

Interview with D1

Q: Please note that this interview is being recorded and your answers are being transcribed for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that the your personal data will be anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by your name, but would either be identified by your job role or your job responsibilities. And this interview is designed to gather your insight and expertise on digital innovation activities, and the rental equipment industry. Could you please introduce what you do in Riwal?

A: Yes, so, I am the digital innovation specialist at Riwal, which is a rental company focused on providing jobs at height. So we mainly rent out equipment like aerial work platforms, telehandlers, sometimes cranes as well. So I work at the digital IT department. And with the focus on digital products we have so together with my manager, we develop digital tools which we can use, or which our customers or external stakeholders can use to work with Riwal. And our focus is now mainly on providing digital tool, which our customers can use to rent out equipment, or rent equipment and, and monitor their equipment in the sense that they can track the usage of our machines, running our co2 emissions, locations, etc. And the idea is to extend that that platform in the coming months. So basically, besides developing tools, we are also always in research of where the market is heading. So we tried to come up with more disruptive technology, innovations and technologies. To become the digital leader in our industry. That's the ambition we have currently, we are not an IT company, but we want to really become the digital leader and the rental industry. And from my department, that's what we try to facilitate with development of the digital tools.

Q: Since you're closely working with digital innovation and digital tools, what does the term digital innovation mean to you?

A: Yeah, I think looking at the our companies build, it means two things to me, like one we have, we have two different types of innovation speed, because we have a lot of we have a couple of mature countries, we which are already, really, we really have in high demand for digital solutions or destroy innovations, like Denmark and Netherlands. And we have a couple of other countries, we also have to take into account we are which are just aiming more for people who only want to rent a machine for one day and just want the ever easy and quick fix. And they are not really eager for digital innovation. So we have to serve both innovation speeds. So in one way, it means that we regarding digital innovations, what it means to me is that for the for the for the lower speed, we just need to facilitate that they have an easy platform to work with, which is fast and stable. or Now we'll call the platform but just a digital solution in general. And at the other end, for the more mature country, we'd like to work more disruptive, and try to look into emerging technology which we can convert into tools our customers go work with.

Q: All right, since there are so many innovation activities that you're a part of, how are these innovation activities and processes managed within your organization?

A: Yeah, it's actually being managed. I think we just we're now going into transition. So the methodology we're using to develop these, these solutions are by Agile and Scrum, to Scrum, like the specific scrum methodology. So, yeah, we tried to manage that by keeping the whole holding into account. So what makes the most impact for every country, not just for one or two countries? So that's always the first criteria we have. And the second thing is that we look at is it more is it actually something new or old world enhance the customer experience is actually new. Together with the new ambition we have to become the digital leader. That should always go first. But he said is really since we have a lot of operational challenges at the moment. We have to I managed to expedite our

own expectations in that sense. So we can try to be disruptive and really innovative. But you see that we don't have the people to carry our ideas, because we always have to we, we develop the idea at HQ, but we have to roll it out in the countries themselves, and then the people there have to be the owner of the solution. But we don't have really the, the people at the moment to, to carry those tools with the knowledge and the expertise to train other people. And so we have to be a bit careful in that sense. So many regarding managing this, these solutions, we really need to focus on what can be done by the right by the people, like the human resources in this in this in this case, are really important to us. It's also sometimes also the back a bit.

Q: All right, given that Riwal will is a big organization in terms of rental equipment, industry, how do you think that your organization compares to the rest of the industry with the innovation solutions that the company is putting out?

A: Like a couple of years ago, I think five or six years ago, we were really ahead of the game, like really like take a look looking back at what we like the platform and the customer portal and app we already had at the time, there was no such losing biotic competition, but we got a bit lazy. And also in the meanwhile, we were in a transition of a new ERP system. So that also took all the resources of it and digital. And now you see that in that in those years, we were busy with the road of our up. Yeah, the other our competition is, as I say that is almost passing us at the moment. So I wouldn't say that we are not really ineffective anymore. Now that we are almost at the rollout of our new improved portal and platform, you see that we take a leap, a small leap again. But we need to be we shouldn't wait any more. We should always be in continuous improvement of these kinds of solutions. And always try to look more ahead like for what will the market demand in five or 10 years instead of looking at what they need today? And that's a bit of a mindset change that we have to go through? Yeah.

Q: And how do you think the industry's reception has been to these new digital solutions? Have you observed any trends or patterns while working with these solutions in this industry?

A: Yeah, I think it's all becoming more digitalized. Like I think everyone sees that. We are always in, in hardware and physical equipment. But you see that? Yeah, like improving and innovating and innovating your services is, is really focused on digitalization. And then regarding more monitoring data, a bit of E commerce, that's becoming more and more important, that's a really big challenge for rental companies in generally, and then you also think, for all of our at least we like a lot of customers come from the from the construction industry. And that's an I think, in a really can be really innovative industry, which is also always highly dependent on regulation. So you see that once new legislation comes in, or the need to, for example, need to reduce their carbon emissions by 50% in a certain year, that really accelerates the innovation process for the demand for those companies and that we need to serve that that needs. So we need to think ahead already and see what's going to happen in the coming years. And try to adapt our services as well. So I think technologies like robot are innovative in the in the scope of robotics or AR VR, circular building, those kinds of things will be really interesting to us. And that's mostly being driven by construction industry. All right.

Q: Is there any kind of process that your organization practices to prioritize different solutions or different digital innovation practices that are being planned out in the near future?

A: Not really. It's yeah, I would say it's really comes from a gut feeling. But just really, I really don't like it. But that's the way it goes. Now. Just to be honest, it's by sometimes being decided by business folks. So just raise your hand if you think this should be done first. But there's no qualitative data check, like or research. No validation with customers, or as we are we did in the past on those are I at least I did it. But that's not enough, I guess that was really focused on the two I'm developing, but it

should be more on the strategic level. And we aren't into the fundamental of doing this with customers. So we just set up a panel per country with, I think, five to 10 customers from different kinds of industries, okay, before maintenance, construction, aviation search, and we are going to work with those panels per country to do strategic sessions with them and try to come up with a roadmap for our own company based on their developments. And then we can say, Okay, this is what we see in the coming five to 10 years. And so there's the way we have to move forward with our innovations to keep up the pace and make sure that we offer the right tools. But that's, that's, that's a bit in transition so that you see that the structure is coming. But we are currently still about doing prioritizing with business folks, or people with the loudest voice or real gut feeling.

Q: And how is this current process that's been used working out for these solutions? Are they showing any progress improvements? Or is there nothing that's being mapped from what I hear you say?

A: I think the current hour currently do it or did it in the past with these business votes. And, and you always seem like these, these, these decisions are always made by the same kind of people the same organ, so they're fishing is always a bit narrow. It's yeah, there won't be any disruptive ideas coming in, if the if the same decision are always made by the same people. But see now that if we now that we are, at least within the digital team, we are trying to bring more structure and also evaluate our decision or validate our decisions with actual quality of the data and testing with customers. So one of the one of the methodology we use we're going to use is a B testing. So we're going to propose to the kinds of solutions to two groups of users. And then you see the we can measure the data in our in our in our in our system. And based on the what makes the most impact, that's what we're going to do. Yeah, or maybe we come up with a combined solution, or we go one specific route. And then we were actually more data driven and not making decisions based on our own assumptions, but really validating it with the data from our customers. So that will be an that's already in progress. And it's going pretty well, to see because it's already based now more on the youth on the data we have, you see the usage is increasing. And we get more new active users as well, which is the main goal for now.

Q: What do you think are the key factors for fostering or developing digital innovation tools? Given that your job role is a digital innovation specialist? So we again, what do you think are the key factors are important factors for developing digital innovation tools? Given that you're a digital innovation specialist of this organization?

A: Yeah, so that's, that's a bit of what I already mentioned. Like we have to deal with these two speeds. I think the for the first week. Like there's more innovating within the box, I would say that's that you track the data of what's currently happening, do a B testing, do qualitative user tests, which are what your customers are do workshops to, to see to understand what the context is their have to deal with and what is happening in their market. And based on that insight, you can just optimize your current your current solution that can that doesn't have to be only digital innovation, but can also be business innovation, for example. And then for the second spirit for, for the more complex countries, for the for the for the customers who are going to ask a lot more things from us. We need to look way more into the future and work more strategic, really try to map where the industry is going. So that we can also decide upon our own priorities. Okay, so in this five years, most of our companies have to deal with this new legislation. So we have to prepare ourselves for that. And 20 years, maybe some of these companies won't even exist anymore, because they're that industry like fossil fuels or something like that. They will there will be they will disappear at some point and they will transform it into a different company as well. But those kinds of strategic decisions based on the roadmap of our customers, that's something we need to we need to do and then we can also say

okay for this coming year is this or are going to be our priorities is the project that we're going to do that plan or the timeline we don't really have at the moment. Right?

Q: And you've already mentioned a few challenges that you go through when rolling out these solutions or even planning these solutions. But do you think there are more challenges that can happen while developing or rolling out these digital innovation solutions?

A: Yeah, so yeah, again, and like you said, the main thing now is the lack of people and the lack of the right expertise to do these kinds of things. Like you see that you, once you're developing these, these solutions, you will also be coming into a, into a tunnel vision, and you think that everyone immediately understands what this tool is about, they first need to be an expert. So you need to provide training. What we do now is we come over to the countries to sit down with them, do full day training, and do a lot of follow up sessions afterwards. So they really start owning the tool, we also push them to give the training to other people, so they become the full expert. And it works pretty well. I think that's the that's the first thing. The second thing is that you need to need to keep into account that you are dealing with different kinds of markets, different kinds of situations like in F in every country, you come from a different background, with some countries we come from the reward came from an acquisition or from a merger. Sometimes we only do sales over there instead of rental can also can also be the case. So we always try to come up with a universal solution for other countries. But that's actually not really possible. There is no one size fits all, although we try to make that. So we need to, we need to extract more data from the country so we can give them other solutions. Instead of just customizing it for them, we need to come up with maybe all different tools for Germany or for friends, instead of providing them the same platform with and then switching on or off some features. That's a different mindset. And that will take a lot more time as well. But we need to stop that thinking that we can provide a solution that fits all the countries or all and and I say that. So in that case, also, every user, because every user is also different.

Q: So from what we've said, so far, we know that the customers are more open to accepting these solutions, because the number of users accepting these solutions are increasing over time. But how's the response for these innovations been within the organization?

A: depends a bit on what country you come. You see, especially regarding digital innovation, like the more mature countries are really not even asking for it. They basically demanding it like we need this. Because otherwise, because our competition has this. And we don't need to keep up the pace. Otherwise, we don't have any USP unique selling point to provide to our customers. So and but for other countries that internally it's really a struggle, because they don't, they don't that they are more traditional and more conservative. They only still do it. Yeah, they will really traditional way of business. They say Yeah, but you can come over. But we already we already telling you we're not going to really Mark we're not going to push this, this system to our to our customer, we're not, we're not going to put a lot of resources in it. And you can say, Oh, well, it's important and the CEOs that will tell you to use it. But yeah, they need to carry that too, and that rollout and we cannot do that for them. So and we also still haven't fully figured out how to how to manage that. Like what we do now during the first initial steps want before the rollout to the cluster, all the people involved together like the country manager, the operational manager, commercial manager, to at least everyone is informed okay, this is what we need for you guys this whole these are the tasks you need to do this. So the person we need we think should do it. At this how much time it will take. So that's that whole process is more clear to them. That's the work pretty really pretty good, I would say. But then we need to be some kind of incentive for them to actually start using it to bring it to the customers. And sometimes that's BS, sometimes a bit jealous that you have to be strict and direct there. KPIs or use it, and then maybe add a bonus to it or change something in the organizational

structure. And that mechanism is not really researchers not really inflation. I really asked for it a couple of times like, Hey, can we set their game that they have KPIs or targets that they have to add a new X amount of users? Yeah, budget wise is really, really, really difficult. '

Q: All right, since the purpose of this research is to design a new process for digital innovation portfolio management, that will require a lot of change, how do you think your organization responds to change?

