



三菱地所株式会社

CASE STUDY

Avanade supports employee innovation for Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd.

Avanade drives agile development for an internal communication tool using Microsoft Teams

Business Situation

The way employees worked changed dramatically

"The Group Long-Term Management Plan 2030" formulated by Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd. (Mitsubishi Estate) positions digital as an essential part of its management strategy. It also defines a strategy for its non-asset business utilizing digital technology as one of the pillars of earnings in addition to the existing asset-based businesses.

Mr. Kazuki Oda, Manager of the DX Promotion Department, explained that one of the roles of the DX Promotion Department is to, "Accelerate workstyle innovation and solutions to the business challenges of both in the office and IT-based work environments. We believe that implementing new ways of working and new office environments is necessary to provide more added value to our employees."

"After COVID-19, the way we work has changed dramatically. With a mix of remote and in office working becoming the norm, the way employees communicate with each other has also changed," said Mr. Oda. "Communications based on face-to-face meetings have become more difficult. There are fewer opportunities to collaborate through casual conversations in the office or to propagate information from the company or departments through incidental communication."

"We worked as one team to drive Scrum development toward the goal of delivering the best value to our users, our employees. We feel that Avanade's support throughout the project has facilitated our operational efficiency."

Mr. Kazuki Oda

DX Promotion Department, Mitsubishi Estate Co. Ltd.

In addition, although employees have moved from face-to-face communications to using digital tools such as **Microsoft Teams**, they have been using Microsoft SharePoint as an internal portal to disseminate important company information.

Mr. Oda added, "Employees cannot obtain information without proactively visiting the SharePoint portal by themselves. It might have been possible to complement lack of access to the portal if we had face-to-face communications. However, it is no longer possible to ensure that employees are obtaining important company information consistently when we are communicating mainly using Teams chat."

Therefore, it was necessary to improve overall operational efficiency in a way that would facilitate the delivery of information sent from each department and each company within the group to users.

Solution

Scrum process enables initial team building and fosters a team culture

Mitsubishi Estate started to review the use of SharePoint, a solution which had been used as an internal communication tool. Management concluded that the best solution would be to consolidate information in Teams, making it easier for employees to collaborate.

After gathering information from several vendors, Avanade was selected, particularly since Avanade had a strong track record as a Microsoft solutions partner. "Not only did Avanade have a proven track record as a Microsoft solutions partner, but their proposal was excellent. It focused primarily on conveying important timely information using Teams, which our employees frequently use as a communication tool. More than anything, the biggest deciding factor was that their proposal best matched what we wanted to realize", said Mr. Oda.

Further, Avanade proposed creating an application using a Scrum development method that provides for incremental releases of the solution in an agile and timely manner.

"While we were a bit apprehensive about trying an agile approach at first, we decided to incorporate it into this project because we knew that we would have the full support and guidance of Avanade. We also thought it would be a great advantage to use this development experience to accumulate agile development know-how within the company," explained Mr. Oda.

"We conducted a PoC (proof of concept) within five months, focusing on how to deliver important information in a timely and easy-to-understand manner. We created a prototype application, reviewed it in Scrum, and repeated the improvement cycle, said Mr. Koya Shirai, Manager of the DX Promotion Department of Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd.

The Scrum development team consisted of Mr. Oda and Mr. Shirai from Mitsubishi Estate, who made decisions as product owners. Employees from the user departments used the system to participate as reviewers. The Scrum master, delivery team, engineers and designers participated on the Avanade side. MEC Business System Solutions Co., Ltd. ("Mitsubishi Jisho IT Solutions Co., Ltd." from July 1, 2022), a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., also participated providing infrastructure development and maintenance support.

In the Scrum development process, the companies became one team as it performed releases in various scales in one-week cycles and continuously conducted sprints with repeated improvements based on reviewers' feedback. Kota Nishizaki, Agile coach at Avanade, also participated in the team, providing support for the day-to-day process and creating the agile mindset and managing the smooth implementation of the project.

