

CAR-O-LINER®

CASE STUDY

Leaner & More Productive: How Car-O-Liner Streamlined Agile Product Delivery With Hansoft

Agile teams at Car-O-Liner build innovative, highly customized products for the automotive industry. After moving to Hansoft, they've never done it as simply, efficiently, or quickly as they do now.

Summary

Car-O-Liner™ Group is a global provider of high-quality, technologically-advanced collision repair and wheel alignment solutions for automotive and commercial body shops and OEMs.

When teams at Car-O-Liner's facilities in Sweden sensed an opportunity to improve productivity, collaboration, and efficiency, they turned to IT consultant Headlight AB, who suggested Hansoft. After a brief pilot, Hansoft is their tool of choice. It has drastically improved their efficiency and shortened customer waiting times.

Since Upgrading to Hansoft...

- **Increased User Productivity**
With fewer meetings and emails, team members at all levels of the organization can dedicate more time toward designing and delivering the product.
 - **Faster Production**
Teams are improving efficiency and reducing customer wait times with a streamlined production process in Hansoft.
 - **Better Backlog Prioritization**
Project & product managers went from "everyone running around getting updates" to knowing project status and priority at all times.
 - **Continuous Improvement**
The organization can now continue to improve processes and collaboration across departments at ease. They doubled Hansoft seats in short time, and could rapidly expand to new departments.
- **Visibility Across Enterprise**
With better visibility, resource utilization on cross-functional teams went from unbalanced to optimized across projects.

Meet a Project Manager



Markus Öjebo is an OEM Project Manager.

He and his team create complex products that have never been made before — customized solutions for the truck and bus industry, which include hardware, software, and documentation.

His Favorite Hansoft Features

Task Break Down — *“It’s very easy to break down, detail, assess, and prioritize tasks.”*

Planning View — *“It gives an immediate overview of where projects are sitting.”*

Dashboards — *“You can see much more of what is actually happening.”*

His day-to-day is extremely busy and fast-paced. He’s responsible for keeping all project deliverables — along with resources, milestones, etc. — planned, managed, and delivered.

A promoter of process improvements at Car-O-Liner, Markus helped lead the charge in finding and implementing a new tool.



It was clear we needed something better, a tool that actually helps you. Something more than an Excel file with macros,” says Markus.

The Search for a Better Agile Tool

Knowing there was an opportunity to improve productivity and efficiency at their facilities in Sweden, Car-O-Liner hired IT consultant Headlight AB, their on-site and on-call resource for finding a solution.



Meet Jörgen Lindholm, Solution Architect at Headlight AB.

Jörgen is a consultant with extensive experience assisting companies conduct large-scale Agile implementations. For Car-O-Liner, he helped them better realize their potential through upgraded tooling and optimized workflows.

According to Jörgen, what many organizations come to find when they work with Headlight is that a right solution can be about more than tooling, it’s also about the teams and people themselves.

“It’s not just about selecting a tool and using it properly, it’s about actually becoming more efficient together. I take pride in helping organizations achieve that.”

After assisting smaller teams at Car-O-Liner with great success, Jörgen was asked to scale up tooling to more parts of the organization. He recommended Hansoft based for two reasons. First, their current tooling environment prohibited them from scaling up.

Second, he'd had success implementing Hansoft with other customers.

But it wouldn't be enough that he liked it. He had to get the team on board.

Introducing Hansoft — 'You Had Me at Hello'

After getting feedback from the software team on the limits of VSTS, their former tool, and knowing that the whole organization needed to collaborate using one tool, Jörgen suggested Hansoft and introduced it to Markus.

His gut reaction?



My first feeling, which I knew from the beginning, was that it was a complete solution." says Markus.

"I still remember when I showed it to Markus the first time. We dove into it for about an hour. I showed some features and he ended the meeting saying, 'You had me at hello!' he said and we laughed," remembers Jörgen.

With key team members on board, they implemented a Hansoft trial period to see if it was the right fit for the organization.

"I saw that Hansoft could help improve efficiency and get the whole organization on the same side," says Jörgen.

But what he didn't know, was that the time he suggested for the pilot was the busiest time of year at Car-O-Liner. Everyone was working hard to complete the backlog of work, reach deadlines, and finish projects as promised to customers.

Jörgen didn't find out about it until the pilot's

retrospective meeting, where they discussed Hansoft and its success or failure.

How did it go?

"They told me that it was the most hectic time of the season for the company. And that even though it was their first time using Hansoft, they wouldn't have done so well without it," recalls Jörgen.

Hansoft Brings the Winds of Change

Teams at Car-O-Liner — from writers to developers to managers to directors — now have a single tool to plan, track, and push the business forward. Collaboration has improved significantly. Efficiency, too, as product and project managers can visualize, organize, and prioritize work. The results are not only felt at the project level, by individual team members, but also by those at the top.