I think pretty well. Because we already have been through a lot of changes in the last couple of years. One major change with the new ERP system and now letting every country work fire the reward way, which is basically our philosophy how to provide safe and effective services. But I think the timing has to be right, I think a lot of people are really tired and a bit frustrated, since after the rollout, that ERP system is still not working well. And that's yeah, people are a bit cynic against digital in it at the moment. So I think what we have to do first to, to get them on board and to back us up is that we have to manage what we offer externally. So we always have to the customer should be the always of the highest priority, obviously. But also, we have to serve some internal stakeholders now like we, if we can make their life easier, and make their make the process more efficient. They don't have to do more devs do less manual activities, then we that's I think also something we have to do, like maybe divided to 80% of your time to develop External Tools, and then 20% For internal stakeholders. And then if you come to a major change, like managing a digital innovation portfolio, then it gets something be that they can back you up. And hey, these guys did this for us. So we will help them make this as success. All right.

Q: When designing the new process, what do you think that needs to be incorporated that is currently lacking and the process that's in place right now.?

A: I think a method to quickly evaluate the impact your innovation will make. And also that you at least have done the right research and have to look at the right data to make these decisions and prioritize the projects you want to do. Now it's just based on, as I already mentioned, who screams the loudest who is the biggest voice and it's usually someone one country manager or the CEO. And that's not the way it should work. Like they all they don't they don't really they don't really realize it. But they all they're always biased like they always have some, something that's more within their own scope. So they obviously they will think that's more important like everyone does. Same as I would say that my developing only digital products would be more important than the business process, for example. But we are employed because they are biased, and they are as they're due. And also due to the hierarchy. People always say, okay, then we're going to do that. But if you have to, and you have the mandate, and you agree with all these decision makers, that this is the tool we're going to use to evaluate how much impact our ideas will make, then there's no one that can disagree with that, because that's what you agreed upon that's within your business of winning your philosophy. And so I would say that's something we need to manage that fairly, and also making sure that we were doing the right things.

Q: What do you think needs to be taken from the current process like what is working in the current process that needs to be replicated again and the new process?

A: Well, what I think is, is nice is that like our focus is now a lot of on digital and it like regarding innovation or the new things we want to develop if you want to call it and real innovation or not. I don't know sometimes not really innovative, but at least it's something new for our company, you see a lot of collab between the business and IT, which I think is nice because then if only it will develop or digital will develop these solutions. You cannot guarantee that it's actually something that business needs because we are not in direct contact with the customers. And they are there you hear

all the feedback and stories from the countries to collect them after their mind. And if we propose an idea or an idea, they can, they can say, Well, that won't work, or that didn't work, because this will be here from the business. The only thing that is really, not really, what everyone has really has is that they heard one thing from one customer and then thinks it's for the for every customer we have. So they like they, they really, they initial they directly going into this tunnel vision. And then okay, this is what we need to this is what I read from this customer, we need to do this. We have no idea if the 99% of our customers will actually want that. And that's a bit of a mindset change that we all need to make, like, what makes the biggest impact for the entire group and not just for one particular customer, which maybe generates wealth turnover, but yeah.

Q: And how do you think if a solution or a process is developed and designed ng will? Would it be more generalizable to other companies working in the same industry? Or do you think it would be very unique just Riwal? because of previous way of working ?

A: think we are one of the few specialists within this field. We are competing more with generalists in the sense that they rent out all types of equipment. So to give an example, balls is one of our main competitors, but they also rent out mobile toilet, toilets, fences, drills, whatever. And I think that we are more specialized with relief with the focus on working on ICT. So we not only providing equipment, we also give advice. Sometimes already at an early stage in the project, we give advice and actually reconstruct the project because they want to work with our machines, which I think is really, really nice, really great stuff. And that's I think the vision of the whole company to become more of that real specialist like if you can have more complex projects, you will you which has some to do with working on hive, you will have you have to think about Riwal. And but that's also. So in that sense, I would say it can it can work for other companies, but we will make we have to we will have more focused on those kinds of customers and projects only for Alec forgot other competitions, who, for competitors who have who have a similar mindset. They don't want to be the generalists, but want to be a specialist and can maybe not only be on working on height, but it can be on different aspects of Yeah, sort of facilitating jobs, then it can be interesting. All right.

Q: That brings us to the end of this interview. But based on the questions that you've had, so far, do you have any additional outputs or any questions that you have from your end?

A: I think now we, since we have migrated to the new ERP system that gives a really, really nice added value that we can extract data from every country because the data source are the same. So it's not it's not contained or anything like it's you can you can make your correlations and your annual data and as because that is all the same kind of data but just from a different country. I think that is great. And now, what we did as a follow up is that we create a lot of dashboarding with these for every country. So we already made a couple of commercial dashboards, measuring turnovers. And also can see a bit of tracking that over time. So you see trends and your time periods and seasons and such. But I think the next step was be like, Okay, what is the exact what are we going to do with this data? Like how are we going to convert it into actual innovations or so yeah, or just or maybe optimizing our business processes Like, we do a lot of movement with our, with our equipment and we moved from A to B. But you can we start optimizing that. That way of working by a really diving into that data, but you are not smart enough yet to do that. And I think that will also. If you converted in a smart way then you can. If you have some design, you have some couple of ideas and you say, OK guys, this the idea is we have. This is the data we see combining the two and this is the actual way we have to go. And I think that's uh, that we can manage that and we have really golden hands. So that's one thing to add.Yeah. Second thing is that uh, you see that now? UM, like I mentioned before, we are now in the transition of working more agile working scrum and I think within our own team who is familiar with who comes from a an A design background or a software

background. That's all for those kind of people. It's really easy for our team as well. But you see that if you are developing digital innovation on these new way new kind of methodologies? For, for, in, within and rental in a company who are more traditional, I think in, in, in general, for, the whole industry. It's a really big you. I really underestimated how much of an change that is for these kind of people like they. They have no idea what it is like, how to deal with it, how to prioritize stuff. They are, really they, they usually work with the waterfall method and they have they have the need for I want to have a planning from A to B and at this point you were going to launch these new features for example. And I said well in the meanwhile just we're going to work more iterative check. The data doesn't work. Yes or no don't look on abandon the idea. Where we're going to start optimizing it. It's for the especially for management are there and with beyond the digital IT . They it's, it's almost seems they hate it. Like they get no grasp on it. They don't have any control and that's really. Yeah. It's really also really fun to see because but they are really like, I don't know you're doing there and how does it work? Yeah, but we decided upon this. You're going to develop this and that. I don't know. I'm going to test this. And if it doesn't work, I'm not going to. I'm not going to continue the development of the of your idea because it's simply not what the customers want. Yeah, but yeah, I know what I wanted that. I see it in the data. They don't want it. And that's really. Yeah, but you see that the this is a new way of working and it scares a lot of people off. While we are getting more control because I am a firm believer that this is the way to go, because then you're actually working data driven and customer centric, but this which is also one of the ambitions we have.

Q: Like you said, the management is kind of reluctant to accept these new ways of working that facilitate the progress of innovation activities within the organization. Uh, how do you think that can be addressed in a way that's more acceptable to them?

A: Yeah, that's a good. I think you can do it in two ways. Uh, I think education is is key. Like you really explain how this methodology works. And also the uncertainty that comes with it like it's really a trial and error thing and they. Yeah, usually was we. We only going to do this if we have the strong belief that actually going to work. And now we are. We know it's something can. Maybe it doesn't work, but that's what we are really comfortable with. That said with that mindset, but they are not. So yeah, I think, uh, presenting them that the whole process like how we make decisions, why we sometimes continue with an idea and sometimes not that that should be there. Mm. And I think the second thing is that you just have an, an A mandate to also allow you to do that because. If you don't, then people are going to start messing again with your process and also the blocks to creativity.

The efficiency. And they are like they are people that don't. They want to have their say in, in, in your own process while they have no clue like they only see it maybe once in 1/4 and once you give them an update. But on the day to day basis, they have no idea and that should they also should not care about that. They should have to trust that. Uh, the people who actually managing that. Uh, who actually did training to manage that agile way of working as the background for it. And that they that they just let them be like and that's really. Yeah. And that you need to have that mandate like on just sounds a bit challenging maybe but yeah that's how it works. And then you can also say, well, this is what we agreed upon you. You should not interfere with our process. So yeah, I think that's yeah, in two ways. OK.

Q: Yep. So I have no further questions. And since the interviews come to an end now, going to stop the recording

Interview with D2

Q: Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project for Process design of improving the digital innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the transcripts would be used for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be pseudo anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by your name, but will be identified either by your job role or your responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather insight and expertise on the digital innovation activities and rental equipment industry, using the data collected. So this interview process structure and validation method would be designed to develop an innovation portfolio management system for new projects. And we're going to start off with the questions right now. So could you please introduce yourself with what you do at Riwal?

A: Yeah, so my role in Riwal HQ is I'm responsible for managing IT innovation. So that means the business side, our platform, MyRiwal, but also data integrations that we have with customers, and creating new solutions with customers on project.

Q: All right, since you're working so closely with digital innovation and digital innovative solutions for the rental equipment industry, what does the term digital innovation mean to you?

A: Yeah, it means that we are, we are a company that's able to be agile enough to move together with our customers and to do new, interested way of working together. So, yeah, innovation means for me, sharing data, be transparent and be flexible. So it's not only for me the outside, but also the inside, it's really important to be innovative.

Q: Okay, and how are innovation activities or processes managed within Riwal?

A: There's a lot of innovation in our company that's being done locally. So we are structured with 16 countries, and they, they have a lot of responsibilities. And then and they have an outer known role, they can decide a lot for themselves. There's really entrepreneurship but also there are efforts to make it scalable, and to also to share these practices. Yeah, there's that we are lacking there. So there's not really an a solid structure on innovations, we have an innovation boards but they like to follow up on existing projects. And not it's like really creating new opportunities. That's, that's come out of the field. So that's, yeah, we are we are lacking our structure.

Q: All right. And since you've been working here for a while, have you observed any trends or any patterns in digital innovation for the industry itself and not just for your company?

A: Yeah, so I think Yeah, so I think the most important thing in our in our business, in our industry is machine data and like to ensure that right people get the right solution. It is important to get this data and it's also scalable for your whole fleet or for the whole business and if it's there, then there's a high demand from our customer to, for example, connect operators do machines or to do other things on in the on the building side, so not only with our machines, but in general on transport or other suppliers. And I see that the industry is not ready for the demand and doesn't have the infrastructure to, to move together with, with this kind of, of opportunities.

Q: And my follow up question would be how the industry has been accepting these digital tools. But since you've already answered that, we're going to move on to the next question. And what kind of digital innovation tools or activities are coming out from your organization that is Riwal?

A: I think one of the biggest innovation is in MyRiwal platform it's on if you're looking from behind from a distance, it, it can be just like a platform. And, but in our business and our industry, it's really a game changer, because the lot of competition has something but they there's not the way we are doing it. So the platform allows us to be really transparent in the way we are operating to show not only data from invoices, but also show data from how we are performing. So I think the platform is. Yeah, it's creating a lot of new tools and new solutions that that makes us innovative.