Masako Sho, Digital Innovation Studio Japan Lead at Avanade, reflected, "The smooth implementation of the project cycle was possible thanks to end user involvements and the fact that Mitsubishi Estate accepted the project implementation in One Team, entrusting us to deliver the best value to its employees."

"The 'courage' of Scrum, the ability to maintain a positive attitude toward meeting deadlines, the true power of the team, and the permeation of an agile culture have been great assets."

Mr. Koya Shirai

Manager, DX Promotion Department, Mitsubishi Estate Co. Ltd.

"In large part, the Scrum development was done remotely, except for the opportunity for a general review of key milestones. There were processes designed as Scrum events, which were planned very precisely. We were often requested to make quick decisions, which was challenging for us. Still, the project management was well organized, including visualization of project progress. We conducted a PDCA (plan, do, check, act) cycle where we discussed positives and negatives every week and made improvements along the way", said Mr. Shirai.

There were some cases where defects were discovered a few weeks before the company-wide release. However, "Using chat communications, we resolved those using in time before the release," said Mr. Shirai.

Nishizaki also recalled, "As we refined the quality from the development phase, defects detected in the final check were only minor ones. We realized as a team, the 'courage' not to give up when it came to each release deadline. The tool was released on time, thanks to defined roles across the three companies, checkpoints and clear timelines regarding what needed to be done by when and implementing the plan. However, we would have probably decided to postpone the release if the traditional waterfall development had been adopted, said Mr. Shirai."

Mr. Oda also said, "We realize that our team having the 'courage' and driving towards resolution without giving up were achieved due to the excellent teamwork and the accumulation of Scrum development to date."

Results

New collaboration tools

Released two months later was “miTene”. This tool plugs into Teams and allows users to receive notifications twice daily and to easily check the latest information including company announcements, from their smartphones or computers.

As for the quantitative outcomes, Mr. Shirai said, “While the data from the company-wide rollout is still in the early stages, I can confirm that the application is accessed at least once a day, and information that the company must communicate is reaching employees.”

In addition, a function of miTene enables users to access a collection of links frequently used for business on Teams. This serves as a portal where employees can get their desired information and is anticipated to improve productivity by five minutes each day per employee.

As for the insight obtained through the Scrum development, Mr. Shirai says, “Scrum events require timely decision-making according to the designed process. Since the iteration of input and output occurs five times faster than the speed of conventional waterfall development, while it was challenging both in quality and quantity aspects, it was a valuable experience.”

“We are proud of completing this project on time which speaks to the ‘courage’ of Scrum values. The power of the team and the impact of agile on our culture have become significant assets for us.”

Mr. Oda says that in the future, they will deploy miTene to the group companies and consider growing the system to bring more efficiency by enabling employees to catch up on more information using Teams as a hub. Although a few employees participated the Scrum development, he expects that experience from this project will help in future projects for sure.



And to Avanade, Mr. Shirai said, “We look forward to continuing to work with them as a partner in fostering a culture within our company from an agile perspective.”

Mr. Oda concluded, “As a Microsoft solutions partner of Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., we hope that Avanade will develop systems and provide suggestions on applying new technologies and tools to our company to improve our business efficiency and bring workstyle innovation.”

About Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd.

A comprehensive real estate developer, Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd. boasts the leading position in the Japanese market, operating a spectrum of businesses in diverse fields related to real estate, including an office building business centered on the Marunouchi district in central Tokyo, a retail property business, a residential business, a hotel business, and airport business. The company's area of operations is not confined to Japan; it includes the United States and the United Kingdom and extends to such Asian countries as China, Chinese Taipei, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam. Visit their website: www.mec.co.jp/index_e.html

CASE STUDY

Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd. provides
innovative employee workplace

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 56,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com

©2022 Avanade Inc. All rights reserved. The Avanade name and logo are registered trademarks in the U.S. and other countries. Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective owners.

North America

Seattle
Phone +1 206 239 5600
America@avanade.com

South America

Sao Paulo
AvanadeBrasil@avanade.com

Asia-Pacific

Australia
Phone +61 2 9005 5900
AsiaPac@avanade.com

Europe

London
Phone +44 0 20 7025 1000
Europe@avanade.com