

CUSTOMER SUCCESS



PEOPLECUBE

Customer Success Story

PeopleCube is in business to help organizations reduce costs and enhance productivity through innovative workplace, resource and energy management solutions. Yet for a time, managing the logistics of their own software development process was a challenge. The traditional waterfall development system they had in place had been adequate for developing “from scratch” projects, but when it came to adding capabilities to their existing products as the market evolved around them, they found it was holding them back. With no time for lengthy spec and design phases for products that might be irrelevant by the time they came out, PeopleCube did what more and more companies are doing: moved to an agile development process and, after a false start, found a tool that supported their new structure. They’ve never looked back.

THE CHALLENGE

The move to an agile process began three years ago in engineering. Because PeopleCube were more interested in changing their project management process than their development practices, they chose to use Scrum. After getting a good grasp of the concepts and processes, the engineering team decided that it was time to add an agile tool, both to make the transition easier and to provide stakeholder visibility.

PeopleCube initially chose what they understood was an enterprise-class tool and thought that it would be a good fit. But after nine months it was clear that things weren’t working well at all. Engineers complained that there were just “too many clicks” and that the tool was “too complex.” They were also dissatisfied with what they felt was poor product support and communication from the company. In addition, as a software-as-a-service provider themselves, PeopleCube did not feel certain that the security precautions in place around the vendor’s on-demand application were sufficient, despite attempts to resolve data backup issues with the vendor.

When the contract came up for renewal, PeopleCube made the decision to scrap the tool and start over. This time they wanted an enterprise-level tool that would provide them an on-site option, would be customizable and would be more intuitive and easier to use. They demoed a few products, but one stood out above the rest.

We have offices in Massachusetts, Michigan, Arizona and the United Kingdom, as well as offshore teams. There are challenges with a distributed team no matter what the process. VersionOne makes communication and data handling much easier.

Joe Karbowski, Vice President & Chief Technology Officer, Innovation, PeopleCube

SNAPSHOT

PEOPLECUBE

- Provides intelligent on-demand workplace, resource and energy management solutions that help customers run sustainable, cost effective workplaces.
- Currently supports 7,500 small, medium and enterprise customers worldwide across a wide variety of industries including Healthcare, Telecomm, Manufacturing, Government, Banking / Financial Services, High Tech, Education, Media / Entertainment & Travel.

BUSINESS ISSUES

- Changing market required a flexible development process
- Multiple teams spread across six offices in four countries
- Existing tool did not provide adequate data backup and was too cumbersome for engineers
- Needed a robust, flexible API that would integrate with their CRM

RESULTS WITH VERSIONONE

- Real-time visibility into upcoming releases, both major and minor
- Greater buy-in means engineers actually use the tool and enter their data for tracking
- Central repository improves communication among distributed team members
- Ready access to historical data improves predictability and trust
- Reputation for realistic schedules helps them recruit top talent
- Ability to respond quickly to market changes and release products accordingly

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

THE CHOICE: VERSIONONE

PeopleCube chose VersionOne. VersionOne, available on-demand and on-premise, gave them the option of keeping their data in-house, a prime concern after their previous tool experience. In addition, VersionOne's application programming interface could be made to work with PeopleCube's CRM (Sage) with minimal effort and cost.

PeopleCube uses Sage to offer customers a portal: a window into the application's future from which customers can see the status of upcoming changes and enhancements in real time. As feature requests come into the CRM, they are moved seamlessly into the VersionOne product backlog. Similarly, as they are closed in the VersionOne product backlog, the feature requests are updated in Sage. As Joe Karbowski, PeopleCube VP & CTO, puts it, "Nearly all of our customers have access to our portal. It's very popular. It is definitely a competitive differentiator for us. VersionOne makes that possible."

RESULTS

As PeopleCube's market continues to grow, VersionOne enables them to react immediately to new opportunities and to quickly adapt to customer needs. Karbowski explains: "As business needs arise, we augment our existing product line with new modules that provide the necessary functionality." For example, PeopleCube is set to release a new application into the education market. This solution will allow institutions to give their students the ability to reserve study rooms. "Instead of walking across campus playing 'Knock-knock, who's there' looking for an available space, students will be able to access all of the available rooms from a touchscreen kiosk in the library or through a website from their dorm rooms," Karbowski says.

These types of module releases occur in multiple products throughout the year and require a great deal of coordination across teams. The teams that make this happen are divided across product lines but are integrated across state and country boundaries. "Having VersionOne as a central repository is key [to coordinating the releases]. For example, we use the notes feature to record issues on backlog items versus sending it all via email," says Karbowski.

The VersionOne tool has even helped with recruiting. "We don't come up with ridiculous schedules because we use VersionOne for planning and predictability; it keeps us

credible. Our realistic schedules are one of the reasons engineering candidates say they are attracted to our company," Karbowski explains.

Overall using VersionOne has helped the company achieve its high-level predictability, dependability, and responsiveness goals. VersionOne has been instrumental in achieving a greater level of release forecasting. "The engineers just 'got' VersionOne," says Karbowski. "They understand why they are entering real hours versus estimates. They don't feel like big brother is watching them."

This consistency coupled with the ability to track data with VersionOne has led to increased confidence and trust from management. "When we say we're going to deliver a module in x months, they trust our estimates because we have the historical data to back it up," says Karbowski.

Finally, VersionOne helps the team in the most important area of all: customer credibility. As Karbowski explains, "Our goal is to be cognizant of the market. We are now able to deliver to our customers products we might never have envisioned through waterfall planning—those wonderful, unplanned products that come from understanding business needs and embracing change."

ABOUT PEOPLECUBE

PeopleCube provides intelligent on-demand workplace, resource, and energy management solutions that help customers run sustainable, cost-effective workplaces. Through its corporate headquarters in Framingham, Massachusetts and offices throughout the world, PeopleCube supports 7,500 customers in small, medium and large enterprises.

More information is available at www.peoplecube.com.

ABOUT VERSIONONE

VersionOne is recognized by agile practitioners as the leader in agile project management tools. By simplifying the planning and tracking of agile projects, we help teams deliver better software faster. Since 2002, companies such as Adobe, Dow Chemical, Lockheed Martin, Motorola, Novell, Sony and Symantec have turned to VersionOne. Today more than 30,000 teams from over 170 countries use VersionOne.

Start small. Scale smart. See for yourself at www.VersionOne.com.