

The Case for IT Analytics

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO DECODING YOUR SERVICE DESK AND MAXIMIZING PERFORMANCE

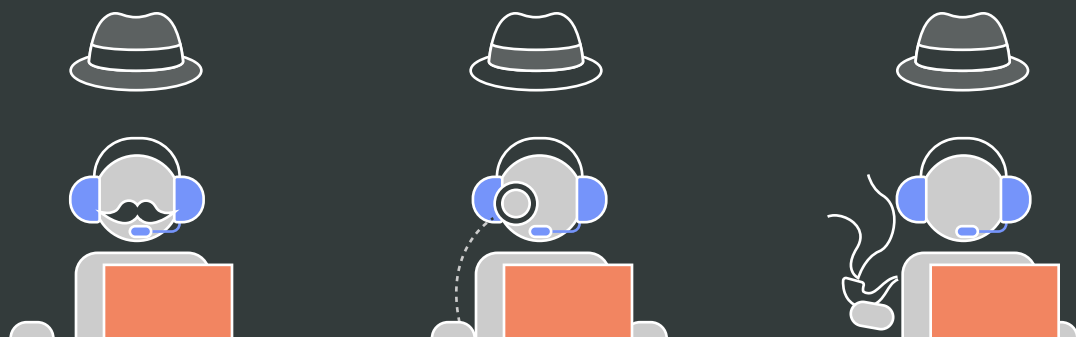


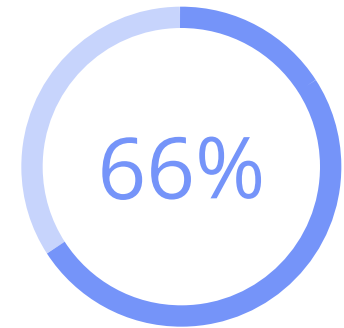
Table of Contents

03	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>
04	<u>PART I. MEETING DEMAND</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Understand Your Service VolumeB. Reduce the Burden on Your Service Team
11	<u>PART II. MAXIMIZING RESOURCES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Evaluate Existing AllocationB. Eliminate InefficienciesC. Reduce Escalations and Reassignments
20	<u>PART III. MEASURING SUCCESS AND REFINING PROCESSES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Gauge PerformanceB. Monitor Customer Perception
28	<u>CONCLUSION</u>

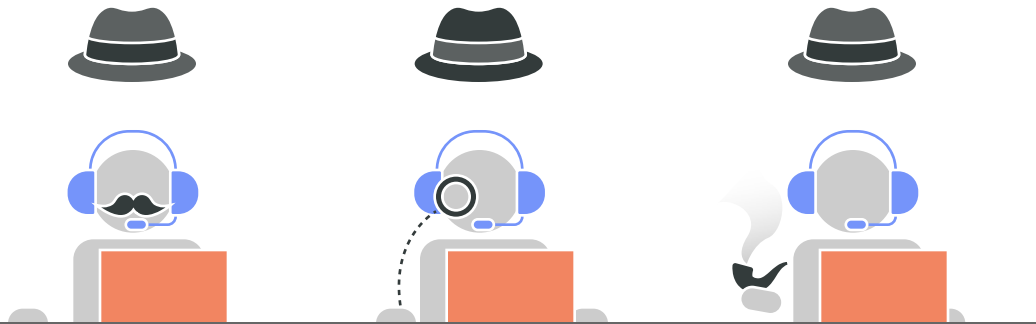
Introduction

Service desks face rising pressure to provide timely, effective support amid growing resource constraints and increasingly intricate processes. As service desk operations get more complicated, so too do their pain points and service issues. In fact, many IT organizations struggle to quickly understand and neutralize service issues and identify which process changes are to blame for a service disruption.

While there is no clear-cut solution to address service desk complexities, analytics are a key piece of the puzzle. Analytics transform your service team into investigators who can uncover and fix the problems that are impeding workflows. This guide instructs IT leaders on how analytics help organizations resolve problems specific to the core pillars of the service desk cycle. With analytical applications, IT leaders can better detect and alleviate their pain points, as well as use these insights to refine their service desk processes.



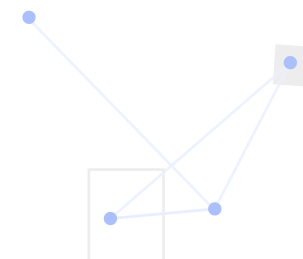
66% of IT professionals feel IT complexity makes their jobs more difficult¹



¹ The Challenges of Controlling IT Complexity: An Ipswitch Survey Report

Part I. Meeting Demand

Key to gauging whether your IT organization successfully meets service needs — and unlocking untapped resources — is analyzing all the moving parts of your existing infrastructure. Your service manager can act as your department's very own detective and conduct a thorough review of processes to obtain an accurate view of IT operations. By evaluating the evidence (or data) and retracing the team's course of action (through historical analyses), managers can identify and work to eliminate weak points within the service desk infrastructure.



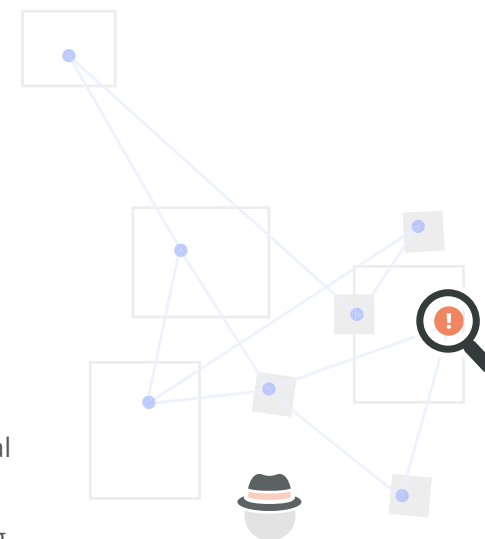
“Having data is good, but having intelligence about your data is what will enable you to be great. IT Analytics is the game-changer that moves you from a reactive to a proactive state.”

