

# Microsoft Project Server Case Study



ALLIED BAKERIES

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## Overview

### Customer

Allied Bakeries

### Products and Services

Microsoft Project Server

### Organisation Size

Large (1,000 - 9,999 employees)

### Country

United Kingdom

### Industry

Manufacturing

### Microsoft Partner

### Specialist Competency

**Wellingtone**  
PPM Intelligence

**Microsoft Partner**  
Gold Project and Portfolio Management

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## Equipping Allied Bakeries with the Right Tools to Complement Existing Best Practice Standards

As part of Associated British Foods plc, Allied Bakeries is a large national company producing a diverse range of popular brands of baked goods. Ensuring that systems are streamlined and that the right tools are used to achieve goals and meet deliverables is paramount in an organisation of this size and scope. This is why Allied Bakeries engaged Wellingtone PPM to provide training at various levels. The aim was to enhance team performance with updated tools designed to complement the company's already stringent project management systems, whilst pound for pound, maximising the value to the business. Michelle Lynch, Programme Management Office Analyst at Allied Bakeries, tells us more.

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**Michelle Lynch, PMO Analyst - Allied Bakeries**

## The Scenario: Identifying a Gap between Skills and Tools

Allied Bakeries already had advanced project management methodologies and processes in place – but outdated technology was hindering their ability to achieve the visibility they needed for their Executive Board and stakeholders. "We were using EPM 2007 and Project Pro 2007 but we didn't feel we were getting the best from the system," Michelle says. "We considered upgrading to the latest version of Project Server as we were looking to achieve greater reporting capabilities on project status and clearer visibility for our stakeholders."

What we needed was a 'one stop shop' for all our project needs. But we recognised that it would be prudent to explore all the options and define exactly which tool was ideal for us before pushing ahead with a technology upgrade." After a transparent tender process Allied Bakeries selected Wellingtone PPM to assist with the decision.

"They were really impressed with the organisational set up we had - all of the things a Programme Management Office (PMO) should be doing, we were doing, and doing well" explains Michelle. "We had an established Project Management Methodology, and were on top of issue management, risk management, resource management and planning. We just didn't have the right tools to give us the visibility we needed to make the right decisions."

## The Challenge: Incorporating a Bespoke System

Having confirmed the strategy, it was decided that Wellingtone would upgrade and customise the system so that Allied Bakeries could implement a fresh new capacity for reporting, visibility, decision making and stakeholder engagement.

Taking into account the company's strategic needs and Wellingtone's input, the decision was made to start with a clean slate by making the move to the latest version of Microsoft Project Server.

After that it was a case of determining exactly what Allied Bakeries wanted out of the package.

"We had a two-day planning session with PMO members and Wellingtone, where we mapped out what we needed to achieve" Michelle recalls. "They took our current processes & capabilities which are already considerably mature, and matched them to our new PPM requirements."



## The Crucial Issue: Maintaining Clear Visibility and Prioritisation

For the new rollout to successfully complement Allied Bakeries' level of project management sophistication, it was vital that PMO members had the knowledge that they needed to use the system. Wellington PPM designed and conducted a short training course to ensure that everyone was starting from the same place. **"We wanted everything centralised – at that time we were storing documents separately which lacked visibility"** says Michelle. **"Once the customisation was designed and in place Wellington performed the installation on site working with our technical team."**

Another key aim of the PMO was to integrate its internally developed project prioritisation methodology into MS Project Server 2010. This was to serve two purposes; increase the visibility of prioritisation within the Allied Bakeries' IT Steering Group and manage stakeholder expectations on project delivery.

**"We needed to have clear tools to understand the 'health' of our project portfolio. Wellington guaranteed that with the new PWA (Project Web App) it would be a lot easier to get hold of the pertinent issues and risks. Extracting the information out of the previous system was a clumsy process and took a lot of time, but the new report Wellington have developed is fast and efficient. It's set up so that you simply press a button and all your information's there."**

*"Wellington's technical team were experts in the reporting capabilities, which complemented the primary consultant's in-depth strategic and practical knowledge. We've got a support package with them that will cover the next 12 months and we'd definitely use Wellington again if the right project arose."*

**Michelle Lynch, PMO Analyst - Allied Bakeries**

## The Outcome: Embracing the New Framework

Overall, the new toolkit has helped Allied Bakeries' people to gain a new skill as well as giving the team the ability to centralise documents and have access to workflow. This was even more important as some vital stakeholders in the team do not work on site. Moreover, the increased visibility has positively influenced the behaviours exhibited by project managers in terms of conformance to methodology.

**"The team has really embraced the new system and training"** Michelle confirms. **"Apart from me, the other PMO team members are all new so we decided to wait and train them on the new system. Across the business we have 15 key people who use PWA and don't work onsite. Now they can monitor their workflow quickly and easily and check everything's been done and all deliverables have been met."**

### The Lessons Learned: The Importance of Planning

The initial days of planning and research ahead of the implementation were vital to ensure that the package could be tailored exactly to Allied Bakeries' requirements. According to the Wellington Consultant: **"We spent two days delivering workshops to examine how Allied Bakeries wanted to use Project Server to help select, plan, and manage projects. We looked at all their existing processes and defined how we wanted to configure Project Server to match their needs going forward."**

## The Bottom Line: A Successful Resolution

On Wellington's role in the process, Michelle says, **"The consultants were very knowledgeable, clearly knew what they were talking about. You could ask a question and they knew the answer straight away."**

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According to the Wellington Consultant: **"This was a real success story because Allied Bakeries already had experience with 2007 as well as advanced processes in place and a detailed understanding of their organisational needs. That meant that they could be really pro-active and they understood the language we used. Their Project Management procedures and processes are exemplary. It was really satisfying to complete the project knowing that they could now have full visibility across those procedures and show the Board and stakeholders the positive impact of their stringent and well managed practices at the touch of a button."**

To learn more about Allied Bakeries visit [www.alliedbakeries.co.uk](http://www.alliedbakeries.co.uk)