

DATA-POWERED CUSTOMER SERVICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

HOW THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE FUELS CUSTOMER CARE WITH DATA-BACKED CONFIDENCE



THE COMPANY

The University of Louisville is more than just a public university — it is a diverse community set on helping develop engaged citizens, leaders, and scholars. The university describes itself as a “Community of Care,” one that cares for one another and the community beyond. Ultimately, the University of Louisville looks to give everyone the opportunity to find and pursue their own noble purpose and make a difference.

Founded in 1798, the University of Louisville has a wealth of history detailing its success in higher education within the United States. This includes many expansions, closings, desegregation in 1950, joining the state system of higher education in 1970, and even athletic success with its NCAA Division I basketball, football, and volleyball teams. This rich history positions the university as a leader in academic excellence, transformational research, community service, and the advancement of educational opportunity.

The University of Louisville’s Business Operations unit — made up of the Customer Service and Quality Improvement, transactional Human Resources, and transactional Finance teams — delivers an innovative approach to the key processes and transactional systems that allow it to conduct administrative and business actions. The goal is to provide responsive digital methods of working, while keeping the highest level of customer service through the power of data.



COMPANY TYPE

Public University

LOCATION

Louisville, KY

SIZE

13 employees in Business Operations at the time of implementation

40 employees in Business Operations currently

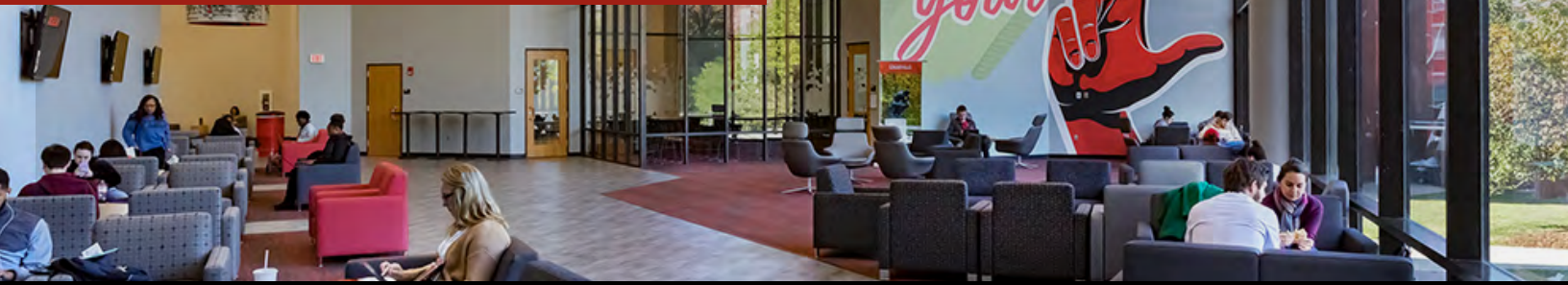
SOLUTION(S) BEFORE BRAINSELL

One single email account

SOLUTION(S) AFTER BRAINSELL

Zendesk customer service software

THE PROBLEM



Customer Support Management in One Email Account Limits Data, Efficiency, & Visibility

The University of Louisville set up its Business Operations unit in 2016. As in any shared service organization, the goal was to efficiently process support tickets and requests, as well as supply clear visibility into how the university services its employees and students.

However, initial processes extremely limited the team's ability to accomplish this goal. According to Melissa Shuter, Executive Director of the Operations Support Services Unit at the University of Louisville, the team was initially using a single email account that managed all the service requests. Colleagues would then login to that email account to assess requests and conduct day-to-day business. The manual nature of this process lengthened response times and complicated administrative and business actions.

The Business Operations team also required data to better understand how they engaged employees and students through customer support to better understand what is working, what is not and prevent anything from slipping through the cracks. This level of insight helps customer support teams to continue honing their craft, while also supplying actionable results on the team's success. Given the manual nature of having multiple people working out of a single email address to handle issues, it was nearly impossible to understand how well the team was performing.

Ultimately, Shuter realized that the email process was not at the required scale to address current workloads, let alone to scale with the team's predicted growth. The team understood that it required software that better positioned its teams to streamline workflows, while also increasing response rates and customer satisfaction. Shuter and her team needed to quickly assess the market to understand what customer service software and CRM offerings were available to meet their specific challenges and use case.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"We were focused on centralizing transactional work for our processes, and data was key to moving us forward through changes. We spent a year using a service [email] account to manage communications, but I quickly realized that this was not scalable. We needed something that would scale with our growth — and our growth was coming very quickly."

