

Hays digitises IT support and drives greater employee productivity with Next Generation Service Desk



Customer challenge

Revenue generation at Hays is dependent on the productivity of its 2,200-plus UK sales consultants. Technology is increasingly being used to streamline the recruitment process, which means employees' IT queries and issues need to be dealt with quickly. With the majority of IT support still telephone-based, Hays wanted to provide employees with a broader choice of engagement channels.

Computacenter solution

Hays signed up to Computacenter's Next Generation Service Desk (NGSD) solution as part of an existing managed services contract. Via an online portal, 5,500 users in 21 countries can now choose from a range of digitised support features – from logging their own incidents and initiating online chats to searching knowledge articles. Business champions, tailored internal communications and a development hothouse helped keep the two-month implementation timeline on track and maximise user adoption.

Results

Sixty per cent of IT support transactions at Hays now happen online, including an average of 1,180 web chats and 370 self-logged incidents per month. By providing relevant and responsive support 24x7, Hays can maximise the time that staff spend on revenue generating activities, which helps to drive profitable growth. A user-centric support experience will also contribute to greater staff retention and satisfaction.

Services:

Service Desk: Next Generation Service Desk

Customer Agenda

- Growth/Business Change
- Continuous Improvement/Innovation

Customer profile:

Filling 1,000 job vacancies worldwide per working day

Hays places more than 260,000 people in permanent jobs and temporary roles globally every year. It is the world's leading expert in qualified, professional and skilled recruitment, with more than 9,000 employees in 33 countries.

By combining expert local teams with sector-leading technology, Hays consistently creates value for its candidates, clients, employees and shareholders.

As part of its strategy to deliver profitable growth, the company aspires to achieve an operating profit of £250 million by 2018. To help it achieve this goal, Hays is focused on hiring and retaining the best and most productive people in the recruitment industry.

Hays recognises it also needs to respond to new and emerging technologies and routes to market. It was the first recruitment organisation to partner with LinkedIn and is embracing digitalisation to drive productivity and efficiency gains.

Business challenge:

Supporting profitable growth

Maximising the productivity of its 2,200-plus UK sales consultants is a major priority for Hays. As Simon Gerhardt, IT Production Services Director at Hays, explains: "Our business involves matching people to vacancies. The more candidates a consultant can place, the more revenue they can generate."

Hays are increasingly using technology to streamline the recruitment and placement process both for its consultants and candidates. For example, it has introduced a new digitised approach for checking a candidate's eligibility to work in different countries. "Technology has completely transformed recruitment. We want to be a digital disrupter and keep pushing the boundaries of how things are done," comments Simon.

With the productivity and profitability of its sales consultants becoming more dependent on technology, Hays needs to ensure its systems work every time, all the time. "We need to make IT as reliable as possible and our support services as responsive as possible," adds Simon. "When there's a problem, our sales consultants want it resolved fast."

Hays' IT support services also need to be easy to use. As with other recruitment firms, it has a high turnover of sales consultants, which means there is a constant flow of new members of staff that need assistance.

"Our sales consultants are customer-oriented; they like interacting with people and that applies to IT support too," comments Simon. As a result, the majority of support issues were logged by calling the company's service desk, which is operated by Computacenter from a shared facility in South Africa.

"We'd tried encouraging people to self-log incidents, but they would rather wait on the end of a phone for a first fix," explains Simon. "This prevented them from talking to clients and candidates."

"We want to give people a choice about how and when they log an issue," comments Simon. "The mobile app will also enable users to keep track of support issues while on the move."

"It's great that we can now chat online instead of having to make a call."

Sales Consultant, Hays

Computacenter solution:

Digitised, user-centric IT support services

At the end of 2015, Hays became an early adopter of Computacenter's Next Generation Service Desk (NGSD) solution. The two companies have a longstanding partnership, with Computacenter providing datacenter hosting, desktop managed services as well as an outsourced service desk.

"We recognised that NGSD would open up new routes to IT support for our staff, enabling them to control how and when they engage," comments Simon.

NGSD provides a consumer-like, user-centric experience with anytime, anywhere IT support and knowledge delivered via an intuitive online portal and mobile app. It is supported by a team of 10 agents at Computacenter's Global Service Desk who provide support to Hays employees in 21 countries.

