



Fortune 500 Manufacturer Chooses MKS Integrity for IBM i To Replace SoftLanding TurnOver™



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A Leading Fortune 500 Manufacturer

The Challenge

In addition to the maintenance contract expiring, the Manufacturing IT team looked to improve the software delivery process for a change management solution to manage concurrent development in a CA 2E environment. The ideal solution would be:

- Accessible to all members of the Manufacturer’s IT group
- Deliver visibility from incidents through to change requests and application development
- Provide greater visibility into the status and routing of change requests
- Allow developers to work concurrently on large-scale projects and emergency fixes

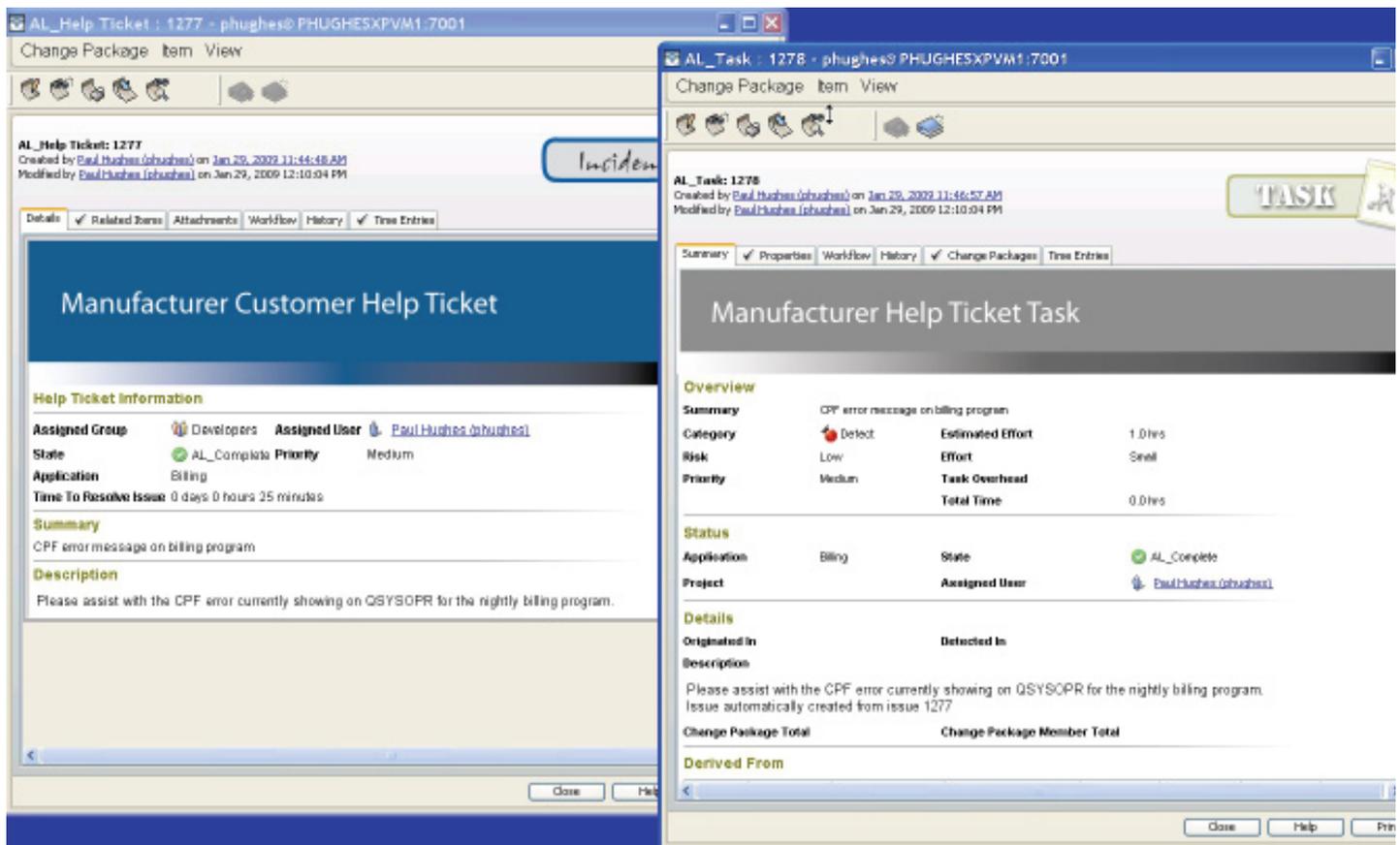
- Offer faster and expanded service to meet customer expectations
- Provide the IT group with a user friendly, single interface for customers to enter Help Desk Tickets

In order to accomplish these goals, the new solution would need to better enforce a change request process and ensure that all of the pertinent information needed to carry out a request would be captured. This was a problem with the existing system, because SoftLanding TurnOver™ made it difficult to mandate certain fields on a Help Desk Ticket; requests would often come in with incomplete information, making it necessary for IT representatives to contact customers for additional details before beginning to resolve the issue. Further to this, limitations to SoftLanding Turnover’s

workflow capabilities prevented tickets from being routed to the appropriate parties, and caused the resolution of some tickets to be delayed.