- PAUL MITCHELL, VP OF IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT AT PGI

A. Understand Your Service Demand

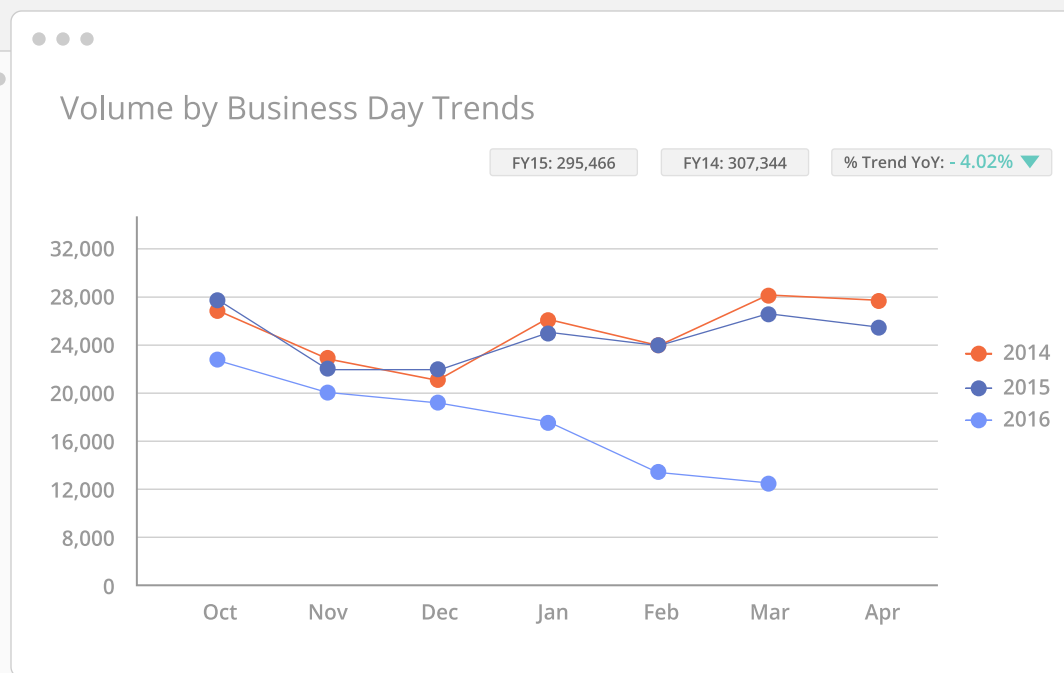
As IT leaders well know, your team's ability to match demand depends in large part on what your service volume looks like and from where tickets are originating. In a traditional IT organization, managers must devote considerable resources to fully investigate these factors. Yet analytics remove much of the burden of manual detective work, rapidly transforming data into informative intelligence.

Your datasets become a trail of breadcrumbs that, when pieced together through analytical evaluation, provides the information necessary to help you ask and answer the right questions. Managers are able to identify common scenarios and uncover service-impacting issues such as volume fluctuations, recurring incidents, and underlying problems that are driving up volume.



PINPOINT INFLUXES

Service volume variability is inevitable — but you *can* control your service desk’s reaction to influxes in ticket quantity. Historical data offer a complete snapshot of ticket volume, enabling you to search for dips, spikes, and other notable variations. Service analytics let you dig even deeper into that data to identify larger patterns such as seasonal changes or peak volume periods. You can then utilize this intelligence to predict future influxes as well as institute a plan for addressing such swells in service demand.

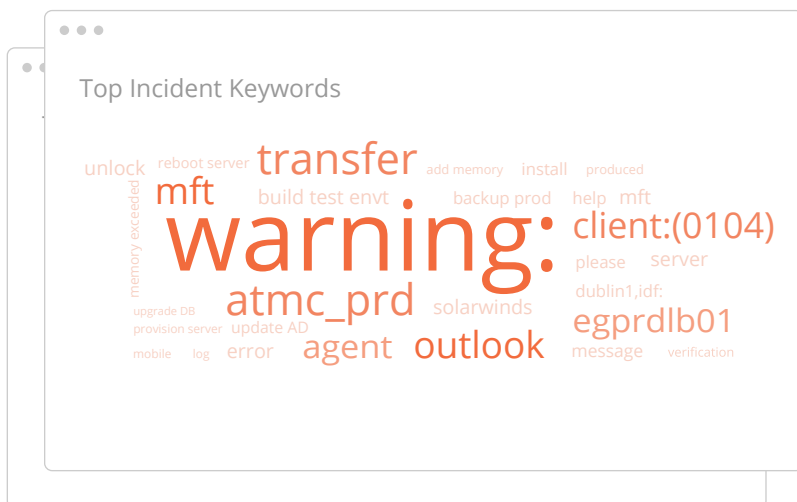


ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

The help desk team at a private university faced seasonal fluctuations in ticket volume. Simply knowing the increase in volume occurred was not sufficient — the team needed to inspect their data and figure out exactly which assignment groups and skillsets were required. With analytics, IT leaders were able to identify their needs and forecast future staffing demand.

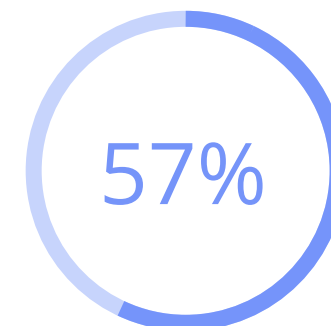
TAKE STOCK OF INCIDENT TRENDS

Beyond detecting recurring spikes in historical volume, your service desk manager needs the ability to see incident trends on a weekly and monthly basis. Service desks with robust data systems can easily extract this information from their repositories and spot trends in the type, origin, and time of incidents.



