Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) for Incident Management

Executive Summary – HPE Service Manager

| Overview | • Enterprise level Incident Management functionality  
• Pink Verified  
• Available On-Premise and as Hosted  
• Impressive use of Big Data analytics  
• Partnership with Xmatters, Bomgar, Westbury, KBI |
|---|---|
| Strengths | • Comprehensive Incident Management offering  
• Can be used for other functions for example HR, Legal & Facilities Management  
• Big Data analytics  
• Image based auto categorization  
• Smart phone access  
• Hot topics & trending  
• Tightly aligned CMS  
• Strong linkages to event management |
| Weaknesses | • Not designed for the small business market  
• The tool has been round a long time; some customers might not be aware of newer capabilities. And, customers on older versions might not be able to take advantage of new capabilities. |
| Primary Market Focus | • Large & very large customer accounts |

Independent Review

Let’s be honest, HP is a company in no need of an introduction. Everyone and their mum knows about HP be it for hardware, software or enterprise solutions. I’ve used HP software since the very beginning of my career in IT back in 2000 when I was a baby techie using HP Openview to manage tickets between queues. Since then I’ve used HP Service Centre and HP Service Manager and its position as one of the big four is well established. But, not everyone knows that HP split into two companies last fall. Service Manager is now provided by the new Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE)

The first thing that impressed me about the product was how well it was designed for your typical stressed out Incident Manager. The initial landing page opens up into a comprehensive reporting dashboard full of charts, tickers and drill down-able graphs. There is nothing worse than dealing with a busy Service Desk or a Major Incident (and believe me, I’ve been a stressed out Incident Manager, I even had a mug that said “there’s a good chance there might be vodka in this”) than being asked to provide a detailed management report ASAP. HPE takes this issue out of the equation by empowering higher ups to make their own pretty pictures. You can even customise your profile with viewing preferences, expanding or collapsing data streams with the click of the mouse.

Service Desk analysts can sort Incidents by a wealth of categories and can export data easily into a medium of choice. The reporting module within HPE Service Manager has been rebuilt completely to move away from Crystal Reports; something that makes me ridiculously happy. In a previous role, I always felt like I deserved a medal or chocolate every time I successfully completed any Crystal Reports faffery so anything that makes data easier to work with gets my vote.

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Linking Incidents is easily done and instead of the usual parent - child relationships; HPE Service Manager enables you to specify the relationship type for example “caused Incident” or “fixed by Change”. All fields within the Incident form can be made auditable if the automatic auditing check box is selected; a very useful feature especially for users in Basel 3 or SOX environments.

End users can log into the product via the web interface or via their mobile devices and can immediately log Incidents or Service Requests. There is also a very handy search bar that can point them straight at pertinent Knowledge Base articles. It was here that I got my first glimpse of how impressively big data analytics have been woven into the product. The tool uses smart tag technology to automatically categorise Incidents based on the attached pictures - the guys at HPE use all sorts of pictures (including Minions!) to demonstrate this. If your organisation is starting to look at Agile or Lean then this could be a significant source of efficiency savings.

The chat functionality also makes use of analytics and the system will even suggest people that could help resolve the related Incident for example the service manager or CI owner. The chat bubbles feature pictures of all participants so again Minions were used to great effect here!

Big data is used to power the Knowledge Base; fixes and workarounds are automatically suggested and task management can be used so that multiple teams can work on the same Incident without multiple reassignments and the system is configured to ensure an Incident cannot be closed without all related tasks being resolved preventing zombie tasks.

The system is very much geared towards proactive Problem Management; hot topic analysis can identify what Incidents are trending and raise related Problem records as appropriate. Fun fact; NASCAR use the same tool to identify trends amongst viewers; a sort of x is trending so let’s run a commercial on it during the next ad break. In short if Lightning McQueen ever needed to log an Incident or Service Request (I know, I know he’s not real but I have a five year old who loves him, ok?) he’d be using HPE Service Manager to do it!

The heat map also looks at Incident volumes so can be used as a visualisation tool during fault analysts e.g. a CPU bottleneck. Options will also appear in the drop down menu e.g. raise Change or log Problem record. Stop words can also be built into the system to exclude certain scenarios.

An Incident can be promoted to a Major Incident by ticking a simple check box which adds extra fields into the Incident form. The extra fields included out of the box are:

- Designated Incident Manager
- Major Incident review
- Root Cause

In summary; this is a fantastic product for large organisations. The tool has a comprehensive engine behind it that can manage any enterprise level ITSM task it encounters. Big Data analytics drive efficiency savings and support a move to more proactive service model without compromising on functionality or management information.

**Technical Summary**

<p>| Incident logging, categorization &amp; automation options | Incidents can be logged from an e-mail, tweet, directly from a CI or Service Catalogue entry, via Event Management or through an integrated ACD system. With Service Manager Smart Analytics an incident can easily be logged via remote devices like Smart Phones using a simple natural language based text message or a screenshot. This smart ticketing will automatically classify and assign based on historical patterns. |
| System access options (web, fat client, mobile, etc.) | On premise and hosted. Access primarily via web and mobile. |</p>
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Strengths
- Excellent Incident Management process
- Excellent customer and user interface
- Impressive use of big data analytics
- Can be used for other functions for example HR, Legal & Facilities Management
- Image based auto categorization
- Smart phone access
- Hot topics & trending
- Tightly aligned CMS
- Strong linkages to event management

Weaknesses
- Not designed for the small business market. I know that HPE are the daddy of toolsets but I think they're missing a trick by not having an offering for smaller businesses. Maybe some sort of cut down Service Manager Light could work?
- The tool has been round a long time; some customers might not be aware of newer capabilities. And, customers on older versions might not be able to take advantage of new capabilities.

In their own words
"Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) Service Manager (SM) software enables IT to increase service quality, improve staff efficiency, reduce associated costs, and reduce operational and business risks. Trend identification and pattern matching, provided by big data analytics, enables faster and more efficient ticket handling, more proactive management, and superior knowledge delivery. Service desk organizations can start with built-in ITIL® best practices and expand as needed including easy process configuration, automation of common tasks, and integration with complementary IT management software. The capability to manage services using a lifecycle approach, with continuous improvement built into the governance model, allows IT to truly enhance the value to the business. Service Manager is at the core of HPE IT Service Management (ITSM) solutions and combines with a powerful suite of operations and extended service management software to provide some of the most robust solutions in the market today. It is central to end-to-end change, configuration and release management (CCRM), as well as a comprehensive closed loop incident process. Close alignment exists with proven industry best practices and new initiatives like the Open Group’s IT4IT initiative (http://www.opengroup.org/IT4IT).
Service Desk teams significantly accelerate implementations and future upgrades with comprehensive out-of-box capabilities, an intuitive interface, and a wide-ranging set of predefined components."

Further Information


This independent review is part of our Incident Management group test 2016, read the full report at http://www.theitsmreview.com/2016/02/incident-mgmt-2016/.

Also participating: Alemba Ltd, Atlassian, Cherwell Software™, InvGate Inc., ManageEngine, Marval Software Limited, Matrix42 AG, Nexthink, SUMMIT Software Inc.