A True Unified Approach to IT Service Automation

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The cloud story to date has traditionally looked at how the technology can be used to increase flexibility, reduce costs or enable businesses to implement a new solution at break-neck speed. But this is only half the story. Beyond the basic benefits which have been widely commented on by vendors, customers and media alike, the reality of the promise of the cloud is already being delivered in some places – in fact, one innovative 'city' has already built its response infrastructure around a cloud solution.

Founded in 1954, CERN is one of the world's most respected centres for scientific research. Its business is fundamental physics, discovering what the Universe is made of and how it works. At CERN, the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments are used to study the basic constituents of matter – the fundamental particles. CERN is known as the birthplace of the Web, the home of the Large Hadron Collider and is home to 2,300 staff members, playing host to more than 10,000 visiting scientists from more than 100 nationalities. But it's not just a scientific revolution which has occurred in recent times at CERN – its implementation of its cloud Service Management solution is ground-breaking.

Faced with an ever-increasing number of CERN users and facilities and a doubling of service requests during the last decade, not to mention a significant increase in CERN visiting scientists, CERN revisited its approach to service management with a renewed focus on superior service delivery for organisational, IT and infrastructure services. CERN turned to our Software-as-a-Solution (SaaS) technology to deliver evolved, people -centric service management across its city.

It created the CERN Service Portal, an intuitive and interactive interface that allows over 10,000 CERN employees and visiting scientists to request more than 650 services, including office and laboratory infrastructure, safety services including medical services and the fire brigade, computing infrastructure, and many more. Additionally, CERN

implemented a configurable, real-time search engine that optimises search results, with the resulting webpages including categorical rankings that enable an enhanced, user-friendly experience. Currently, CERN employees and visiting scientists across its vast, city-like campus now use our cloud-based technology to request business, IT and facilities services for.

- 1,702 buildings and tunnel repairs and maintenance requests
- 1,294 visitor access cards requests
- 1,785 requests and incidents logged for housing operation
- 1,113 print device support requests
- 785 requests and incidents logged for entrance control and guards

This is only one example of this type of innovation in practice though. Organisations in the UK are also following suit, with the University of Bournemouth branching out beyond the IT department to enable the library and cleaning services to use the functions provided by a cloud based ITSM solution, with a user-friendly front end.

The linking factor between cases is innovation and user base. What CERN and the University of Bournemouth share is a user base who are on the move, working at varying time periods and require a user friendly system through which to enter requests. And this type of user is nothing new. In fact, as we see trends such as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) become more prevalent, this type of cloud based solution will only increase in popularity.

Businesses who want to get ahead can no longer consider their IT functions in isolation, but must look at how business units and functions fit together and the common features which can be supported through a cloud solution. The proof is in the reaction from the IT staff and the end users. If you can streamline the process for all involved and automate as much of the process as possible, you're bound to be onto something successful.

It's time for us to stop talking about the cloud as a solution for the IT department and start considering the implications for the rest of a business – or even a city. The opportunities are endless – you just need to change your mindset to see them.

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