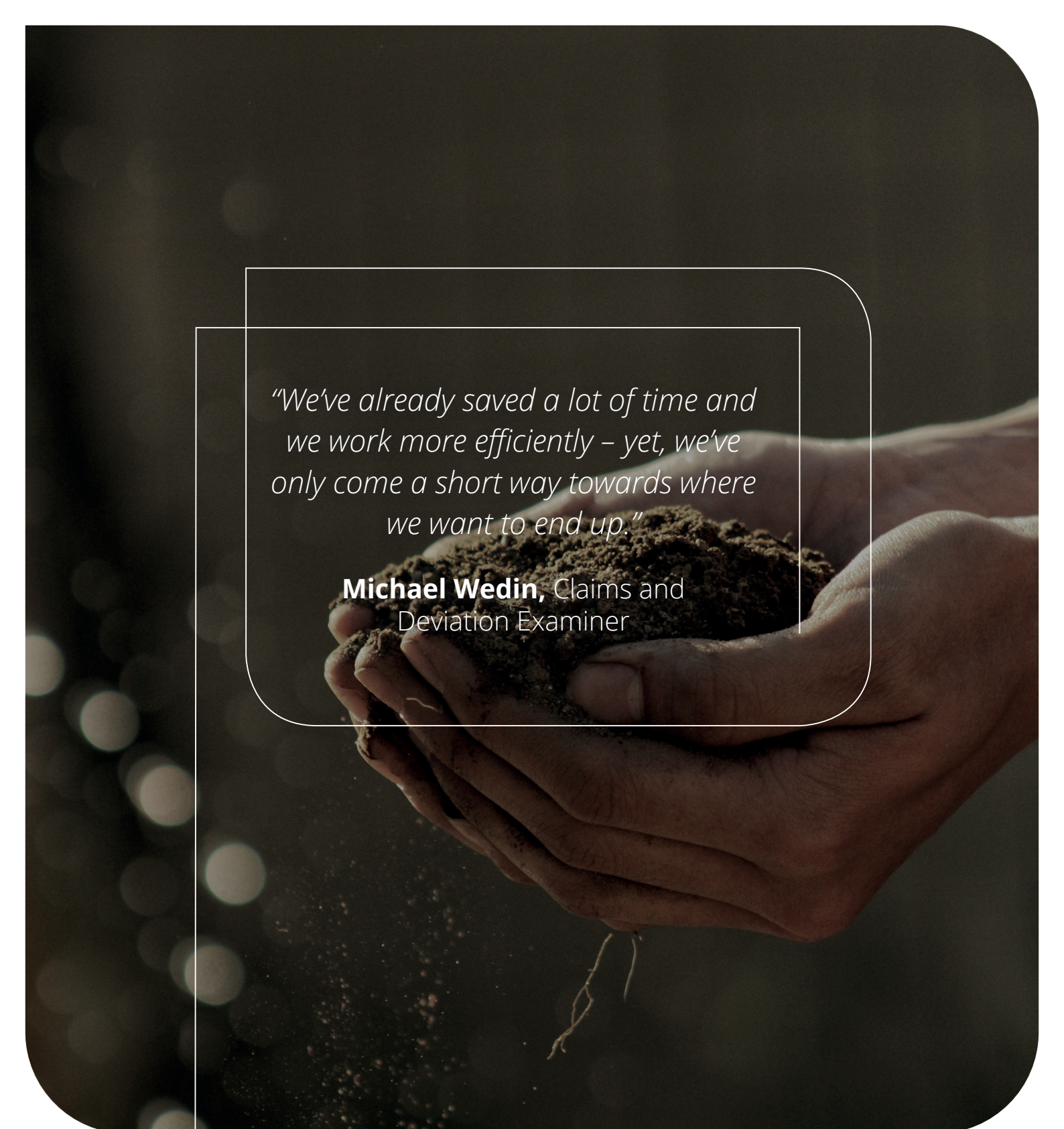


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user stories

Granngården



"We've already saved a lot of time and we work more efficiently – yet, we've only come a short way towards where we want to end up."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

GRANNGÅRDEN

ETABL.1880

Founded back in 1880, Granngården, is a well-established company. The company offers products and services primarily for agriculture, gardening, pets and the home. More than 100 retail outlets are situated around the country. Granngården also offers e-commerce to its customers.

