

Siemens enjoys the power of service with Numara FootPrints

For Siemens Power Transmission and Distribution (PT&D) centrally managing IT support for nearly 1,000 employees across five geographically-dispersed divisions is a challenge in itself. Add-in initiatives for installing a Citrix environment, rolling out Microsoft Office 2003, upgrading to Microsoft Exchange 2003, and replacing its current ERP system with SAP, and it becomes clear that IT support needs to be extremely responsive and efficient.

David Inman, Manager of Information Technology, is responsible for the IT help desk at Siemens PT&D. When he joined the company IT was using the Remedy IT Service Management Suite and had gone through one upgrade cycle.

“After evaluating the IT infrastructure at Siemens, we determined that Remedy was too expensive to maintain in-house. And, we didn’t have the manpower required to manage and input changes - we are simply too busy. We were further constrained by limited budget for consulting, support, and maintenance.”

Siemens PT&D opted out of its Remedy maintenance contract and sought new support automation solutions. During initial research Inman came across Numara Software’s FootPrints.

Extensive tests were run on the solution. “We loaded the solution, tested it on the back- and front-end (for the agent) and entered sample tickets to replicate day-today IT support issues.” FootPrints’ reporting capabilities were also scrutinised.

The Choice

“We really like FootPrints, and the biggest draw was its web-based architecture,” Inman said. “We always saw our help desk to be on the web so users can go online from any location to fill out and submit their tickets.”

Once the decision was made, Inman assembled a five-person team for a planning session to discuss what they liked about the old system and how to do more with the new FootPrints system. From there, they developed all the menus, mapped data sources within the system, and finalised the layout.

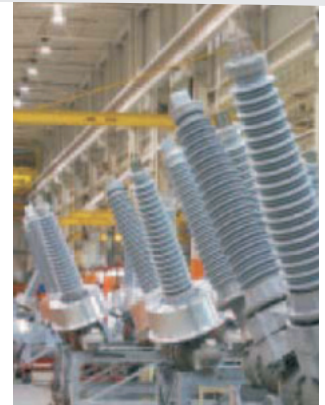
After going live Siemens PT&D initially duplicated tickets in both Remedy and FootPrints. After a successful three-day period the entire support automation function was switched to FootPrints.

The Solution

Siemens PT&D uses FootPrints to provide IT support, including PC and network support to 1,000 employees across five divisions. When asked what type of employees FootPrints supports, Inman says, “It can be anybody from senior executives, to blue or white-collared employees.”

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He explained that when employees have an IT problem such as a malfunctioning computer, or if they simply forgot a password, they can submit their support requests via email, the web, or phone.

If they call in a request, agents have FootPrints open at all times. According to Inman, “Quick tickets make it so easy for our agents. For example, password resets can be done by just clicking on a ticket and FootPrints automatically fills in the required information. The agent only has to enter the customer identifier such as an email address or an employee’s last name.”

Email Support and Issue Management Within FootPrints

When an employee submits anything via email it is immediately assigned a “request” status within FootPrints. Requests are assigned to agents, and the user receives a confirmation email. Once the agent begins working on the ticket, it is designated “work-in-progress,”. If more information is required from the user, the agent can enter information in the ticket and forward it into a “customer-pending” queue. An email is sent back to the employee stating, “This is the status of your ticket and to proceed we need additional information. Could you please reply to this email with this information.”

When returned to the help desk, the ticket moves to “customer-responded” status, and the agent knows the customer has responded. Once the problem is fixed, the ticket is considered “closed” with information indicating the employee has agreed that the issue is resolved. When closed, FootPrints sends a final email to the user. If the ticket was closed in error, the user is instructed in the email message to please contact the technical support centre to either open another case, or have the case re-opened.

Business Rule Automation

"We have also set specific times that a ticket can stay in a certain status," Inman said. "If a ticket goes un-edited for seven days, then we receive a pop-up message alerting us of the delay. That happens for up to four weeks. Then the ticket turns red and triggers a screen-pop reminder that appears on agents' computer screens.

When I review the list, I know that a ticket has been open for too long.' 'Our goal is to set business rules for closing tickets. For instance, if a ticket needs input by a customer who hasn't responded for more than three days, it sends another message to the user saying 'please update this ticket'."

Self-Service Online

To further assist employees, Siemens PT&D has also set up a self-service site through FootPrints. FootPrints eService gives employees access to frequently asked IT questions and a growing knowledge base.

If this content does not provide the answers sought, the site directs employees to submit a trouble ticket or view their open and closed tickets. The company has even set up kiosks so employees can use the web to submit a ticket. This is done in case employees cannot connect at their desktop or if they do not have dedicated PC's. To access the online support site FootPrints simply recognises their email address.

LDAP Integration

"Using the FootPrints Dynamic Address Book Link we were able to easily map indices in FootPrints, making it seamless to import real-time contact data into help desk tickets," explained Inman. "When a ticket is received by an agent, it pre-populates with key employee information required to resolve the problem fast."

Reports

Inman also notes that FootPrints' built-in customisable dashboard features are invaluable as they help him and his team to dynamically monitor help desk activity and performance.

"We post weekly performance statistics including the number of open versus closed tickets, total number of tickets by priority, and average close time. With simple pull-down menus and report templates, FootPrints makes it extremely easy to set up and run these reports."

A small selection of organisations that depend on Numara Software help desk and service desk solutions

3M A.C. Nielsen	Hewlett-Packard
Abbott Laboratories	Hilton Hotels
Ameritech	Honda-Netherlands
AT&T	IBM
Bacardi	Lloyd's Bank
Cartier	Loughborough College
Charles Schwab	Lucent Technologies
Chase Manhattan Bank	Mercedes-Benz
Chester City Council	Mitsubishi Motors
Chrysler	Motorola
Chubb	Nabisco
Cisco Systems	NHS Tayside
Deloitte & Touche	Nikon
DHL Airways	Pfizer Pharmaceuticals
Discovery Channel	Pirelli
Dr. Pepper	PricewaterhouseCoopers
E.I. Dupont	Quaker Oats
EDS	Reebok
FedEx	Rolls-Royce
Ford	Shell
GE	Sony
Goodyear	Sotheby's
	Texaco
	UPS



About Numara Software

Founded in 1991, Numara Software is a global provider of service desk management solutions. Its flagship products, Numara Track-It! and Numara FootPrints, support over 50,000 customer sites worldwide making it the leader in this market for small to mid-sized enterprises.

About Siemens PT&D

Since 1847 Siemens has been recognised as a global leader in electrical engineering and electronics. Siemens PT&D was established to serve the growing needs of the electric power industry. Their products, systems and solutions can be found from the power generating station to all stops in between. They are a world leader in high voltage transmission system technology that moves thousands of megawatts of power around the globe.