HOW APOTEX USES BMC HELIX DIGITAL WORKPLACE TO PROVIDE BETTER SELF-SERVICE TO ITS EMPLOYEES

In this Run and Reinvent podcast, Deb Elliot, manager of service management at Apotex, a Canadian pharmaceutical company, and Simon Geddes, senior product manager at BMC, chat about the digital workplace of the future. Below is a condensed transcript of their conversation.

Simon Geddes: What's your role at Apotex?

Deb Elliot: I provide leadership, input and assistance for the design and deployment of IT service management processes, manage the service catalog and the request submission and delivery processes for the IT services. I have oversight over the ITSM processes and our ITSM suite of products here at Apotex. And I work closely with the global service desk and our own other process managers. I help to oversee the service lifecycle and champion the customer centric experiences and continue service improvement initiatives.

Simon: How did you realized there was a need for a digital workplace solution?

Deb: Well, working with our ITSM solutions and our request submission processes, over the years it's been quickly understandable that our employees, like most companies, have become more and more digitally-oriented and are constantly seeking ways to achieve the same continued productivity and efficiency at the workplace as they experience with their devices at home. As such, they demand more from services and IT support, and what they get from it at work, and they expect it to work as seamlessly as it does in their own home environment.

We were tasked by our executives not too long ago to create a global service portal where the company employee could get all the things they would need to be productive in one place; a one-stop shop in a single pane of glass with a great visual experience and also intuitive and it had to support mobility and it had to be available anyplace, anywhere, integrated, and trackable end to end. It sounded like an easy task but, of course, not simple for a global company like Apotex with many different IT groups, and you support many global customers in many different ways.

When we started to lift that rock, this is what we found. Over the years operating as separate entities, we have discovered that we have many different methods and many different ways of inputting, entering, asking for your IT services through manual paper processes right through to home-grown service portals. We had manual processes; we had disjointed processes. Nothing was integrated and there was not one central source where you could control, manage, and audit something easily. And a lot of it – some of it was mobile, but not a lot of it.

So, we quickly realized we need to do the work and find an application that fit with our suite of products we already had that would deliver this to us.

Simon: How has this been formed into better business outcomes?

Deb: We used Digital Workplace and we found using it that it helped us to simplifying our – globalized our customer request. It gave us visibility to the status and health of the service customers used and gave us better insight in how to control and give a better user experience. We started off by streamlining our submission and approval processes by removing standard roadblocks which helped us to operate more efficiently. Our employees are now able to take advantage of the self-guided learning and knowledge sharing functionality which is in the DWP Workplace.

That knowledge is globally available and centralized. We allow our employees within the digital workplace to submit their own issues and requests which, of course, helps them to cut down on manual entry processes and which frees up more manpower in our global service desk to do new initiatives and more value-added work. The last thing we did which was really helpful with the Helix and the DWP environment was to integrate our people data from many of our source systems globally allowing better access for our customers and better insight to us to what our customers – who they are and what services they use every day.

Simon: Were there other software solutions you were looking at to solve your challenges?

Deb: Over the years we've been on other ITSM platforms, of course, before BMC and myself, personally, I have had experience supporting and using other online ITSM services and portals with other companies. And also here at Apotex, we kind of strive to keep – I think with anyone who's really into the evolution of ITSM and the evolution of the digital workplace, we tend to strive to keep an eye out of all the new software and the new applications and the new functionalities and the trends that are coming down pipeline for digital workplace.

So, even though we are on the BMC Digital Workplace platform now, we are always keeping abreast of the new stuff; the new stuff coming down the pipeline, the new thoughts, the new best practices, and the new tools to see what's out there, to see what could be used to your best advantage. Overall, we found that even though most of the other applications and devices all look very fancy and did some things in a very kind of clean, cool way; they didn't have the level of system integration and manageability that we needed to support our front office and our back office processes in a secure and compliant way.

As a pharmaceutical company, we obviously stress security in how people access our stuff, and we have to maintain compliance. The other key piece that I said there was the front office and the back office. So, a lot of the other portals and other applications that are out there and available for digital workplace-type activities are very, very focused on the front end. So, they're packaged nicely and they may do some things in some simplified, or what looks to be simplified ways in the front end.

But to really integrate them into the back end for end-to-end customer experience and IT delivery is not something that we've seen anyone else do as we have seen it in the DWP suite that fits in nicely with the other BMC suite of products.

Simon: What are the biggest goals BMC Digital Workplace helped you accomplish?

Deb: It helped us to get our requests – all of our requests more global, more simplified, and that's not an easy task. We're still doing that; we're still enhancing that. We're still expanding our platform. And we're also doing it outside of IT. So, I've been talking a lot about IT requests, but we started with IT. We've expanded out to include our business-shared services of HR, legal, procurement, engineering, anything that people are looking for in that one-stop type of way.

And it really has helped our employee become more efficient because it's easier for them just to go to the one place and find what they need rather than trying to search around copious webs or copious file servers trying to find the request that they're looking for in order to get their stuff in. We've centralized our approval processes. We've been able to integrate into our HR systems that have allowed us to really get true approval chain processes set up. We have the auditing and the CFR 21 compliance stuff happening within our front-end DWP and our back end.

And the entitlement stuff is really – of the marketplace view has really helped us to manage our people and who sees what so that when it's a global request everyone can see it, and they can see it mobilely wherever they are, wherever they are, whenever they want to do it and get the support really 24/7 to follow some kind of support that they're looking for.