V-SOFT CONSULTING

Case Study

"ServiceNow and our approach to executing on a services-oriented delivery model across the company has improved the dynamics of how we engage with the business and the value IT is delivering to the company." – Bob White, CIO, Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.

This ServiceNow case study is based on an interview with Bob White, CIO and Brian Golish, IT Director of Enterprise Services at Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc.

Ashley Furniture Changes the Way Work Gets Done in IT and Across the Enterprise

ASHLEY FURNITURE INDUSTRIES, INC.

Industry
Retail

Headquarters
Arcadia, WI

Employees
7,500

Highlight
ServiceNow boosts efficiency, transparency, and collaboration across the enterprise and drives value into the business.

Business Need

Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc. is the largest manufacturer of furniture in the world, and its goal is to continue a rapid pace of global growth while maintaining the quality that has led to its overall success. CIO, Bob White, knows that IT plays an essential role in helping to accelerate the company's growth and quality goals. He knows that IT can make business processes more efficient by adding structure and automation to speed responsiveness, improve decision-making, expand knowledge and insight and free departments and employees from repetitive and mundane tasks. "We use the ServiceNow platform and will continue to use it to drive value into the business and increase transparency," reflects Brian Golish, IT Director, Enterprise Services.

"From an IT perspective, we know that what got us to this point is not what will get us to the next," said White. "We don't want to be our grandparent's IT organization."

Business Solution

As the starting point in its service management evolution, the IT team adopted the ServiceNow Service Automation Platform to create a service portal to make IT support easier and more efficient than ever for employee IT issues and needs. "Self-service is a game-changer for IT," explains White. "It changes the dynamics of how we engage with the business, and it changes perceptions."

White knows that the change does not stop with IT. "The ServiceNow platform cannot remain just an 'ERP system for IT.' It has to extend to the rest of the organization, and it was our vision from the get-go to extend the service management and automation capabilities far beyond just IT." For example, the same ability to manage the request-fulfillment process and work tasks for IT can apply to other departments across the company.

White recognizes that much of the business value stems from changing the underlying communication process. "The ServiceNow capabilities make us more transparent and better positioned to engage with our internal consumers effectively." Employees get nearly instant responsiveness while online for their personal matters—they can order things and have confirmation of immediate shipping, and they can get answers on demand. "People need help or answers now," says White. "Gone are the days when people are willing to wait around for you to get back to them."

Along with the ServiceNow platform, Ashley Furniture uses the ServiceNow IT Service Automation Suite to automate and manage core IT processes with Incident and Problem Management, and the team introduced Change and Demand Management as two new disciplines and key value drivers.

Change Management provides the foundation to better assess the processes, mitigate risks and eliminate the disruptions often associated with changes introduced to an IT environment prior to production.

Demand Management now provides a seamless process surrounding the intake of work against business need and impact to help IT assess the timing, resourcing and funding needs to execute work.

Leveraging ServiceNow as the platform that provides IT with a single structured and standardized way to conduct the business brings many advantages and value improvements, including:

- **Access from anywhere** – the portal is fully mobile and accessible in any location around the globe
- **Automated approvals** – once a request is made, the approval process is automatically routed and advanced
- **Flexibility of service** – requests can be done directly from the portal or through email or phone
- **Complete transparency** – status of request is available in real time on the portal; this will enable future Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
- **One stop shop** – all requests for support, new items, changes and anything else can be done in the portal
- **Easy to use** – intuitive with a consumer-like interface makes it simple to get what you need
- **Entry point for other department services** – the portal introduces the services approach to other departments and the "one stop shop" model can extend to other departments, such as facilities and HR

Extending the Service Model Across the Enterprise

"At the end of the day, it's all about people," said Golish. "The platform allows us to do more. People can work more effectively and be better informed." Already, the team applied the service management approach to a number of specific areas, while augmenting various functions with a broader, more connected view:

- **Approval for Expenditure** – spending at Ashley Furniture requires a justification and approval process that had been done in an ad hoc style through email using Excel documents passed through the management and executive chain. By building a custom application on ServiceNow, the team has automated the entire process. "By having a method that is uniform, trackable and less time consuming, we've taken the way we've always done something and made it a billion times better," said Golish.
- **Employee Onboarding** – managers can use a newly built custom application to outfit new hires with a fully configured computer with required software, a phone, network and file access and more.

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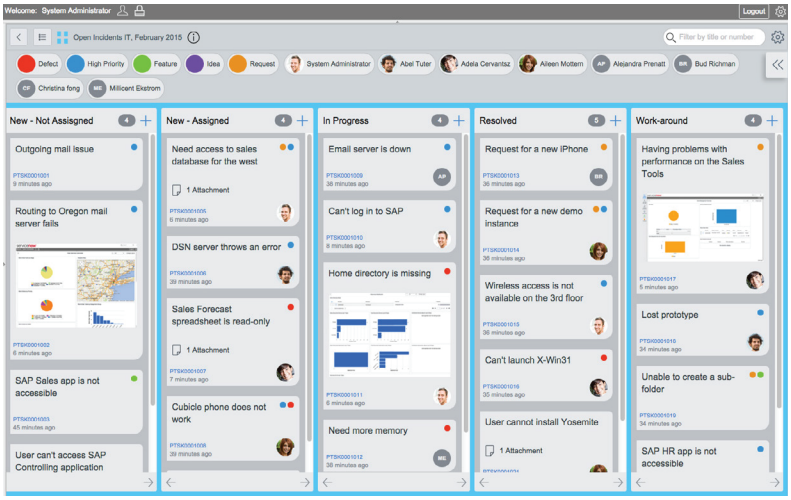

- **Visual Task Board** – provides an easy-to-use, directed way to plan and staff tasks and projects and get a big picture view of the associated workflow. This broader, connected vantage enables IT teams to collaborate more easily.

Conclusions & Next Steps

"It's extremely important to our future that we gravitate to platform and process singularity," said Golish. "We must also embrace automation. ServiceNow helps get us there on all fronts."

The service portal has become the manifestation of the ServiceNow platform and represents to employees the way service automation makes work tasks far more efficient and effective. "The portal is our value menu," explains Golish. "It's the single place for people to turn to fulfill needs and get answers."

In addition, the team has a roadmap with enough enhancements to keep them quite busy, including:

- Project Management & Project Portfolio Management
- CIO Roadmap
- Vendor Performance Management
- IT Financial Management

To continue accelerating its comprehensive vision for service management, the Ashley Furniture IT team is a design partner and early adopter of more advanced Project Portfolio Management and IT Financial Management capabilities for ServiceNow.

"Making project management and financial management fully integrated with other IT functions will enable better, faster and more informed decision-making. Tying together incidents, problems, changes, assets, vendors and other aspects gives IT a more informed, complete view of factors affecting the work of the department," explains Golish.

"It's extremely important to our future that we gravitate to platform and process singularity," said Golish. "We must also embrace automation. ServiceNow helps get us there on all fronts."

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