



## The Devereux Foundation Utilizes Numara FootPrints to Provide IT Service and Support to Employees in 53 Locations Across 13 States

The Devereux Foundation, which traces its roots back to 1912, is the largest private healthcare carrier in the U.S. Headquartered in Villanova, PA, the organization was founded by Helena T. Devereux, a pioneer in the field of special education.

The Foundation's mission is to provide the highest-quality services to children, adults, and families with special needs, stemming from behavioral, psychological, intellectual, or neurological impairments. Today, the company's 6,000 staff members, at all levels, provide professional and quality care to more than 15,000 individuals annually. Devereux offers assistance to its members in a wide range of settings – from home, school, and community to campus-based programs and hospitals.

### The Challenge

In order to fulfill its mission of providing the highest-quality services to children, adults, and families with special needs, Devereux must deliver world-class service and support – particularly information technology (IT) support – to its employees. Thus, for Devereux, centrally managing IT support for its employees across 53 centers and 13 states presents a significant and ongoing challenge.

As now mandated by HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accounting Act), Devereux is required to administer and enforce patient privacy within its software systems. A single technology that could handle both IT support, HIPAA regulatory rules, and other departmental functions (like HR) would be an ideal solution for this major healthcare provider.

In the Spring of 2002, the Devereux Foundation decided to conduct a search for a new technology solution that could centrally manage and automate IT support. The organization had determined that its old solution, a Microsoft® Access database, no longer met its requirements because it was slow and only allowed access to a handful of concurrent users.

### IN BRIEF

**Industry**  
Healthcare

#### Challenge

- Manage IT support for a large, distributed workforce

#### Solution

- Numara® FootPrints®
- Numara FootPrints Dynamic Address Book Link (LDAP Integration)

#### Application

- Centralized IT help desk
- Human resources special-issue tracking center
- HIPAA security center
- Property maintenance

#### Key Features

- Web-based architecture
- Knowledge base
- Seamless database integration
- Business rule automation
- Two-way email management
- Custom reporting
- Multiple projects

#### Benefits

- Significant cost savings within IT department
- Ability to log after-hours support requests
- Ability to log and track all support issues in a single system
- Improved communication streamlines workflow and boosts agent and employee productivity

“Scalability is what we were looking for,” explained Mark Eckert, Manager of Help Desk Operations at the Devereux Foundation. “We wanted agents from any one of our 53 centers to have access to the system at anytime. When it came down to it, we needed a webbased solution that provided all the functionality that our previous system lacked.”

According to Mr. Eckert, his colleague Dave Sutton was primarily involved in the decision-making and rollout of the new system. “After conducting our initial review, we narrowed our search down to Numara FootPrints, and an alternative low-cost solution,” explained Mr. Sutton, Senior Systems Analyst at the Devereux Foundation.

### The Choice

After a thorough evaluation process, the Devereux Foundation selected Numara FootPrints from Numara Software. “The fact that Numara FootPrints is web-based was one of the biggest factors for us,” said Mr. Sutton. “Also, Numara FootPrints was far superior cost-wise compared to the other two options. As a non-profit organization, cost is always a factor, and with Numara FootPrints, we were able to receive the functionality and scalability we needed at a price point well within our range.”

Once the final decision was made, Mr. Sutton and his team began the rollout process of the new Numara FootPrints system. “Following the simple rollout process, we moved our Numara FootPrints install to a faster server, which meant that I had to install it from scratch and then move all the data over from our old system,” explained Mr. Sutton. “We were up-and-running in no time, and with no real hiccups to report back to Numara Software.”

### The Solution

Today, the Devereux Foundation uses Numara FootPrints to provide IT support, including PC and network support, to nearly 6,000 employees across 53 locations. When asked what type of support he provides or employees through Numara FootPrints, Mr. Eckert said, “There are many different uses of Numara FootPrints throughout the foundation. Our number one use, however, is the IT help desk. We provide standard computer support to employees who are having software, hardware, or activity problems.”

Once the Devereux Foundation conquered IT support, it realized Numara FootPrints could be useful in other areas of the foundation as well. Devereux has deployed Numara FootPrints within its HR special issue tracking center, its HIPAA security center, and its property maintenance apartment. According to Mr. Eckert, “Numara FootPrints is being used as software support and management for one of our divisions that creates an intellectual product that we sell. Also, Numara FootPrints is an important part of our maintenance division because it helps us better manage the many properties that we own.”

