craftware

Case Study

Higher quality of service thanks to a multidisciplinary team

We took over the system's (built on Salesforce Service Cloud) support and development in mid-2019 from our existing supplier – a global IT company.

The customer, a global pharmaceutical company, wanted to provide a higher quality of service to the system users, optimize costs and change the type of service from the standard (handling errors and user requests and system development by separate teams) to one multidisciplinary team operating in the DevOps model (Dev – development, and Ops – operations).

Issue description

We provide Managed Service for the Salesforce Service Cloud system. The system is used primarily to cooperate with external and internal partners of our customers by commercial and medical departments. Salesforce Service Cloud is a component of the medical database, a solution integrated with Veeva Vault MedComms/Veeva CRM applications. These systems' main task is to capture inquiries from customers and healthcare professionals, and support agents in responding. The solution is used by more than 800 users located in 30 countries.

Craftware is responsible for handling requests (incidents, service requests, problems, information requests) and system development based on collected requirements (fourth support line). The service is available on 16/5, from 8:00 a.m. until midnight, five days a week. Since the Managed Service is carried out in the DevOps model, the third support line specialists are also involved in minor development and testing works.

The team consists of :

- Service Manager,

- two IT Support Specialists,

- four Developers,

- a Business and System Analyst,

- Dev Lead,

- OPS Lead,

- QA Lead,

- two Testers,

- ETL Specialist.

Challenges

- The technical debt made the development system very difficult; the system did not keep up with business needs and was not adapted.

  - Hardcoding – when we took over the service, it turned out that a large part of the code was not written in the Salesforce standard, which meant that the code was not created with the system development in mind. As a result, large parts of the code required refactoring to ensure that it could be freely edited in the future.

  - Lack of environment and refactoring (code refreshing) – outdated environment and code limited the customer and us in developing the service and introducing good SFDC coding practices.

- A large number of meetings with too many people, the lack of an effective decision-making path, and the system development management organization slowed down the work related to adapting IT systems to the business needs.

- A long list of unspecified business expectations concerning system development. We had to understand the customer's needs, categorize them in terms of priorities, and set a timetable for their implementation.

- The change of the ticket management system (for incidents, service requests, and changes) did not affect the level of user service or the SLA because Craftware had experience in working on various tools.

Solution

The scope of support included:

- **Consulting on service and system development**. In the beginning, we wanted to understand the broadear context of the customer's service, its purpose, and dependencies on other systems. We aimed to build a partnership in which we participate in discussions on further possibilities of using Salesforce in its organization, changes in the architecture and system development.

- **Arranging the service by ITIL standards**, taking into account the customer's capabilities and internal standards.

- **Support in adopting a new system for reporting incidents**. We have been working on the ServiceNow system for many years to support the customer's team in using the new ticket system.

- **The implementation of a release calendar**, thanks to which the customer, one year earlier, knows when the release takes place. Thanks to this, the customer can easily plan its core business activities.

- **The introduction of the DevOps model** is a working method in which the same team is simultaneously involved in the development of new functionalities and incident resolution.

Craftware has created a **multidisciplinary team** consisting of fourteen specialists with complementary competencies. The service team included people who had experience working with a similar system. The gained knowledge and experience were invaluable.

The first months were a big challenge. At the same time, we acquired the knowledge, got to know the system, and started activities related to the leveling of technical debt or creating missing processes.

We also had to take care of constant communication with users and system development.

The beginnings were not easy. Cultural differences and an insufficiently precise definition of expectations caused mutual frustration and slowed down cooperation. However, sincere communication and a series of meetings helped to overcome these difficulties. Together with the customer, we started to go in the right direction, and we have been keeping this trend until today.

Benefits

Within 12 months, the team introduced over 200 feature requests (changes) that **reduced the number of errors reported by users, improved the system, allowed to obtain good SLA results**, and maintained a constant level of service.

Customer benefits:

- Structured service (both in terms of backlog, processes, standards, and organizational structure).

- Compensation of technical debt.

- Structured stakeholder teams – shorter decision path and more effective project team meetings.

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As part of the global contact center, we established cooperation with Craftware in 2019. It was a reorganization and transformation time, both of the company operating model and the contact center product itself. It was an extremely demanding time that was managed thanks to an ambitious team of professionals efficiently.

I will mention three aspects that influenced the success of the joint project:

- implementation and improvement of the DevOps model - the key step was mapping and describing the backlog management process carried out by the Business Analyst.

- carrying out a transition from the previous supplier without affecting the implementation cycle and without a significant decrease in SLA,

- excellent cooperation with the Service Manager on the side of Craftware.

Customer statement

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The biggest challenges of the service that we carried out for a customer who uses Salesforce were technical debt, lack of good coding practices, and the service operation, as well as expectations of Salesforce Service Cloud development. The technical debt was so advanced that it made it impossible to implement other changes.

Our work began with writing down the backlog, prioritizing it, and then working back the technical debt. In coordination with a Product Owner, we placed technical tasks in each of the planned monthly release cycles to correct the existing code.

With time, when the customer placed their trust in us, we have planned to refresh environments, thanks to which we unblocked the development of the Salesforce Service Cloud system. In the meantime, we defined and implemented processes such as access management and problem management that allowed us to support users smoother and maintain the SLA level according to the agreement.

Magdalena Wałęka
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