



Stannah Management Services

Case Study

clear blocked queues using SMS - avoiding the cost of an overnight operator and vastly reducing wasted effort catching up the next day

Background

The Stannah Group is the world's market-leader in everything they sell.

Within the Stannah Group there are three manufacturing divisions, delivering stairlifts, passenger lifts, platform lifts and goods lifts. Stannah Management Services provide an integrated IS service across all divisions, based on an AS/400 system.

Challenge

Stannah needed to improve the two-way communication between the AS/400s and their operations staff.

Previously, a program which stopped during an overnight run would block the whole queue until the next morning - creating a huge backlog of jobs.

This could mean that regular reports were not sent out on time, and that valuable programming and planning time was taken up the following day during catch-up.

Delays in account runs could postpone a whole day's accounts, creating a significant knock-on financial effect especially at the end of a week or month.

"Novagem's EOM means that we can clear blocked queues straight away using SMS - so when we come into the office the following morning we don't find stopped jobs and missing reports.

This frees up valuable daytime hours to do the rest of our work."

Solution

Stannah selected Novagem's Enhanced Operations Manager (EOM) to provide a secure, 2-way communication solution for the business.

The service enables Stannah to instantly receive email and SMS alerts from any queue message.

If a stopped program blocks the queue, operators simply clear the queue there and then by sending a short command reply by SMS, and receive a SMS confirmation that the command was successful.

This means that issues are resolved before anyone else in the business becomes aware of the problem.

If a program error blocking the queue appears to have wider implications, operators can easily forward an email containing message details to their external support company for further diagnosis.

Trend spotting

In addition to assisting day-to-day operation of the business, Novagem's EOM also provides an invaluable tool for internal audit.

Through ongoing message analysis, repeat errors can be flagged to the development team for resolution.

EOM also identifies repeat error messages from the same user profile - invaluable for identifying potential hacking attempts.

Monitor the whole network

As well as reporting issues on the AS/400, Novagem's EOM also provides the first notification of faults on other Windows and UNIX elements connected to the AS/400 network - such as the IP Gateway and the SMTP host.

Result

Craig McCormick, IT Manager at Stannah said "We are delighted with the Novagem solution because it gives us instant, two way control of our AS/400.

It saves the cost of an overnight operator whilst ensuring that the system is running well in our absence."

Based on saved manpower, it is estimated that the solution gave a return on investment within 4 months.

"The solution gives us more time to plan scheduled system enhancements and less time reacting to a crisis." McCormick concluded.

For further information call Novagem now on 01992 505337.

