

# BEST PRACTICE

ProData Consult magazine about IT, projects and the people behind them. 7, 2016



## The complex IT project that went according to plan

Interview with CIO Morten Gade Christensen, Energinet.dk





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**ProData Consult  
and Raft Consulting  
have joined forces**

The merger adds expert business consultants to the existing pool of skilled IT consultants. Interview with CEO Søren Rode and COO and Claus K. Rasmussen.

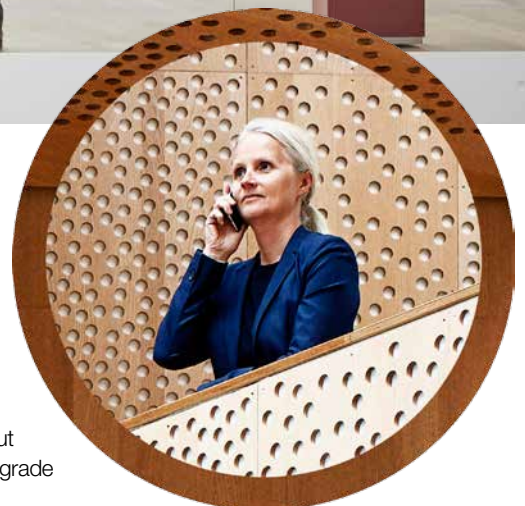
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**Energinet.dk's  
Mission Impossible**

When Energinet.dk needed to upgrade a critical control system, ProData Consult supplied the right woman for the job.



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Three ProData consultants share their experiences.

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Helen Holdt, whose background is in the financial sector, talks about her role in the upgrade of Energinet.dk's control system.



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## New consolidated ProData Consult

### Most likely the best consultancy in Denmark

**ProData Consult and Raft Consulting merged on 1 January 2016. With this merger, we've consolidated our position as Denmark's largest consultancy in our segment, which gives us an even better platform for serving our clients.**

The merger of the two companies has been challenging, but also interesting and intense. We're pleased and proud that we haven't suffered from churn in connection with the merger – either in relation to clients or consultants – and I would like to thank all of our valued clients for your patience in connection with the transformation into ProData Consult.

We will use the energy and resources the merger and higher

volume are giving us to optimize and improve our service to new and existing clients. We've taken our business to the next level: in addition to our generic IT competencies, which have now become even stronger, we now also have in-house business consultants with a deep knowledge of the financial sector in particular, in addition to telecommunications, energy and transportation.

At the same time, the merger has given us a stronger foothold on the Swedish market, where we now have divisions in both Malmö and Stockholm. Our presence in Sweden now has a really substantial volume, which means that we are fully equipped to service our clients no matter where they are located in Scandinavia.

The theme of this issue of Best Practice is knowledge sharing. Among other things, you can read about how Energinet.dk tackled a critical, high-profile project in order to future-proof a crucial link in Denmark's critical infrastructure. And to give you a different angle on the same story, this issue also features an interview with the ProData consultant who successfully led the project and made a big difference for the client. It's something we see every day. And it's what we live and breathe for.

I hope you can use the knowledge we share in this issue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Søren Rode'.

Søren Rode  
CEO





# After the merger: PROBABLY THE BEST CONSULTANCY IN DENMARK

PRODATA CONSULT HAS JOINED FORCES WITH RAFT CONSULTING TO ADD TOP-LEVEL BUSINESS CONSULTANTS TO OUR TEAM OF EXPERT IT CONSULTANTS. THIS WILL MAKE THE COMPANY ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S STRONGEST CONSULTANCIES.

*Interview with CEO Søren Rode and COO Claus K. Rasmussen.*

The company headquarters are still located at Stamholmen in Hvidovre, but a wall has been knocked down to make room for 30 new colleagues. As a result of the merger, ProData Consult's staff has grown to 90 administrative employees and full-time consultants – and over 700 freelance consultants placed with the company's clients. This means that ProData Consult is now one of Denmark's largest suppliers of business and IT consultants, and by far the largest supplier of consultants to the financial sector. Claus K. Rasmussen, former CEO of Raft Consulting and now COO of ProData Consult, states:

"Our shared vision for the company is to supply something unique: our goal is to be a strong full service supplier and to build on the powerful synergies that lie in the combination of Raft's specialized business consultants and ProData's many experienced freelance consultants."

## TWO STRONG COMPANIES – ONE DREAM TEAM

But the merger will not only create synergy. The two companies complement one another on a variety of levels, from the two executive management teams and corporate culture to a focus on quality. What's more, a large propor-

tion of ProData Consult's total revenues are generated from some of the same areas that Raft specializes in.

"We are two strong companies that are joining forces to become a unified dream team, instead of fighting over who's going to take first and second place," explains COO Claus K. Rasmussen.

"In light of the increasing complexity of clients' IT needs, a merger with ProData Consult makes good sense – the consultancy has a unique ability to meet its clients' needs for experienced IT consultants."

*Claus K. Rasmussen, COO*

Prior to the merger, Raft Consulting was a specialized consultancy with a focus on sectors in which industry insight, business processes and IT go hand-in-hand, particularly the financial sector. But in light of the increasing complexity of clients' IT needs, a merger with ProData Consult makes good sense – the

consultancy has a unique ability to meet its clients' needs for experienced IT consultants.