About 800 employees work towards offering quality products that promote a more down-to-earth lifestyle to its customers.

Granngården – **transforming** its claims handling

THE CHALLENGE

Like many other companies in the retail sector, Granngården has focused on making shopping easier for its customers by creating digital-contact surfaces. The challenge for companies that both manufacture and sell goods is to keep the same pace when it comes to internal modernization and digitalization. This was also a challenge that Granngården identified, and first on the list was dealing with claims handling.

“We try to make it as easy as possible for the customer, but then we tie our hands internally.”

Ake Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

Granngården had an established process for claims handling. The big challenge, however, was to make that process work. The employees created templates in Excel to cover gaps among existing systems. Soon, however, Granngården, just like other companies having tested similar solutions, discovered new problems arising. It became harder to follow up on cases and this led to lost revenue as they weren't compensated accordingly by suppliers. The lack of correct data also resulted in incorrect decision support.

“Even though the work is done manually, there's normally a common theme. The problem is the step departing from that process is not that far - especially when it comes to a process such as claims handling.”

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

THE NEED FOR A SOLUTION

Manual work steps are a time thief in most organizations. Granngården is no exception. Although a clear work process was in place, the existing system could not cover every part. Consequently, gaps were closed with tools, such as spreadsheets, e-mails and phone calls. In the case of spreadsheets, it was often a matter of being able to patch the figures together as best as possible in order to report these to suppliers.

“Of course, there were several different areas that could be made more efficient but we identified the claims process as the most important. We had already structured this purely theoretically and it would save a lot of time for the employees in the stores. Previously, about 60% of all claims were registered and with a simpler process, this figure could be improved quickly.”

Ake Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

At the same time, there was no common theme throughout the process because the various departments worked in silos, with no functioning handover of cases or data shared. The difference between how it would actually go and how it was actually implemented was, at times, huge. The result was an enormous amount of administrative work and conflicts among departments and stores – both of which could have been avoided.

“With a new claims process in place, we hope that all departments will have a greater understanding of their part in the process and that together, we will handle all claims with less friction among the departments at Granngården.”

Ake Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development



Another important reason why Granngården began to look for a new system was their wanting to be able to anticipate and plan the claims processes to a greater degree. This was missing, which led to unnecessary stress and extra work. If a product is mentioned in a claims, it's important to be able to create a signal list already at an early stage to stop selling it. With better planning, you can create the conditions for qualitative follow-up.

THE TRANSFORMATION – FROM MANUAL TO AUTOMATED

The process has not been a revolutionary one: it still involves similar steps and the same people. What has changed is the working methods applied. Granngården has made its processes more structured and has replaced manual elements with digital ones. Above all, it has collected everything on one and the same platform – data that previously ended up outside the systems.

QUALITATIVE DATA GIVES RISE TO FOLLOW-UP

What Granngården identified as challenging was the quality of the data. In the past, the lack of a coherent work process with system support resulted in lost or often poor-quality data. It could be that, for example, an article number was missing or even the reason for the claims. With Barium Live, Granngården succeeded in including all the data and ensuring its quality.

“Now we have quality-assured data – previously impossible for us in the old process.”

Ake Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

Granngården, a company that both produces and sells goods – known as a manufacturing retail hybrid – has, as such, ongoing contact and follow-up with a number of suppliers. Previously, the lack of correct information in claims handling meant that compensation from the supplier was more difficult to obtain.

“Without this quality assurance of data from Barium Live, we'd still be at the same level of compensation for claims from our suppliers. It gives us an enormous sense of security to know that the data which we base our follow-up on is now correct.”

Ake Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

Improvements haven't just been seen in internal work and communication. Transparency to customers having submitted a product for repair or service, is like night and day.

“It's been a time thief, both for the staff in the stores and us in customer service, assisting customers with information about their ongoing issue. Even though we launched this application about two months ago, we can already see a shift in the type of cases that come in, and we can do so much more at the same time.”

