FleetPlus

» FleetPlus has gained far more transparency into its service desk operations with BMC Remedyforce, a solution that is able to grow alongside the company

BEFORE

» An previous approach to service management meant that only a fraction of the 500 tickets logged each month were genuine—the rest were noise, but still capable of clogging IT

» Potential risk was introduced to the organisation because the current service management system was inflexible and information was difficult to extract and report on

» Technology was challenged to support and respond to the company’s rapid growth rate

AFTER

» The adoption of BMC Remedyforce Service Desk has introduced greater consistency, discipline, and transparency, improving service levels and reducing risk

» The insight that can be gleaned allows proactive assessment of business hotspots, permitting resources to be diverted where and when they are most needed

» A cloud-based solution, BMC Remedyforce can be scaled up quickly and cost effectively in order to meet rising demand as FleetPlus grows

For FleetPlus, a Sydney-based fleet management and leasing business, growth is the catalyst for IT reform—in particular, the need to institute robust and scalable systems and processes. The previous approach to service desk management had involved staff just emailing their requests to the help desk. About 500 tickets a month were generated as a result, but only a fraction represented genuine service requests.

The functionality of the existing service management software was inefficient and was not going to be able to support FleetPlus as it continued to grow. But, the company did not want to weigh itself down with a huge capital outlay for a new system. By adopting the cloud-based BMC Remedyforce Service Desk, FleetPlus has secured far more transparency into its service desk operations, and has found a solution able to grow in synch with the company.

GROWTH DEMANDS AGILITY AND EFFICIENCY

For the last decade, Sydney-based fleet management and leasing business FleetPlus has achieved double digit growth each year, transforming from a small company into a medium-sized organisation. Now, with 115 employees and clients across Australia and New Zealand, FleetPlus is the largest privately owned leasing and fleet management company in the country. Clients include Fairfax, Lion Nathan, and Fuji Xerox.

Like any fast-growing company, there is pressure to keep costs down and seek out
efficiencies across the business, but there is also a parallel requirement to be responsive to changing market conditions and client needs.

In early 2012, the company hired David Tanti as its Head of Information Technology. One of his first priorities was to reform the service desk in the organisation, and recast the reputation of the IT group as one that was quick to respond to changing business requirements and supportive of business growth.

“When I came here, I realised there was a requirement to enhance the change management process, visibility and tracking of requests, and the service desk system to keep pace with the company’s strategic growth,” says Tanti.

“When you operate in a dynamic environment there is a tendency for IT to do everything really quickly and consequently it can lack structure or direction. That’s what I was brought in for—to mitigate any potential risks and set the company in the right strategic direction regarding applications and systems.”

FleetPlus runs Microsoft applications in administration, and uses an Australian-developed web-based system called Catch-e that provides quoting and leasing applications. They also use Greentree for back-end accounting and system management.

In the past, when the leasing team asked for changes to the Catch-e application, the IT team often developed custom software add-ons to meet user requirements—in essence, the IT team was responding to user demands by creating fresh legacy. Tanti quickly recognised that this approach had injected unacceptable levels of risk and he needed to introduce a process that would allow better management of change requests relating to Catch-e. It was imperative for Tanti that “all critical processes are managed within Fleetplus key systems.”

The main problem was that service desk management hadn’t kept up with the company’s growth.

A freeware system that met only minimal requirements was initially installed. Subsequent customization of the solution over many years resulted in even more legacy code that prohibited rapid change and growth.

And while the technology team did its best, they did not have a rigorous understanding of proper change management or service management. Tanti, who is ITIL certified, quickly identified the problems.

“In my last job, we spent a lot of money for a similar on-premise system, and that didn’t include the CapEx we had to spend on hardware. To get a service desk system running and fully licenced for under $15,000 is unbelievable. To me, that’s the power of the cloud.”

DAVID TANTI
HEAD OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
management capabilities—it was happening, but it wasn’t being recorded in a consistent authorised manner.”

At the same time, tickets were being generated for no real reason, creating the impression of a huge backlog of work. “Users would often cc the helpdesk on an email, however, this would raise a ticket although there was actually nothing for IT to resolve.

I had limited visibility into the real reasons for the tickets or where our problem areas were; there was no reporting or analysis of problem areas or problem departments,” which would have allowed IT to proactively focus on real issues. At the same time, the business perception of the technology group was being tarnished because of the aging of tickets. “The general complaint was about the lack of visibility into what IT was doing: Users logged tickets through email but had no way of tracking their status, ageing or number of outstanding or resolved tickets.”

“SPEED, CERTAINTY, AND SOLUTIONS
By the time Tanti lifted the lid on the problem, IT was receiving around 500 tickets a month—but only 300 were ‘real’ tickets. The rest were noise, but noise that was still clogging his department and introducing significant levels of risk due to the lack of transparency.