"The winds of change can really be seen and felt in the organization," says Sören Mellgren, Director of Engineering & Product Management.

One Tool for Everything

According to Sören, the biggest positive effect of using Hansoft is how it helps them organize and track all their activities.

"Now we have the possibility to keep track of what is happening in the business and the activities for each area. It's very easy to get an overview," he says.

On top of the overview, project managers enjoy having one tool that immediately synchronizes with everyone in the company.

"Whenever a task comes in, and from whatever direction — phone call from a customer, email from a sales colleague, whatever — you always

have the tool in your computer, and can enter the task in without hassle, which your team members see immediately,” says Markus.

According to Markus, Hansoft, in effect, eliminated much of the wasted time spent sending and confirming emails.

“Now with just a few clicks, you can make sure someone is aware of your update — all in the same tool,” says Markus.

“You really don’t have a need for anything else when it comes to my type of work anyway,” Markus adds.

Less Guesswork, More Focus

So now, it’s more of a collaborative effort for each delivery. The project managers work in Hansoft and conduct high-level prioritization every two weeks, so all these different teams know what they should focus on.

People used to have to do a lot of running around, getting updates, explains Marcus. Now, he says, everyone has a well-defined prioritized list from which they can pick things from the top to complete.

“It’s a major difference,” he says. “No more wondering, ‘Am I doing the right thing? What should really be top priority for me right now?’ They know exactly what they should be working on.”

The Power to Say No

It doesn’t matter what business you’re in. We often encounter people coming to us with their own ideas of what should be done.

At Car-O-Liner, Hansoft helps teams say no to tasks that aren’t officially in the tool.

Markus shares his experience:

There are often people coming to the teams and saying, “Can you do this? Can you do that?” With Hansoft, they have a prioritized list and, if it’s not there, the people coming from the side have to make sure that it gets on the list. It’s actually quite common, you hear people occasionally saying, “Is it defined in Hansoft?”

Leaner Resource Utilization

The combination of team reorganization facilitated by Jörgen of Headlight and their new tool, Hansoft, has streamlined resource utilization.

Previously, they locked up certain resources at project outset, and that resource would stay with a project until it was completed. Now, project managers spread tasks on the complete teams when possible.

More Flexibility to Manage Dependencies

With Hansoft, teams can manage their work in the tool the way they prefer — not in the way dictated by a tool.

For Markus’ team, which follows the Agile scrum methodology, everyone works in sprints, which are synced to major releases. Different teams, however, with different needs and constraints, have different ways of using Hansoft.

The software team and the hardware team prioritize their work and update it from the to-do list, while the technical writers use Hansoft a little differently. The technical writers have

a lot of dependencies. They need inputs (and reviews) from both the hardware and software teams to write the manuals. The writers, then, take advantage of the Gantt charts available in the Planning view in Hansoft.

Lower Lead Times

With Hansoft, teams at Car-O-Liner can reduce customer wait times, process more RFQs, and improve overall process efficiency.

To understand, let's look at Car-O-Liner's typical production pipeline.

Everything starts with a request for a quotation (RFQ) from a customer. After a technical solution concept is defined (by numerous subject matter experts), a quotation is written. This results in a purchase order from the customer, and that's when the project starts. The team then makes sure all activities are carried out and that delivery and installation are completed.

What's happened at Car-O-Liner is that they can now track work much earlier in the intake process — at the RFQ stage.

Rather than quote just their time, as they did previously (for example, "software development – 40 hours", "mechanics – 80 hours", "documentation – 20 hours") they now can easily itemize work and update each work package as they learn the order process. That knowledge goes into Hansoft immediately, and with greater detail. Each quotation is broken down and defined in Hansoft. Teams create user stories and conduct estimates for each quotation. Later, when they receive that order from the customer, most activities are already defined, making it easier to pick up where they left off, and, importantly, get paid

for what they actually deliver.

The RFQ is now quickly transferred to a project state.

It adds up.

"What that means for us," says Markus, "is that all the time spent in the RFQ process, you can actually cut from the order implementation lead time thanks to this tool."

The Last Word

Teams at Car-O-Liner are committed to continuous improvement. While they've seen and felt drastic improvements in their daily workflows and processes, they're currently looking at finding ways to improve success by creating and refining new key performance indicators (KPIs).

"I'm sure we can find more metrics to improve, thanks to this tool," says Markus. "We've gone from a chaos state and then into Hansoft



Now, we're constantly improving here, thanks to Hansoft."

Another big difference for Car-O-Liner? The support from Headlight and Jörgen.

"As soon as we had a question we had someone on site that was there to help instantly. I don't think I've had that experience before. I mean, it was very easy for us having a Hansoft specialist on site," say Markus.

"It's hard for me to see a workplace where this is not going to fit in. As far as my experience goes, I would have loved to have it at my previous company as well. I'm not saying that to be nice. It's completely honest," says Markus.