



Healthcare Organizations

Healthcare Organizations Drive Up Efficiency and Drive Down Costs with BMC® IT Service Support Express

Geography

North America

Industry

Healthcare

Business Need

Giving physicians, nurses, technicians, and other healthcare professionals easy access to systems that support them in all aspects of delivering patient services is essential to meeting two important objectives: containing costs and improving the quality of patient care.

Solution

Healthcare organizations are investing in new IT solutions, such as clinical systems, inventory management, patient profiling, and tracking of patient care, in order to contain costs and improve the quality of patient care.

Results

- > Higher first-call resolution rates
- > 85 percent reduction in response time
- > 16,000-hour savings in training time
- > Lower TCO through extension to other corporate services, such as facilities, human resources, legal, patient complaints, and bio-med, and through JCAHO accreditation
- > Faster, more efficient, more accurate recording of incidents, for higher support staff productivity

Today's healthcare organizations are under pressure from patients, insurers, government entities, and other stakeholders to contain costs while improving the quality of patient care. Providing physicians, nurses, technicians, and other healthcare professionals with easy access to the systems that support all aspects of delivering patient services is essential to meeting these two important objectives. Healthcare organizations are responding to this need by investing in new IT solutions, such as clinical systems, inventory management, patient profiling, and tracking of patient care.

For the IT staff, however, these new systems translate into an increasingly complex technology environment and a rapidly growing number of users who need assistance in using critical systems. Limited IT budgets and the fast-paced nature of the healthcare environment make it difficult to provide adequate levels of support. In many environments, support personnel struggle with antiquated systems for recording and tracking user inquiries, requests, and problems. Without automated processes, problem resolution is slow and feedback to users is almost nonexistent — so users call back repeatedly to check the status of their issues. Consequently, the productivity of the staff and the quality of care suffer.

Healthcare organizations, such as BayCare Health System, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC), and Care New England Health System, have overcome these and other challenges with the help of BMC® IT Service Support Express (formerly BMC® Magic solutions). "The BMC IT Service Support Express products give us comprehensive service desk, asset tracking, and change management functionality," Jimmy Arrington, supervisor of the IA Support Center at BIDMC. "The BMC® Service Desk Express Suite (formerly BMC® Magic Service Desk) has lowered costs, increased end-user satisfaction, and improved productivity for our support staff."

Built-in workflow capabilities enable healthcare organizations to automate IT support processes to ensure prompt response to user needs. Moreover, easy adaptability reduces total cost of ownership (TCO) and increases ROI because the organizations can extend the product's capabilities beyond IT to handle a variety of other tracking needs, including facilities, patient complaints, human resources (HR) inquiries, and tracking of issues within legal departments.

THE DEMAND FOR GREATER EFFICIENCY

In healthcare, as in many industries, IT budgets are extremely tight despite the growing demand for IT services. With so much emphasis on patient care systems, little funding is often left for IT service and support systems. IT departments need to absorb the growing demand without adding headcount, which means they must find affordable solutions that drive efficiency and maximize the productivity of every member of the support staff.

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Jimmy Arrington
Supervisor, IA Support Center
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

Key Products Used

BMC® IT Service Support Express, including:

> BMC® Service Desk Express Suite

> BMC® Desktop Automation Suite Express

The BMC Service Desk Express Suite is helping healthcare organizations address this need with an economical solution that automates the recording of new incidents; tracks incidents through to completion; sends alerts and notifications when problems are not resolved within specified time frames; tracks and manages IT assets; and manages IT changes. These capabilities have boosted the productivity of the IT staff, increased first call resolution rates, and slashed call volumes — enabling organizations to lower support costs.

At BayCare Health System, for example, it previously took five to seven minutes to record a customer incident using the organization's makeshift problem tracking system. Status notifications to users were virtually nonexistent, resulting in a number of callbacks as users sought to follow up on incidents. "We reduced response times by 85 percent by leveraging the BMC IT Service Support Express capabilities to automate the recording and tracking of incidents, implement self-service incident reporting through the Web, and initiate automatic notifications to users to communicate changes in issue status," reports Patrick Cook, Manager of the IT Help Center and Training, who was selected by the Help Desk Institute (HDI) as the winner of the 2004 Help Desk Analyst of the Year award.

