Executive Summary

K-16 Solutions presented South Carolina State University (SCSU) a proposal for automated Help Desk Administration, Work Order Processing and Facility Management service related issues for a multi-departmental campus environment. The system was designed and deployed by Novantus. Novantus has engineered a web native enterprise level application that is designed to be user friendly and highly functional for the management and development of various campus administrative systems. Virtually all Novantus software is designed to be multi-departmental multi-campus functional. This incredible feature allows for the seamless management of numerous applications and complex data for many departments or campuses with the lowest possible effort. Novantus’ technology has facilitated the sharing of information by various groups based on agreed upon rules and conditions of use.

In effect, the multi-departmental, multi-campus feature allows Novantus software to be managed by individual departments and offered globally throughout the enterprise. This means that our Vice President for Student Affairs, for example, can view a work order submitted to the Facilities Management Office or the Telecommunications Office by any student. A manager in the Telecommunications Office, however, can view only work orders submitted by students to the Telecommunications Office. Indeed, a department manager may identify specific parameters for their department and can define who and how the information is accessed. This framework provides great flexibility in delivering services and departmental requirements by allowing the department manager to create unique policies and procedures for their individual departments.

The engagement with K-16 Solutions and Novantus has become a strategic partnership - important to the long-term success and growth of our service delivery departments. They have met all requirements by bringing secure, innovative, flexible features that will scale as our campus departments grow and respond to more demanding requests for services.

K-16 Solutions is a minority technology services and consulting organization headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA with satellite offices across the country, dedicated to providing advanced technology and integrated solutions for the educational markets. Novantus Corporation provides web-native eBusiness solutions for organizations via exploitation of proprietary technologies that deliver substantial value to their clients. The development of web native modules that run on browsers and use no executable files is a key differentiator. This “zero client” process brings a substantially lower total cost of owner.

This partnership has provided a baseline of solutions and services that will assist SCSU staff in the housing, facilities and telecommunications departments maintain an integrated, robust, state-of-the-art system that produces increased application availability, cost savings and service to customers. This solution is replicable for other institutions with limited budgets desiring to provide web-based help desk and work order solutions. The software is also flexible enough to provide other service related applications commonly found on college or university campuses that require communication between clients (students, parents or faculty) and employees in a web environment.
**Product Description**

Maintaining an IT infrastructure requires significant investments of time and capital for any organization, no matter how large the staff or budget. The integrated solution provided for SCSU, offers a solution for managing service requests and work orders, IT-Help Desks and assets in a comprehensive secure environment. Additional sub-systems can be added for cost-accounting management, wireless integration and access to existing student information. The following is an overview of the modules deployed at SCSU.

**Virtual Help Desk**

The “Virtual” Help Desk is an integrated web native solution that can extend any Help Desk that operates during normal business hours to a 24 x 7 operation. The initial baseline system design has been based on what is currently being used as far as data requested. It does not include the ability for instructors, administrators and students to receive help without requiring a live agent to take the trouble ticket, however as data is collected it will be compiled and made available to all users. The collection of this data is standard. An optional module, not deployed by SCSU at this time, allows 24x7 access by users remotely.

In the higher education industry the need to have computer access, with adequate support is no longer a luxury but a necessity as technology requirements continue to rise through increased research needs and student computer ownership. Once a strong knowledge base has been developed, the “Virtual” Help Desk will provide an automated yet integrated response to most problem calls and will be backed-up by existing on-site SCSU technology personnel when a work order is required. This will eventually extend the existing level of support to a 24 x 7 operation.

**Facility Management**

This module is a multi organizational web native module that is used to manage work orders and problems tickets for a distributed work force. Contact to field crew can be made from anywhere on the network via the Internet. Members of the user community can open and track work orders until such orders are closed or resolved. Administrators can receive work orders and assign orders to a field crew from any computer located on the network. Field crews can receive orders via the Internet or paper copies printed at various networked printers. Authorized employees can view work accomplishments of various support teams or problems generated by any specific user or work generated concerning any specific location or problem. This system will be used by our Facilities Management and Telecommunications Offices. This system also has an optional wireless connectivity module that allows field crews to receive and close work orders via Internet capable hand-held devices.
Implementation, Service & Support

Implementation

The methodology used to enable full deployment of the Help Desk and Facilities management systems required two days on-site. The initial onsite visit was planned to insure that the system was up and working as proposed. Prior to coming on campus to perform the implementation, the required server software and hardware specifications were forwarded to our IT Department. A second on-site visited was required to correct several minor problems with the look and feel of the system. Novantus employees worked with us to provide a system interface that was similar to the current database interface and manual processes.

Training

Training was coordinated by K-16 Solutions and provided by Novantus. Administrator and “key operator” training were provided during the on-site visits. Network and technical issues were discussed during training sessions with our network support team. Our partners have agreed to provide refresher classes throughout the initial 60 days via the Internet.

Support & Maintenance

K-16 Solutions was made aware of the support and financial issues that SCSU is faced with as it relates to technology. Budget cuts throughout the state have resulted in virtually no state funds allocated to supporting the existing infrastructure or any upgrades of the constantly changing network of advanced technology. Therefore we have agreed to a simple approach and commitment to supporting. Through customer education and open communication, K-16 has agreed to hear our concerns and fulfill our needs quickly by utilizing existing on-site personnel and our proposed integrated Help Desk and Facilities management solution. This may mean defining new service requirements or modifying the existing support offerings. Maintenance and upgrades will be available annually throughout the life of the contract.