Location
Logan, Utah, United States

Industry
Higher Education

Type
Land-grant, public research university

Faculty and Staff
800 Faculty members

1600 Full- and part-time support staff

Students
27,000 undergraduate and graduate

Mission
Be one of the nation's premier student-centered land-grant and space-grant universities by fostering the principle that academics come first, by cultivating diversity of thought and culture and by serving the public through learning, discovery and engagement.

Utah State University drives innovation in IT and beyond

Best value college breaks down departmental barriers and transforms the campus experience

Founded in 1888, Utah State University (USU) is a public research university located in Logan, Utah. One of America's top-rated public national universities according to Washington Monthly, USU is home to more than 27,000 undergraduate and graduate students, along with 800 faculty and 1,600 support staff. The university offers 159 undergraduate and 110 graduate degrees in specializations ranging from psychology and mechanical engineering through to elementary education and computer science. USU takes pride in offering outstanding academic opportunities at affordable fees and was the second-ranked public university in Forbes' "Americas Best Value Colleges" for 2017.

From departmental IT to federated IT

As with many higher-education institutions, USU had a decentralized IT model, with many faculties making their own IT decisions. IT support was also largely distributed, with embedded support staff in individual departments. While there was sufficient central IT support, there was no overall coordination of IT services across the university. This resulted in significant duplication, which was compounded by a lack of ITSM tools and limited resources.

However, USU didn't want to abandon its departmental IT model. Having local IT resources in each department created good working relationships and provided dedicated service. Instead, USU decided to move to a federated IT approach, maintaining departmental resources while integrating them into a university-wide global shared services infrastructure. To do this, USU needed an ITSM platform that could support multiple IT groups while coordinating their activities.

That's why USU chose ServiceNow.

Empowering faculty, staff, and students

Steve Funk, who runs USU's ServiceNow development team, recalls. "When we saw ServiceNow, we realized that would revolutionize the way USU delivered IT services. Before, we worked off paper and phone calls. With ServiceNow, our faculty, staff, and students could go online and make requests by themselves. And, we would have one consistent platform for all of our IT teams, reducing duplication, increasing visibility, and improving service quality."

USU started using ServiceNow for its central IT group but rapidly expanded it to its departmental IT teams. Now, when an end user enters an incident or request using the ServiceNow portal, it's automatically routed to the right IT person, whether that is someone in central IT or an embedded departmental resource. USU has also created a ServiceNow Incident Management extension called MyTech, which automatically shows end users a photograph of their assigned technician along with contact information when they submit a ticket.

25% productivity gains

Funk is enthusiastic about the productivity gains from using ServiceNow, giving an example. "We had 13 full-time desktop support technicians. They would spend 15 hours a week on the phone answering trouble tickets, rather than actually going around the campus fixing desktops. With ServiceNow self-service, we've cut that to five hours. We still have 13 technicians, but now they are doing what we hired them to do. By freeing up 25% of their time, we're getting back 130 hours a week. That's like having three extra technicians. And, because ServiceNow gives us a searchable knowledgebase, we can also use part-time students to answer the phones – all the information they need is at their fingertips."

ServiceNow custom app replaces costly billing system

As USU continued to use ServiceNow, it realized that ServiceNow was more than an incident management system – it was a platform where USU could develop its own applications. According to Funk, "Our first custom application was for IT billing. We had an existing billing system, but it took a lot of work to keep this up and going. With ServiceNow, we could integrate billing directly into our ITSM processes. This made our billing more accurate – and eliminated the hardware and maintenance costs of our existing system. Now, when a user requests a priced service catalog item, ServiceNow automatically creates a billing record when the service is completed. At the end of the month, ServiceNow turns these into departmental invoices which we then send out – it's as straightforward as that."

Driving innovation beyond IT

However, USU hasn't limited ServiceNow to IT. Funk and his team quickly found more opportunities to improve services and reduce costs using ServiceNow's rapid workflow development and knowledge management capabilities. Not only is Funk's team delivering value across the university, but it is also elevating its visibility as a critical partner for solving key problems.

Funk says, "We've got huge demand across the university. Here's one example. We developed a custom application for HR called MyTime, where university staff submit their timesheets, overtime and leave requests online. Once the request is submitted, the employee's supervisor is notified via email. They then approve or deny the request, and the employee is automatically notified. Prior to developing MyTime, employees had to submit paper forms for signature. Each supervisor collected a stack of leave requests and walked them to their department's leave manager, who would manually enter the leave requests into the University's HR system. Developing this in ServiceNow has reduced manual entry and allows personnel to work more efficiently."

> "
> ServiceNow goes to the heart of USU's mission. We're accountable for our students' success, and we want to give them a great experience. With ServiceNow, we're doing this.
>
> – Steve Funk, ServiceNow Lead Developer and Project Manager, Utah State University

Funk continues, "We built the app in three months, and everyone on campus was using it within a week of launch. It's been a huge success, and it's saving us 2,000 hours of administrative effort every year. We were able to rapidly develop and deploy the application due to the components available in the ServiceNow platform."

Furthering student success

STEPUP to Higher Education is another example. This State of Utah initiative provides programs and resources to encourage Utah students to pursue education after high school. The Concurrent Enrollment program allows high-school students to earn college credit from Utah's eight public colleges. Funk says, "USU volunteered to build an application where students could apply for and pay for these courses from any of the state's public colleges. However, when the original team looked at the requirements, they found that they couldn't build it. That's when we said we could do it using ServiceNow. Once the project was planned, we were able to build the app in less than three months, including pulling student information from the state database and connecting to a payment gateway. The feedback from the state, students and schools has been very positive."

And, the momentum continues to build. Most recently, USU went live with a ServiceNow app for handling scholarship acceptances, and there's more in the pipeline. For example, Funk's team is currently working on a new student orientation project, allowing advisors to track the activities students need to complete when they first come to the university – so they can reach out and help students if they are struggling. According to Funk, "ServiceNow goes to the heart of USU's mission. We're accountable for our students' success, and we want to give them a great experience. With ServiceNow, we're doing this."

Sample ServiceNow Apps at USU

My Time
Leave request, leave tracking, and timesheet system for USU employees

Software Licensing
Purchasing and distribution of site-licensed software at USU

Scholarships
Scholarship notification and acceptance system for USU students

Automated Billing Management
Automated billing of USU departments for IT services

P-Card
P-Card requests and transaction approvals

Step Up to Higher Education
State of Utah's concurrent enrollment system for Utah high school students

Utah Nature Explorers
Supporting a USU Extension program that helps educators share Utah's natural world with their students

Fire Marshall
Notification and tracking of USU fire-code violations

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