However, if your organization relies on lighter service processes, a scarcity of incident data can hinder your team’s analysis of service volume. A tool like text analytics can alert you to issues of which you were not previously aware. Text analytics provide crucial insight into incident descriptors, thus enabling your team to prioritize incident tickets with reappearing keywords.

IT organizations detect and address only 57% of critical issues before they impact the business.²



UNCOVER INCIDENTS CAUSED BY CHANGE

In organizations that introduce hundreds of changes each month, those changes frequently end up affecting the number of incidents logged at the service desk. Yet your service desk manager may lack the means to definitively correlate changes with service incidents, especially without a mature CMDB. Analytics allow you to drill into users, locations, assignment groups, and business services/applications to infer change-to-incident relationships. The robust visibility gained from service analytics gives your team the upper hand in pinpointing the best approach to quickly neutralize spikes in change-based incidents.

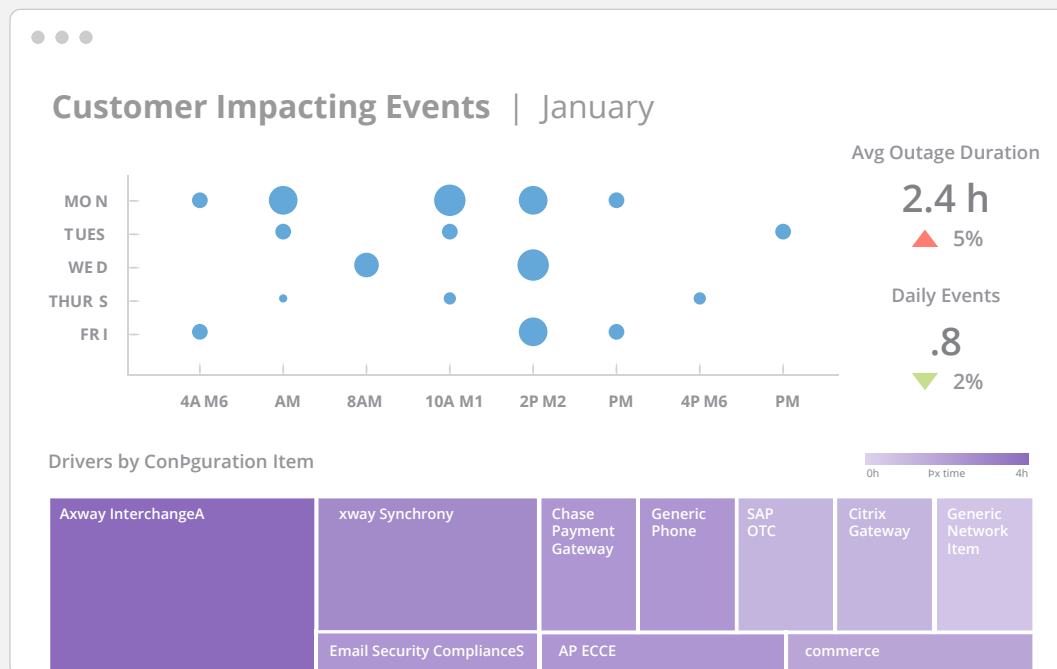
² <http://www.continuitysoftware.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015-ITOA-survey-report.pdf>

CONDUCT ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Changes may represent a portion of the underlying problems driving up your service volume, but by no means are they the only unidentifiable issues lurking under the surface. Root cause analysis lets your service manager drill into specific service events and discover hidden drivers of service disruption. Investigate whether the issue behind a rise in service demand stems from a business service or configuration item (CI), an issue with staffing or workloads, or another area of IT operations. With root cause analysis, you can transform your service desk operations from reactive to proactive — instantly honing in on a spike in demand and linking it back to the original event or complication.

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

A leading technology manufacturer sought a way to identify spikes and anomalies in incident volume — one that didn't include hours of spreadsheet maintenance. Their IT leaders turned to visual analytics with incident visualizations to better understand service volume. Colored heat maps help their managers rapidly identify areas of incident growth or reduction by business service, allowing them to pinpoint issues in need of attention.



B. Reduce the Burden on Your Service Team

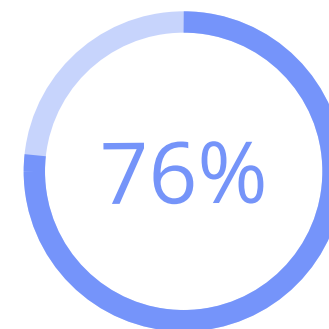
Identifying the source of service issues and strains on your resources is not itself sufficient — instead, the insights you've uncovered should act as a jumping-off point for addressing these challenges of meeting service demand. As any good detective knows, your actions should align with what your evidence, or in this case data, reveals. Analyses of your data provide valuable insights about the state of your service desk performance, which you can use to actively address and correct pain points.



REVIEW EXISTING PROCESSES

Armed with the right tools and data points, managers can correlate performance to workflows to better understand their service desk needs. A survey of IT professionals found that although 64 percent of IT organizations have target resolution times for major incidents, 76 percent frequently miss those targets. In situations such as this, your IT leaders need the ability to drill into individual components of your service desk cycle to see where processes are proving ineffective.

Service analytics offer distinctive value in their ability to highlight weak links and bottlenecks around your processes, staff behavior, and even service delivery. Your data might lead you to discover that a certain type of request has an unexpectedly long resolution time, or that workloads distributed unequally are increasing the age of open work tickets among certain agents.



76% of IT organizations frequently miss their target resolution times

AUTOMATE REPORTS

Report automation is perhaps one of the most effective changes you can make to your service desk processes to reduce your team's workload. Traditionally, manually building reports requires vast amounts of time and is subject to errors and stale data. Service analytics not only enable managers to exhaustively investigate your organization's critical business data; they also provide the tools to create customizable dashboards and analyses pre-populated with the metrics that matter most to your IT leaders.

