

Problem, solved.

Kiloutou

New equipment testing and travel management processes help construction rental company accurately compare results and create fully transparent workflow.

“Fujitsu RunMyProcess helped us turn a manual, disorganized process into an automated, fully transparent workflow that saves valuable time.”

– Cyril Guillemain, organizational change manager, Kiloutou

RunMyProcess.

a Fujitsu company

Background

Kiloutou is the largest construction equipment rental company in France. At the end of 2012, it employed more than 2,500 employees across 310 agencies throughout France, and reported revenue of 361 million euros.

Problem – travel request management

Managing hundreds of agencies throughout France is a difficult task that requires coordinated staff training and regular communication between agencies. Employees of Kiloutou are often required to attend training sessions across the country and travel for business-related reasons such as meeting new clients, suppliers and/or travelling between agencies. On average, around 100 Kiloutou employees travel every week.

The coordination of these trips is managed by the travel managers – a small team of just two people. The employees would contact the travel managers by phone, fax or email with the details of the trip and if all required information was submitted, the travel managers would make the travel reservations. However, as there was no organized way of submitting the information, most of the time the travel managers would lack reservation details, such as dates, personal details, and travel preferences. “The team had to spend a lot of time going through emails to make sure they had the latest information and re-contacting the employees for the missing information. The process was time consuming and inefficient,” Cyril Guillemain, organizational change manager at Kiloutou, recalled.

Also, once a travel reservation was made, the managers of the employee weren’t notified. An employee wishing to attend a training session would have to submit a travel request twice – to inform the travel managers and to register for the training: “Everything was managed a bit randomly,” said Cyril Guillemain.

Kiloutou needed an application that would help automate the submission of travel requests to implement a more organized, monitored and transparent process. The application had to allow automatic request approval notifications and provide process analytics. Kiloutou also wanted it to be personalized, as they were concerned that their employees would resist the change from a personal contact reservation to an online form. Having worked with Fujitsu RunMyProcess before, Kiloutou decided to once again approach Gpartner, a Google Apps seller, and Fujitsu RunMyProcess, in search of a cloud-based solution.

Solution – travel request management

The Fujitsu RunMyProcess-based application was successfully developed and implemented in September 2013. All 3, 200+ employees of Kiloutou can now access the application from their computer desktops.

Once the user opens the application, it recognizes the employee according to his or her ID and auto-completes the personal information into the form. The user can then select between a 'training travel' and 'other travel' request, with each launching a different validation process.

If the user selects 'training travel', the application displays a list of all training sessions available for this user. To ensure that the list is up-to-date, every day, Kiloutou sends an automated export of all training sessions and active users in a .csv format that is automatically integrated by the application.

Having selected a training course, the user can then select a preferred travel method: train, car, plane, or a combination of different vehicles. The user can also select 'I allow the travel managers to decide' or 'I use my own vehicle'. Each travel vehicle selection links to a different set of questions (for example, indicating that you prefer to rent a car) and will ask you to specify your permit details and select between car rent providers. The user can also select 'travelling in a group', in which case it is required to submit information on other travellers.

If the user selects 'other trip', the application provides more travel options, requiring more information on the request (travel time, airport locations etc.). A user can also select a 'multi-distance' option, asking for a reservation of numerous trains. For both travel submissions, the user is also asked to provide accommodation details, selecting the number of nights and the hotel preferences.

The user can only submit the form when all fields have been completed – that helps avoid incomplete requests. Once submitted, the travel managers receive an email notification with the details of the request. The travel team can view all current travel requests on a real-time dashboard and filter them according to training sessions, status, or date.

The travel team can validate or refuse a request, for example if the training session has been cancelled. If a demand has been refused, the user receives a copy of the original travel request that can be easily copied and resubmitted. If the travel managers validate the request, the user and their managers receive an email notification with the summary of the travel.

Benefits – travel request management

The new automated solution helps Kiloutou save time and achieve greater transparency and accuracy in the management of travel requests process.

As all travel requests are now submitted in a unique format, the travel managers can immediately proceed the request, without spending time following up on missing information: "It is evident, that now we save a lot of time in the management of travel requests," says Cyril Guillemain. The standardised format of the travel requests also helps the travel managers keep track of all requests and analyse the process. The real-time dashboards ensure the full

transparency of the process at all times: “We always have the correct, up-to-date information, even when there are some changes,” he adds.

