Solid Green Consulting Establishes Predictable Growth and Profitability With VOGSY

From scattered spreadsheets to trackable progress, this environmental consultancy is achieving profitable growth

The Solid Green story

Solid Green Consulting is one of the largest green building consultancies in Africa. Using high-tech energy modeling simulation software on top of sustainable practices and materials, Solid Green's team of Green Star SA and LEED Accredited Professionals helps businesses design energy-efficient, environmentally-friendly buildings.

Marloes Reinink, Founder and Director of Solid Green, started the business with the idea that it would stay small. But as the business grew exponentially, the question arose: How was it going to sustain continued growth and profitability?

The challenge: Maturing into a data-driven company

Understanding project profitability

Project managers were struggling to manage project budgets and stay on target without accurate data on budget consumption, which made it difficult to gauge profit margin.

Part of the problem was that staff were not using timesheets, making it impossible to tell how profitable projects were without knowing how many hours staff were spending on project work.

Lack of billability data

Solid Green's spreadsheet system provided no insight into employee and department billability. This information would be critical to enhance utilization and increase profitability.

Limited resource visibility

While Solid Green's staff grew, there was still no clear way to understand resource availability, allocations and planned hours. This was making it difficult to assign the right people to projects.

Account managers also needed access to better resource management tools. Without knowing who might be able to do the proposed work and at what cost rates, it was difficult to determine appropriate sales estimates.

Why VOGSY? All the right information in real time, effortlessly

Also on Reinink's shortlist was Monday.com, but Reinink was immediately impressed with how visual and user-friendly VOGSY is. As a Google Workspace user, Reinink felt immediately at home in VOGSY's Google Material Design interface.

After demoing the software, it was clear that only VOGSY had the capabilities she was looking for at the right price point.

One important deciding factor was VOGSY's ability to support not just the new processes, but also the cultural change. The strategy was to start small, with limited organizational impact, and then expand the usage of the system but also the sharing of data across all departments and staff.

Easy project and opportunity management

In VOGSY, projects and opportunities are represented by graphical "cards" that centralize all relevant information and communications for sales and project delivery teams, including files, planning and customer emails.

"VOGSY makes it easy to find what you need quickly and gives you the right information automatically. It's very intuitive," said Reinink.

Project progress and profitability are tracked with real-time data on project schedules and estimated vs. actual budgets and margins, and opportunity cards show estimated revenue and deal health based on how long an opportunity has been in the sales funnel, helping sales professionals prevent lucrative deals from slipping away.

Linking time tracking, billability and profitability

With VOGSY auto-populating timesheets from project information, Reinink knew that getting her staff into the habit of filling out timesheets would not be a struggle. Moreover, VOGSY's time tracking system provides a critical link in project profitability. As staff record their hours, VOGSY adjusts the budgets and margins of projects they worked on automatically,

VOGSY also provides employee and department billability information in real-time charts, giving Reinink the information she needs to reach targets and improve billable utilization.

Comprehensive resource management

VOGSY's resource heat maps showing all resource availability, including non-billable time, PTO, under-planning and overplanning make resource planning easy. Coupled with Gantt charts displaying all projects, their timelines and allocations, managers have reliable insight into who is busy on which projects as well as when projects will be finished so that new projects can be scheduled.

Leveraging VOGSY's resource placeholders, account managers can also create resource roles needed for proposed work and define their functions, activities, cost and sales rates, which improves hiring decisions and helps to achieve the targeted margin.

The results: Higher profits, better practices and repeatable successes

Increasing deal wins

Opportunity cards are helping Solid Green efficiently review all opportunities. Clicking on opportunity cards, salespeople can instantly see what stages opportunities are in and what their health statuses are.

Having this information at their fingertips is helping sales professionals quickly determine which deals they should follow up with right away. This is increasing the rate of follow-ups, resulting in increased win rates.

Pricing projects competitively

A combination of robust resource management and project data is giving Solid Green the tools needed to price work realistically and competitively.

"VOGSY lets me drill down into projects and see the difference between calculated and actual hours, costs, sales rates and margins. With VOGSY, I know—are we spending the hours I think we're spending?

Are we overspending, undercharging? I can see which types of projects we need to start charging more for and be more competitive," said Reinink.

Leveraging real-time resource availability information, placeholder resources and historical project estimates vs. actuals, Solid Green can create accurate assessments and proposals and make profitability more predictable.

Helping department heads meet targets

Billability is not the only metric helping Solid Green improve performance. VOGSY provides department heads with real-time charts that supply the information they need to meet targets and manage teams effectively.

Charts for sales funnel and pipeline progression break down for the Head of Sales how many opportunities are in various stages as well as win/loss ratios. In addition to margins on project cards, VOGSY provides a chart that displays all active projects' margins for the project department head to analyze at a glance. For Reinink, being able to see the revenue forecast for different departments is crucial for determining budgets and where to increase business acquisition efforts.

In addition to these charts, metrics like customer profitability, resource utilization and financial KPIs are providing a well-rounded understanding of the health of the company.

Standardizing processes

A welcomed effect of the automated workflows in VOGSY is much-needed standardization of processes, which is important for the scalability of the business. Creating projects and their work breakdown structures follows a guided procedure that can be done with duplicatable deliverable templates that save activities, costs and budgets for similar project work.

Thanks to automation making processes like time tracking easier, employees are performing their tasks and filling out timesheets at a predictable cadence that ensures accountability and optimal efficiency.

"VOGSY is helping us establish structures that promote operational efficiency, profitability and continued growth," said Reinink. "We didn't have that before, and VOGSY is making it happen."

CONSULTANCY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Need more insights?

Are you looking to make your Professional Services Organization more productive and make your professionals work with ease and better results? Please contact us. We will be happy to help you achieve the results that you aspir in order to make your business grow: better margins, lower overheads, higher utilization and a higher yield.

Wout Klok, Managing Director

w.klok@geefirm.com

+31 6 5575 1690