

ORBIZ & Touchplan

A Partnership to Further Construction Technology



Meet ORBIZ

Headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, and London, UK, ORBIZ is a specialist consulting firm that provides a broad range of performance improvement, project management and advisory services across the public and private sectors. Partnering with clients across various industries, they harness the principles of Lean and Continuous Improvement in capital project and operational settings to help manage risk, reduce cost, and maximize productivity.



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The feedback from the contractor community using Touchplan has been resoundingly positive,” said Ross Sterland, Director & Co-Founder at ORBIZ. “Head contractors, subcontractors, planners and trade supervisors all find Touchplan extremely useful. They feel they are all aligned. No one is trying to understand what needs to be done; no one asks what you need from us? Touchplan makes the expectations abundantly clear and puts everyone on the same page.”

1

How ORBIZ Connected with Touchplan

CEO Ross Sterland and ORBIZ were engaged with the Western Program Alliance (WPA) as part of the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) in Victoria in Melbourne. This project will remove 85 railway level crossings that crossover roadways in suburban Melbourne by replacing them with bridges or underpasses. The project also delivers other railway network upgrades, including new stations, track duplications and car parking garages as part of a USD 10bn investment.

Having established a series of lean construction foundations, including visual management and structured problem-solving forums, WPA began developing a three-year roadmap for the next wave of improvement. This activity caused the team to ask what other principles Lean could bring to the project. One of the answers was the Last Planner System. A trial activity was initiated using the "old school" method of Last Planning, which meant a lot of sticky notes on walls, several meetings, and lots of information to maintain with no central repository for the data.

Exploring electronic options via the web led WPA and ORBIZ to Touchplan. After a trial run, the project team quickly realized the power in the tool and began implementing it and immediately saw the benefits, but Ross saw a lot more.

"We quickly realized that very few projects in Australia were using Last Planner, never mind, a digital version like Touchplan," said Sterland. "We saw an opportunity in the local market, to firstly, educate people on the power of the Last Planner System, and using a tool like Touchplan to deploy it. So we arranged a meeting with the Touchplan team in the US and were able to establish a marketing partnership

to promote Touchplan's technology through ORBIZ."

Bringing Last Planner to Level Crossing Removal

From that point, ORBIZ, with support from the Touchplan sales team, presented Touchplan to their client Fulton Hogan and the Main Roads Program Alliance (MRPA), who had shown interest having seen WPAs success with the software. MRPA is also working to remove level crossing as part of LXRP. The client was immediately a fan, and ORBIZ has helped MRPA implement Touchplan on two large-scale, \$100 Million plus projects. In addition, ORBIZ anticipates supporting MRPA to implement Touchplan on several other projects. Not to mention other ORBIZ clients are expressing interest in using Touchplan and the Last Planner System.

"A core principle of Lean is detailed planning and control by having visibility of what are we planned to do, and then assessing how we did and where we missed," said Sterland. "Touchplan makes all of that so much easier in a very complex environment, as it enables collaboration across lots of different people. It's not always feasible to get everyone physically in the same place, be it a 100-storey building or a rail infrastructure project spanning a worksite 80 miles from end to end. Touchplan allows you to get the team together efficiently and collaborate remotely, put a plan together, report on the performance, and discuss where you need to correct. These are all of the things that we try to achieve through Lean, and Touchplan is helping us to better enable our clients' workforce as part of their Lean journey."

As ORBIZ promotes Lean and the Last Planner System throughout Australia and Europe, Touchplan has been an invaluable tool, especially its collaborative planning and data analytics features. Sterland sees tremendous opportunity for Touchplan both within the construction industry and beyond.

"The reports are huge to us. We're all about getting data out on performance, identifying the repeat issues, and the repeat areas where we're having problems. Touchplan's Insights feature helps you do that a lot quicker, and that brings efficiency to the Lean process."

RESULTS

Our relationship with ORBIZ has produced some mutually beneficial results, including:

- Bringing Lean & Last Planner to Australian construction markets
- Improving efficiency and collaboration on ORBIZ projects
- Better utilization of data to identify repeat problems and how to best refine them