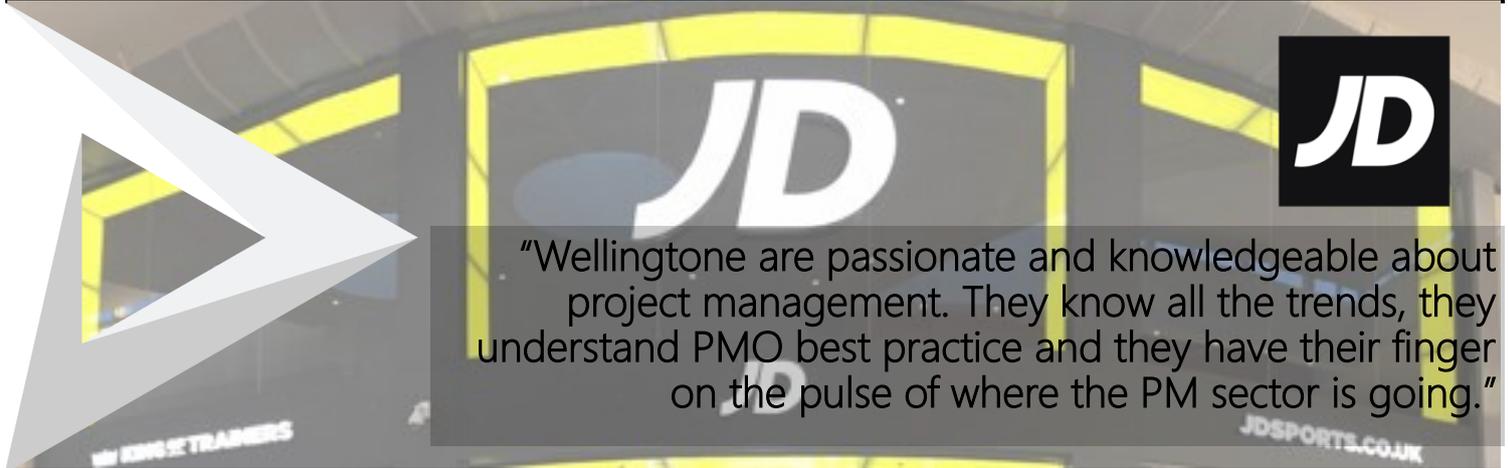


# Microsoft Project Online Case Study



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## Overview

### Customer

JD Sports

### Products and Services

Microsoft Project Online

Power BI

### Organisation Size

Large

### Country

United Kingdom

### Industry

Retail

### Microsoft Partner

**Wellingtone**  
PPM Intelligence

### Specialist Competency

**Microsoft Partner**  
Gold Project and Portfolio Management

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## JD Sports Delivers Business Value and Portfolio Visibility with Microsoft Project Online

JD Sports Fashion PLC began in 1981 - when a single sportswear shop, John David Sports, was opened in Bury. Over the past thirty-five years, the brand has achieved widely recognised status as the leading UK specialist retailer of fashionable branded and own brand sports and casual wear. Today, the Group operates well over 2000 stores globally, supported by an extensive multi-channel offering. Behind the company's retail enterprise lies an IT PMO, charged with delivering efficiency and business value across the corporate projects portfolio. The implementation of Project Online in late 2017 was a step towards refining these deliverables, with Wellingtone selected to support the system configuration and implementation. Mark Yates, PMO Manager for the IT PMO, tells the story.

“Wellingtone is a Microsoft Gold Partner, Project Online is their core business, and project management is their clear area of specialism.”

**Mark Yates - PMO Manager for the IT PMO, JD Sports**

## The Business Case for a Cloud Based Project Management Tool

“One of our key objectives within the IT PMO is to ensure that business benefits are realised as early as possible,” Mark explains. “To that end, we operate our own bespoke project management framework, which we call SPIRIT. That allows us to select the best methodology approach for the nature of the particular project – whether that be an Agile, iterative approach or a more Waterfall oriented strategy. We decide on that criteria based on what we believe will deliver the best project outcome.”