## The Devereux Foundation utilizes a number of Numara FootPrints features, including:

### Centralized Multi-Channel Issue Management

Through Devereux’s IT help desk, most issues are submitted by phone, with the help desk staff in control of the ticket from start to finish. Users can log in to Numara FootPrints at anytime to view the progress and status of a ticket. In addition, some users will email the IT help desk to open a new ticket or to automatically re-open a closed ticket when an issue is not resolved to satisfaction.

Two of Devereux’s maintenance projects use the Numara FootPrints login method exclusively, allowing users to log into a central location where they can see if their issue has already been reported, and to create new work orders or add information to an existing work order.

In addition, agents and managers can make use of the Numara FootPrints’ automatically generated HTML form, which is posted on the associated Devereux Intranet pages. Users can open, fill out, and submit forms, creating a new ticket in the process.

### Two-way Email Management

These comprehensive email capabilities allow support agents to manage, age, query, and track all tickets submitted through email.

They can also automatically track email conversations, send customizable email alerts and notifications, and create issues directly from emails. According to Mr. Eckert, agents and managers are provided with a lengthy document that shows them how they can open, assign, and close tickets as if they were coming from users as requests. “We trained quite a number of people on this, so that they could use Numara FootPrints completely through the email interface.”

### Auto-escalation Capabilities

Using the auto-routing and escalation capabilities based on our workflow and business rules, the Devereux Foundation is able to optimize 24/7 support to ensure issues do not slip through the cracks. “These features have helped us ensure we don’t drop the ball on any of our tickets,” said Mr. Eckert. “When employees call in, agents want to make sure every ticket is handled in a professional manner and seen through to resolution. The business rule and workflow automation capabilities within Numara FootPrints allow our agents to make sure each ticket is handled efficiently.”

### Dynamic Corporate Address Book Integration

“We use the Numara FootPrints Dynamic Address Book Link to pull in our Novell® NDS® (Netware Directory Service) information into Numara FootPrints,” said Mr. Eckert. “When our agents enter a user ID or an email address, Numara FootPrints auto-populates the ticket with data pulled dynamically from our corporate address book. With information pre-populated, agents can close tickets and resolve problems faster.”

## Knowledge Base

“The built-in knowledge base capabilities are a very important feature for us, but one that we are just growing into now,” explained Mr. Eckert. “We believe this is a very positive part of the product, and although we have used it sparingly, our next steps are to create a portal where users can go to discover solutions before they call in for help.”

## Custom Reporting

“We rely on a number of automated daily, weekly, and monthly reports that are created and emailed to us,” said Mr. Eckert. “From a management standpoint, I regularly look at Numara FootPrints to see who is handling call volume in the most efficient manner and who has an exceptionally large amount of tickets still outstanding. This way, I can come along side those agents and help them clear any backlogs they might have.”

## The Results

With Numara FootPrints, Ventura’s IT division was able to meet its primary goal of automating the IT help desk by the start of the calendar year. Due to the solution’s ease-of-use for both administrators and users, and its flexibility, Mr. Fratello was able to fully customize and deploy Numara FootPrints in a few days, without outside vendors or consulting services. Since deploying Numara FootPrints in 2001, the city has logged more than 15,000 service requests in Numara FootPrints, including over 5,900 IT-related requests and 5,700 related to facilities maintenance. Mr. Fratello said the popularity of Numara FootPrints has spread rapidly throughout city departments because of its ease-of-use and flexibility. “Numara FootPrints is extremely easy to automate, and with its multiple-project capability, we are able to automate numerous internal processes which helps ensure things do not fall through the cracks,” he said. “Because Numara FootPrints can be easily customized, interfaces can be designed to be very intuitive – making our agents more productive.” Mr. Fratello added that Numara FootPrints has helped improve workflow especially when more than one area is involved with a project.

In the past, for example, an employee who needed a brochure would have to submit two separate requests – one to the graphics section to design and create it and another request to the print services section to print it. With Numara FootPrints, when a ticket is submitted to graphics, it can easily be forwarded on by Graphics to Print Services for printing. In September 2004, the city’s marketing section plans to announce to employees a new Numara FootPrints project entitled “Website Requests.” This project will be used to submit and track content additions and changes to the city’s web site. In the future, the IT division anticipates expanding its use of Numara FootPrints to incorporate their citizen response system used by the Public Works Department. This will allow citizens to use email and the Internet to submit their requests while allowing the city to better manage those requests by routing them to the appropriate staff.