"As our ITSM capabilities have expanded, the data in our service management system has become increasingly more valuable. Likewise, the leadership demand for that information has grown exponentially."

- BEN SAPP, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT AT CARDINAL HEALTH



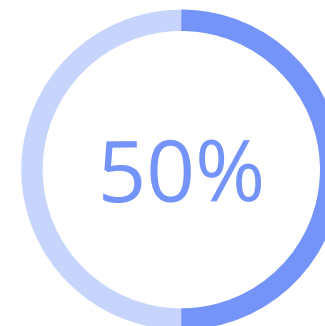
55 hrs

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

The IT division at a provider of collaboration technology was spending 55 hours each month manually building reports to track service metrics. Upon realizing these reports failed to answer key operational questions, an IT leader decided the team needed better visibility of operations and a more efficient way to capture intelligence. With analytics, the team was able to set up dashboards, automate tracking of service metrics, and obtain a more comprehensive view of operations.

DEPLOY SELF-SERVICE

If an inspection of existing processes reveals your team has difficulty meeting demand, consider how you might help offload some of the burden from your agents. Implementing a self-service portal can help deflect as much as 50 percent of incidents.⁴ In addition to reducing agent workloads, self-service can help cut costs as well. HDI estimates the cost of resolution for self-service to be between \$1 and \$5, compared to the cost for agent-assisted support between \$22 and \$85 (depending on the support level).⁵



Self-service can deflect up to 50% of incidents.

REALIGN YOUR SERVICE CATALOG

Yet another way to improve service desk processes is ensuring proper service catalog setup and accurate classification of incidents. Your users *want* the ability to solve issues on their own. In fact, 65 percent of consumers feel good when they're able to solve an issue without assistance from a customer service department.⁶ When you give your users the tools to resolve their simple service problems, you decrease the strain on your service desk staff.



▼ 50%

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

At a leading healthcare equipment provider, the IT division uncovered a problem with miscategorized tickets driving up service volume. The team used service analytics to better understand the issue, implement a new classification system, and reduce their service volume by 50 percent.

⁴ <http://www.thekcsacademy.net/kcs/>

⁵ <http://www.slideshare.net/MetricNet/benchmark-2014-global-results-for-desktop-support-v2-1>

⁶ The Aspect Consumer Experience Index, By Aspect Software & The Center for Generational Kinetics

Part II. Maximizing Resources

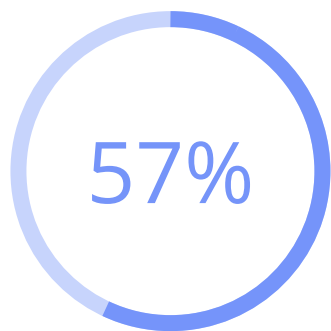


A good investigator will not draw conclusions until he or she has evaluated all relevant evidence and details. Within your service desk, the people responding to and resolving service tickets play as significant a role as fluctuations in ticket volume. Service managers need a way to understand whether available personnel are sufficiently meeting demand — or if staffing issues are inadvertently contributing to service volume. Unseen problems such as inadequate staffing, unbalanced workloads, and mismatched skillsets can all complicate service desk operations and squander your resources.

“It was critical for us to get a comprehensive view of our IT service performance and be able to easily analyze the data to drive operational efficiencies.”

- RICHARD HU, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF SERVICE STRATEGY AND SYSTEMS ARCHITECTURE, WEILL CORNELL

CIOs allocate 57% of their budget to day-to-day operations⁸



A. Evaluate Existing Allocation

Do you know how all of your resources are being allocated? What about whether the allocation of those resources aligns with existing demand? If your service desk team fails to track asset allocation or lacks a process for ensuring optimization of resources, you're likely not alone. A survey by SDI and Cherwell Software found that 40 percent of service desk professionals don't measure key business value metrics: lost IT service hours, lost business hours, business impact, risk of missing service level agreement (SLA) targets, and costs saved through decreased fix times.⁷

⁷ Demonstrating Service Desk Value Through More Meaningful Metrics, the 2013 Service Desk and IT Support Show white paper

⁸ Deloitte's 2015 Global CIO Survey



Yet those value metrics are the bread and butter of a successful IT service desk, and part of that foundation depends on the relationship between resources and performance. To increase awareness, service managers can put on their detective hats and use analytics to evaluate workloads, mean time to resolution (MTTR), and resource-skillset symmetry.

ASSESS EMPLOYEE WORKLOADS

Understanding employee workloads is crucial to your service desk's performance, as individual productivity can adversely affect the entire team and the business at large. Traditional service management applications may track process-specific assignments by employee, but the service desk manager needs a more in-depth mechanism to review workload distribution across the entire team. Managers want to see an individual's tasks across incidents and service requests, as well as change and problem assignments among Tier 2 and 3 teams. Workload analyses enable service managers to combine data from disparate systems and obtain an accurate view of employee workloads and aging work by individual.



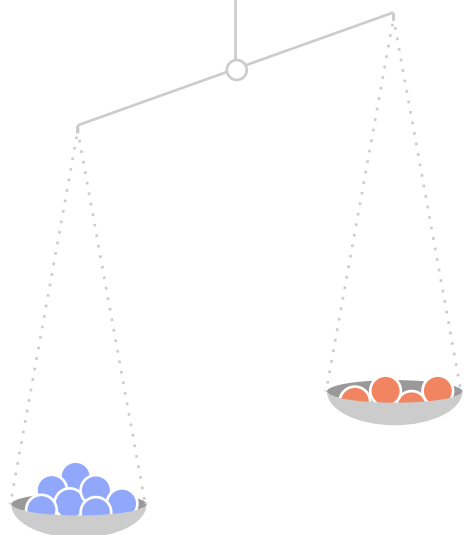
INSPECT MTTR PERFORMANCE

Mean time to resolution (MTTR) can be a good indicator of whether your resources and personnel are meeting service desk demand. However, an average number on its own offers little to no insight into variations across incidents. If your MTTR is unusually high, you want to drill into the data to uncover whether the increase stems from a resource imbalance, insufficient personnel, individual performance, or another factor. You also want the ability to analyze the distribution of resolution times by incident source and by the time of day the incident was opened, among other factors — details you can't get from MTTR alone.

