

Questions and Answers for Rfp 108-DD10.

Required Product Technology

Item 12 – What does M-DCPS use to support release management activities today? Does M-DCPS use an internal application or a third party product? If so, which ones?

Answer: For mainframe applications, M-DCPS uses Panvalet for version control and an in-house custom developed application to move code from the Test to Production environments. The EPO Server pushes anti-virus updates to workstations district-wide. Windows Critical Updates are distributed via a central share folder at locations that have a Software Update Services (SUS) server. M-DCPS is currently implementing BigFix to facilitate updates of O/S service packs, System/Office software releases and technical fixes and documentation.

Item 15 – Does M-DCPS currently use PDA devices today? If so, which one(s) are in use? What level of functionality does M-DCPS expect from the Help Desk product when interacting with your PDAs? infraWise assumes that M-DCPS has the required servers and support software installed or in plan. Is this correct or which ones are still needed?

Answer: M-DCPS currently uses 3 types of PDAs: Palms, Pocket PCs and Blackberries. The level of functionality we expect is web access to the Help Desk Software so field technicians can receive, update and close tickets and the capability for them to receive email alerts automatically generated by the Software Solution at pre-programmed intervals. We currently have no servers or software in place. We are expecting a turnkey system that would provide this functionality.

Item 16 – What products or applications, if any, does M-DCPS currently use to store HR, location and property information today? In which databases do these products store their information and how do you want the selected vendor to interact with them? Does M-DCPS have any specific RDMS requirements for data exchange or product interoperability with those applications and their data or does M-DCPS wish the new product to assume those functions.

Answer: HR, location and property data is currently on the mainframe and nightly downloads are done to a SQL Data Warehouse. M-DCPS maintains data warehouses by subject area using SQL 2000. The preferred method of interacting with the data is using stored procedures and views and DTS is also supported. M-DCPS maintains an automated FTP system that uses 2048 bit encryption for file and data sharing with external entities.

Item 17 – Does M-DCPS currently use an ODBC compliant report writer today? If so, which reporting tool does your enterprise use? Will it be available when this project is implemented or will the Proposer need to specify a new reporting tool in the response? Crystal Reports is our de facto reporting tool but any ODBC compliant tool can be used. What proportion of your up to 45,000 users will (a) create report definitions and/or stand alone reports and (b) request on-demand reports from the system? Will the on-demand reports be real-time or will the users access reports that are updated periodically?

Answer: M-DCPS currently uses two ODBC compliant report writers: Crystal Reports and SQL Reporting. SQL Reporting is the preferred reporting tool. Only select administrators from user offices will be creating reports. The 45,000 employees are presented as potential clients who would report problems to the Call Center and submit service requests to IT staff. Actual Call Center and administrative users would likely be 500 or less.

Item 18 – What surveys does M-DCPS typically take on a regular basis? Which tools do you use today and will they be available when this project is implemented? Are the questions fairly standardized and fairly static, as one would find in a user satisfaction survey, or are the survey questions dynamic, changing with each survey, as one would find in a requirements survey, or both?

Answer: Currently, M-DCPS uses Survey Gold to administer Customer Satisfaction surveys. The questions are standardized for obtaining information regarding levels of quality of service. The new product should take over the survey function so that the process can be automated – i.e. once a work order is closed, the customer should automatically receive an email asking them to rate their experience.

M-DCPS will also use surveys to collect information from clients initiating service requests.

Item 19 - Does M-DCPS currently use a desktop discovery tool? If so, which one(s) and is it M-DCPS's desire to continue to use this tool with the implementation of the new Help Desk Solution?

Answer: The product M-DCPS currently uses is Retina with BigFix coming online shortly to enable greater discovery, desktop control and software release push. Although initially purchased as an OS patch management tool it does provide a desktop discovery function. These products serve Network Services needs. The Call Center needs an integrated desktop discovery tool that agents can quickly and easily activate from the software interface

Item 23 – Please clarify what M-DCPS means by end-user support being provided by the Help Desk solution vendor. Would the selected vendor be responsible for answering questions and solving problems for the potential 45,000 user population or would questions and problems be filtered by the M-DCPS help desk and product support personnel, thus making the vendor the 2nd level support for only those questions or situations the M-DCPS help desk cannot resolve?

Answer: Support would be required for the approximately 100 Call Center Agents and staff that would be using the product, not for the approximately 45,000 end-users that we support. Questions and problems would be filtered by M-DCPS Call Center, Implementation team and Administrative staff and the selected vendor would be 2nd level support.

Preferred Features, Item 2 – Please explain how M-DCPS would want the selected vendor's product to interface with HP OpenView Node Manager Server OPS, specifically the features of OpenView you wish to use. The iWise product provides a rich set of APIs and access methods for 3rd party products, such as OpenView, to create or update incidents in the iWise database. Additionally, iWise provides the capability of monitoring agents to query products that have an open API. Does M-DCPS have OpenView personnel to code that side of the transaction interface or will the vendor be responsible for the full interface?

Answer: When the HP OpenView technology detects an operational issue, we would like it to be able to send an alert to the Help Desk software product to advise a Call Center agent of the situation. One possibility is that it could create a "skeleton" work order that may or may not need to be acted upon. We expect the vendor to be responsible for the full interface.

QUESTION: With regards to the M/WBE Program, if there is no participation by a M/WBE firm within the scope of work, does that firm still need to complete Attachment B?

ANSWER: No, it is not necessary.

QUESTION: Request For Financial Information. Will a financial overview be acceptable in lieu of the financial statement?

