

# IT Service Provider Reduces Software Complexity



Hessian Centre for Data Processing (HZD) accelerates and simplifies service management processes with Cisco ServiceGrid.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Customer Name:** Hessian Centre for Data Processing (HZD)

**Industry:** Government

**Location:** Wiesbaden, Germany

**Number of Employees:** 826

### Challenge:

- Integrate various help desk tools to improve incident management
- Centralize data storage for all service tickets
- Incorporate key performance indicator (KPI) and service-level agreement (SLA) monitoring

### Solution:

- Cisco ServiceGrid allows states to leverage existing systems and investments
- Cisco ServiceGrid displays all possible ticket processes through a single, comprehensive view

### Results:

- Streamlined incident management by integrating all financial authorities on central platform
- Gained management overview of KPIs across all service processes
- Achieved significant time savings through automated service management processes

## Challenge

Founded in 1970, the Hessian Office for Data Processing (HZD) is the central IT service provider for the Hessian state government in Germany. The organization drives country-specific IT projects for customers in all departments of public administration, including tax administration, police, judiciary, and school administration.

In June 2005, the finance ministers of the 16 states of the Federal Republic of Germany were looking for a way to implement uniform tax software that could be used by all states. Dubbed the KONSENS project, the ultimate goal was to coordinate the development of new software for the tax administration to use. The German states of Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Baden-Wuerttemberg, and Hesse were in the project lead, while Hesse assumed project responsibility for the design and implementation of the IT service management processes across all states.

The fiscal authorities of the German states and the federal government are closely connected. So if a cross-state query were to come through, having access to the data of other states would be critical. Without that collaborative view, an incident in one state could potentially lead to impairments in the fiscal authorities of the other states. In this way, each state is both a customer and provider in the service process.

When it came to cross-border collaboration, the central Incident Management (IM) platform needed to manage a network of 16 x 16 support relationships. At the time, however, the states not only had varying levels of development in incident management processes, but also used different help desk systems, including BMC Remedy ARS, CA Unicenter, HP Help Desk, Front Range, and others. As a result, the IM platform required an intelligent and smart approach toward integration to make ongoing maintenance possible. Other requirements for the IM platform included key performance indicator (KPI) measurement and service-level agreement (SLA) monitoring in real time, as well as an optional web front-end for states whose help desk tools are not directly connected.



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Peter Lacher  
Head of Distributed Systems  
Hessian Centre for Data Processing (HZD)

### Solution

Cisco ServiceGrid™ fulfilled all of the German fiscal authorities' requirements, including the ability to provide efficient problem management. With the cloud-based service integration platform, each state can continue using its existing systems, while ensuring cross-state cooperation in solving incidents.

HZD was responsible for implementing Cisco® ServiceGrid, and currently maintains the German federal states' tax software on an ongoing basis. The implementation was completed in three phases. In the first phase, HZD reduced the technical complexity of incident management process. Cisco ServiceGrid was initially implemented in just two states using the same system (BMC Remedy ARS). The HZD team then set technical concept details and standards. In the second phase, the five states that are responsible for the KONSENS software development were successfully integrated on the basis of this approach, with each state using different systems. In the third phase, the remaining 11 German states were connected via a web front-end to the incident management platform in just one month. Most of the states were directly connected to the platform step by step. Only a few are actually using the web front-end today, but the rest will be integrated in the near future.

One particular challenge that Cisco ServiceGrid is helping the German states address is the correct display of the ticket process. Often, one state has an incident while another is responsible for the resolution. The situation gets even more complicated if more than two states are involved. For these cases, a three-state workflow was developed in two forms:

- In the sequential workflow, providers can change. For instance, if one state (the customer) reports an incident to another state (provider A) that is not able to solve the problem, the incident can be redirected back to the customer, who then reports it to another state (provider B), which resolves the ticket.
- In the parallel three-state workflow, one state (the customer) reports the incident to another state (provider A). Should the incident require support from another state (provider B), provider B would process the ticket and return the solution to provider A, who then reports it to the customer.

Because of its highly complex incident management process, the fiscal authorities were also in need of an intelligent interface that would let them know exactly where tickets are being sent. With Cisco ServiceGrid, all possible processes to progress tickets can be displayed. Dispatching tickets to the proper German state is done through a three-level categorization in about 1100 categories.

In addition to being connected for incident management, the German states are also connected to a program called ELSTER through Cisco ServiceGrid. ELSTER is an online service portal that is used to transfer electronic tax returns via the Internet to the fiscal authorities.

### Results

On average, the German fiscal authorities open and edit roughly 1400 tickets per month using Cisco ServiceGrid. With the solution, users now have an excellent overview of key metrics that can be displayed through a variety of reports, including volume reports and SLA reports to evaluate processing and response times of individual states. It also provides specific KPI reports that are defined by KONSENS, which provide examples of how often a solution is rejected or require further inquiries. In addition, Cisco ServiceGrid is processing central problem management for registration and monitoring of known problems and possible workarounds.

“With Cisco ServiceGrid, we now have a centralized application for all service processes,” says Peter Lacher, head of distributed systems at the Hessian Centre for Data Processing. “Thanks to the automated electronic data exchange between different systems, our service management processes are now greatly accelerated and simplified.”

With its new-and-improved incident management process, the German fiscal authorities have been able to save a significant amount of time. “Each German state now implements just one connection, so only one interface for each state has to be maintained,” says Lacher. “We have an overview of all important key indicators of our service management and can make small adjustments ourselves. Without ServiceGrid, this would never have been possible.”

### Next Steps

Looking ahead, the remaining German states using the web front-end plan to connect their help desk solutions directly to the IM platform. Ultimately, the new incident management infrastructure will be used for all cross-state incidents.

### For More Information

- To find out more about the Cisco ServiceGrid, go to: [www.cisco.com/go/services](http://www.cisco.com/go/services).

### Services List

- Cisco ServiceGrid



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