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

A concrete example of success since Barium Live was implemented is the increase in the number of claims received by customer service. Previously, a large number of claims never even reached customer service! This gap has now been closed.



WHY BARIUM?

A main reason why Granngården chose Barium Live was the flexibility and speed that low-code technology offers. As a manufacturing retail hybrid, Granngården needs to respond to changes in a fast-paced industry. This means being able to quickly change existing working methods and act together as an organization.

Furthermore, independence was a crucial factor in choosing a system. Granngården understood that after just a few training sessions, they could take ownership of the development.

“Something that was important to us when we chose a supplier was having clear ownership of the internal development. After a few training sessions, we’re actually there. We work on the platform ourselves and streamline the entire business.”

Åke Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

Another important advantage of Barium Live is that the platform creates improvements in both IT and the business. It gives the business a mandate over its own working method while IT is involved in validating the business applications that are developed. This allows the business to be faster. They get the support they need and the IT department, instead of putting out fires, can see to more value-creating tasks.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

It is tempting for companies to try and solve shortcomings in work processes with tools they already have. In Granngården’s case, Office 365 was being used. True, it offers variety and excellence in certain areas, but it cannot solve everything. This was something that Granngården identified early on as a critical factor in the claims-

handling process. For example, one of the brake pads that occurred via Power Apps were the start-up costs. At the same time, there were other challenges, such as the re-use of functionality or modules in one application that could not be transferred to another.

“Barium Live is simply a much better alternative than, for example, Power Apps for this particular application. With Barium Live, we got started quickly and can easily reuse much of the logic in the application. The choice to go ahead with Barium was therefore not particularly difficult.”

Åke Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development

Granngården also checked out whether other, more niched systems could be a solution but found that often, they were too limiting and rigid. A niche system that comes directly from the product shelf is excellent in a certain area, but falls short as soon as adaptations are required or a new area needs to be reviewed.

“In our case, it became enormously clear that implementing a platform that functions as a kit instead of a finished system was so much more valuable.”

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

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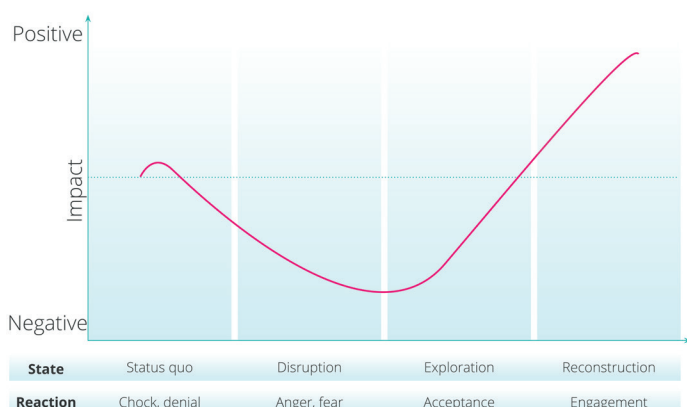


IMPLEMENTATION

The time from idea to being up and running, and using a business application varies, depending on the complexity. In Granggården's case, it took about 4-5 weeks to have a new way of handling claims in place. To put the complexity in context, they also developed an application to facilitate communication between customer service and the stores. That application took only a couple of hours to develop and about a week of validation and testing before being able to put it to use.

The big challenge in implementing a new system isn't always the system or platform itself that sets hooks. Rather, it means a change for employees and in their everyday work. We all differ in how we accept change – there are those who want to fall back to old habits.

Two months have passed since the application was implemented at Granggården. It's still considered to be at a relatively early stage in the Kubler-Ross change curve. What has changed is that previously, a person worked on a case until it was closed. Now, several cases run in parallel and one person carries out a part of the process before handover to the next person.



EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

With new ways of working and a new platform for future improvement work also come expectations. Above all, it is the logic in the platform that is the decisive factor in Granggården appreciating the platform so much.

"It's a very competent platform in terms of logic. There are always areas that we, as a customer, think can be improved. Overall, we're incredibly satisfied that it meets all our expectations."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

In addition to the logic, it's also the flexibility that constitutes a strength for Granggården. If they encounter a problem, there is almost always a way to get around it. It's also a key to why they can be so quick-footed and agile in responding to changes internally or in the market at large.

