



Doncaster College

Background

Doncaster College's multi-million pound Waterfront campus opened in September 2006, giving students access to some of the best educational facilities in the country. The Hub offers a wide variety of higher and further education courses at the state-of-the-art site.

The building, jointly funded by the College, the Learning and Skills Council and Doncaster Council, took just under two years to build, employing more than 2,500 builders.

Students benefit from some of the best educational facilities around, including a 100-seat lecture theatre, a 200-seat drama studio and a huge two-floor Learning Resource Centre packed with IT facilities.

Leading edge technology is at the heart of the building - interactive whiteboards and projectors are in almost every classroom, video clips are streamed into classrooms via a network and plasma screens welcome students at entrances, informing them of the latest College news and events.

The Challenge

During the last academic year, more than 11,500 people enrolled on courses. Across its two main campuses, the College employs over 1,100 staff and accommodates students aged 16+, along with some younger learners as part of the Doncaster Children's University. The college has ambitious plans to increase the number of Students year on year, but as with all businesses the College has to carefully balance operational budgets, especially in areas like ICT.

Nigel Barry (Head of IT) says "With a support staff ratio of 572:1 this is a very exciting environment in which to work; it is certainly no place for shirkers. I have an excellent team of IT professionals all of which are ready to step up to the plate and relish the daily challenges of delivering, maintaining and supporting cutting edge technology". As if it was not demanding enough supporting over 12,000 staff and students Nigel's team always strive for excellence in line with the college mission statement: "Realising student potential and achieving excellence."

With ever increasing demands it was crucial that the IT support function was able to meet the challenges in the future with an equally cutting edge helpdesk. A key component to any IT

support service is the helpdesk. Nigel says “We simply outgrew our incumbent helpdesk system. My view was we needed a system that would grow with the business, enable the department to be pro-active and move away from our reactive stance, the system should also support industry best practice out of the box, be easy to use, affordable and supplied by a vendor we could work with”. Doncaster spent several weeks identifying the key ‘feature set’ of a help desk solution for the business, then went shopping...

The Solution

Doncaster College went to the help desk market and considered all main vendors. After reviewing the core offerings and pricing structures a short list of possible products was created. Nigel says “We liked Simplisys (formerly Citrus Service Desk) from the start, the representatives were engaging and attentive answering all our questions in a timely professional manner and showed a real interest in addressing our issues; I felt straight away that this was a company I could work with and the solution represented excellent value for money”.

Simplisys offered some strong benefits over the competition including:

- S** Integrated Incident, Problem and Change management – ability to view “Known Errors” when logging a call, preventing duplication of effort.
- S** Dynamic, interactive and configurable personal dashboards – steering users to what’s changed in the system that relates to them.
- S** Dynamic Knowledge Management – enabling more calls to be closed at first contact.
- S** Strong Management Reporting – real time quality statistics at your fingertip.
- S** Sophisticated SLA (Service Level Agreement) and OLA (Operational Level Agreement) management including third parties. – Key Performance Indicators.

- S** Quick Calls – template calls including workflows and knowledge articles.
- S** Linked Incidents – update all effected parties instantly in one action.
- S** Third Party Integration services – LDAP, Single Sign-on and emails easily configured.
- S** Customised Self Service Portal – an extension to the college web site, enabling staff and students to view the status of calls, update existing calls and add new calls with dynamic knowledge management (FAQ’s, How Do I’s) prompting self-help and reducing the number of calls logged.
- S** Intuitive User Interface – ease of use.

Another factor that led Doncaster to Simplisys was flexibility in terms of the license models, deployment options and payment plans. Simplisys is a web based application available as a service (SaaS) and also for on-premise installation. Doncaster opted for an on-premise installation supported remotely by SimpliSys staff based in Bristol.

The Result

Nigel says “From the first point of contact, the installation and configuration process, user training to go-live through to today’s post-sales support, we continue to be extremely happy with Simplisys. Andy, our technical contact in particular has been outstanding”.

For information on how Simplisys could help your organisation call 01275 240500 or email: sales@simplisys.co.uk