Service desk analytics enable you to dig deeper and gain insight into broader macro trends such as overall performance, as well as reveal micro problems such as employees in need of additional training. Analysis of MTTR across a period of time, for instance, can reveal whether personnel are able to adequately respond to incidents caused by unplanned outages.

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

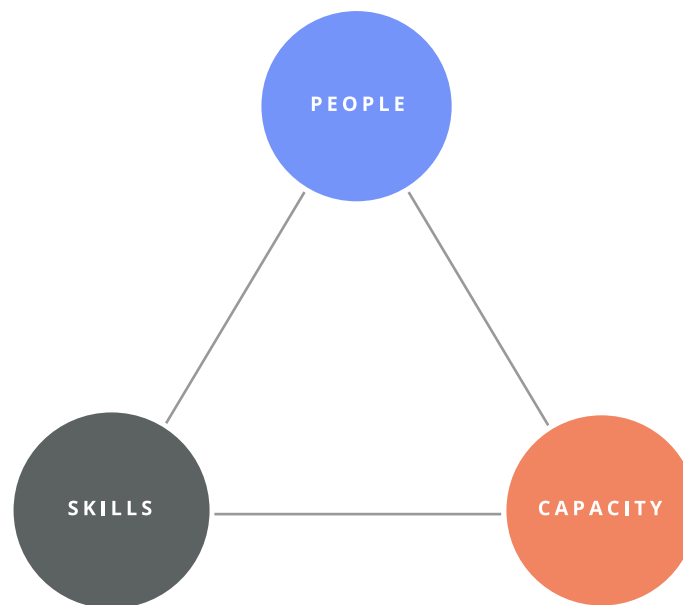
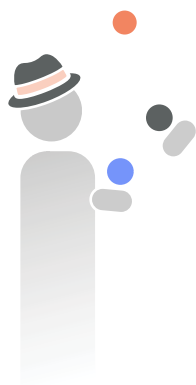
A leading semiconductor manufacturer sought a way to dig into their unexpectedly high MTTR rate. IT executives used an analytical dashboard to review the total open work assigned to its technicians, and found that some technicians had double the typical load of problem tickets. Identifying the issue and rebalancing ticket allocation enabled the company to reduce its MTTR.

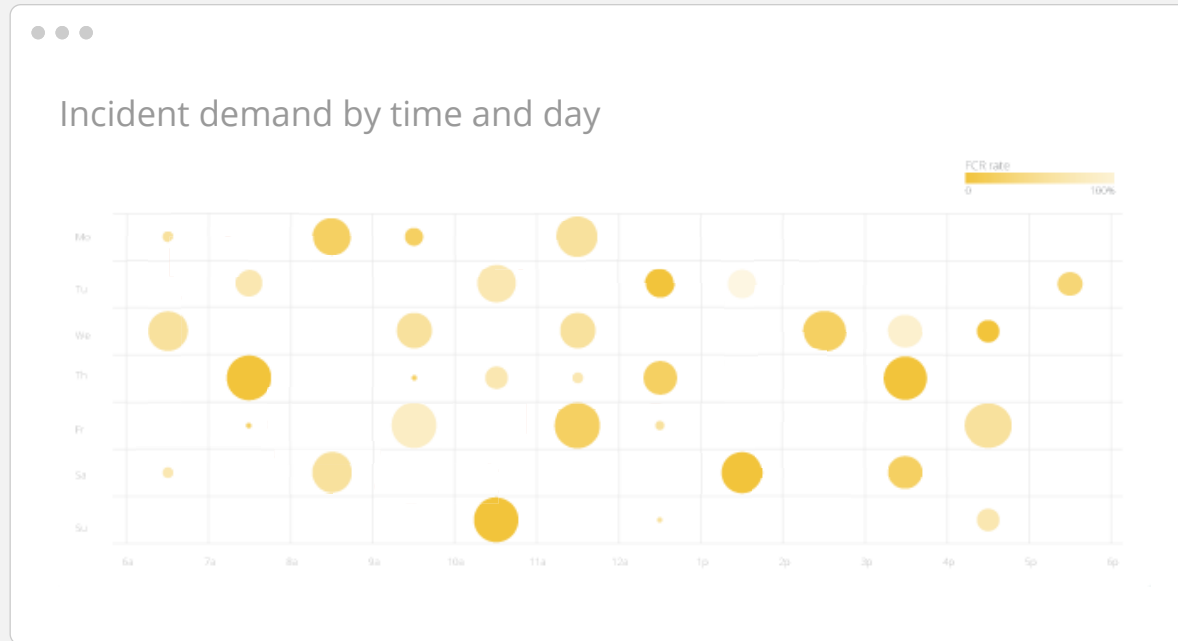


MONITOR BALANCE OF PEOPLE, SKILLS, AND CAPACITY

Beyond reviewing MTTR performance and workload distribution, your service manager should do their due diligence to fully understand the effectiveness of existing resource allocation. Critically, he or she should assess the symmetry of the service resources trio: people, skills, and capacity.

For instance, analysis may reveal that your service resources align with demand most of the time, but that regular volume spikes are also causing longer resolution times. This information could lead you to discover that, although you have the right people with the right skillsets, your current team size is insufficient during high-traffic times. You may even need to investigate beyond the spikes in volume to discover that just one application or skillset has insufficient capacity during peak times. With these types of in-depth insights, managers can work to correct issues brought to light and continuously optimize their distribution of resources.





ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

A top tech enterprise needed better visibility of when their service desk experienced the highest volume of traffic. IT leaders also sought to identify how successful their agents were at meeting first call resolution (FCR) rates during these high-traffic periods. An incident demand map revealed not only which times of day and days of the week the most incidents were being raised, but also indicated whether the FCR successfully met the threshold. Armed with the information from this detailed breakdown, service desk leaders were able to redistribute their resources to prepare for peak traffic times.



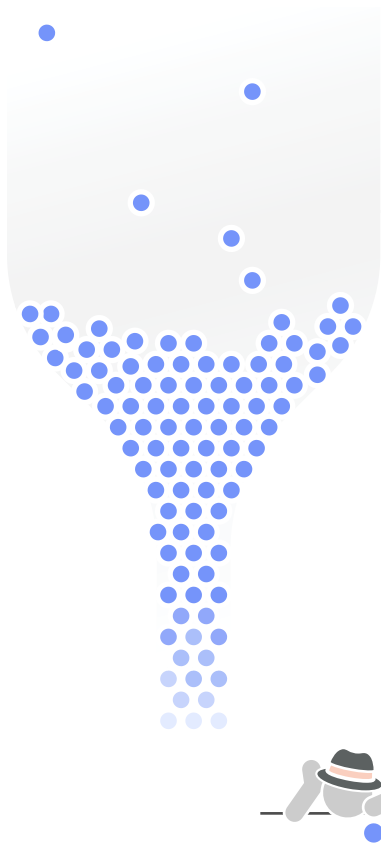
B. Eliminate Inefficiencies

Managers must also take steps beyond evaluating resource allocation to determine whether current service desk processes are unintentionally wasting team assets. By analyzing delays in your service desk cycle, you can correlate backlog issues, aging incidents, and bottlenecks to asset misappropriation or misutilization. If surveillance of your assets yields inefficiencies in how you distribute resources, it's important to both work to correct the existing problems and modify processes to prevent the same scenarios from cropping up in the future.

REPAIR CRACKS IN PROCESSES THAT ARE DRIVING BACKLOG

Unveiling the cause of service desk backlog can feel like looking for a needle in a haystack — and yet the importance of finding the origin cannot be understated. Analysis of service desk backlog can reveal significant details about resource inefficiencies, from unequal workloads and insufficient staffing to ineffective categorization and routing processes.

To address backlog, service managers require the ability to see trends in incoming ticket rate, ticket category, ticket recipients, and availability of skilled staff. Service analytics enable managers to examine historical data, identify periods of backlog growth, and correlate problems to resource imbalances. A service manager could use backlog analyses to detect spikes in the volume of unresolved incidents, then attribute it to timeframes when less experienced agents had to deal with unanticipated periods of high traffic. This insight would help managers pinpoint gaps in training, which they could then correct with additional training sessions.



EVALUATE AGING INCIDENTS

Ticket age doesn't just drive down your service desk's resolve time, MTTR averages, and SLAs — the impact extends to the customer's perception of IT and even your company's brand image. An analytical dashboard will enable your service desk manager to actively investigate aging tickets and their subsequent outcomes. Oftentimes, tickets in this category may originate from a source more complicated than a high ticket volume. For instance, you could use service desk analytics to correlate aging tickets to an underlying issue like an unequal workload distribution or an inaccurate ticket categorization system.

SEARCH FOR BOTTLENECKS & RECURRING INCIDENTS

Nothing squanders your resources more than making your service desk staff continuously work on duplicate incident tickets or navigate the same process bottlenecks ad infinitum. And yet that's exactly the cycle many teams end up repeating. Fortunately, with the right tools to examine incident data, managers can review service desk processes and spot recurring issues that are wasting resources.

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

A leading retailer used analytics to discover that a high number of service desk calls were coming from store employees. Their IT division realized that limited in-store visibility and a lack of knowledge transparency were prompting the quantity of calls. By building a store-facing dashboard, IT was able to increase store transparency of service tickets and ultimately reduce help desk calls.

Weekly performance snapshots and detailed incident activity records help a manager understand what actions have been taken to resolve a recurring incident or address a process bottleneck. Event-specific analyses can also assist with connecting the dots between a bottleneck or recurring incident and a resource imbalance.

C. Reduce Escalations and Reassignments

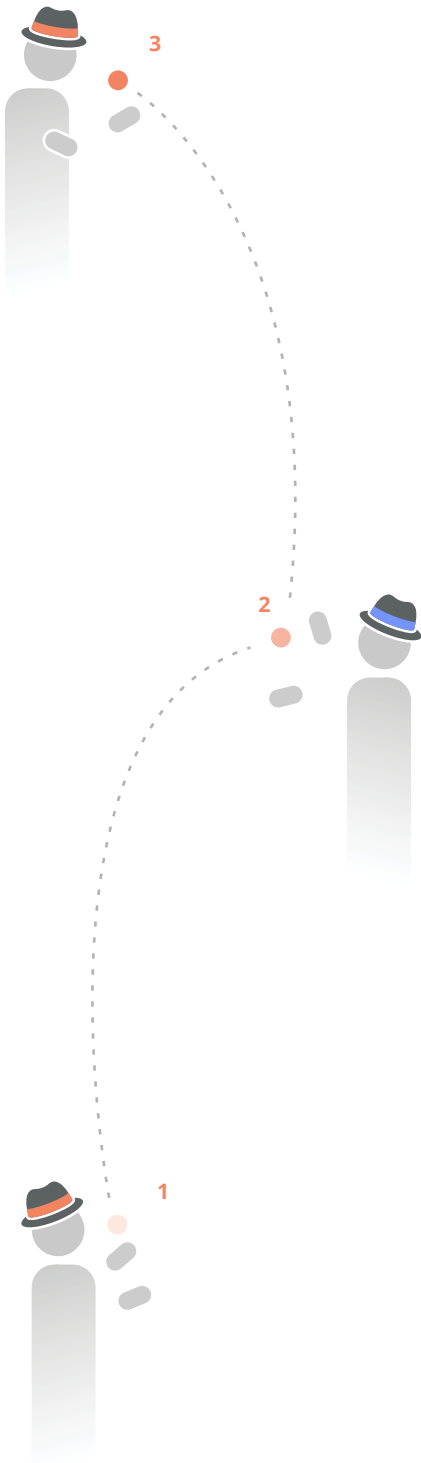
A final component of appraising resource allocation is looking at how frequently and to what extent incidents are being passed around internally. Service data is of great value for this type of analysis, because it can act as your own version of an informant. All of the details necessary to identify poor resource distribution and resolve underlying issues are available in your data.

