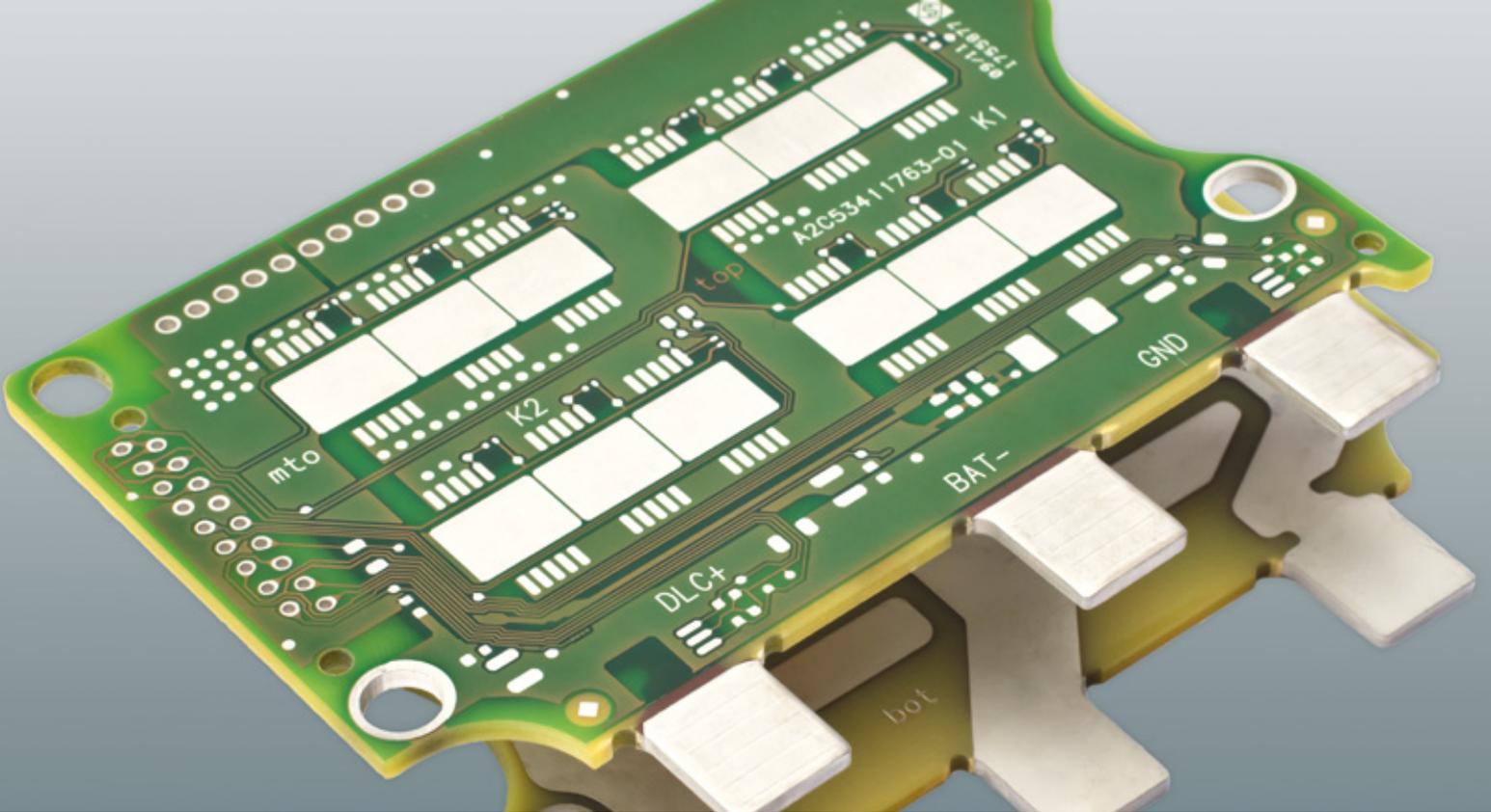


SUCCESS STORY

Working in Harmony with Managers and Staff Toward a New Vision of Project Management

Automotive





INCREASING GROWTH BY OPTIMIZING PROJECT MANAGEMENT AT SCHWEIZER ELECTRONIC AG

Lean processes and greater efficiency are key to company success

In order to make processes even more precise and efficient, Schweizer Electronic AG from Schramberg in the Black Forest called on the professional support of Ingenics AG. Working together in a series of workshops, the companies developed a lean and sustainable project management system. The results were outlined in a project management manual. By putting this continuous improvement process into action, Schweizer Electronic AG will now be even more efficient at every stage of projects.

