



## North Dakota Information Technology Department

### COMPANY

**Name:** North Dakota, Information Technology Department.  
**Location:** Bismarck, ND  
**Industry:** Public Sector  
**Website:** [www.nd.gov/itd](http://www.nd.gov/itd)

### SOLUTION

HEAT Service Management

### BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Provide service desk support concentrating on the business needs of the customer
- Automate workflow for incidents and requests
- Achieve 99.8% satisfaction rating with customers

### STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA AUTOMATES IT AND BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH HEAT SOFTWARE IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT

#### Summary

North Dakota was ranked as the best-run state in America in 2012. North Dakota's oil boom has transformed its economy, making the state the second-largest oil producer in the country and keeping unemployment low. Good economic times, coupled with a focus on efficiency, has enabled North Dakota to be one of only two states that has not reported a budget shortfall since 2009.

The culture of service and efficiency runs deep at Information Technology Department (ITD), the group responsible for providing and regulating IT services for North Dakota government. ITD coordinates IT activities with government agencies, K-12 schools, universities, and vendors. It also provides a broad variety of IT services, including hosting, communications, software development, and professional services. The group dates back to the state's first central data processing division in 1969, and today, ITD has grown to 347 employees.

#### Growing Demand for Service Desk

ITD has used HEAT Software HEAT solutions since 1994 to support its own department's service desk needs. In 2004, ITD began offering a new service of a contracted, customized, service desk tier 1 support to agencies as an alternative to managing their own internal help desks. ITD staff evaluated its options to ensure that the technology solution they chose would allow them to align with the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework, as well as fit the organization's growing needs. After a thorough evaluation of other service management solutions, ITD decided to stay with HEAT Software, and transitioned from its current Help Desk solution to HEAT Service Management to support its higher level process maturity requirements for Incident and Change management.

ITD uses HEAT Service Management to help maximize operational efficiencies, reduce IT costs, and improve service quality and compliance. ITD's enterprise service desk supports state, city and county government agencies, university systems, public and private K-12 schools, tribal colleges, public libraries, health alert entities, commercial and private businesses, and citizens. Along with the many customers that ITD supports, ITD also provides a contracted tier 1 service desk arrangement for Bank of North Dakota, Department of Human Services, Office of Management and Budget, Job Service, Criminal Justice Information Sharing (CJIS) program, and ND Public Employees Retirement System. These agencies employees share in the use of ITD's enterprise HEAT Service Management tool.

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Terese Birnbaum  
Enterprise Service Desk Manager  
Information Technology Department

ITD's service desk provides a single point of contact and first-line support for both IT reported issues as well as for non-IT related business services, including facilities. For example, Bank of North Dakota, the only state-owned bank in America, uses ITD's service desk to support any facility-related issues, such as reporting any building maintenance and mechanical issues, requests for equipment, furniture, light bulb replacements, and snow removal requests. "Our service desk support has gone beyond the typical IT technical support for several agencies," says Terese Birnbaum, enterprise service desk manager at ITD.

"It's been a huge success for these agencies to use our service desk 24 x 7 and lower the cost of not having to staff or support their own service desk," says Birnbaum. "For our customers like Bank of North Dakota, their core mission lies in banking not in IT. So by providing them the contracted option of a tier 1 service desk, they have more time to focus on their core mission. We're their trusted business partner, and with the shared use of the enterprise HEAT Service Management, our relationship has grown."

ITD's customers echo that sentiment. "ITD has been able to customize the application to meet the Bank's needs," says Danika Schell, IT application support manager at Bank of North Dakota.

"The system has become more than a help-desk application and now serves as our central incident and request management system. By tracking incidents, requests, and projects within a single system, we are better able to track and manage the work."

Providing an enterprise service desk to state agencies has helped the State of North Dakota realize true cost benefits and increased efficiencies. Several agencies had their own instances of HEAT Help Desk with their own separate license agreements and yearly maintenance costs. "Consolidating into a single enterprise service management toolset has allowed the ease of transferring incidents from one business unit to another, securing data while meeting the requirements of each agency," says Birnbaum. "By sharing hardware components, software licensing, and administrative resources, our agencies benefit in the use of a feature-rich service management system and ideally keeping the overall price very affordable." Agencies can leverage ITD's staffing and expertise, rather than having to hire and train staff to maintain their own separate service desk platform. "We manage the solution for them so they don't need to hire separate on-site staff to administer HEAT," she says.

ITD provides different levels of support, depending on the business needs of the customer. For example, it provides comprehensive support for many agencies that may not have the expertise or resources necessary to deliver the support they need, as well offer a customized tier 1 support solution for those agencies that prefer to resolve their own internal issues.

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Regardless of the level of support, workers across different agencies can be assured of a consistent level of support from ITD. To better understand how their service desk is performing, ITD conducts customer satisfaction surveys after each incident is closed. The staff also leverages many of HEAT's service management dashboards and reports, helping them stay on top of the most important issues as well as giving them the capability to track key performance metrics. "Based on our improved service, we have been able to achieve on average a 99.8% satisfaction rating each quarter with our customers," says Birnbaum.

ITD also uses a rigorous change management process to reduce the risk of downtime from any unplanned or unapproved changes to business-critical updates. HEAT's Change Management functionality provides the service desk with a higher level of awareness and insight around changes allowing them to better troubleshoot issues and improve communication with their customers when necessary.

The service desk workflow has created efficiencies for the IT staff as well. "By utilizing the HEAT Service Management toolset, our service desk functions as a single point of contact, making first call resolution a priority, whereas our IT experts can then direct their efforts to the higher priority work," says Birnbaum.

### **A Hybrid Approach**

Birnbaum and her team have their eye on HEAT Software new HEAT 2013, the only service management solution designed to simultaneously support on-premise, multi-tenant cloud and hybrid deployments from a single platform. Hybrid IT service management delivers new levels of flexibility by allowing ITD to rely on a single platform that's fit-for-purpose for both cloud and on-premise deployment models.

“We’ll continue to utilize the on-premise solution, but we’re encouraged that our vendor offers a choice of a cloud solution – that flexibility is very promising,” says Birnbaum. “Moving to HEAT 2013 will allow ITD’s enterprise service desk to deliver even greater efficiencies while blending people, process, and technology in a way that efficiently and effectively supports their customers. Today, some agencies use an in-house developed work management system for service requests, while others use HEAT Service Management. HEAT 2013 will enable ITD the scalability to consolidate these platforms.

“The mobile access and web based capabilities in HEAT 2013 are the driving force for the upgrade,” says Birnbaum. “Today we use HEAT Service Management in the same way for service requests and incidents, whereas in service request the current system lacks in the capabilities of a formalized authorization process. With HEAT 2013 we will be able to add that.”

ITD is also looking forward to the self-service capabilities in HEAT 2013. “We believe the use of the self-service portal in HEAT 2013 will be a huge enhancement for our customers allowing our customers the ability to submit incidents and service requests in the same storefront, with the capability to view all previous history,” she says.



## A Strong Partnership

The State of North Dakota is a sophisticated user of HEAT Service Management, having completed more than 2,000 configuration iterations.

ITD worked closely with HEAT Software professional services on the migration from HEAT Help Desk to HEAT Service Management. “It’s been good working with the expertise and knowledge of the professionals,” says Birnbaum. “We’ve had a successful, trusted partnership with HEAT Software.”

ITD continues to onboard new departments and agencies to its shared enterprise HEAT Service Management solution. Birnbaum recently met with a department that has been logging 1,000 calls a week on paper. “We were able to streamline and automate those interactions through the use of the enterprise HEAT Service Management solution, creating much efficiency for them,” she says.

## More Information