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ROB CROMPTON

Head of Service Management, The Very Group



THE
VERY
GROUP

4.9/5

satisfaction score
for Jira Service
Management

34,000

tickets submitted in
the first 7 months

16,000+

incidents raised and
resolved in 7 months

How The Very Group’s \$2B retail enterprise modernized and centralized service management

Transitioning from outsourced to in-house IT services led The Very Group to modernize their legacy service management system and boost employee satisfaction.

THE VERY GROUP

With annual revenue of £2.15bn, The Very Group is a unique digital business that combines online retail and flexible payments. Their digital retail brands, Very and Littlewoods, help to bring over 2,000 desirable labels within easy reach of more customers. They have over a hundred years of history behind them, but at their heart there is a passion for change – to constantly improve what they do, to innovate with data and technology at their core and to be the best possible place to work.

INDUSTRY

Retail

LOCATION

Europe, Middle East, and Africa

COMPANY SIZE

1,001-5,000 employees

SOLUTION PARTNER

[Clearvision](#)

ATLASSIAN PRODUCTS & APPS



Jira Service Management
Collaborative IT service management



Jira Software
Project and issue tracking



Confluence
Document collaboration

THE CHALLENGE

As The Very Group transitioned from outsourced to in-house IT services, they saw an opportunity to improve both the employee and customer experience by modernizing their legacy service management system, which was quite basic and highly manual.

THE SOLUTION

The company implemented Jira Service Management in a matter of weeks with the help of Atlassian Solution Partner Clearvision.

THE IMPACT

The Very Group has rolled out Jira Service Management across the organization to rave reviews from employees. In addition to rating the system a 4.9 out of 5 in satisfaction surveys, team members say they love how the tool helps them collaborate more, work faster, and provide even better service to both internal and external customers.

Bringing service management into a centralized tool and the 21st century

As a retail empire that has evolved from mailing catalogs in 1861 to an e-commerce and financial services giant today, The Very Group is no stranger to transformation. So, when the business was moving IT services back in house after outsourcing them for decades, Head of Service Management Rob Crompton and his team saw an opportunity to optimize The Very Group's service management practices, beginning with a new platform.

Rob says the company's legacy tool was "quite clunky" and required employees to rely on phone calls and emails to fulfill requests. While this may have been sufficient for a small business, it was far too basic and manual for an enterprise with over \$2 billion in annual revenue, 3,000-plus employees, and 4.4 million active customers. "We wanted to mirror what we do in our wider organization and innovate through technology to give our colleagues an experience similar to what they would have if they were using any online retailer or any social media platform," Rob explains.

Since The Very Group already used Jira Software and Confluence for project and knowledge management (respectively), the Service Management Team was intrigued by the idea of adding a familiar, integrated tool like Jira Service Management. Rob says, "It gives us the opportunity to bring everything together on one platform: our incident management across multiple different solutions, all the forms, and that centralized collaboration ability of Jira Software."

However, Rob and his team were still new to Jira Service Management, so they turned to their Atlassian Solution Partner, [Clearvision](#), who provided a demo and guidance on the platform's capabilities. Impressed by its potential, The Very Group moved forward with building a rapid prototype with Clearvision. "Within three or four weeks, we had a product that would work for the organization very quickly. We were able to configure all the key elements, the self-service portal, and the knowledge articles enough for us to take it on ourselves and start working with it," Rob recalls. After setting up basic incident, change, and problem management workflows along with a self-service portal, the Service Management Team spent the next few months finessing configurations, implementing automations to increase efficiency and self-service, and rolling out the tool to the rest of the organization.

Better efficiency and control make employees happy

Since launching Jira Service Management, employees across The Very Group have embraced the tool as a faster way to serve each other and their own needs. Over 50,000 tickets were created in the first seven months after rollout, 36,000 of which came through the customer portal.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. “Since we went live, we’ve been getting a 4.9/5 satisfaction score on average, which has been fantastic to see. With the previous solution, we had nothing but complaints,” Rob says. He notes that Jira Service Management has enabled support teams to be much closer to the end user as they use it to communicate updates, ask questions, and seek clarifications when needed. He believes the improved communication is directly reflected in the great satisfaction scores. “People love the fact that they can search knowledge articles, self-serve, and track requests. It improves the employee experience.”

Technical and non-technical teams alike are using Jira Service Management to speed up everyday tasks and collaborate to complete requests. Employees have turned to the platform to raise and resolve over 16,000 incidents, 1,400 changes, and make 8,000 service requests since rollout. While The Very Group’s previous solution required a five-day lead time to handle changes, with Jira Service Management and pipeline integrations, they have optimized the change process and reduced lead time significantly, while enabling continuous integration and continuous delivery.

The Very Group also streamlined the access management process and built in strict controls required for security and regulatory compliance. Jira Service Management is integrated with the company’s HR systems, so whenever a new employee starts, hiring managers can search for the employee in the self-service portal, choose which applications they need access to, and submit a request within minutes. The User Admin Team can then take that request, break it up into multiple tickets to grant access, and track permissions. The Very Group also uses Jira Service Management’s native Assets tool to track which employees have access to each application.

These strict security controls and audit trails are especially important for The Very Group’s financial division, which must comply with the UK’s Financial Conduct Authority. “As a regulated organization, we need to make sure we have the right controls in place,” Rob says. “What Jira Service Management enables

us to do is really lock down that control around access to systems, to make sure we've got an audit trail of all the access requests.”

Happier employees across the company means happier customers across the globe

Improving the employee experience has trickled down into a better customer experience. Keeping customers happy is especially crucial – and even more difficult – during the busy holiday season. [Research from Salesforce](#) shows that over one billion consumers stocked up on gifts from their favorite stores in 2022 and spent over \$1 trillion in online shopping alone. For retailers like The Very Group, providing speedy service and managing incidents are an even higher priority during peak times like these. “Jira Service Management gives our colleagues easy access to support when they need it. So if our customers have problems, we're able to request support very quickly for them,” Rob explains. “Now, we can promptly resolve issues that are facing our customers at this time of year [the holidays], when we want them to keep on shopping. We don't want to be interrupted,” Rob says.

Implementing Jira Service Management has also helped The Very Group gain visibility into data that can be used to make improvements across the business, such as the most common issues and total onboarding time. As more teams (including People, Accounts Payable, and Facilities Management) have seen the types of processes they can streamline and the data they can gather, they have approached the Service Management Team for help launching their own service desks.

Going forward, Rob and his team are excited about optimizing more processes, as well as getting even more value out of the tool by expanding automation, Assets and their CMDB, cloud environment, and more. Although it's still early in their journey, Rob says teams across The Very Group are already loving the day-to-day improvements of Jira Service Management and looking forward to its long-term potential. “It gives that real flexibility and real ease of communication that we were looking for.”

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