



## Maintaining Superior IT Support for 600 City Employees in the Heart of Silicon Valley

The City of San Mateo, located 20 miles south of San Francisco, offers its residents a very desirable place to live. It has ideal weather with year-round temperatures averaging 68 degrees. The city has a wealth of cultural activities and events, as well as many recreational opportunities.

San Mateo is situated at the crossroads of three major freeways which provide a link with San Francisco to the north, San Jose to the south, Half Moon Bay to the west and the East Bay to the east. Additionally, San Mateo's proximity to both the San Francisco and San Jose Airports provides convenient air transportation. The city is very proud of its great neighborhoods and schools, outstanding libraries and parks and some of the best shopping and restaurants on the Peninsula.

San Mateo is also ideal for businesses. With a population of over 90,000, approximately 58,450 jobs and a mean household income of \$84,500, the city offers an attractive marketplace for retail businesses and personal service providers. Sixty-three percent of San Mateo residents have attended college, providing a well-trained educated labor force for businesses.

### The Challenge

Find a help desk system that is easy to implement and use by a large, diverse city workforce – When you are managing a fast-paced help desk that supports 600 users in 22 locations serving the needs of a large city of 90,000 people, you can't have your staff writing work tickets on scraps of paper. Yet Sr. Project Manager Young Vu found himself in just that predicament.

"We had a help desk software program in place, but it wasn't implemented well," said Vu. "Our staff didn't use it, and they fell back on writing tickets on paper. That was a problem. Work orders fell through the cracks, and users did not know if their requests were worked on or escalated."

### IN BRIEF

**Industry**  
Government

#### Challenge

Maintain networks and PCs for 600 users spread across 22 facilities in a diverse and rapidly growing high-tech city

#### Solutions

- Numara Track-It!
- Numara Network Monitor
- Numara Remote
- Numara Asset Manager
- Numara Industry Knowledge Paks
- Numara Track-It! Bar Code
- Numara Track-It! Self-Service Plus
- Numara Track-It! LDAP Directory Importer
- Numara Track-It! Survey

#### Business Application

- Help Desk Management

#### Key Features

- Web self service for superior customer assistance
- Tools for effectively monitoring the network
- Remote access for fixing PCs quickly
- Rapid inventory capabilities for standardization and security
- IT asset maintenance and purchasing simplification
- Two way communications for techs and users
- Data management for more control and better reporting

#### Benefits

- Money saved due to fewer staff needed
- More satisfied users
- More efficient and happier agents
- Safer, faster network for users
- Better informed management
- Improved performance with city to city benchmarks

Vu took on the task of finding a new help desk system that was easy to implement and would make his customers happy. “My number one goal was improving our customer service,” said Vu. “I wanted to create a situation where our communications with customers was excellent, where they knew where their requests were.”

## The search for a new solution

Because he was purchasing a solution for the city, he was required to follow established purchasing guidelines. “We were required to conduct site visits at help desks in other cities and look at their help desk software before we made any purchase,” said Vu. “We developed a list of standard questions to ask at each location regarding how they would rate the features of their help desk solution on a scale of one to ten.”

In Vu’s travels, he was able to review products from several vendors, including TechExcel, CATM, BMC® Remedy® and HEAT® from FrontRange Solutions®. The one solution that he found rated the highest with cities, however, was Numara® Track-It!® “The solution from Numara® Software consistently rated a nine out of ten in terms of satisfaction, and that included administrators, technicians, users and management,” said Vu.

The Solution: Implement the easy to navigate, easy to install Numara Track-It! and replace paper tickets

After his visits were complete, Vu felt that Numara Track-It! Enterprise edition was the best solution for the City of San Mateo. “CA and Remedy required too much manpower to implement. With Numara Track-It!, it’s up and running in one to two days,” said Vu. “It also offered a much easier navigation system for the clients and technicians. The support had to be excellent, and Numara Software tech support is very responsive when we need assistance.”

“We required an excellent system for providing customer service, and the web feature in Numara Track-It! helps us communicate with clients,” said Vu. “Finally, we looked at product cost, and Numara Track-It! had the advantage there as well.”

## Key Features

### Web-based self-service for happier customers, remote access for happier techs

#### Web self service for superior customer assistance

The City of San Mateo is staffed with 16 employees in its IT department who are charged with answering help desk requests and managing all the city’s IT assets. “Our help desk gets around 30 to 40 calls a day,” said Vu. “The requests vary from the user’s software not working to the user unable to connect to the network to hardware purchase requests.”

Vu’s team receives about half of the requests through the phone, the other half through email. “We encourage users to submit requests through the web self-service portal,” said Vu. “The email that comes into Numara Track-It! automatically creates a work ticket and sends them a status including which tech will be working on it and when it will be complete. It’s a great customer service tool. The user knows, for example, when we tried to buy something for them and we’re just waiting for the vendor. It lets them know it’s something we can’t control.”

## Tools for effectively monitoring the network

With Numara® Network Monitor, Vu’s team is able to continuously monitor the health and performance of the city’s network. “We have an LCD monitor in the help desk where everyone can see what is going on with the network,” said Vu. “We actually use the Numara Software tool as an added check on the system, in addition to the tool used by our IT Network team.”

“Numara Track-It! really helps us cut down on work requests,” said Vu. “With the Numara Network Monitor, we can see, for example, that the server is down responding to a call at Fire Station 21. We’ll put up a notice on the Numara Track-It! dashboard that the server is down, so when anyone from that station logs in they know we’re aware of the problem and they don’t submit work orders.”