Within that framework, a business case was identified to equip the IT PMO with Project Online, with the aim of improving PPM visibility, resource capacity planning and reporting procedures. “We very much saw the shift to Project Online as evolutionary, not revolutionary,” says Mark. “In the first instance, we wanted to standardise the way we do things as a team to make it more uniform. A key component in the strategy was to get all of our projects into one place, so that we could achieve clear visibility across our pipeline and understand what is required to fulfil it. We needed Project Online to perform as a central hub where we can manage prioritisation, planning and resource allocation – plus we needed to implement a consistent and transparent reporting format as efficiently as possible.”

## Evolving Project Management Practices to Promote Consistency and Visibility

The PMO first engaged with Wellingtone in mid-2017 and felt confident in selecting them as the implementing partner. “They're a Microsoft Gold Partner, Project Online is their core business, and project management is their clear area of specialism,” Mark explains. “We wanted to work with a partner that we were comfortable with, and we felt we could have confidence in them due to that level of expertise.”



## Benefits

- *Centralised and consistent PPM visibility.*
- *Improved project life cycle management.*
- *Standardised, touch-of-a-button reporting.*

The implementation itself took place during Q4 2017 and was supported by Wellingtone on a step by step basis. **“Initially, the priority was to get our project templates into a position we were happy with,”** Mark recalls. **“We needed to migrate everything out of SharePoint and Excel and get it all centralised. Wellingtone walked us through our requirements and went through several configurations to create a baseline that we signed off as the template for them to build the solution. They then facilitated a playback process to show us how the system would look, incorporating our feedback before full configuration.”**

Having established the system parameters and built the solution, Wellingtone then conducted training for more than a dozen project-based staff in the PMO, allowing them to prepare for the migration of the portfolio data into Project Online. **“It was a process that taught our staff a lot about the value of standardising our approach,”** says Mark. **“The project schedules, in particular, took some work, because Project Online demands that all of the data around planning, risks, issues and the like is correctly inputted to a standard format. It was a bit of a shift for us, having previously worked more independently, but our staff very quickly began to see the benefits of that centralised approach.”**

One of those benefits, according to Mark, was a new-found ease and consistency of project reporting. **“Previously we were using other Office tools including PowerPoint and Excel to produce our reports – but of course that was labour intensive and brought a degree of subjectivity into the mix,”** he says. **“We wanted to have more of an objective view of our project status. Now that Project Online is geared up to catch all the data, we’ve been able to consolidate all of our risks, issues, actions, changes, status updates, documentation and milestones into our reporting and to produce those reports quickly and efficiently. Our IT Director is pleased with the quality of the information we’re able to pull up – and that information has improved our ability to track and manage projects consistently. We have real time visibility over individual projects, as well as how the portfolio is performing overall. And from the point of view of our Project Support Office, producing the data is far easier and more standardised now.”**

*“We have real time visibility over individual projects, as well as how the portfolio is performing overall.*

**Mark Yates - PMO Manager for the IT PMO, JD Sports**

## Refining Resource Capacity Planning for an Optimised Portfolio View

Looking ahead, the intention is to expand the deployment of Project Online to deal with resource and capacity planning. **“Right now, we’re at the stage of starting to record actual time through Project Online,”** says Mark. **“We’re looking to develop that further over the next few months. Further down the line, we want to look in more detail at the potential to refine our resource management processes. We know that Project Online has the ability to give us that enterprise-based view across our pipeline, so that will be a focus moving forward.”**

Impressed with their early experience of Wellingtone’s services, the intention is to continue working with them to achieve these future benefits. **“For me, it’s clear that we’re not just dealing with a software company,”** Mark says. **“Wellingtone are passionate and knowledgeable about project management. They know all the trends, they understand PMO best practice and they have their finger on the pulse of where the PM sector is going. Plus, they have wide cross sector experience, which they’re willing to share for the benefit of their clients. They give you confidence in what they’re saying. In short, they’re experts in Project Online and experts in project management – and that’s why we’re working with them.”**

To learn more about JD Sports, visit <https://www.jdsports.co.uk/>