The Devereux Foundation’s IT support desk manages 1,800 calls per month, which equates to 150 calls per day within a 30-day month. In the past, support calls that were received during nonbusiness hours usually never made it into the previous tracking Numara FootPrints at the Devereux Foundation system. The ability of agents to handle customer inquiries on a 24/7 basis was an important factor for the Devereux Foundation when selecting the right solution.

“Now, we have people who are answering calls and, with a few key strokes, they have entered a ticket within Numara FootPrints. Just knowing that we are able to track every support call with Numara FootPrints gives us a sense of security that we are serving our employees at the highest possible level,” said Mr. Eckert. In addition, the email management and support automation capabilities have delivered significant results. “We have plenty of people that have access to email, but may not have the time or capability to jump into a web browser and open Numara FootPrints. We have users out in the field who are responding with their cell phones to manage and close tickets. This feature has been a powerful one for us,” said Mr. Eckert.

“Three of our maintenance departments have investigated outside building and grounds maintenance software and were excited to hear that Numara FootPrints could do exactly what they wanted with a cost savings of approximately \$15,000 per department,” said Mr. Eckert. He added, “These facility departments are now using Numara FootPrints for anywhere between 10 and 60 repair, maintenance, and hazard calls a day.”

## Focus on HIPAA

HIPAA sets national standards for the privacy of patient records, defining and limiting the circumstances in which an individual’s protected health information may be used. To comply with HIPAA’s privacy rules, the Devereux Foundation, like other health care providers, has to enforce privacy access rights to its existing medical software applications. The Foundation relies on medical information software from CMHC Systems for its patient medical data.

They are also using a new Oracle-based system. Both the CMHC and Oracle software systems have built-in authorization rules that control who can view and update the information. “From the software side of things, each one of these applications has special rules and requirements for authorizations,” said Eckert. “Everyone has to have a specific authorization for a specific area of the software.” For Devereux’s IT systems, HIPAA compliance involves defining, on an application basis, which field, drop-down menu, or function are accessible to each healthcare employee (as well as third-party users, like consultants) and getting and logging the supervisor approving the access. Devereux even requires authorization for anyone who accesses the network, even if they are not logging on to one of the medical applications or touching a HIPAA-protected worker.

## ESAR Workflows

Eckert realized that this workflow could be handled by Numara FootPrints. The system that Devereux came up with is called ESAR (Employee System Access Request). To handle the scope of the authorization, Eckert crafted a Numara FootPrints input screen with over 300 fields. Eckert took advantage of Numara FootPrints’ customizable HTML-based input screens, adding their own additional powerful HTML code to validate input information.

“If you need access to sub-menu number 17 in a UNIX application, we have an authorization field for it,” noted Eckert. “Everyone who gets access to something in Devereux has to have an ESAR record created.” According to Eckert, the ESAR records change frequently as people gain responsibilities or move to different departments. Eckert: “It’s a tremendously active Numara FootPrints project, we probably have two to four hundred changes rolling through every day.” Almost all of the authorizations involve either an add, change, or delete. Reflecting this fact, each subsection of the HTML authorization screen contains add, change, or delete sections. For example, the LAN section has an add section for new employee requesting network access to a shared drive, a move section when the employee changes offices, and a change section if he/she needs additional shared drive access.

ESAR was implemented with a complex rule set for escalations. Part of this complexity arises from the fact that each of Devereux’s over 53 locations has a different policy regarding access rights, with the on-site director being the ultimate approver. Depending on where the employee is located, a request for authorization will involve different follow-ups.

Some centers may require two approvers (e.g. a supervisor and an executive director), other centers only one (just a site supervisor). When a request for a new authorization is made, it triggers an email notification to the appropriate supervisors and approvers. The email indicates the user requesting the authorization and what is being authorized. With Numara FootPrints’ bi-directional email capabilities, the supervisor can then respond with the text, “supervisor=yes”, which ultimately enables the ticket’s check-box field for that authorization. If multiple approvers are involved, the escalation rules will send off additional emails. In the case of a new employee, because so many systems and authorization domains are involved, the creation of a single Numara FootPrints ticket can trigger many emails.

