



Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Engineering and construction

Customer Profile

With 200 business locations around the globe, CH2M Hill plans, develops, and manages infrastructures, facilities, and environments for public-sector customers and companies in almost any industry.

Business Situation

The company's help-desk solution was nearing the end of its life cycle, presenting an opportunity to reinvent support services and align the help desk with organizational strategy.

Solution

CH2M Hill implemented a help-desk solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM and already-existing technology developed by Microsoft partner xRM.com.

Benefits

- Drive self-service adoption with outstanding user experience
- Minimize cost and resource impact of global help-desk functions
- Develop effective technology management strategies to reduce support needs

CH2M Hill Increases Support Quality, Reduces Expenses by Using Global Help-Desk Solution

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Diane Sharrock, IT Director, CH2M Hill

CH2M Hill, a global provider of infrastructures, facilities, and related services, provided employees with technical support by using a help-desk tool that had become unstable and would soon lose vendor support. After reviewing competing solutions, the company decided to implement Microsoft Dynamics CRM together with help-desk capabilities developed by Microsoft partner xRM.com and Microsoft Services. Today, 23,000 employees around the globe can rely on a help-desk resource with extensive self-service capabilities and a vast, discoverable knowledge base. CH2M Hill can now resolve the majority of support requests through self-service tools instead of over the phone. Intelligent routing directs requests to the right member of the global help-desk team. With new efficiencies, the number of support analysts has remained the same although CH2M Hill has brought on thousands of new employees.

Microsoft | Services



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Situation

[CH2M Hill](#), an employee-owned company with headquarters in Englewood, Colorado, serves business and public-sector clients around the globe by planning, developing, and managing infrastructures and facilities to enhance the quality of life and provide elevated levels of safety and efficiency. The company’s many different services include energy management and planning, environmental management and planning, lean enterprise solutions, program and construction management, and sustainable solutions. Currently, CH2M Hill is involved with the construction of many of the venues for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The approximately 23,000 CH2M Hill employees use a variety of technologies and devices to do their work, collaborate with colleagues and teams, and communicate with clients and business partners. A team of close to 300 technologists is responsible for supporting the entire company’s technology users and helping them address any issues they run into as they work with software, computers, mobile devices, peripherals, and networking technologies. The support team receives approximately 18,000 requests in a typical month.

Strategic Help-Desk Technology Planning

To manage global IT help-desk services, in 1999, CH2M Hill implemented a system called Peregrine, which HP eventually acquired and renamed HP Service Center. During close to 11 years of use, CH2M Hill had introduced many enhancements and customizations to the solution, and it had become unstable and challenging to manage. At the same time, the version of the solution that CH2M Hill used was approaching the end of its life cycle, with HP about to discontinue support. Because

of this, no further enhancements and updates would be available for the solution. Diane Sharrock, IT Director at CH2M Hill, explains, “When we started experiencing unwanted downtime, we assessed our options, including reimplementing a new version of our present solution without the modifications or acquiring a different help-desk management system. However, before going any further with a technology decision, we chose to review how we could improve the quality of the help-desk services for CH2M Hill and in which direction we wanted to take the help desk of the future. In the years since we first implemented the help-desk system, the company itself had grown and evolved, and we wanted to ensure that the help desk could effectively support changing requirements and business processes.”

Ambitious Efficiency Goals

Considering the IT help desk in terms of the company’s overall strategy, Sharrock and her stakeholder team articulated a number of objectives and requirements and identified compelling opportunities for enhancing help-desk services. “When help-desk engagements took place, 75 percent of them occurred over the phone and 25 percent occurred in a self-service manner through an online portal,” says Sharrock. “We thought it was possible to invert this ratio by the end of 2011.” In doing so, CH2M Hill also wanted to reduce the costs and increase the efficiencies of creating support tickets and managing them to resolution.

