

# Curvature

## CLIENT SUCCESS: SERVICE DELIVERY AND CUSTOMER PORTAL APPLICATIONS

### SNAPSHOT

## CURVATURE

### ORGANIZATION

With headquarters in Santa Barbara, California, and offices in North America, Europe and Asia, Curvature sells pre-owned and new-surplus networking equipment and services solutions.

### CHALLENGE

Create a fully integrated service delivery platform that streamlines service desk operations and improves reporting and analysis. Create a customer-facing portal that allows clients to access information about the details and status of their assets and contracts.

### STRATEGY

Design and develop service delivery and customer portal applications that are integrated with back-end Oracle systems to consolidate data and improve accessibility to information.

### RESULTS

Users at the company now have quick access to information about equipment, contract details, and service entitlements. Analysts can make assessments and measure day-to-day performance about incidents and how problems are solved. Customers can access details about assets, contracts, service levels, expirations, and knowledge about products.

*Curvature is the world's leading provider of pre-owned and new-surplus networking equipment and services solutions. The company supplies IT hardware and support services to more than 10,000 organizations worldwide. Curvature strives to help its clients obtain better control of their enterprise IT budgets by breaking the OEM stranglehold, giving companies freedom to make choices about how they invest in themselves.*

To deliver on that objective, Curvature engaged Visus LLC to design and develop a service delivery platform that is fully integrated with inventory, field service and geographic mapping. Visus also created a customer portal that gives Curvature's clients access to information about equipment they have purchased, contracts, support entitlements and other details via a web-based responsive application.

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**– Mark Kelly, Chief Technology Officer, Curvature**

"Visus works closely with us to design and develop solutions from a blank slate with a vision for identifying the business needs and understanding the challenges to be overcome," says Mark Kelly, chief technology officer at Curvature. "There is an art to getting clear requirements for an application. It involves focusing on the core question: what are we trying to accomplish? The Visus team excels at that. They iterate that back and forth to extract the requirements, even when those needs may not yet be fully clear to the business."

## Fully Integrated Service Delivery Platform Streamlines Support

Curvature started as a seller of refurbished IT equipment. The company later expanded its offerings to include maintenance services. Curvature needed a way to provide service desk technicians with access to information about customer contracts, support entitlements, and other critical records. The company tried off-the-shelf cloud-based support ticket solutions. But because those solutions were not integrated with Curvature's Oracle system, technicians could not provide real-time support services. Laborious manual searching was required, data was cut and pasted between systems, and equipment serial numbers were unsupported.

"We knew we needed to start from a blank slate with our service delivery platform to support our 24/7 service desk," Kelly explains. "The project could go virtually anywhere. That's why we chose Visus to help us. The Visus team is comprised of experts who can creatively see an entire business challenge and start working toward a vision. That doesn't mean trying to shoehorn a problem into a solution they already know. It means having a thoughtful conversation and discovery about what the application needs to do at any given time and asking if each action has a value for getting to the next step."

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Visus created a fully integrated service delivery platform for Curvature that vastly improves the speed and quality of maintenance and support services. Now, when a customer calls with an issue about a piece of equipment, a service desk technician simply enters the serial number. The new system accesses the related information from Curvature’s Oracle system and populates required fields in the support ticket. Integration with inventory, field service, and geographic mapping enables Curvature to track equipment, contract details, and service entitlements directly to a customer so problems can be resolved quickly. Company analysts can access the system to make assessments and measure day-to-day performance about incidents and how problems were solved for customers.

“Through their design work, the Visus team was able to quickly filter out what is truly critical and important at each phase of the project,” Kelly says. “That enabled them to create a clean interface that doesn’t throw everything onto the screen at the same time. Users can focus more on the problem they’re trying to solve and less on finding the data they need.”

### Customer Portal Facilitates Asset Management and Communication

Company leaders at Curvature also wanted to provide their customers with access to information about the details and status of their assets and contracts. They wanted to offer the ability to load assets and contracts from other vendors into the system as well so customers can manage all of their IT assets from a single place.

Visus designed and deployed a B2B customer portal that enables Curvature’s clients to see what equipment they purchased and have under contract with Curvature and other vendors. Customers access the portal through a website with secure logon. A user-friendly interface provides details about assets and contracts, service levels, expirations, and knowledge base about products. The portal provides a clear

way for customers to understand their entitlements and Curvature’s support obligations.

“Working closely with Visus, we were able to go from concept to an operational customer portal application,” Kelly says. “The Visus team can take a concept and spin it through cycles to come up with a useable application that can be scaled and built upon with needs that haven’t been accounted for yet but may be necessary in the future.”

Experts from Visus and Curvature have worked together to continually refine and scale the customer portal. The next generation of the portal enables users to see all assets in their IT organization to enable solid IT asset management across the globe. Inventory functionality allows users to complete inventories throughout the system. To effectively enable that, Visus built a mobile application. Technicians can use the camera from a smartphone to scan equipment serial numbers and look them up in the asset management system. The application creates reports that show any discrepancies between the asset list and what is scanned for inventory management and audits.

### Widespread Impact of a Long Term Technology Partner

Visus has helped Curvature with its technology needs for many years. Along the way, Curvature has enjoyed tremendous company growth. Mark Kelly says Curvature’s partnership with Visus is a key factor in that expansion. “The applications that Visus developed with us have enabled us to scale at a very high rate,” he says. “Our business has blossomed. Visus has been there when we were smaller and stayed with us as we have grown to the global business we are now.”

Kelly says the expertise of the Visus team has a positive impact on Curvature’s technology professionals. “We have application developers on staff,” he says. “Visus comes in and raises the game of the developers they work with. Everybody absorbs their expertise, process, and commitment to high development standards to improve their own processes and standards. Visus has the flexibility of working wholly on a project or fitting in as the extension of our team. They conduct periodic check-ins and team meetings to communicate progress and ask questions.”

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The value of a true partnership is evident to leaders at Curvature. “We could get an offshore provider to put an application together for us, cheaply,” Kelly explains. “But they may not be within standards, we may lack visibility into the coding process, and we may be left with code that is difficult to manage. Ease of administration is not ensured because there is no partnership and no deep understanding from them about how you want to use the application. Consequently, there is a higher cost in adopting and maintaining that application than there would be with an application that Visus produces. Working with an offshore provider, you typically have no visibility into the resources and you must be completely in control of the design. The Visus team adds value with their ability to understand business needs. They are problem solvers.”

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“The key to Visus’ success is the time they spend hiring the right resources,” Kelly concludes. “They keep a very high standard for the resources they hire so their team is comprised of experts who can understand business needs. They have an ability to step back and see the entire solution. With Visus, you get a partner that helps you put the right design in place.”

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