

Customer Story -
University of Michigan

**America's #1 Public University Promotes Academic
Success with Comprehensive IT Service Management**



The University of Michigan's Ross Business School is driving greater efficiency and saving money across the school's IT and operations departments; enhancing learning, teaching, and research.

About University of Michigan

The University of Michigan is ranked as the best public university in the United States, as well as the country's top research university, boasting 502 reported inventions. Established in 1817, it is Michigan's oldest institute of higher education, one of the state's leading employers, and a founding member of the Association of American Universities. The University of Michigan has approximately 60,000 undergraduate and graduate students from all 50 US states and 128 countries.

Selected rankings

#4	#1	#21	TOP 4	484	#1
Top public school in the U.S.	Best college town in the U.S.	Universities worldwide	Employer in Michigan state	New inventions reported (2018)	Public research university in U.S.

The university operates 19 schools, one of which is the Stephen M. Ross School of Business ("Ross"). The Ross degree programs are recognized as being among the top programs in the field. There are over 4,240 students enrolled in the school and 153 full-time faculty.





Multiple needs, workflows, and complexities

IT Support Services for the Ross School of Business serves students, faculty, and administrative staff. The IT department is divided into four sections: Support Services, AV Infrastructure, App and Web Services, and Admissions Services. These IT teams regularly collaborate with University of Michigan's central IT department. However, due to the size of the university, each school is independent and has its own perspective on IT needs, workflows, challenges, and complexity.

Prior to SysAid, Ross IT was using ServiceNow, which was configured to make no distinction between service requests and incidents. This made it very challenging to collect data and gain perspective on service requests versus incidents' pain points or the effectiveness of IT support workflows. In addition, the IT team felt they needed to be able to easily configure their operational workflows to be more centered on service expectations and meet their changing needs.

Similarly, Ross IT was not able to produce customized reporting with its previous solutions. Rather, it was dependent on the general campus IT for creating and sharing activity reports. The result was an impactful wait before reports were available, as well as metrics that were only partially useful.

For asset tracking, Ross IT developed its own in-house system. As such, it was initially tailored to meet the department's specific needs. However, the homemade solution eventually became outdated and its lack of integration with the service management system turned it into a growing, time-consuming burden for IT staff.

Finally, Ross IT had no way to quickly and universally share information on common tech problems or necessary updates. This again caused time and efficiency issues for the team members, who had to potentially address the same issues or manually keep the support community informed of new developments.



Cheryl Sobkow,
Director of IT Support
Services for the Ross School
of Business at the University
of Michigan

"Having all the IT service and support pieces integrated in one system allows us to tell a more complete story."

‘Support, sustain, and maintain’ in a one-stop solution

Ross IT selected SysAid to overcome its challenges due to the system’s flexibility and integrated services.

One example of its flexibility is the ability to categorize tickets as either service requests or incidents, with automated escalation and routing according to the type of issue. This has significant importance for the IT team, as each provides a definition for the type of work required, resulting in a focus on service expectations.

Similarly, integrating asset management via the CMDB has centralized Ross IT’s overview of its technology inventory and associated asset information to their corresponding customers. Using the CMDB function for asset management ensures everyone is aware of the organization’s assets, therefore aligning their support with the organizational strategy surrounding lifecycle management.

A knowledge base was also introduced for internal use by IT staff. It was rapidly adopted and is being extensively used for sharing practical information.

Ross IT has taken integration of the SysAid solution even further with several APIs developed to suit their specific needs:



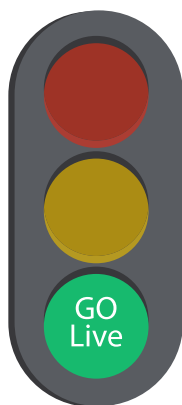
- The Business School hosts many events, requiring IT support and services (such as for the recording of lectures, hardware requests, troubleshooting, booking rooms, etc.). The IT department has an in-house event management system, for which it designed an API that generates auto-populated SysAid tickets. The API gathers all of the necessary event information such as customer requirements, setup and takedown details; and initiates the service cycle beginning with the SysAid ticket.
- The Ross IT team also wrote an API that streamlines collaboration between them and the general campus IT department. It generates a ticket for the general IT department’s service management system directly based on a ticket from within the Ross IT instance of SysAid.



Built-in reporting means Ross IT is able to quickly generate reports, produce analytics as desired, and deliver insights directly to selected recipients, which saves a significant amount of time for the IT department.

Cheryl Sobkow, Director of IT Support Services for the Ross School of Business, has had a chance to see the impact of SysAid with a broad and deep perspective. Before coming to the Ross School, she had already been with University of Michigan for over 25 years and worked in the hospital IT department for 21 years. Cheryl's career had been primarily in the world of IT, with various roles in service desk and support, enterprise IT projects, and service management. As she puts it, "IT is my passion."

Drawing on her extensive experience with various types of service management tools, Cheryl said that SysAid provides an overarching advantage for her team. "Having all the pieces we needed integrated in one system allows us to tell a more complete story."



2 MONTHS ONLY

In addition, Cheryl noted, the SysAid setup and deployment was quick and seamless. **Including training the relevant team members, it was ready to go live in two months.** She added that SysAid has also been easily configured to meet her changing departmental needs: "I find the tool very intuitive, simple to use, and it serves a really vital function for us as we scale."

'Helping us help them' faster and more efficiently

With its new comprehensive approach, Ross IT has transformed many areas of its operations:

Asset and ticket tracking within SysAid is providing important trending information and other systemic insights, helping the IT department plan for the future more effectively and within budget.



Event coordinators spend **54% less time** submitting tickets and service requests as a result of the introduction of the automated ticket creation API.



SysAid's robust reporting tool, with the built-in scheduling feature, gives Ross IT the independence to provide timely, accurate, and detailed information to the university's leadership team.



The knowledge base is facilitating greater education within Ross IT; with field teams posting information, they are able to provide and exchange knowledge more easily.



Asked about what she sees as success for Ross IT, Cheryl replied, "Partnering with faculty, staff, and students for success in using the latest technologies, so they can achieve their objectives. SysAid gives us a centralized management view of it all, so we can create processes that assist us with their success."



Growing, expanding, and preparing for the future

The future for Ross IT is one of sustainability and growth in key support areas. As the Business School continues to host more and more events, the SysAid integration will be similarly extended to provide support for a higher volume of event management activities.

The IT department also intends to expand its use of automation to build employee onboarding and offboarding workflows.

In addition, having seen great success with the SysAid knowledge base, Ross IT is looking forward to extending its use to end users for greater self-help. Noting that, as the school grows and technology changes, the knowledge base will become even more important to support rapid adaptability.

More generally, Cheryl foresees the greatest changes in balancing end-user experiences with security and privacy. This will entail keeping staff, students, and faculty connected, so that IT teams can provide support, yet allow them to be more mobile, whether at home, on campus, or while traveling.



The integration of technology and learning spaces is also changing, requiring the extension of access to secure, on-demand, cloud-based technology to over 100 study rooms constantly in use at the business school, as well as public spaces and classrooms.

“Easy, secure, and seamless,” Cheryl concluded, “those are the three major tech challenges ahead of us.”



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