ANSWER: As indicated in the proposal, "the Proposer shall provide, at the time of interviews/demonstrations/testing, its current financial statement, which can be retrieved upon completion of then presentation. Failure to submit this information shall cause the proposal not to be considered for award".

Submission of a financial overview may or may not be acceptable. Once the Selection Committee meets to evaluate the proposals received, the committee as a whole will determine the responsiveness of the submittals.

The Committee itself will make a determination as to acceptance of any information submitted.

1) How many analysts, administrators and technicians will be accessing and using the Help Desk? Page 12

CA licensing is based on a Concurrent User Base.

Answer: Initially, approximately 300 Call Center agents will be using the product on a full-time basis. There are about 150 other administrators, technicians, project managers and support staff who will use the product intermittently. These numbers will increase in the future as the product is rolled out to various district locations

2) Will you want to launch the XP Remote Agent from the Service Desk Application? - Page #10 - Requirement #5

Answer: Yes. We would like to be able to activate a remote desktop feature from within the Service Desk application.

3) Is Time Tracking/Management for the Technicians a requirement?

Answer: Yes. We should be able to track the time any particular agent spent on the trouble, from the Call Center agent to the technician to (possibly) an outside vendor referral. For the technicians, this must be time stamped by system, not manual input and the system must also have a way of tracking windshield time (in other words, separate accounting for travel and actual hands-on troubleshooting time).

What integration points are included in the Proof of Concept?

Answer: None. We will expect the Proof of Concept to be accomplished with test data.

What specific details need to be illustrated in each?

Answer: We will expect the vendor to discuss integration details during the demonstration process.

Is the current solution configured on an HA Cluster or MoM (manager of managers)?

Answer: Neither. For the new solution, we would prefer HA Cluster-aware software that can run in our environment.

What is the extent of Service Management and reliable SLA metrics that the customer is expecting?

Answer: We have defined three levels of priorities with various escalation procedures and alert intervals for our vendors and technicians. We will also need escalation procedures and alerts for Change events

Is this a lights-out shop?

Answer: No

What is the estimated monthly workload for the Help Desk, i.e., total number of tickets per month (service calls, change tickets, etc.)

Answer: The Help Desk receives approximately 10,000 calls per month. Field Service Support receives approximately 1,000 Add/Move/Change requests per month.

How many months of on-line data are required?

Answer: 36 months of online data would be considered ideal. 24 months is the minimum timeframe we need access to online data. This applies to Change Management as well

What is the total number of call center agents that need access to the Help Desk? What is the average number of concurrent users per shift?

Answer: The total number of Call Center agents that need access to the Help Desk software is 300. Our current working hours are 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. so all users would access the product during these hours

How many IT personnel need access to the Help Desk solution, i.e. Tier 2 and above support? (Besides call center agents) What is the average number of concurrent users per shift?

Answer: Approximately 150 administrators, Project Managers and technicians will need intermittent access to the product between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This number will increase in the future, as the product is made available to schools and other administrative locations.

What is the business issue or compelling event that is driving this RFP to replace the current Peregrine solution?

Answer: Our current solution does not offer web-based access for trouble reporting, integrated change management or single number call tracking, among other things. M-DCPS also plans to roll out the product to various district offices and additional Peregrine licensing fees are considered cost-prohibitive.

What is the history of your current Peregrine solution? How long has it been in service, who implemented it? What are the issues, etc. that warrant replacement?

Answer: Our current solution, Peregrine 3.0, was implemented in March, 2000 by in-house staff and Advanced Marketplace consultants. The issues that warrant replacement are detailed above.

What is the total number of IT assets that would populate the database? What is the breakdown, by category, e.g. network, servers, desktops, applications, etc?

Answer: M-DCPS currently has approximately 90,000 desktop workstations, 6,000 servers and 5,000 other Network devices such as routers and switches. Approximately 50 different applications are supported, including mainframe applications.

What is the total number of valid callers?

Answer: The number of potential callers would be 45,000.

What software distribution tool/application is being used for desktops and servers?

Answer: None at this time. BigFix is currently being implemented for patch management.

What are your existing standards for Reporting?

Answer: We currently use Crystal reports to measure standard Call Center statistics, including agent activity, vendor response time, caller wait time and abandon rate, among others.

What software configuration management tools exist within M-DCPS, e.g. Clearcase, etc?

Answer: No software configuration management tools are currently used district-wide. BigFix is being implemented for patch management and is also capable of collecting asset information down to the PC workstation level.

What is your existing call monthly call volume?

Answer: The Help Desk receives approximately 10,000 calls per month. Field Service Support receives approximately 1,000 Add/Move/Change requests per month.

Are there any existing knowledge databases being used?

Answer: There is a recently implemented Knowledge Base in use. This is an area we wish to expand.

What are your network and system management tools/standards?

Answer: HP OpenView is used by Network Services at the core. The Help Desk currently uses Windows Netmeeting to establish remote desktop connections.

Are there any ITSM or ITIL-related initiatives within M-DCPS?

Answer: Change management is currently being implemented under ITIL standards.

What existing notifications tools/applications are currently in place?

Answer: The Help Desk currently uses E-mail and telephone contact.

QUESTION: With regards to the M/WBE Program, if there is no participation by a M/WBE firm within the scope of work, does that firm still need to complete Attachment B?

ANSWER: No, it is not necessary.

Question: Does this RFP include a two-stage selection process?

Answer: Yes. The Selection Committee will initially meet to determine the responsiveness of all proposals received and to select the companies who will be invited to provide a live demonstration of their product.

After the demonstrations, selected proposers will be required to perform a Proof of Concept to verify the performance of the product with the M-DCPS platform, network, servers and databases. After which, the Selection Committee will recommend the company to be awarded the contract.