How **Lightenco** Enhanced Project & Resource Management with **ProjectManager**

PM ProjectManager

Company name: Lightenco

Location: Ottawa, Ontario

Website: lightenco.com

Industry: Construction

Size: <15 employees

LIGHTENCO

Why ProjectManager?

Mark Klady, Director of Operations, noticed redundancies and inconsistencies across departments, making data across the lighting company difficult to trust. ProjectManager offered a huge upgrade from Microsoft Project and Excel, allowing for real-time tracking at various levels. Now, teams in every department can better manage both human and physical resources by tagging and delegating tasks in centralized schedules and throughout the procurement process.

Before ProjectManager

✗ Excel was used to run projects, made collaboration difficult

✗ Data siloed in different locations, created redundancies and lost data

After ProjectManager

✓ Gets twice as much work done

✓ Centralizes information for scheduling, sharing and collaborating

Lightenco is an award-winning Ottawa, Ont.-based lighting company that started doing LED retrofits over a decade ago. Since then, they've expanded their services into electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, solar panels and energy and lighting consulting services. The company has 12 full-time employees including six installers and contracts with hundreds of electricians across Canada. Lightenco does the research, design and procurement while contractors do the installing.

"We have projects in most provinces," said Mark Klady, Director of Operations. "Our client base is primarily building owners and managers. We service both residential and commercial chains, the vast majority are in Ontario and Quebec."

Project management was spread across roles and tools

Klady joined Lightenco in April 2022. At that time, the operations manager, the director of sales and the CEO were sharing the company's project management responsibilities. There was a fourth individual who runs the warehouse procurement. Each had created unique tools and systems such as using Excel to run the projects. While there was some sharing of information, there were multiple locations where project data lived.

"There were clearly redundancies," Klady said. "Some information was even lost because it wasn't stored in a common location." There was a place for common file storage, but everyone was using their own naming convention and formatting files differently.

With 30 years working every role from VP of operations to director of sales, Klady knew that getting the right tool was key to moving forward with the least amount of disruption. "My experience told me that using project management software would bring all the data together in one place and let us track it in a rational, reasonable fashion, with the visibility we wanted," he added.

That led to tasking an intern with an IT and software background to research project management software products. For three months, they kicked the tires of popular brands, such as Microsoft Project and Monday.com. "MS Project was cumbersome and required active use of coding," Klady said, "so that was out."

Monday.com didn't integrate effectively with Microsoft Outlook. "That was a no, too," Klady said. "I live and breathe on Outlook." He works with many people outside of the office and shares calendars and scheduling with them.

There were other software solutions that were tested, but none fit the bill. What they did was help Klady create a criteria chart, which included integration, being able to add notes and comments, file storage, tracking and visibility at various levels.

"ProjectManager checked all those boxes," Klady said.

ProjectManager offered ease of use, which trumped Microsoft Project and had integration with Outlook and more useful platforms. There was also the ability to delegate and tag different groups, such as installation, management and procurement. "They would have key items pop up on their daily tracker and task list," Klady said. "I get central information to schedule our people, share those schedules, comment and update them, too. Plus, our bill of procurement, delivery information, electrician and key contact for clients are all in one spot."

Most powerful of all was that Lightenco could now accurately and effortlessly track their resources, both human resources and physical resources. "I think I cried," Klady said. "I was so happy."

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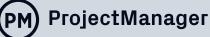
Impressive customer support & hours of time saved

Customer support from ProjectManager was "exceptionally helpful," Klady said. The team answered questions promptly and gave Lightenco an extra week of the free trial. Purchasing the subscription was seamless, and "the subsequent support has been amazing," he added.

> "The implementation of ProjectManager, from day one, was the easiest implementation I've ever dealt with," said Klady. "That includes Oracle, Microsoft, Adobe, pick a name. It was the simplest product I ever worked with with incredible robust capabilities."

Today, Klady has up to 50 active projects at any given time. When he has a technical question, support gets right back to him. Klady's team learned how to set up guest licenses for users to have more visibility. "I noticed recent updates added functionality that we've requested," he said. "It's great that ProjectManager is adapting to the inquiries that are coming from clients."

Before ProjectManager, Klady spent the first four hours of his day getting updates, seeing where projects were and hunting down details. Every project had its own Excel chart. "It was a waste of time," Klady said. "Now I just open ProjectManager and check the notes on the project. It's all there." He gets his work done twice as fast as in the past.

ProjectManager's scheduling features sealed the deal. "The ability to schedule and have that schedule exported to various calendars has centralized 14 different people's time schedules, which previously were run independently," Klady said. "To have notes and files stored against a project in a logical place and being able to tag installation, the electrician and bill of materials, knowing who is shipping and the dates, all in one spot—that was nonexistent until we started using ProjectManager."

ProjectManager is expanding its footprint in Lightenco. Administration uses ProjectManager to know which jobs have closed and are ready for final billing. The CEO uses it to track progress instead of getting updated with long phone calls. Sales uses ProjectManager to track progress on their jobs. "There's a lot of things we're doing that are much easier with ProjectManager," Klady said.

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