Q: Okay, and how is this platform being rolled out or scaled up within your organization?

A: Yeah, so we, we created so with all the different counties, we have to create it spoke so contact persons that it's that are like the ambassador of the platform. So they do basically the, they are managing the rollout in the country, and we support them from HQ with all kinds of content and all kinds of, like, best practices to how they can do this in the country.

Q: Okay. And what kind of process the Riwal practice to prioritize different innovation projects?

A: Yeah, we, we have an Gantt chart, we have, like an overview of the projects. And once a while they are they're presented to the owner and to the management board. And after that, we are saying it's, it's a, it's a one project two project or three project, so we are prioritizing it. And then, yeah, then after our budget is it's known we are making decisions or which projects we can proceed with. So of course, the ones with priority one, they come first. And then if they're still money left, we do the second and a third.

Q: And do you think that with the process that you currently have there are any challenges or improvements that can be done to help innovation activities be better in your organization?

A: Yeah, I think we are really money driven with innovations. And I think that's, that's a really complex combination to really want to earn money in the in the in the first phase or so yeah, I think we are blocking a lot of good ideas, because we want to see your business case instead of and, and change in doing business.

Q: All right. And what do you think are important factors or important topics, while developing new digital innovation tools?

A: Yeah. From our side its leadership, I think we, if you if you don't have leadership in this, it's really hard to make progress. And the way people understand your vision or the intelligence of an innovation is that's really complex. So yeah, if you if you're presenting this, if you are, like, try to roll this out in the company, you have to make it really easy and to make it really understandable. And that's it as I think it's a complex combination with innovations.

Q: Okay, I see that. And how is your organization's response to change or accepting new processes or new changes within the company?

A: A lot of people, they want to, but they are kind of easygoing on change. Like, they see that we have to develop, we have to create new ideas. But I think our fundamental and, and also the, the problem that we have, and that we buy our product, and then rent it out, is that we are not owning the development of our product. So those parts are, yeah, are less flexible to innovate on so people are always open to discuss this because we don't have the resources or with the fundamental to make big steps.

Q: All right. And with regards to digital tools, like the MyRiwal platform, how has the response been to that tool? Outside the organization within your customer circles?

A: Yeah, really positive. So but it's yeah, it's especially the combination of that, that we believe in the in the two that we're selling it. So yeah, I think it's, it was a game changer on so many projects that they choose Riwal instead of the competition, because we had, we had such a nice tool

Q: And since this project is dealing with developing a new process for managing different integration activities. What do you think is lacking in the current process that your company is using?

A: Yeah, resources I think I think we have if we are having resources and leadership, it's it's doable, but if you if you have a management that's only looking at cost. Yeah, it's complex to make some sense.

Q: And with the new process, because sometimes there's always something nice about the old process that should be carried forward. So in the new process, what do you think should be taken into consideration from the old process?

A: Yeah, I think we are now right to control more based on the list on, like, progress on deadlines, etc. And I don't see that that's really positive for our for our innovation, because now it's getting a little bit more corporate and that combination, I think it's another really good one. All right. I need to be more open you need to be more Yeah, I don't know. To. Like, bro, projects like this you cannot approach on an old school. way like it, there's not an there are so many insecurities that that that you that you need to act in your project also a little, little a little bit less like a one structure with one vision need to be more open more flexible I think. All right.

Q: Just one final questions based on the questions that we've had so far. Do you have any other questions or additional inputs that I need to consider during this research projects that are probably missing out on in terms of designing a new process?

A: Yeah, I think good companies like we will you need to find a do that. That, that, that makes sure there's trust, there's stability, but also the room for, for creativity and for also not. Yeah, try. If you structured too much, if it's too much big brother's watching you it's, it's not going to work. So you need to find you need to connect people, the people that that that understand each other and have the same goal. And then try to create a platform that's also given the stability to do kinds of initiatives. So that's, that's I, I see it as a combination. So you need to create an environment that people like are creative and they you take them outside of their daily work because if you do try to get everything in this organization, I don't think it's going to work. All right. So there has to be a change in the way people communicate with each other and also where they are so in their own landscape in their own environment. I think you you can change a lot.

Q: All right. Thank you for all your answers. This one this to the end of the interview, and I will stop recording this interview right now.

Interview with D3

Question: Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview in the first place. This interview is designed for the master's thesis project, titled as process design for improving innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and recorded audio will be used to create transcripts for data collection. I would also like to inform you that personal data will be pseudo anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by our name, but would be identified either by your job role or your responsibility. So during the interview, you can refrain from telling your name if you're not comfortable with it. The purpose of this interview is to get your insights and expertise on the digital innovation activities in the rental equipment industry. And using the data collected through this interview, a process structure and validation method would be designed to help develop an innovation portfolio management system. I shall now start asking you questions, please feel free to raise any concerns or questions during the session. Please start by introducing yourself as in what you do at Riwal?

Answer: Okay, my name is [Redacted], and I'm responsible for global IT within Riwal. So actually, that's the goal of Director IT.

Question: All right. And could you also let me know what exactly your responsibilities in the company are usually with digital innovation?

Answer: If you look at the current situation is, of course, support and maintain the current applications, build an application for change, and innovate so that we can implement new digital innovations for our customers and internal company.

Question: All right, perfect. And what does the term digital innovation mean to you working at Riwal?

Answer: Yeah, we have a lot of machines, of course, that we are rent and sell. And there are people from Fleet and operations are busy with physical innovations on top of those machines. And if you want to compare in these kinds of market, you not only can have physical services but also digital disruptors. You also need to implement digital services on top of your machines, so that you create digital disruptors, innovative ideas, where clients see the benefits, why they choose for us for rental and not for the competitor

Question: All right. And how do you think the innovation activities are being managed within Riwal?

Answer: In the moment, we had a commercial innovation team, what was being led by, by the commercial people, and they had a full focus on the innovation part for customers. So we're on commercial side. And we the first plan was to set up a framework where every client could see their information about their equipment that was rented. So that's what we set up the my rebar portal as a basic and made a roadmap together with all kinds of enhancements and nice features for the future. But the downside is on that part is that you're really focused on one sort of solution. What we didn't do at the moment at Riwal is set up a sort of brainstorm idea room where everybody think about the top three new ideas for our business or our clients, and do the fact it's almost to do with a sort of product development strategy at the moment at MyRiwal and not on an innovation part anymore. So that's why we have a manager digital innovations required to make this happen.

Question: And apart from these, what other challenges do you see the current process that Riwal be adopting to prioritize innovation within the organization?

Answer: is because our market and equipment is very day to day we they order it today and they want to have it yesterday. Sometimes our management and we self are also act like that. So priority, setting strategic goals for the future is always mid and long term. So the ultimate goal, the focus is always on day to day. So how do you balance between helping the operation now? And also setting some things in movement for mid and long term? That's the challenge here within Riwal at the moment.

Question: Okay. And what do you think, Riwal position is when compared to the rest of the industry in terms of innovation itself.?

Answer: For the outside world, they think and see that Riwal is very innovative, and also digital, we even won a prize in 2021 by the MyRiwal portal, the app and the BIM services. To be honest, the fundamental grounds on which these kinds of products or solutions are built on and the process part around it is not rock solid yet. From an IT perspective, or digital perspective we need to go back to the drawing table again. So if you want to implement number two, number three, number four, we don't have the authorization for change and the platform for change. So it looks like from the outside, it's look fantastic. And that's the downside of it. Compared to for instance, Loxam our competitor, they build up an fundamental platform for digital transition, they are not exploring yet, physically to the market. But they are internally I think, a step further than we.

Question: All right. And also, we were talking about how receptive the organization is to change, is Riwal very open to change, or is there still some roadblocks ahead for evil to accept change, especially in processes and adopting innovation activities?

Answer: Yeah, that's a very nice question. I know maybe, you know, the old cartoon with the two pictures, the who wants change, and everybody's raising his hand, and then say, who wants to change and then nobody raising his hands. So that's also to do with here. And I don't say that only, it's going very well at teams and sites where there are more young people, but young mind that there are also people that work a lot for a long time for Riwal, and they are still changeable, they are easy to adopt the change. And the nice example is that within Denmark, we have around 18 People that works with the rental desk for more than 20 years with an old program. And they can all they can do the rental order blindness, they get the new change of applications. And it's cost very, very long time to unlearn what they did, and learn what they need to do. In UK, they have very young, small team, they are all under the 30. They didn't work with the previous application suite, and they now are back in business in five weeks, and they don't make mistakes. So it's not a does not only do with age, it's also what, what did they do before and how long? And are they capable of adopting that change? So it's a little bit both ways.

Question: All right, and also have as the response to the innovation been outside the organization, we're talking about how responsive the company is within the organization that's between different troubled countries. But how is it been with the customers if you have any idea about that?

Answer: I think it's good because if you look at 20% of our customers now sorry, 80% of our customers produced 20% of our revenue. So and the 20% of our customers producing the 80% of our revenue and that Pacific 20% are the very IT Savvy kind of customers like Fokker, Mahmud KLM, etc. Those companies are really digital by the heart. So they expect also partners and clients and suppliers that are being digital. So if you can ask Fokker they work with only us and not with the competitors because we had a direct API layer between our systems so that they can easily see their own machines, but also our availability of all our machines. So if you express that kind of innovations or

possibilities outside, then you can easily and fast adopt on that change. You will really, really responsive on that.

Question: Yeah, and what do you think are the important factors to harbor foster innovation within the organization? Because it sounds to me that innovation is the heart of the progress for Riwal, but what do you think are the factors are important points that needed to be considered, while we are trying to develop these.

Answer: Now, what we saw in the in the past, also within revolt is the time to market. For instance, when we implemented MyRiwal 1.0, the time to market was very slow. And because of the slow time to market, and every client speeded up, we didn't talk about scalability. So if you can, maybe more implement the time to market with small, minimal viable products, you can easily adopt on that change from the outside, that is very important, and internally and externally that they see the progress not always are we very good, especially also not in IT, we are not very good communicators. And the third thing is thing, I think, if the clients can see the benefits of that digital innovation, they will pay for it. If they pay for it, then internally, you have very good stakeholder management to do because you have funding to for your innovation, and you can get leverage, it gets attention. So you have always the chicken in the egg, hey, where do I first invest? Or do I have if a client wants to pay for it? Sometimes you have to do a little bit both to know, to speed up with that. Yep.

Question: Yeah. And also, since this project is related to designing a new process, what do you think is lacking in the current process that needs to be incorporated in the new process of trying to manage a portfolio?

Answer: Yes, and that I call it value mapping to the strategy. Normally, I'm used that if you have a strategy, for instance, we want to become a digital rental leader. And that means A, B, C, D. And then based on every stream, or every department, they determine a projects or initiatives, and you can score that kind of initiatives on how much do they contribute to the strategy. And if that score is very high, it's ultimately gives a very high priority. Yeah. And if you don't do that, then priority setting is very dangerous. And also, not always, we put our money on the right spot or time. So I think if that's missing in the current process for sort of business value mapping or strategy or something, or was always the business benefits calculation or something like that, if you if we count that in, then the priority will run by itself.

Question: All right. But sometimes we also need to take the good things from the current process to the new process, do you think there's something really good that's working in the current process that could be also incorporated in the new process?

Answer: I think personally, the, what we did with current road mapping already defined a sort of, okay, this is version one, this version two, then we first do version 2.1. And then 3.0. And what's sometimes the long the line, there will be vague, but it already gives you sort of direction. Where are we heading? There? I think that's one, it's very good. And other thing is the team who is now organized. It's not on HQ on digital sites with one commercial guy. Now it's commercial operations fleet finance, maintenance workshop. So in in basically all the responsibilities from the country, company, sorry, are involved. So the, if some ideas they're pitched, and everybody likes it, then ultimately the whole company likes it. Yes. They represent the whole company.