Need for Effective Knowledge Management

Technology users and support specialists at CH2M Hill had access to comprehensive documentation regarding the resolution of technical issues and the company’s technological environment. However, searching through this content required

navigating several menus and reviewing supporting documentation, which prevented many employees from making full use of the materials. Help-desk managers wanted to find a way to make these resources more valuable by deploying effective knowledge-management capabilities. They also wanted to make it easier for help-desk professionals to search for past support tickets and their resolutions, a function that tended to slow the current system.

Complex Routing Requirements

CH2M Hill also had complex requirements for routing support requests to the right support specialists. Employees in any of the company's 200 locations worldwide need to be able to initiate a support ticket on a wide range of possible issues and receive a helpful response from somebody who can help them. Many help-desk analysts are at the company's headquarters location, but many others work in CH2M Hill offices in many other countries. Says Sharrock, "We wanted to eliminate issues we had in transferring support tickets to support teams in different countries. The help-desk solution needed to reflect how the company works and provide an efficient way to route requests to the right people, wherever they are."

Solution

In reviewing possible help-desk solutions, CH2M Hill focused on technologies that the company already used and for which the IT group had application and user interface standards: HP Service Manager; Oracle Enterprise HelpDesk for Human Resources; PeopleSoft Enterprise HelpDesk, which is also from Oracle; and [Microsoft Dynamics CRM](#). The Microsoft and HP solutions offered the most potential for extending the use of the service desk and ticketing system to smaller support groups within the company and for integration and

alignment with software tools that CH2M Hill uses.

Decision for Proven Technology and Experienced Partner

For CH2M Hill, Microsoft Dynamics CRM was a well-known product that [close to 1,000 sales professionals at the company used](#). "We liked that the user interface in Microsoft Dynamics CRM provided a familiar experience to employees, and we had already proven that a single instance of the solution could well support a global organization," says Sharrock. "We also saw that it would be easy to align Microsoft Dynamics CRM with such common business software tools as Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel. In keeping with the same user interface, we would also be able to develop a self-service portal with extensive knowledge management capabilities." In addition, CH2M Hill sought to integrate Microsoft Dynamics CRM with Microsoft Office Communications Server, now known as [Microsoft Lync Server](#), facilitating efficient communications in a number of ways.

CH2M Hill connected with [Microsoft Services](#) and Microsoft partner and Microsoft Dynamics CRM specialist [xRM.com](#). "xRM.com already had created more than 80 percent of the functionality we looked for in a help-desk solution above what Microsoft Dynamics CRM offered," explains Sharrock. CH2M Hill decided on Microsoft Dynamics CRM together with the additional capabilities that xRM.com built. Consultants from Microsoft Services, collaborating with technologists from CH2M Hill and xRM.com, performed the implementation.

Efficient, Global Help-Desk Management Solution

In the process, CH2M Hill gained an efficient, companywide help-desk solution

that offers a vast, discoverable repository of technical documentation and historical ticketing information. At the help-desk portal, which reflects the company's branding and interface standards, employees can search the knowledge base, answering simple questions to help them select the most helpful information. Available content includes extensive user guidance and standard operating procedures for IT and help-desk specialists. If employees are unable to resolve their issues on their own, they can enter a help-desk request.

xRM.com developed the help-desk portal and the sophisticated routing that automatically forwards support requests to the appropriate specialists, depending on issue details, location, time zone, support staff availability, skills requirements, and other criteria. Through the integration of Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Lync Server, help-desk specialists and their internal customers around the globe can communicate through chat and easily exchange information without having to switch applications. Nine support analysts, available for 15 hours every day, are ready to engage in this way with employees in need of assistance.

The help-desk solution integrates with [Microsoft SQL Server](#) to provide CH2M Hill with a data warehouse and enterprise-level reporting capabilities for any queries related to technical support concerns. To introduce the new help-desk tools, xRM.com provided some train-the-trainer instruction and more extensive training for help-desk team members. Employees across the organization quickly adopted the new help-desk resources.

