

With Help from Clarizen, *ComActivity* Standardizes Its Project Management and Enjoys Immediate Cost-Cutting Benefits



[ComActivity Australia](#) was founded in 2005 by five business consultants with the goal of providing customized Enterprise Resource Management (ERP) solutions. The company employs 37 people and offers a wide spectrum of software solutions and business services throughout Australia, New Zealand and Asia. Solutions cover all stages within supply chain management including: manufacturing, warehouse management, procurement, maintenance, customer and sales management, and overall supply chain optimization. In partnership with *Lawson Software*, ComActivity offers implementation services of M3 ERP systems within a number of industries including Pharmaceuticals, Construction, Technology, Food, Fashion and Mining. The company's main activities are divided into two areas, support and implementation services for Lawson M3 and process improvement using the ComActivity Business Process Platform.

Mitch Edwards is a Senior Consultant at ComActivity. In addition to his role as consultant, Mitch is also responsible for overseeing the IT and phones infrastructure component of the business. With the steady growth of the company, Mitch was also assigned the task of finding a suitable project management solution.

Before ComActivity began working with Clarizen, team members managed their individual projects with spreadsheets; however this method became a hindrance when projects grew in size and interdependencies.

"It was particularly frustrating and took a lot of time trying to communicate with and keep track of project team members, as well as organize resources. We needed to find something that would bring everything together in one manageable place, something to help us manage projects and resources, and a solution that would address our customer billing activities", says Mitch.

The decision to look for a more robust project management solution was made and the search began. Mitch began his search online, reading review sites that discussed the available project management software options and their respective attributes. As part of ComActivity's requirements, the company wanted a web-based solution, convinced the benefits far outweighed the costs.

After a vigorous search, Mitch narrowed down the options to five potential candidates including *AtTask*, *Daptiv* and Clarizen. After a closer, more intensive review *Daptiv* was taken out of the running and Mitch was left to decide between *AtTask* and Clarizen. At this point, Mitch presented the two solutions to the managing partners and following vendor demonstrations a final decision was made and Clarizen was chosen. When asked if there was any specific reason that Clarizen won out over *AtTask*, Mitch explains,



“Even though AtTask had a lot of features that we liked, it didn’t look very easy to use at all. On the other hand, Clarizen’s ease of use was just very intuitive; we didn’t think we would have to spend a lot of time teaching people to use it.”

The transition from using spreadsheets to using Clarizen was a bit challenging at first, mostly because team members were used to managing their own work, each in a different way. For ComActivity, Clarizen created one unified method of recording tasks, resources and budgets, so some adjustment to the new methodology was to be expected.

“Initially people began using Clarizen with time-tracking and eventually became more familiar with how Clarizen is set up. Now everyone is familiar with the modules and knows how to use it”, says Mitch.

Mitch has used the new customization features to create an easy method for expense reporting. ComActivity also uses Clarizen to generate billing spreadsheets.

“With the new customization features, all our company’s expense reporting is managed through Clarizen. It was pretty simple to configure the custom fields to serve our administrative needs, so that’s really great”, says Mitch.

Following the initial stages of adoption, the entire company is happy with Clarizen. “The feedback has been fantastic, everyone here loves using Clarizen, including the managing partners who especially rave about it”, says Mitch.

Currently, with each new project ComActivity projects are configured from the ground up, but the company is working towards standardizing projects and using repeatable templates. Also the team is putting in place tasks that serve monthly milestones for each project, which among others, serve the company’s billing requirements.

“We’ve only used a small part of the full Clarizen platform and we’ve already seen the benefits. Just by using Clarizen’s most basic modules, our account managers have saved approx 3-4 hours every month in the billing cycle, plus we send out the billing sheets to our clients much earlier. Just this small change has increased our productivity and ultimately, profits”, says Mitch.