Question: Perfect. Apart from this, there are no more questions that I have. But do you have any additional inputs to add based on the questions you've answered so far, that need to be considered, while thinking of a new kind of process outlined for Riwal?

Answer: That's not maybe a process outline. But normally, I'm used that innovation is in ecosystems, and not only inside the company. So I would always involve universities, with students with a sort of hackathon, ask some questions, but also our vendors and partners. So now we have an IT partner but we also work with Jeannie and GLJ. Our vendors have the machines, you have to work with their product development teams, where are they heading on? How can we align on each other strategy? Is there a contractual possibility with your suppliers, for instance, that they have to bring two or three ideas in the current year that you put it in the contract not only give support, but that you also sort of make it an obligation that they deliver proactive suggestions to us.

Question: All right. All right. Thank you so much for your time. And this brings us to the end of this interview. I will stop recording this interview and if you have any concerns about intermediate addresses to me after the recording ends

Interview with D4

Q: I started. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project title process designed for innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio will be used to make transcripts for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that the personal data will be used on optimized, which means that you will not be identified by your name, but either by your job role or your job responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather your insights and expertise and innovation activities in the rental equipment industry. Using the data collected through this interview, the process structure and validation method would be designed to help develop an innovation portfolio management system for new projects. And if you have any concerns or questions during this session, please feel free to ask them right away or raise the concerns right away. Introduce as to what job role you're doing at Riwal and what the responsibilities entail.

A: Okay. So before to the team leader for the development team in Dubai, basically, we are taking care of the development part. Starting from the planning to the implementation part, we are taking care of that. So I'm into the team learning process. And I'm also working as a tester for what are the projects that the team is handling right now. And also taking care part of the scrum, which is like currently we are doing the agile methodology for the team. So I'm taking part of the scrum master role as well. So these are the main three roles that I'm taking care of at the moment. Yeah, that's in short about the

Q: Yeah. Since you are aiding in the development of digital innovation tools for Riwal, what is the term digital innovation mean to you?

A: Innovation? For me, I would say improvisation or that's the proper term that I want to use actually, improvisation and implementation of new ideas.

Q: Yeah, yeah. And how are these innovation activities and processes managed within your team?

A: We have We are strictly following the agile methodology. So we are always welcoming the ideas. And we will discuss on the planning meeting, and we decide how we will design and implement and we'll deliver to the customer. So the stakeholders they will say,

Q: okay, and how are different features, different updates or different developments? prioritized within your team?

A: I will go for the word. What's the current needs of the stakeholders? That's how we are prioritizing the needs actually, for example, we have five tickets in the loop. And everything is in the high priority, we will have we on the planning meeting, we will discuss an audit and we will find out which is a very high priority one that needs to be considered on the coming days. For example, what is the one which stakeholders is really looking for and what is what is basically hype important thing that they really want to continue the work. So we prioritize the ticket accordingly. And we will start implementing the ratio according to the priority, according to the need of the stakeholders at the moment we're prioritizing.

Q: Okay, and how are these priorities? Also for new features taken into consideration? Is it the same process? Or is it a different process?

A: Priorities? We will differentiate between the, for example, like what was things that we already implemented? And what are the new features that are coming. So we'll divide a sprint into for example, if you're taking six tickets for us, will give priority for the three tickets which is has to be

considered with the new features that we are planning to implement, and three features which is high priority, which is already implemented, and we need improvisation to that part.

Q: Okay. Given that your team is working on a lot of digital tools, what kind of tools? Is your team responsible for Riway, or manlift?

A: Remain the applications that are currently having the rental app? Yeah, at the moment, and we have the portal and we have a sales photo app. Okay. Yeah. So we currently we are developing applications on both platforms, for example, pharmacy on the web platform and on the mobile platform, and that too, for iOS and Android, we have two different.

Q: Okay, perfect. Perfect. And how do you think has the company been responded to these tools that you've been developing? How is the company's response to it?

A: Welcoming, that's what I would say actually, like, they are the one who appreciate all the changes. And they are the one who welcomed all these changes. And for example, they have their own ideas to implement for all those different tools. For example, I would say, as a user, as a common user, we all know that new technologies are coming in both on iOS and Android, as a company, they are already really happy about all those new changes. And they really want those changes to be implemented in the application as well. So I would say welcoming, that's a short word that I can use, what they're currently doing with the tools, and they are taking care of the suggestions that we are giving to the company. For example, we are saying that, okay, this would be better if we can implement it, they are really, they listen to it, they learn about it, then they come back, then we'll start implementation.

Q: Okay, and how is the response been from the customers and for these innovation tools?

A: I will definitely say, if I'm comparing the old one and the new one, the new one has more reach than compared with the old one. With all this new features and the user friendly atmosphere, I would say, more customers has started using it. And one other tool called mix panel, what we can understand that the outreach of the new project is very high. And we are happy about that production electric, we could do we can we have already did better. Now we can do more better for them, for bringing up with the other customer. For example, if I'm saying 100 Customers most probably is 70 or 80 Customers maybe have already started using the platform. They are we should be working on to bring the 100 customers to the platform actually. So slowly, we are working on it. We are planning to implement more features to the project, which will welcome the whole customers who are saying back.

Q: Yeah. Okay. And what do you think are the important factors, while developing these tools that help in developing these tools as well? Like what do you think are like important factors or resources?

A: Important factors is discussion, I will definitely say it's a discussion part, for example, we have a team of five or six, discussion is a main important part, for example, they come with a point, we discuss about it, and we decide how are we going to implement it? And how what is the solution that the company going to get after implementing it? So I would say discussion is the main factor. Okay, yes, yeah.

Q: Do you think there are any more additional factors that contribute to developing these digital tools?

A: As of now, I'm getting only one point at the moment, there might be many actually. Yeah. Not sure at the moment.

Q: Okay. And what kind of resources do you think an organization should provide for helping development of the digital innovation tools?

A: Luckily, they have already provided to us a platform to learn, we already have the club condition with the Udemy. Every developers and every team members have access to, they can keep on updating their knowledge, they can improve their knowledge, they can learn new thing, they can keep updating about the new technologies that coming up. So that's why at the beginning, I said company itself is an open arm. For every, every team members of mine, who have given a provision to learn new thing, don't stick to the old one company requires more new technologies, and they're ready to give a path. Now, as a team member, we should be taking initiation to bring it up.

Q: Okay. And what do you think, are the challenges that your team faces while developing these digital innovation tools?

A: Communication was a main factor, for example, being a team in another continent, and discussions happening on other continents, it's communication was a big factor. At the beginning, it was a big factor nowadays, everything is I would say everything is have moved to the single pipeline, I would say like, you know, now that every clarification is made, every communication is documented, everything is a clear is getting clear and honest, before implementing. So I wouldn't say communication was a problem before now. It's not anymore. Actually. I'm really happy to say that.

Q: And do you have any technical challenges while developing these tools?

A: maybe, I would say, I don't know. I'm actually because I'm not the very better one to reply to that question, because I'm not into development. I'm just doing the testing part. I'm asking the testing part actually, currently, we are not automating the projects that we have done. So I don't know about the tools and requirements at the moment. But as of now, if I'm asking you about my profession, I would say no, we are we are happy with what we got.

Q: Okay, with your experience as an employee at Riwal, do you think Riwal have been open to accepting new processes or new changes that has been planned or in the pipeline?

A: Of course, yes. Maybe the very first company that I ever worked on who always welcomed with new ideas, okay. Yeah, I will definitely recommend to other people also actually, because this company is always welcoming everything whatever this is, the discussion is always open to everyone, there is nothing like a higher level lower level discussion is open to everyone. They can read I suppose, and I can go with my points, they will we will discuss about it. And if it is good for the company, we will implement it that too, they will have a reply to everything that your example. Okay, I'm going to the point x, and we'll discuss about and they say that, okay, this is not the correct time to implement it, we won't implement it. But if it is a good point, we will add to the project and we will implement in the coming features. So I would say yes, it's a better company to work.

Q: Okay. And because it's responsive to new change, and this project deals with designing a new process for prioritizing different innovation activities within digital innovation department. Do you think that there's anything lacking in the current process that needs to be considered for the new process?

A: I wouldn't say I'm talking about the current if I'm talking about the current situation, I will definitely reply with a capital N and oh, no, there is no nothing we are lacking. At the moment. There

was a stage, but we covered all those things. Happily, we covered all those things. Now there is no, there's no there is no breaking point. A point actually we have we are getting books and we are working on it. We have discussions, the implementation we are designing. So it's this loop is still going on. So

Q: okay, yeah, yeah. And because you're quite happy with the current process. What do you think is that one important factor, or one important thing that needs to be taken from the current process to the new process?

A: I would say, input from the team members actually, as I said, the communication, the input from the team members responding to the input from the team members, that's the thing that we are currently doing. This, I think that we I would really want to take to the future also. Yeah, that will really help as a company that will really help actually like, what they want and what we can implement. That's a two different thing. We're clubbing together will bring up a perfect application.

Q: And based on the question so far, do you have any other questions, additional questions or any inputs that need to be added? Or considered while developing a new process?

A: I would no I don't think so actually, like I don't think there's nothing to be changed as, as an employee as a team member or as team leader, I definitely say that changes will happen in coming future maybe the technology might be changing or the methodologies might be changing. But as of now, we are happy with the what we are currently doing. It's a current proper way. And improvisation may be coming later. But as of now, it's good to go in the same.

Q: Okay. Thank you for answering all the questions because the questions that I've had, so this brings us to the end of the interview and I will stop recording the interview and if you have any concerns about any of the questions or you feel anything that needs to be raised, you can do it after I stopped the recording.

Interview with D5

Q: Okay. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project titled process designed for digital innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio will be transcript it for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be pseudo anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by your name, but could be identified either by your job role or your job responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather insights and expertise on the digital innovation activities in a red liquid industry. Using the data collected through this interview, a process structure and a validation method would be designed to develop an innovation portfolio management system for your projects. Please feel free to raise any concerns or questions during this session. We will start off with this interview right now up Could you please introduce yourself with your job roles and responsibilities at Riwal?

A: Yeah, I'm [Redacted] I'm in the capacity of regional IT and digital manager. Basically, part of manlift group is based in Dubai office where the digital development team is based in and responsible for developing internal and external customer facing digital solutions for Riwal and manlift group. I've been working for Manlift for the last 17 years. And basically from India.

Q: It since you work with the digital innovation aspect of real environment so closely what does the term digital innovation mean to you?

A: Digital innovation? For me at least, is something that can disrupt the industry I can I should say. I mean, you want me to have a detailed explanation? Or what does that mean to me? Or maybe in a nutshell, how i i see that. Yeah, it's something that gives us as manlift or Riwal to have a competitive advantage over our competitors, when you are giving a solution to them. In simple terms, that is what innovation means to me.

Q: Okay, and how do you think the innovation activities and processes are managed within your organization?

A: In the current setup, we do have we do, we are kind of a demand supply organization where recently, we recently introduced that concept of digital innovation team within our organization. And it's been, I think around for the last six months before that we were not so organized in that respect. So now that there's a clear separation of the demand and supply, plus a dedicated team for the innovation, that is going that is giving a little more structure and insight into the way we are developing applications, even though we are following the best industry standards and practices as a software development team. But when it comes to translating the business needs into final solutions. We were like we were lacking that middle man who's who can act as an innovation specialist who can bring in new ideas and technologies into the data spectrum. So currently, if you ask me, if you ask me currently where we are standing with this, definitely we do have a lot more data structure than we had a six months back.

