



Enabling Red Gold Tomato Manufacturers to Provide Gold Standard IT Support and Keep 1,500 Employees in Five Locations from Seeing Red

Red Gold began in 1942 as a rebuilt Midwest cannery to provide fresh-tasting canned food products for the war effort. Today, it is one of the largest privately-owned tomato processors in the nation, producing premium quality canned tomatoes and tomato-based products for the retail, foodservice, private label and club channels of distribution. A third-generation and locally-owned company, the year-round food processing operation is rapidly becoming the employer of choice in central Indiana. Over sixty years and three generations since its beginnings, Red Gold makes over a hundred different products, continuing to pursue its mission: "To produce the freshest, best-tasting tomato products in the world."

The Challenge

To operate its increasing network of manufacturing facilities, division warehouses, tracking divisions and operations handled at the corporate office, Red Gold relies on a comprehensive IT infrastructure that is capable of growing and changing with its business. Tracking large quantities of requests through the service desk, the IT operations and development departments require a consolidated solution to ensure this infrastructure performs at optimal levels and to centrally manage IT service and support requests for personnel and facilities throughout multiple locations.

When Red Gold first established an IT support desk in 1996, it consisted of five people monitoring one phone extension for IT problems across the company. The solution was based on a reactive system using paper tickets, which were often lost or simply never created, resulting in unhappy end-users. At an attempt to advance tracking and make it easier to input tickets, the support desk next implemented an Access database. While ticket tracking

improved, they were still unable to run reports and maintain historical records and as such, there were no metrics for management reviews or improvement processes. Red Gold was sure that they were experiencing an increase in call volume, but didn't have any metrics to back up their requests for additional support resources. They decided to seek an alternate solution that could keep pace with their changing IT infrastructure and support needs and, as a result, maintain high IT service levels for department employees.

IN BRIEF

Industry
Manufacturing

Challenge

- Automate IT service and support for manufacturing, warehouse, tracking and corporate facilities
- Manage expanding and dispersed IT infrastructure
- Establish reliable and timely IT service desk capable of handling high volumes of request

Solutions

- Numara FootPrints
- Numara FootPrints Dynamic Address Book Link (LDAP) Integration
- Numara Asset Management

Business Application

- IT Service Management
- Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)

Key Features

- IT Service Desk
- Time Tracking
- Knowledge Management / FAQs
- Asset Management

Benefits

- Improved problem resolution
- Increased First Call Resolution (FCR)
- Faster time to issue closure
- Single knowledge share
- Increased productivity for IT staff and customers
- Increased customers satisfaction
- Implementation of best practices
- Increased use of self-service

The Solution

In 2002, Red Gold began their search for an IT service desk solution, keeping in mind that they needed a cost-effective solution that could adjust to their shifting technological needs. They were also cognizant of the rate of growth within the IT department – increasing from five staff members controlling twenty computers in 1996 to seventeen staff members monitoring over 500 computers today. Red Gold reviewed a number of service desk solutions, before finally deciding on Numara FootPrints.

Numara FootPrints is an award-winning, ITIL® compatible web-based service desk automation solution that centrally tracks and manages all incoming service and support requests received from multiple communication channels, including phone, email, the Web and chat. In addition to centralized incident, problem and request management, Red Gold is now utilizing some of the other capabilities the Numara FootPrints product line has to offer, including automated IT asset management and dynamic access to LDAP and SQL-based directories.

“We determined Numara FootPrints was the perfect fit for Red Gold because it contained the robust functionality required to support our growing company, while also being cost-effective and easy-to-implement,” stated Beth Richwine, Operations Support Supervisor at Red Gold. *“As soon as we implemented the product, the system’s flexibility and customization capabilities made it easy to integrate with a range of different business processes and existing applications.”*

In 2003, Red Gold deployed Numara FootPrints and had the system in full production within days.

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 Operations Support Supervisor

Key Features

In order to deliver effective IT service and support to more than 500 internal customers and address over 1500 trouble tickets each month, Red Gold created an IT support center powered by Numara FootPrints. Today, the support center helps the company track and manage all types of IT projects, including end-user support requests, department-wide application upgrades, network outages or errors and more.

IT Service Desk Support

Within Numara FootPrints, Red Gold has created a Service Desk project where they track all incidents, work orders, change orders and problem issues. As a result, they can now record, track, assign, escalate, manage and report on IT support issues throughout their life cycle, ultimately improving responsiveness and resolution times. Red Gold currently has three main groups within IT utilizing this project: Service Desk, Operations (Service Engineers) and IT Development.

“We’ve developed several Quick Tickets for the more common IT Service Desk issues in order to expedite the process for creating and resolving these requests,” said Richwine. *“In addition, there are three Master Quick Tickets with pre-defined subtasks that we use regularly: New hire, Termination and Hardware requests. These automatically create the subtasks necessary to complete the requests and are a huge time-saver for our staff.”*

Time-Tracking

Red Gold relies heavily on Numara FootPrints for tracking the time spent on service desk issues and operations. In addition to tracking time within the Service Desk project, each IT group has established separate projects where they track time spent on non-service related issues. This has enabled Red Gold to not only understand where time is being spent and better predict future resource utilization, but has also provided the IT Service Desk with the metrics they need to request additional IT support resources.

