

Peace of mind: Dumfries & Galloway Council chooses Alemba for cost-effective, future-proof ITSM



Client	Dumfries & Galloway Council
In Brief	Upgrading InfraEnterprise to Alemba Service Manager to create a robust and secure environment for future development of ITSM software using mobile devices.
Business	Local government
Location	Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland
Reach	Supporting more than 8,000 users across all services in operational and remote-working locations.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is the third largest in Scotland and serves a population of almost 150,000 people. The Council's IT team consists of 75 members, three of which are dedicated help desk technicians that support **3,000 corporate users**, **3,000 school network users** and **4,500 devices** in offices and remote locations.

A reliable help desk facility is a core IT requirement. Working with limited resources, the team aims to deliver a continually improving service to the Council's IT users. Alemba Service Manager is enabling the Council's IT team to manage its resources and expertise across the county and offers further potential to expand and develop its ITSM activities.

Benefits

- 7% increase in organic Self-Service adoption over 12 months
- Future-proof solution for continuous growth of ITSM strategy
- Cost-effective
- Minimal retraining required

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Carol Brownlie, Mobile and Desktop Principal Officer,
Dumfries & Galloway Council

The case for Alemba Service Manager

The Council had identified that support and development of its ITSM software, InfraEnterprise would come to an end in 2012. In its final form, InfraEnterprise v8 would no longer be supported by newer technologies, such as later versions of the Internet Explorer browser.

The Council needed a cost-effective solution that would build on the IT team’s existing knowledge and guarantee high-quality, ongoing support and development for its ITSM strategy.

Alemba was already well known to the Council for its maintenance and support of InfraEnterprise. The decision to work with Alemba and upgrade to Alemba Service Manager would give the Council a straightforward, cost-effective solution that would minimise retraining needs and deliver a like-for-like service with ongoing support and development.

Preparing the foundations

The Council prepared for the Alemba Service Manager installation by first upgrading to the latest version of Internet Explorer. This ensured that the upgrade and testing would be undertaken in the most appropriate environment.

This approach was consistent with the Council’s strategy for sustainable, long-term IT investment.

Testing: connections, portals, processes

Alemba created a test environment for the IT team and Alemba’s project team to work together in thoroughly checking every aspect of Alemba Service Manager. Testing covered new features, new layouts, call logging and regressive testing of tasks undertaken in earlier versions.

Testing was also undertaken for the connection with MS SCCM to ensure that the team would gain a Council-wide understanding of its hardware, software and operating systems.

Alemba’s positive response to feedback and liaison with the project team ensured that testing delivered the customised and high quality upgrade that the Council expected.

During this phase, the Council’s IT team took the opportunity to become familiar with the intuitive look and feel of Alemba Service Manager. This would have a significant impact on training needs and the use of new features such as the enhanced screen designer.

Improved performance

Upgrading to Alemba Service Manager provided the Council with the ability to control and expand its ITSM activities, with the critical benefit of Alemba's ongoing maintenance and support.

While the Council's ITSM team principally uses Alemba Service Manager for logging calls, the testing and feedback phase of the upgrade enabled the team to explore all aspects of Alemba Service Manager, including new features that they would aim to develop in the longer term.

As Jeanette Sneddon, Senior Technician, recalls, *"Alemba's team were very accessible. They were always available and quick to get back to us and respond to us when we asked them to look into issues."*

The familiarisation process eliminated the need for further training. The IT team were quick to create new user forms and new order forms for examples, using the enhanced screen designer features.

The Council provides services across 2,380 sq miles of Scotland, so efficient asset management was a critical requirement for a team that needs to rigorously manage its time, costs and resources.

Alemba worked with the Council to deploy and configure Alemba Service Manager's connection to MS SCCM. Jeanette says, *"Alemba help set that up, thank goodness, to bring in all user accounts and details to give us a like-for-like upgrade."*

Reliable and accessible

Carol Brownlie, Mobile and Desktop Principal Officer, says, *"Working with Alemba is easy. They are easy to get hold of, knowledgeable about the system and very helpful. You always know exactly what's going on. From a support point of view Alemba are really good."*

The quality of Alemba's support throughout the upgrade means that an increasing proportion of the Council's 3,000 corporate users are making use of the Customer Portal to complete new user and new order forms.

"It's [Alemba Service Manager] a good system to use", says Carol. "Without any formal promotion of the system, we've seen a natural and organic growth in Customer Portal users logging everyday calls from 8% to 15% over the past 12 months."

The future is mobile

The next priority for the Council's IT team is to establish access to Alemba Service Manager on mobile devices. IT technicians are frequently working in remote and other office locations throughout the Dumfries and Galloway area. With Alemba's support, mobile access will enable officers to update the call log promptly wherever they happen to be working.

The Council plans to increase its use of asset management features. Currently the team is using the CMDB for laptops and PCs, and plans to expand that to more devices in the future.

Workflow is also on the Council's target list of future developments. Linking Alemba Service Manager to the Council's payroll structures will streamline the current manual approval process and further improve the help desk team's productivity.