“Once all of the groups have answered back, Numara FootPrints will look at all the sections and say, ‘no more are open’, then mark this ticket as a new employee,” said Eckert. “We have over 500 escalations, including in some cases tertiary approval processes, and Numara FootPrints handles it just fine.”

## HIPAA Auditing and Violation Tracking

To satisfy HIPAA auditing requirements, Devereux must also keep a log of every change made to the employee authorization ticket. For this purpose, Eckert has made creative use of Numara FootPrints’ master-subtask functionality. Eckert: “Every user has a not-closed ticket which shows all the authorized applications and accesses across all of Devereux. Every request to change becomes a subtask attached to that master. Devereux’ internal auditors will pull up the current master ticket to see the current access, viewing the master history to check field updates, and then, if needed, bring up individual sub-tasks for more detailed information.”

The auditor then compares the user access reports produced by each of the individual master applications to those functions, fields, and services that have been formally authorized within ESAR.

“He’s getting a report from each of the master applications. It’s a role report actually – this user has access to this menu and this section – and correlating across the reports and then makes sure it matches up with ESAR,” said Eckert. “If there’s a discrepancy, then a violation has to be reported.”

Eckert has set up a separate Numara FootPrints project, called the HIPAA Security Privacy Officer, to track these violations. While some of the violations come as a result of an authorization audit, the majority are filed by employees. The rule is that if you see a HIPAA violation, you need to report it. Devereux employees use Numara FootPrints to submit HIPAA incidents. Most of the violations are minor, according to Eckert, including confidential client data printed in some center other than where it originated, a door that shouldn’t be unlocked, or an unattended monitor screen – HIPAA rules say that screen saver must be launched when healthcare workers leave their desks.

“We have to respond to every violation with a research, a resolution, and in some case with punitive action. This is all be tracked in the issue violation,” said Eckert. The HIPAA officer of the center is assigned to the ticket and investigates the incident. A decision is then made as to whether more training or a change in policy is warranted and then the ticket is closed. For more serious violations, the executive director of the center is immediately notified via email. In all cases, escalations are triggered when officers don’t respond within the configured time-period. The HIPAA violations are reviewed monthly by internal auditors at each Devereux site. Numara FootPrints makes it possible to track these violations, ensures the appropriate officers are notified, and ultimately enables this provider of special education services to maintain patient confidentiality and compliance with HIPAA.

"Whether it's HIPAA or other requirements, there's nothing yet that I have been able to throw at Numara FootPrints that it has not been able to handle. We love it because the back end SQL is extremely secure. We love it because it gives us history tracking on anything we do regarding HIPAA. We love the configurability of Numara FootPrints as HIPAA changes."

### What's Next

The Devereux Foundation has many plans for Numara FootPrints. It is planning to implement the Numara FootPrints Dynamic SQL Database Link as part of its PC inventory process. According to Mr. Eckert, "We are dealing with approximately 3,600 PC's across our foundation, all of which are currently maintained in a product we own called ZENWorks®. Eventually, we want to create a SQL database for PC inventory so that every time agents open a ticket, they know exactly what type of system the user has."

The group calendar feature is another part of Numara FootPrints that the Devereux Foundation would like to expand upon in the near future. "Some of our resources, PC's, projectors, and equipment will be tracked through a project that is set up within this feature. We think this feature is the best way to track these resources so that they are not lost or misplaced."

On the list of long term projects, the Devereux Foundation also plans to create customer satisfaction surveys within Numara FootPrints. Mr. Eckert states that these surveys used to be completed as part of a manual process. "Now, we want to move towards a point where we use Numara FootPrints to generate customer satisfaction surveys in order to show us how we are serving our customers."

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**Mark Eckert**  
Manager of Help Desk Operations, Devereux Foundation

## Who are we?

Numara Software is a leading provider of integrated IT management solutions for Desktop Management, PC Lifecycle Management, Security & Compliance, Help Desk and Service Desk. Designed to optimize IT management, Numara FootPrints and Numara Track-It! collectively support more than 50,000 customer sites and nearly 20 million IT assets worldwide.



freedom  
to simply **choose**  
the right solution for you