



Consortium for
Service Innovation

Legato Support Services Knowledge-Centered SupportSM at Work

Legato

- Legato, a division of EMC, delivers enterprise software for information management
- Highly technical products provide information access, application availability, and information protection
- Award-winning Support Services are a critical part of Legato's value proposition

The Challenge

- Customers are demanding, highly technical, and often dealing with crisis
- Lack of an effective knowledge base resulted in slow incident resolution and long hold times
- Customer satisfaction did not meet target levels

What They Did

- Implemented Knowledge-Centered Support with explicit commitment from executives and key stakeholders
- Changed their incident handling processes to reuse and capture knowledge in the process of delivering support
- Leveraged captured knowledge in a web-based self-service offering

The Results

- Time to close and hold times fell dramatically
- Customer satisfaction rose to over 90%
- Self-service deflected 25% of calls from the support center

Complex Meets Critical: The Legato Support Challenge

Legato is a leading provider of information management software. Standing behind its information access, information availability, and information protection solutions for complex and heterogeneous storage environments, Legato is held in a special position of trust by its customers, who are, in effect, buying peace of mind. Technical complexity combined with this enterprise-critical aspect of Legato's products puts a tremendous burden on the support organization.

A New Way of Solving Problems

In response to this challenge, Legato embraced Knowledge-Centered SupportSM (KCS), a set of practices developed by the Consortium for Service Innovation, to make support centers more effective at using and improving knowledge. KCS improves the speed and accuracy of response to customer issues. Using KCS, Legato has been recognized by the SSPA and—more importantly, its customers—as a vastly improved provider of support and an industry leader.

Integrated in the Support Workflow

"We call it knowledge-centered support, but it's baked into everything—it's become what people do," notes Lynn Llewellyn, manager of knowledge content and key KCS implementation champion at Legato. Through a process of training, coaching, and integrating knowledge tools with the CRM environment, Legato has injected knowledge directly into the problem resolution workflow. As a result, knowledge improves analysts' ability to resolve the vast majority of cases.

This is a contrast from the way knowledge management is often implemented—as a separate process with disconnected tools. This style of knowledge management rarely succeeds because support professionals are busy and don't have time for the additional set of knowledge activities. Using KCS, however, the Legato analysts have gained confidence in the knowledge-empowered problem solving process,

"In the beginning, KCS was kind of perceived as overhead, and people were already under pressure from customers

with urgent problems," observes Legato Product Support Engineer Srdjan Avlijas. "But now the feeling is more that KCS is a useful tool, not part of the overhead, based on the fact that analysts started to see results."

Key Benefits

- Knowledge captured in the workflow shortens time to relief, increases satisfaction
- Knowledge sharing dramatically shortens time to proficiency for engineers
- Effective self-service deflects incidents while satisfying customers

In particular, support knowledge is no longer authored by a separate group, but is captured by analysts in the process of delivering support. As analysts talk with customers, they search for existing knowledge by capturing the customer's situation in the customer's own words. Then, if no knowledge is found, the customer-provided information forms the basis of a new solution. Instead of just writing case notes in the CRM system, the Legato analyst captures the generic or reusable aspects of the fix or workaround in the solution in a structured, actionable form. So, by the time the incident is resolved, its solution has already been shared with other Legato analysts.

Assuring Knowledge Quality

Capturing knowledge in the workflow dramatically lowers the cost and increases the speed of knowledge development, but it raises questions about quality. To make sure that the knowledge is as accurate as it is timely, Legato has implemented KCS best practices for knowledge quality assurance.

KCS coaches and "knowledge champions" regularly sample the knowledge base to assess the quality of specific solutions and to provide constructive feedback and mentoring to the contributors. Also, coaches look at new solutions, especially from analysts who are less experienced with KCS. Solutions that are frequently viewed or used become candidates for external publication on the website, and that



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publication process has its own editorial and review processes.

KCS proposes that responsibility for knowledge base quality is shared among all users of the system. So, in addition to specific reviews, any Legato analyst who sees content that is hard to understand, hard to find, or technically incorrect has the responsibility of fixing it or flagging it for a subject expert to fix.

