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Axios assyst® Case study

IS and non-IS departments at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) use assyst to manage their processes more efficiently and produce meaningful management reports

Challenge - Improve processes and management reporting capabilities

SRUC was using a call management system that no longer provided the depth of functionality they required within the organization - they had the ability to log, assign, process and close IS related calls, but not the capacity to provide adequate reporting for management in order to analyze progress or inefficient areas.

It was essential that SRUC find an IT Service Management (ITSM) tool that would manage their incidents more efficiently and that could provide detailed management reports. In addition, the tool needed to be fully aligned to ITIL, encompassing all disciplines, as this would allow the organization to establish firm procedures for Incident, Problem, Change, Configuration and Business Continuity Management.

Outside of IS, other groups at SRUC had some simple processes in place for logging issues or requests, but these were mostly noted in spreadsheets or other documents, and were very limited in detail. The organization had to therefore find a way that they could improve processes in all other departments as well.

Strategy - Implement assyst by Axios Systems throughout the entire organization

SRUC chose assyst by Axios Systems to help them achieve their desired processes and level of efficiency. Initially, assyst was intended for use only by the IS group. However, it quickly became apparent that the tool could be used effectively across all groups within the Professional Services Division. Rolling the tool out across the entire division was expected to take a lot of time and planning so SRUC chose to follow a phased approach to implementation.

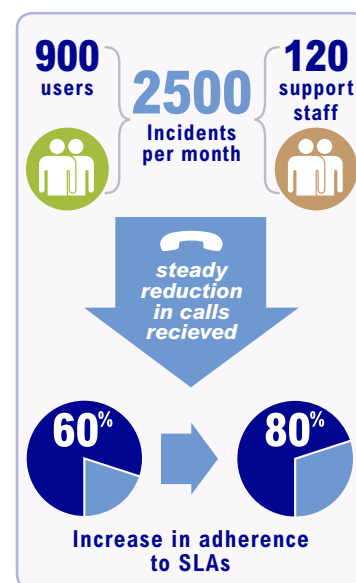
Property and Estates: Only 4 months after the initial implementation within IS, SRUC deployed the software in the Property and Estates group. This area uses the tool for reactive maintenance, whereby calls are logged and dealt with in a similar way as IS incidents. SRUC identified that most of the employees within this area were field workers and didn't always have access to the electronic system so they set up a process whereby these people receive an email, which they can access remotely, or are given a print out so they know what jobs they have. They do not use the application directly but do follow the process so that their actions are logged in assyst. It is also used for preventive maintenance where calls are automatically raised at given times for certain assets.

Finance: assyst was then implemented in Finance, who use the system for key activities such as invoice requests. SRUC has created a form on assystNET, Axios' self-service portal for its assyst solution, which is completed by the end-user and generates an incident in assyst. They have also created a report in Crystal that provides SRUC with the information of this incident in a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is then uploaded into SAP, its finance system, thus reducing the workload in Finance and minimizing errors.

Human Resources: Human Resources was the next phase of the assyst roll-out at SRUC and was the biggest challenge for the IS group as a lot of the information used by HR is private and sensitive and therefore requires measures to ensure this information is protected. Certain activities were identified as acceptable to put through the system, including the new start process.

Founded on world class and sector-leading research, education and consultancy, Scotland's Rural College – SRUC – is the result of a merger between Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge Colleges and Scottish Agricultural College (SAC). SRUC has an accomplished history with more than a century of success in delivering comprehensive skills, education and business support for Scotland's land-based communities and industries. The organization places particular emphasis on agriculture and related sciences, rural business development and management, food chain quality and safety, and rural resource and environmental management.

SRUC has a Professional Services Division that is made up of Information Systems (IS), Property and Estates (PEG), Human Resources (HR), Finance, Health and Safety (HS) and a contracts office.



IS has created a change process for new starts, which in addition to creating the tasks for HR to carry out, also goes to Finance and IS for the creation of accounts in certain key systems. This is tailored depending on which department the new employee is in. SRUC has also linked the probation stage to the new start process, which automatically generates emails to line managers at certain times reminding them that the next probation report is due. There are a number of other processes that IS has started to implement using *assyst* for HR, including the leaver's process.

