



Case Study – Staff Sick Days Reduced by 61%

October 2003

The Customer

The Sydney Help Desk (SHD) provides a 24 hour / 7 day support service for the customers of a leading global Information Technology and Telecommunications outsourcing vendor. The SHD is one of five international help desks linked to give customers worldwide, a continuous follow-the-sun service

The mission criticality of the customer systems demands the vendor provides a robust service bound with extremely tight service level agreements (SLA). These agreements are based on response time to customer queries and mean time to resolve issues. High financial penalties can be invoked should the SLA not be met.

Therefore, the SHD service is dependant on the availability of a high skilled team with expertise in a wide range of computer hardware, systems and applications software, and telecommunications networks.

The help desk facility is a state-of-the-art 800m² open office area divided into workstations separated by half-height partitions to facilitate communication. Interaction between staff is necessary given that a customer query frequently required expertise in more than one technology. Ten closed offices and meeting rooms surround the central area (figs. 1 & 2).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

The Issue

It was becoming increasingly difficult to meet customer SLA's due to the number of staff absent due to illness. The number of hours lost to illness was rising steadily, principally caused by the influenza viruses that were sweeping the country.

The potential results was either customer dissatisfaction and possible payment of penalties, or incur a prohibitive additional expense by maintaining excess staff levels to cover for absent team members to ensure that service levels were met.

The Objective

The SHD was searching for ways to reduce the high levels of lost hours caused by cross-infection throughout the help desk area. Staff were already immunised under the company's occupational health and safety program and isolation was not an option given the need for interaction.

Any new program was to be first evaluated on a cost-benefit basis and then trialled over a minimum of two months with the hours lost being the principle metric. A minimum reduction of 30% of the peak month of June was deemed to be a successful trial.

The solution

The SHD elected to proceed with a trial of the WEIN VI-2500 air purification system supplied and installed by Edge Management based on the following:

- ⊕ The speed with which the system could be installed as the problem had to be addressed urgently
- ⊕ The positive results of two clinical studies into the effectiveness of the WEIN VI-2500 for virus protection (2003) and bacteria control (2001) by the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, (Environmental Health Foundation, Department of Environmental Health University of Cincinnati Division of Environmental and Industrial Hygiene). This University is one of the world's leading aerosol research laboratories.
- ⊕ Immediate results. Initial downward trending in lost hours could be expected in the first week of the trial.
- ⊕ Portability of the system as the SHD was moving to a new building within the next year.
- ⊕ The low cost of the air purification system.
- ⊕ Operational costs were negligible.
- ⊕ Easily implemented with minimal incursion on operations.

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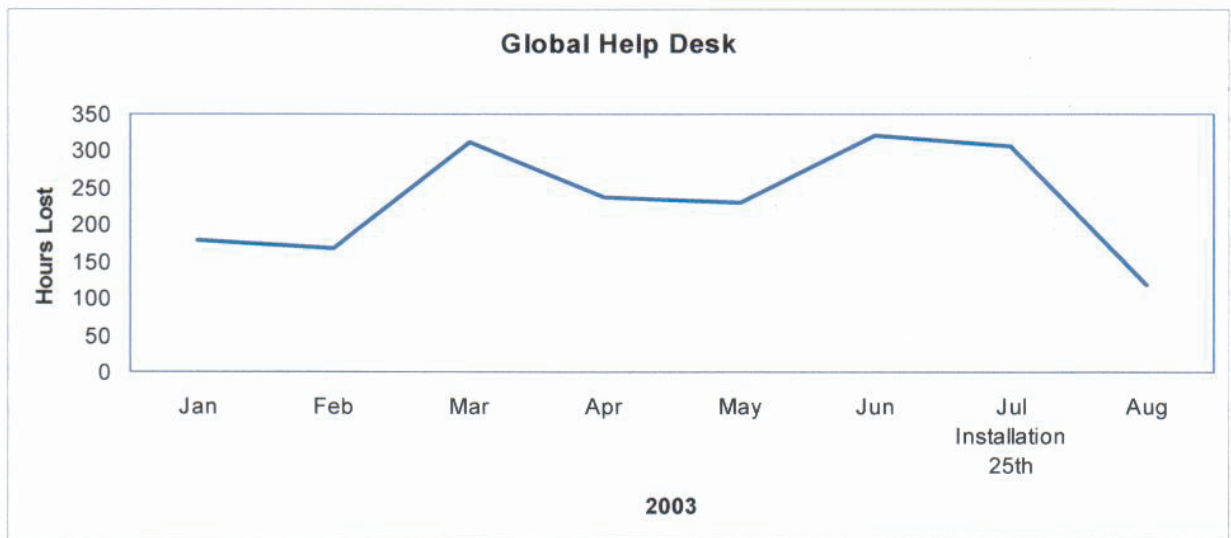
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Year: 2003

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Hours Lost	178	168.5	312	236.3	229	321.3	307	119



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