Furthermore, when registering for a training session, Kiloutou employees now only need to submit a request once, helping them save time.

Pleased with the results of this application, Kiloutou has already built other workflow solutions on the Fujitsu RunMyProcess platform. This includes a new machinery validation application which helped Kiloutou increase the speed of the process and the accuracy of the data.

Problem – equipment testing process

Kiloutou’s steady growth over the last 25 years is largely attributed to its substantial geographical expansion and the high quality of its products and services. To maintain its market leadership, Kiloutou constantly expands its product portfolio with new tools and equipment.

The team responsible for testing new product proposals, located in the company’s headquarters in Lille, France, continuously receive new equipment samples from suppliers. These samples could be anything from lifting equipment to drills.

The proposed equipment undergoes a series of tests conducted by different team members, who assess the product on the basis of numerous criteria including quality, security, noise, and ease of control. This helps them to determine whether or not to introduce the equipment into Kiloutou’s product range.

However, Kiloutou wasn’t entirely satisfied with their new equipment testing process. The testing team, consisting of up to 15 engineers, recorded all of their examination results and evaluations in a common Excel spreadsheet, saved on the company’s server. As there was just one spreadsheet to record all data from different contributors, there was a large risk of overwriting the latest file and losing previous data.

“There was an error risk because there was no chronological record. That meant we could have had discordant information,” said Cyril Guillemain, organizational change manager at Kiloutou.

On top of this, it was difficult to estimate how long the testing process would take because the engineers weren’t always available at the assigned time and tasks weren’t being completed on schedule. Once the evaluation file became particularly large and difficult to manage and store, Kiloutou decided to search for an alternative solution.

They were looking for an application that could be accessed from different locations, was easy to manage, and could adapt to the needs of the company. Interested in cloud-based solutions, Kiloutou approached Gpartner, a Google Apps seller based in Paris and Lyon, who advised the company to consider Fujitsu RunMyProcess.

Solution – equipment testing process

The new solution is comprised of 10 workflow steps, each corresponding to a validation step in the equipment testing process. All contributors can access the application from their computer desktops.

Once the team manager receives a new piece of equipment, they launch the application to record the information on the item such as the brand, supplier, equipment type, test number, and report number. To organize evaluation data, each brand and supplier has an individual analysis number. If the team manager creates a new workflow with a brand and supplier that's been recorded before, the Fujitsu RunMyProcess application will link the new report to the existing analysis. Conversely, if it is the first time Kiloutou has received equipment from a specific brand and supplier, the application automatically generates a new analysis number.

Once the information has been recorded for the item being tested, the team manager assigns a responsible manager for each test, estimates the completion time (in hours), and indicates whether the test is mandatory. The contributing engineers can then view the tasks assigned to them on the application dashboard.

Each manager submits the results of the test by logging into the Fujitsu RunMyProcess application. Once all tests have been conducted and all results submitted, the managing team submits their opinion on the equipment based on the test results. If the team decides that the equipment doesn't meet Kiloutou's standards, the process is stopped. If following the evaluation, the team decides to continue with the equipment, further steps are taken and tests are conducted – the results of which are also recorded in the application. The process steps are used as a justification reference for the equipment order made at the end of the process.

Benefits – equipment testing process

The application was introduced in September 2012 and in the following year, the evaluation team carried out 330 equipment tests. The new process improved the accuracy, coherence, accessibility, and flexibility of the test data.

As each testing step is now recorded and validated, team members can view the process status at all times to see what stage the process is at and how many tools are being evaluated. The developed application helps Kiloutou trace the new equipment validation steps and more accurately compare results against other models from the same or different suppliers. "The application shows us a real-time summary of all process statistics, making the analysis much easier...we now know more," Cyril Guilleman confirmed.

The application also allowed Kiloutou's evaluation team to save time. The organization of the testing process and the reporting is now done in one application, whereas before they had to use several office tools. The team can also easily

keep track of availability of contributors – as estimated test time is defined in advance. This way, they can reduce schedule conflicts that often used to delay the testing process.

The application greatly improved the structure of the process, and was received and integrated successfully. The new solution also provides an analytical framework of the process that the previous Excel-based workflow couldn't, which Kiloutou plans to use to perfect its validation process. "This allows us, with time, to review and adjust the way we work in the future," Cyril Guilleman added.