

Clarks' Leap from Email Chaos to Cloud Efficiency

Overview

With a history steeped in tradition, Clarks has also embraced the need to adapt and innovate. This journey from an on-premise service management system to a modern, cloud-hosted solution underscores Clarks' commitment to operational efficiency and excellence in service delivery.

Challenges

For 20 years, Clarks relied on IFS assyst in its on-premise setup, which had served the company reliably during its tenure. During this time, the system formed the backbone of service management, helping Clarks address core operational needs. However, as the business grew and evolved, the complexities of maintaining and adapting the system to meet modern demands began to surface.

One key challenge was the limited scope of the Configuration Management Database (CMDB). While it provided basic asset management capabilities, it was primarily focused on end-user devices. The absence of a more comprehensive, service-aware CMDB meant that critical information about configurations, dependencies, and infrastructure was scattered across spreadsheets maintained by individual teams. This siloed approach hindered visibility and slowed the resolution of incidents, as IT staff often relied on institutional knowledge rather than consolidated, accessible data.

Over the years, as various configurations were added, the service catalog was overwhelmed by irrelevant service offerings, making it harder for end-users to locate the services they needed. This led to the significant operational strain the service desk faced, where they were managing a staggering 9,000 emails each month. This manual, email-based workflow required service desk agents to interpret and process every incoming request, often leading to delays, inconsistencies, and duplicated efforts.

About Clarks

Clarks, a globally recognized footwear retailer, is nearing its 200th anniversary. Headquartered in Somerset, UK, the company operates a network of over 550 stores worldwide, with key markets in the UK, Europe, the US, and Asia.

www.clarks.com





The lack of standardization made it challenging to prioritize and route tickets effectively, further compounding inefficiencies.

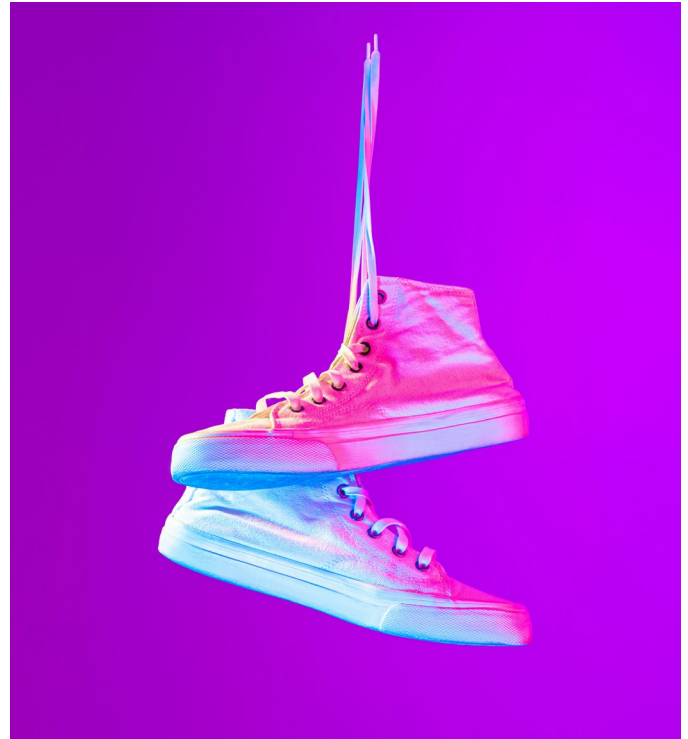
Faced with these challenges, Clarks began exploring options to modernize its service management, aiming to enhance efficiency, improve end-user satisfaction, and future-proof its operations for the next stage of growth.

Solution

After careful evaluation, Clarks selected IFS assyst's cloud-hosted solution as the best fit for its evolving service management needs. The decision was driven by the familiarity of the system, which minimized disruption for users, combined with a seamless migration path and robust, modern capabilities. This approach allowed Clarks to build on the strengths of its long-standing on-premise system while embracing a solution that could address the growing demands of its global operations.

