The Education Revolution

Service Management On The Campus

versaSRS is a highly configurable solution that can be used for IT service management and much more across a wide range of organisations.

Three very different institutions showcased here have deployed versaSRS as their service desk of choice.

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Turn-around times are crucial in any IT department especially when it comes to technical support requests. However managing the queue, prioritising and capturing usable information is equally important and a process in itself. When this process takes more time than resolving the issue at hand, something needs to change. While this may sound elementary, it is a running theme especially in smaller IT departments. But the tide is turning and the education sector offers some prime examples of the impact that an automated helpdesk can have on the IT function.

Emmanuel College, eWorks and Norwich University each service a different area of the secondary and higher education spectrum. The common thread among their IT departments was the lack of a formalised helpdesk system; instead relying on email trails and spreadsheets to manage support queries. Not surprisingly, the difficulties this created were similar for each one. The search for automation resulted in the implementation of versaSRS, a case management tool which has transformed their respective processes in a variety of ways.

eWorks in Melbourne is a leading provider of e-learning products and services to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. The delivery and support of leading-edge technologies is a key aspect of their operation. It relies on efficient and responsive IT technicians to track the details and support history of each client and resolve any issues as quickly as possible. Monitoring these queries originally involved spreadsheets which were not fit for purpose, according to Eric Kuncoro, Web Technology Consultant at eWorks.

"It took more time to update the spreadsheet than doing the technical work itself", said Eric.

The impact of automation has removed these peripheral tasks, allowing them to concentrate on the core activity. From the client's perspective, this not only provides a speedier resolution but also gives visibility over the current status of their requests.

This has similarly contributed to the customer satisfaction experienced at Emmanuel College in Victoria since implementing versaSRS.

"College staff say that the turn-around for their requests is now quicker, and they now know where their requests are. versaSRS gives them a single point of contact", says Systems Manager, David Mitchell.

Emmanuel College's IT department services over 2000 staff and students across two campuses. Previously managing the queue of break/fix requests via email, spreadsheets and verbal communication gave them no means of keeping tabs on the work being carried out or preventing jobs from being duplicated.

"versaSRS has streamlined our services. Everything is completed more quickly and we have minimised the duplication of work. Requests are not forgotten. Our technicians like it as they don't have to answer the phone as much as requests are logged using versaSRS", says David.

Having already used the software at the King David School where he worked previously, David knew that versaSRS was easy to use and quick to deploy.

"VersaSRS has made a considerable impact at the school, as expected, which is why the Business Manager has requested a second instance", says David.

This will be used for grounds maintenance to enable the school to allocate jobs to the staff at the start of each day. The versatility of the application is such that the college also use it to log other work they are involved in.

"For example, we manage the college's Reporting package software, our Parent Teach Online software and the Audio Visual department. By using versaSRS to log all requests for changes to classes, students or assessments for example, we have a complete, auditable record of changes made by our team. versaSRS provides us with a visibility we did not have previously", says David.

Norwich University in the UK have also tapped in to this versatility, using versaSRS to manage not just support requests but their assets as well. For Mark Humphrys, IT services Manager at the University, it has exceeded their expectations.

"We had some idea but it was not until we had it operational and started using it that we became more aware of its capabilities", says Mark.

Previously assets were logged into an Access Database. "Keeping these assets updated was difficult and linking assets to jobs was impossible. Having two applications to keep track of jobs and assets meant that people were often only updating one without doing the other", says Mark.

Knowing that they needed a robust application to resolve these issues, they did their research. "We looked at a variety of other packages, and while many offered a similar range of functionality as versaSRS none came close in terms of pricing", says Mark.

The ability to track requests and monitor progress has improved the way Mark, as the department head, is able to manage his IT staff; as well as to ensure that any of the 1800 staff and students who log technical issues, can see what is happening with their request at any given time.

For the technicians resolving these issues, versaSRS provides the added benefit of collaboration.

"By having all IT staff able to access the system at the same time and make updates etc., each one of the team is able to see all the jobs. Then there is a greater likelihood that jobs get done quicker and advice about a particular job may be passed from one to the other more easily", says Mark.

Outcomes such as these are what revolutionise the workplace.

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