

Kent County Council are one of largest UK Authorities. Their Business Services Centre recently implemented Oracle Service Cloud as their HR Helpdesk solution.

Kent County Council's main aim is to enhance the quality of life for Kent's residents by looking after Kent's long term future, environment and provisions. Kent County Council also work in partnership with 12 District Councils and 289 Parish/Town Councils. Their Business Services Centre in particular provide HR/Payroll services to the Council and external organisations.

The recent implementation of Oracle Service Cloud as their HR Helpdesk solution aims to improve the level of service they offer their customers both internally and externally. Their main project objective was to implement an end to end online system enabling automation of processes, customers the ability to self-serve, improved workflows for greater efficiency in the operation teams, whilst enhancing their overall commercial offering.

We recently caught up with the team at Kent to find out how they are using Service Cloud and why they chose Service Cloud in the first place.

Q. Can you summarize your main points of frustration before you started using Service Cloud as your HR Help desk? How has Service Cloud specifically addressed those problems?

A. Usability was one of our main issues, the system we previously used as our HR Helpdesk used multiple screens for each activity and also included lots of pop ups so it was difficult to navigate and very confusing for our users. When we first implemented Service Cloud we thought we were doing something wrong, it all seemed too easy!

One of the other main issues we had was reporting. If we wanted to configure dashboards or reports before, someone needed to code something specific for us which was time consuming and reports would often be left incomplete.

Q. What are the main features you like about your new HR Help desk solution? Why do you like them so much/what do they allow you to do that you couldn't before?

A. The main reason we undertook this project was our customers - we wanted everyone to have a tailored and personalised experience and Service Cloud has really allowed us to do that. We know so much more about our customers now, we can tailor our communication and marketing for everyone. Our customers now have the ability to self-serve which allows them to find the information that they want when they want it.

Dashboards - the ease of reporting is fantastic. We were so limited in the reports we could run before that it is great to be able to go in and pull all of the information we need quickly and easily. Our new weekly workload reports have everything we need for our weekly update meetings in one place. We also couldn't schedule reporting before which we now can, we used to spend up to 2 ½ days building KPI reports which we can now schedule automatically.

Categories - this is something that the HR Helpdesk project really made us analyse. We used to have 1700 different categories, we now have 76! It is so much more manageable.

Multiple job roles - we had some people with up to 13 different job roles and managing this was rather difficult. Service Cloud now does this for us.

Q. What were the biggest challenges you faced either during implementation or with introducing the new solution?

A. Our Service Cloud implementation was really quick and easy, it really is the easiest implementation we have done so far but if we have to come up with something I think we would have to say our biggest challenge was ensuring the project took a step forward and didn't just address the issues we were having with the current system. The workshops we did with Boxfusion before the project started, really made us question why we did certain things in certain ways and this fed into the final respecting system requirements. It made us think about what we really wanted the system to achieve in the long term, it also helped everyone understand what the finished product would look like.

Data load complexities due to people having multiple job roles was another one of our main challenges, we have some individuals on our systems with up to 13 different job roles! This was an issue raised in every system we looked at. Boxfusion managed to customise Service Cloud to be able to manage multiple job roles.

One of the main issues we have had since implementation has been training. When we have been training people internally they genuinely seem concerned that they were doing things wrong because Service Cloud is so easy to use!!

Q. What specific problems has Service Cloud addressed that other HR departments of your business size might be able to relate to?

A. As we mentioned before, managing multiple job roles has always been an issue for us and this is something our new HR helpdesk can manage going forward. The ability to report on and share information so easily with Service Cloud is something that any HR department (or business for that matter) can benefit from, integrated and shared information has led to better quality data and increased our customer service.

Q. Has the new solution reduced the time you need to perform any tasks and, if so, which and by how much?

A. The schools team used to run a report on a Monday morning that used to take them 2 hours and it now takes them 2 minutes!! Call abandonment rates have fallen by 25% since we went live and our average call times and our time to answer have also been reduced as our access to the information our customers need is so readily available now.

We also estimate a saving of at least 50% in time spent on reporting across all operational teams – approx. 1 day a week in terms of man hours is saved.

Q. What is the single biggest reason you would recommend Service Cloud?

A. Service Cloud is a really premium system. It is so easy to use and easy to navigate. But not only is it an intuitive solution for what we wanted, it has so many more opportunities that we hadn't even thought about before, which we can now make possible.