The migration process was carefully planned to ensure a smooth transition and broad stakeholder engagement. Recognizing that the shift to the cloud was as much about people and processes as it was about technology, Clarks worked with the IFS assyst technical team to conduct workshops and vision-setting sessions to involve IT staff and end-users from the outset. These sessions addressed concerns about the change while showcasing how the new solution would improve efficiency, scalability, and user experience. By demonstrating the potential of IFS assyst's cloud capabilities, the workshops helped win over teams who were initially skeptical about the move.

To maximize the benefits of the new system, Clarks leveraged the IFS Academy for training, equipping staff with the knowledge to unlock its full potential. This training encouraged employees to rethink existing processes and explore new ways of working. For example, the team redefined the service catalog, adopting a streamlined structure with two clear options for end-users: "Something is broken" and "I need something."



This approach dramatically simplified the user experience, making it intuitive for employees to find the services they needed and reducing the risk of confusion or errors.

Results

The migration to IFS assyst's cloud-hosted solution has redefined Clarks' approach to service management, delivering clear and impactful results. The transition significantly reduced the internal burden of system maintenance, enabling IT teams to shift their focus from routine administrative tasks to more strategic initiatives that enhance business outcomes.

Efficiency gains have been a standout result of the migration. Processes that previously consumed hours now take minutes, reflecting the streamlined workflows and enhanced capabilities of the cloud platform. End-users have also benefited from the introduction of an intuitive self-service portal, enabling Clarks to eliminate its email-based workflows. This feature makes it simpler to submit and track service requests, improving accessibility and satisfaction while simultaneously reducing the workload on the service desk.

“The help desk received 9,000 emails a month because everybody just engaged with the help desk via email. And since we've put assyst live, we've turned that email off.”

**– Matthew Wills, Head of IT
Service Management, Clarks**



“Processes are far more efficient because the tool is quicker. It just doesn’t fall out and bug out all the time.”

– Matthew Wills, Head of IT
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The integration with Power BI has added a layer of data-driven intelligence, enabling real-time visibility into service performance. Customizable dashboards provide actionable insights into incident management and ticket resolution, equipping the IT team to address issues proactively and refine operations.

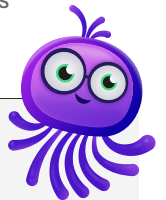
These changes have modernized Clarks’ IT operations, enhancing user experience, operational efficiency, and decision-making capabilities. The results highlight the success of Clarks’ transition to a cloud-based framework, positioning the company for sustained improvement and scalability.

Looking Ahead

Clarks is building on the success of its cloud migration by pursuing targeted enhancements to its service management framework. A key priority is the implementation of a service-aware Configuration Management Database (CMDB) through assyst Enterprise Transformation Manager (assystETM). This initiative aims to integrate data from existing systems of record to create a unified, real-time view of configuration items and their relationships. By consolidating this information, Clarks will gain deeper insights into its IT environment, improving the ability to anticipate and address service impacts proactively.

Another focus area is refining service-level agreement (SLA) and operational-level agreement (OLA) management. As Clarks increasingly works with external partners for IT support, robust SLA and OLA processes will ensure accountability and measurable performance standards. By leveraging IFS assyst’s capabilities to monitor and report on these metrics, Clarks plans to strengthen vendor relationships and drive higher levels of service reliability.

Looking beyond specific initiatives, Clarks recognizes that continuous improvement is critical to sustaining the benefits of its modernization journey. Regular reviews of service processes, user feedback, and technology advancements will help the company adapt its service management framework to future challenges and opportunities. This forward-thinking approach positions Clarks to remain agile, scalable, and aligned with its business goals.



About IFS assyst

Our goal is to graduate teammates from mere operational slaves to transformative change-agents. Giving them back the time and energy needed to build the future. Automation looks after the routine work that happens every day so your people can progress the projects that really matter.

Less routine, more creativity.

Simple automation is the key to this change.

assystme@ifs.com