SHAPE Australia

Challenge

Over the last 27 years, SHAPE Australia have built a specialist fitout and refurbishment brand with a growing client base. With geographically diverse projects in every state and territory of Australia, they'd outgrown their custom built PM software environment and identified the need for change. SHAPE wanted a tech and cultural fit that would be easily adoptable in real time as the company portfolio continued to evolve.

Solution

Procore's clarity of design, flexibility and ultimate scalability attracted SHAPE's attention. Overcoming a rocky start to implementation, the intuitive user interface and mobile features engaged workers who quickly started seeing the benefits on their sites.

PROCORE®

They call themselves Shapians, and they are enthusiastic about the mission. "We have the pleasure of building some absolutely stunning commercial spaces across all different sectors," says Sara Cecchi, SHAPE Australia's Procore Implementation Manager, and she goes on to sum up the SHAPE ethos. "Transparency, collaboration, and fun—delivered by people who love what they do." Shapians are thus the energized and creative construction pros of SHAPE Australia, for nearly 30 years one of the country's top fitout and refurbishment specialists.

The aptly named SHAPE Australia dynamically reimagines the design possibilities of spaces that answer to a variety of needs. From Offices and Hotels, to Education, Healthcare, Retail and Specialty spaces, SHAPE continues to pleasantly stun grateful clients in every state of the Australian nation, helping them "experience better" Whether SHAPE's "territory" is defined as the World's Largest Island or the World's Smallest Continent, it is undeniably a huge place. "Australia is a big nation, and that comes with its management challenges" Sara understates.

Leaving Nova

With projects of every size and description in each of Australia's seven provinces, SHAPE was bound to outgrow its project management system, an in-house PM software environment they called Nova, which they'd exactingly designed and activated about a decade before. When it came time to shop around for a replacement system, they sought a construction PM software product that was both all-encompassing, and supple enough to remain a perfect fit, especially as SHAPE continued to scale. They went with Procore. "When it boiled down to it, it was a partnership decision," Sara says. "Who did we see actually partnering with us, listening to us? Who would we want to share in our growth journey? From a cultural perspective, we found Procore was a great partnership fit."

I Do

SHAPE had suffered the jarring experience of a PM solution mismatch before, and were determined to get it right this time, technologically and culturally. The decision to go with Procore, which at that time had absolutely no presence in the Aussie market, was a calculated risk by a company whose whole business model was based on risk-aversion. "It was really the relationship that was built with Procore during the sales process that in the end convinced us that there would be a true partnership here", Sara explains.

Relationships are lovely, but the end of the honeymoon is the beginning of actionable wisdom— and so it was with SHAPE and Procore. Many of SHAPE's rank and file had, in effect, grown up with their old system, and sought its match in the new Procore system. "Look at it this way; we're at a very reputational risk when we bring in a system like this. We're dealing with projects that are extremely high-paced in terms of turnaround. We couldn't expose ourselves to any situation whereby our running of projects was compromised." Sara pauses. "We're a $500 million company. When you're talking about upwards of 350, 400 projects a year, you can kind of see the issue".

Training with a Side of Intuition

Ultimately, Sara Cecchi was internally recruited to spearhead and organize the implementation. Once Sara had mastered Procore in all its facets and matched it with SHAPE's Process Map, her training sessions came down to overlaying the old system processes and tools with Procore's suite of tools and features. Sara explains the approach she used.

"This is a really important piece to understand", she emphasizes. "We thought implementation was going to be a very technical thing, like training everyone to understand the software. It wasn't that at all. My role turned out to be that of a translator. 'Okay, here is our workflow from cradle to grave. Well, we used to do it this way. How does it now work in Procore'"? As the focused training was rolling out, Procore's inherently intuitive design encouraged, and rewarded, exploration among the SHAPE stakeholders.

"With Procore a lot of people can just dive in and...muddle through!" Sara says. "They're not optimizing the system necessarily, but they can just get in there and do what they need to get done. Not all systems are like that. For a lot of other systems, the learning curve is really high and it's a big barrier to usage. We found with Procore...the design just makes sense."

The Question Funnel

As a practical matter, Sara's methodology wove in the expertise of Procore Account Manager Nick Anderson. "He was my counterpart at Procore, and the two of us were essentially the funnel", she says. "I cannot speak highly enough of Nick. I funneled questions to him, which he funneled out through Procore's product managers and support, and whoever else needed to be in on that particular conversation. And then when he had a question, I funneled it out through my organization. So, I would get Health and Safety on board when it was a quality and safety issue. I would get the estimators on board if it was to do with the tendering and bidding modules, for instance. I didn't ever go to Nick saying, 'I need Procore to be able to do this, this and this.' I would always go to Nick and say, "This is the outcome that our old process was trying to achieve. How can we achieve the same outcome in Procore?'"

Suspiciously Simple

By the time the ceremonial Official Launch date arrived, the SHAPE culture had already so broadly embraced Procore that the "launch" was a non-event. "We had over half of our forward workload already in the system. I was very disappointed!" Sara laughs. (Recently, SHAPE's internal utilization of Procore shows as a robust 91.6%). The adoption of Procore and its collaborative model is tuning up efficiencies on the job site, and even helping to bridge the historic gap between the project office and field. Sara sets the scene.

"Everyone has the same information at the same time. Gone are the days of multiple phone calls and hours rifling through paperwork to find the correct document. Our site managers are quite often spread across multiple floors, which effectively divorces them from both site and head offices. Now they can be out there on site having those productive conversations, instead of wasting time looking for the information in the office."

SHAPE brings its unique ethos to every project it takes on, and adds to that a model of efficiency made possible by Procore's flexible field solutions.

"SHAPE is selling a service," Sara says. "That service is delivered by a group of 350+ people who love having fun at work, love to collaborate, and love to work in an environment of accountability and transparency. On those fronts, Procore does really work with us instead of for us."

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SARA CECCHI

Procore Implementation Manager, SHAPE Australia

TALK WITH AN EXPERT

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AU: 1800 431 456
NZ: 0800 005 210
International: 866 477 6267
or email us: sales@procore.com

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