

Balfour Beatty Construction

A Centralized, ITIL Compatible Service Desk in Under Six Months

Balfour Beatty Construction Builds Advanced Service Desk with FrontRange™ IT Service Management

Customer

Balfour Beatty Construction

Industry: Construction

Products

- FrontRange™ IT Service Management
- ITSM Self Service
- ITSM Incident Management
- ITSM Change Management
- ITSM Inventory Management

FrontRange Solutions Partner

Alliance Technology

Quick Stats

- IT staff: 35, of which 15 are IT Field Operation staff, Help desk agents: 3
- Incidents per month: 1,400-1,500
- Employees: 1,600
- Annual revenue (parent company): \$14 billion

Business Benefits Realized with ITSM

- Balfour Beatty, with no existing service desk processes to build on, formed and deployed an advanced, centralized, ITIL compatible service desk in a six-month period.
- The service desk closes 62% of all calls at the first level, freeing second-level staff to focus on resolving more complex issues quickly and working on more advanced projects.
- In the first few months after implementing the ITSM Self Service module, 22% of all issues began coming through this lower cost service portal, reducing cost-per-contact to \$10.
- IT now has complete visibility into all issues that the service desk processes, providing a centralized view of services provided by each of their remote sites.

In the construction industry, business is still conducted largely face-to-face. Balfour Beatty Construction, the U.S. division of \$14 billion, UK-based Balfour Beatty, is no exception.

“It’s very relationship-oriented,” said Rick Roman, director of IT operations. “If they’re not talking to someone physically in the office, our employees at least want to know the person on the other end of the phone.”

Balfour Beatty Construction had a very decentralized service model and lacked insight into IT issues or the magnitude of service orders and work volume.

When the company set out to streamline its service desk, IT management placed a high priority on personalized service, but at the same time wanted to move away from the high cost of supporting employees with direct access to their in-office IT colleagues for support.

With FrontRange IT Service Management, and a best practices approach, Balfour Beatty Construction effectively launched a centralized, ITIL compatible service desk in less than six months.

Moreover, less than a year after their centralized service center was in full production, Balfour Beatty achieved high first-call resolution rates and a reduction in calls into the service desk when the adoption of web self-service took off. In addition, the company added a sophisticated change and inventory management function – all while preserving the personal service that offices have enjoyed.

Complete ITIL Compatibility

In business for more than 75 years, Balfour Beatty Construction has grown to become a leader in the U.S. commercial construction industry. The company provides general contracting and construction services for nearly any type of facility, from the North Carolina campus for Cisco Systems to the Southwest Airlines headquarters in Dallas to airport concourses across the country.

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Rick Roman
director of IT operations, Balfour Beatty Construction

Balfour Beatty operates four divisional offices, as well as temporary offices at job sites. IT staff at each regional office delivered personalized service and support to employees in each of their offices. However, IT teams did not have the tools or process in place to capture and track service desk issues in a centralized fashion.

“Service was decentralized but very personalized, which was highly valued by our employees,” Roman said. “It made sense to centralize our service desk, but we needed to figure out a way to provide personal service while doing it long distance.”

IT Operations not only wanted to centralize support but also establish a service desk based on ITIL best practices. To that end, the company began its search for a comprehensive service management solution.

Balfour Beatty evaluated several solutions from large software vendors. After conducting a formal request for proposal and on-site proof of concept, the company selected FrontRange Solutions' IT Service Management as the core of its IT service desk.

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Rapid Adoption with Branded Rollout

Rollout of ITSM involved two distinct phases: the technical implementation of the FrontRange tool, and introducing a new centralized process to employees. For implementation, the company engaged Alliance Technology, a FrontRange Solutions Partner, to help configure the software for service management best practices and to devise a rollout strategy.

Balfour Beatty began with the Incident Management and Self Service modules. With Incident Management, IT staff across all locations track every IT support issue, giving the company one location for insight on its service management activities.

