

Leading law firm Herbert Smith rules in favour of VMware Service Manager

Herbert Smith

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Customer

Herbet Smith

Industry

Legal

Challenges

To increase efficiency with a Global Service Desk solution based on ITIL best-practice.

Key Solutions

- VMware Service Manager software for Incident, Problem and Known Error Management with integrated Knowledge Bank.
- Change Management and Customer Portal planned.

Benefits

- Best practice processes implemented across multiple IT and non-IT service desks
- Faster resolution of Problems
- Improved customer satisfaction

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'Magic Circle' law firm Herbert Smith LLP is an international legal practice, comprising more than 1,200 lawyers and a network of offices throughout Europe and Asia. The full-service commercial firm has a formal alliance with leading European firms Gleiss Lutz and Stibbe, and provides advice across all major practice areas including capital markets, dispute resolution, employment and European Union law, intellectual property, finance, tax and real estate.

Herbert Smith attaches great importance to providing outstanding levels of customer service to its many clients and requires excellent IT systems to effectively support the success of its business. The ability to swiftly resolve support issues affecting the firm's IT and telecommunications infrastructure is therefore a top priority for the IT department.

It was becoming evident that Herbert Smith's existing call management system was insufficient for the firm's increasing IT Service Management needs. The call logging process was unwieldy, calls were taking too long to complete and the system did not support proactive Problem Management. As a result, Herbert Smith decided to commission consultancy firm Plan-Net to develop a service improvement process based on ITIL best-practice.

Implementing ITIL processes with VMware Service Manager

A 'key criteria' checklist was developed for the selection of a new service desk solution with tenders invited from a number of leading providers, including VMware whose Service Manager solution was successful. Catherine Cheetham, Service Management Team Leader within the Information Services Department (ISD) at Herbert Smith comments, "The decision to choose VMware Service Manager was based on our immediate business requirement for an easy-to-configure, web-based service desk that would allow proactive Incident/Problem/Known Error lifecycle management. Significantly VMware Service Manager also offered advanced features such as time-zoning, which actively supported our goal to implement a global service desk for business critical issues.

VMware Service Manager global service desk

Within Herbert Smith, ISD, based in London, provides a 24-hour weekday service desk for users as well as weekend cover. A team of fourteen frontline and seven second level analysts are responsible for managing mission-critical service calls received daily from lawyers and other employees. Analysts are also located in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Paris and Moscow. Over 6,000 Incidents/Problems are logged each month using VMware Service Manager with typical calls ranging from requests to reset passwords or difficulties with Word documents through to issues with printers or email.

“VMware Service Manager has enabled us to build the flexible global service desk solution that is right for our international support operation today and can be continually enhanced to meet our future needs.”

– Eva Wieckowski
Associate Director, ITIL Strategy
and Implementation, Northwestel

Since implementing the VMware system, calls initially logged in Europe or Asia can be seamlessly escalated to the second line in London, with each Incident/Problem being tracked through to closure. All calls logged are in the local time and time-zoning within VMware Service Manager makes it possible to accurately track when calls are first raised, when actions are taken and the time of resolution – invaluable information when managing a global support environment.

Efficient Problem Management

Using VMware Service Manager, ISD can also accurately monitor information such as the exact nature of each call and the point at which calls require escalating to Problem status, and subsequent management via the Problem Management process. Analysts have the ability to link calls to current Problems or Known Errors enabling management to track the volume of calls relating to specific issues and determine a true impact analysis.

According to Catherine Cheetham, “VMware Service Manager provides us with the key information that we need to carry out trend analysis and this enables us to identify issues sooner. When a Problem hits, we are now in a much better position to manage it effectively. As a result, there has been a marked improvement in efficiency with 75% of all calls now resolved by the initial contact.

Sharing skills and knowledge is also much easier now that all international support teams are using the same system. Herbert Smith has implemented VMware Service Manager Knowledge Bank, building up a repository of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and documentation to assist with troubleshooting for common Problems. With the knowledge of Known Errors, ISD in London now also proactively publish such information to the business.

Business support with VMware Service Manager

The successful implementation of the global service desk has led to a number of other support groups within the firm adopting VMware Service Manager. ISD now manages frontline calls for the contact management system, HR and the accounts system, ensuring that consistent processes are followed and routing calls to the relevant department for application-specific support. Acting as a single point of contact for frontline calls ensures that best-practice processes are adhered to and enables the consistent management of all calls through to closure.

Several departments have also begun to use VMware Service Manager as a business system, replacing existing databases with limited functionality. For example, around 50 users in the Document Centre now log over 800 jobs per month within VMware Service Manager. Similarly the Reprographics department, responsible for providing a fast-turnaround photocopying service, is using VMware Service Manager to manage 1,200 job requests monthly. VMware Service Manager offers an easy-to-use yet comprehensive tracking system for job requests with partitioning within the system ensuring that users view only data relevant to each particular operation.

Integrated Change Management and Customer Portal

Looking to the future, Herbert Smith is planning to implement Change Management using VMware Service Manager to replace a number of other systems.

The firm anticipates that integrating Change and Problem Management processes will increase efficiency and speed up the authorization and implementation of Changes.

The introduction of VMware Service Manager has certainly had a positive impact on customer satisfaction – 85% of calls are now answered within just 30 seconds and the service desk is seen within the wider business as an efficient and effective way to resolve problems and action requests. Herbert Smith is also planning to provide user self-service in the future via VMware Service Manager’s Customer Portal, allowing calls to be logged to ISD, Reprographics and Document Centre.

Catherine Cheetham believes that the IT Department has found the ideal service management solution for Herbert Smith's international set-up.

"From the initial tendering process we got the strong sense that VMware was a company we could do business with. VMware Service Manager software is smart and sophisticated, but not difficult to use or overly costly. In fact, VMware's software does exactly what it says on the box, and where configuration has been required, it has been simple. VMware's consulting and technical staff were - and continue to be - brilliant throughout.

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