

# Unified Customer Care Team

Improving State Operations



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*Office of Management and Enterprises Services  
Information Services Division (OMES ISD) and  
State of Oklahoma*



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Project Completion: November 2, 2015

## Executive Summary

The Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) Unified Customer Care Initiative has enabled the State of Oklahoma to bring fragmented Information Technology support processes together into a unified, high-performing process which has dramatically improved the speed and quality of IT services provided to customers throughout Oklahoma's State government.

Prior to the Unified Customer Care Initiative, many customer service inquiries had to be transferred between different teams before they could be resolved, often multiple times. Each transfer added to the amount of time required for resolution, and made it more difficult for customers to understand the status of their inquiry. Unfortunately, this fragmented process applied to diverse inquiries ranging from simple email password resets to urgent building maintenance requests. Since many of the customer service inquiries impact key business functions at agencies throughout the state, OMES saw an opportunity to improve its own operations while also strengthening those of its agency partners.

OMES' position as a service provider to many elements of state government created a unique opportunity to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness across the state.

Customer Service quality has improved substantially as a result of changes made due to the Unified Customer Care Initiative:

- First Contact Resolution rates have nearly doubled
- Overall resolution times have improved significantly
- Communications with customers have become more transparent
- Internal staff have reported substantial streamlining of their workflows

## Business Problem

After establishment as the central provider for Information Services in Oklahoma's state government, the Office of Management and Enterprise Services gradually took on customer service responsibility for a variety of technology systems and support processes. These systems and processes are often essential to the business functions of state agencies, but they came from many different origins and operated with very different performance histories and customer expectations.

Over time, OMES Service Desk staff noted that service metrics for some systems were unacceptably low and therefore pulled down the organization's overall performance. This situation meant that customers could experience inconsistent results when they requested support.

## Solution

OMES started the Unified Customer Care Initiative to ensure that customers receive a consistent, effective, and positive experience regardless of the specific reason they request support. As a result of the Initiative's findings, OMES created the Unified Customer Care Team (UCCT).

The Unified Customer Care Team provides a new, multi-disciplinary escalation path for customer requests and incidents. Front line customer service agents are able to escalate difficult or complex requests to the Unified Customer Care Team and be confident that the customer will be matched with someone who has the expertise necessary to answer their questions or resolve their issue.

Establishing the Unified Customer Care Team took relatively little time once the plan was developed, but OMES staff first had to take on the initiative to map out support processes, identify performance weak points, and address knowledge gaps. This initiative was largely driven by staff in the support teams who saw opportunities to streamline internal workflows while improving results for their customers.

Staff with expertise and experience from a broad array of agency partners and technical backgrounds work together on the UCCT to fulfill customer requests or resolve customer-reported issues, often before the customer

has even hung up the phone. Bringing this diverse group of skilled personnel together has reduced or eliminated numerous bottlenecks that hampered customer service, particularly for customer requests that previously had to be shepherded through multiple teams with varying workloads and reporting structures.

Cost avoidance metrics are not yet available, but performance metrics since the Unified Customer Care Team's establishment in November 2015 have shown ongoing improvement.

## Significance

The Office of Management and Enterprise Services supports diverse agency customers that carry out vital work on a daily basis as they serve Oklahoma's citizens in service sectors ranging from healthcare to public safety. Their work is critical, and so is their time. The Unified Customer Care Team has enabled OMES to better support partner agencies in virtually every business process that utilizes technology, and in today's environment that is essentially everything.

At this time, nearly every executive branch agency in the State of Oklahoma has already benefited from the OMES Unified Customer Care Team through:

- Decreased wait times for request processing (access provisioning, equipment orders, etc)
- Decreased wait times for technical incident resolution
- Greater transparency into incident status

As agencies continue to benefit from improved efficiency and support, the citizens they serve will benefit as well.

