



# Liverpool John Moores University

University Closes Information Gap with BMC Service Desk Express Suite

## Geography

United Kingdom

## Industry

Education

## Business Need

Liverpool John Moores University needed a flexible and sophisticated service desk solution to replace a number of disparate systems.

## Solution

The University chose the BMC Service Desk Express Suite to address their incident and problem management, adding change management to the mix after a number of years reaping the benefits of the service desk.

## Results

- > Provides easy-to-use, browser-based technology
- > Spares matched against incidents for cost recovery
- > 95% first-call Resolution (FCR) achieved
- > Reduced call volume by 44% and lowered cost of support by £22K (\$40K) p.a.
- > Prevented budgetary losses by automating inventory controls

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) has a burgeoning reputation for developing programmes geared to the needs of the business world—from forensic science to computer games technology and broadcast engineering—designed to equip students with the full set of knowledge and skills for their own professional environment. It is this attention to detail in its course development that leads to more than 90% of its students acquiring graduate jobs or going on to further programmes of study within six months of graduation.

LJMU is also one of the top 10 universities in the country to be actively engaged in the formation and development of fledgling student companies. In the last two years alone, it has provided business support and financial assistance to 25 business start-ups in life sciences, new media and business consultancy.

## CONTROLLING INCIDENT AND PROBLEM MANAGEMENT

There has been a strong and ever-increasing association between LJMU and the deployment of leading-edge technology as the university stepped up the alignment of its IT systems with the needs of the business. Critical to that process has been the university's deepening commitment to the BMC Service Desk Express Suite. LJMU originally implemented the BMC Service Desk Express Suite (previously named Magic Service Desk Suite) in 1998, when the university moved from a number of disparate and inflexible information systems to a single solution.

"The systems in use at the time did the basic job when it came to logging hardware and software issues, but were not really sophisticated, or flexible enough," recalls Julie Wynne, senior computing officer, LJMU. "Users' hardware issues were being logged as software problems and vice versa, and there was no link between the systems to move the information between them. Data was either being lost or duplicated all the time, and users were frustrated with the delays. We recognized it was time to change the way we were operating."

The BMC Service Desk Express Suite was singled out as the solution of choice and implemented. "It had great flexibility," says Julie Wynne. "You could customize both the front end and back end, and it was far and away the easiest solution to work with from those we evaluated. Customizing the BMC Service Desk Express Suite is incredibly simple to do and, in my opinion, it has improved the service we offer to our users at least tenfold."

The university used SupportMagic for Windows v4.0 initially to help create the structure it was looking for. They upgraded to the BMC Service Desk Express Suite to take advantage of the browser-based interface and the workflow management offered by the business rules engine. Now all calls—hardware and software related—are handled from within a single relational database. Operations staff on the core help desk are tasked with everything from dealing with telephone call incident logging to incident screening from email, as well as routing incidents to the user support group or specialist teams. With the BMC Service Desk Express Suite, the staff achieves a 95% FCR (first-call resolution) on average. Second-line resolution is provided by the user support group, which can also refer calls to one of a series of specialist teams.

"With the BMC Service Desk Express Suite in place, the number of direct calls to the help desk has gradually reduced, saving us £22k in the last academic year alone in support costs, as incidents are increasingly logged by email," adds Julie Wynne.

## FURTHER INVESTMENT IN BMC SERVICE DESK EXPRESS SUITE ENHANCES SELF-SERVICE AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The IT organization has added BMC Service Desk Express Change Management, as well as BMC Service Desk Express Client Services. These products are being deployed at LJMU city-wide—embracing three campuses and numerous university buildings—to support 4,500 PCs employed by fixed (2,500 staff) and transient (27,000 student) users.

“BMC Service Desk Express Client Services is a far more customizable self-service option, which is something we are developing at LJMU,” says Julie Wynne. “For example, we are about to release a self-service based procedure for handling student complaints and issues, which would be segregated in the database with a separate escalation mechanism.”

