



Vodafone Australia

Vodafone Turns to the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite to Streamline Its Service Support Infrastructure

Geography

Australia

Industry

Telecommunications

Business Need

Vodafone required a single solution suite to manage companywide incident management and change management workflow, as well as associated service levels and assets.

Solution

The company turned to the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite to help it identify and understand IT and technology elements of individual services, making IT more transparent and automated.

Results

- > Accelerated the approval of change requests from weeks to days
- > Reduced the number of IT incidents by 20 percent, thanks to a clearer picture of root causes and faster resolution times
- > Obtained a single view into SLAs — across a multitude of outsourced partners in the service delivery chain
- > Elevated its view into the IT infrastructure, shifting from topography to a service model identifying asset-to-service linkages and, eventually, their impact on revenue
- > Created a “single source of truth” that provides an accurate picture of dependencies among business processes, users, and IT infrastructure
- > Facilitated compliance with IT Infrastructure Library® (ITIL®) best practices

Customers don't care about the technology that underpins a specific business service — they just want to get what they want when they want it. Service providers have responded, and many today use technology that increasingly provides customers with options to self-manage their own services. However, such service innovation requires heavy synchronisation and automation of infrastructural components connected to individual services. Vodafone says the key is managing systems and computing infrastructure using a single source of truth. The company has turned to the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite to get there.

LIVE AND KICKING

Like most other category-leading brands, Vodafone Australia, the country's third largest mobile provider, is a serious innovator. Bringing new services to market faster than its competitors has served it well. Vodafone Live, an initiative giving customers access to multiple services and dynamic content from a single portal, is perhaps the most visible example of Vodafone's service strategy. Matthew Massoud Nasrabadi, OSS Strategy and Planning, Technology Operations, Vodafone Australia, says the initiative continues to drive change through his IT organisation. “We're moving our technology closer to business strategy. Key to our success is bringing new services to market in a more nimble fashion than our competitors.” The move spotlighted Vodafone's platform management technologies and its ability to run an operation progressively remodelled on both traditional IT and IP elements.

COPING WITH COMPLEXITY

In positioning Vodafone's IT topology, Nasrabadi says telecommunications providers are challenged with managing infrastructure that is far bigger and more complex than standard corporate IT environments. “As telecommunications has embraced both IP-based and IT-based technologies, we have experienced a tenfold increase in the number of elements and equipment. So, if we talk about 500 to 1,000 servers and thousands of network elements, multiply that by ten, and you get a picture of the management challenge we face,” he says.

Against this expansive backdrop, Vodafone and its 700-person IT team use a number of outsourced partners to manage non-core services, such as desktops — a move aligned to the company's service strategy and designed to concentrate focus on critical service-based and revenue-based elements. Then, there's the ongoing reorientation of IT systems to concurrently provision multiple services in place of the more “vertical” service delivery of old. “Telecommunications services have traditionally been built vertically — launch a service like SMS and build a dedicated IT and network structure to support it,” Nasrabadi says. “Moving from that environment to allowing customers to provision multiple services is a huge change. It's totally different and means that we need to be much more nimble.”

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Vodafone knew its future service delivery meant drilling business requirements into technology. “We needed to identify and understand IT and technology elements of individual services,” Nasrabadi says. “Transparency and automation are the new agenda.”

A cornerstone initiative was consolidating multiple incident and change management systems. The company was an early adopter of the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL), and sought to reduce the touch points in incident, change, and problem management. The need for a single companywide system was determined, and, it was hoped, such a system would reduce resources required to manage the same business, repetitive tasks, and mean time to repair (MTTR).

For instance, one of Vodafone's issues with using two separate change management systems was the friction this duplication added to approvals workflow. It doubled the workload for approvers, and failed to provide single source systems management or ITIL-aligned workflow. Approving changes took much longer than it should have; and managing 500 incidents daily, as Vodafone did, was a lingering threat to timely service resolution and consistent availability.

