

Customer Case: WIPAK

Keto®



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WIPAK is part of the Wihuri Group, a Finnish family-owned global business giant. Packaging Division consists of two international brands: WIPAK in Europe and Asia and WINPAK in North America. From the 1960's Wihuri's Packaging business has grown into the world's leading producers of packaging materials and solutions for the food and medical supply industries in Europa, Asia and North America.

With 21 manufacturing sites and numerous sales and service offices on three continents Wipak and Winpak teams of experts deploy globally to serve customer needs. The strategic alliance of Wipak and Winpak allows global customers to reduce costs, simplify product development and consolidate packaging solutions.

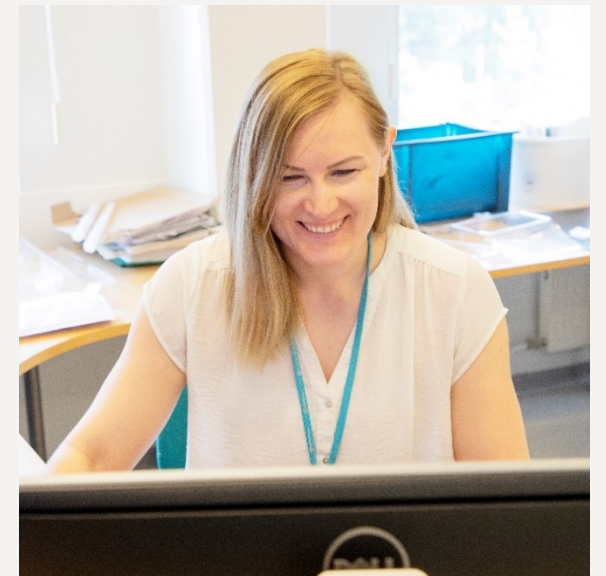
Wipak's strength is based on linking expertise in research and development with the group's production and sales capabilities around the globe. Wipak specialises in high-end packaging solutions and services for perishable food products as well as for healthcare sterile supplies and devices. Wipak is well respected in Europe and Asia for its expertise in complex multilayer films in general and barrier films in particular.

Wipak operates eleven facilities and a network of sales offices in Europe, the Middle-East and Asia.

Wipak's R&D uses Keto v5 Platform to manage their research and development project portfolio to get better visibility throughout the group project portfolio development.

Lotta Mantere, R&D Engineer, is one of Wipak's three main users. She's been working with Wipak for the past 4 years and before that, she co-operated with Wipak for 2,5 years.

Lotta's responsibilities in addition to her R&D tasks involves the management of Keto's project portfolio platform established in 2016.



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History of Project Portfolio Management in WIPAK

In order to understand the evolution of the project portfolio management in Wipak's R&D, let's take a look at how it all began. History goes back to 1967 when Wihuri acquired a small pouch manufacturer in Helsinki region. In 1969 the production was moved to Nastola, Finland which is still one of the main production locations in Wipak Group. Nowadays there are 3 factories in Finland and another 7 in Europe and one in China. Already from the early days Wipak's focus has been in Food and Medical packaging.

All the way until mid 2000's the product development was mainly driven without harmonized processes between units. Then, the thinking moved towards structured processes and to better visibility what is done and where. The plan was to make the product development more rational and in-line within the group.

At the time, new product inquiries were made in every unit, about 50 to 100 per year in total and they all required a lot of paperwork – sending the documents from one person to another resulted time consuming and very unsure method, as some were lost in transit. Managing the projects was complicated and difficult at times.

The solution was to build up an intranet where all documentation was tracked, stored and approved. The system was in use up until 2014, but it did not solve all the problems within the project portfolio management.

This was the time of lean thinking, so the product development processes were carefully studied, and many unnecessary phases were deleted and prevented. For example, the idea-to-product time window is critical phase, in order to get the timeline as tight as possible, amends were made in important matters, such as raw material orders, and the waiting times.

Pinpointing these pain points and understanding them brought up the gate thinking.

In gate method, you indicate the critical phases and determine the steps that need to be ready before proceeding to the next phase. And determine the decision-makers who will have to approve the gate before it is accepted, and the project can move forward. For this, a tool was needed, as the filling and filing all the XLS spreadsheets in intranet was not the best solution. So, in 2015 Wipak contacted Keto Software.