## Remote access for fixing PCs quickly

The help desk at the City of San Mateo is busy, so they appreciate any tool that helps them save time. Vu’s team purchased Numara® Remote to diagnose and solve end-users problems from their desk. “Numara Remote is great for our help desk supervisor,” said Vu. “He and his team can access a user’s computer wherever they are and fix problems, and they don’t have to spend time going onsite to see what needs to be done.”

## Rapid inventory capabilities for standardization and security

With over 600 users, Vu has his hands full keeping the network secure. That’s a big reason why his department employs Numara® Asset Manager. “We’re very conscious of security here,” said Vu. “If anyone plugs in an unauthorized PC or router, it’s a breach of security. Fortunately, with Numara Asset Manager, we are aware of it right away and take immediate corrective action.”

As a city located in the heart of Silicon Valley, San Mateo wants to keep its technology up-to-date. That’s why Vu and his team replace employees’ computers every four years. They count on Numara Track-It! Bar Code to help make the process easier.

“We use Dell™ products, and all Dell’s have asset tags on them,” he said. “We scan the asset tags using Numara Bar Code and import that data into Numara Track-It! This helps us when we are ordering new Dells because we know exactly what we have, and what we need to order.”

“It also helps greatly in maintenance,” said Vu. “For example, let’s say we need to download a new driver. Since we have Dell’s proprietary asset information captured from the asset tag, all we have to do is go to their web site and download the right driver. It saves us time since we don’t have to go onsite and record that information by hand each time.”

For keeping track on what resides on each computer, and helping with maintenance, Vu uses Numara Asset Manager. “It goes into detail right down to how many slots of RAM exist on a computer,” said Vu. “So if we’re going to upgrade a user’s computer, we know exactly how much RAM we can add before we even go out there. It really helps with planning.”

### Two way communications for techs and users

The IT department tries to manage their workload by empowering their users as much as possible. They've cut down on phone calls from users by enabling all users to login, submit orders and check their status by implementing the Numara Track-It! Self Service Plus add-on.

"Numara Self Service Plus helps our users take a great deal of responsibility in the IT request process," said Vu. "And it saves our techs time, as well. For instance, let's say our tech is at the library, and someone from the library submits a ticket. The tech will get an email notification on his PDA, and when the tech checks it, he can take care of the issue right then, saving him/her a return trip. It helps both the user and the tech."

### Data management for more control and better reporting

Vu uses other features of Numara Track-It! to import and export critical information. He uses Numara Track-It! LDAP Directory Import to populate his database with information on all the users. This saves his team valuable time in responding to help desk requests, because tickets are auto populated with the right user information.

To gain real-time data on his team's performance, Vu employs Numara Track-It! Survey. "On every tenth ticket we close, Numara Survey automatically sends out a survey to the user asking them where we need to improve," said Vu. "It's much better than waiting, say, six months to find out how we are doing. Rather than be reactive, we can be proactive."

Vu also pulls data from Numara Track-It! that keeps the City Manager Office up-to-speed on the help desk's performance. "I run reports regularly so I always know how we're doing," said Vu. "If the City Manager asks a question on our performance, I can show him the statistics. I also use the information to submit a quarterly report to ICMA, the professional organization for administrators in cities throughout the world. That way we can continually measure ourselves against other cities in terms of key benchmarks, such as network availability and call resolution."

*"I would tell other law firms that as far as an out-of-the-box solution, Numara Track-It! is the best out there, especially for the price. It will definitely handle all your problems."*

**Young Vu**  
Sr. Project Manager  
City of San Mateo

### Results

**Success in terms of money saved, safer network, more satisfied agents and happier management** – The IT department at the City of San Mateo has seen a great deal of cost savings with Numara Track-It! especially when it comes to the deployment of resources. "We have definitely saved money in terms of manpower," said Vu. "Take for example the asset discovery feature of Numara Track-It! We did an IT inventory project with the Police Department that took us a week. If we had to do it manually, it would have taken three months. Our average tech makes from \$25 - \$30/hour, so that a savings of close to \$14,000 right there."

Vu and his team have also saved a great deal of money by not having to hire outside resources for their implementation. "Numara Track-It! is practically ready right out of the box," said Vu. "With just a small configuring to your workflow, you are up and running. Our whole installation took just three days. That's opposed to using Remedy by BMC where you need a whole team of developers. I know one city that bought Remedy, found it was too complex, canned it, and bought Numara Track-It!"

Because of Numara Track-It! the City of San Mateo also experiences a safer, faster network. "With Numara® Network Monitor and Asset Discovery, we know when someone has attached a device onto our network. We can stop them and tell them they cannot do that, since it may lead to network viruses and it takes too much bandwidth away from the network."

"Our agents are much happier with Numara Track-It!," said Vu. "The navigation is very intuitive, and very similar to Microsoft Outlook with the menu on the left and information on the right. Everyone likes how the information is presented."

"Management is happy, and users are too," Vu continued. "Our customers like that they can see who their work requests are assigned to so they can follow up with them if they want."

"I've already recommended Numara Track-It! to five other cities," said Vu. "I would say it's better than other solutions not only in terms of the cost factor, but the ease of use. It's great software for the money."

## Who are we?

Numara Software is a leading provider of integrated IT management solutions for Desktop Management, PC Lifecycle Management, Security & Compliance, Help Desk and Service Desk. Designed to optimize IT management, Numara FootPrints and Numara Track-It! collectively support more than 50,000 customer sites and nearly 20 million IT assets worldwide.



freedom  
to simply choose  
the right solution for you