## THE NEW PRODATA CONSULT

Both consultancies achieved their best results ever in 2015: ProData showed 10% growth, and Raft grew 33%. ProData Consult has a larger portfolio now, which in itself will increase growth this year. But the driver of development has to be quality, not growth. In the words of CEO Søren Rode:

"Raft and ProData complement each other well, which will result in deeper knowledge and even better quality services to our clients."

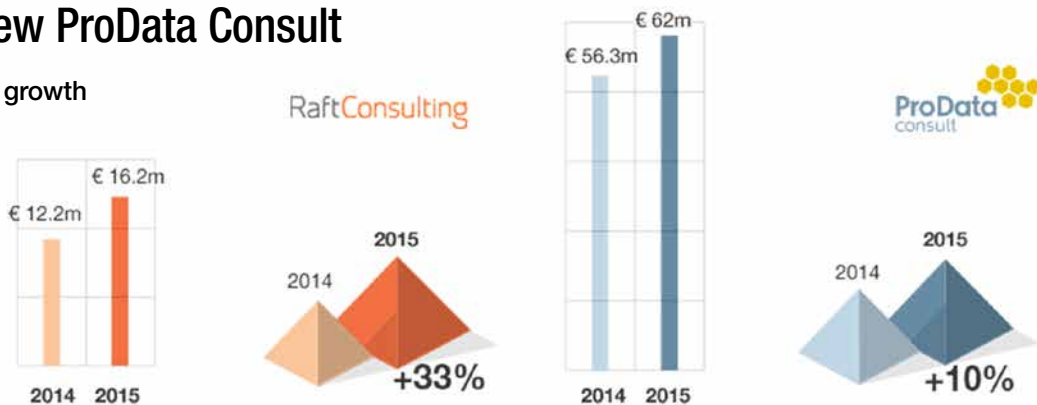
Many companies fail to live up to their potential after mergers, which is often due to the fact that the merger was motivated by an attempt to save the companies from failure. This is not the case here. Søren Rode emphasizes that both companies could have easily continued to stand alone:

"What we have here are two strong companies that will be even stronger together. That makes a big difference. We're not laying people off – we're hiring."

Another benefit of the merger is that it will make the company even more international. According to Søren Rode, ProData Consult

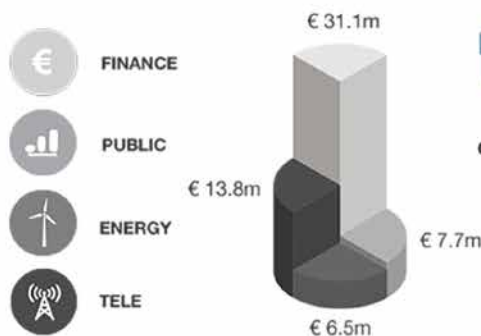
## The new ProData Consult

### Revenue growth



### After the merger

#### OUR BIGGEST INDUSTRIES



#### ACTIVE CONSULTANTS



#### COMBINED REVENUE



is a sound business with great potential that can now be realized, thanks to the company's high-powered additions to its management team and additional resources.

#### EVEN BETTER SERVICE FOR CONSULTANTS

Even though Raft is contributing full-time industry specialists to the company, this doesn't mean that ProData Consult will be reducing its focus on freelance consultants. On the contrary. The company's foundation remains its large team of freelance IT developers, testers and project managers. Søren Rode states:

"In reality, over 80% of Raft's consultants were also freelancers, so we're gaining a larger volume overall – and because we've grown, we can create closer relationships to our consultants and provide even better service."

With the addition of the knowledge of the industry specialists, ProData will also become a better sparring partner for freelancers, who can get advice on trends in the business areas the company specializes in. And a larger company means a broader palette of projects, which in turn lead to exciting jobs and opportunities for competency development for associated consultants.

#### THE MERGER IS AN UPGRADE

The new ProData Consult has deep insight into its clients' reality, which is strongly affected by change: new legal requirements are being

implemented, clients must handle the need for new competencies, redundant IT, the need to revise business models and an intensely competitive environment in which parts of the industry are under enormous pressure.

"The merger is the upgrade that means that we can meet our clients' needs and ensure that they are in an optimal competitive position," says Claus K. Rasmussen.

ProData Consult's focus on internationalization is yet another facet of this upgrade. CEO Søren Rode explains:

"It's important for our clients that we have the most up-to-date experience, both technically and in terms of business insight, and to a large extent, this is something we gain outside Denmark's borders. For example, we can supply consultants who have just handled a Basel III implementation in Tyskland, or the latest Big Data solution in Poland, which is a major advantage for our clients."

#### UNIQUE ADVANTAGES FOR CLIENTS

Internationalization is far from the only advantage the merger will mean for the consultancy's clients. By supplying quality counseling and services, ProData can function as a trusted advisor to our clients. Broad IT expertise combined with the full-time specialists' deep experience provides unique advantages – and makes the company a more complete supplier.

"Our full-time consultants are some of the

best in the business. They keep us up-to-date on developments in different industries, what products we need to have, and how we can best support our clients' businesses," says Claus K. Rasmussen.

This anchors important knowledge in the company, which also gives account managers the insight they need to create value: instead of only asking what the individual clients needs, ProData Consult can provide more industry-specific expert sparring. As the COO explains:

"We have an interest in developing along with our clients. The better we understand our clients' world, and the better our clients understand how they can use us both as brains and brawn, the stronger our partnership will be, and the more value we can generate."