Q: Okay. And how do you think the company's response has been to these new digital tools and new initiatives taken to improve the digital tools?

A: I think it's very, very promising. The kinds of initiatives that we are presenting in for Have them. They are all really positive about it. And then I think the management has that vision that this is the way forward.

Q: Okay? And how are these solutions being rolled out from rebuild to its other countries at the customers?

A: we do have a very clear roadmap for 2022, where in how and when we are about to reach out to different markets and countries for the rest of the manlift. And manlift was the pilot country initially, so the two entities has already been taken care of. But the remaining around 10 plus countries in the in the world region, we do have a very clear cut roadmap for 2022. So it's been already scheduled and planned. And then we have we are going through that phase, taking a one major the major markets like Denmark, France, as an already been completed, Netherlands is about to happen within the couple of weeks' time. And then the remaining countries are lined up in kind of batches, small batches with the two countries together. So we do have a very clear cut roadmap in place, which has been already scheduled in the JIRA project as a project roadmap.

Q: Okay And what do you think are important topics are important factors that help develop different digital innovation projects?

A: we started very small initially, when we started building these in these kinds of solutions, digital solutions for the group, we started with a couple of developers, of course, the support from management, they have given full confidence in us that initially, we they have given some pilot projects for us to see if how effective our team is how effectively we can translate these business needs to effective solutions. And based on those outputs, they have given more trust to the team. And then the slowly we started increasing the capacity of the team. And then the now it become around 10 People will be working in the digital development solutions, both in the iOS, Android a bit of a mobile application phase and in the web application area. So yeah, of course, the support, the capacity, the planning. And in addition to that, again, as I mentioned that it clear cut definition of the responsibilities, who's going to take care of the demand side. And then again, that separation of that entire development, exercise into demand and supply where in my team and me are mainly focusing on delivering things rather than getting involved with understanding and gathering business requirements. So I think it's a, it's a multitude of things, the support from the management, the capacity, the increased capacity, the quality of our team, I think we got one of the best teams in the in the entire IT department, I can proudly say that high performance team, the kind of organized way of working and then we have more embracing towards agile scrum methodology of working that will that definitely has introduced a lot of discipline within the team. So now we are much more agile, kind conventional way is to completely move away from the conventional way of software delivery from a waterfall methodology to more agile way of working. So we deliver incrementally. So it's a multitude of things that definitely helped us to improve.

Q: Okay, and another question is that, how does the organization respond to change?

A: Very open. Yeah, it's very often, in the sense that they are we always had a had a chance to raise our voices, we always given a chance to contribute in all possible ways. So it's been very often so they are very open to these kinds of affiliations and opinions.

Q: Did you face any kind of challenges when you were trying to develop these integration tools are when you tried to change the process from waterfall to Agile?

A: It was, of course, of course, it was not an easy, easy journey. Of course, these kinds of changes are very difficult to implement. In fact, to be really honest, we were not completely following your waterfall methodology. But again, it was kind of a mixed approach. Because initially when we started building a team of people, even though people I've recruited people from industry, leading companies and all, they were all black, practicing agile practices, but again, when I formed the team,

it was when in the initial days, it was kind of a mixed work, or development methodology. We were falling, so we were not practicing it in the into the fullest way. But yeah, that that transition was a little difficult to pray to put all these processes in place and forcing everyone to follow in strictly. Yeah, it was it was difficult, but again, of course, now we are in a much, much better position now.

Q: Okay, and what do you think helped overcome these challenges? Do you think anything in particular, from your side from your teams and or from Riwal side and helped you overcome these challenges?

A: We had some training sessions in I should say, related to the agile scrum methodology. For the end, we do have a certified scrum master within our team. So it was fairly easy for me to ask him to because he's the scrum master. So he brought in a lot of discipline in that respect. So yeah, the support from the management, some trainings and then a qualified member within the team. These are all factors that helped us.

Q: Since this project deals with prioritizing different kinds of innovation projects within your team, how are different kinds of projects or tickets or features that need to be pushed into the solutions? Prioritize, like, is there a particular method where you prioritize

A: The prioritization basically, it's all as I said, it's a purely an Agile Scrum. Scrum is our methodology to practice this agile. So we have a scrum board. We use JIRA Agile Scrum board. To schedule our sprints, we usually have bi weekly sprints. So we are practicing the scrum, scrum methodology wherein we have sprint planning, Sprint, sprint review, Sprint, retrospective, etc. So the prioritization happens during the planning session. And the sole responsibility lies with the product owner of these respective projects, where you know, who's the one who's deciding the priority of which ticket to take care for the next sprint, so the sprint backlog and the priority of these tickets are decided by the product owner, not the development team. But again, from our side, what we does is we do estimations that is based on that estimations, the product owner will get an idea how many of these tickets has to be can be taken care of in a single sprint, but again, the priority decision it's all with the product owner and that that is his decision is based on the continuous stakeholder interaction. And then the Yeah, so if the customer a customer is keen, in this case, the Emended when we talk about customers, in our case, the internal stakeholders, the personality from different countries. So those people are, I think, influencing that prioritization of the ticket, and it's the only with a product owner.

Q: Okay? Does your team interact with these customers of it? Or is it just a product owner usually interacting with the customers, even if it's with support or service?

A: Not 100%. It's a product owners interaction. But again, while during the sprint plan, review sessions, definitely all the stakeholders will and customers will be there and all those sessions. And we do we do have some catalysts, a minimal level of interactions, but on a majority of the time, it's all the product owner, we don't have to the customer doesn't have to directly come back to us as a development team.

Q: Okay. And what has the customer's response been to the solutions being provided by your team?

A: yeah, it's usually as I as I mentioned, there is no direct interaction, the interaction is very limited to none. The only area wherein we get a direct response from the customer is through while we go through the sprint planning review session, that is only what we call occasion wherein we will become directly in contact with the customers or the stakeholders. So otherwise, all these feedbacks are privately channeled to us through the product owner only. So we come to know okay, we release

a new feature by the end of a particular sprint directly we will get an immediate response from them that hey, this is good or this is bad or this new changes etc. That is an area where we can construct similarly, we can get a feedback directly from Compton otherwise on in general, if there are suggestions, there are improvement ideas, all these things are all always coming through the product or not to us.

Q: Okay. And since this project again, is designing a process for prioritization of a portfolio, what do you think is lacking in the current process that needs to be incorporated in the new process?

A: I think that's a really interesting and then relevant question. And this I have, I wanted to have this kind of discussion with the rest of the team, not, not, I'm not talking about the development team, maybe for the demand side and the commercial innovation team, etc. One of the areas which I personally as a developer or the lead developer of the team, which I believe need, still, I know that there is a commercial innovation CIT team, they collect all these kinds of requirements, talking to different customers, and then a compiling a list of requirements, requirements and features and etc. And then they are the one who's responsible for prioritizing these kinds of feature request or user stories. And then based on that, the priority board will decide which project has priority, we need to have if that some new kind of solution or software has to be developed, definitely there, we have to have a business case prepared and then gives us full approval, etc., etc. So that process that is perfectly working fine. But still, if you particularly talk about my role as a customer facing big the biggest customer facing solution that we are currently handling and developing, maintaining and developing, I still think that the priorities of features that we are given to this particular platform is not so aggressive, in the sense that the our priorities are listed a little off. That is, again, as me as a developer, I may be completely wrong. But again, I think if there would have been a different maybe, I don't know if that has something to do with the process. Your question is particularly about is there any way that you will need a change in the process? But if we ask me the priority, what we decide to go ahead with this project is slightly off, you know, you got what I'm trying to say. Yeah. So, we are not giving the right kind of priority to this one big project that we are giving Okay, now, we are developing a feature 123 are all prioritized. So, I think that that order of priority, we are going ahead with each and every feature has to be shuffled a little bit, that is my personal opinion. Or maybe I think my team also share that same kind of field we always discuss about it, are we giving the right kind of a priority to the right features as of now is this C or agile is all about delivering values, right? When we are developing an application Agile methodology is the very first thing is all about the kind of value we deliver through each and every increment or, or an iteration or a sprint, in the initial phases of any project, we will deliver high value solutions, or, or what we call the high value features or functionalities. And as the time passes, the value, the weightage of those values should be decreasing. So that means all the high priority or high value features and functionalities in a project should be delivered first. And then that that itself shows that we have the prioritization of our tasks will be based on the value how much of a value I'm delivering. When I'm releasing a particular feature. Say for example, again, I'm giving you a feature or functionality to give notifications through the platform. Whenever there is an action happening in the platform. There should be a notification mechanism Yeah, it's a wonderful idea and it's a wonderful value addition to customers experience right any user use using a portal is a customer facing portal. So portal what is the meaning of a portal, a customer want to track all the activities that are the he is doing in the firewall or, or the automatic lifter portal environment. So that notification mechanism can be considered one of the high value feature that we can over on the other side, if we are focusing on an area where in sample something like a my projects, it's a different functionality that we are building. Only a handful of countries or companies or even customers are using that functionality in only one or two countries. But the kind of volume of the complexity of the scope and the time and effort we need to build that particular

module is much huge than building a not vertical notification mechanism. So if you take these two particular these two different modules and compare their value delivery, of course I'll go with the first one. Yeah. Then the second one then this the second one even though the score Find the complexity is too big to develop that functionality, it's giving very little less value. So if you compare the value weight age of these two features, definitely the second one has to go way back into the priority list. Yeah, I still have a confusion whether are we giving the right kind of weight age to each feature or function? And are we delivering? Is it in the right order? It's I am no one to say, say anything on that front. But again, this is my personal opinion, I'm sharing with you. That's it. So there may be there is an area where still we can be there is a room for improvement in prioritizing the features

Q: Do you think anything is working really well. And the current process that should be carried forward to the new process?

A: its share of opening it is it is, of course, the way we are vertical or vertical gathering this information through the feedbacks, the interviews, the questionnaires, or face to face, meetings, etc., etc., and then compiling everything into a consolidated list of compilation of the requirements and then taking these things through some kind of a, what they call priority board meeting and then deciding which one to go that that kind of a process that we put in, definitely does commendable and it is working really well. The only area where I find a little bit of tweaking is required is the kind of ordering the ordering priorities of these particular features. But the way we collect all these information and compiling and then going through an approval mechanism. That is I think it's a full proof system we already have.

Q: Okay, and based on the question, so far, do you have any additional inputs to add that should be considered while designing the due process?

A: I can't think of any, maybe we should be introducing the concept of design thinking when we are implementing a new project. I'm not talking about any existing projects, if we are planning for a new project, any new digital solution that we are going to build from manlift, or revolve digital development team. I think this is the best practice. What this is one of the best things, which I think will add definitely add value to the development exercises. It's a design thinking process. I know I don't know whether you're familiar with the design thinking, workflow, gathering ideation, and then prototyping and then feedback etc. So there are five pillars in a design thinking methodology. So that that is that is what one thing which I really want to see in the future process. Okay, so if you want me to put it in a single sentence, I want to see a design thinking approach in any new project that we are going to build in the future.

Q: Okay, okay. Yeah, I get it. That brings us to the end of this interview. Thank you for the time and I will stop recording this interview right now. If you had any concerns about any of the questions or any concerns about this interview, you can address it to me after I press stop recording.

