

M Squared Lasers Success Snapshot



INDUSTRY: Manufacturing

LOCATION: United Kingdom

PREVIOUS SOLUTIONS: Trello, Excel, Manually

The Company

M Squared is an award-winning photonics and quantum technology company. For over a decade, it has provided the world's purest light to enable scientific progress and power industry – helping to address some of society's greatest challenges. Its laser systems are now working to realise the potential of the coming quantum age, improve healthcare and provide the scientific understanding to help halt climate change.

M Squared has already established itself as one of the UK's most innovative, disruptive technology businesses. Recognised by the Deloitte Technology Fast 50 and The Sunday Times Fast Track 100 and Export Track 100 and awarded the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in Innovation and International Trade. Founded in Scotland, M Squared employs more than 100 people and has offices throughout the UK, Europe and the USA.

The Challenge

M Squared is a fast-growth business, so transformation and agility are crucial to their continued success. Of course, being a growing company at the forefront of science and technological advancement brings unique operational challenges.

M Squared has talented multidisciplinary teams spread across multiple locations in the UK, Europe and USA. Teams are working on a wide range of technologies at various stages of the product development lifecycle, and are often working in collaboration or partnership with many external organisations. Take M Squared's quantum centre, for example; its 20 strong team comprises quantum scientists, hardware, software and mechanical design engineers as

well as commercial staff. Teams are centred around developing novel 'first of a kind' technologies in areas such as quantum computing, inertial quantum sensors and quantum timing devices. This is a highly collaborative, highly specialist environment where teams often work in their own styles while collaborating in real-time with staff and project partners around the globe.

It is typical for a growing company to experience tool fragmentation and manual dropouts in process. At M Squared, some teams had adopted Trello or other project management tools, while others used Excel spreadsheets, and everyone was primarily using email to provide project updates. Using lots of different software, while workable, reduces efficiencies and at times saw teams coordinating less optimally, so reporting on project status was hampered by additional complexity to an already complex set of projects.

The Solution

M Squared determined the need for an agile project management solution that could unify teams and drive efficiencies - one process and one platform. This solution would allow project stakeholders to quickly see and collaborate on the status of each task within any given project across the business.

In addition to a flexible, agile project management system, M Squared needed a Project & Portfolio Management (PPM) solution to give Program Managers the capabilities to manage large and complex projects, such as new laser designs. The company wanted an integrated solution though, where project status' in the agile system could be gathered and reported in the larger PPM system, ultimately providing a portfolio-level status report in real-time. In addition to

the added efficiency gains at the task level by unifying all project teams and related processes onto one agile system, Project and Program Managers would also be able to more quickly generate and share reports on project status and portfolio health with its senior management. This wider portfolio-level visibility would allow M Squared to make real-time staffing adjustments and other critical business decisions, thereby enabling the business to stay agile and adaptable.

The Results

M Squared selected Clarizen One as their PPM system and Clarizen Go as their agile solution. By integrating Clarizen Go with Clarizen One, the company is enabling its teams to more efficiently execute and work in the way that they want. Meanwhile, by connecting the two Clarizen products, the company is also providing its Project Managers with the insights and reporting capability needed to scale business operations in a dependable and measured way.

Simon Cole, Chief Operating Officer at M Squared, commented:
 “Intuitive and easy to use, Clarizen Go is a great tool for any team on any project. Our teams can quickly get up and running and back to focusing on their priorities.”

The flexible nature of Clarizen Go meant that more teams and projects could be incorporated onto the platform, compounding the efficiency gains and further increasing cross-team collaboration. What started as a plan to unite engineering teams with a Task Management system, now includes greater transparency across:

- Manufacturing lines
- Customer service
- Installations
- Higher management coordination tasks
- Recruitment drives
- Marketing/Events management

M Squared metrics:

- Increased staff involvement with Agile projects - by a factor of 10
- Three business units now collaborate more efficiently on projects and day to day business matters
- Tool fragmentation has reduced - by a factor of 3
- Timesheet management has reduced time spent on collating information (approx. 60 days saved annually saved)

“As we went on this journey to increase project collaboration and improve efficiency, we engaged several of our teams and showed them what we were hoping to accomplish. It was encouraging to see everyone buy into both the vision and the new Agile processes and methodologies that we are embracing.”

— Dr Nils Hempler

Head of Innovation at M Squared explains

ABOUT CLARIZEN

Clarizen is a collaborative work management solution designed for people who value their time, and for organizations that value cross-company engagement. Built on a secure, scalable platform, Clarizen brings together project management, configurable workflow automation and in-context collaboration to create a meaningful engagement experience that allows everyone to work the way they work best.