

Setting New Records

Records Management Re-Invented

Records and information management in local council is traditionally viewed as a back-office function and not often renowned for its innovation.

“It isn’t always about more staff it’s about looking at your processes in a different way to be able to do more with less and that can actually be done.”

Information
Governance
Team Leader
Yvette Van Berkel

A lack of visibility of requests within the team can be as much of an issue as visibility of the team itself. The City of Onkaparinga has found ways to address both of these problems by redesigning their service model and implementing versaSRS for their internal and external customers.

The result is an Information Governance team which is now front and centre to all of its customers and is actively enabling a performance driven council.



Prior to versaSRS being implemented, requests were sent through to a team email address. This in itself created a lot of issues for the team as it was also used to communicate and give advice to each other within the group. Requests would get lost in the volume of emails and there was no visibility of something as simple as the number of requests coming through on a daily basis.

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“It was just a lot of rework and different people starting to work on the same things or something not getting done as quickly as possible”, Information Governance Team Leader Yvette Van Berkel said.

“There was no tracking around how long something was taking so you couldn’t really apply SLAs easily to how they were being done. It was just messy and labour intensive and not fit for purpose when you’re talking about a council of this size and the number of customers we have that we need to deal with.”

Consultation was an important part of the change process. The team put out a survey of what their customers were looking for from them and this helped inform their service model. Yvette also had a clear vision in mind of what she wanted to achieve from a software solution.

Creating SLAs & Trackable Service Requests

“I wanted to be able to categorise the requests; I wanted to be able to track the requests; I wanted to be able to build some quick profiles so that capture of information was consistent and there wasn’t a lot of having to go back and forward with a customer each time to get what we need; and I wanted to make sure that we’d be able to start reporting on what we were doing so that we could build SLAs against it to be able to track how effectively we were delivering and how often we were going over the time frames and what sort of reasons were causing it to occur. We went with versaSRS because it was already used by the City of Onkaparinga and could meet everything that we needed at the level that we were looking at.”

The implementation itself was set up and running in a day

“And of course, it’s just such a logical system for the team compared to what they were doing before, they’ve taken to it very easily.”

It also didn’t take very long for it to be picked up by the wider organisation as a better service model. Around 98% of requests were coming through the versaSRS portal almost immediately. In fact, feedback from customers has been so positive that requests have been coming through that people said they hadn’t bothered to try and fix until now. With the new process being so much easier and transparent, it has actually encouraged them to engage.

For the team, the benefits of being able to see each others work and support one another has improved their communication and efficiency, allowing them to work more collaboratively.

“We can see that our turnaround times are actually decreasing because we’re efficient and we can see what we’re doing and we can actually report against that.”

It has also put more opportunities for process improvement within reach and this extends beyond their own processes to those of their customers. Having a customer-centred focus on their processes enables their customers to “seamlessly do what they need to do without spending lots of down time trying to manage information or find what they need in order to go back to do their core role.”

And this has not gone unnoticed. Onkaparinga has staff nominated Team Values awards each year, and in 2016 the ‘Courageous’ award was won by the Information Governance team for their engagement across the organisation and their willingness to actively seek feedback, work with customers and look at doing things differently.

The flow on effect to team morale has been obvious.

“There’s a really great vibe within the team. There’s a lot of the changes we’ve put in place and versaSRS is a core part of that. We do get a lot of positive feedback and because we can see how we’re performing, we can see how we’re improving and that’s now really visible in the organisation. So, as a team we have a huge amount of support from our customer base and leaders in the direction that we’ve been heading and a lot of positivity about the fact that we’re openly wanting to be transparent in how we are performing and that’s greatly enhanced by the fact that we can now track what we’re doing and be able to demonstrate that.”

“These sorts of teams can have visibility and profile and make a real difference to an organisation if that’s what you set out to do.”

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