

Flying high with Ryanair

Central control - 135 locations linked by single system for IT support at Ryanair

Background

When Ryanair needed a robust yet flexible Service Management Solution, Numara FootPrints was the only product in the market to match its requirements.

Ryanair was established in 1985 by the Ryan family with a share capital of just £1 and staff of 25. Today, the airline has 4,800 staff, comprising of 25 different nationalities, based in 23 European locations and its fleet of aircraft carry around 52 million passengers during the course of the year. This makes Ryanair one of Europe's largest low fare carriers, flying to over 10 destinations in the UK as well as covering a huge area of Europe.

Delivering a fast and reliable service is of utmost importance to the airline's continued success and this includes ensuring that the needs of employees are met as well as passengers. Ryanair has 22 IT staff supporting over 1,000 office and engineering staff and 3,000 pilots and crew across 135 different locations. This incredibly busy internal support team manages over 500 calls every week.

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Improving response times

Ryanair has a strong commitment to service levels, resolving staff queries and issues with quick response times. Keeping downtime to a minimum is an imperative but this is not an easy task when dealing with many diverse geographical locations, multiple languages and cross cultural issues.

On a daily basis, the IT team resolves a wide range of issues from system failures to PC/laptop setup, account lockouts, systems setup, printing issues, network link set up, new airport and base set ups and Ryanair's customer facing website. The primary responsibility of the IT team is to oversee the internal systems, as the business understands that any delay in responding to internal queries and problems could ultimately impact on the customer experience.

In October 2006, Ryanair appointed a new IT Director, Eric Neville who was tasked with reviewing the current IT support system, as well as ensuring that the company achieved Sarbanes Oxley (SOX) 404 compliance.

Neville found the airlines 'home grown' system was extremely stretched and lacked the visibility, escalation and workflow capabilities that he expected from a service desk.

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There was also the need for the company to comply with strict industry legislation that demanded organisations be accountable for securing their data, IT systems and process integrity.

This meant that the airline needed to ensure audit trails and histories were all recorded correctly. With an increasing number of issues to deal with, Neville knew that he needed to replace the service desk.

Eric Neville, IT Director for Ryanair responsible for IT purchasing takes up the story:

“Maintaining, upgrading and resourcing the in-house developed system was our biggest challenge. When we started to review potential new service desk solutions we already had two internal systems which were extremely cumbersome, with limited usability, flexibility and they lacked visibility into open issues. We needed a web based solution which could handle the constant changes within our business quickly and easily and could also scale to accommodate future projects.”

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The devil is in the detail

Ryanair began the unenviable task of researching the market. In a relatively short space of time a long list of suppliers was whittled down to a short list of three potential vendors. Neville continues:

“We put together a key requirements document stating what we wanted to get out of a service management solution. We then researched which of the tools in the market were able to meet some or all of these requirements. This quickly narrowed the choice down to three, Numara FootPrints being one of them. Numara FootPrints had an amazing amount of flexibility and was the only solution that met all our needs.”

Through its technology partner, QMS, Ryanair arranged for a demonstration of Numara FootPrints, which appeared to be the front runner. Even at this early stage, Ryanair found the product extremely user friendly and was impressed by the functionality of product and, in particular, its customisation capabilities. The decision was quickly reached to deploy Numara FootPrints.

Rapid deployment

The solution was straightforward and quick to implement. The entire system was up and running within 4 weeks. Representatives from Numara Software and QMS were on-site during setup and this partnership worked extremely well. The key features of Numara FootPrints include streamlined ITIL enablement tools and powerful workflow automation, along with bold usability features and advanced customisation options.

Numara FootPrints process realisation functionality also enabled Ryanair to adapt quickly to the changing needs of the business without the costly administration and management overheads found in many other service management solutions. In the fast moving airline business, Ryanair craves the flexibility to make changes quickly, without fuss and without incurring expensive consulting fees.

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“For a small but highly experienced IT team, within one of the largest and fastest growing airlines in Europe, finding a solution that needed minimal system resourcing and management was critical in the decision making process. Numara FootPrints is packaged with pre-customised templates so it is not only quick and easy to deploy but the ongoing management and maintenance costs are dramatically reduced. Effectively we purchased a technology platform and then put our own pre-configured templates on top of this.”

Neville continued:

“Numara FootPrints had the same, if not more functionality as other market leading service management products, but it was much easier to set up and implement at a very cost effective price.”

A multi-faceted solution

As a result, the Numara FootPrints system has enabled the Ryanair IT team to increase the visibility of the way in which calls and requests are logged and handled. It has also reduced ‘corridor’ requests, as all open ticket requests now have to be listed and tracked which, as a direct result, has also significantly improved escalation management.



Photo: Kas van Zonneveld

The solution monitors all facilities and purchasing needs, manages workflows and tracks all hardware and software. In addition, Numara FootPrints supports all Ryanair’s change management requirements providing a full audit trail so that the company continues to comply with government regulations and legislation. Perhaps most importantly it has enabled the airline to track statistics relating to performance, which is delivered in easy to use management dashboard reports.

By implementing Numara FootPrints, Ryanair has dramatically increased the visibility of calls and requests via email or phone - even if this involves a third party. This has resulted in the fast resolution of queries and an overall 99 percent satisfaction level with users.

Neville concludes:

“I would have no problem recommending Numara FootPrints. It is extremely simple to use, very competitively priced and an incredibly powerful service management solution.”



About Numara Software

Founded in 1991, Numara Software is a global provider of service desk management solutions. Its flagship products, Numara Track-It! and Numara FootPrints, support over 50,000 customer sites worldwide making it the leader in this market for small to mid-sized enterprises.