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— Ivan Ivanov, IT Solution Lead, ActivTrades

ACTIVTRADES

Customer

ActivTrades

Highlights

Leading independent broker moves 99% of IT service requests online, freeing up IT teams to focus on innovation-led business projects

Headquarters

London

Geographies

EMEA

Employees

230

Business

Financial Services

Partner

ITCE

Challenges

- Lengthy resolution times and slow, complex processes for incident and change requests, due to home-grown, legacy ITSM
- Active avoidance of ticketing system by employees led to chaotic processes and workflows, with hundreds of aged tickets
- Lack of focus on business-led projects because day-to-day issue resolution was taking up the majority of IT’s time

ActivTrades Makes a Sure Bet on ServiceNow

ActivTrades is a leading independent broker that provides trading services in Forex, Contracts for Difference (CFDs), and Spread Betting. A tech-focused company, ActivTrades provides a range of sophisticated tools and services for its clients, including fully-automated, deal-execution systems and both proprietary and industry trading platforms.

A 20-person IT operations team supports the IT requirements of ActivTrades employees and all the systems and tools in use. However, as the growing organisation continued to expand, it became increasingly clear that its home-grown ticketing system could no longer support the company.

“We were using a free, open source system to deliver IT support to all our employees, which has been configured by numerous people who had joined and subsequently moved away from the IT department,” explains Ivan Ivanov, systems administrator, ActivTrades. “The result was a legacy IT set-up with limited features and no flexibility to scale with our requirements.”

ActivTrades needed to address its chaotic approach to IT service delivery, the lengthy request fulfilment processes, and slow resolution times. There were no standardised templates for raising a ticket and no guidance on the information required, so issues couldn’t easily be articulated. Often, users would avoid the ticketing system altogether and simply visit an IT person at their desk.

“There was a perception across the organisation that our ticketing system was ineffective, chaotic, and inefficient,” says Ivanov. “We needed a platform to streamline IT service delivery and match the sophistication of our trading tools.”

Intelligent service delivery

As a fast-growing organisation, ActivTrades moved quickly to shape a new IT service management strategy and selected ServiceNow to underpin its approach.

Working with IT and management consultancy ITCE, ActivTrades planned a phased approach to its adoption of the Now Platform™. In just three months, ITCE and ActivTrades had scoped and implemented release one of ServiceNow, focusing on the areas that would deliver maximum value in minimum time: IT Service Management, Service Portal, Incident and Change Management, and Project Management.

“ServiceNow offered the best functionality on the market and the cloud delivery model allowed us to move quickly with our plans, with a fast and straightforward implementation. We spent around 10% of our time on technical aspects and 90% on designing the functionality of our new ServiceNow platform to ensure maximum value from the first release,” said Ivanov.

Solutions

- ServiceNow® IT Service Management
- Service Portal
- Incident and Change Management
- Project Management

Results

- Using the IT service portal is second nature, with employees raising 99% of all tickets through ServiceNow
- Dramatic decrease in resolution times has ensured age of tickets does not exceed 48 hours
- Up to 60 minutes removed from the discovery phase alone for incidents, freeing up IT teams to focus on IT-led business projects

Empowering employees with intelligent workflows

ServiceNow created new and improved workflows that have significantly improved the efficiency of the IT service delivery process and eradicated desk-side visits.

Through a single sign-on function, employees land on the service portal home page, where they can select from two options: submit an issue, for example if something has stopped working; or make a request, for example to gain access to a particular system.

A series of drop-down options, customised per previously selected options, now serve to ensure accurate and relevant information is provided against each request and issue, and these are then automatically assigned to the most appropriate IT group.

“ServiceNow has brought simplicity and efficiency to service delivery at ActivTrades. Standardised templates and intelligent workflows mean IT teams get exactly the information they need to take action and resolve an issue quickly. There’s minimum effort for everyone involved, with no back-and-forth required between an employee and the IT service desk to clarify any missing details,” said Ivanov.

Fast resolution with 99% uptake

A notable benefit of using ServiceNow has been the dramatic reduction in the number of people visiting the IT support team at their desks.

“Before ServiceNow, our employees were trying every way they could to approach IT about a query or problem except using the ticketing system,” said Ivanov. “Today, 99% of employee requests and issues go through the Now platform. If someone comes up to our desk we know they want to catch up with us personally, and not talk about IT!”

Issue resolution and request fulfilment times have also decreased dramatically, as ServiceNow removes the burden on internal users and IT to explain and define a problem or query. Aged tickets do not exceed 48 hours.

“By using pre-populated information, we have significantly reduced the end-to-end time between a ticket being raised and completed. On more complicated issues, we’ve removed up to an hour from the discovery phase alone, as IT no longer needs to analyse what the problem might be. With around 70-80 tickets a week, that’s a lot of time we are freeing up,” explained Ivanov.

More time for projects and innovation

The efficiencies that ServiceNow has delivered in the IT service desk have enabled Ivanov and his team to better balance the issues of internal users with the demands of the business for innovation-led projects.

ServiceNow® Project Management was introduced as part of phase one to support the focus on multiple projects and certification in ISO 27001, ensuring Ivanov’s team can manage and resource key activities that support business development and growth.

“ServiceNow has enabled us to create a highly efficient and structured IT support that allows us much more time for innovation and business-focused projects to support other departments,” said Ivanov. “In a fast-paced, multi-tasking IT environment, we have created the serenity to work smarter and support the business better.”

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Expanding service delivery within IT and beyond

Following phase one of the ServiceNow implementation, ActivTrades is moving quickly to expand the Now Platform into other areas of IT, including knowledge management, problem management, asset management, and CMBD.

For Ivanov, the introduction of SLAs on the Now Platform is also key, with SLA definitions that are clearly aligned with the requirements of the ActivTrades business. “IT needs to be accountable to the business and that’s why SLAs are critical. With ServiceNow, we are ideally placed to set and meet our SLAs and prove our value to the business.”

Given the success of ServiceNow to date, Ivanov is keen to involve other departments on the platform.

“Technology lies at the heart of the ActivTrades business and the more our business grows, the more ServiceNow can grow with us and adapt to our needs. ServiceNow is an enterprise service delivery platform and I can easily see how it can extend across our organisation to contribute further to ActivTrades’ success,” Ivanov concludes.