Something they previously struggled with was quality assurance of information. With the help of dynamic and compelling forms in Barium Live, they now have a completely different prerequisite for collecting information in a qualitative way.

"Digital process automation (DPA) is incredibly powerful in collecting data. It should be hard to make mistakes – and that is the case with Barium."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner



Communication plays an essential role in the processes. It's not uncommon for two individuals to do so via email or phone. The challenge here is the high, personal dependence that's created; one that's fragile if an employee becomes ill or quits and someone needs to take over the work tasks. Without further transparency, the situation becomes immediately problematic. By elevating competence, knowledge and communication, from the individual into a common workspace, these challenges can be addressed in a completely different way.

"Instead of checking permissions at the individual level, we now do so at a group level. This means we can always cover for each other and mitigate personal dependence."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

RESULTS

Just two months of Barium Live up and running, Granngården has already witnessed major changes and savings. Earlier, they were forced to spend much working time following up on incomplete information and administrative tasks. That time has now been significantly reduced, both in feedback to suppliers and communication with the stores.

"Already now, we can say that we've saved a lot of time and we work more efficiently – yet, we've only come a short way in towards where we want to end up."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

As a manufacturing-retail hybrid, there is great focus on the customer experience and on different strategies about how the proportion of returning customers should increase.

It's a competitive market with several players in the same segment. Claims is an area that is very central to the customer experience and the transparency of that process can be decisive as to whether the customer comes back or chooses a competitor for the next purchase.

"Those dealing in post-sales are better equipped to handle claims today. We have total transparency of the process, which we can also communicate to the customer and stores."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

Granngården has also initiated work, using the data contained in Barium Live for decision support. This is done via integration with a business-intelligence (BI) tool that retrieves data from Barium Live – serving as a basis for reports and requirements for suppliers. The expectation is that it'll be used to a greater extent in other parts of the organization. As the information includes the proportion of claims per article, supplier or customer, the areas of application are potentially many – Granngården only has to identify which.

"We've circled the data that should be interesting for the claims process in particular and this is something we'll do in all applications we build in Barium Live. This is to be able to make decisions based on current data and create clarity in the follow-up."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

It is not just about quality-assured data, follow-up of KPIs or other hard values. It's about changing working methods that affect the everyday lives of individuals.

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"I don't feel I have the same job anymore. Before, I mostly sat and administered incoming and outgoing cases. Now, it's much more about development and innovation. I enjoy my job more and am really super happy with the shift it has brought."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

NEXT STEPS FOR GRANNGÅRDEN

Just like when the claims process was identified as low-hanging fruit, another similar process has now been called upon – return handling.

When novelties are implemented in an organization, they rarely go unnoticed. Most recently, the department in charge of quality and the environment has shown interest in having its current working methods reviewed for streamlining. They've identified, for example, the area concerning revocation and ARN (The National Board for Consumer Disputes) cases. Even if the inflow of cases in these processes is not major, it's nevertheless crucial to ensure the quality of the data collected. Part of a group to create more cohesive working methods within the group, Granngården presented its claims-handling work to Norwegian colleagues at Felleskjøpet.

Granngården has also opened its eyes to robotic process automation (RPA) to complement Barium Live in further automating the business. Hopes for this initiative are high.

"When we combine Barium Live with an RPA platform, we'll probably mostly roll our thumbs."

Michael Wedin, Claims and Deviation Examiner

Hyper automation (HA) – i.e. combining DPA, RPA and Artificial Intelligence (AI) – is another area Granngården is interested in looking into.

"The fun and very exciting thing about HA is that it'll no longer be 1 + 1 + 1, but rather 1 + 4 + 8. The exchange is potentially enormous and we look forward to sinking our teeth into that project."

Michael Wedin, Reklamations och avvikelseutredare

Granngården has an incredible number of exciting projects, visions and initiatives ahead to ensure quality assurance, work efficiency and their future in general. It will be extremely exciting to see what they come up with and we wish them the best of luck in their automation journey!

"Now we have quality-assured data – previously impossible for us in the old process."

Åke Wallin, Process Manager, Business Development