

Case Study

**GEQCOMM**

# Zavanta Software Helps to Achieve Operational Excellence Through Standardized Work

## Our Client

GeoComm, a Granite Partners company headquartered in St. Cloud, Minnesota, was founded in 1995 to provide local governments with turnkey emergency 9-1-1 development services by bringing together 9-1-1 communications and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

In the early start-up days, GeoComm's big innovation was putting the location of a 9-1-1 call on a map in the 9-1-1 call center. This was a major innovation that infused the company when cell phones began proliferating throughout the country, and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated that those calls needed to be mapped in front of 9-1-1 call-takers.

Over the last 28 years, they have grown to serve local, regional, statewide, and military agencies in 49 states, helping keep more than 100 million people safe.

### Services include:

- **School Safety.** Digital mapping and real-time indoor visualization to accelerate school incident response.
- **Vertical Location.** Converts raw positioning measurements from 9-1-1 callers' cell phones into dispatchable locations.
- **GIS.** Enables the collaboration for editing, merging, analyzing, completion of quality control checks, updating, on-going maintenance, and automated packaging and provisioning of GIS data for public safety systems.
- **Mapping Applications.** Consolidates Public Safety Location Intelligence® from local GIS, 9-1-1, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), and trusted third-party data sources, empowering users to receive the right location data on their map at the right time.

# Granite Partners

Helping keep over  
**100 MILLION PEOPLE SAFE**



**17** STATEWIDE  
NG9-1-1 PROJECTS  
across the nation

**OVER 1,500 JURISDICTIONS**  
across the country use  
GeoComm's GIS data  
management solutions



**19,000+ GIS DATASETS**  
have been submitted  
to and processed by  
GeoComm



**Over 1 MILLION  
QUALITY CONTROL**  
checks completed to date

**THE LARGEST** dedicated public  
safety **GIS TEAM IN THE NATION**



**GIS CERTIFIED EXPERTS**  
such as ENPs, GISPs & PMPs

**LEADING 1000s OF PROJECTS**  
supporting statewide  
& military agencies in

**49 STATES**



We build and maintain GIS  
data for roads, addresses  
and NGCS systems  
**ACROSS THE GLOBE**



Trusted GIS data for  
maps of complex  
**INDOOR STRUCTURES**

## Renewed Focus on Continuous Improvement

Granite Partners is a private investment and holding company with a mission to grow companies and create value for all stakeholders, acquired GeoComm in 2013. After an acquisition, it is standard for Granite to initiate Lean Principles and make continuous improvement a priority within the company. They shared these best practices with GeoComm to ease growing pains and improve efficiency.

## Company-Wide Operational Excellence Focus

From 2013 to 2018, GeoComm focused heavily on the basic principle of Lean, eliminating the eight (8) wastes from current processes.

In 2019, GeoComm's senior leadership created a strategic plan with a heightened focus on Operational Excellence as a strategic pillar. This resulted in a focus on another one of the Lean principles, Standard Work.

Prioritizing operational excellence and implementing rigorous processes is critical when lives are at stake. GeoComm prides itself on a strong leadership team focused on customer success, project delivery, and process improvements.

The GeoComm team is committed to the customers and the communities they serve and is dedicated to improving business outcomes and customer satisfaction. They work hard for their customers to make sure systems function as expected and find solutions to meet both industry standards and jurisdiction-specific technical needs.

