

Christopher Ward aligned teams and accelerated product delivery with Smartsheet and Cheetah Transformation

As Christopher Ward scaled its watchmaking operations, siloed teams created costly delays. Partnering with Cheetah Transformation, the brand used Smartsheet to create a single source of truth—improving visibility, collaboration, and speed.

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Niall Madden,
Lead Analyst at
Christopher Ward.



Customer:
Christopher Ward

Industry:
Retail

Organization Size:
Emerging and SMB
(1-199 employees)

Website:
christopherward.com

Region:
EMEA

Christopher Ward is a British watchmaker that has quietly redefined modern luxury watchmaking. Founded in 2004 as the world's first online-only luxury watch brand, it has grown into the UK's number-one watch brand, offering everything from accessible entry-level pieces to complex, award-winning timepieces. With just over 100 employees across the UK, Switzerland, and the US—and manufacturing based in Switzerland—the brand serves a global community of watch enthusiasts. “Our mission is to offer premium watches with really strong value in an industry where luxury often comes at a very high cost,” says Niall Madden, Lead Analyst at Christopher Ward.

Unaligned teams, costly delays

As the company scaled, it realised that its project management setup was becoming increasingly unsustainable. The UK and Swiss offices were working in silos, while teams across design, manufacturing, production, marketing, and retail were disconnected without a single source of truth. “The right information wasn’t reaching the right people at the right time,” explains Madden.

As a result, Christopher Ward faced delays in product launches, leading to customers cancelling orders altogether. “Our meteoric growth completely outpaced our existing processes,” Madden says. “We needed a solution that could cover the full product journey, from an initial watch idea through the development cycle, all the way to shipping.”

A calculated choice of tool and partner

The search for a project management solution ultimately led to Smartsheet’s Intelligent Work Management Platform—which stood out for its practicality, ease of use, and most importantly, the capability to scale with Christopher Ward’s growth.

Smartsheet then introduced the team to Cheetah Transformation to support the implementation. Christopher Ward worked closely with Cheetah to understand and map out needs and requirements. “The Cheetah team was upfront about what was and wasn’t possible,” says Madden. “When something couldn’t be done, they didn’t just say no—they came back with clear alternatives, so we always knew where we stood and never felt stuck.”

A careful, considered rollout

Cheetah translated those discussions into a clear scope of work. “We focus on showing that we understand the client’s challenges and what they’re trying to achieve, then clearly set out the solution, timelines, and costs—so everyone knows what to expect,” explains Gary Thornton, Operations Director at Cheetah Transformation.

From there, Cheetah moved straight into building and rolling out the solution. After internal testing, the platform went through user acceptance testing, where teams reviewed dashboards, metrics, and workflows and flagged what needed adjusting. Cheetah quickly incorporated that feedback—making practical refinements to ensure the solution fit how people actually worked—before moving onto training and onboarding. “The training and support were really strong,” says Madden. “Cheetah stuck with us throughout, and as a result, we



Use case

- Project & Portfolio Management
- Operations Management



Capabilities

- Control Center
- Dashboards and Reporting
- Resource Management

reached 100% adoption across the teams that needed it. We're really glad we chose them instead of trying to build it ourselves."

A comprehensive, centralised, intelligent solution

The result was a project portfolio management (PPM) solution using Smartsheet, supported by Resource Management and dashboards, with Control Center at the core. "Control Center lets us spin up new projects very quickly using templates that already include the documents and information we need," explains Madden.

In day-to-day use, Smartsheet gives each group the right level of visibility. Team members work from personal dashboards that bring all their tasks into one place. "They can immediately see what they need to do and when it's due," says Madden. "From there, they can update progress or flag a question." Managers use rolled-up dashboards to track team workload, spot bottlenecks, and rebalance work during weekly check-ins. Senior leaders, meanwhile, rely on a portfolio dashboard for a high-level view of project health and resourcing, drilling down only when something needs attention.

A bird's-eye view

With a clear structure and a single source of truth, visibility across the business has improved significantly. "Moving from a siloed way of working to a centralised approach has been really helpful," says Madden. "We now have a solid foundation to identify inefficiencies, spot gaps in responsibility, and flag issues early—without having to dig through email chains from months ago."

By laying out tasks, dependencies, and timelines visually, teams can clearly see how work flows from one stage to the next and who owns what. This makes it easier to question assumptions, adjust sequencing, and test changes—such as moving a task earlier or grouping related work under a single owner—while immediately seeing the impact on delivery dates.

Faster, smoother delivery of strategic initiatives

With a smoother workflow, the company has reduced execution errors. "Before Smartsheet, things would constantly slip through the cracks," Madden explains. "With Smartsheet, we can build better checks into the process. And if mistakes still happen, Smartsheet gives us a central place to capture those learnings and continuously improve."

Crucially, Christopher Ward is launching and delivering products faster. "With Smartsheet and Cheetah Transformation, we can predict deadlines earlier and with more confidence," Madden notes. "We're also better at launching watches with stock available from day one, because we can align supply chain planning more effectively with what the marketing team is doing. That inspires customer trust, because in the premium watch world, keeping your word is important."

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A more efficient, consistent, scalable future

With an automated, standardised setup in place, Christopher Ward is also saving time. "We have everything we need at our fingertips, which helps us accelerate our work," Madden notes. "Comments via the Conversation function, in particular, help improve our work velocity and collaboration. We used to get buried in emails. Now, if there's a question or an issue, I can tag the task owner in a comment. They then get notified and can respond or update projects quickly."

Looking ahead, Christopher Ward plans to extend Smartsheet beyond product development and into broader project management across the business. "Smartsheet is well-suited to long-term, cross-functional initiatives because it gives us a single source of truth and a clear path to follow," says Madden. "Moving forward, we expect to rely on it more and more."

