



vitaz digest

A vendor perspective of current IT management processes

Premier league solution

Premier Incorporated chose ServiceWise from TechExcel over a number of other solutions during its quest to bring process consolidation and automation to its IT services team.



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Background

The key objective for Premier's CITS (Corporate Information Technology Services) Group was to implement a Help Desk solution that would provide application and technical support for its internal customers (employees). However, the vision of the CITS Group transcended the traditional 'Break / Fix' Help Desk as they wished to provide a centralised Service Desk that could streamline and automate business processes to benefit all its business units.

Premier identified several collaborative business processes and goals they wished to incorporate and improve in the context of the Service Desk:

- **Process: Incident Management;** Goal: Increase uptime by providing a transparent view of problems from submission to resolution.
- **Process: Problem Management and Root Cause Analysis;** Goal: Increase uptime by identifying problems, learning from mistakes, and continuously improving.
- **Process: Change Management;** Goal: Lower risk, track all changes and reduce system downtime.
- **Process: Applications Support;** Goal: Manage requests for technical support that come from Premier's externally-facing Solutions Centers.
- **Process: IT Procurement;** Goal: Streamline and track requests, approvals, ordering, receipt, and installation
- **Process: Technology Asset Management;** Goal: Maximise use of equipment and lower costs by assisting with the operational management of assets over the asset lifecycle – from purchase to disposal.
- **Process: Work Intake;** Goal: Automate and streamline the extremely manual and time-consuming workforce on-boarding and exit processes which manage account activations and terminations. Additionally Premier wished to exceed the timeliness and quality of service established by the outsourcing partner. Perhaps the greatest challenge was the tight timeline to implement a new Help Desk Solution. In three months the support contract with the existing vendor would expire.

Required components

- **CRM.** An application that included: an interface with a user database; a problem / case tracking resolution database; a knowledge repository; the ability to solicit customer satisfaction surveys; real-time problem monitoring by customers; the ability to prioritise issues based on severity; and the ability to create an escalation process.
- **Workflow Management.** An application that included a defined workflow management system with customisable business rules to streamline and automate processes.
- **Metrics and Reports.** Robust reporting was a must. Premier needed both corporate and individual reporting capabilities and the ability to perform analysis to effect continuous improvement.
- **Asset Management.** A central repository to manage all company assets throughout their lifecycle.
- **Self-Service.** An application that included



the ability to submit, monitor and track requests for service through a web-based portal. Premier also wanted to promote self-service by empowering their customers to find their own solutions through 'knowledge' searches and access to Frequently Asked Questions. Additionally, it needed a vehicle to communicate outage information.

- **Integration with existing third-party applications and tools.**

The initiative

A selection team was formed in February 2007. Members of the team had familiarity with several major tools including Siebel, Remedy and Magic. The team selected three tools to investigate further and began the RFI (request for information) process. The three vendors were:

Siebel: Premier already owned other modules of the Siebel application and therefore had support knowledge with their existing staff. This solution rose to the top due to this existing vendor relationship.

Magic: A mid-level application in the Remedy family; some team members had familiarity with this tool.

TechExcel-ServiceWise: Premier found this application through an internet search. After an initial product demonstration, it was clear ServiceWise could meet the requirements.

The three software vendors were sent a requirements list from Premier. Each vendor conducted presentations of their products. It was during these demonstrations that the selection team began to see clear differences in the products and began working towards a final selection.

TechExcel demonstrated how even the most difficult of workflows could be easily mapped and improved using ServiceWise. With ServiceWise, team members could see that their vision for a company-wide Service Desk was attainable. The team members recommended TechExcel's ServiceWise to their executive committee and received approval. TechExcel was awarded the business in late May.

Implementation

Premier had a hard 'Go Live' date of September 1st. With only three months to complete a full implementation, the team had doubts as to whether they could install, configure and test the newly selected tool on time.

The TechExcel professional services team began working with the Premier implementation team immediately. Even before arriving onsite TechExcel assisted with setting up Premier's environment and installing the necessary software pre-requisites and the ServiceWise application.

The TechExcel professional services team also provided guidance on legacy data migration, defining team roles, and detailing workflow considerations. This preparation work gave a 'running start' when the TechExcel professional services team arrived onsite. Initially there were a few environmental challenges and integration issues; however, the team helped work through the issues quickly and seamlessly demonstrating their commitment to Premier's success.

The scope of this project required the commitment of Premier's Team as well. They reviewed all of the existing processes and procedures to validate and document them within the knowledge base component of ServiceWise. The team developed process documentation to be used by the Service Desk agents for potentially faster and easier resolutions. Premier also transitioned the knowledge data from the outgoing vendor into ServiceWise.

With the assistance of the TechExcel professional services team, Premier conducted a relatively easy migration and all deadlines for documentation in the new system were handily met.

The TechExcel team trained the Premier team on how to configure the ServiceWise application. Soon the Premier team became self-sufficient in developing and customising workflows with this agile application. In early July, with less than two months to go, the Premier team realised that their goal was within reach.

One of the most cumbersome and challenging workflows at Premier was the on-boarding process for new employees. With the existing process, the helpdesk agent manually generated up to 12 help desk tickets after the original 'IMAC' (Install, move, add change) was submitted. The team was able to configure ServiceWise to create these tickets automatically dramatically increasing the team's overall efficiency and minimising human error.

Premier's implementation of ServiceWise required a change to the company's support

paradigm which was previously limited to email and phone support. Email support was labour-intensive and it required manual intervention to copy and paste information from the email into a manually created ticket. Premier wished to automatically generate tickets upon receipt of email. Even more importantly Premier desperately needed to move employees towards a web portal solution that would facilitate accurate and detailed ticket submission, again saving significant support time and resources over phone or email submission. The team anticipated employee resistance as email support had long been ingrained within the members of the organisation. Configuring a self-service portal that would be easy to use and have a high user acceptance level was imperative. To drive user adoption, the team utilised TechExcel 'Best Practices' and began extensive user communications. This effort included quick reference guides provided by TechExcel.

The results

As the 'Go-Live' date approached, the support Premier received was extraordinary. Both teams provided a heroic effort to meet the deadline. On September 1, 2007 Premier successfully went live with TechExcel's ServiceWise. It enabled Premier to implement and automate five business processes – all fully customised, configured, and tested – within just three months.

During the first month after implementation, 1,319 tickets were submitted via the Web portal. One year later that number has jumped to 2,728 tickets representing an over 100 percent increase in portal submission of tickets.

The ultimate judge of the results is the user community. Premier has learned through the customer satisfaction surveys, generated through ServiceWise, there has been tremendous customer acceptance to the new support model. The success can be seen in the Customer Satisfaction KPI, which ended the fiscal year at a 99 percent rate. One customer's response to the survey can best sum it up: "They (IT Service Desk Department) provided excellent response; solved my problem; and rendered 100 percent customer satisfaction. The department should be called the employee salvation desk." **VITAL**

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