



Smartsheet helps The Scout Association deliver inspiring programmes in the UK

Each week Scouts equip half a million young people with a sense of optimism, strong values, as well as leadership and teamwork skills. With Smartsheet, it found a solution that helped deliver its mission and extend its reach.

“

Smartsheet has been transformational for our programme and project management process. In terms of organisational effectiveness, we have achieved clarity and control on a global scale – all through the visibility Smartsheet gives us.

”



Dirk Grobler, Senior Project Manager
at the Scouts



Customer:

The Scouts Association

Industry:

Nonprofit

Organization Size:

Medium (50 - 999 employees)

Region:

EMEA

Website:

scouts.org.uk

The Scouts is the UK's largest youth organisation. Its mission to bring skills for life to young people and adults at the heart of communities across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, is supported by its Joint Presidents HRH the Duke of Kent and HRH the Duchess of Cambridge.

Background

Every week, The Scouts helps young people build "skills for life," developing their personal lives through friendship and outdoor activities. Its Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers – aged 6-18 years – go camping, hiking, swimming, abseiling, cycling and canoeing, working in teams to take on new challenges.

Solution

When Senior Project Manager Dirk Grobler joined the Scout's headquarters in the ancient woodlands of Epping Forest, he wanted a platform that would empower his team to collaborate with volunteers at the frontlines of the movement. And to gain a conclusive understanding of how much the Scouts are accomplishing each month, Grobler needed the solution to act as a central source of truth for a diverse portfolio of projects and as a tool to establish consistent, accurate reporting.

From experience of project management, Grobler had used Microsoft Project but feared that the platform would be too "heavy-duty" for time-poor volunteers and too expensive for the non-profit to scale. The need for a platform that would be easy to roll out, require very little training and provide cost savings pushed him to pilot Smartsheet within his team.

After three months of testing, Smartsheet was the chosen project management solution for The Scout Association. *"It was a process of continuous improvement but Smartsheet added so much value that I had no pushback to adopting it into all our processes,"* Grobler said.

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Improving delivery of its strategy

Using the Smartsheet Sheet Summary feature, Grobler and his team gain a macro-level view of every active project and can determine early signs of delays. This solution also supports those involved governance of projects by helping them drill down into micro-level information that offers actionable insights to keep the momentum going on their tasks.

Another example of how the project management has been improved with Smartsheet is through the use of formalised templates. For instance, project managers collaborate with volunteer leaders to create a streamlined project initiation document that hosts relevant data with an updated schedule that forecasts timescales.

“Using templates means that volunteers don’t start with a blank slate. They know how to start. And that the results reported are recorded and standardised in a way that they have never been before,” Grobler said.

Extending the movement’s “digital first” approach

Smartsheet is used to bolster Scouts’ exciting digital progress, for example in recruiting and retaining staff members. The Association uses a suite of new tools and forms through Smartsheet that now collect and process new applications.

Innovate reporting with Smartsheet

In addition to refocusing its operational management and HR functions, Smartsheet has helped the project management team improve reporting. Monthly reports are now easier to collect, thanks to automation, and display consistent data, thanks to standardised templates. Teams are able to make timely corrections to their performance

In a Nutshell:

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or hone in on successful strategies by receiving updates made at project level and then carried into portfolio level. This ensures that accurate real-time information is available to everyone.

“Reporting and maintaining our portfolio has become much smarter. Everyone from our chief executive to our portfolio management team sees exactly the same information and in the same format, making accountability easier,” Grobler said. He added that monthly reporting used to take a whole week and now takes just a few hours.

Witnessing the capabilities of Smartsheet, other Scouts departments have started exploring its potential in their own solutions. And with an attractive cost of ownership, the Scouts’ use has grown from 25 to 130 licenses – demonstrating how broadly Smartsheet is valued across the organisation.

Smartsheet has empowered The Scouts to deploy new processes at scale and give project management teams more project visibility and easier reporting. It has helped volunteers deliver engaging events, enabled dispersed teams to collaborate and brought digital progress to one of its key processes. With a dynamic platform at its side, the movement is ready to reach its goals and continue making a difference in the lives of young people.

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