In line with their main objectives of increased visibility and improved levels of customer service, the manufacturer’s IT team also sought a solution that would effectively keep developers more focused on development tasks and less on administrative duties, based on the reasoning that efficiency would increase if the developers did not have to constantly enter the system to view Tickets. They also hoped to resolve some auditing issues with respect to recovery and traceability, while being able to provide management with a quick and easy status update of where things stood at any given point in time.

Case Study



The Solution

A small group of personnel at the Fortune 500 Manufacturer worked to familiarize themselves with the project requirements well in advance of initial meetings with outside vendors, and this proved to be crucial when it came to implementing the new solution within their three week deadline. Already having a sound idea of the requirements for their new Help Desk solution, the project team worked alongside a team of MKS consultants, converting vision to reality and implementing a solution that addressed the challenges being faced.

Among other things, the Help Desk Ticket was designed as a single screen to include:

- Mandatory fields, with an automatic error message to be triggered when a user tried to submit a request with information missing from mandatory fields, along with event triggers to auto populate non-mandatory fields upon submission of a request.
- Unique cascading pick lists in a three part Category field, categorizing issues extensively so that the correct technical group could be automatically assigned to deal with the change request and reduce unnecessary rework.

- The option to include a screen shot (or other attachments) as part of a change request in order to clear up any confusion that could result from ambiguous information being provided. In addition to the interface upgrades seen by the customer, the new solution also offers: A repository for documentation that enables the IT group to search through previous tickets by category as a way to resolve recurring problems more quickly.
- Fields enabling Technical Support representatives to map out their planned and actual progress on a specific issue, helping to gauge work level and activity, as well as to help monitor the group's success in adhering to SLAs.

Change requests at the Fortune 500 Manufacturer are now “batched” or grouped together as either “enhancements” or larger scale projects, with simple event triggers enabling automatic email notification for all stakeholders when status updates are made on certain issue types. The enforced workflow facilitates visibility of processes from start to finish, validating workflow by requiring an electronic signature to approve the movement of a ticket from one stage to another, while user-friendly charts offer valuable metrics to quickly analyze where IT is spending the majority of their time.

Furthermore, since code audits require that code changes follow a separate workflow, the new MKS solution was set up to “spawn” Help Desk Tickets into Development Tasks, with information

easily copied over from the original Help Desk Ticket. These Development Tickets are used primarily by IT, and arm developers with the ability to include additional requirements, test cases, impact analysis, and implementation/recovery information as an ongoing part of the resolution process.

One of the key factors in their decision to move to MKS Integrity for IBM i over the competition was that MKS has the best integration with CA 2E on the market. Competitors do have some solutions, but they are not as integrated with CA 2E as MKS. This Fortune 500 Manufacturer realized that MKS could accommodate the requirement of allowing development to be able to have two models within CA 2E, and automatically keep those models in synch with each other.

“While solving a short tactical need to replace an outdated solution, this company is representative of our forward-looking IBM i customers that look beyond simple source management and deployment to their complete Application lifecycle Management (ALM) needs. At MKS, our efforts are focused on a single unified ALM platform to meet the needs of this and other companies utilizing the IBM i operating system.”

Marty Acks, MKS Product Manager for IBM i

The Results

After an initial onsite visit from MKS’s team of consultants, the Manufacturer had its first group up and running on MKS Integrity in just three weeks. It was MKS Integrity’s unsurpassed flexibility that enabled the Manufacturer to implement a solution that addresses their unique requirements.

The ability to group change requests appropriately is facilitating concurrent work across multiple projects, allowing developers to respond to emergency fixes while larger scale project development is ongoing; mandatory fields are helping to increase efficiency in responding to Help Desk Tickets, since the necessary information is being captured at the time of original entry; and effective documentation of past ticket issues is allowing for more efficient resolution of future change requests, providing a more focused starting point for solving new but similar issues.

Moreover, automatic and comprehensive email notification is keeping developers more or less out of the Help Desk system when dealing with change requests, while improving overall visibility across all relevant parties. The end user community has found the new Help Desk system more straightforward and easy to use. And finally, Management is now able to quickly and easily access metrics to gain an instant snapshot of progress, and history tracking is improving overall workflow traceability, impressing internal users and external auditors alike.

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