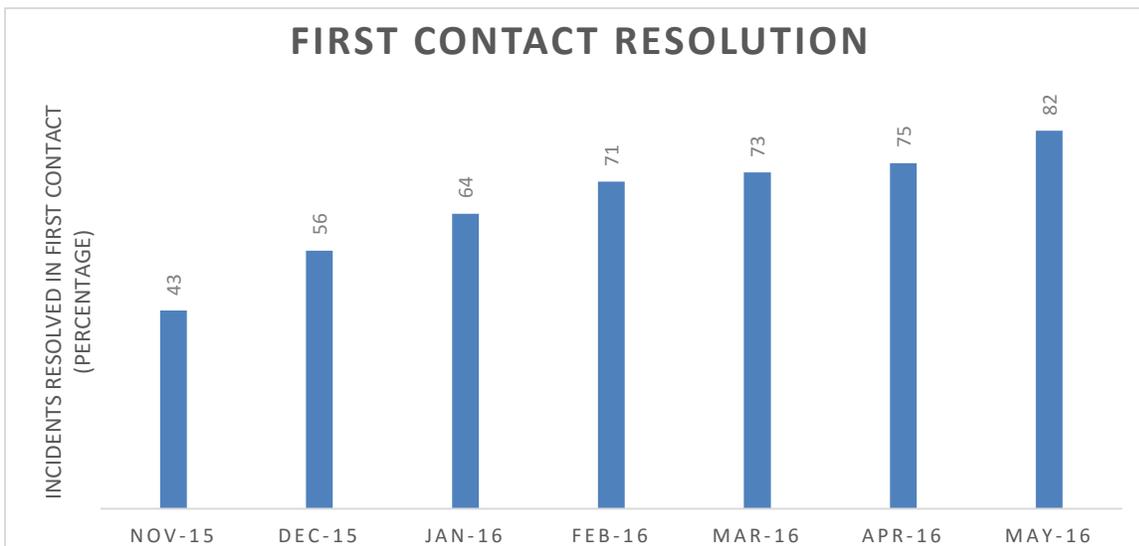
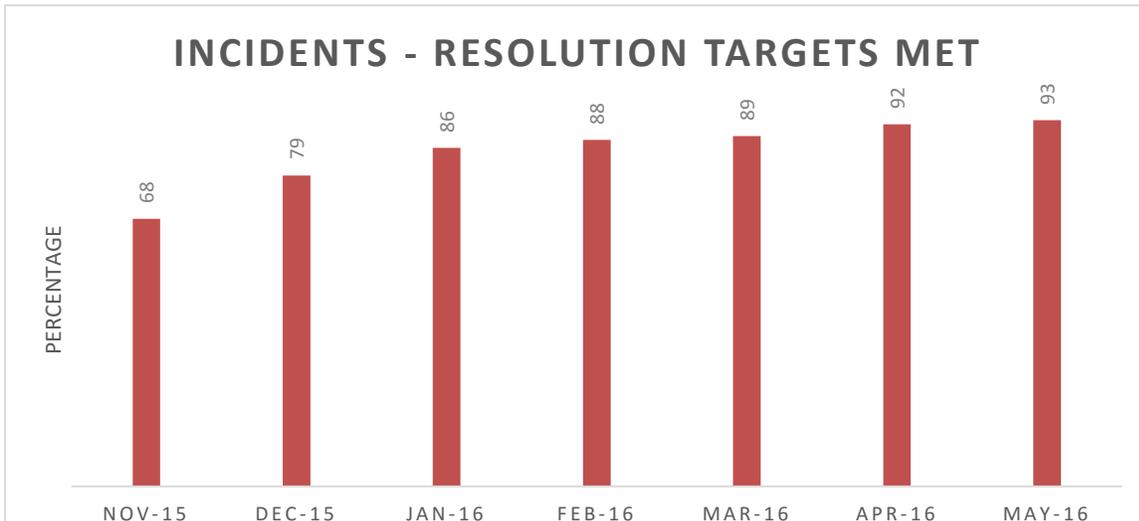
### **Strategic & NASCIO Priority Alignment**

This project aligns with the NASCIO State CIO Priorities by consolidating and optimizing OMES' internal and external operations. The project also aligns with the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services' IT consolidation plan by enhancing the value of state information through IT tools and helps to increase collaboration and data analysis. The

implementation of the Unified Customer Care Team also enhanced state agencies' operations through improved access to technology support.

## Impact

Designated stakeholders from within OMES and its client agencies worked together to establish clear metrics by which the Unified Customer Care Team initiative could be evaluated. These metrics focus on incidents that meet resolution time targets and first contact resolution (FCR).



These metrics show considerable improvement since the establishment of the Unified Customer Care Team, including a near doubling of successful first contact resolution. Ideally, the improved efficiencies that were achieved as a result of this initiative will continue to yield positive results well into the future.

Citizens should never have to worry about being stuck in a line because the DMV agent is waiting for their password to be reset, or a longer wait on a job application because the state's background check system needs to be checked. Oklahoma's Unified Customer Care Initiative has demonstrated that opportunities to reduce unnecessary friction points within government agencies can also reduce friction between citizens and their government.