



“Because we found the ServiceNow product to be configurable with an interface that users could easily customise to their specific needs, we quickly made the decision to switch.”

—Che-Hoo Cheng, Associate Director (Infrastructure), IT Services Centre, CUHK



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Headquarters

Hong Kong

Industry

Education

Highlights

- Replaced an inflexible system with difficulties in customisation to manage IT service incidents, problems and changes
- ServiceNow enables the CUHK to track the IT services team's responses to users who log an issue, and establish service level agreements governing speed and quality of resolution
- The ServiceNow system will improve the job satisfaction and performance of University employees

Products

IT Service Management
Incident Management
Problem Management
Change Management
Configuration Management
Project Portfolio Management
Cost Management
Asset Management

CUHK Turns to ITSM to Support Mission of Bringing Together China and the West

Established in 1963, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) is the largest government-funded university in the territory. Located in 160 buildings on a 137.3 hectare campus overlooking Tolo Harbour, the CUHK aims to combine tradition with modernity and bring together China and western societies.

A High Incident and Problem Workload

An IT services centre with a team of about 170 experts at the CUHK supports around 7,000 staff and more than 20,000 students. “It can be very hard to manage a campus of this size,” says Che-Hoo Cheng, Associate Director (Infrastructure), IT Services Centre, CUHK. “Every day we have lot of different cases pop up that we need to handle.”

Replacing an Inflexible, Limited System with ServiceNow

The CUHK had relied on an inflexible system with difficulties in customisation to manage IT service incidents, problems and changes. This system did not help the IT services team resolve incidents promptly and did not support development of a structured approach to incident and problem management. However, in 2012, Hong Kong universities' curricula extended from three years to four years. “This meant we had 33 percent more students than previously and had to become a considerably larger institution to support the change,” says Cheng. “It also meant that we had to become more efficient in the way we managed and delivered IT services.”

The IT services team decided to review the CUHK's IT service management system with a view to implementing a new tool that was scalable and streamlined the processes to resolve incidents, problems and changes. The team worked with one system that proved hard to configure and customise to meet the CUHK's specific needs, before ServiceNow approached the institution at the start of 2015. The vendor undertook some demonstrations and provided a proof of concept to showcase the software's functionality. “Because we found the ServiceNow product to be configurable with an interface that users could easily customise to their specific needs, we quickly made the decision to switch,” says Cheng.

Partner Ensures Smooth Implementation

The CUHK engaged Hong Kong Telecom to undertake the deployment and transfer skills to the institution's IT services team. “Using the partner enabled us to launch the system faster than we would have on our own, as we had very limited experience,” says Cheng. “However, I would say now we are 80 percent equipped to use the system to its potential.”

“Because all our colleagues are overloaded, many projects are not completed within deadline. This is not sustainable in the long term and ServiceNow will help us determine the projects to accept and those to defer or reject in consultation with management.”

The CUHK is now running ServiceNow IPCC (Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management and Configuration Management), with PPM (Project Portfolio Management) due to move into full production from 1 January 2017. At present only the IT services team has access to ServiceNow IPCC, but the CUHK plans to run its entire service desk—including service request support—in ServiceNow IPCC within the next six months. At this point more than 20,000 users will gain access to the system to log service and incident requests. Once PPM is deployed, the CUHK intends to implement ServiceNow Cost Management and ServiceNow Asset Management. “Right now, we are looking into the cost model of all our services because we need to find a way to charge our users properly,” says Cheng.

Business Value

The ServiceNow system will enable the CUHK IT services team to create a portal through which users can log incidents and problems rather than doing so over email. “This existing email-based process is very time-consuming and siloed, meaning we do not gain full visibility of the incidents and problems that users are experiencing,” says Cheng. However, ServiceNow will centralise and provide full transparency of all incident and problem resolution, and provide a knowledge base that enables service desk workers to respond to requests more effectively and efficiently.

Deploying ServiceNow will also enable the CUHK to track the IT services team's responses to users who log an issue, and establish service level agreements governing speed and quality of resolution. The CUHK and IT services team will also be able to report on and analyse compliance with these agreements.

While the CUHK plans initially to only use ServiceNow PPM for IT projects, the institution plans to extend the system to other projects in coming years. “I think our key promise with the new system is that we will provide management with full knowledge of the latest project developments and to determine whether we have sufficient resources to handle additional projects,” says Cheng.

“In the past—without this information—our practice has been to set up requests and push our colleagues to complete all the listed projects,” he adds. “Because all our colleagues are overloaded, many projects are not completed within deadline. This is not sustainable in the long term and ServiceNow will help us determine the projects to accept and those to defer or reject in consultation with management.”

As well as greater efficiencies, the ServiceNow system will improve the job satisfaction and performance of University employees.

Cheng is extremely pleased with the assistance provided by ServiceNow. “They have encouraged us to maximise our use of the functionality of ServiceNow and have always been there to provide inputs when we need them,” he says. “We look forward to working with them in future.”