



PROCESS DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY

How *i-Sight Case Management Software* Helps DataPath to Improve Support for its Combat-Ready Satellite Earth Stations

At DataPath, Inc., words like “rugged,” “reliable” and “industrial strength” are not just empty marketing promises. The Duluth, GA-based systems integrator builds fixed, transportable, mobile and portable satellite earth terminals for use in some of the world’s most challenging and hostile environments – areas where less sophisticated equipment simply will not cut it.

Widely deployed by the U.S. military, DataPath’s battle-tested satellite earth terminals have seen action in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans, delivering secure, headquarters-quality voice, video and Internet communications. The company’s commercial solutions, meanwhile, support television broadcasters and other major customers across the United States and around the world.

“I was impressed by the flexibility of the solution,” Carpenter says. “It was immediately obvious to me that the i-Sight software would enable us to accomplish what we wanted to do, quickly and cost-effectively.”

One of the keys to DataPath’s success is its reputation for expert on-site operations and maintenance support. Wherever its solutions are installed, the chances are good that DataPath engineers and technicians are there, too, delivering round-the-clock, mission-critical connectivity.

Founded in 1996, DataPath has grown rapidly over the past decade, to the point where it now employs more than 300 personnel globally.

THE CHALLENGE

In the field, DataPath’s systems are typically configured with full redundancy. In the rare event that a problem necessitates the shutdown of a primary satellite earth terminal, the company can switch seamlessly to a secondary unit that is kept on hot standby. For customers, the result is reliable, uninterrupted communication.

To enhance its reputation for superb customer service quality, DataPath needed an efficient means of tracking and managing technical problems and other support issues. Prior to 2004, the company’s field technicians would generally report problems to head office by email. “Our field personnel would tell us what was wrong, and then I would make a note of it in a Word document,” recalls Steve Carpenter, DataPath’s Manager of Customer Service. “It was a pretty painstaking process. At any one time, we might be juggling multiple issues; and I had nothing more than individual paper documents to track them all.”

continued...



CUSTOMER[®]
expressions

PROCESS DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

continued...

THE SOLUTION

Convinced that there was a better way, Carpenter set out to find a full-featured case management system that was secure, easy to use and cost-effective. He wanted a system that could be customized quickly to DataPath's unique requirements and that would be accessible to all personnel via the Internet, regardless of location or time zone. That way, employees in the field would be able to log in securely at any point and see the status of their support tickets. If a technician at head office was working on a solution, the system would ensure that all appropriate personnel were kept fully informed. If a replacement part was required, the system would tell staff in the field whether the part was in stock or on order, and how quickly it would be shipped out.

"I was extremely impressed by the way the engineers at Customer Expressions managed to pull everything together," Carpenter says.

Carpenter investigated several potential solutions before choosing i-Sight Case Management Software from Customer Expressions, the leader in customizable, Web-based case management and complaint-handling solutions. "I was impressed by the flexibility of the solution," Carpenter says. "It was immediately obvious to me that the i-Sight software would enable us to accomplish what we wanted to do, quickly and cost-effectively."

The customized i-Sight solution was fully deployed less than 90 days after DataPath placed its order. The new system not only met Carpenter's requirements, it included several additional features that were not part of the original design specifications. For example, during the testing phase, Carpenter asked whether the system could be configured to send automatic reminders to field personnel whenever their passports, visas or foreign work permits were nearing expiration. He also wondered whether the system could be set up to generate an automatic email alert whenever a specific piece of testing equipment was due for recalibration. As well, he wanted to know if i-Sight could double as an inventory management system, helping the company to keep track of spare parts that are stored at various field offices.

In every case, the answer was yes. "I was extremely impressed by the way the engineers at Customer Expressions managed to pull everything together," Carpenter says. "I would say something like, 'It would be really great if i-Sight could do this,' and they would just go ahead and make it happen. We definitely threw some challenges at them, and they never let us down."

i-Sight also features a full range of advanced reporting and analysis tools. As a result, Carpenter can now easily monitor service turnaround times, analyze hardware failures by vendor, and identify trends before they become a serious problem. "Previously, reporting and analysis of our field systems was quite challenging," Carpenter says. "i-Sight has given us a range of important tools that we did not have before."

The bottom line? "i-Sight Case Management Software enables us to support our customers and field employees better. It was the right solution for us."