

South Central Ohio Computer Association



Efficiently Providing High-Quality Support to an Ohio Educational Community

"We looked at several hundred helpdesk solutions and SupportWizard fit our needs perfectly. It is totally Web-based, very easy to implement and customizable. The support we have received has been very personal and outstandingly quick. With SupportWizard, our extremely cumbersome and time-consuming year-end processing—this time with a severely limited staff—was the easiest it has been in the last 5 years!"

—Ryan McClay, Systems Manager, South Central Ohio Computer Association (SCOCA)

Business Overview

SCOCA is part of the Ohio Educational Computer Network. It provides accounting, payroll, library automation, video conferencing, CISCO training, student services software and filtered Internet services to 50 local and city school districts and over 85,000 students and teachers in southern Ohio.

Challenges

SCOCA's thirty technical support personnel serve the 500-700 student and fiscal staff users of its software packages. The organization had been relying on "just paper and pen," according to Ryan McClay, Systems Manager at SCOCA, to keep track of incoming calls. This was inadequate for managing their call volume.

- **Poor Communication with Customers**

With no automatic notification capability, users had to wait for support personnel to contact them with the status of their issue. As a result, they had no way of knowing if SCOCA was already working on their problem, and often re-contacted the organization. Such repeat communication added to the already large volume of calls and led to duplication of effort by support personnel.

- **Redundant Work**

"Since we had no effective way of tracking our response to incoming calls," said McClay, "multiple support people might simultaneously work on the same problem."

- **No Means of Assessing Software and Support Effectiveness**

SCOCA could not easily gauge the effectiveness of its software and support, as its "paper and pen" method provided no ability to track calls. As a result, the organization lacked data to inform software or support improvements, which—if put into effect—would mean fewer incoming calls.

- **Staff Resistance to New Solution**

Although SCOCA's employees realized that the manual system was not ideal, they were resistant to implementing a new solution. Said McClay, "Changing support staff practices and mentalities was the biggest hurdle we had to overcome. Even though our older method was not efficient, it's what people were used to."

Requirements

SCOCA, which had lost almost half of its support staff, realized the need for a customizable and easy-to-use software solution that automated the support process. According to McClay, "Being an educational support institution with a limited budget and staff, we couldn't afford expensive software." In order to accommodate off-site personnel, the product also needed to be Web-based.

The SupportWizard Solution

"We looked at several hundred helpdesk solutions, and SupportWizard was the only one we could identify that was both inexpensive and Web-based," said McClay. "SupportWizard was also very customizable and easy to implement. We had gotten demos of several high-end commercial products, but when the price tag started out in the tens of thousands of dollars for basic functionality and a proprietary client, we dropped that idea quickly."

SCOCA is using SupportWizard—which it launched in late 2000—not only to track and route calls and to communicate with end users, but also to monitor the effectiveness of its software and support.

- **Staff Buy-In**

Commented McClay, "Implementation would not have happened at all if SupportWizard was not customizable and easy to integrate into our existing structure. Now, the staff love it because they realize how much it helps them!"

- **Increased Efficiency**

With SupportWizard, SCOCA is easily managing its incoming calls, preventing redundant work and increasing staff efficiency. Even with half of its former staff, according to McClay, "Things are running more smoothly than ever. With SupportWizard, our year-end procedures, which are usually very time-consuming and cumbersome, were the easiest they had been in the last 5 years! Routing items to a general mailbox where they are then evenly and automatically assigned helps our staff resolve problems effectively and efficiently, so end users get help more quickly."

- **Superior Customer Service**

SCOCA is now providing superior service to end users in an extremely efficient fashion. SCOCA staff can respond quickly to calls, and end users can track the status of their issue. Stated McClay, "With automatic email notifications, users know as soon as their problem is being attended to and can track its status."

- **Reduced Calls and Better Problem-Solving**

Due to the solution's automated issue tracking, SCOCA can monitor the subjects of incoming calls. If one aspect of its programs is constantly requiring assistance—as evidenced by the volume of tickets in SupportWizard—the organization can respond to alleviate the problem, reducing the number of calls.

About SupportWizard

SupportWizard, a division of Integral Solutions Corporation, is dedicated to developing no-hassle, easy-to-deploy, and cost-effective Web-based solutions for building strong customer relationships. With SupportWizard Enterprise Edition 5.0, its fully customizable Web-based customer support and knowledge management system, customers can reduce their support costs by as much as 70%, provide superior service with less wait time, and gain better control over their support organization. With over three years of full production use, SupportWizard Enterprise Edition 5.0 is relied upon by leading organizations worldwide, including AT&T, Lucent Technologies, Chevron, and 3Com. To learn more, please visit www.supportwizard.com.