



Fabricom aligns complex oil and gas project processes with Safran to be one of highest-regarded firms in the sector

From its base office in Stavanger, the oil capital of Norway, Fabricom is as a major provider of topsides engineering, modification, maintenance and installation services for the offshore oil and gas industry. In addition, Fabricom performs fabrication work, construction services and maintenance for traditional onshore industries. The company has a strong balance sheet and employ approximately 800 permanent staff.

With several stakeholders involved and large, complex projects to be served, Fabricom's Norwegian business conducted a major re-engineering of its project control system to evaluate their existing project management systems and compare them to the functionality required on the company's new and forthcoming oil and gas projects. The scope of this re-engineering included a fully detailed review of all aspects related to project management execution, including software portfolio, procedures, competence, support functions and more.

"After a trial period of a few months, it became evident that the software we were using was not sophisticated enough to handle such a project, nor did it provide the flexibility and reporting features required," says Per Eivind Steen, Fabricom's department manager for project control.

"We had a problem to solve. We simply had to do something," says Pål Ingar Dahl, project control manager for the EPCI project. "The results from all our efforts to implement the latest software release of our existing software package were far from satisfying. We were struggling to transfer data across the various systems and to issue the weekly reports on time. Our client's confidence was diminishing, and most importantly, we were about to lose control." As a result, Safran is now implemented as a key element of Fabricom's project control model and toolbox.

Moving forward with Safran

"The size and complex nature of these projects requires the use of a highly specific methodology for managing projects and a sophisticated and flexible project management solution supporting this business environment," says Steen. Consequently Fabricom decided to acquire a new planning system. Primarily, they were looking for a tool that could be easily integrated with other systems and which included improved reporting functionalities.

Within one week of purchasing Safran, Fabricom transferred 3,000 activities into the software. Both planning systems ran parallel for a two week period. "Implementation of Safran proved to be a stunning success, and it went

Organization:

- Fabricom Norway, a leading EPCI employing 800 local staff
- Subsidiary of Suez, a European group of companies operating in 16 countries employing 46,000 people at 750 sites

Goals:

- Re-engineer project management execution, including software portfolio, and PM procedures
- Better manage complexity and support sophisticated business processes
- Speed reporting and project statusing
- Restore client confidence lost using other systems

Safran Benefits at Fabricom:

- Swift transition to reliable planning, improved control backed by first-class reporting capabilities
- Corporate standard for all projects from tender through all phases of project execution
- Client confidence restored

very fast,” says Dahl. “We swiftly moved from a situation that was getting out of control to a status of reliable planning, improved control, backed by first-class reporting capabilities, and more importantly, client confidence was restored. We were pleased with the control provided through Safran.”

Creating a corporate standard

Implementation of Safran was performed in close co-operation with Safran Software Solutions. Safran is now the corporate standard for all planning and project control work, and is used for all planning and project control work from tender through all the phases of project execution.

Fabricom has engaged both consultants and trainees from Safran for ongoing projects. Their presence and support has equipped the people from Safran with a thorough insight into and understanding of the requirements of Fabricom and Fabricom’s customers.

Leading the ranks of oil and gas firms

Three years after the re-engineering process began, Fabricom is now regarded as one of the most reliable companies in its market sector when it comes to project management execution. Time and again, their Safran software has proved to be reliable and well suited for planning, monitoring and managing projects. The system is flexible and can be customized to meet any requirements for management of EPCI, M&M (Maintenance & Modification) and fabrication projects however complex.

“We have every reason to be proud of our project management system,” says Steen. “The key elements of our project execution model comprises a tailor-made integrated portfolio of software, work process oriented procedures, description of inter-disciplinary interfaces, work instruction and control check lists, project phases and milestone descriptions and finally – highly qualified personnel. The model has been developed based on both best practice and our vast experience from executing projects for the oil and gas industry in Norway.”

Having mapped how projects are executed in phases, the project execution model provides a systematic approach to planning and project execution. “We are able to track

and measure performance of activities through each phase to ensure that all milestones are successfully achieved,” says Steen.

“Good planning is a key to project control from start to finish. We believe that submitting a high quality, detailed bid forms a sound basis for successful project execution. Therefore we put a major effort into the early phase of a project. Detailed planning with clearly defined milestones and phases provide predictability. Good planning and tight project control builds trust and ensures good relationships with our customers. A state-of-the art planning and project control system such as Safran is a must.”

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Fabricom Project Control Manager

The way ahead

User acceptance and satisfaction is high among Fabricom’s team of planners and project control specialists. Fabricom’s project management team is equally satisfied with the planning deliverables that result from the new system. This contributes to more focus and ownership of planning and project management in general throughout the project organization.

Previously, the department manager for project management regularly received complaints from projects related to planning. Nowadays this is very rare. “I now get only good feedback. Occasionally the planners still get

the blame for poor progress – but *Stairway to Heaven* is only a song...,” says Steen.

“To us it is an advantage to work closely with a software supplier that puts a lot of effort into product development. Safran has proved capable of delivering enhancements and new features at a steady pace, helping us improve our overall project management capabilities. It is a great bonus that the people at Safran are experienced project professionals,” says Reidar Bergem, lead planner and Safran system manager. Safran continuously enhances and develops their project management software to meet the demands from exacting customers.

Finally, Per Eivind Steen concludes: “We believe that the Safran software has positively contributed to significantly improved project management execution at Fabricom.” ■