

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GOES SOCIAL WITH VOGSY

SPECIALISTERREN
DE BESTE TESTERS

INDUSTRY

Professional Services

COMPANY

Specialisterren

SIZE

50+ employees

BENEFITS

- Improved resource utilization
- More effective and efficient invoicing
- Increased management responsibility

THE SPECIALISTERREN STORY

Being recognized as a Society Changer in McKinsey's 2016 Report on the Social Enterprise sector means a lot to Specialisterren. The Netherlands-based company provides software test services to major banks and insurers, large retailers and IT companies. But they do it with a twist, because Specialisterren is determined to particularly encourage staff with autism to join the company (known as Specialistars).

"Often people with autism are particularly skilled and successful in software testing due to their eye for detail and accuracy, and ability to concentrate intently. But sometimes these candidates are overlooked because they may not perform so well in interview conditions. At Specialisterren we want to encourage applications from autistic candidates. This is key to our social mission," said Sjoerd van der Maaden, founder of Specialisterren.

Having McKinsey's recognition is a fantastic validation of the Specialisterren team. "We set out to prove that people with autism have a unique contribution to make in IT. Our double-digit growth shows us that we are on the right track," continued van der Maaden.

Sjoerd van der Maaden founded Specialisterren in 2008. One of his key focus areas today is ensuring that as the company continues to expand, so does its ability to enhance and optimize the way the business is run: "We need to prove to our people that we have the right environment for them to excel as our business grows. Equally important is our ability to bring full confidence to our customers that we're delivering the outcomes they need. That means having complete auditability of every step in our service delivery." The ability to scrutinize every cent of spend and operate on a sound financial footing are topics that are very much required in social enterprises like Specialisterren.

THE CHALLENGE | SCALING THE BUSINESS WITH CONTROL

To manage controlled growth, the team at Specialisterren wanted to achieve the following business and operational benefits.



The opportunity to embrace an efficient, accountable way of working was key to ensuring that Specialisterren could follow McKinsey's advice to social enterprises around the need to make the business scalable. But how could these objectives be met?

Sjoerd van der Maaden and his team started to evaluate several different options that might help them meet these objectives. First, they looked at upscaling CRM, but found that possible direction to be too cumbersome and not watertight. Second they looked at implementing greenfield ERP but found the process to be far too lengthy as well as having the potential side-effect of a negative impact on agility. Having rejected both of these routes the Specialisterren team felt like they were out of options.

**UP AND RUNNING
WITHIN ONE MONTH!****THE SOLUTION: VOGSY | BUILT WITH THE USER IN MIND**

When designing VOGSY we set out not only to solve the core efficiency problems of a professional services company, we also focused squarely on building an easy, intuitive software solution that service professionals actually want to use. And by incorporating general ledger, project and resource management, time tracking and expenses, it dramatically improves business control enabling customers to achieve profitable growth.

"VOGSY has been built with a social-style app interface. This means we bring alerts and updates to your personal timeline on your cell phone when you need to take action. You don't need to upload or input data, or take any heavy training to start benefiting from VOGSY – if you can use social apps, you can use this," continued Leo Koster.

And being easy to use and implement was absolutely part of the reason why Specialisterren chose VOGSY. Within one month they redesigned many of the processes within the company and were beginning to use the VOGSY KPIs. Within 1.5 months the entire company was using VOGSY. The roll-out was simple and straightforward with one introduction session plus some on-the-job support.

Now that the solution has been rolled out across the team, the company is on track to doubling its business securely and feels safe in its choice.

While Specialisterren has realized many benefits from the VOGSY solution, so far three have had the a huge impact:

1. **Managing resource utilization** by being able to plan and manage in one system
2. **Being more effective and efficient at invoicing** through faster invoicing and fewer lost hours
3. **Managers taking on more responsibility** by having more information available to them to make decisions

THE RESULTS

According to Sjoerd van der Maaden:

"We love the fact that VOGSY runs in the Google Cloud as a cost-effective app with no capital lock-in. It aligns completely to our vision of buying no technology. And we're seeing more rewards from VOGSY than we anticipated. Because all information is updated in real time, invoicing can be instant and concise from within the tool. We no longer need to go through the tedious process of monthly information gathering and manual invoicing and this means that our cash flow gets a nice boost too. The feedback so far from our Specialistars is really positive because onboarding is seamless and we're creating a more engaging environment for them.

VOGSY has enabled our staff to perform at their best by having information available to inform, drive, motivate and challenge them. By keeping everyone informed it gives them an opportunity to grow to their full potential.

As the CEO it makes my day more effective since I now have real-time trusted data about the company and how it is functioning. I know how things are working.

The company is now on track to growing social impact by 'going social' and we're fully in control. That's a great outcome."