#### A STRONG PROFILE ON THE MARKET

The greatest challenge for the company now is to stay focussed on the vision, because both Rode and Rasmussen agree that there are many potential distractions.

"You can't answer the door every time opportunity knocks if you want to have a strong profile on the market," says Claus K. Rasmussen. Søren Rode adds:

"We have to stay true to our value proposition – both in relation to our clients and our consultants. Every new service we provide has to make our core business stronger." ●

# Most likely the best consultants in Denmark

Do you need a  
business or IT  
consultant?



ProData Consult delivers the most qualified business and IT consultants, with competencies ranging from software development to business management. We can provide you with quick access to expert consultants with the skills and cutting-edge knowledge your business needs – and at least five years of documented experience within a main field of expertise or primary competence. Always.

In fact, our IT consultants average over ten years of experience. Our consultants can assist you with over 4,000 different business and IT specializations. Because we have specialists in handling virtually all types of business and IT projects for both the public and private sectors.

We always strive to handpick the right consultant and send a CV within twenty-four hours of receiving a request.

Read more at [prodataconsult.com](http://prodataconsult.com).



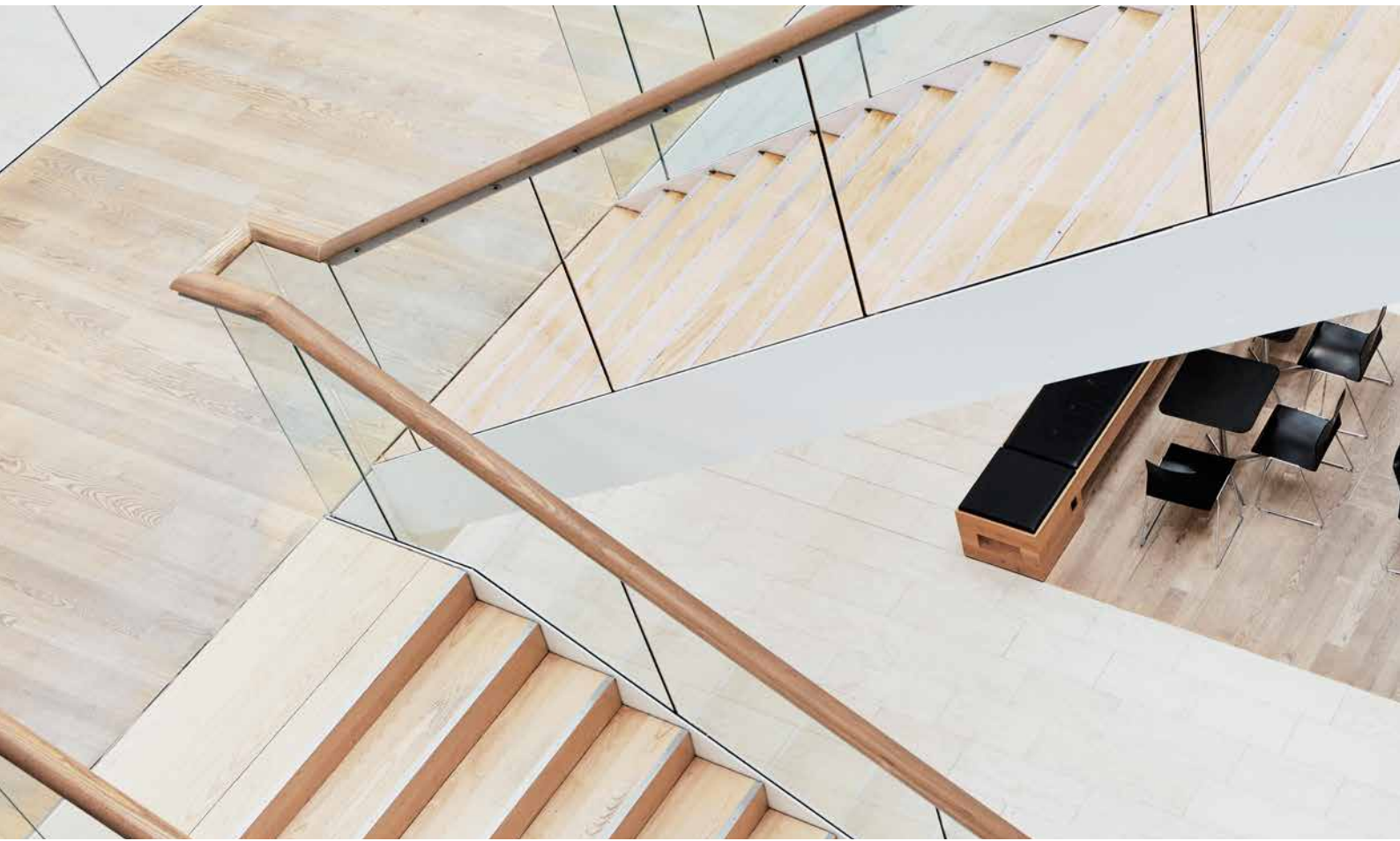
# The complex IT project that went according to plan

DENMARK'S ENERGY GIANT, ENERGINET.DK, HAS TRIUMPHED WITH A TRUE MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: A COMPLEX, APPROX. EUR 14.5 MILLION IT PROJECT WAS COMPLETED ON TIME AND ON BUDGET. IN THIS ARTICLE, CIO MORTEN GADE CHRISTENSEN REVEALS WHAT EMBRACING CHANGE AND AN ULTRA-STRUCTURED PROJECT MANAGER CAN ACCOMPLISH.

