

Petroleum Development Oman

SMAX successfully delivers efficient self-service for 12,000 users, while SMAX smart analytics support root cause and trend analysis.



Who is Petroleum Development Oman?

Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) is the leading exploration and production company in the Sultanate of Oman. The company delivers the majority of the country's crude oil production and natural gas supply. PDO operates in a concession area of about 90,000 km² (one third of Oman's geographical area), has around 209 producing oil fields, 55 producing gas fields, more than 8,000 active wells, a diverse workforce of more than 8,500 employees, comprised of 70 different nationalities, and more than 70,000 contractors.

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ELCHIN MAHMUDOV
SMAX Technical Lead
Petroleum Development Oman

Requirement to Enhance Service Delivery Management

Around 2007, PDO committed to OpenText™ Service Manager for a process-driven service management strategy. This provided an improved service portal for all 12,000 end users and increased process automation and operational efficiencies. However, after 10 years it had grown heavy in customization which proved problematic not only in upgrading the solution, but also in its regular maintenance and updates.

Elchin Mahmudov, SMAX Technical Lead for PDO, explains further: "We'd added extra fields and database items. Even though this functionality may no longer be in use, it affected how we evolve the solution. We also wanted to use our data more intelligently, to support root cause analysis and effective trend analysis.

The company also aimed to consolidate its service and asset management into a single solution, as different solutions were in use for both. Mahmudov and the team were introduced to OpenText™ SMAX and evaluated this alongside ServiceNow. "We were tempted by ServiceNow, as other divisions in our company group use this," says Mahmudov. "However, MicroFocus (now part of OpenText™) proposed a combination of SMAX and Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) Operations Orchestration



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At a Glance

- **Industry**
Chemicals
- **Location**
Sultanate of Oman
- **Challenge**
Consolidate asset and service management delivery while leveraging AI and machine learning to create a more efficient and engaging experience for 12,000 end users
- **Products and Services**
SMAX
Operations Orchestration
- **Critical Success Factors**
 - + Improved service agent productivity with faster issue resolution time
 - + Fully retained existing investment
 - + Improved transparency and vendor accountability
 - + Time and cost savings through rising trend in user self-service
 - + Smart analytics enabled root cause and trend analysis of requests and incidents

(OO) to automate our service delivery even further. We consulted with Gartner and were advised that SMAX was a market challenger at the time but was clearly progressing. We spoke to other organizations who had a very positive SMAX implementation experience and this, coupled with the fact that we could retain our existing license investment by upgrading to SMAX, made the decision for us.”

Effective Partnership Swiftly Delivers SMAX-Driven Service Portal

The SMAX implementation was a joint effort between a PDO project team and OpenText™ Professional Services. Initial architecture and design workshops took place and just after the implementation went into production COVID-19 struck the world and all remaining interaction had to be done remotely. This was a concern, but in the end the online delivery turned out to be a great success. Engagement meetings, UAT sessions, and training for 90 service agents were all conducted remotely and very efficiently. Within a three-month timescale Digital Gateway, the new service management portal, was live.

Leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) within SMAX, ‘Sanad’, an interactive virtual assistant was introduced to support users who want to request an IT asset, access to an IT service, or new software. Requests go through a pre-defined process for review and approval. SMAX is also open for business to any non-IT departments. “We recently onboarded our communications colleagues who manage our intranet and social media channels. Within just an hour we built the necessary SMAX processes for them, and within two weeks the department was trained and operational with SMAX, massively improving their tracking, monitoring, and team transparency,” comments Mahmudov.

The team appreciates the SMAX built-in smart analytics. “By leveraging SMAX smart analytics we have a snapshot of all requests and incidents so that we can identify trends easily. We can then proactively create a ticket to solve a common issue, or produce a knowledge article to support our users, pre-empting future requests and fixing issues before further problems arise,” says Mahmudov.

Asset and Vendor Management Integration Improves Efficiency

The full automation vision was realized with a project to provide office WiFi access. SMAX and OO integrate to launch a fully automated scenario without any manual intervention. Users can track the live status of their request on Digital Gateway with no need to follow up by phone or email. IT knowledge is built by creating more knowledge articles and making them available to the PDO community with ratings, empowering users to self-service. SMAX-based interactive forums where users submit ideas and ask questions improve collaboration between IT and the PDO community. With automated workflows, better access to historic data, and supported by readily available knowledge articles, service agents can resolve requests faster, improving end user satisfaction.

Leveraging the out-of-the-box best practice Asset Management module in SMAX, PDO introduced end-to-end asset management. Starting from receiving assets from suppliers, to retiring them. The assets include end user devices, such as laptops, desktops, and printers, as well as IT assets, such as servers and datacenter-related assets.

PDO outsources much of its IT delivery to a trusted partner. SMAX centrally tracks and reports on the partner’s KPIs and SLAs. Monthly

reports provide much-needed transparency and traceability and the PDO team uses them as a basis for invoicing and improving vendor accountability.

SMAX and Operations Orchestration—Automated Workflows to Deliver Value Faster

Now that SMAX and OO are operational, Mahmudov can see so much future potential: “We knew that implementing SMAX would be just the beginning of our journey. We now have the best integrated platform in the industry to enable full integration and automation to deliver value to our audiences. Transparency, availability, and convenience for our users were the main goals, alongside an improved way to manage our vendors. All of these have been achieved and the anecdotal feedback we have is clear: ‘this is exactly aligned with the company’s ongoing vision of more automation and simplification’ and ‘it is straightforward and very easy’.”

In the future, PDO will look to automate more workflows. OO specializes in automating and integrating IT processes across heterogeneous systems—perfect for PDO’s diverse IT architecture. With the versatility of SMAX and OO, PDO looks to design and automate processes to clean up inactive WiFi user accounts, deploy software based on approved service portal requests, retire expired assets from Active Directory, and add or remove users from assignment groups.

Most Successful IT Delivery Project within PDO

There is a clear increasing trend in self-service and virtual agent-assisted requests, which is music to Mahmudov’s ears: “More than 1,000

“The slogan for this project was ‘zero customization’ as the belief is that SMAX can accommodate any requirement.”

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users access the Digital Gateway each day. Since SMAX was launched four months ago currently 15-20 percent of those are self-service led, using SMAX smart search capabilities and knowledge articles. As we roll out further automation and increase our knowledge article base we expect this percentage to rise significantly. Especially once we introduce our mobility platform.” The slogan for this project was ‘zero customization’ as the belief is that SMAX can accommodate any requirement. It has been deployed with purely out-of-the-box functionality and has been successfully upgraded twice since the initial deployment. The

next step is to introduce a mobile platform to provide more access options and flexibility.

Mahmudov concludes: “Good enterprise-wide communication, effective project organization, and an excellent partnership with Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) were all key to the success of our SMAX and Operations Orchestration implementation. It was named as the most successful IT delivery project in the company last year, and will provide many benefits, including significant cost savings, above and beyond those already realized.”

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