

Industry

Higher Education

ITSM Challenges

The legacy IT service management system was:

- Complex and slow
- Use was limited to a single web browser
- Large investment required to update to a new server and reconfigure the system

Outcome

Through Samanage, College of the Holy Cross was able to streamline workflow of yearly updates to hundreds of computers across campus and empower end users to resolve some of their own technical issues through a self-service portal.

Dorms, Libraries, Labs, Oh My!: Samanage Paves a Path to Streamlined Workflows and Simplified IT Asset Management

Campus gets easier to navigate for a college IT team courtesy of a new IT service management solution that allows them to track assets and warranty information, perform upgrades that meet a user's specific needs, and decrease the amount of follow-up requests to the help desk.

Background

The College of the Holy Cross is a highly selective, four-year college located in Worcester, MA with nearly 3,000 students and 332 faculty members. The College boasts impressive technological facilities with four on-campus libraries and 11 fully networked residence halls.

Challenges

Holy Cross was using an IT service desk product from CA Technologies®, a companion product to their Unicenter® network monitoring system. At the time when they were selecting a service desk product, they chose the CA product because it was bundled with the larger system.

"We moved off Unicenter many years ago, but continued to use service des for IT help desk tracking," said Ellen Keohane, chief information officer at Holy Cross.

They found the service desk to be complex, slow, and difficult to upgrade. The limited functionality was a burden as it only allowed the team to work with one web browser. In order to update it, they would need to invest in a new server and reconfigure everything again.

Instead of making a large investment just to make updates to their old ITSM solution, Keohane and team felt it was a good time to transition to a cloud-based asset management and help desk solution that would more effectively and efficiently meet their needs.

Solution

When Holy Cross began considering other solutions they were also gearing up to undertake a major expansion in the number of work stations on campus. Becky Chickering, technical support director at Holy Cross, did an extensive search to create a short list of potential solutions. Their must-haves for the future solution included:

- Integration with Google Apps
- Cloud-based IT service management solution that would limit the amount of maintenance and on-premise hassles
- Easy access from mobile and Internet-enabled devices

Throughout their search, the Holy Cross team participated in demonstrations with 10 different providers, but after a thorough evaluation of the ey vendors in the mar et, Holy Cross chose Samanage for a number of reasons.

With Samanage, product updates are continuously deployed and automatic which would free the Holy Cross team from needing to do any cumbersome updates or maintenance on-premise. The strong inventory capabilities that

Samanage brought to the College, like automatically using the agent to update data in the inventory, was additionally important as they made their decision to move to a new ITSM solution. Finally, Samanage's seamless integration with Google Apps was a breeze.

The Samanage platform had all of features important to the Holy Cross team, as well as a price that was in an acceptable range for the College. Ultimately, Keohane, Chickering and team selected Samanage as their new ITSM solution.

Benefits

As part of their four-year replacement cycle, Holy Cross upgrades approximately 450 computers for faculty, staff members and labs each year. Using Samanage, they were able to create a workflow process that allowed them to manage this rollout with greater accuracy, something they did not have in the past.

Technicians that are assigned a rollout request follow the same procedure with each computer, using

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a checklist-type process. Now, there is no worry of something being misconfigured or left out.

"We are able to provide a quicker rollout, no longer keeping the user from their work while we 'set up' their new computer," said Chickering. "This also lets IT managers know exactly where a particular computer is in the process and allows for any technician to continue working on it at any point in the process."

The inventory tracking agent takes care of updating objects automatically and communicates with Apple, HP and Dell for warranty information on each device, making it easier for them to locate all machines that are up for renewal. "These reports are critical each year for our rollout project," said Chickering.

Using Samanage, the IT team at Holy Cross has been able to create a service desk workflow that allows

them to manage the acquisition and installation of hardware and software purchases. The process starts with the users request for purchase and ends with the technicians installation. The Samanage software inventory shows exactly what is installed on the

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Becky Chickering

Technical Support Director The College of the Holy Cross

old computer, making it easy for the technician to setup the new computer accurately. Any hardware incidents are now monitored carefully, making sure devices are well within their usability. The Holy Cross IT team is now able to immediately replace printers with excessive repairs as well as extend the life of those printers still performing well past their warranty, providing a cost benefit to the college.

Not only have they improved their IT help desk ticket time, faculty, staff and students are now empowered to solve more of their own technology issues using an easy-to-use self-service portal. The Samanage self-service tool allows the Holy Cross IT team to extend their office hours in a sense, giving customers the ability to find an answer or solution on their own time, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

"Having a user interface that looks current, that functions well on a mobile device, that helps end users answer their own questions by searching on a knowledge base. All of these things make our IT service organization look more professional," said Keohane.

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