*Interview with CIO Morten Gade Christensen, Energinet.dk*







**The integration of renewable energy into Denmark's energy grid is moving fast.** So fast that time was running out for Energinet.dk's control system, which is what guarantees that every Dane can start the day with hot coffee and turn on the lights when the sun goes down. And so in 2013, the energy supply giant launched an ambitious project to upgrade and future-proof the IT system.

"The old control system would not have been able to manage the flexible energy system that Denmark is in the process of developing. In order for IT support to keep up, an upgrade was necessary. At the same time, we wanted to meet the company's need for a more robust, secure system," explains Morten Gade Christensen, who has been CIO of Energinet.dk since 2013.

#### STRONGLY ANCHORED IN THE ORGANIZATION

It's irritating if you update your corporate website and there's a single page that doesn't work. But if you're an energy provider and you make a coding error in the engine room that causes a blackout in an entire county, you have a real problem. For this reason, the upgrade project demanded, if not a zero-error policy, then an intense focus on identifying the potential challenges that could develop into severe threats to the energy supply. And so Morten Gade Christensen's first step was to

ensure that the project was strongly anchored at executive management level as well as in the rest of the organization:

"In connection with many projects you have to prioritize what's important, and we've done that. The upgrade was integrated into the corporate strategy as a target that had to be reached, and the importance of the upgrade

**"The importance of the upgrade was clearly communicated: drop whatever else you're doing immediately if there is a need for you."**

*Morten Gade Christensen, CIO*

was clearly communicated: drop whatever else you're doing immediately if there is a need for you."

#### UNTRADITIONAL CHOICE OF PROJECT MANAGER

Normally, a project manager with serious industry experience and SCADA expertise would be chosen for such a high-profile, critical project. SCADA is the type of IT system Energinet.dk uses. One of the two heavyweight project managers presented to the CIO by ProData

Consult had this kind of background. The other had an unconventional profile: former CEO in an investment company and a trained lawyer. Her name is Helen Holdt, and although she had no knowledge of the energy sector, she had extensive experience with structural issues from a complex bank project. She demonstrated that she knew how to keep a project on a short leash – something that gave Morten Gade Christensen a good gut feeling:

"Helen's experience with major banking systems resembled our critical infrastructure: in the financial sector, it hurts when systems don't work, just as it would have unimaginable consequences for Energinet.dk if we turned off the power in Denmark."

#### STRUCTURE, STRUCTURE, STRUCTURE

The choice fell on Helen Holdt, who immediately started describing roles and responsibilities, drew up logs of decisions, structured meetings and got her mandate clarified. Everything was hammered into place in one go. Even the project participants who failed to deliver on time and who should have feared her most were enthusiastic: she never went after the man, but instead focused single-mindedly on clearing obstacles out of the way so that everyone could move forward.

The untraditional choice turned out to be the right one. The CIO finds it interesting that the



## About the control system

Energinet.dk uses a SCADA system. SCADA stands for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition.

With the new SCADA system, Energinet.dk is able to control and monitor its electricity transmission system. The upgraded system has a more automated control system and advanced system monitoring, which gives the technicians responsible for operations the nuanced overview they need to balance production and consumption. The upgrade also supports the energy requirements of the future: in 2020, 50% of Denmark's energy must derive from sustainable sources. This places heavy demands on the system, because the production of wind energy fluctuates according to the seasons and weather conditions. The new SCADA system also optimizes IT security.

perfect match can be a project manager with no sector experience, as long as he or she has experience with some of the same fundamental issues:

"We are an energy supply world leader with a complex, critical infrastructure. It's exciting that it was possible for Helen Holdt, who has a background in finance, to leave Energinet.dk with a deep knowledge of the energy sector."

### EFFECTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE AND A DYNAMIC CONTRACT

Prioritization and a talented project manager aren't the only secrets to Energinet.dk's success with the SCADA upgrade. An effective steering committee was a priority for Morten Gade Christensen, who made sure to include the executive director of French GE, the largest supplier, on the steering committee. Though this is not standard practice, the CIO wanted to bring people on board who knew how to make decisions:

"We invested a great deal in physical meetings, and I got it included in the contract that GE's representatives on the steering committee had to be 'on location' at Energinet.dk once a month, so we could decide from meeting to meeting whether a phone call was enough."

