



The Arc of Ventura County –

Experiences Easiness of the Help Desk Management

The Arc of Ventura County is a community-based, nonprofit organization based in Ventura, California. The organization is dedicated to improving the quality of life of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Established in 1954, the Arc of Ventura County currently serves 700 individuals through a variety of programs that helps them enjoy a life of dignity, respect and inclusion. Program participants have the opportunity to gain life skills to live independently, participate and volunteer in the community as well as receive training and skills that lead to employment.

The Arc of Ventura County provides services at 13 locations throughout Ventura County and employs 275 people, including job coaches, management personnel and administrative staff. To finance its operations, the nonprofit receives federal and state funding, grants and private donations as well as financial support from The Arc Foundation of Ventura County.



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The Problem: Excel doesn't help

Prior to ServiceDesk Plus, the support staff at The Arc of Ventura County used Microsoft Excel to track all its help desk operations. The issues were submitted on sticky notes to the IT team who manually entered them into Excel. This resulted in human errors and delayed effective resolution of incidents.

Andy Mack, Director of Information Technology at The Arc of Ventura County recalls the challenges, "Like most non-profits, we faced two core challenges in managing our IT resources. First of all, we had and continue to have a limited budget. We want to spend as much as possible on serving the community, which means spending as little as possible on things like IT and IT management. Second, before I got here, we just didn't excel in technological use, and we weren't big on technology as a way to achieve our goals."

Considering these challenges, Andy decided it was time to install a new and more efficient solution to reduce errors, reduce the response time, and to speed up the entire process.

The Challenge:

Easy, Quick, Affordable IT help desk software

Given the situation where IT help desks were unnecessarily complex with significantly huge price tags, was it a challenge for Andy? The answer surprisingly was that, it was not!

Over the last decade, Andy Mack has introduced the ManageEngine software to several non-profit and for-profit organizations that he had worked with. His first exposure to ServiceDesk Plus was at a non-profit firm that used Excel to run its help desk and track computer hardware for 70 staffers at five locations. Later, Andy used ServiceDesk Plus at a for-profit company that used Excel and email to support 500 people in the U.S. and abroad. ServiceDesk Plus proved to be a cost-effective solution to streamline help desk operations at both companies.

In 2012, Andy introduced ServiceDesk Plus Professional Edition at The Arc of Ventura County to handle both help desk and asset management duties. ServiceDesk Plus was also used by the organization's facilities staff to manage vehicle and building issues.

After a one-day installation process, Andy had users initially send their requests to the IT team via email. Once users got comfortable using the ServiceDesk Plus via email, Andy trained them on the ServiceDesk Plus web portal. The portal presents users with drop down boxes to describe help desk issues in granular detail and also facilitates overall tracking and reporting.

Andy allowed the system to run for a few months before evaluating the performance and he found that the ServiceDesk Plus enabled the team to take up and resolve more calls as compared to what they handled before the changeover!

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Feeling the ServiceDesk Plus Difference!

One reason why Andy prefers ServiceDesk Plus and sings its praise is its simplicity and ease of use.

Once installed, Andy found that setting up ServiceDesk Plus can be done in a “snap” without having to install separate servers or software to finish the installation. Moreover, a web console also presented the configuration options all in one place and a logical menu that further streamlined the setup of the entire organization’s site. Andy continues to praise the application’s notification, tracking features and the way users are notified on the tickets.

Andy used the application’s asset management component for hardware tracking including end of life cycle information allowing him to do budgeting for the future purchases. He used the ServiceDesk Plus purchase order feature on a daily basis to track all IT-related purchases and expenses incurred during the year. He also tracked all IT and non-IT agreements keeping the concerned informed on an upcoming contract and its details.

With so much to do at so little a price, Andy says, “The move to ServiceDesk Plus has been a clear advantage to our organization in terms of reducing costs and increasing productivity. The whole organization is now cheerful because ServiceDesk Plus is unbelievably affordable, easy to use and helped us meet the increasing demands on our IT help desk!”

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