

Implementing a Unified Ticketing System with Integrated Automation for HR, IT, and Facilities & Fleet Departments



South Carolina Commission for the Blind

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BACKGROUND

The Commission for the Blind is a state agency whose core mission is to support individuals who are blind or visually impaired—referred to as consumers—in achieving independence, securing employment, and integrating fully into their communities. The agency provides vocational rehabilitation, independent living skills training, and job placement assistance to hundreds of consumers each year. Approximately 124 employees handle responsibilities such as counseling, administrative coordination, technology support, and program oversight.

In addition to these core services, the Commission operates a Business Enterprise Program comprising over 70 vending stands across the state. The Facilities & Fleet department oversees the upkeep of these stands, as well as building maintenance and vehicle scheduling. Human Resources (HR) handles personnel matters like onboarding, benefits, and accommodations. Information Technology (IT) manages hardware, software, network security, and procures assistive technology for consumers statewide. Consumer Services staff routinely email IT to request assistive technology on behalf of consumers, though many have noted difficulties tracking these requests due to the absence of a centralized system.

Every year, these departments collectively handle around 3,000 requests, ranging from simple IT fixes or HR inquiries to more complex vending machine repairs or assistive technology orders. Historically, requests have been tracked through emails, spreadsheets, or verbal discussions. This proposal seeks to explore the implementation of a unified ticketing system with integrated automation to address inefficiencies.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

HR, IT, and Facilities & Fleet rely on separate, mostly manual processes for initiating and resolving service requests. One department may use shared folders, another might rely on emails, while a third occasionally depends on staff memory or informal notes. This patchwork of methods causes confusion about how to submit requests, uncertain wait times for employees or consumers who need support, and frequent follow-up messages merely to confirm that a task has even begun.

It is also challenging to collect accurate data on service levels. HR may complete a complex ticket in four days but fail to account for an extra day or two spent locating the appropriate contact. IT may assume it handles most issues promptly while overlooking the backlog of lower-priority tickets. Meanwhile, Facilities & Fleet faces a constant balancing act, handling building maintenance, vehicle scheduling, and vending repairs without a systematic way to prioritize urgent tasks.

A unified ticketing system that includes automated routing and transparent logging addresses these pain points. Employees or Consumer Services staff could submit requests through a single portal, eliminating guesswork about who should be contacted. Automated notifications would keep people updated on a ticket's progress without repeated follow-up. Managers would see each department's workload at a glance, enabling better allocation of resources where they are most needed. Overall, standardizing the request process offers significant potential for improving efficiency, service quality, and employee satisfaction.

DATA COLLECTION

Several sources of data informed this proposal. First, existing documentation on how departments should manage requests was reviewed. Some departments had guidelines specifying contact points, while others relied on a mix of verbal instructions and personal preference. Variances often depended on individual managers or shifting day-to-day priorities.

Ten employees—managers and frontline staff from HR, IT, Facilities & Fleet, and Consumer Services—were then interviewed (See Appendix A). Their observations revealed how relying on emails and spreadsheets leads to ticket duplication or neglect, especially during busy periods. Some staff mentioned sending the same request to multiple contacts to ensure it was handled, while others struggled to track requests they assumed had been resolved. Managers recalled instances where tasks appeared finished but were never officially marked as closed.

Conversations with IT staff confirmed the Commission's technical environment includes both on-premises and cloud-based systems, which any unified tracking system would need to integrate with securely. Requirements for licensing, data storage, and user authentication via Active Directory were key considerations. Active Directory is a Microsoft directory service used for Windows domain networks that provides authentication and authorization of users and computers.

Lastly, a review of email logs, spreadsheets, and partial tracking tools estimated the annual volume of requests at roughly 3,000. Resolution times were highly inconsistent (See Appendix B). Some requests stayed open for months with no

documented updates, and several critical tasks—like assistive technology orders—went untracked until consumer complaints highlighted the oversight. Establishing a baseline for department-specific response times was complicated by such outliers, though rough estimates indicated IT could address simple issues within hours while leaving complex ones open for weeks. Facilities & Fleet tended to finish routine maintenance in a few days but could struggle for weeks if backordered parts were involved, and HR, though typically quick, lacked formal Service Level Agreements. Service Level Agreements define the mutually agreed-upon standards for service delivery, including response and resolution times, between providers and customers or between different departments.

DATA ANALYSIS

Findings show that dependence on emails, spreadsheets, and personal memory creates missing or incomplete documentation, delays in resolution, and frequent confusion. Employees often cannot tell if anyone has acknowledged a request, while managers lack an overview of workloads across multiple departments. IT may inadvertently overlook routine staff or consumer assistive technology requests when a major network incident arises. Facilities & Fleet leaves some vending repairs unresolved for extended periods if parts are on backorder and no one updates the ticket. HR addresses most requests promptly but lacks SLAs to define consistent turnaround times. In one instance, an HR accommodation request required multiple approvals but was delayed because each manager believed another had already responded. Similarly, IT occasionally discovered email requests for assistive technology only after a consumer filed a complaint, showing that routine tasks can be buried under more urgent tickets when no system enforces prioritization.