Morten Gade Christensen also had a strong focus on Energinet.dk's contract with GE. Traditionally, you describe the desired product, and the supplier quotes a price. Then you spend the project fighting about everything that's not described in the contract – and who's going to pay for it. Instead, GE was asked to estimate a price for the total package and to develop a structure to ensure faster and better delivery. As the CIO explains:

"In this way, GE would earn more, while we would save money and avoid delays. In short, it was a much more dynamic contract that gave the project manager full transparency and that made it easier to manage the project." ●

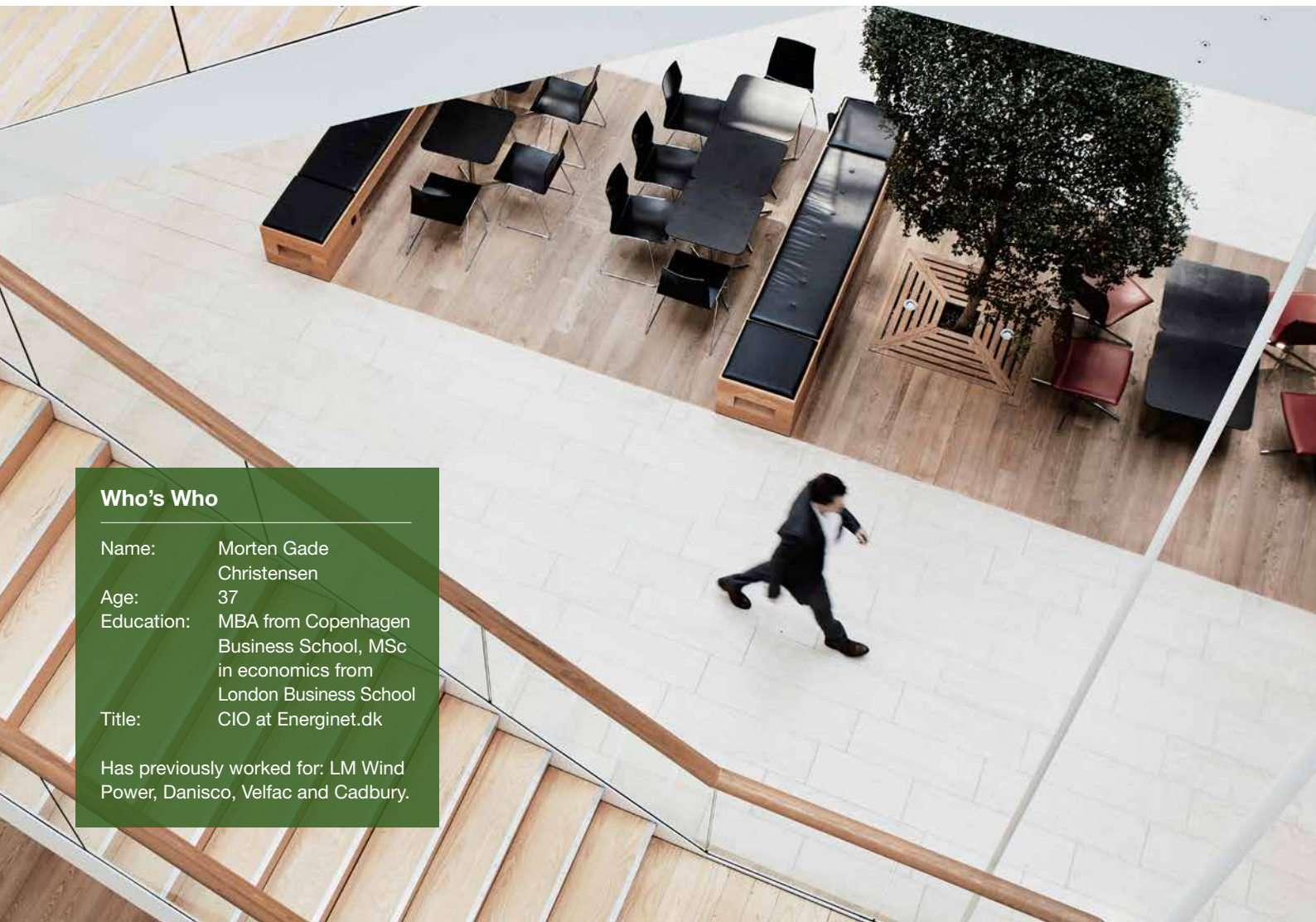
### Facts about the project

Project launch:	August 2013
Completion:	November 2015
Budget:	EUR 14.5 million
Project manager:	Helen Holdt
Suppliers:	Alstom and GE

### Who's Who

Name:	Morten Gade Christensen
Age:	37
Education:	MBA from Copenhagen Business School, MSc in economics from London Business School
Title:	CIO at Energinet.dk

Has previously worked for: LM Wind Power, Danisco, Velfac and Cadbury.





# “I’VE NEVER BEEN IN DOUBT ABOUT WHERE WE WERE GOING”

WHEN ENERGINET.DK NEEDED TO UPGRADE THEIR SCADA SYSTEM, THE HEART OF DENMARK’S MOST CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, THEY CHOSE AN UNTRADITIONAL PROJECT MANAGER. IN THIS INTERVIEW, HELEN HOLDT TELLS US HOW SHE STEERED THE PROJECT TO SUCCESS.

*Interview with Helen Holdt, program manager*

## COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE PROJECT BRIEFLY?

The project was an upgrade of Energinet.dk’s SCADA system (System Control and Data Acquisition), which controls the Danish electricity infrastructure. The system needed to be moved to a new platform with a new network, both in order to future-proof the system and to improve security. The upgrade was necessary to achieve the company’s strategic objectives in relation to sustainable energy. At the same time, the servers were on their last legs.

I took over the project in September 2013 with an analysis phase, and the upgrade got started in early 2014. The plan was to go live in November 2015, which we succeeded in doing.

## WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS ON YOUR LACK OF EXPERIENCE WITH THE ENERGY SECTOR?

I don’t have a degree in IT, but I do have an educational background in law, finance and business processes. Over the last 13-15 years, I’ve been responsible for a range of IT projects. No matter what the business, there are a variety of conditions, processes and

“The steering committee had a good understanding of the business and the deliverables, and was good at handling difficult challenges, which is also central to every project.”

