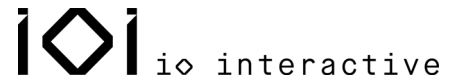


Flexible, agile finance for the creators of HITMAN 3



IO Interactive



A smart, connected Unit4 platform is helping the creators of the HITMAN video game series, an upcoming James Bond-themed game, and other exciting games to drive agile and adaptive finance management.

IO Interactive partnered with an expert team from Unit4 to deploy the modern, adaptive enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform in just three months and with a limited budget.

- No anticipated increase in finance headcount, despite forecast 300% growth over initial sales budget for the first three months of 2022
- Implemented Unit4 platform in just three months
- Created a single, company-wide version of the truth
- Accelerated and streamlined finance-based decisions

From HITMAN to James Bond

IO Interactive is a Danish AAA video games developer based in Copenhagen, best known for creating and delivering the HITMAN franchise and other exceptional games to a global community of fans. Among many future developments, IO Interactive is working on a new James Bond game, codenamed Project 007, featuring a wholly original Bond story.

Four years ago, IO Interactive was at a crossroads. The company had undertaken a management buy-out (MBO) from its parent company and quickly needed a modern, flexible enterprise ERP platform to manage critical business processes like finance, procurement, reporting, and forecasting. Ammara Ghulam, Head of Finance at IO Interactive, picks up the story.

“This was an exciting moment for IO Interactive. We were independent and eager to grow our portfolio of video games, including the HITMAN series. However, we urgently needed a best-in-class ERP system to underpin everyday processes. We had little time, minimal budget, and limited internal expertise – but a lot of expectation.”

Industry

Video Gaming

Location

Copenhagen, Denmark

Size

Approx. 200 staff in 3 countries; plans to grow to 300 staff by end of 2021

Product

Unit4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Challenges

Following an MBO, IO Interactive needed to implement a modern and adaptive financial management ERP platform very quickly. Time and budget were both limited – as were the IT resources available to deploy the new platform.

Key metrics

Zero

Increase in finance headcount despite record growth in staff

3 months

Time to implement Unit4 cloud platform

“This was the most successful implementation I’ve ever been involved in. We set some punishing parameters at our first meeting, but there was no limit to what Unit4 could achieve.”

Ammara Ghulam

Head of Finance, IO Interactive

The previous parent business was a highly satisfied, long-time Unit4 customer – and it was to Unit4 that Ammara and her team turned for their new ERP solution. “Our previous relationship with Unit4 had been exceptional. The team was incredibly professional, expert, and understood our business operating model. They were the first choice for IO Interactive’s ERP platform, despite the restricted budget and timeline,” she says.

“The most successful implementation I’ve been involved in”

IO Interactive has standardized on a connected Unit4 ERP system, spanning finance and procurement, to create a single, unified view of financial management. “This was the most successful implementation I’ve ever been involved in,” Ammara explains. “We set some punishing parameters at our first meeting, but there was no limit to what Unit4 could achieve. Nothing was too much trouble. The entire team worked as one even during the restrictions of the pandemic. They were continually proactive and focused on our business goals.”

With the ERP platform deployed in just three months, IO Interactive benefits from a single-ledger, unified accounting system. All the processes for agile, accurate, and automated financial management are available to everyone in a secure cloud environment. Timely and reliable finance data is shared right across the business to support fast, informed decision making – on everything from investor relationships and game development to engagement with publishers.

Complete procurement control and compliance

Smart, automated procurement management is just one of the areas delivering process transformation. IO Interactive works with multiple external partners worldwide, such as freelance game developers, and the company has complete control and compliance across the end-to-end procurement process.

Ammara cites an example of how this works. “We work with suppliers to create game assets issuing a purchase order at the outset of the project. Automated Unit4 workflow ensures that when the design assets — goods — are receipted and paid, they become IO Interactive’s intellectual property. There is no dispute about ownership. Of course, we also have complete insight into which suppliers deliver the best value, so we can focus our spend very carefully.”

Another example in this forward-thinking financial management is segregation of duties. The ERP platform is configured so that no single person is responsible for every stage in a process, with processes broken down to reduce the risk of fraud and error. “This provides assurance that transactions are valid, accurately reported, and in compliance with our objectives,” says Ammara.

Trusted, informed decisions

All of this takes place in an adaptive and secure cloud environment. Everyone is on the same page, using the same single version of the truth,

to make trusted, informed decisions and move IO Interactive forward. “Cloud-based ERP is such a logical move,” Ammara says. “It frees up our IT resources, with Unit4 taking responsibility for key processes like IT performance, availability, and security. We are also always on the latest version.”

Unit4 is also delivering operational efficiency by automating and streamlining vital processes. Ammara again: “The ultimate advantage of Unit4 is that our people can work faster and smarter. Process automation means we can channel resources away from tedious, repetitive, back-office tasks, towards creating exciting new games like HITMAN and Project 007. For example, we are forecast to increase our headcount to 400 people by 2022. However, I don’t anticipate needing to increase the size of our finance team.”

