Across Europe, many governments are moving IT services to the cloud to improve efficiency and reduce costs. By replacing isolated, sometimes aging legacy systems with centralized shared services, government organizations can focus their IT resources on their core business, improve data security, and focus financial and human resources on their primary objectives.

In Belgium, the federal government and social security institutions decided to set up an ambitious program called G-Cloud—a combination of commercial public cloud services, private cloud services, and managed ICT services hosted in government data centers. The hybrid cloud services could provide up to 80,000 government users with communications and collaboration services, and includes a self-service portal to request applications, services, and infrastructure.

ITSM-as-a-Service, an offering for IT service management and customer relationship management, was recently set up within the G-Cloud based on ServiceNow technology. Belgium’s shared in-house ICT organization Smals, which has been offering information and communications technology (ICT) services to social security institutions for more than 75 years, has been designated as a service owner. Smals follows a cost-sharing, non-profit model.

A Cloud-Based Solution with Multitenancy Support

Within the G-Cloud service portfolio, Smals now offers a cloud-based IT Service Management (ITSM) tool that is fully managed, or a dedicated instance for individual government agencies. This supports the agencies in their ongoing efforts to consolidate the different tools, spreadsheets, and manual processes that may exist in their organization.

“We were faced with older tools with a lot of redundant data and little integration between them,” says Luc Billion, Operational Director Infrastructure, Systems, Services & Support, Smals. “Our call center staff and IT support team used separate systems, which sometimes resulted in information being duplicated or unavailable. We needed to change our culture and we needed more transparency. We wanted to make our environment easier to manage by moving to a single cloud-based toolset.”

The new solution had to support multitenancy in order for the project to be successful—meaning that there had to be a different domain for every G-Cloud customer. “We knew that keeping domains separate would be essential to maintaining customer satisfaction,” says David Dothée, Project Manager for G-Cloud ITSM at Smals. “Otherwise, it would be chaotic to manage and difficult for us to meet the government’s high standards for quality support and fast incident resolution.”

As we move more e-government systems into G-Cloud, ServiceNow will give us the fast incident resolution we need to keep Belgium’s public-facing services such as social security and e-health available”

— Luc Billion, Operational Director Infrastructure, Systems, Services & Support, Smals

Improving Government Efficiency with IT Service Management

Challenges

• Offer user-friendly IT processes and services to Belgium government organizations
• Manage operations more efficiently to meet SLAs without increasing staff
• Resolve incidents quickly to keep customer satisfaction high
• Reduce the cost of providing IT services to government entities
• Consolidate and standardize IT services

Solution

ServiceNow Customer Service Management
ServiceNow IT Service Management
• Configuration Management (CMDB)
• Incident Management
• Problem Management
• Change Management
• Knowledge Management

Results

• Provided better user experiences for e-government applications
• Contributed to reducing average support ticket volume by nearly 50%
• Improved IT support efficiency by 15%
• Contributed to projected IT cost reduction of €30 million over 5 years

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“ServiceNow allowed our IT support team to go from responding to emails to conducting true root-cause analyses of problems and incidents, helping us avoid similar issues in the future.”

— David Dothée, Project Manager, Smals

As required by law, Smals put out a public tender for ITSM software and evaluated several competing solutions. “ServiceNow was the only solution that met all of our requirements, including multitenancy support and the possibility to use a cloud-based CMDB for certain data, and an on-premises CMDB for confidential data,” says Dothée.

Smals worked with Fujitsu, a ServiceNow partner, to integrate ServiceNow ITSM with the government’s existing systems. In addition to ITSM, Smals uses ServiceNow Customer Service Management to replace traditional CRM tools and speed time to resolution. “It was a very smooth deployment, and ServiceNow and Fujitsu worked well together to accomplish our goals,” says Dothée. “We found ServiceNow to be easily customizable, although most of the functionality we needed was there right out of the box. It’s also user-friendly, which helped with training.”

**Reducing Support Tickets by Nearly 50%**

By replacing disparate tools and manual processes with ServiceNow and G-Cloud, the Belgian government is on its way to achieve dramatically improved IT efficiency. Previously, Smals was handling an average of 15,000 support tickets per month; with ServiceNow, that number has dropped to approximately 8,000.

“We took the opportunity to restructure our processes based on the capabilities that ServiceNow provides for incident, problem, and change management,” says Billion. “We were able to find better ways of working. As a result, ServiceNow has contributed to reducing our average support ticket volume by nearly 50 percent. It also drove a 15 percent increase in overall efficiency for our IT support staff, because now they have a single tool that contains all the information needed to provide quick resolution and close tickets faster.”

**Better Experiences for Users and Citizens**

Instead of spending time following email trails or calling the contact center, G-Cloud users will be able to track their ticket from submission to resolution through a self-service portal and plan their business activities accordingly. Users who do call tend to get their issues resolved immediately, as call center employees use ServiceNow Knowledge Management to have answers readily available.

Smals’ IT support team benefits as well—armed with the tools and information to be more effective, they are more satisfied with their jobs, and can have consistently positive and productive interactions with users.

“Before, our support people were overloaded with emails, which hindered their ability to meet service level requirements,” says Dothée. “ServiceNow allowed our IT support team to go from responding to emails to conducting true root-cause analyses of problems and incidents, helping us avoid similar issues in the future.”

Citizens who depend on e-government systems to receive pensions, pay taxes, and fill electronic prescriptions could benefit from the high service availability that comes with efficient incident management. “As we move more e-government systems into G-Cloud, ServiceNow will give us the fast incident resolution we need to keep Belgium’s public-facing ICT applications such as social security and e-health available,” says Billion.
“As we gain momentum in IT, we plan to leverage ServiceNow for savings in other areas such as asset and facilities management”

— Luc Billion, Operational Director Infrastructure, Systems, Services & Support, Smals

A Natural Evolution for Service Delivery

With ServiceNow as part of the G-Cloud service offering, the Belgian government is able to offer better quality IT services at a lower cost, keeping pace with IT modernization trends in Europe and around the world. By bringing service delivery into the 21st Century, it can:

• Offer consistently high service quality, exceeding SLAs
• Give users faster access to the latest technology
• Keep government employees effective and morale high
• Reduce cost by eliminating legacy systems, maintenance, and licensing

“With the G-Cloud program, we expect savings of approximately €30 million over the next five years. ITSM-as-a-Service is one of the initiatives in the G-Cloud portfolio that will help us achieve this objective,” says Billion. “As we gain momentum in IT, we plan to leverage ServiceNow for savings in other areas such as asset and facilities management.”

Next Steps: More Flexibility, Reduced Risk

Smals is in the process of moving its on-premises service catalog to ServiceNow's cloud-based solution to streamline request fulfillment, which will give it unprecedented workflow flexibility and automation capabilities for both internal and external users. It also plans to use ServiceNow Change and Release Management to reduce incidents even further. By structuring change and release processes more efficiently, Smals will be able to reduce the need for overtime and long hours, even during periods of intense change, giving employees a better work/life balance.