— *Melissa Shuter,*
University of Louisville

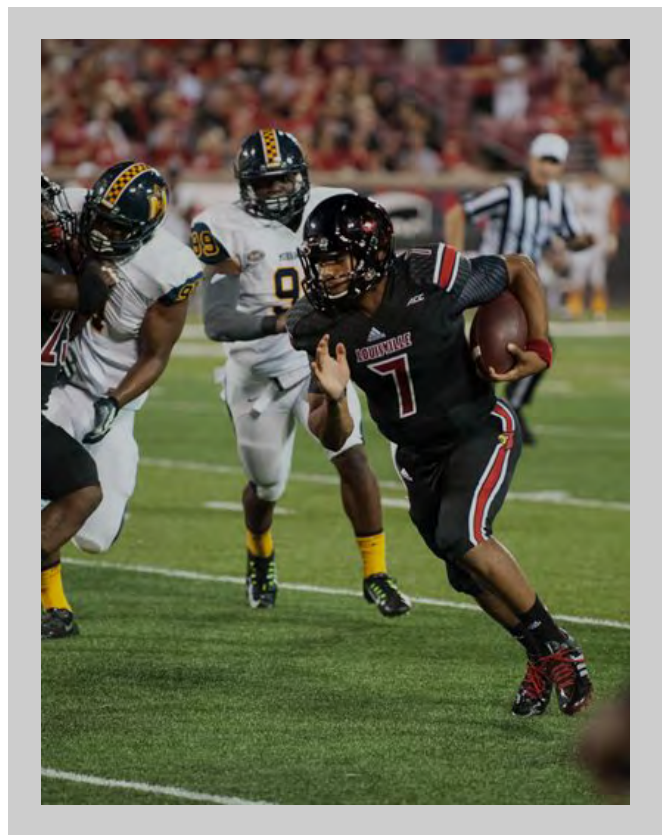
THE SOLUTION

A Customer Service Platform for Data-Driven Tracking & Prioritization

After sitting in on a BrainSell webcast during their CRM and customer service solution research process, Shuter and her team sat down with BrainSell to discuss their specific needs. BrainSell was able to then direct them to Zendesk out of several options, which checked all the boxes in what they were looking to do as a business unit.

The team launched Zendesk in early 2017 with a trial subscription. Shuter challenged her team to prepare themselves to get everything ready to stand up a full instance of the software once the trial expired. The team went fully live with Zendesk in July 2017 in the customer service department only, officially better enabling themselves to track, prioritize and solve support tickets.

The University of Louisville's Business Operations unit went on a scaling spree over the course of the following year. In January 2018, Shuter and her



team launched Zendesk's Talk functionality. This allows the customer service team to record phone calls and include that audio information within tickets—offering even more insight into support needs. Six months later, they launched its Collaboration functionality to bring the full Business Operations team onto Zendesk and enable them to efficiently communicate with one another to solve customer questions.

Expansion continued as the team began working on its Knowledge Base buildout in December 2018. This further enables reps to support customers by offering a repository of content to defer calls, support customers, and actions are all measured in a specific location. Shuter and her team were able to launch its Knowledge Base to the whole university in October 2019.

With BrainSell's vast knowledge of the marketplace, as well as Zendesk's plethora of capabilities, the university better positioned itself to address its current service challenges and set a foundation for scale.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"There is absolutely no way we could handle the volume and variety of transactions that come through without a tool like Zendesk."

– *Melissa Shuter,*
University of Louisville

THE RESULTS



Streamlined, Data-Fueled Workflows Powered by Tech = Better Customer Experience

With a project that originally started with just the customer service team, the Business Operations unit at the University of Louisville saw rapid adoption that helped them open Zendesk up to the entire unit within a year. Now, the Business Operations unit is positioning itself to further expand its tech stack to further enhance its employee and student experience, in partnership with BrainSell.

Notable results from implementing Zendesk include the ability to streamline workflows in the face of increased workload. While they continue to see the number of support ticket submissions increase, they have also seen a clear decrease in the average time it takes to reply and work each ticket. Shuter's team can now do more, in less time, while also boosting their staff and student experience with the university.

Shuter says they expect to see their service level agreements improve by 15% and are exploring more agreements to guide service.

With the help of Knowledge Base, Shuter and her team understand what content is most valuable to their customer support initiatives. This helps reps supply relevant content and deflect more calls and tickets. Insights gathered from comments and other content engagement also help the team understand what other topics they should be focusing on to better support their employees and students.

With Zendesk's Knowledge Base functionality, Shuter expects to deflect 10% of support tickets by enabling customers to self-serve.

Ultimately, the University of Louisville has positioned themselves to further refine their processes and expand their customer service initiatives. A continued relationship with BrainSell enables Shuter and her team to consider other aspects of their operations, such as marketing automation to better understand and engage employees and students. That continued relationship between BrainSell and the University of Louisville will, in turn, lead to continued growth and success.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"I've been extremely pleased with Zendesk as a product. The support [we receive] is very clear. They provide a great example of what we can grow to be."

– *Melissa Shuter,*
University of Louisville



About BrainSell

BrainSell helps companies thrive by solving business challenges with expert guidance and best-of-class technology. We have offered unbiased software selection, implementation, support, and consulting services to clients of all sizes across North America for over 25 years.

Our methodology involves helping clients identify the clearest areas for potential improvement in their processes. If technology can help you, then the BrainSell team can guide you on your path to business growth.

Looking for CRM, ERP or Accounting Technologies?
Contact us to learn more!

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