

How Cisco IT Migrated to an ERP Technical Support Module

Companywide migration to standard tools for services management and configuration enable enterprise integration, full support for solutions, and smooth path for future upgrades.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Fully supported platform
- Integration with company-wide platform
- Path to future enhancements
- Excellent user acceptance
- Avoided down time

"We were operating on a 'burning platform.' The new tools have averted disaster."

– Joe Mastropolo, IT project manager

Any Cisco customer requiring technical assistance relies on the Cisco service and support team. This mission-critical Cisco organization must efficiently log, track, and manage global customer service requests that pour in over the Cisco web site, in emails, and through phone calls to the call center. Two key applications supported the service functions. The CARE system was used for tracking service requests, and the Metrix system served as the foundation for all service logistics, which included spare parts inventory management, accounting, returns/repair management and order management. A third application was used to automate service order configurations. These purchased applications had been in use for approximately a decade.

Heavily customized by the engineers within the service organizations, upgrades and support had become extremely cumbersome tasks, and both providers had transitioned the applications to end of support (EOS). None of the packages had been upgraded for many years.

The challenge was two-fold. The in-place tools, while out of date and in danger of an eminent business-impacting failure, were getting the job done for the support engineers. Years of customizations and tweaking had resulted in a software jungle, but a jungle that was very familiar and comfortable for its resident users. Convincing the hundreds of engineers that replacement software was vital to the success of the company would be the first hurdle. A sense of urgency also drove the selection process forward. With EOS software, the service team was at great risk.

The team elects a move to standard Oracle 11i tools. A detailed vendor package evaluation and proof of concept were required to ensure ultimate acceptance by the user base. With a more thorough than usual proof of concept defined up front, the project team was able to evaluate five vendors of relevant application packages. The Oracle 11i applications proved to be the best choice for both the customer call management, as well as managing service logistics. Selectica was selected for service order configuration. The involvement of service engineers early in the requirement planning and solution selection processes contributed to the ultimately successful adoption of the new applications by the user base.

Phased-in implementation minimizes disruptions to users and enables sufficient testing by pilot users. The gradual release—over an 18-month period—proved to be a critical factor in the success of the project. With careful up-front planning and solid release management, risks were effectively mitigated.

A phased-in approach provides training and adjustment time for technical users.

Case Study: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/about/ciscoitatwork/case_studies.html

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read the entire case study or for additional Cisco IT case studies on a variety of business solutions, visit Cisco on Cisco: Inside Cisco IT www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit

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