Knowledge Management / FAQs

For Red Gold, Numara FootPrints has been a tremendous help with Knowledge Management, providing a single source for useful information. Both IT staff and end-users can access Numara FootPrints via any web browser to find answers to frequently asked questions and/or resolutions for common issues. This has greatly improved the level of self-service as well as First Call Resolution for the support desk.

Asset Management

The Numara FootPrints Asset Manager tool allows organizations to gain control of IT assets to automatically identify the hardware and software located on users’ PCs and other network assets. Red Gold uses the Numara Software Asset Manager product to assist with desktop, notebook and other network device management. The asset management capabilities allow Red Gold to determine which machines fit within their required specifications and develop optimal schedules for replacing and refreshing equipment.

“We use the Asset Management module to track our assets such as desktops, notebooks, network printers and other LAN equipment,” continued Richwine. *“This is a great tool for our annual hardware refresh program during which we evaluate our desktops for replacement based on our standard specifications.”*

The Results

Red Gold has drastically improved IT service and support for its five facilities and its 1,500 employees since implementing Numara FootPrints. *“Prior to Numara FootPrints, we had no way of gathering information and reporting on IT problems,”* explained Richwine. *“Now we can effectively track and monitor problem response times and guarantee a response within the agreed-upon service levels. In addition, the knowledge base has enabled our support agents to resolve problems much faster, increasing First Call Resolution by about 20 percent.”*

Today, Red Gold opens and closes an average of 1,500 problem tickets a month within Numara FootPrints. The solution has greatly improved agent workflow, a benefit that has allowed IT problems and service and support requests to be solved much faster and more efficiently. Now, when an IT infrastructure issue or an employee support request is submitted within Numara FootPrints, agents can often just point and click to resolve the problem.

“When we first implemented Numara FootPrints we were surprised to see just how many tickets we were processing each month,” continued Richwine. “The solution allowed us to establish a single point of contact with email requests along with phone requests.” Red Gold also removed huge inefficiencies with increased communication facilitated by the tool and the ability to link similar tickets. “We can now detect potentially larger problems when we see multiple tickets with similar issues. We’ve really moved from reactive to proactive mode.”

Today, the IT support metrics that were so elusive to Red Gold ten years ago are shared with the staff and management team on a monthly basis. These metrics help the IT support staff to trend their projects around busy times and determine their capacity and need for additional headcount for the future.

Red Gold has also benefited from the seamless upgrades of Numara Footprints since its start with Numara FootPrints 5. Over the years, Red Gold has upgraded to numerous versions of the solution and recently implemented Numara FootPrints, the most comprehensive and flexible Service Desk Management Solution on the market today. “Overall, the upgrades have been a smooth transition that are completed within a matter of hours without a loss of previous data or sacrifice to customer service,” said Richwine. “Numara FootPrints is so intuitive that there is typically a very low learning curve for newer versions, with IT personnel usually trained within a matter of days.”

With each upgrade, Red Gold has been pleased to find that much of their feedback has been incorporated into the latest version. Since 2003, Red Gold has been adopting best practices from the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), greatly supported by the evolving ITIL compatibility tools found in Numara FootPrints. Numara FootPrints supports multiple components of the ITIL-compatible service desk with PinkVerify™ certification for incident, problem, change and configuration management functions. “We are very impressed with the ability of Numara Software to proactively incorporate our requests and industry best practices into the latest versions of Numara FootPrints. Having a solution that grows with us is imperative in supporting, and sometimes driving, our service and support processes, which are critical to managing the evolution of our company,” said Richwine.

Continuing upon its ITIL quest, Red Gold is currently planning the implementation of the Numara Configuration Management solution, which will enable them to create a centralized repository of key assets and the IT services they support, and dynamically visualize the relationships between these items and to other core processes. The solution will allow the team to be even more proactive by providing a comprehensive view of how any IT changes will impact the rest of the IT and business environment.

Red Gold has been so impressed with Numara FootPrints that they continue to find ways to improve their service strategy based upon the solution’s capabilities. “We’re thrilled with how Numara FootPrints has grown with the Red Gold organization, and helped us to improve our IT support services, and we look forward to partnering with Numara Software for years to come.”

Red Gold is a premier full-line tomato processing company with its corporate headquarters located in Orestes, Indiana. The company operates state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Elwood, Orestes and Geneva, Indiana, as well as RGT Logistics in Elwood, Indiana. Red Gold produces premium quality canned tomatoes and tomato-based products for the retail, foodservice, private label, and club channels of distribution. The Red Gold family of brands includes Red Gold, Redpack, Tuttorosso, and Sacramento. Exceptional quality and operational excellence are the shared values that contributed to the employee-created mission statement: “To produce the freshest, best tasting tomato products in the world.” For more information, visit www.redgold.com

Who are we?

Numara Software is a leading provider of integrated IT management solutions for Desktop Management, PC Lifecycle Management, Security & Compliance, Help Desk and Service Desk. Designed to optimize IT management, Numara FootPrints and Numara Track-It! collectively support more than 50,000 customer sites and nearly 20 million IT assets worldwide.