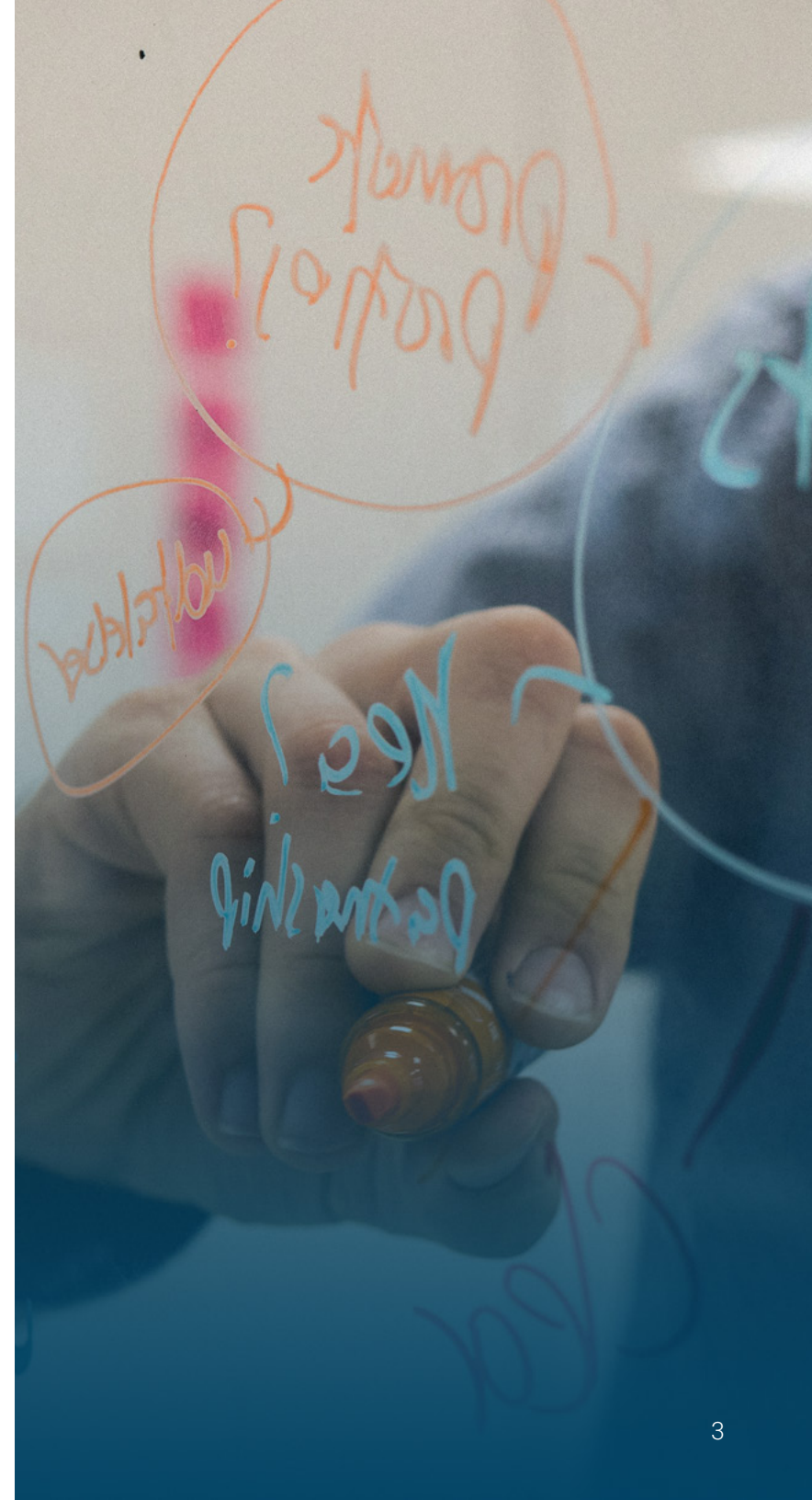
# Business Challenge

## Lean Principle Alignment

At the time of GeoComm’s acquisition, Jessica Koenig was a part of the team for over 10 years and was the internal expert on GeoComm’s processes. Jessica was selected to lead GeoComm on their new Lean journey. Jessica works with Lean Champions in each department to make Lean principles more integrated in day-to-day work. With operational excellence as a strategic pillar, this included an increased focus on the Lean Principle of standard work.

When GeoComm set a strategic goal of Operational Excellence in 2019, initially, the company looked at hiring a consultant to lead this initiative. However, because of Jessica’s role as the Lean Manager, she knew that first, processes needed to be accurately documented in their current state so there was a baseline for improvements.

So, instead of hiring a consultant, Jessica and her manager embarked on determining the best way to get all processes, procedures, and work instructions documented.



## Framework

Their first step was to find a framework to create, define, and organize all processes, procedures, and work instructions.

