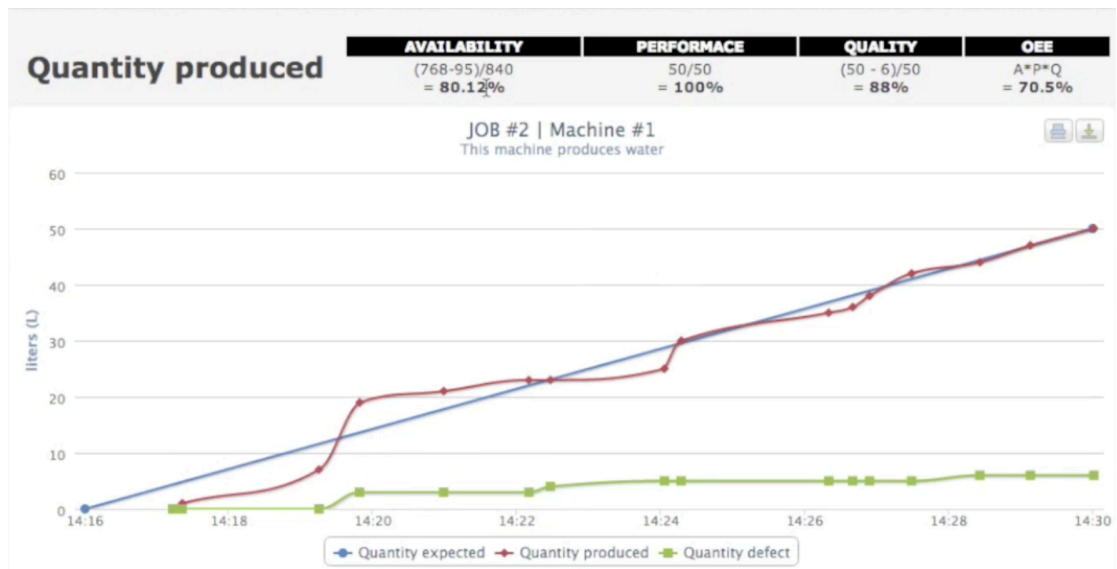


Figure 19 - Total OEE automatically calculated by AltoChange

Having such tools enabled the supervisors to better do their jobs, the production manager to plan the productions ahead of time and include all SOP's and other information needed to make sure the production will be flawless and have real-time data to act immediately when needed.

The plant managers could have an easy overview in real-time of what's going on in their factory.

I would like also to add that in each factory we had a continuous improvement (CI) manager.

These managers before the arrival of AltoChange.com had only limited connection and impact on some issues handled.

After installing AltoChange.com, the continuous improvement managers were part of all the teams and able to provide services where needed.


Also, what happened and which was extremely positive was that the managers of the plants and the production managers, the CI managers and in some instances the supervisors really evolved into a true management teams.

This was not always the case and often was the weakest link in most of the plants where most of the managers simply grew up the ladder but never really became proficient in new process improvement tools and were not able to easily collaborate between them.



AltoChange.com changed all that almost overnight.

One of the last tools that we have started to use and that gave us a huge advantage in solving various issues was the fact that we are able to attach files to actions listed in the High- Impact Action Plans.



PENDING ACTION

Project High-Impact Action Plan - TEST PROJECT

(Peter SMITH) 14 February 2014 at 16:14 (GMT)

SCORE	% DONE	OWNERS(S)
6	0	Peter SMITH

#	CODE	IMPORTANCE	URGENCY	IMPACT	START DATE	DUE DATE
1	E45	3	2	1	2014-01-10	2014-03-28

ACTION

Buy and install a new machine in the German factory

CAUSE	ACTUAL SITUATION	EXPECTED SITUATION
The current situation is not acceptable in the conditions given	n/a	n/a

Figure 20 - Pending action in the High-Impact Actions Plan

Those files can of course be files such as Excel sheets and Word documents but we have also started to attach image photos taken with smart phones on the shop floor and uploaded it directly into the system thus sharing those images instantly and even sharing short videos between the team members.

We even created in the files management system a special place to keep videos and pictures of our success stories so that these could be used in other sites to show how it is done elsewhere and to teach other company members what has been done elsewhere, to get great inspiration and really feel as part of the same family and team.

G) CONCLUSION

Any change initiative such as trying to improve business processes or managing projects can be extremely stressful for the employees and workers in a company.

The AltoChange.com system changed that overnight and instead of stress we had fun instead of difficulties we had many successes and those successes were all documented, shared and enjoyed by all the participants and beneficiaries.

This is extremely rewarding to know that by using the system we managed not only to improve practically every aspect of the business and production processes but also changed the culture from a blaming culture and an unyielding structure into a great place to work in and a very powerful culture which is agile, friendly, very competent, very knowledgeable, very participative and extremely capable in all that was and will be undertaken. A team and team members sure of their capacity to handle any challenge!

The various sites have decided to keep the system on a permanent base because the system not only enables you to make change happen quickly, easily and with great agility but also the system permits to sustain all the goodies that were implemented so that the improvements and the culture changes are now irreversible and made the company as a whole much stronger, increasing its sustainability, agility and capacity to thrive in today's extremely competitive market

In one of the plants we managed to almost triple the production with the same number of employees with no stress.

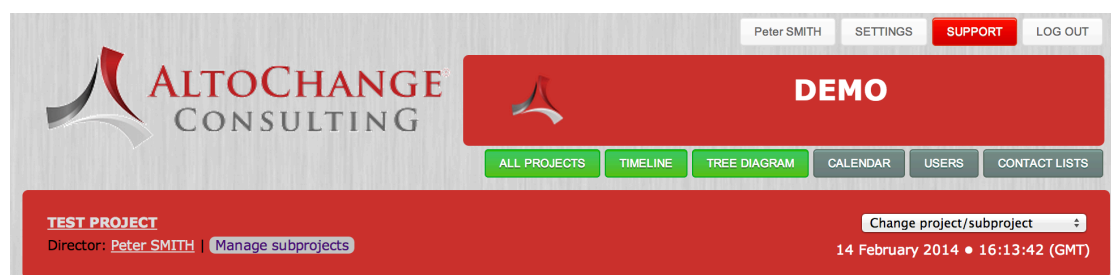


Figure 21 - Part of the menu

The system is so versatile that I have already used it in lean manufacturing improvement projects, Six Sigma projects, World Class Manufacturing initiatives, Kaizen's, TPM projects, IT projects, Agile project management approach, Business Intelligence projects, CAPEX (Capital Expenditure), ITIL projects and Prince2 type projects, moving and after mergers and acquisitions.

It is difficult for me today to imagine any project without such tools because the system gives each and every member so much as well as creates real team collaboration and can improve the return on investment of any size project by many folds almost overnight

I'm always impressed just how helpful the system is to get any project and teams working perfectly.