

»Blue Ant offered us the largest intersection of solutions.«

Andersch AG is the leading restructuring consultancy in Germany and specialises in the sustainable management of challenging corporate situations and change processes. Medium-sized and listed companies consult its experts in Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg and Düsseldorf about far-reaching decisions in the strategic, operational and financial areas.

We spoke to Christopher Weiss, Manager, and Peer Wunder, Director, about the introduction of Blue Ant.



Case Study

Mr. Weiss, can you describe your business day?

I have been with Andersch for about three years, currently as a manager. Projects in the context of corporate structuring are my daily business.

Mr Wunder, does project business also concern you?

Yes, because I myself am heavily involved in restructuring projects. I also take care of controlling and finance and am jointly responsible for the introduction of Blue Ant.

Mr. Wunder, what is the core business of Andersch AG?

Andersch AG is a medium-sized owner-managed consulting company. We focus on what we do best: restructuring and optimizing companies.

Andersch AG was founded in 2012. At that time the core consisted of ten staff; today we employ 80 people. One of our main products is restructuring reports and services that involve plausibility checking of planning and preparation of liquidity planning. We also offer advice on strategic issues and option analyses. In addition to developing change programs, we also support companies in the implementation phase and assume responsibility for the success of the project.

Mr. Wunder, can you describe the project landscape at Andersch?

The classic project duration varies greatly depending on the size of the project. For large companies, this can take between three and six months, one to two years even, with implementation support. There are also smaller projects, which tend to have a shorter duration of up to four weeks. Our business is driven by external projects, i.e. the consulting business. Employees are scheduled; on average four to six employees per project, and various projects run in parallel. These projects have different running times, which is why it is important for us to keep track of the scheduling of our staff. In other words, who is in charge of which project and how long do the projects run?

Even with new projects, we have to keep track of which employees are available when and to what extent our colleagues are working at full capacity.

Mr Wunder, what was the project landscape like before Blue Ant?

We worked with Excel tables, which was error-prone due to manual intervention. The scheduling process was also different. Staff

reported to what extent they were scheduled where. This was then entered into the Excel sheet. Blue Ant allowed us to introduce a tightly organized process.

Mr. Weiss, why did you choose Blue Ant?

We first took a close look at the market landscape of the project management software providers and created a shortlist. We conducted short interviews with these vendors, during which we were guided through the tools. Building on this, we then sent a Request for Proposal to the short-listed vendors. In it, we described our actual processes at the time and explained what our target landscape should look like and what we expected from a tool. Blue Ant was a good fit right from the start. In addition, the proventis staff were quick to understand where our pain points lie, how we work and how we see projects. As a result, we focused on Blue Ant. The software offered us the largest intersection of solutions.

Mr. Weiss, how did the introduction of the software go?

The introduction was sequential. First, we replaced the existing time recording system. Of course, this also involved some background processes in our accounting department. In the end, it was only a matter of recording all of our employees' actual data in Blue Ant once. Then time recording was quickly introduced. The training courses were also straightforward, as Blue Ant is basically very intuitive and clearly structured. It was more time-consuming to create the interfaces to our accounting service provider because we use software that is not common for a Blue Ant interface.

Mr Wunder, can you give us any details on the subject of time recording?

As a consulting company with project management, we need the recorded hours for our inventory changes. The data must also be transferred to the accounting software - and for this we needed an interface

Mr Weiss, how long was the introductory period?

It took us about eight weeks. We decided on Blue Ant in the summer, then all the preliminary work was done and the actual "launch" was completed within two weeks. During this time, however, I also took supervised the introduction quite intensively. In the second step, we replaced the existing Excel solutions for staff scheduling within four to six weeks.

Mr. Weiss, what functions do you use in the Blue Ant?

We work a lot with time recording and project planning. We also use the holiday calendar and absence functions as part of our scheduling. This gives us an overview of who is on a training courses or holiday and when employees cannot be scheduled. We have only used a small percentage of other Blue Ant functionalities to date, but this is set to change in the future. We have some internal projects and ideas in mind and are currently planning how we can represent them in Blue Ant.

Mr. Wunder, which functionalities of Blue Ant would you like to use in the future?

We are planning to implement our travel expenses recording using Blue Ant. Here we use other software, and although we are happy with it, we would nevertheless like to streamline everything in Blue Ant.

Mr. Weiss, what was the general course of the introduction? Do you have any tips for other companies in your industry?

The topic of "Getting the staff used to Blue Ant" in terms of time recording went very well. This is because Blue Ant is very clear and intuitive. It was a little different with scheduling. We changed the process here.

Clear responsibility is just as important: from the selection process to the decision to the introduction, a lot of time goes by and a great deal of effort is required. An employee who bears the responsibility and has the flexibility to take on this work is definitely necessary. The devil is in the detail and the effort should not be underestimated, including after the initial introduction.

Mr. Wunder, how would you estimate the cost of running Blue Ant?

It depends on the size of the company. With our current 80 staff, the effort is manageable, the time investments are manageable. We are growing, so we regularly add new employees. In addition, the individual projects run over several months. So you don't create ten projects a day, but a few a month. This definitely makes the expense realistic in terms of implementation.

Thank you very much for talking to us!