PODIO

Implementation story
UUUC

UUUC is the central secretariat for the **49 Youth Education and Career Guidance Centers** across Denmark.

Created in August 2010, its goal is to **enhance knowledge sharing** and learning across centers throughout the country. Up until this point our centers had been operating without a common **extranet** or tool for sharing knowledge, information and experiences.

At the formation of UUUC, I was evaluating whether to build or buy an extranet solution for sharing knowledge across the centers.
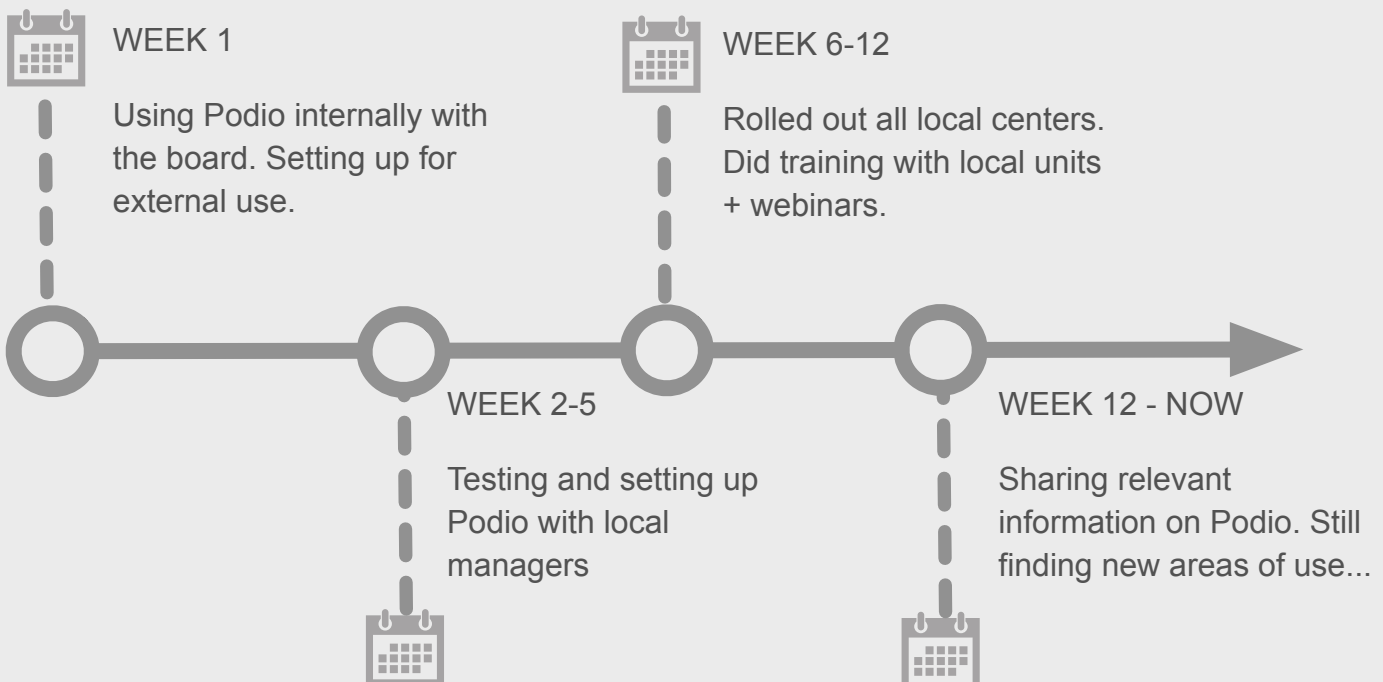
Then I came across Podio.

Pia Vigh, Head of Secretariat, UUUC

UUUC
Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejlednings Udviklingscenter

☑ Getting started

☑ Setting up

☑ Training

☁ **Sharing knowledge across the organization**

📅 **WEEK 1**

Using Podio internally with the board. Setting up for external use.

📅 **WEEK 6-12**

Rolled out all local centers. Did training with local units + webinars.

WEEK 2-5

Testing and setting up Podio with local managers

📅

WEEK 12 - NOW

Sharing relevant information on Podio. Still finding new areas of use...

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✓ Getting Started

We started out using Podio internally with the board at a very early stage and we really liked it. We use Podio exclusively (together with the Office suite) internally.

However, we saw a much larger potential in Podio and decided to try to get all the 49 centers on board, creating a common platform for the first time in our organization's history. After getting positive feedback for the idea from the local managers around the country we initiated a test group with the 49 local managers and us in the board.

✓ Setting up

During the 4-week test period, we went through the structure in **one space**, to make sure it was right before launching. We created somewhat **similar spaces** for each of the 5 regions as well to encourage local knowledge sharing and project initiation.

When we launched Podio internally we were experimenting as we went. We saw Podio as a solution to a lot of the challenges we were facing with sharing information and knowledge across these geographically spread centers, whereas many of our users, the counselors saw Podio as just "*another tool*" rather than a substitute to existing ones.

For people to **see the need** for Podio, we wanted to get it right the first time around. To make Podio *the* place to go to for information, we added a lot of **resources** to the apps and **instructions** to make it easier to understand where to find and add resources. After we had tested the set-up with the local leaders for 4 weeks, we invited the network –more than 1000 people.

"Before people know what Podio is, they need a reason to go log in. Sharing important information exclusively in our Podio spaces, we managed to create this need."

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✓ Training

Our case is probably very different than for most others' on this aspect. We couldn't just call everyone into a meeting and get started from there. We had more than 1000 people around the country, most of whom we'd never met, who we needed to log on to Podio and see the benefit of doing so on a regular basis. It demands quite some effort.

Our web developer Niels traveled around to many of the local centers to do training with the people there. We'd made a manual and a quick video of how to use Podio with the structure we had set up. This was of great help to many as it was very specific for our use.

> *"A lot of these people don't even know Facebook. Now they're logging in to Podio on a regular basis to find relevant information and join discussions."*

Equally important to training people in how to use Podio, was **communicating the need for logging in.** From the beginning we intentionally shared important information only on Podio to urge this need. When our members first logged in to find this information, they saw all the other discussions etc. that are taking place in our Podio workspaces and some started new discussions or joined existing ones. We've also started to set up some **local workspaces** to manage projects, which makes Podio even more important in their everyday life.

Another huge benefit we see with Podio is when there is **turnover** in the organization. We have a new generation of leaders coming up soon and rather than starting from scratch, they will find all previous material and discussions that used to take place in emails, on Podio.

> *"For the first time, everything is now shared in one place and everyone has the same information at the same time. No more mass emails and information silos!"*

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✓ Looking back

It took a lot of effort from Niels and myself, but we see that Podio is gradually connecting our 1000+ student counselors across the country for the first time!

Getting all the local leaders on board for the testing period before we launched was critical, but we could have pushed the leaders even harder.

Everyone agreed that it was a great idea to use Podio and confirmed the need for a knowledge-sharing platform, but there's a step from that to actively participating.

My tips to people using Podio as an extranet is:

- Don't underestimate the need for direct interaction with people

- Clarify the intentions of the leaders/managers and get their commitment to share and participate actively on Podio –Take ownership.

Inform people what Podio is and how it will help them before inviting them