Health and Safety: As with HR, some information can be sensitive and therefore cannot be put through the system due to data protection. However, simple calls are logged for this area of the business, such as if a fire exit is blocked or if a carpet is loose and could trip someone up. These can be logged in the system to be passed onto the relevant person to address.

Vehicles Administration: The Vehicles Administration group use *assyst* to log a change of driver or request new authorizations. SRUC provides the DVLA with this information and will soon be receiving information back from them, which will be kept in *assyst*. SRUC also plans to add details of all owned and leased vehicles into *assyst* and will use the software to log calls against them.

Marketing and Communications: The final area that began to use *assyst* was Marketing and Communications. *assyst* is used in this group for requests such as creating posters and organizing events. They have created a form on SRUC's Intranet page that, when completed, sends an email to the team that provides detailed information on the request so that the team do not have to make follow up calls to ask for further information.

Benefits - increased efficiency and reporting capabilities

SRUC has now implemented *assyst* across the entire organization, and all groups are reaping the benefits.

IS Department: Before the Service Desk was implemented at SRUC, not all calls were recorded and the IS team had no idea who was working on what and what part each person played. They are now seeing a steady decrease in the number of recorded calls, which they have attributed to staff adopting a more pro-active approach and preventing calls by providing training programs.

In addition to the management of call volumes, the IS group has noticed a significant benefit in the measurement of the group's adherence to Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Before the implementation, the group was only able to achieve 60 per cent of SLAs and it is now closer to 80 per cent. The Service Desk allows SRUC to monitor this weekly and organize staff accordingly.

Property and Estates: This group has noted many benefits from the *assyst* implementation, including providing tangible data of work in progress and enforcement of targets for achieving closure actions within SLA timeframes.

Finance: There are two key benefits that have been identified within the Finance group at SRUC.

Firstly, the Service Desk is being used to monitor recurring problems and, as part of the division's continuous improvement culture, they can now seek to improve internal procedures in order to enhance customer benefits more effectively.

Secondly, service request levels are monitored to enhance resource planning. If large volumes of requests are being received into one area of Finance, staff are diverted from other areas of the group to provide additional support and so ensure SLAs are achieved.

Human Resources: Within the HR group, *assyst* allows them to create processes for activities such as new starts and, as a result, everyone that needs to know when a new person joins the organization is advised automatically. They can also record any actions that they have taken, which allows them to provide a slicker service for new staff.

The same process has also been implemented for people that leave the organization - this is helping from an Asset Management point of view as they no longer have phones and laptops lying in cupboards.

Other Groups: SRUC now provides comprehensive control over processes across all areas of the F&CA division. While ensuring continuity throughout the organization for logging and monitoring customer problems and requests against agreed performance targets and SLAs, there has been an improvement in user support and the provision of accurate and high quality management information reports.

"Our existing tool could no longer provide the depth of functionality we needed in order for us to function efficiently as an organization."

Belinda Haig, Project Manager.

"All calls are now automatically linked to SLAs and comprehensive event logging provides instant status of current calls. assyst has provided useful real-time information to clients and a structured platform which has enhanced the overall performance of the Property and Estates group."

Tom Corall, Technical Services Manager.

"Since implementing the assyst software we have noticed a remarkable improvement in our reporting – assyst has given us the ability to be more efficient as an organization."

Belinda Haig, Project Manager.

Axios Systems plc

For over 25 years, Axios Systems has been committed to delivering innovative IT Service Management (ITSM) solutions that help customers improve not only their infrastructure operations but also to enhance service delivery across business functions including HR, Facilities Management and Finance. Axios is recognized as a world leader by leading analysts and their global client base, with a 100% focus on service management technologies.

Axios's enterprise ITSM software, *assyst*, is purpose-built to transform IT departments into profitable business-focused customer service teams. *assyst* adds tangible value to each client's organization by building on the ITIL® framework to help solve their business challenges across the organization. In 2014, *assyst* was accredited for all fifteen PinkVERIFY™ ITIL® processes, and was the first technology vendor to do so within a single solution.

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