"With self-service incident reporting, our help desk staff spends a lot less time answering the phone and a lot more time resolving issues," Cook adds. "What's more, customer wait time has dropped from five minutes to an average of just about 45 seconds. Instead of waiting on hold, listening to annoying prompts, and so on, the doctor or nurse can type in the information, click Submit, and go right back to working with patients. It improves the quality of care by letting medical professionals focus on patient needs, not technology."

At Baycare, automatic notifications and self-service incident reporting have slashed call volumes nearly in half, resulting in a dramatic reduction in workload and the cost of support.

Reducing call volumes has a substantial impact on support costs because it reduces staffing requirements. By reducing the number of calls and the time it takes to respond, healthcare organizations can save thousands of dollars each year. "At BayCare, automatic notifications and self-service incident reporting have slashed call volumes nearly in half, resulting in a dramatic reduction in workload and the cost of support," says Cook.

The BIDMC help desk has also experienced a substantial drop in call volumes since implementing the BMC Service Desk Express Suite. According to Arrington, the number of incidents dropped from 50,000 a year to 36,000 during the year after the implementation.

MAXIMUM VALUE FROM ALL IT ASSETS

BMC IT Service Support Express is helping healthcare organizations manage IT assets more efficiently by providing a single, centralized database inventory tool for asset tracking, vendor tracking, and maintaining service contracts. BMC® Desktop Automation Suite Express (formerly BMC® Magic Desktop Automation Suite) provides the ability to track not only help desk costs but also assets, to keep up with IT hardware and software inventory. It enables healthcare organization to understand what IT assets make up the IT environment and keep up with evolving data.

Effective asset tracking is also important in maintaining accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). An independent, not-for-profit organization, JCAHO is the predominant standards-setting and accrediting body in healthcare in the United States. Healthcare organizations can leverage the asset tracking capabilities of the BMC Desktop Automation Suite Express application to track asset service history and other levels of preventive maintenance that are scrutinized by the Joint Commission.

HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY FOR MOBILE TECHNICIANS

Healthcare organizations rely heavily on mobile technicians who provide hands-on support in resolving technical issues and installing new equipment. Too often, these professionals lose valuable time going back to their desktops to close out tickets and obtain new assignments.

The BMC IT Service Support Express solution offers sophisticated wireless capabilities that increase mobile technicians' productivity by enabling them to perform these and other tasks from wherever they happen to be, using personal digital assistants and other handheld devices.

Healthcare organizations save money every time a technician is able to close out a ticket at the customer location. Moreover, the timestamp on ticket closings reflects the actual time the problem was resolved, thereby providing for a more accurate picture of performance.

ENHANCED DECISION-MAKING

Because of the fast-paced nature of the healthcare environment, responding to the needs of computer users requires agility and speed. For IT support managers, that means making quick decisions about staffing, training, and other concerns. The BMC Service Desk Express Suite provides detailed reports that enhance decision-making.

“The reports enable our managers to assess how many help desk agents are needed at specific times, and identify areas where additional training might be required,” says Howard Rubin, director of IS Technical Services at Care New England. “And along those lines, the system gives us a better view into what kind of training our clinical and other support staff need. If we see that we’re getting a high volume of calls related to performing certain functions, we can recommend additional instruction that addresses the problem proactively and eliminates those calls.”

Reporting functionality is facilitating help desk consolidation at Care New England Health System by giving IT management better insight into staffing needs. “We use the reports to assess how many calls come in at any given time,” Rubin notes. “So we can determine if we have enough calls to justify keeping a help desk agent available until, say 7:00 p.m., or if it’s more cost-effective to have the help desk calls roll over to our computer operators who are available 24x7.”

BIDMC is taking full advantage of the real-time reporting capability that provides such information as how many calls are currently in the queue, call status, and other details. As a result, managers can quickly see where more coverage might be needed and reassign people accordingly. IT management can also spot trends and take action to address them to improve efficiency.