Jessica and her manager discovered and then customized the American Productivity Quality Center (AQPC) process framework. They identified and created eight (8) workgroups in which of their current processes, procedures, and work instructions could align with. All current state documents were organized within each workgroup and a gap analysis was completed to identify missing processes, procedures, and work instructions.

## Original System Limitations

Each workgroup, process, and procedure were numbered so they could accurately be organized under each workgroup. Through this organization they found that work instructions could be related to multiple procedures which was identified as an issue within their current systems organization. It was determined that a more thorough gap analysis was needed to determine if a different solution was required to replace their existing system so they could be more intuitive and create an organized repository for all standard work documents and policies.

Before Zavanta, GeoComm utilized another system to store all process-related documents. This included hundreds of documents (Word, PDF, PowerPoint) stored in folders loosely organized by department and/or product.

There was no centralized oversight supporting process management. Some of the gaps identified with their original system included:

- **No specified process owners.** Employees edited and uploaded documentation at their convenience. In many cases, people never made time to write and upload documents. This left many employees wasting time searching for work instruction support that didn't exist.
- **No standardization.** Each author used their own approach and style when creating and formatting documents. Process owners organized their folder structure according to their own logic. Nothing was standardized across the company.
- **Subpar search.** Users were frustrated by the trial and error required for search. Valuable time was wasted with the random "search and hope" method. They also lacked a numbering system that could support tracking and search.
- **Insufficient focus on continuous improvement.** While the company had a focus on operational excellence, employees complained that there was not enough time for continuous improvement or an easy way to be notified of aging documentation. Their original system did not offer a system to support the document lifecycle.



## Solution

The first step to achieving operational excellence was to ensure all the current state processes were properly documented. So, they set off with a stronger focus to implement and organize content in one location, establishing a schedule for regular review and updates.

### Solution Search Requirements

Jessica took the lead on the initiative and the search for the right software solution and process system. She made a priority list based on the completed gap analysis. The new solution requirements:

- **Standardized content:** System to help subject matter experts properly document all processes with guided authoring, content overlay templates which would ensure consistent formatting, and structured content.
- **Ease of entry:** Document entry needs to be easy.
- **Automated reminders and version control:** Provide an automated process for notifications for regular document review and updates to support continuous improvement. The system must notify document owners when it's time to review and include version control as people collaborate on documents.
- **Customizable portal:** The ability to configure the portal and tag documents so they can show in multiple locations.
- **Administrative features:** Have single sign-on, workflows, and read verify.

## The Results with Zavanta

A key component of Lean is standard work and Zavanta offered the solution.

**Aligned with Continuous Improvement.** Zavanta supports continuous improvement. The system automatically reminds content owners when it is time to review and update a process. Plus, Jessica meets with each manager every year to walk them through the processes that need to be reviewed and updated for continuous improvement. Zavanta makes it easy for Jessica to run a report and export the processes each manager needs to review.

**Standardized Formatting.** Document templates are set so that each new workgroup, process, procedure, work instruction, and policy is formatted the same. This makes documenting easier for process owners and editors while also standardizing the view for all employees when using the documents.

**Support for SOC2 audits.** GeoComm uses the testing feature in Zavanta for SOC2 compliance audit. They use these campaigns to document and disseminate the employee handbook, company-wide policies procedures, and work instructions. Auditors use these documents as the source to verify and evaluate GeoComm's controls and work processes against established criteria and standards.

**Improved Onboarding Experience.** Jessica meets with every new employee and utilizes Zavanta for the onboarding content. Lean Principles and process are both part of onboarding. It's imperative to have a centralized system and a single source of truth that new employees can access any place, any time. A binder on a shelf isn't going to work, especially with a remote workforce.

*"They all love it. I have not heard one bad thing from a new hire. They say it's the most organized orientation documentation they have ever seen. Zavanta makes onboarding easy."*



## About Comprose

We are dedicated to helping people thrive by gaining access to accurate, updated “how to” knowledge anytime, anyplace, in any language.

Everything we do – our method, our software, our advice – is focused on one thing: helping our clients achieve their strategic goals by getting procedural knowledge out of peoples’ heads and shareable.

We’re passionate about the power of good systems and clear standard operating procedures because of the tangible results we’ve seen our customers achieve: agility, reduced operating costs, faster training, predictability, and greater transparency.