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Implementing the Keto Platform

The Keto Platform was taken into action in 2016 in Wipak's R&D. The challenge was to harmonize the working habits between the units so that the general process would follow same principles while still enabling certain flexibility to adopt local needs if required. Also, there was the matter, that SAP was just implemented which required that R&D related functions had to be revised and fit to NPI process as well.

The original gates were very straight-forward and included mainly the technical side of the product. The process ended when it was technically able to perform. It was only later, that the commercial side was added, and more gates made to make sure, the end of the project was more carefully planned. In commercialization, the challenges lie within the sales support materials, product specifications and in specific raw materials and their availability.

The actual implementation of the Keto Platform went well. Benchmark visit was made to Saarioinen and it was a good experience and encouraged Wipak to move forward after evaluating the pros and cons. It became clear, that the processes were not ready made, but configurable so that they would fit in the company's current ways of working.

Also, with Keto Platform, the data transfers to/from SAP were possible.



Wipak conserved their idea-to-product gates with the new platform and added the justifications to commercialization and placed the regulatory and legislation fulfillments. The processes between gates are very detailed and carefully thought indicators have been set for the green light.

Wipak started in 2016 with Keto Platform v4, and in 2021 updated into Platform v5 where the user features have improved greatly. Broader user profile was deployed, now including also deeper involvement of purchases, quality and supply chain. Product development owns the process until commercialization, from there on, marketing takes the lead and finishes the projects.

The history was received from Mikko Kettunen, who has worked at R&D Wipak over 20 years.

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Keto Platform v5 in action

The Keto Platform v5 **enabled wider scale portfolio management** for Wipak. Last year 2021 there were over 300 started projects, including raw material projects and new product inquiries, whereas in 2019 there were approximately 190 projects ongoing.

From the new product inquiries business justifications are made, the possibilities in production are investigated and the decisions to proceed taken. Then the development project is established, and gates or smaller acceptance decisions are set in material testing, production trials, client testing, documentation, regulatory checks and finally in commercial side.

Lotta Mantere is one of the three main users of the platform. Her function is to pilot and try out new features, train users and follow up error reports, gather ideas for continuous development and communicate with Keto team.

The challenge is to give all users the same training and the baselines to work with the system in the same way. There are about 60 to 70 users in Wipak's R&D regions, including technical services, purchases, supplies and quality plus the whole sales department.

There are named main users in factories in Germany and France, responsible for local training and first line user support but the ultimate knowledge and responsibility lies in Nastola behind Lotta's desk.

Benefits of the Keto Platform

The management of increasing number of new product inquiries required a tool. With the help of the Keto Platform, all paperwork is now in order and the **process is more systematic**, as everything is reported in the platform. This has greatly **increased the visibility** of the projects. Of course, the visibility is always restricted according to the user's status.

The reporting is still partly made in Power Points, the platform could be used more widely in reporting in the future.

“Great improvement in the new platform is the increased visibility over the project portfolio. Currently, we are talking about having full visibility in one glance over all projects. Let's see when that becomes possible.” says Lotta Mantere.



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Keto Platform v5 benefits and challenges

Another great benefit in Keto Platform is, that it makes the **ISO audits** very **simple and easy to manage** as all project related info and required acceptance decisions are documented in one system. Also, thanks are given to **the personalization and easy customization of the fields** in the platform.

An internal challenge surged, when implementing the new v5 Platform. Wipak decided to change the scope slightly during the implementing process and add also the commercialization phases into the new product development process. This caused bigger problems when combined with an originally strict schedule with the implementation and too general description of the new process.

If the implement and process change would be done now, enough time and resources would be used beforehand for determining the detailed flow of the new process and to list carefully all the features needed. Last time too much effort was used in determining the process details during the configuring phase of the implement and some of those decisions are still being fixed.



Another challenge is the **versatility of Keto's platform** – there are infinite amount of possibilities to configure the platform and not all options are taken into consideration. The full potential of the platform is still unclear.

"The demo environment is great, it's not just empty board but there are real examples to work and test with and an effort has been made with the visualizations. It helps to understand the system better", Lotta compliments.

Then there's always the continuous development with the Keto team, where issues are taken into account and solved. Lotta gives credit to the co-operation with Keto Software, as everything has always run smoothly.

There's always an appointed account manager to take care of each one of Keto's customers and long fruitful co-operations have surged from them.