*Helen Holdt, program manager*

working methods that apply to all IT projects and all IT support. I’m quite familiar with these conditions, and they are my primary tools in

connection with any IT project. For all IT projects, I’m dependent on being able to draw on resources from the business and on making sure that we in the IT department understand what it is the IT deliverable is meant to support. And so it made no difference to me that

I wasn’t familiar with the energy sector.

## WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THE PROJECT WHEN IT WAS OFFERED TO YOU?

That it was big and incredibly exciting. That the project was important to Energinet.dk, which means a lot to me. Most clients have a lot of projects – I would like to have the project that’s most important to them, because that means it’s usually easier to get the project moving forward.

## HOW DID YOU APPROACH IT?

We made a contract with the supplier of the application, the French company GE, which required sub-deliverables in the form of 20-25 work packages, which meant that we received smaller deliverables on a regular basis. We







asked GE to provide estimates and plans for delivery of each work package, for example delivery of a module or a specially coded functionality.

In addition, we also established a test strategy in the steering committee quite early on, which basically was that we should test as early as possible. When a sub-deliverable was delivered, we tested as much as we could for the given deliverable, where we worked with work packages and milestones.

In the test strategy, we and GE defined what was considered a minor error and what was considered a critical error. We worked with five categories in order to establish a shared understanding of the definitions. We practiced looking at results, at what it meant when corrections of errors were delayed, which were more important than others, and what it meant when there were x number of errors within each level (minor - critical). In the steering committee, we only looked at the number of defects within the different levels, whereas in the test strategy it was a question of what we would accept within each level.

Early on, we decided to involve the end-users in a go-live plan. We had a fall-back strategy as part of the go-live plan: if something in the plan started going badly after a few weeks, we could fall back on the earlier version of the system.

#### **WAS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU HADN'T ANTICIPATED?**

In a big IT project, new issues arise every day that no one has thought about. It's a matter of how you handle these issues. I've never been in doubt about where we were going. We always managed to figure out who could help us move forward, or how we could solve our challenges together.

#### **WHICH ELEMENTS WERE IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT?**

GE's commitment, the project managers, the

#### **Five helpful tips**

- 1 Make sure that you have access to decision-makers
- 2 Have good contact with your supplier
- 3 Get the resources you need
- 4 Make a plan based on the final objectives
- 5 Structure the tasks in a way that makes sense





### Who's Who

Name: Helen Holdt  
Age: 52  
Education: Master of Laws and PhD in law, MBA, PRINCE2 certification

Helen Holdt comes from the financial sector, and projects include a two-year project for Pohjola Bank in Finland to implement a new system for trading securities, from trading to back office.

steering committee and the project room. In relation to the steering committee, what's fundamental to every project is that it is able to stay on course despite difficult decisions. Here the steering committee's extremely competent chair, Jens Møller Birkebæk, played a central role. I cleared difficult decisions with him, after which either he or I discussed them with the other members if there was anything that needed to be clarified.

The steering committee had a good understanding of the business and the deliverables, and was good at handling difficult challenges, which is also central to every project.

### WHAT DID THE PROJECT ROOM MEAN FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING?

People sat in the project room when they were working on the project. It quickly filled up with posters of integrations, the platform and work packages, which we used in different ways. For example, we wrote the names of the individual deliverables on the work packages poster, along with their status and when they were scheduled to land. From the beginning,

we used these posters to communicate how far we had progressed. Having them hanging in the project room really helped the project group communicate.

In addition, one of our minimum requirements was that the French supplier GE had to be present and participate in testing in the project room along with us every time they delivered a work package that was ready for testing.

All of the project participants came to like the project room, and after a couple of months, it was functioning as the primary tool in relation to our ability to work together and make what we were doing visible.

### WHAT OTHER TOOLS DID YOU USE TO CREATE AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT?

SharePoint for gathering documents in one place, and Energinet.dk's intranet.

### THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY?

The usual challenges, such as: getting enough resources allocated; getting people to work together instead of passing the ball; getting the right resources at the right times – both

from Energinet.dk and GE. The latter problem mostly applied to us, but it's very common in this type of project.

For example, it took a little time to get Energinet.dk's staff down to the project room, but it was important for communication and cooperation in the entire project group (Energinet.dk and GE). If you only communicate by mail, you lose valuable information and time. If it takes more than two or three mails to clarify something, it's time to pick up the phone or sit down together. ●

## The project manager's final report

In Helen Holdt's final report, she describes the guidelines that were established during the analysis phase and which were implemented early in the project (However, the fall back strategy was developed at the beginning of the process of establishing a cutover strategy.):

### FOCUS AREAS IN RELATION TO STRATEGY AND THE MINIMIZATION OF RISKS

- Internal steering committee with few but strong managerial profiles
- External steering committee with strong GE profiles
- Project room to bring together resources working on the project
- Project organization to break down the classic boundary between business & IT
- Agile project method
- Focus on quality requirements and testing
- Fall back strategy for cutover (system transition)
- Freeing up internal resources.