Adoption by Other Business Groups

Shortly following the implementation for the IT support group, several other, smaller

business groups such as asset management, design software development, engineering business applications, financial systems, and procurement became interested in the help-desk solution and the xRM application development framework within Microsoft Dynamics CRM and started using the solution for their own support and change management requirements. For these groups, the help-desk solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM replaced a variety of systems and practices, resulting in a consistent, companywide approach to providing support.

Benefits

For CH2M Hill, its decision to implement Microsoft Dynamics CRM resulted in new help-desk capabilities that provide internal customers with an excellent support experience, help to keep costs down, and let the IT group support more employees with increasing staff. As Sharrock comments, "We now have a streamlined, reliable, highly automated help-desk management solution that guides many more employees to take care of their concerns through self-service. Microsoft Services and xRM.com did an outstanding job in delivering the technology and enabling us to run and refine it on our own."

Drive Self-Service Adoption with Outstanding User Experience

Today, CH2M Hill's roughly 23,000 employees receive efficient, responsive technical support. "Searching the knowledge base has become much easier, with vastly improved performance. Many support requests don't get to the IT group anymore, because our internal customers resolve them on their own," Sharrock states. When it is necessary to generate a support request, employees don't have to answer preliminary diagnostic questions anymore,

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Diane Sharrock, IT Director, CH2M Hill

which they often found difficult in the past. Instead, they note their support requirements through the help-desk portal. At that point, the portal still presents useful knowledge base articles that the employee might not have located yet. Employees are unaware of the automatic, complex routing workflows that guide their support requests to the most helpful help-desk analyst available.

CH2M Hill is successfully changing the ratio between self-service and telephone support requests. Says Sharrock, “The new help-desk solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM will let us resolve 75 percent of all support inquiries in self-service style and the remainder over the phone, which is the exact opposite of what service management used to look like.”

Minimize Cost and Resource Impact of Global Help-Desk Functions

The new help-desk solution helps CH2M Hill keep costs under control. Although CH2M Hill has added several thousand employees in recent years, the company has avoided increasing the number of people staffing the help desk. “With the same team of close to 300 support specialists, we help thousands more customers,” states Sharrock. “On average, help-desk analysts handle 15 percent more support tickets than they did in the past.”

What’s more, technology-related expenses have also gone down. “Although the implementation cost of Microsoft Dynamics CRM is comparable to that of other solutions, the ongoing costs are 80 percent less than the competitors’,” says Sharrock.

Develop Effective Technology Management Strategies to Reduce Support Needs

From taking fewer clicks to navigate to running with predictable stability, CH2M Hill has gained a help-desk infrastructure that makes life easier for its IT department. “Microsoft Dynamics CRM is extremely reliable,” comments Sharrock. “It also offers a convenient xRM development environment that we can take advantage of to easily extend the solution or adjust it to changing requirements.”

With new reporting capabilities, CH2M Hill can perform root cause analysis to understand trends in support requests and address them globally before they have a greater impact on employees. Says Sharrock, “With Microsoft Dynamics CRM, we can very efficiently analyze help-desk request traffic to get to the larger issues that we need to tackle to reduce the number of requests. With the previous system, this would only have been possible by investing significant time and effort.”

At CH2M Hill, the help desk and teams continue to find out what Microsoft Dynamics CRM and xRM resources can help them accomplish. “Incorporating standard operating procedures and process documentation from a variety of business groups in the same system, we are still discovering new efficiencies for the support systems at CH2M Hill,” says Sharrock. “Even beyond the important help-desk capabilities, Microsoft Dynamics CRM is a powerful change management tool for us.”

For More Information

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For more information about CH2M Hill products and services, call (888) CH2M-HILL or visit the website at:
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Additional Resources

- [Find out how CH2M Hill's sales organization uses Microsoft Dynamics CRM.](#)
- [See how CH2M Hill cuts costs with virtualization.](#)
- [Learn more about Microsoft Dynamics CRM in professional-services organizations.](#)
- [Hear about other companies' experiences in the Microsoft Dynamics CRM community.](#)
- [Understand the potential of xRM to manage key relationships.](#)

Microsoft Dynamics

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