❝ With Jira Service Management and Adaptavist's help, we can support our fundraisers faster…and help them manage their work much more seamlessly.

DEREK SUTTON
Director of Infrastructure and Enterprise Architecture

95%
Fewer email requests and incidents

> 80%
Less time spent in change control meetings

SickKids Foundation transforms lives and saves time with Jira Service Management

Learn how SickKids Foundation in Canada saved countless hours, reduced request volume by 95%, and enabled remote work with Jira Service Management Cloud.

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For the team at SickKids Foundation in Toronto, a service management solution is part of something much bigger than completing mundane business tasks – it's helping save lives.

As one of the largest foundations in Canada, SickKids raised almost $200 million in fiscal year 2020 to support Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. The hospital operates as a separate entity, but works closely with the foundation on fundraising, granting, hospital relations, and more. Donations have led to groundbreaking advancements, like CRISPR gene editing technology for fixing disease mutations, and life-altering research, such as studies around microdosing for managed exposure of deadly allergens.

SickKids' IT group supports fundraising for these exciting discoveries by managing operations, such as infrastructure, workplace productivity, security, fundraising technology, and analytics. The foundation itself raises money from multiple audiences, each with unique needs that require a different sales, marketing, and operational approach. Fundraising programs vary from gathering donations from individuals and businesses through SickKids' website, to selling merchandise through their online shop, to in-person events, and more.

Until recently, the foundation was still managing their diverse fundraising endeavors manually, with phone calls and emails. As those efforts accelerated and expanded, growing complexity revealed the need for a more intentional digital transformation. That's when SickKids reached out to IT leaders Neeraj Mather and Derek Sutton to join the foundation and guide the initiative.

Since overhauling the foundation's manual processes and ad-hoc workflows into one central, streamlined service management platform using Jira Service Management Cloud Premium, SickKids has saved countless hours, increased internal collaboration and response times, and enabled remote work for the entire organization. With faster, more flexible ways to work, the foundation is poised to break more fundraising records and impact the lives of even more children around the world.

An organized, automated service management solution

When Neeraj and Derek joined the team as CIO and Director of Infrastructure and Enterprise Architecture, respectively, the foundation was using Jira Software and Confluence Server to capture requests and incidents. But there wasn't a way for employees to differentiate between request types or efficiently manage each request from intake to resolution. "The volume and complexity of work necessitated a better solution," Derek says.

As they began researching service management solutions, Jira Service Management showed potential as a fitting complement to their existing Atlassian platform. SickKids reached out to Solution Partner Adaptavist, who reinforced their interest in Jira Service Management and joined the initiative to support implementation.

Adaptavist began by working with SickKids in 2018 to update and clean up the foundation's Jira Software and Confluence instances. A few months later, they were ready to start building the team's new service management solution. Stewardship and Donor Relationships, Brand Strategy, and Legal have been the first non-IT teams to adopt Jira Service Management.

With Jira Service Management, Stewardship and Donor Relationships created new workflows for developing proposals for potential donors and Impact Reports for fundraising and accountability. Jira Service Management has also helped the Brand Strategy team collaborate with Stewardship and Donor Relationships to customize these Impact Reports. Brand Strategy also uses the platform to manage marketing- and promotion-related requests across the organization, such as marketing briefs, fundraising proposals, letters, and speaking engagement notes.

Additionally, Legal is leveraging the JIRA Cloud platform to streamline the review process for larger gifts, sponsorships, and corporate gifts. Team members are able to quickly intake the information they need and move requests through consultation, preparation, negotiation, and approval.

While each team uses the solution for a slightly different purpose, they've all experienced powerful improvements over their legacy ways of working. Having a formal service desk ensures no detail falls through the cracks and serves as a central hub to view and track requests. Jira Service Management's intuitive interface and workflow simplifies the process for all stakeholders too. Requesters can easily provide information and see the status of their request, while fulfillers process each one quickly and easily. "The principal benefit has been time savings. It's so much easier to log requests in the right place and manage them," Derek says.

Being able to differentiate between internal and customer-facing comments also enables fulfillers to collaborate on resolutions, without the requester seeing all the inner workings. The result? A faster, better experience for everyone involved.

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> Director of Infrastructure and Enterprise Architecture

A cloud migration unlocks a faster, more flexible work environment

As Adaptavist helped SickKids implement Jira Service Management, they were also working on migrating all the foundation's Atlassian solutions to the cloud to enable remote work in the short term and support the organization's farther-reaching objectives.

"There was an explicit mandate when I got hired: How are we going to get on the cloud?" Derek says. Anticipating a rise in remote work, he was also excited about empowering employees with more flexibility through this migration. "My first goal was: How can we allow people to work from anywhere? We have to have the right tools to enable it. I knew remote work was the way things were going."

Motivated by business goals and personal passions, Derek's team collaborated with Adaptavist on initial setup and training of Jira Service Management Cloud Premium in 2019. "When we realized that we wanted to move to Atlassian Cloud, that's where the relationship with Adaptavist took another step and became much more of a collaboration. They really helped us get set up on the cloud, showed us how it works, and gave us the knowledge and tools to manage and enhance it," Derek explains.

Adoption quickly and organically grew because the cloud version works similarly to their server solutions, only better. Derek says, "Once everyone got used to going to Jira Service Management [Server] for IT support, we could point them to the cloud version and say, 'You could use this in pretty much the same way.'"

Embracing cloud solutions was beneficial when business was good, but also during tough times. When the pandemic hit in 2020, companies around the world scrambled to transition to remote work. But for SickKids, the shift was as smooth as it could be.

