Industry

Education

Business Size

SMB

Location

Cincinnati, Ohio

Costumer Since

2016

Replaced

ServiceNow

Use Case

Incident management, service catalog, service portal

Favorite Feature

Service Portal

samanage

Cutting Support and Maintenance Costs Out of the Box with Samanage

Background

Great Oaks Career Campuses offer innovative career training to empower individuals and communities. With 67 programs across 40 locations in Ohio, Great Oaks serves more than 11,000 students.

Challenges

Great Oaks needed a versatile solution to handle IT incidents, a robust service catalog, and some beyond-IT functionality to create a successful service environment for teachers, and in turn, their students. Because such a large amount of educational activity depends on technology, they needed a user-friendly way to submit tickets and find quick resolutions.

They originally decided on ServiceNow, but Director of IT Stephen Jacobs said that they spent far too much time and money trying to make the platform work for their needs.

"We didn't have a lot of implementation on the ServiceNow side, so the coding side of it was just incredibly expensive," said Jacobs. "Either my crew had to do it, or we had to hire a third-party developer just to keep the product running."

Once Jacobs began calculating the cost of maintaining a service portal plus all of the services that would run through it, the cost became much higher than they had bargained for.

"It was a monster," Jacobs said. "By the time you got done with their piece, the framework piece, the consulting, all the training, and everything else we had to do just to maintain its functions, it was an astronomical final price."

So, Jacobs and his team started looking. Employees had grown accustomed to the service portal, which significantly decreased support phone calls, so that was a necessity. They wanted a service catalog, and they wanted a cloud-based platform to ensure services would be available even through some kind of disruption at their facilities. They also wanted a solution that was simple enough to build out service catalog items for cross-departmental services, like employee onboarding.

Solution

Samanage kept popping up in online searches and reviews.

"It checked all our boxes: service in the cloud, all of the functionality we were looking for, and customized portal so we could put our logos in," said Jacobs, adding that they were able to replace all of the features they built with ServiceNow right out of the box.

"The ease of setup was a big help. We did have to spend some time building out the service catalog, but that wasn't a huge, tedious process like it is with ServiceNow," said Jacobs. "Our service desk coordinator could do most of it herself, whereas before we had to use programmers and engineers just to build basic functionality."

Jacobs changed the DNS servers to point to the new service desk, which made the transition very smooth for users. Portal adoption remained very high.

Great Oaks also incorporated Samanage into certain elements of their onboarding process, smoothing out the communication. Many courses in the curriculum are specialized, meaning part-time employees might teach one or two classes. That constant influx of part time and specialized employees makes a smooth onboarding process vital to Great Oaks' success.

"We might have one guy show up to teach CPR once a year, and we pay him for it," said Jacobs. "If he logs in to try to submit his time and it falls apart, they'll blame us, so onboarding was a high priority for me."

Jacobs said his HR and facilities teams have each used Samanage in the onboarding process.

Benefits

Smooth onboarding has made a major impact at Great Oaks.

"I've seen improvements in communication, leading to better satisfaction for our employees," said Jacobs. "When they walk in and they already have their credentials, they already have email, and everything is working before they even sit down, that's a big impression for somebody."

Resources and training for teachers has made a significant impact, not only for their satisfaction, but for the entire educational process. A significant portion of the curriculum depends on technology. Many of the courses deal with computer programming, robotics, 3D printing, or building technology. Those pieces of equipment need to be set up with login credentials for students as early as possible — ideally on the first day, which Samanage has helped them do.

"If we have all of that student data, and the teacher has everything ready to go on the first day, the students can immediately take advantage of that curricular time," said Jacobs.

"We cut our service desk software and support budget by 75 percent," said Jacobs. "It was half the cost of the ServiceNow framework and extremely more robust, which helps us save on building and maintaining new features."

Stephen Jacobs
Director of IT

"The students respond better, and that improves the general view of what's going on at Great Oaks. People know we have our act together."

In addition to a smooth onboarding experience for both employees and students, Great Oaks has received a greater ROI with Samanage across the board.

We'd love our next success story to be the one we write together with you. Let us know how we can help at 888-250-8971.

samanage

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