



Sensei

CASE STUDY

ELEVATING PROJECT EXCELLENCE: ASAHI BEVERAGES HARNESSES THE POWER OF SENSEI AND ALTUS.

Asahi Beverages is one of the leading beverage companies in Australia and New Zealand. With a rich and varied history, the organisation markets quality alcohol and non-alcohol beverages, boasting a strong portfolio of established household brands and innovative, new-to-market products. Asahi Holdings Australia is a member of Asahi Group Holdings, one of Japan's leading beverage companies, and comprises of some of Australia and New Zealand's most successful beverage businesses, including Asahi Lifestyle Beverages (formerly known as Schweppes Australia), Asahi Beverages New Zealand and Carlton & United Breweries (CUB) which now incorporates Asahi Beverages alcohol division, Asahi Premium Beverages.

When Asahi Holdings Australia set about a capability uplift for its project management office, the organisation beverages company Asahi selected Sensei and Altus project and portfolio management software solution to support the goals of improved visibility, better reporting and optimised value creation across a vast and continually evolving portfolio of initiatives. After a successful implementation and three years later, Asahi has established solid foundations with Sensei and Altus, demonstrating the efficacy of the software and continues an organic process of maturing the project management office among professional and citizen project managers alike.

Asahi

COMPANY NAME

Asahi Holdings Australia

INDUSTRY

Beverages

LOCATION(S)

Global

HEADQUARTERS

Melbourne, Australia

SITUATION

Describing its projects portfolio as 'quite a complex environment', Asahi's CCP and PMO Group Manager, Matthew Carrocci, says the company recognised an opportunity for improving performance. "We wanted efficiency of information and standardisation, with project and portfolio management supported by a single application," he recalls.



Within the Asahi Beverages group there are multiple companies and subsidiaries, with a similarly diverse set of processes and ways of working on projects. Many of these ways of working, says Carrocci, were considered legacy, inefficient or sub-optimal; the project managers across the organisation span a continuum from those formally trained and qualified in methodologies like PMBOK and PRINCE2, to those considered 'citizen project manager's. The tools in use, too, spanned everything from Excel spreadsheets to personally selected specialist applications. "This might work fine for individual projects, but when it comes to rolling it all up to get a portfolio view of progress or value delivered, it was a bit of a challenge. Providing access to information was difficult and time-consuming. And we wanted people spending more time on project work, rather than chasing information."

The answer, he says, was building an Asahi standard framework and way of working with the right PPM tool to support it.

SOLUTION

While a recommendation for Sensei and the Altus solution came in from EY, Carrocci says "All Sensei's selling points for the solution are precisely what Asahi sought." Those selling points include elevating work to achieve organisational strategy, improving resource utilisation, transforming work processes to foster collaboration, and evolving decision-making with trustworthy insights. "We're a big Microsoft user too, so the fact that Altus is built on the Microsoft Power Platform was a big plus. Sensei also gives the consumer clients of its software a lot of control, including hosting on our own tenant and connecting to all the applications in the Microsoft stack. And as a Software-as-a-Service application, the price and speed to

solution from out-of-the-box made sense for us rather than customising something from the ground up."

The implementation took a staged approach starting with a single team at Asahi and then migrating out to additional teams and users. Carrocci says the initial stages went smoothly, with a high degree of collaboration between Sensei's people and Asahi's internal staff. There were some complexities during implementation with the acquisition of major beverages company Carlton & United Breweries (CUB), which necessitated some rework but with Sensei's support the team delivered on a successful first iteration of the tool. "Typically, you want your processes and governance embedded before you put a system in. However, bringing in CUB meant we had to ensure the system would be future proof as the business harmonised ways of working and processes."

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*Matthew Carrocci, CCP and PMO Group Manager,
Asahi Beverages*

BENEFITS REALISED



Altus has contributed to enhanced project excellence, improved performance, and standardised project management for Asahi Beverages, ultimately driving better outcomes and value creation for the organisation.



OPTIMISED VALUE CREATION

Altus streamlines processes, standardises project management, and fosters collaboration for optimised value across initiatives.



IMPROVED VISIBILITY

Altus tracks project management requirements, highlighting areas for improvement and maintaining standards.



INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Altus replaces legacy ways of working, eliminating manual tracking and consolidating project information, saving time for project managers.



BETTER REPORTING

Altus enables comprehensive reporting on project progress, value, and resources, supporting decision-making and ensuring accurate updates.

He confirmed however, the commitment and adaptability from Sensei and Asahi's teams drove towards a successful initial rollout within 3 months. "Once implemented, though, the real work starts – the biggest challenge, especially in a large population of users, is change management and bringing people on board to embrace and use the new tool."

This process of embedding Altus, says Carrocci, is ongoing. To date, he says around 100 people are frequent users; there are a further 100 to 150 individuals engaged in project specific tasks that he'd like to see on the system. "We're looking for a domino effect. The more people who use Altus and see the benefits, the more advocates and systems champions we have to bring others on board." This is also true as Asahi embarks on a Transformation Program moving the company forward on establishing the future outlook of the business.

RESULTS

Achieving lasting change in a large multi-disciplinary organisation is challenging, but Carrocci says the ball is rolling in the right direction with Altus. "At the moment, Altus is providing insight into the maturity of our project management capability as an organisation. There is a standard we are setting in project management, and we hadn't previously had the tools and visibility to maintain that standard. As a comprehensive solution tracking almost every aspect of project management, we can now shine a light on not only where we're kicking goals but also where there is room for improvement. The system is transparent and sets a single expectation for governance so we're all on the same page.

Carrocci stresses that the point is not about making project management more difficult, but to make it better. "Altus does that. Now, we're looking at automating some of the system inputs, so it gets easier for our users, maturing the system and further driving the benefit. We've shown the business the potential, now it is time to fully unlock that potential."



"Altus is setting a new standard with comprehensive tracking, it reveals completed and unfinished tasks. The system eliminates hiding unfinished work, ensuring transparency in project management."

*Matthew Carrocci, CCP and PMO Group Manager,
Asahi Holdings Australia*

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