

University of Milan

SMAX with Universal Discovery and UCMDB support SLA compliance and elevate the user experience with a self-service portal and single point of contact.

About the University of Milan

The University of Milan is a public research institution with branches throughout Milan. One of the largest universities in Europe, it enrolls more than 65,000 students and employs approximately 10,000 permanent teachers, researchers, administrators, and library staff.

Removing Roadblocks, Regaining Control

Like many higher education institutions, the University of Milan managed IT and non-IT services for students and departments with open

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IT Director
University of Milan

source tools. After working well for years, this strategy became less effective as services multiplied. Consequently, the University began looking for a practical way to grow self-service for users and relieve the heavy burden on IT teams.

"Many of our tools were based on old Open Source solutions, which did not offer ways to evolve to new use cases," said Yuri Pasquinelli, IT director at the University. "It was expensive to maintain our environment, and we had difficulty keeping tracks of IT requests because multiple channels could be used to submit them without any central management or consolidation. We needed more control."

The current inventory of in-house tools proved unable to deliver that control, so the team started working with Hogwart Srl, a company specializing in organizational and IT consultancy, OpenText Gold Partner, that had already analyzed the University's services and managed interdepartmental communications. Knowing that the University needed an advanced service management model, Hogwart recommended OpenText SMAX for the job. Based on embedded machine learning and analytics, SMAX delivers a smart approach to extending service management beyond IT functions.



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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO

At a Glance

- **Industry**
Education
- **Location**
Italy
- **Challenge**
Grow self-service, strengthen SLA compliance, and unburden IT with an advanced service management tool
- **Products and Services**
SMAX
Universal Discovery and CMDB
- **Success Highlights**
 - + Boosted productivity for nearly 200,000 users with easy self-service.
 - + Strengthened SLA compliance with intuitive out of the box capabilities.
 - + Improved service quality through full request visibility and traceability.
 - + Enabled end-to-end asset lifecycle management with effective CMDB integration.



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Codeless Configuration for On-Time Delivery

The team agreed on a two-phased approach, starting with the introduction of a student service catalog. After a Hogwart-led analysis to define functional and process requirements, five service categories were chosen to support students throughout their education journey. These categories covered enrollment, career management, post-graduation administrative aspects, fees and benefits, and foreign student support.

Hogwart was responsible for the SMAX implementation—managing tests, setting up

pre-production and production environments, configuring the service catalog, and integrating the University's master data with SMAX. This integration step included creating SMAX user profiles, testing functions, and training operators and administrators.

According to Pasquinelli, "SMAX's out of the box and codeless configuration capabilities were a key success factor. They ensured that our production deployment times were met and that our internal teams can easily manage the most common management activities—such as updating the service catalog, configuring specific services, and setting up requester user and operator groups."

Nearly 200,000 More Productive Users

Thanks to SMAX, non-IT staff in more than 30 departments now manage the service catalog and service requests. They also manage a reservation system with which students can request virtual or in-person meetings with faculty staff. The Human Resources and Real Estate Departments use SMAX workflows for scheduling COVID tests, delivering student

equipment, and other departmental or administrative procedures.

"The introduction of the SMAX-driven student portal was a big success," said Pasquinelli. "We offer more than 90 services split into different categories. Over 170,000 users submit approximately 16,000 service tickets each month, which are processed through 180 SMAX operators. Everything is carefully tracked, and each request is fully transparent end to end."

University staff can also access their services through a service catalog. No matter how requests are raised, they are consolidated and managed centrally. With the SMAX self-service portal, hot-topic analytics, smart search, and mobile app, services are easily accessible and highly reliable. The staff service catalog has 20,000+ users, who generate 1,000 monthly service requests, which are processed by 110 SMAX operators.

"Requests arrive with all the necessary background information already completed through SMAX, supporting much improved deadline control," Pasquinelli said. "Users have a single



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point of contact and full visibility of their request progress. We can clearly monitor SLA compliance for student requests and easily track user satisfaction—a feature we plan to introduce in the staff service catalogue too."

By using native APIs, SMAX offers a quick, easy-to-implement solution that has the flexibility to address urgent requests without IT staff involvement. "Because we don't need to customize SMAX at the system level, but rather configure it flexibly in-house with little or no code changes, our upgrade and maintenance costs are drastically reduced," Pasquinelli said. In the near future, his team would like to broaden the application of ITIL methodologies to complement SMAX asset management.

A SMAX-Inspired Discovery Project

Inspired by the success of SMAX, and with the help of Hogwart, the University launched a Discovery project aimed at analyzing its infrastructure. Configuration information on hundreds of servers supporting production and test application environments was automatically collected and updated. OpenText Universal Discovery and CMDB made it possible.

"In just a few months, about 150 servers were discovered and more than 100,000 hardware and software configuration items were surveyed and updated," Pasquinelli said. Hogwart championed the modeling of 40 application services so that a University application can be directly correlated with the relevant infrastructure components that enable its delivery. This ability supports clear impact analysis.



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Data from the production servers and application services model servers is automatically transferred into SMAX so that all information is available when requests are submitted. Any assets influencing individual productivity—such as PCs, tablets, printers, and keyboards—are analyzed and consolidated to manage their end-to-end lifecycle in correlation with service or support requests.

An Excellent Service Experience

"This experience, expertly guided by Hogwart, was excellent," Pasquinelli said. "Introducing SMAX gives us a single point of contact and an efficient way to track our requests, ensuring we maintain our SLAs and improve our service delivery. The combination of SMAX with Universal Discovery and CMDB supports our staff onboarding processes, greatly improving productivity."



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