Making services insanely easy to access—and sell

Commercial real estate leader drives $2.2 billion in new customer revenue using the Now Platform

The value of a property is directly tied to how well it’s maintained. This axiom also applies to the world of commercial real estate, because everything from lease rates and occupancy levels to tenant productivity to the reputation of the property owner depends on the condition of the facilities.

That’s why one of the world’s leading commercial real estate firms has consistently made facilities services a top priority. Whether it’s replacing a cracked window, repairing a malfunctioning elevator, or responding to a gas leak, the company is dedicated to responsive, high-quality service.

The firm employs more than 20,000 facilities management professionals and more than 10,000 engineering and technical professionals to enhance the workplace environment and improve staff efficiencies in its thousands of commercial properties worldwide.

However, service delivery can become extremely complex when millions of square feet of commercial space are involved. How do you accelerate the service request process without overwhelming service staff? How do you make the experience smooth, fast, and painless for end users? How do you cut costs while continuing to increase responsiveness? How do you expand your offerings so you can grow your customer base and revenue?

Looking to improve its self-service portal

The company began investigating new ways to improve its self-service portal for requesting facilities services. At that time, most service requests were still phoned in to a call center where representatives opened trouble tickets manually. There was a self-service option, but the existing portal was not always optimal. The existing platform didn’t always provide adequate context or personalization for users: Language options were limited, multiple sign-ons were required, etc.
Moreover, the back-end processes for creating, configuring, and deploying portals were difficult and costly. The company was completely dependent on its vendor to turn around updates.

As a longtime, trusted partner to the real estate firm, ServiceNow felt it was in a prime position to recommend and explore innovative new options. However, the company associated ServiceNow primarily with IT service management (ITSM) solutions. The company wasn’t sure the Now Platform had the breadth, depth, and scale to support its ambitious plans for better workplace solutions.

ServiceNow proposed letting the ServiceNow Inspire team show the real estate company a better experience. Inspire is an executive advisory program made up of former CIOs and industry consultants. The Inspire team requested a face-to-face meeting with the company’s executive leadership team, not only to show them what was possible but also to create a roadmap and strategy to transform the workplace services portal and create new revenue opportunities. With a hint of reluctance, senior executives at the company agreed.

**From doubt to incredulity**

The initial meeting with the Inspire team was an open discussion focused on business objectives and the role of the workplace services portal in accomplishing business goals.

Specifically, the company was looking to accomplish five strategic objectives:

- Increase adoption of the self-service portal
- Provide sales personnel with the tools they need to more easily sell workplace services
- Raise customer satisfaction levels
- Encourage customers to adopt more services
- Lower the TCO of the portal

At the meeting, the ServiceNow Inspire team unveiled a proof of concept for a self-service portal that could accomplish these goals and much more. Building on the functionality of the Now Platform the company had already deployed, the new workplace services portal designed by ServiceNow Inspire delivered the following capabilities:

- A slick, intuitive interface that provides a fantastic user experience for requesting services and that increases user satisfaction and adoption rates for the self-service portal
- A mobile display that expands service portal access to any type of mobile device and further accelerates portal adoption
- An easy registration process with single sign-on (SSO) that streamlines the service request process for first-time users
- The Configurator feature that allows extensive customization of the portal elements—empowering both the company’s sales team and customers to get the most from the company’s platform—and offers personalized, custom-configured services under the company’s own logo
- A single system of engagement that consolidates four legacy supporting systems into one, cutting TCO
- Automated data synchronization from integrated work order management systems that drives further business process improvement at a lower TCO

**Business Outcomes & Value Realization**

- Helps secure and maintain revenue from existing customers amounting to $1.2 billion annually
- Drives revenue from new customers for an additional $1 billion annually
- IT operational cost savings due to:
  - Lower TCO on the Now Platform, largely due to avoidance of new application purchases, maintenance, and upgrade fees over the next five years
  - IT operational cost savings due to reduced efforts to onboard new customers
  - Able to avoid adding additional FTEs to handle increased call volumes as new customers are brought on board
- Annual cost reduction resulting from improved data integrity and fewer incidents to resolve
The visual, intuitive POC made it easy for executives to see the business value. It was also clear that the Configurator feature would make it easier for customers to resell personalized services under their own brand, expanding the revenue potential. “You are almost making it too easy for our sellers to sell,” said one senior executive.

**Aggressive goals measured by tangible metrics**

In subsequent meetings, the company's executives and the ServiceNow Inspire team fleshed out the workplace services portal transformation roadmap and formalized the goals, milestones, and timelines. The key financial metric was the realistic, achievable goal of $2.2 billion in revenue attainment per year, including $1 billion in new customer revenue and $1 billion in revenue protection.

At the same time, the Inspire Labs team, along with the ServiceNow® Professional Services organization, continued to press ahead with the development, functional testing, and user acceptance testing of the enhanced portal interface.

The deadlines were astonishingly aggressive. For example, the timeframe between the initial mock-up and production readiness of the portal was just a few months. Moreover, the first customers were expected to begin onboarding the new portal just weeks after going live.

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At the same time, the company continues to hold ServiceNow to extremely high standards in terms of delivery. Being able to execute quickly and to consistently measure success through objective KPIs were critical. The projected financial goal of $2.2 billion in revenue attainment was the overarching metric, but ServiceNow Inspire has also helped define specific value realization measures. Examples of these metrics include:

• Manual process efficiency gains (manual versus automated time savings across various departments)
• Reduced time and resources required to configure and maintain portal attributes
• Reduced labor hours to integrate with new customer services
• Reduced cost of portal downtime (per hour/month/year)
• Increased speed to revenue attainment (customer onboarding velocity)
• Internal user experience satisfaction ratings (measured by Net Promoter Score)
• External customer experience satisfaction ratings
• Reduced time (labor hours) to integrate portal with existing services and/or new acquisitions

The project started with a simple concept: Enable the company to do a service request portal in a better way. The proof of concept ServiceNow Inspire created had capabilities its leadership team hadn’t yet imagined. Today, it has morphed into the full-blown rollout that is making a multibillion-dollar difference for this extremely satisfied customer.