Interview with M1

Q: Perfect. So I'm going to start this interview now. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project titled, Process Design for Digital Innovation Portfolio Management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio will be used for transcripts for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be anonymized which means that you will not be identified by our name, but either be identified by your job role or your job responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather insights and expertise on the various innovation activities and marketing activities in the rental equipment industry. Using the data collected through this interview, process structure and validation method would be designed to help develop an innovation portfolio management system for new projects. I shall now start asking you questions, please feel free to raise any concerns or questions during this session. Could you please introduce as to what you do at Riwal?

A: Yeah, sure. So, my role is marketing intelligence specialist. And I working in HQ. With HQ marketing team, which consists of two people. My responsibilities, let's say this, the main scope of my responsibilities is focused on the database marketing, we are using database to from Dun and Bradstreet, this is one of the largest supplier of commercial data in the world. And basically, my goal is to use this tool in order to create new opportunities for Riwal to get new customers. Okay. Besides that, yeah, I'm also helping with other marketing tasks like managing social media channels on HQ level and helping our team with different marketing activities like newsletters. Yeah, and other marketing things.

Q: Okay, and how closely are you aware of the progress of the digital innovation activities that's happening within Riwal with the customer base of Riwal?

A: That To be honest, I'm not a part of MyRiwal meetings. So basically, digital innovations, this is a part of innovations and big part of innovation. But yeah, for some reasons, I mean, for some activities, I need to know what is going on and where we are in terms of the progress. So yeah, I know, basically, what are the innovations to the platform or when we are going to launch? The platform, the new platform to countries?

Q: Okay, given that you've worked with a lot of data for commercial purposes, do you think that these new tools that the company is developing is helping and expanding the customer base?

A: I think it could be, because basically, rental companies offers the same thing, same machines, but I think having such tool as MyRiwal can be, let's say advantage for us compared to the competitors. And another thing, that now I believe that future will become more digital, to get all the information you needed via your phone or customer portal. Yeah, that makes the life of our customer much easier. So I would say, first of all, MyRiwal two, can we add like a retention tool of current customers? But can we also like argument like, this is a selling point for new customer.

Q: And do you think that Riwal is performing better than its competitors or in par with its competitors, as of now with all the different kinds of solutions not just digitally, but the rental services and everything combined?

A: I think it's highly depend on the Country in some countries, we are really very well present. Yeah, as in the Netherlands and some Nordic countries, we are performing very well. But in some other countries, I think the Riwal's position is not so good.

Q: Okay. Okay. And in your experience, the current process in terms of how projects are handled within the company? Do you think that it's going well? Or do you think there's room for improvement or if anything needs to be improved? Like, it can be any kind of project not just related to MyRiwal as of now?

A: Yeah, for MyRiwal, it's different to judge. If I can talk about marketing projects. I would say the main issue within the Riwal that maybe someone is in charge of project and for him, it's of course priority. But for other teams, they have other projects and other priorities. But to actually to succeed in project you need the support of other departments. And if for them, your project is not a priority, then of course, for you, it's very difficult to achieve something that would be good maybe to align maybe on upper level between different departments to set priority up. So then, let's say, we are sure that everyone would be focused on key projects for the company.

Q: And also, how do you think the company responds to initiatives?

A: The thing that Riwal, it's not really a centralized company, but really, I would say, more decentralized. So basically, it means that on the country level, you need to have people support to, let's say, promote some projects or innovations or things. So if you don't have a support from country manager, or let's say, managing global, then of course, it's very difficult.

Q: And how do you think it's been outside the organization?

A: I think if you talk about Riwal, we could take as a good example, MyRiwal platform, we can see that in some countries, the number of users is quite high. And at the same time, in some countries, it's very low. And I think that shows a picture that actually shows a reality that in some countries, it means that people were more interested in my I mean, like commercial people were more interested in promoting. By retail, too. I think it's always education, because if you have a great product, but you never tell your customer about this product, so of course they wouldn't use it. So I think you need to also spend a lot of efforts to explain what is your product is and why they need to use it. And only like that, they will start but if you just say nothing and you have it somewhere in the corner, so no one would use it.

Q: Given that marketing is a huge part of driving customers to being more active, using Riwal, tools and Riwal equipment while prioritizing projects. Do you know any important factors from a marketing perspective that discussions should be made on while thinking about developing new projects or by thinking about developing new solutions or rolling them out?

A: I think that this question would be better to ask [Redacted] because he is more in let's say aligning country marketing Team, let's say defining the strategy. But I would say there are some. As I said, it's my personal feeling that currently, we don't have one person marketing person that would really make the decision for a company for all countries. What should be the priority for marketers? What happens? Sometime in the country, you can have only one person from marketing. And that actually combines a job with another role. Okay. So of course, if we talk about his priorities, those priorities comes from his country manager. And yeah, what is decided, basically, on the company level, we in marketing team, that wouldn't be so big priorities.

Q: And as an employee of Riwal, how do you think Riwal accepts change? Do you think Riwal is more receptive to change or more reluctant or hesitant towards new changes,

A: I can only take about my experience was my project. So when we started to work with DnB, it actually would have another, let's say, approach our commercial people doing Because currently, I have a feeling like they are more waiting for customers to come. So receiving requests, or just

farming our current customers. But in terms of hunting new customers, I would say we are less performant. And in my project, when we would use a database to look for new customer interesting for us as segments, that means that our account managers needs to be proactive and try to contact, let's say, those companies to convert them to our customers. And I would see more resistance.

Q: Okay. And also, another thing that I would want to know is that from a perspective of reaching out to customers, what do you think is the most effective way to do so?

Clarification -

what do you think can be done to get them more engaged with the company?

A: Because we have different types of customers, we have small, occasional customers, and we have like big customers. And I think the motivations of those type of customers can be different. For instance, if we imagine just painter or I don't know, like, independent guy who needs a machine just to do his job. On the Job side, I believe that for him, it's very important to have like to rent a machine fast and have a good service, like working machine deliver it in time. And I think this kind of, let's say relationship can be set up on digital way. So I imagine he has his phone, he has a website, he just ordered the machine and his own, and he gets a confirmation and then the machine and time. So I think the future for those type of customers would be online. If you talk about like larger customer, then of course, let's say the personal touch is also very important, because they need more machines, they can have more specific requirements. Of course, it can be some problems. So it's very important that they reach to one person to resolve it. Okay. And also, we can talk about customers like [Redacted] that have a lot of entities. So also to have one single point of contact could be interesting for them.

Q: Do you have any additional inputs to add, especially when considering that a new process is being designed to help manage new projects and prioritize new projects at Riwal? Do you think anything should be taken from the current process that I should add to the new process?

A: Um, I don't know if it's also for MyRiwal, but I saw that you have like Project Manager. For some projects, we use a project management to JIRA very basically can allocate the task to involve parties and See already. So based on that to see a workload that should be done and yeah, plan, better plan stages of the project. So I think this is really good too. And time in other projects we are missing that. Yeah, so I think that I mean, project management skills in some for some projects are really missing for big projects.

Q: Okay. Thank you for your inputs. And this brings us to the end of the interview. Thank you for your time and I will now stop recording the interview. If you have any concerns of for any questions, or which we had so far, you can address it once I stop recording.

Interview with M2

Q: Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project titled, process design for digital innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio will be used for transcripts. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be anonymized, which means you will not be identified by your name, but can be identified either by your job roles or responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather your insights and expertise on the marketing of digital innovation activities at free will. Using the data collected through this interview, process structure and validation method would be designed to develop an innovation portfolio management system for new projects. I shall now start this interview, please feel free, free to raise any concerns or questions during the session. Could you please introduce yourself without using your name but telling me what you do Riwal?

A: Yes, I am the Marketing Manager for the Wii while holding group 30% of my time and the other 70% of my time, I am the Marketing Manager for Riwal Benelux. So the Netherlands office.

Q: All right. And what do your job responsibilities include as a marketing manager at Riwal?

A: It's a very broad role. For headquarters, it's merely strategy, not so much operational or tactical. For the Netherlands, it's, it's also operational, so it's strategical tactical and operational. And it goes from multi digital marketing, which includes the website, SEO. So that's our Google position that's advertising, it's social media, it's video, photography, it's spiritual strategy. So it's marketing plans and setting KPIs and budgets, and it's very broad, very broad business.

Q: I can see that, yes. Do you have any experiences handling marketing aspects for the digital innovation tools that we will have such as the MyRiwal will and app and the website?

A: I'm also working with that. Yeah. The operational part is done by my colleague, mainly. I'm, I've not been involved in MyRiwal so much. So not, not from a marketing perspective, it's been handled actually, mainly by the MyRiwal team, which is two people here at the Netherlands. So that was my Netherlands role, mainly that I was involved in it. But the major part is done by the practical part is done by two other colleagues, and we take care of the introduction. So the launch of the MyRiwal 2.0. But it's very limited.

Q: All right. And from marketing perspective, what does the term innovation mean to you?

A: Well, there's a lot of opportunity for innovation, in marketing in within Riwal, what we lack here, we have a lot of systems, but they're not connected. So we don't have data flowing from, for example, our email marketing tool into CRM, and vice versa. Web visits are monitored in Google Analytics, but not also not connected to other systems. So we cannot follow our customers through the sales funnel, so to say, not properly, because they're all separate tools with separate dashboards. So it's very hard to set KPIs and to track the KPIs. So that's why we're working on a new website and a totally new ecosystem that connects those systems. So we can easily track and trace our clients throughout the sales funnel and also track the KPIs

Q: All right. And given that new innovation activities doesn't have to be digital, but there are several innovation activities that Riwal is rolling out from different teams. How are these innovation activities and processes managed from the marketing teams and if you're aware of it?

A: No, for the moment, I'm actually only aware of our same marketing projects. We do have contact with the priority board about them and we do of course have contact with digital and IT, but I'm not really very well aware of Other projects, although I am aware that this ecosystem that we are striving to develop, of course, also interlinked with other departments. And there is another project, I believe on the way to create that that web app or that ecosystem, as we call it, to link all the systems, so there must be some form of communication. And there is a certain overlap, so that we need to get that going. But we've only just started our website project. So okay, it's very high on the list, we should have contacted all right line?

Q: And how do you think Riwal response is towards change? Do you think the company is very open to change? Or do you think they're still with traditional ideologies?

A: Let's say that Riwal is a very ambitious company. But we lack resources, it's really as simple as that we don't have enough people or money to roll out all the ambitious plans that we have. So currently, I would say we're behind in terms of marketing, at least, and in terms of it. MyRiwal well, really needed an upgrade, it's getting an upgrade. Still, I think there's there should be it well, there's a lot of room for improvement, and it should be faster. But we like the resources that we're website and the online ecosystem detail. It's really weird that we have several systems in place that are not communicating. So we can't really properly do our marketing. So we're Yeah, we're behind. I would say there's a lot of work to be done.

Q: All right. And what about process changes within the company? Do you think Riwal is open to having changes in terms of different processes or the way it handles things within the organization?

A: I think it really depends for country or even for depo. I think 70% of my time is of course for the Netherlands, so I'm quite comfortable with talking about the Netherlands. I think we're pretty okay with changes in theory, but in practice. While it Yeah, half of it doesn't happen. But that's also a resource thing, I suppose. I think at least we're very open to changes for the better. Okay, I must add the changes for the better. Because certain things, certain changes that we've recently had are not have not been for the better. Okay? All right. Talking about NetSuite particular. And we are facing some problems with the well, that date, I'm not going to say it's the data team, but we have some, it slash data related issues that are also caused mainly by lack of staff lack of resources, which is, has caused quite a few problems with the website. So that's where we lose business if the website's not ready, now run properly. And it's actually we have a lot of information disappearing because of some upgrade or, or new product import. And if you lose information from your website, pictures and data sheets, and whatever, and then that's Yeah, well, that's potentially harmful.