COST-EFFECTIVE TO CONFIGURE, MANAGE, AND USE

In healthcare, IT professionals are always under rigid time constraints. They need solutions that are fast to implement, easy to manage, and easy to use. Once again, BMC IT Service Support Express fills the bill. Healthcare organizations using BMC IT Service Support Express products report that implementation is fast and easy, administration is simple and straightforward, and adapting the applications to meet unique needs is a snap.

“One of the things we liked most about the BMC solution is that we could implement it quickly, and then modify the configuration as we went along,” Care New England’s Rubin recalls. Patrick Cook at BayCare reports that making modifications is almost effortless. “I can make changes right away, on the fly, from any location, anywhere in our network, in any city — from anywhere I can get to a browser.”

Because the product is so easy to modify, BayCare was able to suspend its own policy of providing classroom instruction for every new service, and roll out Web-based incident reporting with no formal, onsite training to its users. “I was able to modify every screen to include instructions that guide people through reporting and submitting a ticket on their own,” Cook says. “With 16,000 employees, we’re talking about nearly 16,000 hours of training time that we saved. It was a first for our company.”

BENEFITS BEYOND THE HELP DESK

With so much public scrutiny on rising costs, healthcare organizations are constantly seeking to achieve maximum return on every dollar they invest. The ability to leverage existing systems by expanding the number of people and functions they support is crucial. The adaptability of the BMC Service Desk Express Suite makes it an ideal solution for this environment because it can address a variety of tracking needs.

Arrington at BIDMC says that this solution can do “just about anything.” The hospital is creating a preventive maintenance system that will enable the IT staff to service equipment before an incident call is received. The hospital is also looking into expanding the use of the BMC product outside of IT to support patient incident tracking and human resources management. “My hope is to get HR to use the BMC solution to track employee information and benefits, perhaps even linking it to our PeopleSoft system. The possibilities are endless.”

Care New England has expanded the product to address project tracking. "In addition to using BMC Service Desk Express Suite for typical break/fix activity, we've customized screens to allow us to track the status of projects, such as installing a new PC," Rubin explains. "That means we can view our workload from a break/fix perspective as well as a project perspective."

Care New England is leveraging its investment BMC IT Service Support Express in a variety of other ways. Integration with Microsoft SMS enables SMS inventory information to flow automatically into the BMC database, giving the help desk staff access to configuration information on all devices for better inventory management. The facilities department is beginning to use the BMC product to track maintenance tasks, such as replacing light bulbs and repairing plumbing.

Finally, the education staff uses the product to track support requests for specific products, and the clinical informatics group tracks calls from the nursing staff related to using clinical systems.

ROOM FOR FUTURE GROWTH

With its comprehensive feature set, ease of implementation and use, and adaptability, BMC IT Service Support Express is giving healthcare organizations a solid solution for addressing current and future needs. The dramatic increases in productivity these organizations are achieving as a result of their implementations are enabling them to support future growth in the number of users and systems without a corresponding increase in IT staff size. As BMC customers work with the applications, they are reporting that the ease of configuration has positioned them to continually modify and refine the applications to meet changing business needs, so they can continue to provide superior user support in the future. And, finally, healthcare organizations using this BMC solution are looking ahead and identifying new ways to leverage their investment to address other critical needs throughout the enterprise.

About BayCare, Beth Israel, and Care New England

- > BayCare Health System, headquartered in Clearwater, Florida, manages eight independent hospitals and 16,000 employees centered in a four-county area.
- > A major teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center employs 10,000 people who service nearly 750,000 patient visits annually in and around Boston.
- > Care New England Health System, headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island, comprises five leading healthcare providers that have a long-standing involvement and reputation in community health, teaching, and research.

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. Only BMC provides best practice IT processes, automated technology management, and award-winning BMC® Atrium™ technologies that offer a shared view into how IT services support business priorities. Known for enterprise solutions that span mainframe, distributed systems, and end-user devices, BMC also delivers solutions that address the unique challenges of the midsized business. Founded in 1980, BMC has offices worldwide and fiscal 2006 revenues of more than \$1.49 billion. Activate your business with the power of IT. www.bmc.com.



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