However, cursory analyses of your data will only provide basic insights, not reveal details or underlying causes. You need the right investigative tools to make those problems visible — and to link problems back to their original sources. Excessive escalation rates and a high occurrence of reassignments are two metrics that can reveal a lot about the state of your incident processes and the efficacy of asset distribution.

APPRAISE ESCALATION WORKFLOWS

Escalation processes are vital to address significant issues that require Tier 2 and Tier 3 expertise. However, if incident escalation becomes too popular among your service agents, it could signify a bigger problem with your system setup or allocation of resources. One culprit of overused escalation processes could be miscategorization within your service desk ticketing system — whether due to how the system is set up, a lack of categories, or an error on the part of the agent (from lack of training).

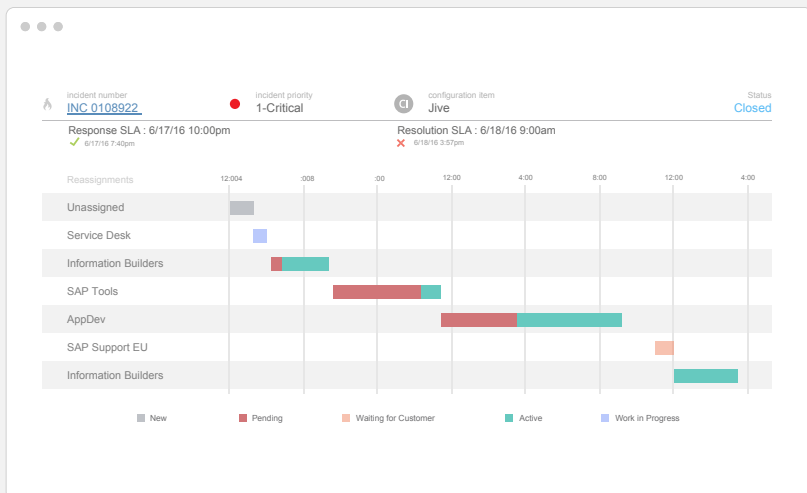
You can identify this inefficiency by analyzing escalations within a specific time frame, then comparing those results against your categorization setup. Service desk analytics also enable you to drill into incident categorizations and agent performance to pinpoint the exact issue, so you can take the appropriate corrective steps.



INVESTIGATE REASSIGNMENTS

Whether your service desk handles hundreds or thousands of tickets daily, a considerable amount of those tickets may end up stuck in a cycle of reassignments. The last thing you want are reassigned tickets clogging up your support funnel and increasing key metrics like MTRR. Service managers can use analytics to conduct audits of out how long an incident has been open, how many times it's been reassigned, what categories it's been listed under, and which agents have touched the ticket. From there, you can evaluate why the incident was reassigned in that way and determine whether it followed the correct process.

The number of times an incident, request, change, or problem is reassigned correlates directly to a process gap. The reassignment count can help you identify outlier processes that would benefit from better documentation or more training. If incidents are being reassigned five times, for example, you may need to evaluate whether there's an issue with the initial routing setup.



ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

A large investment bank had no way to identify the problem areas in their reassignment process. After implementing a dashboard with aggregated ticket data, managers were able to review ticket state changes and the duration of each stage. Gantt chart visuals enabled them to quickly distinguish reassignment patterns such as which stages were taking the longest to complete. With this information in hand, they could pinpoint where to follow up on training needs and staff allocation.

Part III. Measuring Success and Refining Processes

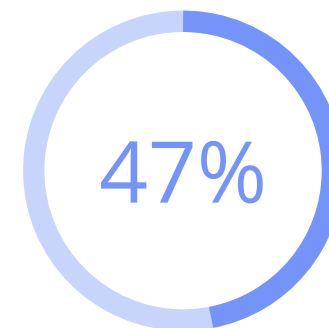
Finding the ideal combination of service desk resources and processes to stabilize demand can feel like being a cryptologist trying to crack a complex code. Except that in the service manager's case, the code itself changes as soon as you discover the right sequence. Service desk operations are continuously evolving as managers tweak resource allocation, evaluate performance, and implement process changes. As a result, service managers should regularly review performance as well as customer feedback to help evaluate recent adjustments and guide future service desk improvements.

U48RT- ORPTAR[I]U FJ1289VN[P]UIA ERKPO VOIW[E] U48RT- OI! WERIOV7N-182MUTA EPIOHPWEP 9VN

A. Gauge Performance

Nearly half of CIOs surveyed in Deloitte's Global CIO Survey said performance is at the top of their business agenda.⁹ And yet only 47 percent of large organizations (businesses with more than 10,000 employees) use analytical tools to measure IT performance, according to a 2015 survey from Continuity Software.¹⁰

Managers need the ability to identify where their service desk is excelling and where it's failing. Metrics play a key role in the process, as they enable you to answer critical questions about the state of your operations. Find out how quickly your team resolves service issues, whether your team has the right balance of resources, and if your team is meeting expectations (within the business as well as externally). Monitoring KPIs such as first call resolution rates and SLA compliance also ensures you're measuring the right metrics to help expose performance-impacting issues within your service desk infrastructure.



