

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines

New help desk service doubles efficiency and dramatically improves user satisfaction

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

AT A GLANCE:

Challenges:

- > Fragmented help desk support with high staff turnover
- > Global support 24 x 7 x 365 required
- > Sophisticated satellite communications
- > 200 users across 40 ships

Solution:

- > Understand and document MOL systems
- > Multi-lingual help desk
- > Weekly project meetings to resolve challenges
- > Comprehensive staff cover

Benefits:

- > High quality progress-driven help desk delivered
- > Completed monthly jobs doubled
- > Excellent user feedback
- > Delivered within budget

New support solution doubles efficiency for Mitsui O.S.K. service desk

01

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd (MOL) is part of the global Japanese MOL Group shipping company. Worldwide it employs nearly 10,000 staff and operates more than 850 ships.



Mark Adkins is the Senior IT Manager with MOL Europe. He supports more than 200 users engaged in providing operational services to 40 ships. Sophisticated satellite-based communications with the ships are an important part of this service. Since the ships could be anywhere in the world and in any time zone, this service has to be available 24/7 every day of the year.

Failure of the systems used to provide this service could be catastrophic. If communications failed and a single ship bearing 350,000 tonnes of crude oil had to lay up, it could cost the company \$50,000 per day.

An efficient help desk for his users to ensure continuous and effective operation is considered to be an essential part of maintaining the company's success.

Challenges

MOL already had a help desk provided by an external company. The service, however, had started to deteriorate. The company concerned was experiencing rapid turnover of its own staff, and had begun to supply help desk engineers who weren't sufficiently IT literate. This meant that Mark had to spend considerable time and effort in training the help desk staff who were then expected to support his own users.

The support provided was also fragmented. Staff holidays were inadequately covered, and out-of-hours support was not available. The final straw for Mark came when one of the more skilled help desk engineers left the company, with unfinished projects, and was not replaced.

This help desk contract was due for renewal within a few months, so Mark proposed going out to tender for a new supplier. Since the MOL ethos is strong on loyalty there was a hope that the tender process itself would spur the existing supplier into improving its service. If not, Mark would have an alternative to hand.

Three companies were invited to tender for the contract, including MOL's existing supplier and Orange Information Systems Group (OISG). Mark knew that the primary challenge for any new supplier was learning MOL's systems and getting its support operational quickly enough to minimise disruption.

OISG won the contract. Its proposal came within budget, and its people provided the confidence Mark needed. Operations were transferred to OISG just two months after winning the contract. Incredible when considering this involved replacing both systems and the staff where MOL's knowledge-base resided.

02



“It was a daunting project because all the knowledge of our systems was in that help desk, to actually change the help desk to a completely new suite of staff was a real challenge.”

- Mark Adkins, Senior IT Manager, MOL Europe

OISG's first task was to understand the systems it was supporting. It did this by thoroughly analysing and documenting MOL's systems in a specific manner for the help desk. This served two purposes; firstly, it helped OISG understand the problems likely to be faced by the users, and secondly it created a documented help desk knowledgebase. MOL will never again be so exposed and dependent upon a single help desk provider.

The second task was to reorganise the operation of the help desk itself. In the old system, users would directly phone the engineers with a problem. In theory, the engineer would log the call and respond; although it is not certain that all calls actually were actually logged. In most cases the engineer would have to go away and find a solution. The result was a frustrating experience for the user and an inefficient use of the engineer's time.

This has evolved with OISG. Now there is a team of three expert engineers fronted by a Japanese-speaking administrator. This administrator takes the calls and logs them; selects the best available engineer, and hands off the job. The engineers now spend a greater portion of their time on problem-solving rather than user-handling.

The administrator also shields the engineers from run-of-the-mill calls, handling problems like issuing and resetting passwords, and undertaking any necessary basic purchasing.

Weekly meetings have been established between MOL and OISG staff. Issues and problems are now openly discussed and solved, and not left to fester and create discontent on either side.

Finally, OISG introduced a comprehensive system of cover. Mark is now confident that during help desk staff holidays, OISG will provide qualified covering engineers. And critically, there is now an out-of-hours phone number for emergencies. A 24/7 expertly-manned help desk is now fully operational.

“The engineers now spend a greater portion of their time on problem-solving rather than user-handling.”

Benefits

“This project was never to cut costs,” says Mark Adkins. “The need was to get a quality help desk service installed – and that’s what we’ve got.”

The improved service shows in two specific areas. Firstly, help desk job throughput has increased dramatically. The previous help desk had been completing around 300 jobs per month. The new OISG help desk is doubling that by completing around 600 jobs per month – either because the old engineers weren’t logging the calls, or the users weren’t calling in because they didn’t expect any service.

Secondly, MOL staff complaints against the help desk have declined just as dramatically. “That,” says Mark, “shows that our users are happy with the new OISG help desk.”

OISG in three words:

04

Commitment - OISG is very committed to success.

Quality - OISG has provided a quality service with quality staff.

Service - OISG has been thoroughly professional throughout.

“OISG really bought into this. We even had the director of operations with us for three months.”

- Mark Adkins, Senior IT Manager, MOL Europe

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