

TAKING SERVICE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

TMA Resources helps professional and trade associations serve their members and customers better. So when the customer service team found it spent 25 percent of its time on manual administrative tasks — taking away valuable time from customer support — Anne-Marie Bitman, senior director of customer service, knew it was time to take another approach.

Organizations such as the American Marketing Association and United States Tennis Association rely on TMA Resources' software to manage every aspect of their businesses. When they run into a question or challenge in the software, they need answers right away.

Previously, TMA Resources' customers emailed the company with questions or problems. That called for a multi-step, manual process of assigning issues, and copying and pasting data into a database. Every time account specialists interacted with a customer, they performed those same steps.

"We needed to create a single point of entry for customers to submit issues, check on status and update tickets, and browse answers," Bitman said.

A COMPLETE SERVICE SOFTWARE, OUT OF THE BOX

For more than a year, the company's IT department had used Parature Customer Service™ software to support employee IT needs. Bitman had firsthand experience submitting issues on Parature's online IT support portal.

The customer service department compared Parature to other options, such as modifying existing databases or creating its own solution. By comparison, the team could deploy Parature Customer Service software much more quickly, and enjoy considerably more capabilities for less cost than with other software applications or solutions.

"Our IT department had seen results with Parature," Bitman said. "Parature also has all the functionality out of the box, so in the long run it was better for us to go with a vendor with regular updates, instead of creating something that would require ongoing development and overhead."

Parature combines the customer portal, knowledgebase and ticketing in one unified system. Customers can find resources and answers, and submit and check on tickets, online at any time.

PARATURE ROLLED OUT IN SIX DEPARTMENTS

Soon after implementing Parature for its customer service department, TMA Resources brought it to other key departments. Now, six different areas within the company use Parature to support their customers:

- Customer Service — Managing all issues submitted by external customers
- Professional Services — Tracking work orders during upgrades and implementation
- Information Technology — Supporting TMA Resources employees' IT needs
- Product Development and Documentation — Tracking all software development needs and requests
- Quality Assurance — Managing bugs and fixes
- Partner Program — Enhancing partner relations by logging and responding to issues

"We service all internal and external audiences with Parature. Two hundred employees and contractors, about 80 percent of the company, uses it," Bitman said.



CHALLENGE

- TMA needed to streamline and automate its manual customer service process to reduce customer resolution times and improve satisfaction.

RESULTS

- ✓ Parature Customer Service software reduced time on manual administrative activities by 25 percent.
- ✓ The team closes tickets 25 percent faster.
- ✓ Four times as many customers now report being "satisfied" with customer service, and the number of dissatisfied customers dropped in half.

SNAPSHOT

Organization: TMA Resources

Industry: Software

Location: Vienna, VA

Website: www.tmaresources.com

Customer Since: February 2005

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Anne-Marie Bitman
Senior Director of Customer Service

TMA Resources also integrated Customer Service, Professional Services, Product Development and Quality Assurance within Parature to enable individuals across those departments to see related issues, and to keep issues linked.

135 PARATURE REPORTS

In the customer service department, TMA Resources customized its portal with a submission form asking customers for all the details of their issues. When customers select certain fields, the form reveals new fields for the customer to provide additional information. Online tickets are automatically created in the Parature software and ready for account specialists to address.

“Customers provide the information we need up-front and there’s not as much back and forth,” Bitman said. “Account specialists can immediately start working on tickets.”

Customers can also browse 494 different downloads and 400 articles on the website, managed by Parature’s download and documentation features. When TMA Resources managers contact customers each quarter, they can run reports showing which resources customers accessed, and ask specifically about their needs in those areas.

With 135 different Parature reports set up, TMA Resources analyzes every aspect of its service and support across all departments. Eighty of those reports are automatically emailed to various internal and external parties. Insight on factors such as number of open issues, top issues, most frequent callers, and affected releases and modules drives better decision-making and training.

TMA Resources also added reporting as a valuable service for customers. Forty-five customers receive regular reports showing all open tickets and issue trending, helping them understand their own customer needs.

LEAPS IN CUSTOMER SURVEY SCORES

At once, TMA Resources reduced the time account specialists spend processing issues while increasing customer satisfaction.

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In fact, account specialists have extra time to focus on proactive customer service initiatives, such as reporting, onsite visits and training.

Most notably, the company saw major improvements in its customer satisfaction scores. Compared to 2005, before TMA Resources implemented Parature, four times as many customers now report being “satisfied” with customer service, and the number of dissatisfied customers dropped in half.

“Increasing our efficiency with Parature has benefited our customers and internal morale,” Bitman said. “Seventy-five percent of the gains we’ve made in customer service are due to Parature. That contributes to greater customer loyalty and revenue.”

Following TMA Resources’ success with Parature Customer Service software, the company entered into a partnership with Parature. TMA customers have the opportunity to integrate TMA Resources’ flagship software, Personify, with Parature’s online customer service software. Integrating the two software systems will allow organizations to extend Personify’s current customer service capabilities.

ABOUT PARATURE

Parature enables organizations to better serve, support, engage with and retain their customers via the Web. Industry-leading, on-demand Parature Customer Service™ software provides customer service organizations with a comprehensive, multi-channel way to meet the growing expectations of their customers. With more than 10 years experience, Parature serves organizations in a wide variety of industries worldwide and helps support more than 16 million end users. Parature is among Inc. Magazine’s Top 100 Fastest Growing Private Software Companies and is the recipient of numerous product, technology, and leadership awards. Today, the Parature name is synonymous with innovation and value in Web-based customer service software, strategies and best practices. Parature is headquartered in Vienna, Virginia with offices in San Francisco and the U.K. For more information, visit www.parature.com or follow @parature on Twitter.

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