About Schweizer Electronic AG

Established in 1849 as a family business in Schramberg, a town in the Black Forest, Schweizer Electronic AG is still managed by the Schweizer family – now in the sixth generation. Schweizer focuses on the development, production, and sale of technically advanced printed circuit boards, serving mainly the automotive industry as well as other sectors such as the solar industry. At present, Schweizer is the third largest producer of printed circuit boards in Europe, and one of the top 20 in the world together with its cooperation partner Meiko Electronics. Schweizer Electronic AG, 78713 Schramberg, Germany, www.schweizerer.ag

The management team at Schweizer Electronic AG in Schramberg believed that leaner processes in project management were the key to securing continued growth in the long term. As a result of sustained growth in recent years, an increasing number of contracts had to be dealt with by the same number of staff and using the same physical resources. However, the company was coming close to its limits unless structures were changed. In order to ensure optimal reliability in terms of delivery dates and to make processes as effective and resource-efficient as possible given the anticipated continued increase in demand, work began to establish a project to optimize project management with Ingenics AG acting as a supporting partner.

The defined target was to make project management processes at Schweizer Electronic AG more efficient and effective with respect to customer projects as well as plans to develop inhouse IT and organization. In this sense, it was necessary to allow processes to be individually adapted to a wide range of projects. Consultants from Ingenics worked with the team at Schweizer to develop structures and methods that would serve as a basis for future projects. Although individual project stages are sometimes very similar, especially at the start and at the end, there are significant differences in other phases.



The most important project results and Ingenics performances:

- › Creation of a project management vision
- › Standardization of process steps for all types of projects
- › Integration of aspects of quality management from VDA 6.1, TS 16949, and QS 9000
- › Development of a project classification system
- › Revision of project roles as well as paths of communication and escalation
- › Reorganization of the committee structure
- › Development of a project management manual

In line with the defined goal, the experts from Ingenics began by analyzing established processes. Individual interviews and group discussions were carried out to identify which steps in the workflow offered the most promising potential for optimization. Building on this, a series of workshops was arranged with the highly committed team at Schweizer to arrive at suggestions for improvement. Workshop groups consisted of those involved in projects on the one hand and the decision-makers who would later have to support the results on the other hand. With respect to project progress – an overview of completed and outstanding tasks and decisions – the required level of transparency was desired by everyone involved and created by participants themselves. A piece of web-based project management software was used as a solution.

“The close involvement of staff increased acceptance when the project results were later put into practice. This significantly aided the success of the optimization process.”

Eike Ubbo Ehlers,
Ingenics project director

As in many other projects, the team of consultants found that all the necessary templates and forms for the effective control of project processes already existed at Schweizer. However the variety of paperwork prevented straightforward coordination because each department or project director had developed separate guidelines for the respective team. This caused confusion in the processing of information and varying levels of knowledge among staff in different departments. Standardization, including the methods used by project directors, became a central

task of the project. In the future, employees will receive detailed information about projects and processes thanks to integrated reporting procedures, defined responsibilities, and clear rules for communication and escalation, ensuring a consistent level of knowledge.

With greater transparency in processes, project directors are in a better position to assess overall project progress more quickly and to identify any deviations from the defined process at an early stage. As a result, the workload involved in areas such as readjusting and correcting courses of action can be significantly reduced depending on the type and scale of the project in question. The easier it is

to trace project progress, the more accurately this can be evaluated by parties such as decision-making committees.

Since members of the Executive Board were closely involved throughout the optimization phase and kept abreast of all the relevant intermediate results, important decisions could be made in an efficient manner. The Ingenics team worked with the Executive Board to develop a project management vision for the company. If not before, staff became aware of the high importance of the project and the improvement process due to the involvement of senior management.

Efficiency improvement³ – Building sustainable business success



In a nutshell, the core services of Ingenics can be summarized in three words: Planning. Optimization. Qualification. Or, to put it simply, efficiency improvement³. Our main focus is on three central areas of business – factories, logistics, and organization. Ingenics' history in these areas has been sustained for more than 35 years.

Benefit from unique experiences gained over the course of more than 5.100 successful projects. Discover how, considering your goals and objectives, we create space for your sustainable corporate success.

