



case study
Hill & Knowlton
EMEA

“Capacity planning is important in good times, but it’s absolutely critical in challenging times”

Jon Mostyn, Worldwide Business Consulting Director

Professional capacity planning brings vital efficiency gains

Like every other Professional Services Organisation, Hill & Knowlton EMEA must navigate skilfully through complex assignments and manage ever-changing resource needs. Maconomy provides Hill & Knowlton EMEA with powerful tools to help them optimise their capacity planning.



“We’ve been able to increase the proportion of time spent on analysis and management from 10-20% all the way up to 50% thanks to People Planner. That’s a huge difference in any company.”

Jon Mostyn, Worldwide Business Consulting Director

Excel is good, but not ideal for capacity planning

It was a priority for Hill & Knowlton EMEA to upgrade from using Excel tools in their capacity planning processes in favour of a specialised solution. As a leading international PR agency, their value creation depends on devoting time to providing creative and strategic communications consultancy to clients. Hill & Knowlton EMEA turned to its long-time ERP solutions partner Maconomy.

“In the past, we spent a lot of time coordinating and planning our resources at our regular planning meetings. We have been able to move away from Excel tools that were complicated and inefficient to manage and didn’t provide us with a way of leveraging the use of the tools across multiple geographies,” says Worldwide Business Consulting Director Jon Mostyn.

“In the first field implementation, we’ve been able to increase the time spent on analysis and management from 10-20% all the way up to 50% thanks to People Planner. That’s a huge difference in any company,” adds Jon Mostyn.

Greater visibility and immediacy of scenario planning

To facilitate collaboration and fully utilise their resources, Hill & Knowlton EMEA decided to optimise its Capacity and Resource Planning by job, client and within each team.

Individual offices vary greatly in size at Hill & Knowlton EMEA - from around 15 to 250+ staff who all play their part in servicing the needs of the clients. To ensure the appropriate billable capacity at all times, Hill & Knowlton EMEA needed a real-time overview of their capacity needs.

“It is an absolute requirement to ensure that we have the appropriate volume and type of billable capacity available at all times. This helps us maximise our use of resources by ensuring we have the right people available to serve our clients and, ultimately, leads to improvements in profitability,” says Jon Mostyn.

Hill & Knowlton EMEA in Brief

Overview

Hill & Knowlton EMEA is a leading international communications consultancy that provides services to local, multinational and global clients.

Ownership

Hill & Knowlton EMEA is part of Hill & Knowlton, Inc., which is owned by WPP, one of the world’s largest communications services groups with 131,000 employees worldwide.

Size and Location

Hill & Knowlton EMEA has 900+ employees across offices in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.



Capacity planning as integrated part of process flow

For Hill & Knowlton EMEA it made good sense to view capacity planning and project management as a fully integrated business process.

“Our planning processes are aligned to the specific needs of the individual operation. Therefore, we needed a specialist application that would enable us to incorporate daily and weekly work planning in our small operations; and monthly staffing planners and quarterly budgeting and re-forecasting in large operations,” explains Jon Mostyn.

With People Planner on board, Hill & Knowlton EMEA are confident that data is consistent as they have only been entered once, and if changes are made in one part of the system, all views are updated immediately to reflect these changes. “People Planner has eliminated the need for planning using separate systems. This makes us much more efficient in the planning process,” says Jon Mostyn.

When the going gets tough, capacity planning takes centre stage

Effective capacity planning helps companies navigate through the ups and downs of the business cycles that affect businesses worldwide. Hill & Knowlton EMEA is fully aware that professional capacity planning is crucial to ensure that they have the right capacity and the right skills on board at all times.

As the business climate gets tougher, it becomes even more essential for companies to ensure their fee capacity matches their latest revenue projections.

“Tighter planning and control can help increase our resource utilisation by several percent over a period of time, and that will help us offset the effects of business contractions. Capacity planning is important in good times, but it’s absolutely critical in challenging times,” says Jon Mostyn.

A flexible and responsive business partner

The vast majority of the Hill & Knowlton EMEA network were already on Maconomy and they are about to embark on an office-by-office rollout of People Planner for capacity planning.

“We didn’t start from scratch. Even the best capacity planning solution doesn’t do the job all by itself. You need buy-in from your organisation in order to be successful. The people at Maconomy have been very responsive and it has been a brilliant partnership. We feel better equipped for the business challenges of tomorrow,” concludes Jon Mostyn.

“Tighter planning and control can help increase our resource utilisation by several percent over a period of six months, and that will help us offset the effects of business contractions.”

Jon Mostyn, Worldwide Business Consulting Director

Building Value for Hill & Knowlton EMEA

Success Criteria

- Upgrade from using Excel sheets for capacity planning to allow more time to be spent on planning and less on collecting data
- Achieve better visibility and reporting in capacity planning
- Be able to plan resources across teams, clients and projects with great flexibility

Solution and Modules

Projects/Finance:

Maconomy Consulting Solution

Resource Management:

Maconomy People Planner

organic business solutions

Maconomy is a global provider of industry-specific business solutions for Professional Services Organisations. We create a natural relationship between people and processes in professional services organisations and provide the basis for overview, follow-up and decision-making in a way which ensures human as well as financial gain.

Our clients include Semcon, ErgoGroup, Devoteam, Deltares, Millward Brown and agencies within all of the big four global networks Interpublic Group, Omnicom Group, Publicis Groupe and WPP.

Maconomy A/S was founded in 1989 and the corporate headquarters is located in Copenhagen, Denmark. We service and support more than 600 clients in over 50 countries through our offices across Europe and in the U.S., and through an extensive partner network. Today more than 100,000 users worldwide use business solutions from Maconomy.

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