"I think the thing nobody realized was that the pandemic would hit and all of a sudden, all those [remote work] trends would skip ahead about three years essentially overnight," Derek says. "The good thing is we had all those tools in place so that people were able to start working remotely pretty seamlessly. All of a sudden, it was like a switch flipped and everybody, especially Senior Management, thought, 'Wow, we're just as productive as we were before, and yet everybody's remote.' It was a complete transformation. And we now have a flexible work policy!"

SickKids' cloud-based platforms have already boosted system availability, resilience, and remote capabilities, while setting the foundation up for long-term success as volume, complexity, and distributed work continue to grow.

Rethinking service management practices

In addition to reaping the immediate benefits of working on the cloud, Adaptavist encouraged SickKids to use the migration as an opportunity to

consider the big picture too. "We look at cloud migrations not as a transfer of the way that you work on premise, but as an opportunity to rethink all the service management processes and procedures that you have implemented," says Rodolfo Romero, Senior Technical Consultant at Adaptavist. "Having that opportunity to reshape the way our clients work is what excites me to work with Atlassian solutions every day and help teams work better together with tools that will empower them."

Together, Adaptavist and SickKids explored ways to extend the foundation's Atlassian suite and improve other processes, such as incident and change management.

Historically, the team didn't have a formal way of tracking and resolving incidents, nor evaluating and implementing changes, because their needs were fairly simple and their team fairly small. Whenever an incident would occur, the Business Intelligence and Information Technology team would manually try to find someone available (which was particularly challenging after hours) and aim to fix the problem by the next day. As SickKids refined the foundation's donation processing system and increased digital donations, BI / IT needed a better, faster way to alert someone and resolve the issue if a mission-critical system went down. Improving this process would not only help avoid fundraising technical difficulties, but also enable the team to staff accordingly while staying lean.

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RODOLFO ROMERO
Senior Technical Consultant at Adaptavist

After adopting Jira Service Management Cloud Premium, the foundation could take advantage of key major incident response capabilities that solved many of their biggest pain points. "Once Jira Service Management incorporated Opsgenie into the product, it included all the features we wanted. We were excited about round robin call trees and alerting," Derek recalls. "Now, when a certain alert gets triggered, the system calls the right people in the right order. That way, the foundation doesn't have to staff the team for 24/7 support."

Jira Service Management Cloud Premium has also enabled the foundation to provide faster, better service by implementing a proper schema for incident prioritization and management. "Incidents and requests are going directly to the group managing them. That's how we sold it to the team: 'By doing things this way, you're going to get a faster response time,'" Derek says.

The team leveraged their service management solution to expedite the change management process too. Having a structured system within Jira Service Management has made it easier to log and approve changes, creating a more comprehensive, accurate system of record and facilitating more efficient conversations around changes. "Time has been the biggest benefit. Our change control meetings used to be an hour, and I dreaded them," Derek says. "Now they're 10-15 minutes because we only look at the changes waiting for approval. People in the meeting go to click 'approve' [in Jira Service Management], and it's done."

Looking ahead, Adaptavist and SickKids look forward to adopting additional capabilities in Jira Service Management Cloud Premium, such as a configuration management database, powered by Mindville Insight and now natively available in the solution. The team is already tracking desktop and laptop computers, phones, servers, and networking gear through Jira Service Management. By incorporating these assets directly into Insight, they'll have what Derek calls "the Holy Grail of CMDB," with the transparency to see assets linked to requests, change management tickets, and more.

Throughout the process of enhancing and optimizing SickKids' platform, Adaptavist has provided expert guidance and hands-on support, while building up the foundation's internal capabilities for long-term success. "One of the things we thought was very important was empowering the SickKids team and teaching them how to do things versus doing it for them," Rodolfo explains. "It was instrumental for them to be able to continue improving the platform and not having to rely on us to do the things that aren't just time consuming, but that they are capable of doing."

With a talented team, a powerful platform, and a trusted partner who strikes the balance between doing and teaching, SickKids has all the right ingredients for fundraising success.

Working toward "something bigger"

SickKids Foundation was already raising hundreds of millions of dollars each year, and now Jira Service Management is supercharging their work for an even brighter future. New ways to work faster and more flexibly have unlocked greater efficiencies and reduced request volumes to far more manageable levels.

"We are now capturing requests from the business in a much more consistent manner through the customer portal. We've managed to reduce the volume of emails for requests and incidents by over 95% in the nine months since we launched," Derek says. "With Jira Service Management and Adaptavist's help implementing this tool in the best way possible, it's had a really good impact on our efficiency. We can support our fundraisers faster; enable our teams to make requests, ask questions, and report issues in a much easier way; and help them manage their work much more seamlessly."

Best of all, these improvements are not only impacting the workplace experience of those inside the foundation, but also the lives of those who benefit from their work. "We [the IT team] may not be directly raising the $1.5 billion [for building the new Hospital for Sick Children]. But everything that all the different business units do play a big part in that. They do their work through the Atlassian platform. It's woven into the fabric of everything we do. Adaptavist has played a critical role in facilitating the process and helping us

get Jira Service Management up and running in the best way possible within a matter of months." Derek says.

It's this deeper mission that drives SickKids and Adaptavist to optimize their processes and platforms even more. "Transformations don't just have to be digital. Kids' lives are being transformed by SickKids Foundation's work," says Harp Athwal, Head of Client Services at Adaptavist. "That's why this partnership works so well – there's something bigger that we're working toward."

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