### THE ALL-IMPORTANT PROJECT ROOM

Helen Holdt writes:

"For every project of a certain size, it is very important to have a physical place where the participants in the project can meet. Considering that some of the primary internal resources could only be allocated on a part-time basis, a project room was an absolute and obvious necessity." With the help of the steering committee, the project was allocated 'SCADA Hut'. While it took a few months for all of the project participants to comply with the strategy that the work was to be performed in SCADA Hut, once the routine was established, it became a great asset in relation to ensuring progress in and collaboration on the project activities.



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ALL OF THE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE OF BEST PRACTICE CENTER ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING. IN THE ARTICLE ABOUT OUR MERGER, YOU'LL FIND OUT HOW PRODATA CONSULT BENEFITS FROM OUR ACCESS TO THE LATEST TECHNICAL AND BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE FROM OUR CONSULTANTS AT HOME AND ABROAD. WE ARE HAPPY TO SHARE OUR KNOWLEDGE WITH OUR CLIENTS. AND SO WE ASKED THREE OF OUR PROJECT MANAGERS TO SHARE THEIR PERSPECTIVE ON HOW THEY HANDLE KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN THE COURSE OF THEIR WORK.

# “They need to feel like part of an overall plan”

*Christian Jaspers, acting CEO*

## WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON RIGHT NOW?

At Bolighed, which is about making being a homeowner in Denmark easier and more transparent, we're constantly working on new functions for our users. It's a data-driven website where you can find a lot of information about homes for sale and homes that might be for sale – which is our own product where you can test the market for your own home. You can also check the estimated market value of all homes that aren't for sale, take the temperature of the market, the relative bargaining power of buyers and sellers, an index for the most attractive locations and much more.

## HOW DO YOU HANDLE KNOWLEDGE SHARING WITHIN THE TEAM?

Our basic tool is Jira, which means that everyone can follow along with the whole project while staying focused on their own tasks at the

**“We chose a light version with knowledge sharing and process management that gives you the flexibility for self-organization within the team. This is what gives the best results.”**

*Christian Jaspers*

same time. The ten members of the team are all consultants, and they've tried a lot of different tools, but Jira was the best fit for our case.

We can streamline the entire workflow and split it up into feature development, improvements and so on. We have the entire history of the project on a shared platform where we



## Who's Who

Name: Christian Jaspers  
Age: 48  
Title: Acting CEO

Christian has primarily worked with online project management, development and startups and has many years of experience from companies including SAS and Gorm Larsen & Partners.

can assign tasks, run sprints and generally speaking work in an agile way using Scrum terminology and methods. You can decide whether you want to use Jira in a looser way or very strictly and by the book. We chose a light version with knowledge sharing and process management that gives you the flexibility for self-organization within the team. This is what gives the best results.

The drawback with Jira is that it can do an in-

sane number of things. You have to invest time and resources into using it right, into educating and training people and insisting that everyone use the program. It took us two or three months to get to the point where we could use the Jira properly – including on a mental level. Just like with every other kind of IT, things don't happen by themselves. But being forced to work in a different way than you usually do is also a strength. At first, I was a little skeptical

about Jira, but the program integrates both vertically and horizontally, and I think it's worth the time we've invested.

#### WHAT OTHER FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING DO YOU USE?

We use stand-ups when we need to, which are also part of the Scrum package, as well as weekly spring planning/review meetings. We also use Slack, which integrates with Jira. We have different channels or chat forums we use for knowledge sharing that everyone has access to. Jira runs on its own channel through Slack, but we also have other channels like 'Ideas', 'General' and a one-to-one chat for specific tasks. Slack is a good supplement to

Jira that takes care of day-to-day operational knowledge sharing, for example if you can't get something to work or there's a bug, files need to be uploaded, and so on.

#### WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU DEALING WITH IN YOUR CURRENT PROJECT?

The eternal challenge when it comes to knowledge sharing: not everyone needs all the details about everything. But everyone needs to understand the overall strategy. They need to feel like they're part of an overall plan and to know what the goal of the project is. So it's about balance, as with everything else. Sometimes we get the balance right, and other

times you spend too much time on the system and too little time on the work.

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING?

Giving the team the optimal conditions for performing their work in the best possible way, so that they get the most out of our resources and don't have to wait for each other. If my team has the right level of knowledge and participation in things, I also get happier employees. At the same time, of course, it's also fun to be part of a project like Bolighed, which is an innovative, disruptive project that fills a gap in the market. ●



#### Who's Who

Name: Mads Juul Jacobsen  
Age: 41  
Title: Senior project manager  
Education: MSc in economics

Works primarily in the financial and public sector. Among other projects, Mads has worked with software development and hard-core infrastructure projects at PFA, Topdanmark and KPMG.

## Most important project management tool: a notebook

*Mads Juul Jacobsen, senior project manager*

#### WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT?

I was technical project manager for a project to establish self-service border control at Copenhagen Airport.

There were several project managers, and some of us left the project before the final conclusion. This made knowledge sharing between the remaining project managers and myself extremely important, so that the loss of knowledge didn't grow too large.

#### WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO AVOID THE LOSS OF KNOWLEDGE?

I made sure that the remaining tasks were described clearly on a board where all tasks are described on PostIt notes with estimated time use and order of completion. Everyone can see what still needs to be done here and how things are connected. That's my approach – I make sure that everything is visible, and preferably on boards or walls.