Balfour Beatty's 1,600 employees not only had to change their processes; they had to change their mindsets. To assist employees with the transition, the company hired service desk agents very strategically – searching for those with both technical and people skills to ensure callers have the best experience.

"We have eliminated incidents that occur from poorly planned change to pretty much zero. When it comes to the management of critical financial systems the business relies on, a solid change management process and toolset has been a welcome addition to the consolidated service center."

Rick Roman

director of IT operations, Balfour Beatty Construction

Next, the company engaged its marketing communications group to create a branding campaign for the launch of the new service desk self service portal. All communications about the service desk have a consistent look, including a service desk logo, fonts, business cards, stickers, instruction booklets and a weekly e-mail tip.

Additionally, a web video for all employees introduced the new service desk and the faces behind the voices employees will hear on the phone – a critical step in the relationship-oriented construction industry.

Employee Self Service: Cutting Cost-per-Incident

Employees now submit tickets by phone, email or a new self service site. Emails to the service desk automatically create tickets in ITSM based on the subject line.

A key component of the service desk, FrontRange ITSM Self Service gives employees a web portal to submit and check on IT issues. In response, the module automatically creates tickets in IT Service Management with the relevant information filled out, ready for a service desk agent.

With three methods available to submit tickets, employees are empowered to submit their own issues any time of day, while service desk agents decrease the amount of time they spend logging new tickets. In the first few months, 22 percent of all issues already were coming in through self service, reducing cost-per-incident to \$10.

"Self Service really cuts down the number of emails to IT staff," Roman said.

"Employees can easily check the status of incidents themselves."

Balfour Beatty's IT team also took ITSM Self Service capabilities a step further, leveraging the IT service desk to also support Human Resources service requests. HR requests are routed to the appropriate HR team to respond to requests for employee adds, moves and changes that involve IT Operations.

A New Purchasing Protocol

As a UK-owned company, Balfour Beatty does not have to comply with Sarbanes-Oxley, however, chooses to do so anyway. The company streamlines tracking of purchases with a combination of FrontRange IT Self Service and FrontRange ITSM Inventory Management.

Because IT now manages mobile device orders, the purchasing department submits those requests on the portal and IT takes orders from there. Balfour Beatty IT staff link purchase orders to ITSM Inventory Management to ensure inventory is updated in real time.

As a result, soft copies of purchase orders, vendor quotes and invoices – all the documentation the company needs to support internal audits – are stored in a single place within the FrontRange Inventory Management system. Additionally, any incidents logged in ITSM Incident Management are tied to the specific inventory items and

purchase orders, allowing staff to determine warranty coverage and other information related to repairs and replacements.

“When internal auditors have identified gaps in the past, it’s taken three months to begin recomplying. I’m certain we’ll save ourselves and our auditors a lot of time because we’re not manually going through paper files,” Roman said. “All POs are in one place.”

Centralized, accurate detail on all the hardware and software on the network provides a basis for identifying hardware targeted for upgrades. Easy access to centralized inventory information streamlines the creation of reports on hardware refresh projects for department managers.

Balfour Beatty also publishes an “IT Tip of the Week” for all its employees. When the team wanted to give employees access to that rich database of tips, an enterprising IT staffer created a knowledge area on the ITSM Self Service portal. There, employees can view all tips anytime, helping them help themselves.

Change Management to Ease Auditing

To support auditing, Balfour Beatty established a formal change management process with the implementation of ITSM Change Management.

With its new system, all changes are logged in ITSM formally, rather than in a handwritten format. At Balfour Beatty, subject-matter experts enter change requests, instead of end users. Those requests then follow a specific order based on type of change and those that need to approve it – with changes categorized and delegated based on low, medium and high business im-

portance. With those business rules, anyone that should be contacted or alerted about a specific change automatically receives a notice.

As a result, the company improves communication among team members, and has already seen a decrease in IT incidents that might have occurred previously.

