“With ServiceNow, we have reduced the number of tickets by approximately 10,000 per year because with automation and self-service, people can do a lot of things themselves.”
—Sotirios Siozos, Head of Global IT Workplace, QIAGEN

Supporting a Revolution in Molecular Biology with ServiceNow

As scientists learn more about biological activity at the molecular level—DNA, RNA, proteins, and the interactions between them—the implications for society are enormous. By gaining valuable molecular information from biological samples, doctors can diagnose diseases earlier and more accurately. Pharmaceutical companies can develop new, more effective treatments. Law enforcement agencies can solve decades-old cases and even vindicate the wrongfully accused.

To get the information they need from biological samples such as blood, bone, and tissue, more than 500,000 customers around the world rely on "sample to insight" solutions from QIAGEN. The company is an innovator in its field, with market share exceeding 70% for certain sample technologies, making the company a key player in today's molecular biology revolution.

From extraction, test kits, and lab automation solutions to bioinformatics software and curated knowledge databases, QIAGEN's technologies enable critical research and diagnosis across the globe. Customers use these technologies to support a wide array of game-changing innovations: fighting cancer and global health emergencies such as Zika and Ebola, safeguarding food supplies, identifying war victims, and reducing risk for tuberculosis infections. They trust QIAGEN to take them “from sample to insight”—the company’s motto—with seamless and cost-effective molecular testing workflows.

Outsourcing and Automating for More Efficient IT

Molecular biology is becoming as essential to human progress as information technology (IT), yet it still takes a lot of IT to make molecular analysis happen. Going from sample to insight involves crunching a lot of biological data, and that data is growing faster than ever before. For example, QIAGEN is a market and technology leader in next-generation sequencing systems that have accelerated genomic research at unprecedented speed but produce vast amounts of data.

"In the biotechnology industry, IT is critical," says Sotirios Siozos, Senior Manager IT International Services, QIAGEN. “Without fast delivery of high-performance IT services, our employees wouldn’t be able to help our customers achieve the results they need. But as in any industry, IT also has to be cost-efficient to meet our business objectives. We saw an opportunity to reorganize IT and become more service-oriented to help the business innovate faster and increase our market share.”

To scale with increasingly massive data sets while allowing its internal IT department to be more focused on business enablement and compliance, QIAGEN decided to outsource all its basic IT functions to a well-known cloud and managed service provider.
“To be successful, we needed a tool that would enable us to manage and direct our new outsourcing partner in a meaningful way.”

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However, it wanted to keep service management functions in-house to help ensure that service level agreements (SLAs) were met. “Completely outsourcing the IT function of a biotechnology company is like open-heart surgery,” says Siozos. “It’s a big deal—but for QIAGEN it was an important step in transitioning to a more service-oriented, cloud-enabled strategy. To be successful, we needed a tool that would enable us to manage and direct our new outsourcing partner in a meaningful way.”

QIAGEN had a basic ticketing system in place, but it did not provide the performance and functionality to support the transition to an outsourcing model. The company evaluated IT service management (ITSM) solutions from ServiceNow and BMC, seeking to standardize on a feature-rich platform that would still be easy to use. “We chose ServiceNow because it was flexible and usable right out of the box,” says Siozos. “Other solutions were massive and required so much customization that we would not gain as much value.”

QIAGEN deployed incident, problem, and change management with assistance from ServiceNow Professional Services consultants who worked with the outsourcing partner to build a seamless ticketing system. It then moved all assets and business services into a ServiceNow Configuration Management Database—a single system of record for IT—and used ServiceNow Orchestration to automate business processes and Service Catalog requests. “Once we got started with ServiceNow, we realized that there is so much we can do with it,” says Siozos. “We started spreading the word throughout the business, and immediately got our facilities team on board with ServiceNow Facilities Management.”

Adds Theo Baum, Head of Global Application Services, QIAGEN: “ServiceNow gives us a lot of useful functionality out of the box, but it’s also very customizable.”

Reclaiming Productivity with Self-Service

Using ServiceNow to automate routine IT functions such as password resets is improving efficiency and reducing costs. Previously, the only option for password resets was a telephone hotline. Once the request was logged, the password reset took five to ten minutes. Now, employees can reset their password in seconds via a self-service portal. Users can also order laptops and smartphones, request access privileges to SharePoint or SAP, install printers, and request software. “Anything IT-related can be requested in English or German using the self-service system, improving employee productivity,” says Siozos. “It’s easy for end users, and it’s just as easy for us to see how our outsourcing provider is performing. With ServiceNow, we have reduced the number of tickets by approximately 10,000 per year because with automation and self-service, people can do a lot of things themselves.”

QIAGEN is growing quickly and adding new employees on a regular basis. Previously, it took two to four weeks to create a user account, add a Microsoft Exchange mailbox, and get a new user up and running. With ServiceNow, a
“ServiceNow has been key in allowing us to successfully implement an outsourcing service model. ServiceNow has also been very dynamic, consistently introducing new features that address our specific challenges.”

— Theo Baum, Head of Global Application Services, QIAGEN

new account and mailbox are created in seconds following approval. “This is a huge time and cost reduction,” says Siozos.

Efficient, Cost-Effective Facilities Management

With detailed, up-to-date reports on facilities in 25 countries, the business can make more informed decisions about heating, repairs, and cleaning services, ultimately reducing global facilities costs. Even office moves are now automated, helping employees relocate faster and get back to being productive.

“The business is enthusiastic about the visibility we have with ServiceNow and the reports we are now able to generate,” says Siozos.

Changing the World, One Molecule at a Time

Since deploying ServiceNow, QIAGEN has significantly grown its total user base, adding valuable research and development (R&D) personnel while transferring approximately 30% of its IT employees to its outsourcing provider with a two-year employment guarantee. With a strong foundation for service management, now the company can:

- Help customers drive breakthroughs in life sciences, pharmaceuticals, and criminology
- Improve employee and R&D productivity with fast access to IT services
- Hold its outsourcing partner accountable with complete visibility into SLAs and metrics
- Continue to drive down IT and facilities costs

“ServiceNow has been key in allowing us to successfully implement an outsourcing service model,” says Theo Baum. “ServiceNow has also been very dynamic, consistently introducing new features that address our specific challenges. It’s been a very effective partnership.”

To conclude:

“The transformation of the Global IT Operations and Cyber Security organization to a two-speed (agile and classic), business consulting organization requires flexibility in all aspects of IT and business processes. ServiceNow has enabled IT Operations and Cyber Security to provide flexible, digitalized processes and enabled a shift-left, shift-down strategy. The enablement of this strategy has allowed key resources to focus on IT’s core competencies of process consulting, optimization and automation; while driving digitalization throughout the enterprise.”

Jonathan Davis, Head of Global IT Operations & Cyber Security