Full Transparency to Innovation and Development

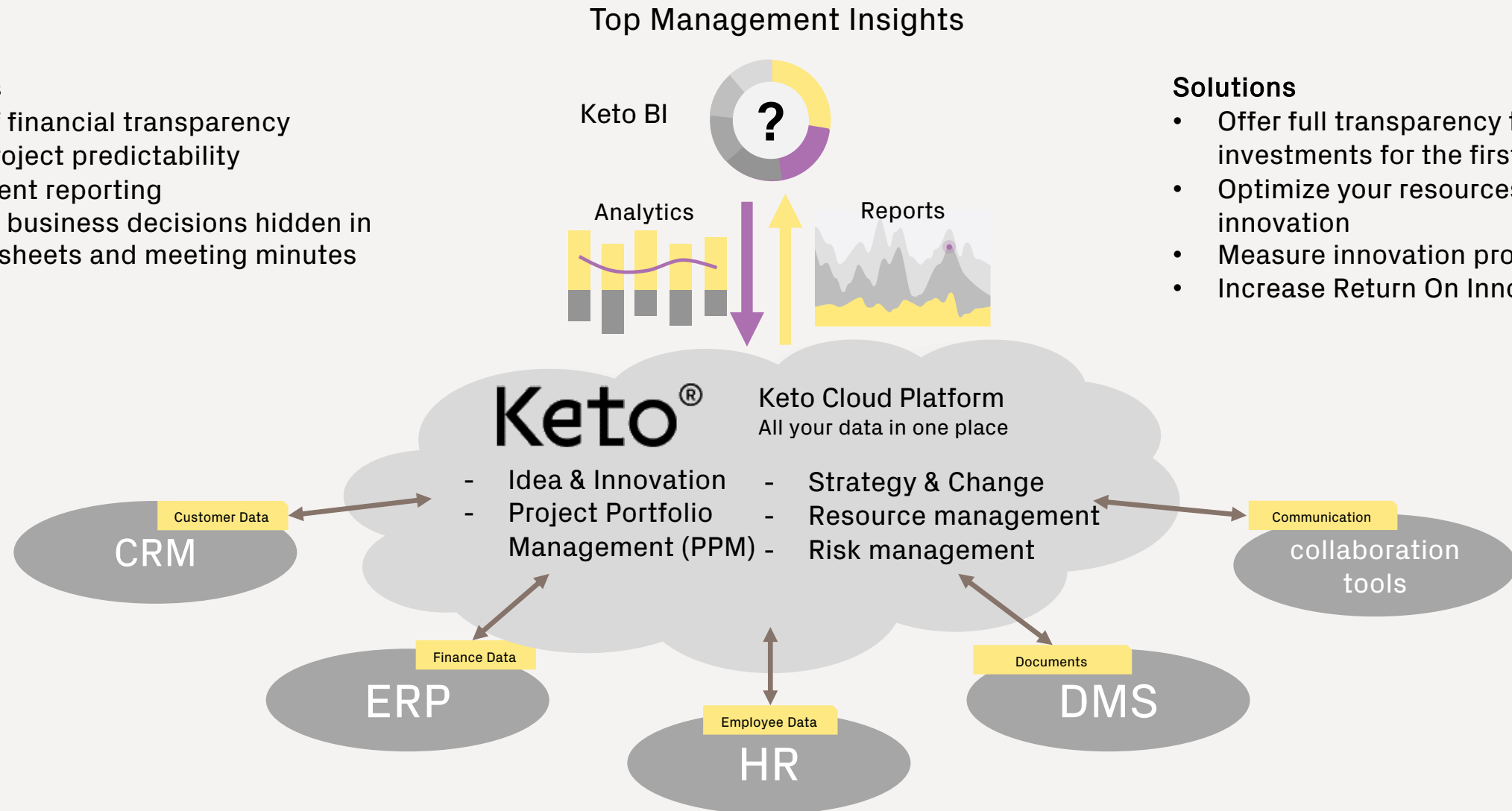
Keto®

Challenges

- Lack of financial transparency
- Poor project predictability
- Inefficient reporting
- Critical business decisions hidden in spreadsheets and meeting minutes

Solutions

- Offer full transparency to innovation investments for the first time!
- Optimize your resources on innovation
- Measure innovation profitability
- Increase Return On Innovation



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