“We have eliminated incidents that occur from poorly planned change to pretty much zero,” Roman said. “When it comes to the management of critical financial systems the business relies on, a solid change management process and toolset has been a welcome addition to the consolidated service center.”

Metrics Support Decision-Making

Previously, IT Operations lacked any insight into its service desk performance because it did not track its incidents. Now, rich metrics in ITSM support decisions and continuous improvement.

The company regularly measures the following with reporting in ITSM:

- Cost-per-contact
- Customer satisfaction
- Analyst utilization
- First-call resolution
- Average speed to answer the phone, email and self-service requests
- The number of escalated incidents per month by type and analyst

The Payoff

With no existing service desk processes to build on, Balfour Beatty not only formed and deployed an advanced, centralized, ITIL compatible service desk in a six-month period; the company also quickly tied in Inventory and Change Management, adding an unprecedented level of insight and process control in the organization.

Three service desk agents currently manage 62 percent of all IT service requests on the first level. With regular surveying of customers, Balfour Beatty’s IT Operations team has seen results improve in tandem with first-call resolution rates.

IT Operations keeps its staffing costs down by reallocating in-office IT team members to higher-value, more technically challenging projects that advance the organization. Industry averages indicate that walk-up IT support costs organizations an average of \$20 per incident. Roman estimates his cost-per-incident is now at \$10. Ultimately, savings realized from lower cost service channels have yielded a rapid return on investment from FrontRange ITSM.

Fully Burdened Cost-per-Incident*

<i>Chat</i>	\$10
<i>Email</i>	\$15
<i>Phone</i>	\$20
<i>Walkup</i>	\$20

*HDI 2008 Practices and Salary Survey

“I think the software paid for itself the first day,” Roman said. “We manage four groups across seven cities from a centralized location, and all processes reside in a single application. It’s well worth the money we paid.”

Most importantly, Balfour Beatty employees embraced the concept quickly. Today, 85 percent of all incidents are submitted via the service desk instead of to local IT staff.

LESSONS LEARNED

From start to finish, Balfour Beatty's IT Operations team took a best practices approach to implementing ITSM, establishing ITIL processes and introducing the new approach to employees. Here's what the team found enhanced the entire process:

Support from executive leadership

IT Operations engaged an executive champion to support and communicate the importance of the project to the organization.

Planning

Balfour Beatty spent several months planning its new service desk structure and processes strategically. "With all the planning, we knew it would roll out as efficiently as it did," Roman said.

Strategic hiring

The company hired service desk agents with both technical and people skills to provide callers the best experience possible.

Star status for agents

"We ensure that our agents are given "star" status in the organization to make sure they feel a sense of importance in the organization and that employees see that too," Roman said.

Branded rollout

With a consistent, branded look for the new service desk, and videos introducing agents, Balfour Beatty increased the rate at which employees began using the new process – and their comfort level of working with virtual IT support staff.

About Alliance Technology

Alliance Technology provides support center and help desk planning, execution, performance maximization and technology implementations for business, government and education. The firm offers comprehensive on-site consulting, including workflow analysis, operational process assessment, project management, and design and implementation of call center and help desk solutions from start to finish. Additionally, Alliance provides custom report development, optimization of systems in place, integration with other systems and customized training. Alliance Technology is a State of Texas CISV Qualified Vendor. For more information, visit www.alliancetechnet.com.

About FrontRange Solutions

FrontRange Solutions develops software and services that growing mid-size firms and distributed enterprises rely on every day to build great customer relationships and deliver high-quality customer service. The company applies a unique combination of innovation and automation with a standards-based approach to simplify core business processes, including: IT service management; customer relationship and sales force management; and PC lifecycle management. More than 150,000 customers use FrontRange offerings to quickly improve their interactions with external and internal clients and achieve better business results. For more information, call 800.776.7889 or visit www.frontrange.com



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