



Novant Health

» Stronger IT service management sustains Novant Health's corporate vision to "deliver a remarkable patient experience."

BEFORE

- » Point solutions didn't provide a cohesive approach to IT service management
- » Planned/unplanned changes resulted in disruptions to users and high call volumes for the support center
- » Lack of insight into changes hampered troubleshooting/resolution
- » Complex environment, including physical and virtual machines, present management challenges

AFTER

- » Integrated processes for incident, change, and other ITSM disciplines drives efficiency
- » Single change process across teams significantly reduced disruptions and cut help desk call volumes
- » Visibility into changes helps support staff troubleshoot/resolve problems in less time
- » Intelligence built into software tools will help in the future by maintaining accurate data about physical and virtual environments



GEOGRAPHY

Southeastern United States

INDUSTRY

Health Care

SOLUTIONS

BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite

BMC Atrium Configuration Management Database

BMC Atrium Discovery and Dependency Mapping

There is no such thing as "9 to 5" in a hospital or urgent care facility. Emergency rooms provide 24/7 care for victims of injury and illness. Hospital staffers monitor and care for patients day and night.

Information technologies enable medical professionals to do their jobs effectively, whether they are delivering medical assistance in the emergency room or providing routine care in a hospital, clinic, or medical office. According to Antoine Lindsay, enterprise architect for Novant Health, there are no holidays for IT in this round-the-clock environment.

Novant's Information Technology Services (ITS) group maintains many critical applications that support every aspect of patient care, from lab testing, dispensing medications, and managing medical records, to admitting patients and billing for services. Keeping these systems available is vital to achieving Novant's objective to "deliver the most remarkable patient experience, in every dimension, every time."

Novant has garnered numerous awards related to quality patient care, including the Professional Research Consultants' President's Award for commitment to service excellence for patients, physicians, and employees; the prestigious Ernest A. Codman Award from the Joint Commission; and a ranking of 17 in Modern Healthcare's 2010 list of the top 100 integrated health networks in the United States.

Over the past two years, Novant Health's ITS group has conducted a major overhaul of its IT service management (ITSM) processes and tools in support of Novant's patient care objectives. The overhaul includes the adoption of IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL®) best practice processes, ITIL training for the ITS staff, and the replacement of its outdated service center tools with BMC Remedy IT Service Management applications. In particular, the change management application is helping the IT staff with scheduling changes, protocols, and categorizations. Ultimately the application will enforce adherence to formal change processes, ensuring that changes to critical systems are successful.

FROM TACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO A COHESIVE STRATEGY

When Novant implemented its first BMC solution, the organization's approach was a tactical one that involved replacing an outdated help desk tool with a more robust system for the support center. At the same time, ITIL was gaining traction around the world and ITS began exploring how Novant might benefit from adopting the ITIL framework.

With the support center solution in place, the staff turned its attention to change management. Independent audits had uncovered weaknesses in the change control process. In response, ITS evaluated available change management software and once again chose BMC Software to provide the solution.

To help with the implementation, Novant engaged IT Prophets, a BMC Premier Partner specializing in project management, system architecture, development, and deployment. "BMC and IT Prophets introduced our executives to ITIL," Lindsay said. "They did a maturity assessment of our environment and our executives participated in a BMC education program called 'Airport Simulation,' which helped them better understand the value of ITIL."

Novant continued, however, to maintain its focus on the major problem at that time, which was change management. According to Lindsay, the epiphany came in August of 2008. Reports from research firms, such as Gartner, Inc., and Forrester Research,

combined with recommendations from Novant's auditing firm, convinced management that moving from a tactical approach to a full-fledged ITSM strategy compatible with ITIL would be essential to supporting Novant's goal of providing a remarkable patient experience.

"When we selected BMC Software for our support center and change management needs, we were strictly focused on point solutions," Lindsay said. "We didn't know that these solutions were compatible with the ITIL framework and that BMC had a comprehensive solution. When we started developing our strategy, we realized what a great choice we had made — and that the BMC solutions would support our strategic service management initiative."

IT Prophets is assisting Novant with process innovation, process design, and the implementation of the BMC solutions. In addition to the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite, Novant is also implementing BMC Atrium Discovery and Dependency Mapping and BMC Atrium Configuration Management Database (CMDB).

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ANTOINE LINDSAY
ENTERPRISE ARCHITECT

With automated discovery and the CMDB by BMC, Novant can capture and maintain information on physical and virtual IT assets and the relationships among them. The CMDB provides an ITIL-recommended “single source of truth” for configuration information on all resources that comprise IT infrastructure. The ITSM applications integrate with each other through the CMDB, which will enable ITS to drive further efficiencies. For example, ITS will be able to tightly link changes and incidents, which will eliminate duplication of effort.

POSITIVE RESULTS

Novant is experiencing a variety of benefits as a result of BMC solutions. The support center is now able to respond to end-user issues and requests more effectively. Moreover, having a single change process across teams using the BMC change management application has helped with change schedules, scheduling conflicts, adherence with protocols and procedures, and change categorizations related to risk levels.

The infrastructure support group has seen a decrease in incidents and in unnecessary network traffic as a result of more rigorous change process. Members of this group reported that greater insight into the changes that have occurred has improved troubleshooting and problem resolution. One technician described how, after receiving an incident ticket, he checked the change management system to see if a recent change might be at the root of the problem. He quickly discovered that a particular domain server had been taken offline and was creating network issues. He was able to contact the right person quickly and get the server turned back on. That resolved the immediate problem. Moreover, it provided insight that has helped with developing a decommissioning plan.

NEXT STEPS

Novant plans to continue expanding its use of BMC solutions to manage both physical and virtual servers across its mainframes and its Windows and UNIX servers. The environment includes two mainframes, 80 physical UNIX servers, 875 physical Windows servers, and 650 VMware servers. “We’re building a foundation for configuration management using the discovery tool and the CMDB,” Lindsay said. “That will help us better understand the environment, the services that we deliver to our customers, and how components of the infrastructure impact the quality of service we provide.”

CUSTOMER’S FINAL WORDS

“Our goal in ITS is to keep improving the quality of service,” Lindsay concluded. “With ITIL processes, the training we’re doing for our people, and the solutions from BMC, we’re putting in a foundation that will allow us to focus on delivering remarkable patient care as Novant continues to partner with new hospitals and adapt to outside factors like health care reform.”

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ABOUT NOVANT HEALTH

Novant Health is a not-for-profit integrated group of hospitals and physician practices, caring for patients and communities in North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina. The Novant Medical Group consists of 1,094 physicians in 345 clinic locations. In addition to its 12 hospitals, Novant Health also encompasses nursing homes and assisted living, outpatient surgery centers, medical plazas, rehabilitation programs, community health outreach programs, and the national MedQuest organization with 100 diagnostic imaging centers in 11 states.

ABOUT IT PROPHETS, LLC

IT Prophets is dedicated to providing Innovative Insight into the IT Service Management environments of organizations throughout North America. A proven team of professionals, IT Prophets delivers software products and services that will: transition organizations from a tactically focused to a strategic support maturity model; attain customer centric and business centric IT service management deployments; install large scale BMC Remedy and BMC Service Desk Express (SDE) implementations; enable robust ITSM SharePoint collaboration; deliver reliable integrations; and provide effective Remedy, SDE and ITIL training and support. IT Prophets is a woman-owned business and is headquartered in Atlanta, GA. Visit www.itprophets.com for more information.

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