These issues become critical when consumer assistive technology requests fall through the cracks. Consumers may wait for needed equipment indefinitely, only discovering the delay after lodging a formal complaint. Tracing the status of these forgotten requests can consume hours, as staff must piece together who handled each step, if any. This evidence points to a pressing need for a single system that standardizes request intake, logs each step toward resolution, and provides clear accountability for all requests. Over time, fragmentation arose as each department adapted processes based on individual manager preferences and immediate needs, rather than adhering to a consistent, agency-wide standard.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A four-phase approach is recommended for transitioning from a fragmented process to a unified ticketing system with integrated automation. Based on stakeholder feedback, the need for a standardized system became evident once overlapping requests, missing tickets, and inconsistent data were identified as recurring problems across multiple departments.

Phase 1: Planning and Requirements

Representatives from HR, IT, Facilities & Fleet, and Consumer Services will determine the essential features, which may include role-based user permissions, automated notifications, specialized fields for assistive technology tracking, and a structured closure protocol to capture final steps. Budgetary considerations for software licensing, hardware, and employee training will be addressed, with an initial timeline of four to six weeks for this phase.

Phase 2: Pilot Program

A limited pilot in one department—likely IT—will test the solution in real scenarios, including both staff requests and consumer assistive technology orders. This pilot provides an opportunity to validate workflows, gather feedback, and refine processes before the system is launched across the organization. The pilot phase is proposed to last approximately three months to allow enough time for identifying and resolving any major issues.

Phase 3: Organization-Wide Rollout

After incorporating lessons from the pilot, the system will be deployed to HR, Facilities &

Fleet, and other relevant areas. Staff will receive instructions on how to open, update, and close tickets. Service Level Agreements will be introduced to set clear expectations for turnaround times. Deploying the system incrementally allows targeted support and reduces disruptions.

Phase 4: Continuous Improvement

Regular reviews of metrics such as average resolution time, volume of open requests, and feedback from employees and consumers will guide refinements. Automations may be adjusted, new features may be introduced, and training can be updated to address any recurring issues. Over time, these improvements should enhance the effectiveness of the system, especially where long-duration tasks like major vending repairs or complex assistive technology orders are concerned.

EVALUATION METHOD

Plans to measure success involve comparing newly generated data from the ticketing system against the former, fragmented records. Key indicators include shorter resolution times, fewer unresolved tickets lingering without updates, and more detailed documentation of final actions. Monthly and quarterly reports will enable managers to identify potential bottlenecks and make informed decisions about resource allocation.

Consumer satisfaction serves as another critical metric, particularly regarding assistive technology requests. A reduction in complaints and a faster turnaround for equipment orders would signify that the new system has tackled one of the most pressing service gaps. Surveys and interviews with staff would be deployed after the pilot phase and periodically during the organization-wide rollout. These check-ins will help determine whether the system is meeting the stated objective of streamlining internal operations and enhancing overall service delivery.

SUMMARY AND RECCOMENDATIONS

The Commission for the Blind consists of 124 staff members who collectively manage around 3,000 service requests annually across HR, IT, Facilities & Fleet, and Consumer Services. Processes that rely on email chains, spreadsheets, or verbal reminders often lead to inefficiencies, missed requests, and incomplete documentation. When these lapses involve consumer assistive technology, they can delay crucial services and spark complaints that only come to light much later.

A unified ticketing system would create a single repository for all requests, provide automated updates, and enforce accountability for tasks from submission to closure. Phasing in the new system with a pilot program, followed by a broader rollout, allows for careful adjustment based on initial feedback and ensures minimal disruption. Platforms that can integrate securely with existing systems and offer customizable workflows, robust reporting, and automated notifications. Implementation also requires strong leadership support, clear communication, and adequate training for staff. Reducing the time employees spend on manual ticket management is anticipated to be reduced, which could result in cost savings and increased satisfaction.

Overall, adopting a unified ticketing platform stands to improve efficiency, shorten resolution times, and enhance consumer experiences, especially for those reliant on assistive technology. The system should also provide valuable data insights that guide ongoing improvements, resource allocation, and departmental coordination.

REFERENCES

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Zendesk. *Faster ticket handling with Zendesk*. [Motel sees self-service climb by 3X and faster ticket handling with Zendesk's Advanced AI](#)

APPENDIX A

Sample Staff Survey Questions

1. How do you currently submit requests to HR, IT, Facilities & Fleet, or Consumer Services, and what challenges have you faced in this process?
2. Which features in a unified ticketing system (for example, automated notifications or real-time status updates) would be most beneficial to you?
3. Have you encountered prolonged delays, particularly for assistive technology orders or vending stand repairs, where the status remained unclear?
4. Approximately how many hours per week do you spend following up on unresolved issues or looking for documentation on tasks presumed completed?
5. Which training format (online tutorials, live workshops, or printed guides) would best prepare you to adapt to and use a new ticketing system effectively?

APPENDIX B

Department	Requests	Assigned	Closed	Average Days to Resolve
Information Technology	1710	1604	1658	30
Consumer Services	120	229	120	45
Human Resources	800	800	800	3
Facilities & Fleet	900	900	900	2

The table shows how roughly 3,000 tickets are distributed among the Commission's main departments. Noticeable gaps between tickets opened, assigned, and closed reflect the inconsistencies in the current system. In addition, long average wait times in areas of information technology and Consumer Services.