

CASE STUDY

ADP AUTOMATING THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT DESK AT AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING, INC





Automatic Data Processing, Inc.

In the highly competitive auto industry, technology can often mean the difference between success and failure, whether it's creating new sales or creating satisfied customers. ADP's specialized automotive management applications are helping its customers successfully compete every day. Its goal is to help dealers and manufacturers get the most out of their technology solutions by ensuring that customer service is only a click away.

CASE SPECIFICS

ADP Dealer Services Group is the third largest business unit of ADP. With approximately \$7 billion in revenues and more than 500,000 clients, ADP is one of the largest independent computing services firms in the world. More information on ADP Dealer Services is available via the Internet at www.Dealersuite.com.

SUPPORTSOFT SOLUTION

ADP runs its customer service and support operations with SupportSoft's Resolution Suite™ software, a highly scalable software program that can speed customer support related to the use of technology. The software can automatically solve application, technical and business process issues—often before customers know they exist—through its patented Real-Time Service Management Platform.

“Car dealers want to sell cars, they don’t want to be on the phone with help desks. If we can shrink that time spent through tools like SupportSoft’s, they can go sell cars.”

— Jim Foote
Technical Services Director, ADP

By Carol Krol

Jim Foote said one of the biggest mistakes a company can make is to find a technology and then try to fit it into its business. As director of technical services and division client relations at business services provider ADP Corp.’s Dealer Services unit, he said it’s better to “listen to the business needs and try to find the right technology solution to meet those needs.”

It’s wisdom Foote acquired while moving his company’s software applications from a proprietary database to a Microsoft-Intel standard platform. During that process, ADP started using SupportSoft Inc.’s support automation technology to ensure that ADP technical centers weren’t overwhelmed with calls.

ADP Dealer Services provides 240 turnkey software applications to car and truck dealerships in the U.S. These applications help manage every segment of dealers’ business, from paying employees to ordering parts to obtaining financing to marketing cars. The applications are often built on a proprietary database within the dealership. More than 16,000 dealerships throughout the United States, Canada and Europe buy ADP’s products and services, so 12 call centers are needed to handle technical support.

In the past, dealership personnel and support agents were spending too much time on technical support—sometimes several hours to fix a single problem. Dealers began to demand a standard platform for applications. ADP was moving in that direction but needed a way to ensure a smooth transition at a reasonable cost. “We wanted to bridge gaps between homegrown applications and the industry standard,” Foote said.

The company enlisted SupportSoft for its support automation technology and began to migrate portions of its 240 applications to the Microsoft-Intel platform. The strategy allowed ADP to maintain its operating costs and avoid increasing the number of support personnel in its call centers.

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SupportSoft's Resolution Suite offers dealers both automated and manual assistance in what is known as the "break/fix" area, as well as the "implement/how-to" area. It also runs service programs that can fix potential problems before they occur.

For example, prior to the SupportSoft deployment, one call center agent spent eight hours troubleshooting for a dealership that was experiencing six different computing problems. After the SupportSoft technology was implemented, a similar problem was solved in 10 minutes. "It's the ability for a computer to heal itself in a fully automated way," Foote said.

ADP has moved about 50 of its applications, including the CRM function, to the Microsoft platform to date, and the standard has proved easier to use than proprietary applications. Even during the transition, ADP did not experience an increase in call volume at its technical support call centers and was able to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction with 200 fewer call center agents. In fact, an independent survey conducted by C.J. Olson Market Research Inc. indicated an increase in ADP's customer satisfaction ratings compared with 2001. Foote said it also managed to improve its operating margin by 2% over the last year. Based on this success, ADP is now in the process of deploying SupportSoft's services to its IT personnel in addition to its customers.

ABOUT SUPPORTSOFT'S RESOLUTION SUITE

Highly personalized, assisted and self-service features can reduce the time customers spend on the phone with service representatives to resolve support issues or help avoid calls altogether. The SupportSoft Resolution Suite consists of numerous key applications that together can be used to build a comprehensive, scalable and dynamic support automation solution. Each application is powered by SupportSoft's Real-Time Service Management Software Platform, which is at the center of every SupportSoft solution. For example, the Resolution Suite can automatically provide the representative with comprehensive information about the customer's technical issue at the time of the call, which can improve problem resolution and help reduce the need for telephone support, resulting in lower operational costs and increased customer satisfaction.

SupportSoft solutions ensure that business processes and related technology critical to the real-time enterprise, as well as services that consumers have come to rely on, work as planned. RTSM provides the ability to take problems or questions when they occur, automatically put them into context and resolve them in real-time. Moreover, RTSM can even anticipate problems and help avoid them altogether through proactive measures before they negatively impact individual or corporate productivity. Real-Time Service Management makes the real-time enterprise run on time—all the time.



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