

Kinetic Request and Kinetic Calendar Earn High Marks for Reducing Helpdesk Calls at the University of North Texas

Customer:

University of North Texas, Denton, Texas

Challenge:

Decrease the number of helpdesk calls and reduce data-entry for frontline support staff by making it easier for users to create and submit their own web-based support requests.

Solution:

Kinetic Request and Kinetic Calendar

Results:

- Helpdesk has experienced a 60% increase in user-submitted tickets generated through the easy-to-use Kinetic Request interface.
- Kinetic Calendar provides a self-service alternative to telephone inquiries about IT system status.
- Helpdesk saves up to 24 labor hours each month handling calls.
- Each new service item can be created in a few hours vs. days.

Kinetic Request and Kinetic Calendar Spell Relief for UNT Helpdesk and Users

Enrollment is up, and fortunately, web-based self-service has also increased at the University of North Texas—one of the state's largest universities, with 11 colleges and schools and more than 36,000 students. The increase in web-based support activity is due to a 60% increase in web-based user-submitted incident tickets—which are much more efficient to process—thanks to Kinetic Request, according to the university's Helpdesk Manager Richard Sanzone. He says, "Every ticket means one less phone call. The Kinetic Request user interface has done exactly what we wanted it to do. It's never been easier to create an incident ticket. During the two months following our rollout, we received 707 tickets, compared with 443 tickets during the same period last year."

UNT's ITSM 7.0 (information technology service management) system is built on BMC's Remedy platform. According to Christopher Strauss, the university's call tracking administrative manager, "The ITSM user interface was designed for heavy users. Our non-technical and infrequent users had a tough time with it, and it was not cost-effective to try to train everyone to be proficient in it."

In the past, Strauss created custom Perl scripts for customer use on the web that walked a user through several questions to describe the problem and create a ticket in ITSM 5. The process of maintaining these scripts or creating new ones had become too time-consuming for him, especially when faced with the much more complex ITSM 7 application that UNT would be migrating to. Since the helpdesk couldn't make changes to these customer interfaces themselves, the staff was forced to wait.

The Search Points to Kinetic Request

When UNT experienced integration problems between Perl and the new Remedy version 7.1 server, an aggressive search began for an interface that was browser agnostic, didn't require Java for the client desktop, and could be cost-effectively maintained and easily distributed. The options: BMC's Service Request Management; equivalent products offered by big consulting firms; and Kinetic Request.

Strauss discusses these choices. "The other systems we considered had pricing models that weren't university-friendly. Their licensing is based on the number of customer users, which would be virtually infinite for us considering future applicants and alumni—absolutely cost prohibitive. The big consulting firms don't really provide packaged products that can be tested and evaluated alongside ITSM 7. All roads led us to Kinetic Request."

Big Pay-Offs

Kinetic Request provided a consistent, effective framework for UNT to roll out a customer service portal to their ITSM environment rather quickly. After four days of on-site training by a Kinetic Data instructor on UNT's server, Strauss says he and his colleagues jumped right into the application and started working. "Now it takes only a few hours for us to knock out a new service item that previously took days," he notes. "We didn't have to train every single IT support staff to be an expert in the ITSM application, because Kinetic Request automatically takes over and creates the tasks for processing and performs those tasks."

Strauss explains what he considers one of Kinetic Request's primary benefits to UNT. "Managing our ITSM application and server is much easier now that it is totally separate from the customer interface built with Kinetic Request. If I need to make changes to Kinetic Request, there's no affect on the ITSM 7 application, and vice versa. I only have to be careful with a few specific points of integration between the two, which I built myself. More importantly, the helpdesk manager now has the lead on developing and maintaining the Kinetic Request service catalog, and all of the appropriate permissions to do so. This puts the ability to update the customer self-service interface where it belongs, in the hands of the organization that provides direct customer support to our end-users. The helpdesk never has to wait for someone else to have time to make the changes; their manager, Richard Sanzone, does it himself."

Sanzone says desktop users are completing their web-based support request tickets instead of giving up and calling the helpdesk. "These tickets document customer interactions that do not require a technician to manually create a ticket based on another form of interaction, such as a phone conversation or an email message. We're saving up to 24 hours each month in handling helpdesk calls alone."

Kinetic Calendar: The Icing on the Cake

Kinetic Calendar has stemmed calls about system status, which Sanzone estimates account for about one-third of all calls during system outages. He says, "Users click on the URL on the helpdesk support page to bring up a monthly calendar that displays all of the tickets in the system classified as an outage—both scheduled and unplanned. Instead of calling the helpdesk for information about an outage, users now click on a calendar entry for details. IT technicians use the calendar to click on a URL that leads to the ITSM application so that they can edit the incident directly. Faculty can use the calendar to compare past outages with student alibis for not taking a test or conducting research."

Service items for IT staff help them enter scheduled and unscheduled outages. These items automatically walk IT people through the process with very little effort. Strauss explains, "We have many IT people who only use BMC Remedy intermittently and are not as familiar with it, but are required to enter planned outage notifications for the systems that they maintain. We also have a lot of administrative staff who occasionally submit requests for building wiring, but otherwise have no need to see the full ITSM application. We didn't have to take the time it would require to train them in ITSM 7. Kinetic Request is a piece of cake to use for these purposes, and Kinetic Calendar automatically publishes the system outage information for us."

See how UNT is using Kinetic Request and Kinetic Calendar:

- [UIT Helpdesk](#)

View Calendar User and Non-Remedy Calendar Builder Documentation at:

- [Helpdesk FYI](#)
- [Managing Campuswide System Outage Displays](#)

About Kinetic Data

Kinetic Data has helped hundreds of Fortune 500 and government customers—including General Mills, Avon, Intel, 3M and the U.S. Department of Transportation—implement integrated workflow systems, including enterprise request management (ERM) systems with centralized portals. Kinetic Data has been recognized with numerous awards for its superior products and support. The company serves customers from its headquarters in St. Paul, Minn., offices in Sydney, Australia, and through a network of reseller partners.

For more information:

Web: www.kineticdata.com

US: +1-651-556-1030

Australia: +61 (0)2 9411 7900