

## Background

Case Study | Highlights for Children-Help Desk Authority

Highlights for Children began in 1946 as a labor of love of two lifetime educators who dedicated the magazine to the belief that children are the world's most important people. Early on *Highlights* became a staple of doctor and dentist offices, and grew to be the best-read children's magazine in North America.

Tom Lewis, Manager of Corporate IT Training and Workstation Assets at Highlights for Children, is responsible for managing IT assets for over 60% of the workforce. Tom also manages the five-person support team that staffs the company's help desk and conducts all training on network topics.

In almost three decades with the company Tom has seen many IT changes, most significantly at the help desk level where, about seven years ago, an outside consultant recommended that a shift away from "homegrown" solutions to commercial applications would increase the IT team's productivity and improve the organization's bottom line. This caused a cultural shift away from the use of "homegrown" solutions. Before this time, there was neither a centralized help desk nor a methodology for capturing user requests for support. Tom was charged with implementing a single point-of-contact help desk, as well as a set of standards for capturing and reporting on its' activities.

*"I do very little maintenance on this tool...and in today's economy, doing more with less is important. And with Help Desk Authority I can do more and invest a LOT less."*

**- Tom Lewis, Mgr. of Corporate IT Training and Workstation Assets at Highlights for Children**



## The Challenge

Tom inherited Help Desk Authority during the transition from homegrown to commercial applications and initially wasn't sure how much it could help him. He needed to put a solution in place that could alleviate help desk ticket tracking issues and replace their in-house system.

Help Desk Authority had been acquired to manage IT help desk tickets according to best practices, but neither Tom nor anyone else planned to use it for anything more.

*Highlights* also needed a way to rapidly inventory their IT assets and search their inventory for selected computers and resources.

The underlying goal in this project was increase productivity in the IT department and use technology to deliver greater efficiency across the entire organization by improving IT processes.

## The Solution

Highlights for Children chose ScriptLogic's Help Desk Authority; an industry-leading help desk software solution for tracking tickets and shortening the lifecycle of help desk issues. This powerful, yet easy-to-install solution enabled the *Highlights* help desk staff to effectively manage issues, prevent issues from getting lost or forgotten, and increased their overall productivity.

After having the Help Desk Authority solution for a few years, Highlights for Children started investigating other help desk solution providers. A proposal was on the table for a competitive product, but after doing a thorough evaluation and cost/feature analysis it was decided that the competitive solution was overkill for Highlights' needs, and the expense would not justify the benefit. Tom said, "It would have cost me 10X as much to buy the competitive product and then 4X as much on yearly maintenance expense. So we determined that we

needed to change our expectations and stick with the solution that allows us to accomplish our business goals at a reasonable cost."

With this decision behind them, Tom began to dig deeper into Help Desk Authority's feature set and as he researched industry best-practices he began to discover features which he hadn't realized existed. Tom found that one of the most beneficial features of Help Desk Authority is the asset inventory piece. "When my boss asks me to find a particular asset, it would previously have taken me about an hour—but with Help Desk Authority, I can take a total inventory of ALL assets in less than 3 minutes!"

Help Desk Authority does SO much more than just ticket management. It helps me with change logging, it provides tracking of inventory changes, it synchronizes with Active Directory, provides auto-escalation, tracks change approval, and much more!"

Tom continued, "Help Desk Authority has paid for itself 5 times over! Low cost, lots of features; and ensures that nothing falls through the cracks. Because of Help Desk Authority we are able to provide a much higher level of service to our employees and avoid purchasing a tool that might have more bells and whistles, but would be way overblown for our business requirements."

Highlights for Children has also acquired many of the Help Desk Authority add-on components to enhance the product's already robust feature-set. "We use the Active Directory synchronization and auto escalation components—and I have to do very little maintenance since the tool is so self-sufficient. And in today's economy, doing more with less (less people, less resources, less funding) is important. And with Help Desk Authority—I can do more—and invest a LOT less."

### Other Benefits of Help Desk Authority

Help Desk Authority provides extensive customization facilities so that other departments can use it to deliver their own tracking systems.

"Obviously, the most significant reason we use Help Desk Authority is to see whether IT tickets are getting closed, but beyond that this tool is so much more than meets the eye," Tom explains. "I have people in other departments (unrelated to IT) who use the solution. Human Resources uses it when they check assets for a terminated employee they wish to de-provision, Customer Service uses it to track changes to the call routing tables in their ACD system and the auditors even used it to perform their annual audits. We've seen a huge return on our investment in areas where you wouldn't even expect it!"

#### Benefits Help Desk Authority Provided for Highlights for Children

- *ROI of at least 5x the initial investment*
- *An automated approach to shorten the lifecycle of help desk tickets*
- *A solution that helps reconcile the asset inventory reports used for charge-backs and audits*
- *A solution that goes above and beyond its' advertised capabilities*
- *An effective help desk solution comparable to some of the more robust solutions on the market without all the added cost and complexity*

### Conclusion

In Tom's hybrid role where he manages the help desk for hundreds of employees, provides training on corporate IT initiatives, manages the IT asset inventory and is also a Chapter Officer for the Help Desk Institute (HDI), he understands the importance of having the right tools in place to ensure that issues don't fall through the cracks, even with a support staff of only five.

Tom believes that because he uses Help Desk Authority so efficiently, Highlights for Children has been able to reap rewards far beyond those for which it was initially purchased. Finding alternative uses for this robust tool in

other areas of the business has saved Highlights for Children a significant amount of time and money.

The advice Tom gives to other companies looking for a help desk solution for ticket tracking is this: "It's just like buying a car, house, or even going to the grocery store—there's a lot out there that looks "neat," but you need to figure out what you are trying to accomplish and what you REALLY need." He continues, "The bottom-line: it helps me do what I need to do, from tracking tickets to managing projects. Help Desk Authority is a wonderful, low cost yet high feature tool that can be used for MORE than just IT service requests."

### About ScriptLogic

ScriptLogic Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Quest Software (Nasdaq: QSFT), is a recognized leader in Microsoft Windows systems and security management. Empowering more than 25,000 customers worldwide with the ability to manage the desktop lifecycle, streamline Active Directory management, secure and protect Windows servers, and ease the burden for Exchange administrators, ScriptLogic's award winning solution families can benefit small to enterprise-size organizations in any industry. For more information on how you can capitalize on your existing IT investments for **Desktop Management, Active Directory Management, Windows Server Management and Exchange Management**, please contact us. ScriptLogic is headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida, with offices around the world. You can also reach ScriptLogic at (561) 886-2400 or on the Web at <http://www.scriptlogic.com>.