Q: Yeah. Also, keeping you're the marketing teams requirements in mind, whenever Riwal is prioritizing any kind of innovation. What do you think they should keep in mind? Keeping marketing perspectives like how would we how think how would we think easier for the marketing team? While Riwal planning out different sorts of innovation activities?

A: Will it make innovation in general even or innovation, marketing wise can build campaigns for just about anything, of course, although it's harder if the systems aren't working properly and not connected. But of course, it really has to add value, and sometimes we have a tendency to launch or promote something that really isn't an innovation. In Well, yeah, in my perspective, or our perspective, or, I would say the customer's perspective, for example, MyRiwal on 2.0 Compared to 1.0, which was, is being intensively used in the Netherlands, is not really an improvement. It's the features are not are quite similar, at least on the front end. And on the in the back end, it's probably better, but the customer won't really know. So for me or for marketing, it's kind of hard to promote

something that requires actually deleting your current app and downloading a new app, instead of just doing an update on an app, we have to get customers to delete the old one, download the new one, log on to the new MyRiwal environment, and then say it's major innovation. Technically, I mean, front end, there's hardly any change for the customer. If it's really, yeah, I mean, any other company would just not even introduce it, but let it get updated of launch and just yet do an update. And that's it. We're actually making this a whole launch blah, blah, because people need to actually download that new app. Yeah. So that's, I think that's, yeah. Harmful, at least for us. marketeers is harmful for the business. I see. That's also I think that's also has to do with the fact that we develop stuff in house, and we are not an IT company, or an AW, P those companies. But sometimes we pretend that we're an IT company. And I'm not, you know, it's not an attack on anybody in the IT department. But let's not pretend that we are an IT company, and we have all the expertise. There's a lot of extra companies build apps that could have probably done an equal or maybe a better job.

Q: Yeah, I understand that. You've also answered partially, my second question, what do you think are the challenges for rolling out these integrations through the marketing perspective? But do you think of any more challenges that could be hindering you from rolling out these or launching these new innovation activities?

A: IT/ slash data team, which is also understaffed, and we need them quite frequently. And I must say that marketing has not, I mean, we're, I'm not going to say we're understaffed, but we could do with more people. So we, we can't really do as much as we would like to do. All right. But I think there's we're trying what we're trying to do is create more, let's say a templates for campaigns, etc. And we've got a set of new tools. But we just need to centralize that from HQ, which is currently actually, most marketing innovations come from several countries and the roles are locally and then copied onto other countries. Whereas headquarters should have a leading role there. Which unfortunately, is not the case because HQ marketing is, is really understaffed. Okay, yeah. And the more strategical, yeah, activity should be done from HQ, and more, let's say, stuff that has global impact. So winning website, but also project photography, client testimonials, social media campaigns, not necessarily, but if we have, if we can create templates and examples and help the countries on the way that would seriously help.

Q: I see your point. Talking about starting campaigns or launching campaigns in different countries? Do they usually have almost the same outline? But ideally, are they the same for all the Riwal countries? Are they different or closely cater to each country?

A: No, they're actually all different. I think everybody has their own approach. That's because we lack any centralization and standardization. But, for example, the miry 1.0 launch, we are using the tools that Denmark who came first is also using France came next. So the Netherlands are copying, let's say the best practices of the other countries. we're copying the certain elements of their campaign. However, there's also locally that there's always localization and yes, can you say that we focus on on our own country and our own culture? For example, France has a very non digital population still. So they really do less to drive people to my year 2.0, then we will do in the Netherlands because the French simply or are less eager to use an app or the desktop version, but they're not mobile friendly. So to say, the French, not early adopters, we on the other hand in the Netherlands would push people towards manual 2.0 As much as we can to unburden our rental desk. So but it's okay in the Netherlands, it's, it's well accepted to to use an app. So there's certainly cultural differences. There's also differences in terms of the number of staff that we have available in the Netherlands we have about 1.5, full timer. For example, in our in the Balkans, or Eastern European countries, or Central European countries like Slovenia, Croatia, they have people that do marketing on the side. So they

just lack the capacity to roll out any proper campaigns. They just try to keep all the balls going so to say, okay,

Q: so would you say that in terms of being early adopters, the Benelux region is usually the ones adopting any kinds of innovation first are more accepting towards innovation?

A: the Netherlands together Denmark, France, to somewhat lesser extent, when it comes to digital stuff, but they are also front runners in terms of marketing. And of course, our manlift countries, okay, are very, also very digitally. Innovative.

Q: All right. And also do the account managers and country managers play a role in the marketing campaign?

A: Not really, not the MyRiwal campaign, for example, but we do liaised with other campaigns. Okay, because yeah, they're usually a joint effort of marketing and, and sales, or Yeah, the commercial sites.

Q: All right now, well, since this project involves designing a new process for innovation portfolio management. Do you think that there's something that needs to be changed from the HQ perspective when they decide what kind of innovation needs to be rolled out and how it needs to be rolled out?

A: I think centralized certain centralized work would certainly help the country's rolling out. But you don't want to over centralized because it still has to fit each country. So what works for the Netherlands? Probably what will not work for Kazakhstan, okay, because of cultural differences because of resources available because of, let's say, the level of maturity, marketing wise as well. So you need to give them handles, but not push through final solution, because that won't that won't work for the Kazakhstan's in the Slovenia's for example.

Q: Okay. All right. I understand that. That almost brings us to the end of the interview, but based on the questions so far, do you have any additional inputs that I you think I should consider while thinking about Riwal as an organization while trying to design a process for Riwal itself?

A: I'm trying to bring structure which was lacking when I came here. So structures a good thing and matching ambitions with resources or rather, ideally, remain the ambition or keep the ambitions at the same level but increase the resources but I know that increasing resources requires certain full turnover etc. So yeah, yeah, we need to step up our game but if for example, we link our systems, we can much easier track our clients in the sales funnel and we can easily we have a lot of advantage driving them through the sales funnel. So yeah, if the systems get better, we will get better marketing will get better sales will get better revenue. You, and then we can grow. Alright, but for the time being, yeah, match the ambitious with the, with the resources definitely yeah, yep. Yep,

Q: that's actually a very good insight that nobody so far has provided, which I think is important as you're trying to develop innovation activities that don't match with your resources.

A: No. And there's another one because, for example, we had to hand in a business case for the website. And we handed it in it was a two slide PowerPoint template that we filled in. And then we were asked by a fine finance manager in HQ to also build a what was it feasibility study, yet, they had to provide a feasibility study and some other report or study or proposal when everything was already in the two slider. So that's actually when we said we're not going to write a feasibility study because everything you need to know is in that two slide document. So don't over know that don't get too corporate and over organized and over document and over process, you know, it's all process

and protocols and blah, blah, it's not hands on. Riwal HQ is not hands on at all. They don't have a clue what's going on in the country. So that's what has become really clear of me doing this dual role. I guess some people in HQ hard even though what a and a WP looks like. And when you when you work here in the Netherlands office where I am right now. It's really it's all teamwork. We all do it together. Whereas an HQ it's more, this is my responsibility than that's not my aim. They shove off responsibility that isn't theirs. Well, yeah, it should be more teamwork. Yeah. Watching work. Yeah, it's a joint effort to improve. We can we can really get further if we work together. Yeah. Yeah. You know, asking people to write feasibility studies that you can just chew on and say, No, I'm not going to give you the money. When it's already clear from the business case that it's a very feasible thing to do. For your personal Yeah, that's not an analysis over. I call it documented. It's not Yeah, that's not that's not move paper around when we can just be very pragmatic. And just go ahead and do it because we already know what's going to work.

Q: Yep, yep. Yep. This brings us to the end of the interview. Thank you for your time, and I will stop recording the interview right now. If you have any concerns or questions that you had during the interview, you can ask it to me as soon as we're done as soon as I stop recording.

Interview with M3

Q: Okay, perfect. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project titled as process design for digital innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio would be used to generate transcript for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be pseudo anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by your name, but will be identified either by your job role or your responsibilities. The purpose interview is to gather your insights and expertise on the marketing aspects of digital innovation activities in the rental equipment industry. Using the data collected through this interview approach, the structure and validation method would be designed to help the intern to develop an innovation portfolio management system for new projects. Please feel free to raise any concerns or questions during the session. Could you please introduce yourself with your job responsibilities or roles that you carry out at Riwal?

A: Yeah, sure. So I'm responsible for the marketing communication at HQ, mainly coordinating and facilitating the local countries in doing they're executing their marketing and communication activities to inform the internal communication and to sell Riwal as a as a solution for working with clients.

Q: All right. And do you have any experience with marketing digital innovation tools that are being developed at Riwal

A: Yeah, so they are the tools, not sure of tools, but the materials that we that we create. So over the course of many years, what we do is we generate materials for the tools that we generated in the let's say, digital and digital department, try to sell that trying to make sure that the personas or the customers understand the added value, and that they understand what kind of solutions can we provide through the platforms through the tools that we are creating? But also, of course, the let's say, the more hardware parts, the machines, what can machines do? What can they not do? How high can they reach? What are the use cases? Which industries? might they be used? And basically inspiring our potential customers to also notify them? What's in it for them? And how we can help them on the job to be done at night.

Q: All right. And what does the term innovation mean to you? While you were working at Riwal?

A: Well when working with Riwal, mainly providing a solution in any field that wasn't there before. And that is now available for customers.

Q: All right. And how do you think the customers or the industry's reception has been to these new digital innovation or digital transformation activities being carried out by Riwal?

A: Depending a bit on the customer, of course, but I think I think they perceive it as a very welcome, welcome addition to the services that we provide. I think they recognize it partly from their b2c experience with other companies. I think to some extent, the there actually helps to carry out their jobs and make it easier for them. And yes.

Q: Thank you, and what kind of processes are there in place? Currently, at Riwal to prioritize different forms of innovation., what kind of processes do you think Riwal currently has within the organization?

A: Yeah, so there's a few elements that are making those decisions, I would say, very high over I think it's management's together with some people in the business are determining which projects are most relevant and most important for the company as a whole. Also, taking into consideration what

is the strategy and what is the need, maybe over the mid and long term. And on top of that, we have the so called product owners. So we have a product owner for MyRiwal product owner for the website, for instance, a product owners for other contexts. Some projects as well, were in the ends, at least on paper responsible for what? Tickets or let's say minor adjustments or bigger adjustments in the ends will be developed first. So they are pre prioritizing the way we develop, and the way we be, become more innovative. So that's just pretty much it. I think there's a clear line. High over management, in collaboration with the customer innovation team, and a more detailed level, that's the product owner.

Q: Okay. And how does your organization respond to change? Is it more accepting? Or is it more rigid? Or is it somewhere in between in terms of accepting new changes in its structure and its processes on its way of operation?

A: I think organization here itself as same as the industry actually is pretty conservative. So changes is something that is sometimes difficult to manage. And also not always very well accepted, I would say. You see that mainly, in the commercial sides, sometimes they are not willing to sell the innovations or maybe not seeing the added value for customers. Although, again, as mentioned, a lot of those innovations are actually coming from the b2c kind of environments, already proven their value in the in the customer sector. So I think that sense to the mind set needs to needs to be a little bit more open to those kind of changes. Or the other on the other hand, we do have in our DNA that Riwal DNA, you can say in a culture here, a mindset of continuous improvement, where we strive to, to improve the processes that we have, what processes improving processes and rebuilding being innovative are two different things. And I think that's where we can improve the innovation part.

Q: All right. And in terms of marketing itself, what do you think are important resources are important factors that the marketing team needs to know or needs to have, before rolling out solutions, innovative solutions to different Riwal partners, or even countries?

