Enquiry Management – towards a better way

RIF Funding Proposal

Version 1.0
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Prepared By
Jon Stubbs
1 Executive Summary

1.1 Enquiry Management – towards a better way
This RIF bid proposes a 12 month pilot of the Right Now Service module within Student Administration at a total cost of $130,000.

The delivery of significantly enhanced enquiry management services is one of the top 5 Divisional objectives in the Student Services OPP.

2 Detailed Project Proposal

2.1 Context
In March 2006 Student Services developed a comprehensive Enquiry Management – A better way submission for the Student Experience Fund. In brief, the original submission encompassed:

- 24 month licence for 16 named users for the Right Now Services module, including usage charge estimate
- 24 month license for a 4-sear virtual Agent 99 contact centre
- Project team salaries
at a total cost of $392,000.

The bid was not supported. Feedback from members of the review panel indicated that while the enquiry management issue was appreciated, inclusion of Agent 99 was tactically unwise (with visions of students waiting on line listening to musak (sic) looming large) and that the potential of the Right Now system was difficult to grasp.

This proposal pares back the first submission and in essence delivers a 12 month pilot of the Right Now service module within one functional area.

2.2 Project detail
This project is designed to prove that implementation of sophisticated enquiry management software can contribute to a significant improvement in the capacity of staff to effectively manage the range and rapidly increasing volume of enquiries. The 12 month pilot project will be based in Student Administration. The project will direct a higher proportion of current student interaction on-line and, through a combination of best practices and new technologies, deliver significant service improvement. Strategies include:

- Creating a knowledge base that effectively and continuously captures the information in the heads of staff experts
- Using that knowledge base as a centralized, web-based repository of information where everyone (staff, students and the public) can find the answers they need
- Leveraging the knowledge base across all channels so that questions can be quickly, accurately and consistently answered over the phone, via email or on the web
- Taking advantage of hosted technology to reduce the costs, simplify support arrangements and accelerate the time to benefit (ROI)

RightNow Service is an online inquiry and content management solution which enables users to:

- Find answers to frequently asked questions by searching stored information
• Submit a question to a staff member. The question is automatically routed to the appropriate section for action

• Manage their inquiries by providing a personal area where their questions are stored and responses to questions can be reviewed

• Provide feedback on the information provided and suggestions for improvement.

The project will:

• Drive a higher proportion of current student interaction on-line and away from the phone, away from email that has to be responded to by a staff member and away from walk-up services

• Deliver a high quality and more timely service to students, and

• Improve the working conditions of staff by:
  o Reducing the total number of telephone enquiries and emails that are directed to front line customer service staff for response
  o Reduce the number of enquiries that front line customer service staff need to refer to a specialist for response
  o Facilitating the development and sharing of authoritative enquiry responses
  o Providing a state of the art system for managing telephone, voice and email enquiries.

• Provide evidence to support a future USF bid for a broader roll-out across other sections of Student Services and service centres within the University.

2.3 Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators for the project will be

• The compilation of comprehensive enquiry statistics

• Achieving a system response rate of upwards of 80% of routine enquiries submitted via the knowledge base without the need for referral to front line customer service staff or information specialists.

• A reduction in the proportion of enquiries that must be referred to an information specialist with a corresponding increase in the proportion effectively managed by front line customer service personnel

• Improvement in the level of student satisfaction reported in relevant surveys on services

• Improvement in staff effectiveness, as measured by relevant student surveys, and

• Improvements in the life balance reported by customer service staff participating in the project.

2.4 Relationship to the Operational Priorities Plan

The project is aligned with the University OPP:

• Strategic objective ‘to improve the quality of the student learning experience’
Operational objective ‘to improve the student learning environment and provision of facilities and services both within and beyond the classroom’ and is expected to deliver management efficiencies and enhanced service effectiveness.

Strategic objective ‘to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the University’ and

Operational objective ‘to enhance the use, support and management of IT…’

At a Divisional level, the project supports a key priority objective to improve the provision of services beyond the classroom.

2.5 **Budget Summary**

**Project Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Budget</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Ex GST</th>
<th>Total Inc GST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RightNow Service</td>
<td>12 month fixed term license including usage charge estimate</td>
<td>$22,708.08</td>
<td>$24,978.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Right Now</td>
<td>Implementation consultancy</td>
<td>$22,710.00</td>
<td>$24,981.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Right Now</td>
<td>Travel, meals &amp; accom (est)</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$2,200.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$52,159.89</strong></td>
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<td>Fixed Term Project Officer L7.01</td>
<td>1.0FTE (full-time 12 months) ^</td>
<td>$78,000.00</td>
<td>$78,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Project Cost (Estimate)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$130,159.89</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project costs will be partially offset by anticipated savings in outgoing telephone call charges and postal expenditure. The extent of the project savings is difficult to estimate at the outset but will be captured during the project.

Assuming the pilot project is successful, perpetual licensing of the Right Now Service module is offered in the second year at 18% of the initial purchase.

2.6 **Enquiry Management Beyond 2007**

Assuming the pilot project proves to be a success, ongoing license and usage fees for the limited scope service will be resourced through efficiencies and staff time savings achieved within Student Services.

A further USF bid will be developed to fund expansion of the service beyond Student Administration.

2.7 **Further documentation**

Further documentation is available from the Student Services Director. Since the March 2006 submission, RightNow technologies has announced its 100th higher education customer worldwide – ECU. In addition, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand has published a very positive account of its experience using RightNow Service; the University of Melbourne has converted its fixed term Right Now licensing to perpetual licenses.