This process will also provide an opportunity to capture information relating to Equal Opportunities requirements and overcomes security issues for data associated with this legislation.

“The BMC Service Desk Express Suite business rules engine is one of the best systems you could have, flexibility wise, compared to the complexity, say, of trying to add a database trigger to the system, which requires an in-depth knowledge of SQL. I can perform tasks that I would never be able to using SQL, and these tasks can all be done within minutes.”

The BMC Service Desk Express Suite has enabled the university to be much more equipped to request, and respond to, information through its “Request for Information” procedure. As many calls come in via email, the help desk often needs to get more details from the user. A ticket number is attached to the request for information and the response, so all communication regarding the incident can be tracked right the way through to resolution.

“The whole process provides information that makes it easy to audit activities,” adds operations manager Mark Wynne, “and that protects both the customers and ourselves, should there be any queries or requests for additional information. What’s also pleasing is that we’ve had a very positive reaction to the changes from users, as they are being kept informed of how their calls are being handled from start to completion.”

One of the main benefits the university had derived from its further investment in the BMC Service Desk Express Suite is the development of a stock control system and spares charging mechanism. “When our hardware technicians go out to fix, say, a PC now, they record any parts they’ve used within the system, and this is then deducted from stock at one of several locations, enabling us to keep tight track of our assets and spares,” says Mark Wynne.

“All parts are then charged back on a monthly basis to the relevant departments, which has prevented us losing money from our budgets because it has ensured that all of the costs are recovered. As far as I’m concerned, all of the charging now happens within the BMC Service Desk Express Suite!”

The university has a full audit of parts used and, when stocks of items fall below predefined levels, a response is triggered automatically so these are replenished. Usage can also be forecast, to avoid both over- and under-stocking, enabling the university to take advantage of preferential deals on, for example, hard drives, while also plotting the rate of usage against the possibility that the drive might become obsolete in a given time span.

## FUTURE PLANS

Future plans include issuing the university’s service technicians with PDAs (personal digital assistants). Through a communication software link, provided by BMC partner Ibertek, they will be live and available to technicians when they are out in the field.

“The technicians can record when they arrive on site, so we know we are responding in a timely manner,” says Mark Wynne. “When the job is complete, it can be closed via the PDA as well, and their next assignments can be checked out, without the technicians having to phone back to base.”

Julie Wynne is also looking to make significant use of BMC Service Desk Express Change Management to improve procedures. “We operate a quite complex system, with around 200 servers which have many interdependencies. It would be a real benefit to be able to tie down those dependencies and, without adversely affecting all of the systems, make changes to the main servers, for example, and assess the impact of that change. That would certainly help to make operations run more smoothly and build even better communications between our teams.”



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Julie Wynne  
Senior Computing Officer  
Liverpool John Moores University

## Key Products Used

- > BMC Service Desk Express Suite
- > BMC Service Desk Change Management
- > BMC Service Desk Express Client Services

## About Liverpool John Moores University

Liverpool John Moores University is a city-based university, with more than 27,000 students studying 200-plus courses at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. New advances in digital technology and science have placed the university right at the forefront of exciting developments in areas such as multimedia and space exploration.

## About BMC Software

BMC Software delivers the solutions IT needs to increase business value through better management of technology and IT processes. Our industry-leading Business Service Management solutions help you reduce cost, lower risk of business disruption, and benefit from an IT infrastructure built to support business growth and flexibility. Only BMC provides best-practice IT processes, automated technology management, and award-winning BMC Atrium technologies that offer a shared view into how IT services support business priorities. Known for enterprise solutions that span mainframe, distributed systems, and end-user devices, BMC also delivers solutions that address the unique challenges of the mid-sized business. Founded in 1980, BMC has offices worldwide and fiscal 2007 revenues of \$1.58 billion. Activate your business with the power of IT. [www.bmc.com](http://www.bmc.com).



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