



Business Needs

More effective call management capabilities for NIU's help desk to reduce call times while providing fast and accurate customer service to end users.

Solution

LANDesk® Service Management
LANDesk® Service Desk
LANDesk® Active Knowledge

Business Benefits

- Reduces call times of the 4,500 calls received each month
- Provides faster and more accurate call management
- Self-service reduces calls and enables NIU's 25,000 students and 5,000 faculty and staff members to help themselves
- Facilitates higher quality support at all levels

Continuous Dedication to Customer Service

Northern Illinois University (NIU) in DeKalb, Illinois is a teaching and research institution with a diverse student body of more than 25,000 students and more than 5,000 faculty and staff members. The educational program at NIU consists of seven degree-granting colleges with 55 undergraduate majors, 77 graduate programs, 10 PhD programs, doctoral degrees in education, and a Juris Doctorate. The central mission of the university is the transmission, expansion, and application of knowledge through teaching, research, artistry, and public service.\

NIU's Information Technology help desk is the central information technology organization for the campus. The help desk supports 1,500 computers for research, instruction and individual use in academic departments, classrooms and student computing labs, as well as the campus telephony system. The department, which started as a student-run help desk, has grown to include 30 full-time status employees that compose a front line team as well as second-level and tech-support teams. The front line team receives and manages the bulk of inquiries coming into the department, and it relies on the second level team for additional support. The tech support staff provides hands-on technical support for students and faculty on campus. Every month NIU's help desk receives 4,500 calls, 1,125 emails and 120 walk-in inquiries. The help desk deals with issues ranging from password and account ID management, software support, networking, and PC trouble reports.

Seven years ago, the department recognized the need for a comprehensive solution that would help it align information technology support with excellent customer service. It needed a solution that would save time and cut costs while streamlining processes that were already in place. NIU ultimately chose LANDesk® Service Management* (formerly Touchpaper Service Management) due to its strong Service Level Agreement (SLA) support and ability to adapt to the vision of the IT department.

By November of 2007, NIU had been successfully using LANDesk Service Management for a number of years and had received positive feedback from users. While using the LANDesk® solution, 93.1 percent of users rated the help desk as knowledgeable and 93.8 percent of users were able to solve their problems on their own. In order to meet the growing needs of the university's users, NIU implemented a knowledge management initiative and called on LANDesk for recommendations on the next steps. In keeping with the spirit of its long-standing, collaborative relationship, LANDesk worked closely with NIU to evaluate the university's IT service management needs and determine the appropriate upgrade. In April 2007, NIU chose two LANDesk® IT Business Management Suite (ITBM™) products, LANDesk® Service Desk and LANDesk® Active Knowledge. On March 12, 2008, the transition completed and went live.

** Spanning 20 years' experience across Europe, the USA and Asia Pacific, Touchpaper has a rich heritage as one of the most established and respected international providers of IT business management (ITBM) solutions, encompassing IT service management (ITSM), customer service solutions, and network and systems management. On July 1, 2008, Touchpaper was acquired by Avocent Corporation and has been integrated within Avocent's LANDesk division. Touchpaper solutions now carry the LANDesk® brand name and are offered either directly or through an extensive international network of solutions providers serving commercial and public sector markets that include education, financial services, government, healthcare, IT, law, manufacturing, professional services, retail, transportation and utilities.*

As a next-generation, graphical business solution, LANDesk Service Desk provides more effective call management for NIU's help desk. The solution cuts down on call times while providing fast and accurate customer service to end users. LANDesk Service Desk combines process-driven call management with role-based privilege sets, automatic actions, assignment, service levels and escalation. It also works equally well for external-facing customer service groups and public-facing information services. Key benefits of LANDesk Service Desk include faster call logging and resolution, powerful self-service to help students and faculty help themselves with their inquiries, and service management tools to facilitate high quality support.

LANDesk Active Knowledge allows both IT support staff and end users to have access to timely, valuable, structured and validated information. The strong self-service model inherent to LANDesk Active Knowledge provides NIU's IT department with an in-house, self service, 24/7 training tool and knowledge base for its help desk. The solution delivers high value within a service management environment, particularly in helping analysts, users and customers find answers to common problems and questions.

LANDesk Active Knowledge allows the IT staff to set up domains that can be customized for their tech support team as well as the general population of the university. LANDesk Active Knowledge can also be used by the department as a training tool. It's a concrete resource for the front line staff, offering the ability to search the knowledge base for answers to questions they would have needed the second level support team to answer. And the second level support team can contribute to the knowledge base in order to provide the front line even better support.

In discussing the Touchpaper team, now part of LANDesk, Sabrina Hammond, Assistant Director of Customer Support Services says, "We've been working with Touchpaper for seven years because of their commitment to customer service. From the beginning, they have been dedicated to understanding the nuances of NIU and the state system. When we decided to upgrade our service, Touchpaper gave us access to technology and people that we could depend on. They pulled together a group of people that met our needs in a way that reaffirmed why we've been using Touchpaper for so many years. We're confident that Service Desk and Active Knowledge are going to make a tremendous difference in the department, and Touchpaper has provided us with a great support team comprised of people that we can rely on."

For more information on LANDesk and its solutions, please visit: www.landesk.com.



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Sabrina Hammond
Assistant Director of Customer
Support Services
Northern Illinois University