

An international hotel chain needs to deal with growing complaints about internal customer service

CLIENT PROFILE

A publically-traded international hotel chain was experiencing problems with internal customer service. The IT group who handled hotel property issues wasn't resolving problems in a timely manner—if the problems were resolved at all. Complaints were on the rise as morale plummeted, and there was no obvious solution to the problem.

INDUSTRY

Hospitality

KEY INFORMATION

- Publically Traded
- \$3.3 Billion Annual Revenue
- 45,000 Employees

BUSINESS NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Inconsistent Internal Customer Service
- Low Employee Morale

OwlPoint SERVICES

- IT Operations Center Management

OVERVIEW

A hotel chain with strong brand-name recognition was facing increased internal customer service complaints. Hotel property managers would call a specific IT group for such tasks as setting up new user accounts for employees, email issues, wireless internet problems, as well as other standard IT issues. The resolution times for these problems was getting longer and longer, if the problem was ever addressed at all, and property managers grew increasingly frustrated.

OwlPoint was asked to discover the source of the problem and take the steps necessary to improve responsiveness and reliability.

BUSINESS NEED

An IT department in a remote location is responsible for supporting hotel property managers with standard IT issues. However, the hotel's main headquarters began dealing with a growing list of complaints about the responsiveness and effectiveness of this department. The group was viewed by the hotel managers as ineffective, unproductive and incompetent. A task that should take a few days was now taking weeks to resolve, and only after numerous calls and complaints.

While these were internal customers, the hotel's guests began to feel the effects when wireless internet access was unavailable or other hotel IT services went down.

While the “trickle down” effect was not a large concern, it wouldn't be long before these problems began to impact the company's brand.

In addition, since this IT department was in a remote location, when managers from headquarters did check in, it was apparent that morale among the employees in the department was extremely low. They felt overburdened, under managed, and unappreciated.

SOLUTION

In order to discover why this IT department was so deficient, **OwlPoint** needed to undertake a current-state assessment. **OwlPoint** began by interviewing every employee one-on-one within the first week of the engagement. This was followed by job shadowing and observation, to see how the department worked together to better understand the lack of responsiveness. After one month, a report was compiled and delivered to the client.

As a result of the investigation, **OwlPoint** made several recommendations to the client which would have an immediate impact on customer service.

At the time of the intervention, the department was extremely flat; one manager and 14 direct reports. **OwlPoint** recommended and then assisted as the group

was split in two, with each group getting its own supervisor who then reported to the manager. One group became the internal help desk, while the other group took calls from hotel properties.

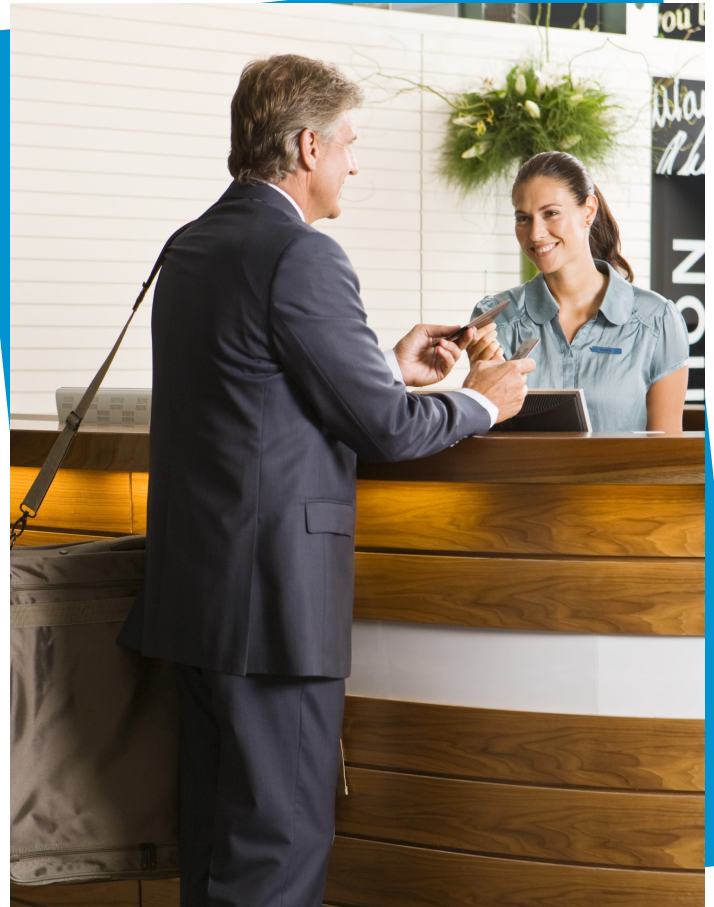
In addition, to help standardize how common requests and problems were resolved, **OwlPoint** investigated and wrote standard operating procedures for every issue. This way, the IT staff wasn't continually "guessing" how to resolve a problem.

Finally, since this IT department was in a remote location, **OwlPoint** helped facilitate "bridge building" within the organization to help those in the remote office feel more connected to those in the main office, and vice versa.

OwlPoint also established regular team meetings to review priorities and a system to track paid time off to ensure consistent coverage. Through better and more consistent communication, the IT group was more informed about such things as the system going down for routine maintenance and were no longer caught off guard.

BENEFITS

As a result of **OwlPoint's** engagement with the hotel chain, internal customer service was greatly improved and complaints to the main office all but ceased. The relationship between the IT staff and hotel property managers is much more cordial and productive, and routine tasks such as creating a new user account are now completed within days instead of weeks. In addition, because of the improvement in service, the remote IT office has a much better relationship with the main office and no longer feels abandoned or forgotten downtime, and the ability to effect change more efficiently.



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