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— Jennifer Lau, Director of IT, Hong Kong Baptist University



Hong Kong Baptist University Boosts Service Desk User Satisfaction with ServiceNow

Highlights

University deploys ServiceNow to improve service desk user satisfaction levels and allocate resources more efficiently.

Organisation:

Hong Kong Baptist University

Business

Education

Headquarters

Hong Kong

Geographies

Hong Kong

Modern ITSM

- ServiceNow Incident Management
- ServiceNow Request Management
- ServiceNow Service Catalog

Established in 1956, Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) runs eight faculties and schools that offer undergraduate, associate degree, and higher degree programs, as well as research postgraduate programs.

The Baptist Convention of Hong Kong initially founded HKBU as Hong Kong Baptist College and the institution gained university status in 1994. Over the years, HKBU has been committed to academic excellence in teaching, research, and service, and to the development of the whole person in all these endeavours, built upon the heritage of Christian higher education.

Changes present opportunity to improve service management

Increasing demand and expectation for high-quality IT services prompted the IT team to provide users with standardised, effective IT service desk services. “These changes presented an opportunity for us to uplift our service management position,” said Jennifer Lau, Director of IT, Hong Kong Baptist University. “This included capturing information about how we were deploying our IT resources and quantitative figures that could help senior management formulate strategies to help HKBU achieve its goals.”

HKBU’s existing systems could not provide adequate quantitative figures. “We had relied on qualitative research to determine how we deploy IT resources,” Lau said. “However, if we wanted to best allocate resources and prioritise action items to improve our systems, we had to implement a standardised mechanism to measure our performance.”

HKBU also needed to implement systems to manage user requests and capture incident cause and resolution histories. Team members frequently communicated with users by phone or email, but details on the communication, course of action, and outcomes might not have been fully and consistently recorded.

“We needed a more standardised way of handling incidents and inquiries, and as the scope of the services we provided to users increased, a formal mechanism to capture the causes of incidents,” Lau said. “We were looking for more systematic ways to quantitatively measure user satisfaction.”

Formalising workload management

The University needed to formalise the process of assigning support team members to resolve incidents. The IT function had relied heavily on the experience and expertise of team leaders to determine which team members to allocate to individual incidents. They had no automated process for managing workloads or interruptions caused by leave and other issues that might delay resolution.

Formal guidelines were also desired. They needed a way to better focus on issues and communicate the status of resolution efforts to users, as well as a more systematic way of capturing team members' knowledge and transferring it to their colleagues.

In addition, HKBU saw an opportunity to streamline processes governing requests for multimedia services and for classroom AV facilities and support for scheduled as well as ad-hoc classes. Previously, the Multimedia Unit and the Teaching Support Unit had to complete these processes manually, consuming time and resources that could be allocated to more valuable tasks.

Meeting current and future challenges

In May 2015, HKBU decided to deploy a new IT service desk service management system and established key criteria the selected vendor and product would need to meet. These included the ability to resolve all of HKBU's existing challenges and incorporate a roadmap to meet the University's future requirements. The vendor had to back their product with skilled, responsive technical support.

"We needed a solution that would enable us to manage the work on IT support on a day-to-day basis, particularly in relation to any jobs or cases that users had raised with us," said Lau. "By doing this, we could properly allocate staff resources to meet users' needs."

Having learnt from the experience of other Hong Kong tertiary education institutions that employed service management systems, HKBU decided to deploy cloud-based service management software. This would enable the University to avoid dedicating resources to administration tasks such as backing up or upgrading the software. This also helped prompt HKBU to consider deploying a

ServiceNow service management system. HKBU then established criteria that reflected its day-to-day requirements and undertook a proof-of-concept exercise with the software.

"ServiceNow performed well against each of those criteria so we quickly decided to move on to implementation," Lau said.

"ServiceNow met all of the challenges before us and did so at a reasonable price. The expertise of its technical and presales support, and the quality of the customer references provided by the vendor also confirmed our decision."

HKBU then embarked on the implementation with assistance from ServiceNow and system integrator Deloitte China. The University's requirements included integrating Google Calendar with the system to help automate the assignment of team members to incidents or problems and integrating ServiceNow with HKBU's single-sign-on access control system.

HKBU, the system integrator, and ServiceNow adopted an Agile software development approach to prioritise tasks and requirements, and completed the project on schedule by the end of 2016. The University has implemented a system comprising of ServiceNow Incident Management, ServiceNow Request Management, and ServiceNow Service Catalog to manage its service desk. It also runs a classroom booking application for its Teaching Support Unit and a service quotation and management application for its Multimedia Unit, both built upon the Now Platform™. The system is fully integrated with Google Calendar and the University's single-sign-on system, and features a dashboard that IT management reviews at least once daily.

24 hours a day, seven days a week accessibility

"The dashboard includes a range of indicators that enables us to plan in

advance where IT resources need to be deployed and to check the consistency and quality of our service," said Lau. "For users, we can provide an easy channel — available 24 hours a day, seven days a week — for them to request IT service desk support and they can be assured that we will assign the right people to help them resolve their issue. They can also easily track the status of cases, inquiries, and incidents."

HKBU is now delivering IT service desk services in a more systematic and standardised way, and established guidelines to drive quality. Capturing information about incidents and problems is helping senior management prioritise investments and make sound decisions about how to allocate resources, while customer satisfaction is at a high level. "We have made use of ServiceNow survey functionality to review satisfaction with the jobs we have completed. On a scale of one to five, 97% of users scored us four or above and our average score was 4.7," said Lau.

Higher service levels

HKBU has also delivered a considerable improvement in service levels. "Post-implementation of ServiceNow, we have seen a drop of 85% in requests overdue and 87% reduction in service level agreement breaches."

The Multimedia Unit and the Teaching Support Unit are now able to use automated tools for requests, quotations, and classroom bookings, respectively. This has minimised errors and enabled them to focus on more important tasks.

"Deploying ServiceNow has established a foundation for considerable improvements in the way we deliver IT service desk and other IT services to HKBU," Lau said. "We look forward to working with them in future to deliver even more benefits."