**HOW DID YOU HANDLE KNOWLEDGE SHARING ALONG THE WAY?**

Normally, I share knowledge internally in the project, but this time there were almost only external people. To make sure that all their knowledge didn't disappear along with the project people after the end of the project, we needed regular meetings with the people who were going to take over after us to get them up to speed about the structure, the code and the architecture.

**YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS 'OLD SCHOOL'.  
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?**

People get and send plenty of emails, so I walk around a lot so that I can have daily contact with the project participants. So I bring a notebook along that I use to keep track of my tasks. On the right-hand side, I have my tasks, and on the left-hand side I categorize them as urgent/not urgent, important/not important. This gives me a good overview of what I need to deal with on a given day, which also reduces my stress levels: If I deal with everything marked as 'urgent' and 'important', it doesn't matter about the rest.

I move the tasks I don't get to the next page. Sometimes my to-do list covers several pages, and then I know that I'm too busy.

It's also a good way to talk to people, because pen and paper seem less formal than when you're standing there with an iPad.

**WHAT TOOLS DO YOU PREFER – IN ADDITION TO A NOTEBOOK?**

OneNote. I used PostIt notes for a while, but you can't always have those with you. But even though I try things out on the pc, I always come back to my notebook. It works, so why spend energy on trying to find a new solution that might be just as good? However, it's a disadvantage that I only have the one book. I'd like to find a cloud-based solution, so that I could have it on multiple platforms. It would be convenient to be able to see it on my phone on the days I don't have it with me at a meeting.

**HOW MUCH EMPHASIS DO YOU PLACE ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING?**

Knowledge sharing is an incredibly important part of the day-to-day work on a project. It's easier to succeed if everyone has an understanding of a shared direction and connections – and how the individual task fits into the big picture. I'm a great believer in agile processes, and I hold daily morning meetings where each participant has five minutes to sum up the work of the previous day, what they're doing today, and what challenges they're experiencing. The testers get to hear how things are going with the software development, and the developers know if the testers can't keep up. The team functions better, and if you hear that one of your co-workers is having problems this week, you're more inclined to lend a hand. If a tester is at the airport or in a different time zone, I hold video meetings. In my experience, things just work out best if you can explain and sketch things out. As one of the developers said, you think best when you're standing in front of a whiteboard together. ●



# "I spend a lot of time trying to understand how knowledge comes to me"

*Louise Gewecke Kristensen, transition project manager*

## WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON RIGHT NOW?

I'm working on a project for the central IT department of the Danish National Police, where I'm responsible for planning the physical and organizational relocation of a police unit. The project consists of six different tracks, and I'm responsible for the IT track. It's a politicized project with a short deadline, which is a challenge for risk assessment and quality, especially because it includes a partial relocation of personnel and equipment.

Knowledge sharing in the project takes place between the client's internal resources and the police unit that's being relocated, as well as the new network that will service the police unit. My role is to let these stakeholders contribute their knowledge, which I then collect and share in a script.

"I try not to interfere in factual knowledge. If I make certain assumptions, I take the specialists' work from them"

*Louise Gewecke Kristensen*

## WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN RELATION TO SHARING KNOWLEDGE?

It's a very broad project, so tasks and knowledge have to be coordinated across the six tracks. You have to constantly consider whether a decision affects the other tracks, which is difficult to figure out in the context of such a large project. Though it might seem unimportant that a project manager changes a relocation from the second day of the month to the first day, this has to be communicated widely, because it's another project manager's job to hire movers and set up tables.

## HOW DO YOU TACKLE THAT CHALLENGE?

I spend a lot of time trying to understand how knowledge comes to me, how much should be communicated to others, and who specifically needs that knowledge. People shouldn't be bombarded with information. It's about finding a balance. My approach is

to write weekly status reports, and include all relevant information in a bullet list. If an item on the list is relevant to someone, they can ask for more detailed information. I send this status report by mail to get it out quickly and to reach a broad audience, but I also hold status meetings every other week in my track that include employees from both organizations.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING?

Even though I know a lot about IT, I try not to interfere in factual knowledge. If I make certain assumptions, I take the specialists' work from them, and this is one of the greatest pitfalls for a project manager in my view. My job is not to tell them what to do. It's to clear obstacles from their path so they can do their job. This approach brings out the best in the specialists: Their job is not simply to perform a task, it's to think about what's the best solution for the organization.

## HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR KNOWLEDGE UP TO DATE?

I make an effort to find time for a course at least once a year, because this is where I get a lot of my new knowledge. I also gain new experiences from my work, because all projects are implemented in different ways. After each task I complete, I update my own templates so that I can reuse them later on.

## WHAT NETWORKS ARE YOU PART OF?

I have a group of colleagues from ten years back. All of them have worked with project management, and some of them are managers today. We meet a couple of times a year, and often invite someone to give a talk. Most recently, I heard Stephan Jensen speak about change projects. At another talk I attended, we were shown an exercise you can use if there's a bad atmosphere at a project: the participants all say something positive about each other and put a PostIt note on each project group member for each comment. This gives a project group a good boost. I also keep up with some of the consultants I've worked with on different projects. We meet for a beer or a bike ride and talk about where we're at and what challenges we have. ●

## Who's Who

Name: Louise Gewecke Kristensen  
Age: 37  
Title: Transition project manager

Twelve years of experience as project manager and manager. Has experience in starting new units as a manager, but now works primarily with IT and transition.