Enabling Self-Service

Legato's customers are demanding and technically sophisticated, making them perfect candidates for self-service. An IT professional who feels he or she is likely to get help with a simple web query will almost always try self-service before picking up the phone or logging an electronic incident.

Before KCS, Legato customers had little access to knowledge on the web. Now that KCS has enabled Legato to create more support knowledge more quickly, they are delivering the most frequently used solutions directly to customers via the web.

As a result, customers are happier because they get their answers quickly and easily. For example, a Legato account manager recently told the support organization, "[The customer] loves the eKnowledgebase. It solves 90% of his issues. He says it's the best thing Legato has ever done." Customers who are happy are more likely to be loyal. And customers who solve 90% of their issues with self-service will open far fewer support incidents. In fact, Legato has noted a 25% call deflection since implementing KCS-powered self-service.

Learning from Customers

Like all support organizations, when issues arise Legato attempts to deliver fast and accurate solutions. But customers would prefer that the issues never came up in the first place. KCS provides Legato with insights about product reliability and usability issues. These insights empower product specialists with actionable feedback for the development group so they can improve the products based on customer experience.

"By looking at the solutions that are being created," says Llewellyn, "we're

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Before	After
A knowledge base was populated in an ad-hoc fashion by a separate group	Knowledge is developed and reused in the normal course of delivering support
Knowledge was reused in fewer than 20% of cases	Over 80% of cases benefit from knowledge captured and shared through solutions
Product development had anecdotal input from the support organization	Customer support provides actionable recommendations for product improvements
Customers were frustrated by the lack of useful information on the support web site	Customers rave about their ability to access useful knowledge on their own terms; 25% of costly customer incidents are deflected

figuring out patterns, clusters, and causes of support issues. We're doing extensive root cause analysis." This root cause analysis leads to improvements in knowledge base quality, because multiple solutions with a common root cause can be consolidated. It also results in a stream of product enhancement requests, for which Legato support and engineering have developed a formal process. "Structured feedback is part of everyone's responsibility," points out Avlijas.

Next Steps

As pleased as Legato is with the results of their Knowledge-Centered Support initiatives, they're continually improving their service delivery processes by using knowledge more effectively. New initiatives include an emphasis on collaboration within the support center, implementing principles of the Consortium's Adaptive Organization initiative. Legato is also looking to augment the bottoms-up knowledge management process emphasized by KCS with more traditional top-down practices, including restructuring and normalizing content to make it more findable and usable.

Knowledge-Centered Support at Work

Legato's knowledge management practices are an excellent example of Knowledge-Centered Support. Legato's successes are based on strong execution of the following KCS principles:

- **Capture in the workflow.** Legato support engineers at all tiers capture and share knowledge in the process of delivering support. This results in more timely and relevant content at a fraction of the cost of a dedicated content group.

- **Just-in-time solution quality.** All analysts, not just authors or knowledge champions, take responsibility for the quality of the information in the knowledge base. This removes the "single review path bottleneck" and insures solution quality while enabling rapid publishing to the knowledge base.
- **Workflow.** Legato has explicitly integrated knowledge management into the service delivery workflow; this integration includes connecting incident management (CRM) and knowledge management technologies. This means that knowledge is developed, referenced, or reused to the benefit of the majority of support incidents.
- **Content vitality.** Through content sampling, reviews of new submissions by coaches, root cause analysis, and emerging standards for normalizing knowledge, Legato keeps the knowledge base crisp, relevant, and up-to-date.
- **Leadership.** Continuous participation by Legato executives reinforced the message that KCS was not a fad, but a fundamentally new way of delivering support. A cross-functional and cross-geographic KCS team provided depth and continuity to the leadership. This visible leadership commitment enabled the organizational and cultural changes required by KCS.

Applying KCS Principles in Your Organization

Legato isn't alone in seeing these kinds of results from implementing KCS. If you're interested in how Knowledge-Centered Support can help your organization, **contact us:**



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