

FFastfill Uses Hornbill's Supportworks ITSM to Meet Demanding SLA Targets



Business Benefits:

- Efficient call logging and tracking enables support teams to meet agreed SLAs.
- Self-service web portal enables clients to track progress of calls.
- Central repository for network and system configuration data.
- Regular reports enable management overview of infrastructure and staff performance.
- Client reporting provides transparency of service support.

Leading application services provider invests in IT service management software to provide global support to clients.

FFastFill is a publicly-owned company that designs and delivers application services for the electronic trading community. These services provide full application functionality for retail and institutional clients, allowing their clients to manage trading and financial risk in real-time across a wide range of products and exchanges, without the need to invest in technology infrastructure or staff.

Trading at the Click of a Button

All of FFastFill's services are delivered against a contracted Service Level Agreement (SLA) that is tailored to an institution's business requirements. The company provides these services from specialist operational centres in London, Sydney and Chicago and a software development centre in Prague.

Vital to FFastFill's success is the management of its service to clients. The company has an experienced support team that is equipped to manage complex service platforms and has recently invested in Hornbill's Supportworks ITSM as its service management solution. The 50-strong support team uses Supportworks ITSM to provide global support to external clients, with up to 40 concurrent users of the system at any one time.

Full Service Commitment

According to Rob Walton, Global Technical Service Manager at FFastFill; "When a client signs an application service contract with FFastFill we take on the responsibility for all the software, hardware, access network and exchange connections necessary to allow the end users to trade successfully. It is, literally, trading at the click of a button.

"This commitment is clearly outlined in our Service Level Agreements. Hornbill's Supportworks ITSM gives us an excellent view of what is happening with our service and infrastructure at any given time, which is critical for our business to meet our SLAs."

Supportworks ITSM is used by the support teams to handle all enquiries - from functionality queries, bugs, infrastructure problems and enhancement requests. The frontline business desk is staffed by ex-traders, who have

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Rob Walton,
Global Technical Service
Manager,
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the required business expertise to be able to provide immediate support to clients. For traders calling the helpdesk, the instant response and relevant knowledge to understand the problem is vital, minimising their system downtime.

All service calls are logged and then filtered and tracked using Supportworks ITSM. Technical queries on the application are handled by the technical applications team, server issues by the systems team and the network team deal with physical connectivity problems. Adopting ITIL processes has also enabled the teams to operate more efficiently. Implementing improved workflow management processes enables the teams to monitor and track incidents effectively, freeing time to plan proactively for change management.

A Central Data Repository

The IT team is in the process of developing a Configuration Management Database (CMDB) to manage data on its network and applications. Data is automatically drawn from other systems and stored, providing a central repository for all configuration items. This is particularly useful for storing data on gateways that require specific keys that belong to different banking clients. Clients may request that although a gateway is no longer used, it be ‘held’ for them in case they wish to use it in the future.

Similarly, details of new connections that may be set up for clients can be entered into the CMDB, along with information on tests carried out. The connection and associated information can be stored as a configuration item, enabling its status to be easily tracked.

“The CMDB will really improve our ability to track assets and provide a definitive list of devices across our infrastructure. Having access to this data will speed up tracing bugs, help us to track gateways and locations and assist with invoicing.

“We can also run a lot of automated checks in our system, freeing up our service desk time to develop more new tools and service clients better,” said Walton.

Knowledgebase Aids Training

The service team at FFastFill is also using Hornbill’s solution to assist with training. When working on new projects or services, the technical staff create a training video which is then attached to the topic in the knowledgebase. As staff members (from other locations) research the topic, they are able to learn from the video in their own time. This sharing of best practice enables the team to use the knowledge for pre-emptive work rather than just the result of someone looking up a common problem.

“Having a centralised knowledgebase is a real advantage to our operations. It means that our teams located in other countries - Prague, Sydney and Chicago - are able to access the same information, all delivered by our Citrix system,” said Walton.

Regular Client Reporting

FFastFill uses the reporting functionality within Supportworks ITSM to generate automated monthly reports for clients. The reports are used by Walton and his management team to monitor the effectiveness of staff as well as to keep key people informed of change management processes.

“The regular reports give me an excellent overview of how we are performing as a team in our problem and incident management. Feedback from clients also tells us that they like our ‘open’ approach. The metrics that we provide and the fact that they can track call tickets logged on the web portal provides a very transparent process of the service we provide to our clients,” said Walton.

Overall, FFastFill is delighted with Hornbill’s solution and the benefits that it has brought; “As a service business, Supportworks ITSM supports the way that we work - its centralised structure and the ease with which we can integrate with other systems and track and obtain information for clients is invaluable,” concluded Walton.

