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Northumberland County Council

HORNBILL SPOTLIGHT:

By Patrick Bolger

Northumberland County Council select Hornbill after visiting SITS

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Lee Mcdermott
Team Leader on the Service Desk, Northumberland County Council.

In June 2016, Lee Mcdermott visited the SITS event in London to look at the latest versions of ITSM solutions in the market. After reviewing several ITSM tools, the team at Northumberland County Council selected Hornbill Service Manager, and started their 30-day switch-on in March 2017, with a targeted go-live in mid-April.

I asked Lee to share his experiences on Hornbill Service Manager and their tight window for go-live, and this is what he had to say.

Can you give me a brief background of who you are and what your role is at Northumberland County Council?

My name is **Lee Mcdermott** and I am a Team Leader on the Service Desk at Northumberland County Council. My main role involves the support of all the corporate applications and systems that are used across the council. From a support and development perspective, the management of the Service Desk tool also fits naturally within our area.

Which Service Desk tool was in place at Northumberland County Council before you deployed Hornbill Service Manager?

Our previous service Desk tool was Axios Assyst, which had been in place for well over 10 years.

What were the business drivers and reasons for implementing a new solution?

There were two main reasons for the change. Firstly, the product was getting quite dated and needed a major upgrade, and the workload involved in just upgrading the tool would have been a major investment in time and effort. The second reason was cost. We were keen to reduce our overall costs, in terms of licensing, supporting and maintaining our ITSM tool.

What was your first impression of Hornbill Service Manager?

My first impression was that the interface was clean and simple, but at the same time, all the relevant details an analyst needs are ready to hand. The graphical, drag and drop form designer is simple to use, which saves a lot of time when configuring the tool.

What other solutions did you consider/shortlist before choosing Hornbill Service Manager?

We looked at a number of products including HP Service Anywhere, Heat, House on the Hill, Topdesk and Samanage.

What was your impression of Hornbill during the selection process?

Hornbill were informative and very helpful. The 30-day free trial and switch-on was a key factor in helping us choose this product. It gave us the confidence that after 30 days, if we felt the product was not right for us, we could just walk away, without incurring costs (other than the time we had invested in the trial).

What would you consider your biggest personal success coming out of the project?

I would say that our biggest success was that from the date we started the 30-day trial, to the date we went live, was only 9 weeks. Having previous experience of Service Desk software implementation, I knew there would be lots of technical work required during the 30-day switch on period. It's resource intensive, and significant effort is required to gather the data you need to configure the tool. Hornbill could perhaps alleviate this by providing new customers with more documentation on what to expect and the work that will be required of them during the 30-day switch-on. Although it was an intense 30-days, we configured the tool to meet all our initial requirements. Now, we're revisiting some of these requirements to make further improvements, such as establishing a virtual CAB and making our change processes more transparent and more agile. The knowledge transfer during switch-on, and the ease of configuring the tool, means that I'm able to do all this work myself.

Since you went live with Hornbill Service Manager, how has it gone?

The transition from Axios Assyst to Hornbill Service Manager went very well, and there was no downtime, which was a bonus. Overall Hornbill has been very well received, particularly by our analysts, because the interface is so intuitive and very easy to configure.

Can you highlight three things that you love about Hornbill?

Forms design and configuration is quick and easy. Boards are a very nice feature, which we're making use of to improve the visibility of support queues. For myself, the Hornbill Community gives me a quick way to get issues resolved quickly, learn how other customers do things, and share ideas with the community.

If you had a magic wand, what is the one thing you would change about Hornbill right now?

Our reports are not ready to present to management at present. Presentation and formatting are limited, unless you really know your way around the Advanced Analytics module, or understand SQL. I plan to look at Hornbill's integration with Microsoft Power BI, and I understand that Hornbill is about to release improved in-app reporting this month, which I'm looking forward to.

Is there anything else you would like to mention in relation to Hornbill?

Overall, the product is working well for us and we are happy with it. I really like Hornbill's continuous deployment, and the fact that new features are regularly being developed and implemented, quite often based on feedback from the Hornbill Community. Announcements of new features appear in the Hornbill community so regularly, but perhaps Hornbill could do a better job explaining the benefits of these features, alongside potential use cases for them, so I can easily identify the ones that would be most appealing to us. The improved reporting module is something that I'll deploy immediately, and thankfully, with a single click of the update button, these new features can be implemented in seconds.

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Nine weeks from the start of a trial, to going live in production was a tight deadline, and we worked together to make it happen. It's great to hear that Lee is already looking at expanding the use of Hornbill Service Manager to deliver more value for Northumberland County Council. It's also refreshing to hear customers talking about deploying new features immediately, and never again having to worry about being stuck with an old software version.

Thanks Lee for sharing your thoughts.

Patrick Bolger
Hornbill

⟩ About Hornbill SPOTLIGHTs

Like any company, we obviously love to tell our customer success stories, we are delighted whenever a customer agrees to participate in one of our spotlight articles. These spotlight articles are very specifically created using our customers own words, for this series we prefer their words rather than ours. Our goal is to "tell and not sell" so we don't glitz these up with enterprise marketing words, fancy info graphics or meaningless statistics, we just document what our customers tell us and publish that in the hope that we maintain a level of on-the-ground integrity and honesty in our story telling efforts.

For more information about Hornbill visit: www.hornbill.com

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