



Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust: Cutting unnecessary calls by implementing Numara FootPrints!

When Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust wanted to change its service desk, rid itself of a string of Post-It® Notes, and benefit from management information, it chose Numara® FootPrints®!

Background

Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust is a Specialist Trust providing Mental Health, Learning Disability and Community Brain Injury services for over 700,000 people in Eastern Dorset and specialist services Dorset-wide. The Trust's annual income is approximately £81 million and it employs 2,000 staff. Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust is one of the 42 UK trusts which have been rated 'Excellent' for both their 'Quality of Services' and their 'Use of Resources' in the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check for 2007/08.

Moving swiftly to complete a necessary service desk upgrade

Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust receives over 3000 service calls a month, ranging from serious issues regarding the urgent servicing of clinical equipment to more trivial issues such as the resetting of passwords. Yet for a Trust whose services have been rated as 'excellent', it was fighting an uphill battle trying to maintain its service quality with a service desk that had long since seen its best days.

The existing system was doing a job of supporting the Trust's 2500 users spread over 30 sites, covering 1500 PCs and laptops. But users and technicians had lost confidence in the system, and a new solution was long overdue. IT Operations Manager Matt Sherrin explains, "Our service desk system was an in-house Access-based system that was very old and lacked functionality. We were getting no managerial benefits as it did not deliver useful statistics or meaningful reports. There was no effective user interface, which made it difficult to log calls. Our technicians were using it, but didn't like doing so.

"That meant we had a series of Post-It Notes appear all over the place, which we tried to ban because we were fed up of seeing lots of scrawl. With the old system, for the time being, we could manage our workflow, but that was about all. We had wanted a proper system for several years, but getting the funding was always the issue."

IN BRIEF

Industry

Public Sector (NHS)

Business Driver

A long-needed move to an ITIL-compatible service desk system that was simple for the Trust's 2,000 staff to adopt and could be implemented quickly and effectively.

Why Numara FootPrints

- Ease of implementation and immediately - usable functionality
- ITIL V3-compatibility
- Ability to work with existing NHS asset discovery tool
- Clean look and feel
- Fast implementation in just under 2 months

Business Benefits

Reduced call volume by 50 percent - Greater assurance in the usability and reporting capabilities of Numara FootPrints means the IT department can be certain that no business or clinical-critical service calls will be missed, and that the resolution of the calls is more efficient.

"In just three weeks, the number of phone calls to the support desk has already decreased by nearly 50 percent."

Matt Sherrin

IT Operations Manager
Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust

After again budgeting for a new service desk system to be installed, Dorset Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's IT team received a pleasant surprise early in 2009, when the funding for the service desk became available. Sherrin takes up the story.

"The Finance Director told me we had the money, but we had to buy the solution, install it and have it active this financial year. That gave us just two months to get it in. And so I did nothing for two months but focus on getting the decision made and implementing it"

In deciding which solution to choose, Dorset relied on the information they had previously gathered at the Service Desk and IT Support Show in 2008 in the hope that at some point, they'd be able to use it to help make a decision.

"We'd already assessed what was out there," recalls Sherrin. "We'd gathered all the information that was available and from that, together with the demonstrations we'd seen, we knew we had a top three and these were Numara[®] Software, Touchpaper[®] and Hornbill[®]."

A Requirement for ITIL V3 Compatibility

Another key criterion for Dorset was to choose a service-desk solution that was ITIL V3 verified. That, together with the need to integrate with an existing NHS system for asset management clinched the deal for Numara FootPrints, as Sherrin explains, "We needed the solution to be ITIL-friendly because we want to be capable of linking with the central service desk for the NHS which relies on ITIL best practices. We also get Centennial Discovery for free as part of the Enterprise Agreement signed between NHS Connecting for Health and Microsoft, so we wanted to be able to utilise that rather than use any other asset management software. In the end, Numara FootPrints represented a substantially huge cost advantage for us.

"We need scalability and ease of development when we want it. We also want something that is simple for both technicians and end users to adopt. They are using it so many times a day that it needs to look clean and to flow in a logical way. Supporting our workflow is important. If it's a headache to use, we go back to square one. With all those criteria in mind, and sitting well within our costings, the choice had to be Numara FootPrints."

Moving fast towards implementation

Although Dorset Healthcare had made a decision to choose Numara FootPrints in February 2009, both the Dorset and Numara Software teams knew there was plenty of work to be done if the system was going to be implemented two months later by the end of Dorset's 2008-2009 financial year in early April. Sherrin admits that the deadline was an ambitious one.

"In the end, we went live on 6th April. It would have been nice to be able to slow the process down, but there was some preparatory work to do. Numara FootPrints helpfully provides you with various different templates and spreadsheets and the more carefully you fill in the matrices, the easier the implementation becomes. Our consultant was excellent and Numara Software helped get us up to speed and sort us out with training. We had a close relationship and great chemistry with the Numara Software team. Now, a month down the line, it's been a real success story for us."

Scope for Future Development

Dorset's implementation timetable has been tight, so it has yet to fully explore how it can use Numara FootPrints within other departments, such as Finance or Estates, to simplify processes.

"The scope is there to be able to use Numara FootPrints in other departments," says Sherrin. "I can see that would be really useful. We are also looking at hardware and patch management solutions and Numara Software have a solution there too.

"Following ITIL best practice is important for us looking ahead. We have ten people on the IT Operations side who have already done the V3 Foundation course training, so it's fair to say we do adhere to parts of ITIL and use it where it's appropriate."

Decreasing phone calls mean increasing service desk efficiency

Although it is early days since its installation and implementation of Numara FootPrints, Sherrin and his support team at Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust are already seeing a difference in the number of calls made to the service desk, which has dramatically improved efficiency – and made the plague of Post-It! notes a thing of the past.

“In just three weeks, the number of phone calls to the support desk has already decreased by nearly 50 percent,” says Sherrin. “We were getting over 3000 calls a month. Sometimes it seemed as if they were even calling us when their kettle wasn’t working. Now, if they email the support desk, a ticket is created in Numara FootPrints, which is seamless as far as we’re concerned, and the user gets an email with the details. In future, they’ll also have the Web portal to log onto. We haven’t advertised that, though we’ve already put an icon on their desktops and some people are logging calls via that. We will start pushing that as soon as agents are more familiar with the software.

“Our goal was to improve communications and to cut down unnecessary phone calls, and we are already achieving that because the number of emails in and out of the system is increasing greatly. Although it’s very early days, it is clear there are going to be major savings because of that communications improvement.”

“In just a short time since 6th April when we went live, the number of phone calls to the support desk has already decreased by 50 percent. Numara Software helped get us up to speed and we had a close relationship and great chemistry with the Numara Software team. A month down the line in using Numara FootPrints, it’s been a real success story for us.”

Matt Sherrin
IT Operations Manager
Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust

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.



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