“This was also about educating the end users around the importance of logging tickets so that over time IT will be able to better respond to their needs in a more proactive manner says Tanti, who adds that it has been important to educate business users about the efficient and proper use of service management tools.

Meanwhile, “For my team, it’s about continual service improvement, better communication and trying to resolve the users’ issues as quickly as possible.”

Having scoped the problem, Tanti sought a solution—looking in particular for a cloud-based system.

His team had already looked at ManageEngine’s ServiceDesk Plus, but having worked with BMC tools in the past, Tanti also wanted to check out the BMC Remedyforce system, and also consider Microsoft’s tool.

BMC Remedyforce quickly earned its stripes. The fact that it was ITIL compliant and based on the Salesforce platform particularly resonated for Tanti, as he may look to use the Salesforce CRM in the future. Being cloud based, the system can initially be rolled out internally, but eventually access may be provided to FleetPlus’s own customers, all of whom can potentially have logins to the Catch-e system.

Being able to access BMC Remedyforce via the Web means they could directly contact FleetPlus

“My aim is to develop a fantastic IT department that is adding value, with quick response times. Eventually, I’d like to make a helpdesk obsolete, because we are so proactive that we see problems ahead of the user. A good service management system will allow you to do that. It’s a lot of hard work—but that’s what you need to do.”

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HEAD OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
for password resets. Previously, service requests have been filtered through account managers; bringing them into the BMC Remedyforce fold would streamline and speed the process.

Tanti signed the agreement in May and went live in June 2012, working with BMC’s partner Arxxus on the installation. While Tanti had to battle some early internal pushback regarding perceptions about cloud security and data sovereignty, he said that was swiftly overcome. Although the U.S.-based cloud does exhibit some latency issues, he said security and privacy concerns had been allayed.

“Organisations have to consider it—but the organisations that support these data centres can provide information regarding security and sovereignty issues. The fact that banks are other financial institutions use this infrastructure should provide an additional level of comfort, although I don’t think that the legislation has quite caught up around the cloud,” Tanti adds.

“In previous employment we were required to spend significantly more money for a similar on-premise system, and that didn’t include Capital Expenditure. To get a service desk system licenced and implemented under $15,000 reinforces the power of the cloud.”

**THE TRANSITION TO THE CLOUD**

Over a period of three weeks, users were educated about and transitioned to the new system. End users can either access the system via the firm’s intranet, or through the Remedyforce website. “I purposely made it that way—they have to go to a website and log in. I wanted them to think ‘do I want to log a ticket?’ I want to get them out of the bad habits of the past, and purposefully log a ticket.”

Once the ticket is logged, it is acknowledged and assigned, and end users are regularly informed about its progress. When the issue is resolved, the user is alerted and the ticket is closed. Management is also provided a quarterly dashboard showing them the performance of the company’s service desk. Aside from users having much better visibility into progress, Tanti has a window on the service desk and can quickly identify trouble spots, allowing him to proactively head off potential issues before they arise.

He said about 200–300 (now genuine) tickets are being logged each month through the system, and expects that will rise as the business continues to grow.

Tanti says the system has helped mitigate risk thanks to the clear and transparent change management process and change management policy. In addition, he says, “There are a lot of soft benefits—plus better service to customers—but it’s hard to put that in dollar terms.”

At present, FleetPlus has rolled out the basic version of BMC Remedyforce. But in the future, they may turn on the Salesforce Chatter functions, which allow users to employ the enterprise social network to communicate with each other.

He can also envision BMC Remedyforce being deployed elsewhere in FleetPlus. “We
have call centres here for repairs and maintenance and sales, and, at the moment, it’s all tracked through emails which makes it very difficult for reporting. An email comes into the public folder and this is then allocated out to staff. We are investigating ways to see how these emails can be tracked and assigned through Remedyforce. The additional visibility, including tracking and measurement, would be beneficial to that area,” Tanti says.

Having installed the system, he is now planning to train his IT team in additional skills through ITIL certification, in order to further embed the more robust service desk management framework.

“For me, it’s about following the right process to achieve that continual systems and process improvement, which is what I’m passionate about.”

“My aim is to continually develop the IT department so that it continues to add value to the business. The aim is to reduce the number of tickets being logged through proactive behavior and by resolving the underlying cause of issues so they don’t repeat themselves. A good service management system will allow you to do that. It’s a lot of hard work—but that’s what you need to strive for.”

ABOUT FLEETPLUS
FleetPlus offers a comprehensive range of vehicle leasing solutions and services to clients across Australia and New Zealand. With offices located in Australia and New Zealand, FleetPlus has established long-term relationships with clients ranging from large household brands to small businesses, offering solutions including fleet leasing and management, novated leasing, salary packaging, and finance.

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