ALL FOR ONE

In evaluating vendor systems, integration was a key consideration. According to Nasrabadi, "We wanted to move away from systems that didn't relate well. We knew that a tightly integrated suite of products would deliver enormous efficiency. We decided on the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite because it offered the suite of products we required and also extended to services and assets."

The BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite is now being rolled out, immediately unifying Vodafone's fault management systems. The suite includes four core applications: BMC Remedy Service Desk, BMC Remedy Asset Management, BMC Remedy Change Management, and BMC Service Level Management. It also includes the BMC Atrium Configuration Management Database (CMDB) to coordinate processes based on a single view of technology components, as well as a Definitive Software Library to automate associations between deployed software, licenses, and their locations.

AT YOUR SERVICE

As Vodafone continues to grow and add new services, the accompanied increase in change and incident management workflow will be more gracefully managed. Immediately, the amount of time taken to approve changes (typically 200 a week) has been substantially reduced. Nasrabadi credits the single view of elements supporting services as the key success factor. "Now we can look at all changes as a whole — not just one at a time," he says. For example, simple infrastructure changes, such as the addition of a new firewall or server, could involve up to 200 people in the approval process, and historically, had taken weeks. Not any more. Turnaround times now typically take just days.

With better visibility of service elements and their interdependencies, Vodafone is now positioned to pre-empt changes, helping Nasrabadi and his team schedule work. "We can now pre-empt a change — not actually raise it, but partly raise the elements we already know about, without having all the details. As a result, we can alert change management teams about upcoming approvals before the event. And that is key because we can schedule people in advance," he says.

IT incidents have diminished by 20 percent. Nasrabadi attributes this achievement to a clearer view of root causes and faster resolution times, as service desk operators more accurately traffic incidents and requests to appropriate groups and outsource partners. "We don't have to farm out incidents to partners and await confirmation that they actually relate to their domain. Minimising the transfer of incidents among groups dramatically reduces resolution time," he says. "And, at the end of the day, we provide a service, and our service has real-time impact on our customers, so we must manage the service and remediate problems in real-time."

Vodafone's largely outsourced infrastructure management had previously complicated systems management. Now, by taking advantage of the multitenancy capabilities of the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite, this has changed, and the company can manage back-to-back service level agreements (SLAs) among different outsourcers. "Many of our services are either directly or indirectly delivered by third parties, so it was important for us to align SLAs back-to-back to gauge performances across every link in the chain," Nasrabadi says. "Because one partner often requires the help of another, problems often arose when there was confusion about the root cause of an incident and responsibilities for its resolution. Now, however, everyone is clear and armed with the right knowledge." In the future, Vodafone will use dashboards to monitor SLAs for different partners and the management of incidents and their resolution.

Closer to the balance sheet, the BMC Atrium CMDB will eventually enable Vodafone to understand the impact of service variability on revenue, opening the way to categorising incidents based on potential business impacts. As a first step, Vodafone is cataloguing service elements, an activity that is already underway.



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— Matthew Massoud Nasrabadi
OSS Strategy and Planning, Technology Operations
Vodafone Australia

Key Products Used:

- > BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite
 - BMC Remedy Service Desk
 - BMC Remedy Change Management
 - BMC Remedy Asset Management
 - BMC Service Level Management
- > BMC Atrium CMDB

About Vodafone Australia

Vodafone was awarded the third Australian mobile telecommunications carrier licence in December 1992. In September 1993, the company began providing GSM mobile telecommunications services with network coverage in Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra. By March 1994, the mobile network was extended to the cities of Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth.

As of June 2005, there were almost 18.2 million mobile customers in Australia. This represents a mobile penetration rate of approximately 90.1 percent. Vodafone Australia operates a GSM digital mobile network that covers 93 percent of the Australian population.

About BMC Software

BMC Software delivers the solutions IT needs to increase business value through better management of technology and IT processes. Our industry-leading Business Service Management solutions help you reduce cost, lower risk of business disruption, and benefit from an IT infrastructure built to support business growth and flexibility. Founded in 1980, BMC has offices worldwide and fiscal 2007 revenues of \$1.58 billion. Activate your business with the power of IT. www.bmc.com.

