SCOPUS

Scopus: Landmark's pipeline for delivering superior customer service to the oil

industry

ontrary to popular myth, it takes more than a stroke of luck to find oil. The technical challenge of finding and exploiting reserves of oil and gas grows more complex every year. And the size of new discoveries continues to decline, with larger reservoirs found in deeper waters and beyond more hostile frontiers that cost more to access. Like many industries today, oil and gas companies are turning to new technology to reduce cycle time and increase productivity. Landmark Graphics Corporation (www.lgc.com) is ready to help.

Landmark provides software and professional services to 90% of the world's largest oil and gas companies, helping them to turn raw oil field data into usable knowledge and enabling them to search out, produce and manage oil reservoirs more profitably by delivering better ways to manage risk and reduce cycle times.

Headquartered in Houston, Landmark has 35 offices around the world, with systems installed in more than 84 countries. Its customers include such household names as BP, Exxon, ARCO, and Texaco.

Landmark's users are geologists, geophysicists and engineers engaged in analyzing the earth's subsurface to find, produce and manage oil and gas reservoirs. They rely on Landmark's applications to transform vast quantities of seismic, well log and other data into detailed computer models of petroleum reservoirs. Because decisions about billions of dollars in capital investment are based on its software, superior customer support is of critical importance to Landmark.

WORK



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APPLICATION

INDUSTRY: SERVER: CLIENT:

DATABASE: PRODUCTS:

NOTES:

45 S S To meet this demand, Landmark has established four major customer service centers around the world, each with its own database. And to ensure the highest standards of customer support, Landmark chose a customer care system from Scopus to track its customers' problems, connect the support centers to its development groups, and to simultaneously synchronize all four support databases.

Given the high level of expertise of the average Landmark customer, most questions are complex and time sensitive. "Our customers' issues are more complicated than those handled by the average phone room operation. We need to integrate the customer support with the development staff," says Geoffrey Morris, Manager of Electronic Support Systems at Landmark.

Landmark's customer care system is based on Scopus SupportTEAM for call tracking and technical support management, and QualityTEAM for product life cycle management.

The Challenge: Accommodating Worldwide Growth

Landmark previously used a proprietary software product to handle customer support. Problems arose as it became clear that this product was unable to keep pace with Landmark's growth and acquisition activity. The proprietary product had a single window interface that was inefficient and difficult to use. In addition, it was not possible to customize the application to meet Landmark's changing needs.

With added pressure from growth and mergers (recent acquisitions have included GeoGraphix, DRD Corporation's WELLPLAN software technology, Stratamodel Inc., and Munro Garrett International), it was clear that Landmark needed more functionality and flexibility, along with the ability to scale to an ever-growing number of users. Landmark's requirements for a superior customer support system included an open architecture, the ability to run synchronized satellite servers, and a sophisticated, easy-to-use interface. An additional goal was to increase efficiency by using software that would require less network bandwidth, have the ability to use a relational database, and be able to integrate third party products.

The Scopus Solution: Fast and Efficient Call Centers

Landmark turned to Scopus' integrated suite of customer care products for a scalable and flexible solution to meet their call center needs. Using SupportTEAM, all information associated with support calls—including both inquiries and their resolutions—is stored in a central database and is quickly available for reference by all representatives worldwide. Immediate access to answers is important when the customers are the giants of the oil and gas industry, whose downtime expense can run into a million dollars a day.

"Our support people are geoscientists and petroleum engineers that have oil company experience. Our software products are very sophisticated," Morris explains. "When our customers call with a problem, ten percent of the time it's something we've never hit, so we have to research comprehensively and quickly. The other ninety percent of the time the solution is already stored in Scopus, so we don't have to re-invent the wheel, which eliminates redundancy and maximizes bandwidth," he says.

Using the same central database, Landmark uses QualityTEAM to ensure that logged software bugs are routed to the most appropriate development staff. This information routing capability saves time and helps Landmark provide its customers with the most streamlined support possible.

Scopus: The Right Solution for Synchronized Data

To ensure that Landmark's customers always receive the most accurate information and solutions, it is imperative that all four customer service center databases stay synchronized. Scopus' WorldTEAM data replication database provides uniform performance and local availability of data to all sites. It enables data modified at one location to be transparently passed over to other sites, either continuously or periodically.

When Landmark support staff take calls from the field, they record a customer support log, and the information is saved across the entire system. It takes, at most, 30 minutes for WorldTEAM to replicate the data to the other three systems, spanning the globe. This ability to synchronize all databases virtually in real-time, has enabled Landmark to eliminate redundancy. "We even found that we could match duplicate bug documents from around the world and consolidate them," Morris says.

Web-based Help for Sales and Customers

Landmark's future plans are to implement their Scopus customer care system over the Web. Scopus WebTEAM will be used to provide a solution for both Landmark customers and internal users. This new implementation will provide the ultimate service for customers: a Web-based solution that provides instant selfhelp, seven days a week, 24-hours a day. Landmark customers will easily be able to create and submit cases, track progress and status, and search for existing solutions, from any computer with Web access and a browser.

Landmark expects this future enhancement will ease the high volume of inquiries the call centers currently handle and allow operators to support people who have new, undocumented problems. "It will be like making a phone call over the Web," says Morris, "but our customers can access it from wherever they are, and whenever they want to."

Internally, Morris says it is an excellent resource for "light users" such as Landmark's sales force, "so they can walk into a site without getting pounced on," he jokes. It allows sales folks to pinpoint the needs of customers and read through a history of customer support reports. Other Landmark staff can do the same, as well as perform trend analysis on the database to reveal important business insights.

From initial implementation to everyday operations, Morris regards Scopus as scalable, sophisticated software he would recommend to others. "We had toddled along with our old solution, but it had a strict regime. That was good while we were growing up, but as a company gets older, more experienced, especially after a merger where you have to accommodate lots of people and new business flows, we needed something that could grow with us," Morris says. "I would recommend Scopus to any company that requires flexibility."

ABOUT

SCOPUS

Founded in 1991, Scopus Technology Inc. is the leading supplier of enterprise client/server based customer care solutions. Scopus applications help companies to win and keep customers by putting the resources of the entire company behind every customer interaction. Scopus—the only customer care supplier to develop products precisely tailored to the requirement of vertical industry sectors produces integrated customer care solutions specifically for the Communications, Financial Services, and Technology and Manufacturing industries. Industry-specific functionality is provided "out-of-the-box", minimizing the need for product customization, and maximizing return on investment. Scopus applications automate call center operations, internal and external sales organizations, product life cycle development, internal help desk operations and quality processes.

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