



# University of Michigan

## University of Michigan Improves Efficiencies with BMC Remedy

### Geography

North America

### Industry

Education

### Business Need

Streamline and automate processes to increase activity.

### Solution

The University of Michigan chose BMC Remedy Action Request System for incident tracking.

### Results

- > 33 percent reduction in repair turnaround time
- > 50 percent reduction in inventory count time
- > Rapid, economical integration of wireless capabilities

Institutes of higher education face a tough challenge in providing reliable, high-performance telecommunications services to support the computing needs of their students, faculty, and staff. At the University of Michigan, the IT Communications team delivers these services effectively and economically. Acting as an internal telephone company, IT Communications provides voice, video, and data services to nearly 107,000 internal customers throughout the university and its hospitals and health centers.

Tight budgets are the norm in the education environment, and a recent 10 percent cut in state funding has made it more crucial than ever for IT Communications to “do more with less.” The team is responding to budget constraints by continually streamlining and automating processes to increase productivity. The BMC Remedy Service Process Management platform, BMC® Remedy® Action Request System® (AR System®) and Aeroprise mobile workflow management products are playing an essential role in eliminating cumbersome manual tasks, automating workflow, and providing wireless access from mobile devices. As a result, the IT Communications department now has the tools it needs to ensure reliable delivery of services and rapid response to customer issues.

### IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Before implementing AR System in 1998, the IT Communications repair department was using a homegrown trouble tracking system. This outdated system had a high failure rate and database issues were occurring daily. The repair staff had to work with multiple programs to enter a ticket, look up cable assignments, and determine which technicians were on call. Moreover, any changes to the system required specialized programming skills. Even the creation of new queries and reports was time consuming and costly.

To solve this problem, it was decided to develop a new trouble tracking solution. They elected AR System as the development platform because of its ease of development, automated workflow, and notification capabilities. University Technologist Tom Shurmur says, “We use AR System’s notifications, alerts, and e-mail capabilities in all of our Remedy applications to keep everyone informed and to keep things moving.”

The trouble ticket application built on AR System has dramatically improved the amount of information tracked on customers, but has still reduced the time needed to process a trouble ticket by as much as one third. Customers are better informed, because they can view the real-time status of their tickets. In addition, when the network monitoring system detects a problem, and the issue is entered in AR System, the application automatically triggers an email to the customers affected. “They’re getting emails about a problem they didn’t even know they had,” states Shurmur. The application has also improved accountability. For example, if a ticket is in the system for more than 24 hours, a reminder is sent to the person to whom it was originally assigned, as well as to that person’s manager.

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Tom Shurmur  
Technologist  
University of Michigan

#### Key Products Used

> BMC® Remedy® Action Request System®

### GOING MOBILE WITH AEROPRISE

In 2002, the IT Communications warehouse team was considering hiring a third party to create a custom application to automate the weekly, monthly, and semi-annual inventory counts of its telecommunications equipment. Automating the process would also give the team a better way to track inventory. As the team developed their requirements, they determined that the need to incorporate Symbol handheld bar-code readers made wireless connectivity essential. In addition, integration with the existing Pinnacle telemanagement system was a critical requirement.

When Shurmur learned of these requirements, he proposed an application built on AR System. He knew that AR System could eliminate the paper-based process for managing inventory and could also easily link to the company’s existing telemanagement system. For the wireless component, he suggested the Aeroprise mobile workflow management solution. Aeroprise, a Remedy Technology Alliance Partner, built its solution on Remedy’s AR System. This common AR System foundation could ensure that the Aeroprise integration would be fast and economical. Additionally, Aeroprise supports many different mobile devices, including bar-code readers, mobile phones, and personal digital assistants.

Shurmur began developing the inventory application on AR System in early December 2002. By early January 2003, the warehouse staff had started using the combined Remedy/Aeroprise solution, realizing immediate benefits. One such benefit is that annual inventory count previously requiring a two-day period can now be completed in only four hours. In addition, inventory figures are captured in real time by Symbol barcode devices, eliminating at least a day of effort to enter this data manually into the telemanagement system. Through the combined Aeroprise/Remedy solution, the inventory count data is automatically entered into the AR System-based inventory application. Remedy then looks at the inventory database, compares the data, and provides a list of discrepancies. The time required to complete the overall process has been cut in half.

### GETTING MAXIMUM RETURN ON INVESTMENT

When management realized how much time the warehouse staff was saving, they requested a wireless pilot for the field technicians with connectivity to the trouble tracking system. This connectivity, also enabled through integration with Aeroprise, is now saving substantial time for the field technicians. Previously, when new tickets were assigned, field technicians would be paged and would then need to locate a fax machine where they could receive the relevant details of the ticket. Now, they simply pull up tickets on their cell phones.

Bringing Aeroprise wireless capabilities to Remedy applications proved to be extremely easy. In the first week and a half after receiving the Aeroprise product, Shurmur had integrated it with the trouble tracking, inventory, project tracking, and cable assignment applications. He added that, like the Remedy solution, Aeroprise is easy to adapt. Consequently, he was able to modify forms on the wireless devices virtually overnight in response to requests from users.

### FUTURE PLANS

Shurmur has already developed additional applications on AR System for bill-of-materials, project tracking, voice-over-IP, cable reel tracking, and inventory count applications—and the requests for new applications continue to come in. The IT Communications team is continuing to look for ways to leverage its investment in the Remedy and Aeroprise solutions by creating new applications with built-in wireless capabilities.

**About the University of Michigan**

Rich in a tradition of academic excellence, the University of Michigan is consistently ranked at the undergraduate and graduate levels as one of the nation's top ten public institutions by U.S. News and World Report. The university has campuses in Ann Arbor, Flint, and Dearborn, Michigan, and offers more than 200 degree programs.

**About BMC Software**

BMC Software delivers the solutions IT needs to increase business value through better management of technology and IT processes. Our industry-leading Business Service Management solutions help you reduce cost, lower risk of business disruption, and benefit from an IT infrastructure built to support business growth and flexibility. Only BMC provides best practice IT processes, automated technology management, and award-winning BMC® Atrium® technologies that offer a shared view into how IT services support business priorities. Known for enterprise solutions that span mainframe, distributed systems, and end-user devices, BMC also delivers solutions that address the unique challenges of the midsized business. Founded in 1980, BMC has offices worldwide and fiscal 2006 revenues of more than \$1.49 billion. Activate your business with the power of IT. [www.bmc.com](http://www.bmc.com).



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