

PROJECT]open[

"It was surprisingly easy to implement complex project and change management with]po["

*Sheharyar Hasan
Head of Project Management
Askari Bank Limited*

Askari Bank Limited Truly Configurable Project Planning & Change Management

"In the past we had a tough time managing the change process of internal software development and the management of new IT initiatives," said Sheharyar Hasan, Head of Project Management at Askari Bank Limited. "The whole process has significantly improved after the rollout of]project-open[and now meets all regulatory requirements."

The Customer

Askari Bank Limited is a leading commercial bank of Pakistan with more than 7,000 employees and 500 branches. The bank is engaged in the business of consumer as well as corporate and investment banking, and is listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange. Since inception, the bank has concentrated on growth through improving service quality, investment in technology and people, and utilizing its extensive branch network, which includes Islamic and agricultural banking.

The Challenge

We wanted a solution for the management of bank-wide changes to core banking and associated software, as well as for the management of major IT projects, e.g., systems and infrastructure upgrades. The two requirements are very different, and a solution that works for both seemed difficult to find.

The Solution

The highly configurable]project-open[system allowed us to create a solution in-house without much external consulting.]po[includes a metadata system that allowed us to create custom fields for projects, customers and other business objects without the need to change any source code. A rule engine can send out email notifications based on rules about object status changes or similar events. "This allows us to keep business stakeholders informed about hundreds of tasks and changes."

IT Change Management

"From the IT perspective, our business stakeholders want to be informed about status changes in real time," says Sheharyar Hasan. The configurable]po[notifications allow us to keep business stakeholders informed as well as track progress of major IT banking projects. The notifications are integrated with our corporate email server. A master project output file in .csv format allows us to reuse existing reports and generate new reports, including aging statistics of late items. "One of the great features of]po[is 'project notes.' They allow us to keep the project/change status up to date. The system is running smoothly on the bank's data center in a Windows-based virtual environment."



At a glance

Customer

Askari Bank Limited is a leading commercial bank of Pakistan with a network of more than 500 branches.

Business Need

IT Change Management was a challenge due to the sheer number of change requests, and Askari Bank was looking for a solution addressing both change management and IT project management.

Solution

Askari Bank implemented]po[with a focus on service delivery to internal stakeholders.

Results

The]po[system significantly improved IT change management and keeps internal bank customers up to date about changes.

PROJECT]open[

Selection Process

The bank evaluated other open-source project management systems including OpenProject, MyCollab, Project-Libre and a number of commercial offerings. None of the systems met the dual requirements of change management and project management in one system, except for]po[. Also, none of the solutions offered the flexibility to install on either Windows or Linux and on-premise or in the cloud.

Open Source vs. Closed Source

Sheharyar Hasan, Head of Project Management at Askari Bank Limited, said, "We finally selected]po[because of ease of configuration and customization. We were surprised to find out how configurable the system was, and fields were added without any source-code changes. Added fields were also automatically used in reports and exported to Excel. Because]po[is open source, our team was even able to customize some code using]po[online documentation."

The Implementation Project

"The implementation was not a big challenge, because project management is the core skill in our department," says Sheharyar Hasan. "We knew our stakeholders, their needs and our processes. Technically, we required only a few remote consulting sessions to configure the system to our needs. Our employees are happy with the new system and didn't need any specific training."

Askari Bank Limited runs]project-open[on a virtual machine installed according to the publicly available instructions and source code.

Implementation Highlight

Replacing our legacy change management system with an open-source system took less than a month.

The new system generates reports about the progress of change requests and IT initiatives for both business users and IT teams. We also managed to connect existing reports to the new system.

Key Modules Used

- ▶]po[PM - Project Management
- ▶]po[ITSM - Ticket Management
- ▶]po[CKM - Collaboration & Knowledge Management
- ▶]po[BI - Business Intelligence & Reporting

Business Results

"We now have a system in place that fits with our requirement for change management and project management. It will allow us to accommodate a number of requirements that we expect to appear in the future," says Sheharyar Hasan. "We will probably extend the use of]po[and consolidate our project management processes going forward."