

Case Study



vdw: More teamwork thanks to communication & collaboration in M365

Company Profile

The vdw Verband der Wohnungswirtschaft in Niedersachsen und Bremen e.V. represents the interests of 180 member associations and supports them in all aspects of their daily work – from legal consulting to construction-related issues. Additionally, the vdw offers a wide range of training and professional development programs and serves as a political advisor, maintaining continuous contact with relevant political bodies.

Technologies

#Microsoft 365

#Microsoft Teams

Challenge

- Short-term introduction of Microsoft 365 (focus on Teams) during COVID, but with only limited depth of use – instead, work remains largely paper-based with duplicate file storage
- Varying levels of experience with M365, along with some uncertainty in its usage
- Separate workspaces make a unified way of working difficult
- Lack of governance and measures to meet stricter data protection and confidentiality requirements as an auditing association

Solution

- Tailored concept of various Change & Adoption measures to empower employees in using M365 and establishing cloud solutions, including support and communication
- Implementation of an initial pilot project (use case workshops) on a smaller scale, followed by further development and expansion across the entire vdw

Benefit

- High acceptance thanks to a user-focused Change & Adoption strategy
- Optimized, streamlined workflows through unified structures
- Improved internal communication and collaboration with all employees at any time – thanks to centralization in Teams

Like many other organizations, the Verband der Wohnungswirtschaft in Niedersachsen und Bremen e.V. quickly introduced Microsoft 365 with a focus on Teams for communication during the COVID pandemic. However, without a structured concept or accompanying change management, the depth of M365 and cloud usage remained very low. Instead, work processes continued to be highly paper-based and lacked transparency, with duplicate file storage in Outlook and file server structures.

As a result, vdw aimed to better leverage the potential of Microsoft 365, fully transition internal communication and collaboration to Microsoft Teams, and critically evaluate existing processes. However, since the current external IT service provider was only responsible for software and hardware administration and did not offer strategic consulting, vdw began searching for an experienced M365 partner – and, through existing connections, found what it was looking for in novaCapta.

Use case workshops as a pillar of a tailored Change & Adoption concept

First, novaCapta analyzed the current situation and challenges: In addition to the lack of structure in the introduction and use of M365 applications, including low potential utilization, employees were at significantly different experience and usage levels and showed some uncertainty when using M365 services and the cloud in general – partly due to the absence of governance. It also became clear that no appropriate measures were in place to meet the stricter data protection and confidentiality requirements as an auditing association.

In response, novaCapta developed a tailored concept with various Change & Adoption measures that would meet employees where they were. The concept of use case workshops also allows for an individual assessment of different processes for optimization with M365 – always considering security aspects and with an outlook on optimizing the IT landscape. Specific measures were outlined as follows:

- Development of a clear **project vision**
- Creation of a **SharePoint landing page** with various **learning materials** as a central hub for all employees, including accompanying communication
- Conducting **use case workshops** with representatives from different departments to find solutions for specific issues (e.g., processing time-sensitive tasks in the tax department)
- **Coffee Corner Call series** through the M365 application world to empower all employees
- Tenant Health Check

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Both the project team and our employees always felt excellently supported by novaCapta. The Coffee Corner Calls were particularly well-received, and further regular training on new features was actively requested. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with novaCapta in the future!



Dr. Susanne Schmitt

Director of the Association
Verband der Wohnungswirtschaft in
Niedersachsen und Bremen e.V.

This concept was initially applied in a smaller pilot project: novaCapta conducted the first use case workshop for the association management and the tax department and tested the format with the vdw core team. After this successful „trial run“, the measures were then continued and expanded with a larger target group. IT coordinator Mandy Schwabenhausen explains: „Unified structures have simplified our communication and collaboration with all employees – whether in the office or remote workers. We were able to significantly reduce our email flood by switching to Teams: internal messages, tips and tricks, as well as IT announcements (e.g., upcoming maintenance) are

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now communicated quickly, easily, and transparently through Teams channels.”

Foundation for further optimization of IT infrastructure

Change and Adoption played a central role in successfully guiding vdw on its journey into the M365 world and empowering employees for sustainable usage. In addition to highlighting perspectives and opportunities, as well as the limitations and workarounds when using M365 and the cloud, the novaCapta project team also provided suggestions for developing a custom cloud strategy and guidelines for M365.

With meaningful work in M365, vdw has now laid the foundation for further process optimization and digitalization within the association. Based on this, additional exciting projects have emerged for 2025 in collaboration with novaCapta – including the use of AI (Microsoft 365 Copilot) for further productivity gains, as well as the optimization of IT infrastructure (Data Governance & Security) and ensuring the smooth operation of the system.

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