

FAME Increases Efficiency and Improves Customer Service by Integrating CA Agile Central with Zendesk

FAME

Trusted Solutions for Higher Education

CLIENT PROFILE

Industry: IT

Organization: FAME

Employees: 150

BUSINESS

For more than 38 years, FAME has been providing financial aid services and student information systems to the higher education market. Its solutions are used every day by more than 1,200 clients across the US.

CHALLENGE

FAME was using a manual process for escalating bugs or defects raised by its customers. As well as being inefficient and cumbersome, it also consumed valuable development and support resources to keep systems updated.

SOLUTION

By integrating CA Agile Central with Zendesk using OpsHub Integration Manager, FAME can now manage issues seamlessly across the two systems. Cross-collaboration between teams and staff satisfaction have also improved.

BENEFIT

FAME has been able to increase efficiency and has also improved customer service through clear and proactive communication. This will help the company to further improve its solutions and support future growth.

Business

Supporting higher education

FAME has been a trusted partner in the higher education sector for more than 38 years. It is one of the only companies to provide both expertise in US financial aid services as well as student information systems. Its solutions are used every day by private colleges and universities to serve hundreds of thousands of students in diverse fields.

Since 1978, FAME has processed over \$12 billion in federal student aid. Today, the company processes more than \$1 billion in federal aid annually and its solutions are used at approximately 1,200 clients nationally and internationally.

FAME continually invests in improving its solutions to help its clients increase operational efficiency, reduce cost, ensure compliance and improve results.

Challenge

Responding effectively to customer issues

“Our manual process was not only inefficient but also made it difficult to provide clear updates to customers.”

Ricky Alfaro

Director of Product Management and Implementations at FAME

FAME is continuously developing and upgrading its student information systems. It relies on agile methodologies, including SCRUM processes and two-week iterations, for product development, including fixes and new releases. New product releases, incorporating fixes and customer feedback, typically take place after three sprints.

The ability to incorporate issues raised by customers in new releases and upgrades is vital to ensure FAME's solutions continue to meet customer demand. However, the process for managing and communicating these issues was challenging. Ricky Alfaro, Director of Product Management and Implementations at FAME explains, “Our development and support teams each used a different system and had to contact each other to keep information updated across both systems.”

The support team had to manually request that feedback was incorporated into development plans, and frequently request status updates to pass on to customers. “Our manual process was not only inefficient but also made it difficult to provide clear and regular updates to customers on the status of their issue,” comments Alfaro.

With new solutions and releases being continually developed, FAME recognized that integration and automation was essential in order to maintain high levels of service to customers as well as enable its support and development teams to operate as efficiently as possible.

Solution

Integrating CA Agile Central and Zendesk

“Integrating CA Agile Central with Zendesk means that support and development teams work more effectively.”

Ricky Alfaro

Director of Product Management and Implementations at FAME

For more than five years, FAME has used CA Agile Central to underpin its agile development activities. The solution’s dashboards underpin weekly reporting and planning meetings, and enable the development team to keep on top of its projects.

In 2016, with support from CA Technologies, Zendesk and OpsHub, FAME integrated CA Agile Central with its Zendesk customer service solution to enable seamless collaboration between service and development teams.

DevOps integration specialist, OpsHub, worked closely with FAME in order to clearly understand the use case and process and define the information that was required by both teams. By integrating and optimizing the solutions, OpsHub Integration Manager enabled FAME’s teams to continue using their preferred systems yet to work together more efficiently to address customers’ issues.

“The support team no longer needs to keep going between the two systems to update a ticket,” confirms Alfaro. “They can now see updates directly in Zendesk and provide proactive communications to customers about when and in which release their issue will be resolved.”

Issues are also now smoothly incorporated into development whereas previously a support issue might be escalated in the middle of a release sprint, disrupting work and planning.

Automating the process has improved cross-collaboration and communication between teams, which is now more proactive and in-depth rather than focusing on status updates and escalations. Staff are happier as their jobs are made a little easier and cross-team relations are stronger. “Integrating CA Agile Central with Zendesk means that support and development teams work more effectively, not only within their own function but also with each other,” adds Alfaro.

Integration also has improved reporting for FAME, which can now leverage data across both systems, although in-depth reporting from each system also continues to be used. “We now get a wealth of information that helps us really understand the issues being raised by customers, such as the number of defects by release and escalations by module,” says Alfaro.

Benefit

Improving efficiency and customer service

Integration of CA Agile Central with Zendesk has provided FAME with streamlined, automated processes across two core IT teams. “Our solutions now interoperate seamlessly: customer issues can be addressed more quickly and efficiently in CA Agile Central while customers are kept fully informed via Zendesk,” comments Alfaro.

Integrating CA Agile Central with Zendesk has also enabled FAME to:

- Increase efficiency and optimize development resources
- Improve staff satisfaction and cross-team collaboration
- Enhance customer service through clear, proactive communication.

“CA Agile Central integrated with Zendesk enables us to improve our solutions more quickly and easily and maintain high levels of customer satisfaction, which will support our future growth,” concludes Alfaro.



OpsHub is the leading provider of integration and migration solutions for ALM and DevOps tool chains.

OpsHub Integration Manager (OIM) improves the efficiency and effectiveness of agile teams in ALM and DevOps environments by integrating the whole tool chain and making rich real time data from other systems available to each user, in that user's preferred system. OIM currently supports over 45 ALM and DevOps tools. OpsHub's solutions for integration and migration speed up development processes, improve traceability, reduce errors and improve decision-making, resulting in faster delivery of innovative products and services.



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