A: Yeah, so for marketing, you always sort of a balancing between the internal organization and the external world towards the customers. So we need to really identify the needs of the customers and make very clear translation. What is in it for the customer? This is your need, for instance, and we can translate that into a feature which brings a solution for the customers. And that is part partly also the task of the of the marketing team, how do we spin this? How do we how can we use a certain solution and bring it to our customers as being then also seen as an added value for them? At the same time, I think is really important that we as a marketing team and a communication team also influence the internal organization making sure that they are moving at the same pace as the rest of the organization. And therefore also embracing the new innovations that we have, and also embracing the maybe new way of working or embracing the solutions that we can provide to our customers so that they can eventually sell it to the customers. And that's really important.

Q: All right. And given that marketing has to be connected with different departments to scale out or rollout innovations to promote them within the customers. Do you think that within Riwal the marketing team is highly interdisciplinary with the other teams working or operating from different countries or within the HQ itself?

A: Yeah, okay. I think the position of the marketing team and the Riwal is not where per se should be, I think, what you see in more innovative companies and bigger innovative companies, which are actually very profitable that marketing is more as a more centralized role. And I feel sometimes Riwal marketing is more of a supporting role and with debts, you'll see that it's more reactive. And that's the commercial teams. That can be account managers, but it can also be the rental desk, for instance, they are coming up with needs saying, Okay, we need this, we need that we need XYZ in order to

inform our customers or maybe sell a certain product. Where in other countries you see it's, it's the other way around. So where are we marketing team is discovering the needs of the customers, where they are communicating about those solutions that we can provide and where they then generate leads. And the leads are being followed up by commercial teams. Right. That's a that's a position of the marketing team, which, which is in that sense, for a marketer at least is not ideal? Because you're more in a reactive kind of way? Working? I think and yes, I think if we are conducting a more structured market research, what are the needs? How can we help customers? Let's then also create the materials to communicate that to the customers it can be. It can become more, more efficient.

Q: Do you think Riwal as a customer centric company?

A: I think sometimes we are, I think some account managers, they are very customer centric. Technical team can be very customer centric. I think as a company as a whole, I don't think we're customer centric. Okay. Because we are quite reactive. And we're pretty much looking at ourselves. As then how can we optimize the processes the internal processes? Can we make it easier? internally? How can we be more efficient? Sometimes we're not always thinking, from the customer's perspective, how can we make it easier for the customer?

Q: What do you think should be important factors from a marketing perspective that should be considered while prioritizing different kinds of innovations or different kinds of solutions?

A: I think the impacts basically let customer centric I think is really interesting. And I think for a mark to add a customer centric approach is very important. Why is that because being customer centric also means putting the needs of the customers first. And if you put the needs of the customers first, you're therefore discovering, I in essence, you're discovering the added value for the customer, how can you bring added value to the to the customers if you really bring added value to the customer? If you if you deliver them solutions that they need to perform better, it's quite easy to market it. All right. I think that makes total sense for a marketer and to really work at a customer centric company, because the solutions are easy to sell. And it's something that the customers should need at least

Q: That makes complete sense to me. Also, given that you have a current process, where people are evaluating different innovation activities within Riwal, what do you think is lacking in the current process that should be considered the new process?

A: Again, I think what we need is a mindset shift from looking internally and improving the internal processes to more focus on the on the customers and say, Okay, what can we do in order to make it easier and better for our customers? I think that's a major mindset shift. Where a lot of training comes in. And we're also big change comes in in terms of how do we approach our customers? What do we what can we what can we provide to them maybe what is the price? What is the way they handle their, their machines there invoices, and everything basically, I think the process should be really focused on make it easy and adding value. I think that As easy as that, but sometimes if you're being a very, very long time, you've been a more company that is reactive, as part of a luxurious position think that Riwal has been in for the last 30 years, 20 years, work came to us people came to us. Competition was alright. But what we see last couple of three to five years, there's more competition, it's less work coming in margins are on the pressure. So we need to be more innovative, we need to be more customer centric, and we need to really put the customer in first place.

Q: All right. And what do you think is working really well with the current process that needs to be carried forward to the new process? Because sometimes things really work out well, in the current process that should be also considered for the new process.

A: By optimizing your own internal processes, of course, you need to keep it because it's, it's minimizing the waste, as in being more effective and efficient inside, in suddenly, in the organization, making sure that your machines are always in order. I think that's a great process that we have in place will definitely not change it. Yeah, I would, I would, I would add a layer on top of that in the mindset that the customer always comes first, we always should focus on the needs of the customer. I mean, just making it easy for them. That's, that's easy. Yes, I can I can bring it to you.

Q: Yep. That almost brings us to the end of the interview. But based on the question so far, do you have any further questions or any additional inputs that I need to consider while developing my thesis or something that I probably should be looking into?

A: What might be interesting is looking at the competition a little bit and also taking into consideration what is the history? Why became the company as it is today? How did they get there? What is the Riwal way? Exactly? When is it implemented? How is it implemented? How can you implement a mindset change a shift there? How can we how can we basically make sure that with the same people, more or less, we change the mindsets and we become a company that is internally focused to a company that is externally focused.

Q: All right, and thank you for your inputs. This brings us to the end of the interview. And thank you for your time. I will now stop recording of this interview and if you have any concerns or questions based on this interview, you can raise them once I stopped recording

Interview with X1

Q: All right, yes. Yeah, I see you this Well, thank you for agreeing to be a part of this interview for the master thesis project titled process designed for digital innovation portfolio management. Please note that this interview is being recorded and the recorded audio will be used for transcripts for research purposes. I would also like to inform you that your personal data will be anonymized, which means that you will not be identified by your name. But there is a possibility of you being identified either by your job role or your responsibilities. The purpose of this interview is to gather your insights on the digital innovation activities, therapy rolled out by river, using the data collected through this interview, a process structure and a validation method will be designed for the will to help with an integration portfolio management system. Actually, now begin with the interview, please feel free to raise any concerns or questions during the session as well. Could you please introduce yourself as to what you do at Riwal or what you do for Riwal?

A: Yes. Okay. Yeah, my name is [Redacted], I am now working at Riwal for more than five years. And I started as an account manager in in the middle of the Netherlands. And now the last two years, I am Key Account Manager in a key account team with three other colleagues. And we are helping the top 20 For customers of Riwal in the most way of working with our aerial platforms, and digital solutions, and innovations and everything what it what, more Yes.

Q: That sounds good. And in general, what do you think the term innovation means to you?

A: Yes, innovation is for me, with the customer, helping the customer with his needs. And we also do that with our customers with my reward, and when I started reward, my reward card came very quickly in my conversations with these customers. And I, we give insights into where the machines are aware and, and how they are used. And that, that that means that the customers therefore the customers wants that data. And so that's innovations to help the customers to work in a safe way at height.

Q: All right, that sounds good. And how do you think from your end as a key account manager, are these innovation activities being handled at Riwal? Like what happens once for example, the team has an innovation like say MyRiwal, how do the key account managers get involved with it?

A: So, the way we involve it is was we get this information of MyRiwal and in turn what I do with MyRiwal is that I was in the beginning or enforced of MyRiwal and so I so just a moment or because of is of this interest of MyRiwal, I have always been involved in the further development of this tool. We will continue to this development these two together with our customers and okay. That's

Q: okay, that's nice to know. And how do you think the customers or the clients have responded to MyRiwal? Do they like it? They use it frequently? Or are they very, not very responsive to this tool?

A: Yes, I'm maybe I must give an example of how I do it with my customers. Maybe perhaps some nice examples a customer of mine, you also have his owns owner aerial platform. So and you will and how, how nice would it be if he also gets all the data from this in MyRiwal? And at the moment this is not yet possible but the data is retrieved from track unit, but this gives him an overview of how where how where the machine are located it could end Yes. And in addition, we are doing in figure in project in [redacted], also on the university, new building for the faculty of science and engineering. And there we have an example. Currently, we have the 80 machines there, which are activate, and

they activate by best. And you want to confirm that with my reward. And that's why the customers is involved with us to do this on this site.

Q: Yeah. That's, that's nice. That's actually pretty nice to know, as well. And do you think that Riwal as a company is very open to new ideas and new innovative activities? Or do you think that they're still very traditional, and they're very closed off, and they like to operate in a very fixed systematic way.

A: Now, we are very open in that. And so they give them the space also, for me, but also to our colleagues are very, to get that innovate and get to get a need, what the customers want. And so we are therefore they love for me, sorry. We are this. So we are the customers knows that we will is one of the suppliers, who thinks a lot of innovations.

Q: Okay. That's good to know. And since you also work very closely with the customers, do you think that the will in terms of digital solutions is better than the competitors that we have right now? Like, are we doing better than our competitors?

A: Yeah, I, our customers, I want to see it from us, our sites and our other suppliers. Yeah, they are also being this doing this. But we are focused on what we are, what we can and what we don't get where we don't. We don't. Yeah. And that's, that's, I think, our power.

Q: Okay. That's nice. And do you think that there are any challenges with MyRiwal, like something that's not working right? For the customers? Do you think there's something that can be improved about my reveal itself?

A: Yeah, there are a lot of challenges we have to do with MyRiwal. And example, what I just told was the own machines from the customers into my repo, so they can get also the data from his own machines, but also to give an A major installing, and I don't want more function to get to do some more function for him out for my reward. So our technical people write MyRiwal repo gets the information from MyRiwal from the more function so we can get faster to the client.

Q: All right. All right. That's nice. And what do you think is something that's really nice about the platform that our customers really like? Like, what do you think is our best feature in MyRiwal?

A: us also many things, but the rapid the co2, co2, and the bream reputation is thinking one of the best what we have now, because the biggest customers wants to get data from how the machines are working. And, yeah.

Q: And do you think as an account manager that would you want to be a part of discussions where they talk about implementing new features?

A: Yes, it's two things, I think it can be better. But many of my colleagues are in discussions with clients, with our customers, and we are going we are getting the space to get more.

Q: Okay. Okay, that's nice. And do you also think that apart from Riwal will, will our customers be open to more new digital solutions? Rather than just more machines? The fleet or more rental options? Do you think if we provide more software based solutions to our customers? Would they be interested in that?

A: Also? Yeah. Maybe I think, all the I think we have to go for one portals. What we have to what I see by customers is that they always say, we have all already many apps for everything. And now is MyRiwal also an app. They want to use one, one app? Yeah. Okay.

Q: All right. And what else do you think should reveal as an organization considered when they're making changes in the app, like MyRiwal? Will itself whenever they're making changes, what do you think we will should consider before making any changes apart from customers or clients?

A: Now we can do more interactive in the in the portal in MyRiwal. So give them more information about the weather, about safety, about what's going on? What has with the rental machines?

Q: Okay, that's, that's really nice. That's basically most of the questions that I had. Do you think that you have any additional inputs? Like do you have any additional points that I should consider while thinking about improving innovation at Riwal according to you, anything about your opinions?

A: Innovation, we are with many things visually and that's that that are separate from MyRiwal. So I don't know if that is that relevant, yeah, it is relevant. So, we have we are we have two when I started Riwal I was with the pipe carriers. So how can we help the customers to get his pipes from sprinkler to get safety at height? So we innovate the pipe carrier. And now they are in our questions about how they can do it with forecasts to get the pipes to hide heavy, heavy, heavy pipes. So also there we are involved with the customer to look for a solution.

Q: Okay, so that's, that's a good point. This brings us to the end of the interview, and I'm going to stop recording right now. If you have any concerns that you want to raise. You can do that ater I stop recording.