

AmicusHorizon: Benefiting from help desk functionality with Numara Track-It!

When regional housing provider, AmicusHorizon, needed a practical, easy to use help desk solution to replace an ageing in-house system, it turned to Numara Track-It!

Business Driver

The need for an effective, simple to use, quick to implement help desk system

Industry Sector

Public Sector (Housing Association)

Why Numara Software?

Overall ease of use and functionality, self service options; ability to log, manage and define calls and manage assets in numerous locations.

Business Benefits

With AmicusHorizon going through major changes to the way it operates as an organisation, it wanted a help desk system that was easy to use, manage, and potentially upgrade in the future.

Background

AmicusHorizon is an umbrella organisation for a number of housing landlords and housing related subsidiaries and it provides homes and services to over 28,000 homes and communities across London and the South East. With a dedication to providing more than bricks and mortar, the Group works to improve the socio-economic circumstances of its residents and the communities it serves through innovative programmes and training schemes, helping people with mental health problems and learning difficulties.

In 2009 the structure of AmicusHorizon is being simplified by bringing together the main housing associations within the Group into one unified housing association. This will help to deliver significant cost savings and create a cohesive culture, while supporting local accountability for service delivery, local investment and performance. The new organisation will be called AmicusHorizon Limited.



Numara Track-It! has more than matched our expectations. We wanted a solution that we knew was going to be easy to use and manage. Numara Track-It! does everything it says on the tin. The product is adaptable for our needs which include logging, monitoring and defining all our calls.



A necessary help desk upgrade

When AmicusHorizon decided it needed to replace its old in-house built support system at the end of May 2005 as it was no longer suitable or maintainable, it had some simple criteria in mind. It didn't want an all-singing, all-dancing system, with an array of White Elephant-like functions it might never use. What it wanted was a simple-to-use comprehensive system that it could get to grips with straight away, as ICT Service Manager Suzanne Adams explains:

“Our old service system, which had to cope with considerably fewer users than we do now, was sitting on top of our housing management systems. To replace it, rather than choose a highly sophisticated help desk that offers a multitude of functions, we wanted something that we knew was going to be easy to use. We just wanted a solution that was simplistic, in a positive way, and does an effective job for the price we pay. There was no point in us buying a Rolls Royce solution that we wouldn't get the benefit from.”

“Having achieved some costings, we had initial conversations with Numara Software about Numara Track-It! and once we evaluated the product, the IT Director made an immediate decision that it would meet our needs. The ability to be able to implement quickly was an important factor in our decision.”

“As expected, it only took us two days to implement, and we went live straight away. At that time, we only had 500 users. Now we have 950 users including staff and contractors and log over 2,500 calls a month and on our Configuration Management Database we hold details of all our hardware devices.”

Numara Track-It! has more than matched our expectations. We use the Help Desk Inventory Solutions, Self Service and Reporting functions, and even our Training Department uses it, taking advantage of the Training module to log all their details on it.”

Spotting the call trends

With the increased number of users among its housing associations, AmicusHorizon's service team has found itself bearing the brunt of a number of help desk calls. With call volumes rising, the organisation wanted to be able to better understand the reasons for calls and get on top of them.

"The help desk is used on a daily basis to help us know what calls have been logged. By allowing us to look at Trend Analysis, we can spot trends that can be addressed by proactive training and gap analysis,"

Effective alignment with the ITIL service management framework

Together with its requirement for a system that was easy to use and implement, AmicusHorizon also wanted a system that was ITIL-friendly.

"We wanted to be able to differentiate between what's an incident and what's a service request," says Adams. "I've done both the Foundation Course and Managers Certificate for ITIL Version 2 and I have colleagues who've done Version 3. We are trying to be more ITIL-aligned but we have some way to go. We use the terminology, but our ITIL processes aren't fully refined yet."

Managing and measuring call metrics

By utilising the Numara Track-It! reporting capabilities, AmicusHorizon is able to get a better understanding of the performance of its help desk operation, tracking its calls on a monthly basis and for all 22 of its business units.

"Efficiency isn't always easy to measure. But we can see how many calls are First Time Fixes, which we define as those being logged within 60 minutes. Last year, of nearly 27,000 calls, we had a first time fix rate of 71 percent. Now, of course, this figure is not just down to Numara Track-It!, but to the performance of our staff, but Numara Track-It! does enable it," says Suzanne Adams.



Looking towards the future

AmicusHorizon plans to utilise Numara Track-It! as much as possible, especially using its Inventory Module as it's Configuration Management Database (CMDB), as Suzanne Adams explains:

"We use the CMDB to track assets at various offices and sites. I find it easy to use and manage, and I find it easy to upgrade, and to make changes. Numara Track-It! is adaptable for our needs and does everything that it says on the tin: We can log, monitor and define calls."



About Numara Software

Founded in 1991, Numara Software is a global provider of service desk management solutions. Its flagship products, Numara Track-It! and Numara FootPrints, support over 50,000 customer sites worldwide making it the leader in this market for small to mid-sized enterprises.