

Customer case interim IT-management – interview with CFO Aart Vollenhoven

The organization

Nedmag produces with 150 employees amongst others magnesium chloride and calcium chloride. These semi finished products are applied in the production of refractory stones, for the bleaching of pulp, for road maintenance and for the production of food.

CFO Aart Vollenhoven is a.o. responsible for IT in the board.



Why Nedmag decided to hire a part-time interim IT Manager

Aart Vollenhoven explains: 'We wanted to improve our IT services, and we faced a number of decisions for a.o. cloud and business applications. In addition, we wanted to **secure our information** better. That is why we, in earlier stage, decided to [use the BusinessITScan®](#) in order to answer a number of questions. That seemed more appropriate than ordering a long and expensive analysis from a consulting firm'.

'Whereas our own IT manager was absent for a longer period, we asked Anton Dijkhuis as interim IT manager to manage our IT department from September 2016 until October 2017. By doing so, we have been able to realize various clear improvements'.

Cooperating demand- and project driven

'Nedmag is a stable and profitable organization, which is valuable to our customers, colleagues and shareholders. However, our board and our users wanted to implement improvements for our processes and management information. We didn't succeed in that too long. With the interim IT manager we have established a **key user team**, which prioritizes the process- and IT-improvements in an integral manner. The **project portfolio** helped us to clarify which requests from the user organization had a good value add. It will sound familiar: also within Nedmag time and money are limited. That is why we wanted to select the requests of our managers and users in a clear and pragmatic manner. The project portfolio today helps us to make and communicate our decisions: which requests get our full attention, and which don't? It's good to work demand driven now'.

Aart continues: 'Changing successfully is an art, that is why we were looking for useful tools to work more project driven. The bottom line is: **changes are realized in projects**. Thanks to the fact that the interim IT-manager worked within our organization, and has coached our business & IT colleagues in working in a project driven manner. We are nowadays realizing innovations in a far more structured and predictable way. As a result, various projects to **improve our efficiency** have been implemented successfully'.

Defining our digital strategy

As within many organizations, the IT landscape within Nedmag had evolved in the course of the years. Aart explains: 'by documenting our IT landscape with our IT colleagues transparently, the interim IT manager has clarified the current situation to our board of directors. Improvements to become more **productive and innovative**, influenced 2 to 3 to 4 business applications. That limits our agility in the first place, and requires an extremely thorough change process in the second place. Our production process runs 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. A Good spinoff from the key user team we formed: business & IT discuss expectations upfront and cooperate more closely. This helps us in realizing more complex innovations successfully. Without business processes coming to a standstill.'

Nedmag faced a number of options to innovate the business applications and IT infrastructure. The CFO explains: 'options were reviewed in the past quite consciously, but we noticed we had made our **IT landscape too complex**. In the basis, our processes are straightforward: we obtain salt from the wells, we process it, and provide it in various refractories to our world wide customers. With the interim IT manager, we therefore answered two questions: can we **simplify our IT landscape**, and can we **use the cloud**? These answers to these questions – and more – have been integrated our digital strategy.



Improved cooperation between Office Automation and Technical Automation

It goes without saying for Nedmag as a chemical bulk manufacturer, that Nedmag must rely on the wells and the factories for 100%. Aart: 'our IT department delivers office automation, and at the same time acts as an internal service provider for our Technical Automation team: servers, storage and network are used for Technical Automation too. The **mutual dependency** is huge. Bringing everything to a cloud service is impossible'.

The interim IT manager has created a **better mutual understanding**, by having various meetings with the OA and TA teams in a clear and open manner. Aart: 'Our factories have been automated very specifically by our skilled TA colleagues. Still, we have to **anticipate** on the end-of-support-dates of various platforms. That requires a close cooperation and a careful planning. The **IT-roadmap** created by the OA and TA teams together with the interim IT-manager, is extremely valuable'.

Value add of interim IT-management: IT delivers, reflects ánd anticipates!

Nedmag's CFO Aart Vollenhoven: 'It was a good decision to hire Anton Dijkhuis as a part-time interim IT manager. Relevant projects have been realized, our digital strategy has been determined clearly with the Six IT Success Factors, ánd our colleagues have evolved well!'.

Meanwhile, a new IT manager has joined Nedmag. Anton conveyed his tasks and responsibilities, and embedded the successful transition in our organization. Aart is very satisfied with the changes Anton initiated and looks forward already: 'also for our new IT manager we've got a number of nice challenges, never a dull moment within Nedmag!'.

More information

About Nedmag:
www.nedmag.nl

About IT's Teamwork:
www.itsteamwork.nl

About the six IT success factors:
www.it-succesfactoren.nl

About the BusinessITScan®:
www.businessitscan.nl