To ensure NGSD was aligned to the needs of its 5,550 users, Computacenter hosted a one-day hothouse. "It gave the project a real rocket boost," reveals Simon. "The hothouse short-circuited a number of weeks of traditional planning. We were able to make decisions on the spot and ensure there was joint ownership."

Prior to the launch, Computacenter and Hays also worked together to build up a bank of knowledge articles that would answer common user queries, such as how to install a printer or open attachments in OneTouch, the Hays main Recruitment system.

"As part of NGSD, we have created a shared library of more than 87,000 knowledge articles, which are adapted and expanded as part of each customer engagement based on their IT systems and user needs," comments Steve Rayner, Group Service Innovation Director at Computacenter.

Almost 300 new knowledge articles were created both for Hays users and IT personnel – and they proved popular from day one. During the first three months of NGSD, there were nearly 5,500 knowledge searches. By encouraging people to rate and respond to knowledge articles, Hays and Computacenter can ensure that content remains as relevant and as straightforward as possible.

Maximising user awareness and adoption

Knowledge is just one of the new digitised support features offered by NGSD; users can also self-log incidents, automate password resets and initiate online chats. With an implementation timeline of just two months, Hays needed to ensure that staff in 125 locations understood how NGSD would benefit them. The companies created an extensive communications plan and a network of 150 business champions.

"Computacenter made sure NGSD was communicated in a Hays way. We treated it as a new business initiative not a new IT solution to get people interested," explains Simon. "The business champions helped drive the piloting and testing phases, and remain a great conduit for feedback from the user base."

Hays and Computacenter also used posters, webinars, team lunches and even branded chocolate bars to convey the NGSD message. This multi-faceted approach has proved a great success – within the first three months, 61 per cent of the Hays user base logged into NGSD. "We're actually seeing an increase in IT support interactions, as it's now much easier for people to get the help they need," reveals Simon.

"NGSD has streamlined the support experience for our staff, freeing them up to focus on their day job."

Simon Gerhardt, IT Production Services Director at Hays

NGSD features a 'This Affects Me' button (patent pending) that enables users to automatically report if an existing IT issue is impinging on their work. This not only limits the volume of tickets raised with the service desk, but also highlights the scale of the business impact. Hays can also use NGSD's broadcast feature to proactively notify employees if there is an incident with a core business system, such as email.

"The 'this affects me' feature enables us to prioritise our response to IT problems based on the level of business and user disruption," explains Simon. "It also means we can keep employees informed, preventing them from having to repeatedly check progress with the service desk, saving everyone time."

Results:

Driving greater productivity and revenue generation

In less than three months, NGSD has transformed IT support and the user experience at Hays. Sixty per cent of transactions now happen online, which is well above the original target of 50 per cent. "NGSD has become the preferred channel for accessing IT support at Hays," explains Simon. "Although people can still call an analyst, we no longer advertise the service desk number. Instead they have an IT support icon on their device that goes straight through to the NGSD portal."

Online chats have proved particularly popular, with around 1,180 being initiated every month. As Simon explains: "The online chat capabilities that come with NGSD are a massive benefit. Sales consultants can continue working while participating in an online chat in the background. They can get hold of an analyst faster and wait while they try different fixes."

Users are also self-logging more incidents - around 370 per month compared with less than 40 previously. The NGSD portal features quick links for a number of common user issues, such as password registration and adding attachments in OneTouch. "With NGSD, staff outside of the UK can log an incident at any time instead of having to wait for the service desk to open at 7am," comments Simon.

By taking a user-centric, digitised approach to IT support, Hays will be able to:

Maximise staff productivity: By giving sales consultants and other members of staff access to relevant and responsive support 24x7, Hays can maximise the time spent on revenue generating activities.

Drive profitable growth: More productive sales consultants means more profitable sales consultants, which will support the company's growth ambitions and expansion into new markets.

Attract and retain talent: Hays wants to be an employer of choice. By embracing digital technologies, it will be able to provide a better and richer user experience for its sales consultants, which will contribute to a lower staff turnover.

"NGSD has streamlined the support experience for our staff, freeing them up to focus on their day job. It has opened up new engagement channels, providing staff with not only greater choice but also better outcomes," concludes Simon.

"It was really easy to log my own ticket."

Credit Controller, Hays