



Customer Spotlight

Taking Support to the Next Level

WIND RIVER

As the global leader in Device Software Optimization (DSO), Wind River enables organizations to develop, run, and manage device software faster, better, at lower cost, and more reliably. Wind River platforms are preintegrated, fully standardized, enterprise-wide development solutions that reduce effort, cost, and risk. They optimize quality and reliability at all phases of the device software development process—from concept to deployed product.

The Challenge

Wind River's customers face many challenges: rapidly shrinking product life cycles, increasing pressure to reduce project timelines, and dwindling profit margins. At the same time, the move to unfamiliar open-source technologies, such as Linux and Eclipse, makes it increasingly harder to keep up with the latest standards. Customers need a higher level of support to succeed in a rapidly evolving marketplace.

To better support their customers in this shifting market, Wind River needed to enhance its support processes. The company sought the expertise of market leader Service Strategies Corporation to help them adopt industry best practices. In addition, to assure customers that Wind River had not only designed improved support processes but also successfully and consistently adopted them, Wind River needed objective evidence of its service quality.

The Solution

To help take its support services to the next level, Wind River entered the Service Capability & Performance (SCP) Standards program, administered by Service Strategies. This allowed Wind River to work with support professionals who offered expert advice.

Wind River is the only provider of a commercial embedded Linux distribution that is currently certified under the SCP Support Standard, giving them a tremendous competitive advantage. And, since support services are a crucial part of a commercial Linux solution, an objective recognition of support quality is a unique differentiator.

The company's adoption of the SCP Standard and implementation of improved support practices is having a marked impact. For example, their event-based customer satisfaction survey scores, as measured by a leading third-party survey firm, have risen by 31% since adopting the SCP Support Standard.

As a provider of device operating systems and development and management tools, Wind River is frequently called upon to help customers link their technology with a customer's application software and hardware. The customer can then bring their device—anything from a cellular phone to a network router to a Mars exploration robot—to market.


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In many cases, Wind River’s customers understand their application software, but are not experts in the underlying technology. They need support services from knowledgeable resources. Since the customer’s development schedule is typically under pressure to become ever shorter, they need these support services delivered quickly, accurately, and consistently.

To meet customer needs, Wind River had two goals: Improve support processes through the assistance of professional, support-specific consultants and a program that could help direct efforts to continually improve their support organization; and help publicize that improvement in a real and credible way to its customers and prospects. The company viewed the SCP Support Standard as the way to meet both these goals, because it is a respected, recognized, and objective measure of support services quality that also represents a robust set of industry-standard, high-quality processes.

“The SCP Support Standard is not a rubber stamp that can simply be bought. It must be earned. Our customers know and trust that if we are SCP Certified, it means we’re in the top of our field,” said Barry Mainz, Wind River’s Vice President of Worldwide Customer Operations.

Wind River chose Service Strategies’ support-specific consultants to assist in creating process improvements. Service Strategies not only evaluates a support organization, but also offers solutions on how to improve support processes and procedures.

“Service Strategies’ advisors and auditors are all former support executives. They’ve been in the trenches and know how a support organization should operate. Their advice comes from experience and can be trusted to get results,” noted Mainz.

Results

By implementing SCP best practices and following the recommendations and findings in the subsequent SCP audit, Wind River was able to apply to its services organization the best support practices defined in the industry today. Specifically, with the assistance of the SCP auditor, Wind River improved its support services by:

- Instituting a formalized new hire training program to get new customer support engineers up to speed one-third faster than before
- Creating a Technical Support Request (TSR) audit program where managers review support requests to ensure that Wind River responds quickly, professionally, and accurately to customer requests
- Designing a number of new dashboards, including one to measure the responsiveness of Wind River’s engineering development team, and one to measure first contact resolution statistics

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- Creating a formal two-year strategic plan for support, including a first-ever marketing plan
- Creating new service response guidelines that prioritized issues based on type of customer and severity of issue
- Creating internal service-level objectives with Wind River's engineering development team to set expectations for their responsiveness to defects and enhancement requests

Wind River's long-term plans include continued refinement of support practices, as well as ongoing annual renewal of SCP Certification. The company will also continue to use Service Strategies' career development curriculum to train support engineers, thereby maintaining a consistent skill set and the high-quality standards set by the SCP Standard. Wind River's customers are clearly the biggest beneficiaries of these efforts.

About Service Strategies

Headquartered in San Diego, CA, Service Strategies advances service excellence by providing industry-standards, consulting, and career development solutions that ensure delivery of consistent, high-quality service and support. Service Strategies applies a proven benchmark process to its standards programs that measures and drives effectiveness for continuous service improvement. In addition, the company's tailored training programs enhance the careers of service professionals throughout the industry and lead to increased organizational effectiveness.

For more information, visit www.servicestrategies.com, email info@servicestrategies.com, or call 858.674.4864, toll free in North America 800.552.3058.

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To learn more about the Service Capability & Performance (SCP) Standards and what it can do for your service and support organization, contact Service Strategies Corporation at 800.552.3058 or email info@servicestrategies.com