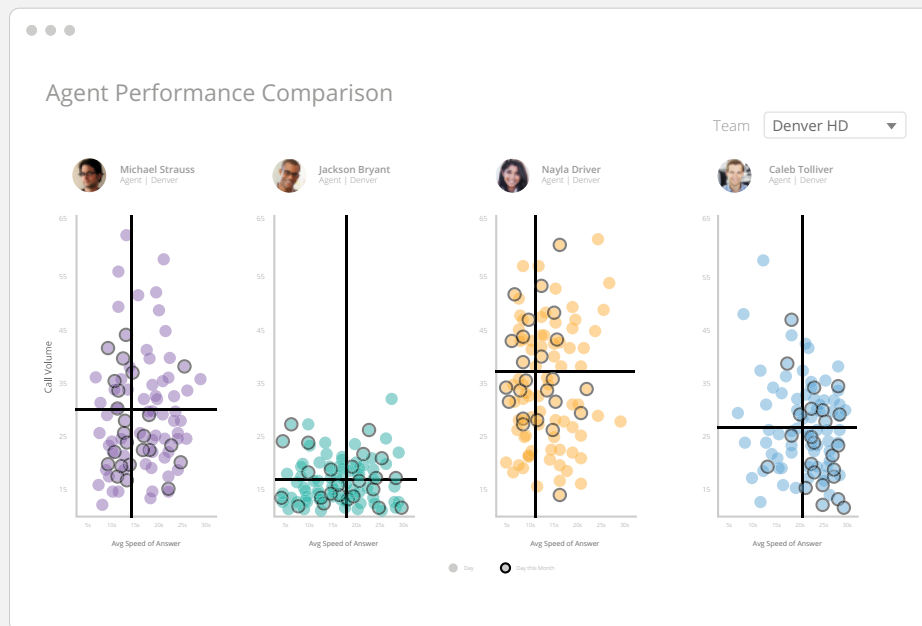
Only 47% of large organizations use analytics to measure IT performance

⁹ Deloitte's 2015 Global CIO Survey

¹⁰ Continuity Software 2015 IT Operations Analytics Survey

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

The service desk manager at a leading retailer discovered she lacked the capacity to see beyond team-level performance metrics. She needed the ability to compare agent performance and individual workloads to ensure resources aligned with demand. After implementing a service analytics application, the manager was able to review agent workload metrics such as the average resolution speed across team members.



DRIVE PRODUCTIVITY

KPIs tell only part of your IT organization's story, but they do provide a baseline for measuring service desk productivity. Specifically, they help your service manager figure out how efficiently your people are performing tasks, and how effective they are at resolving issues during the initial point of contact. Of the seven top KPIs for service desks, six metrics directly correlate to the productivity of your service desk agents: first contact resolution rate, first level resolution rate, cost per contact, aggregate service desk performance, agent utilization, and agent satisfaction.¹¹ (We'll touch on the final metric, customer satisfaction, a bit later on.)

However, managers must also have the tools to ask — and answer — more complex questions about service desk productivity. For instance, how have unexpected peaks in volume impacted FCR performance over the last three months? And how does that compare to FCR performance during a time frame with an anticipated high volume of traffic? You want the ability to pinpoint broader effects of performance to help discern whether specific agents and teams are helping or harming productivity, and subsequently IT costs.



PUT YOUR FCR TO USE

On its own, first call resolution may seem minimally valuable for acquiring insight into overall service desk performance. And while it is true that FCR is just one measurement of a single component of your service desk, the metric can reveal a number of things about performance when combined with the right set of tools.

Inserting FCR into comprehensive analytical dashboards can help you link reassignments and escalations to an underlying problem with service categorization or agent training. Alternatively, visibility of FCR performance across a period of time might reveal a resource issue related to another branch of IT, such as delays in asset delivery prolonging resolution times.

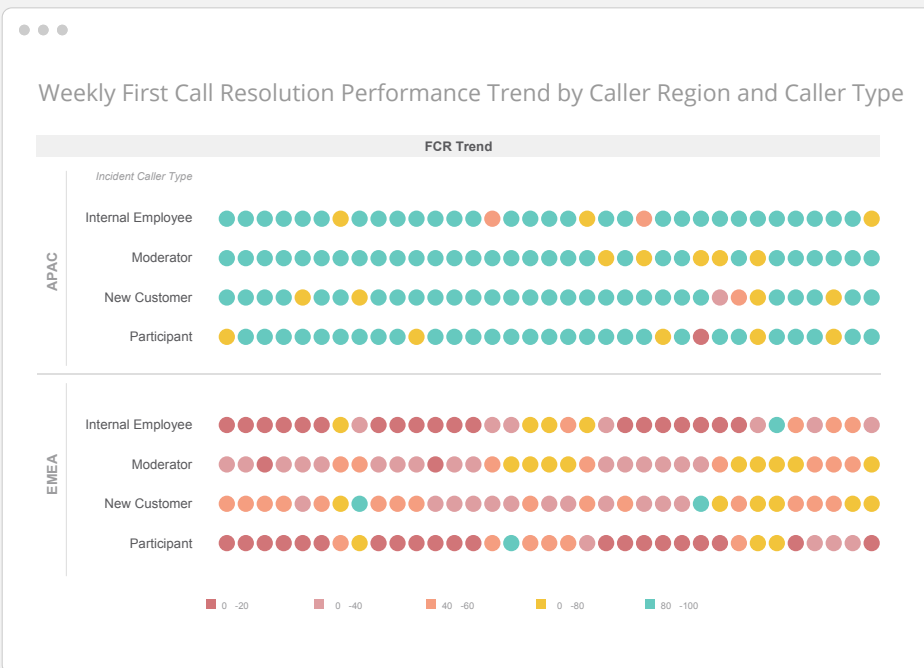
FCR can also be useful to understand and impact customer satisfaction. According to the call center firm SQM Group, a one-percent improvement in FCR correlates to a one-percent improvement in customer satisfaction.¹³ Service analytics allow you to track FCR against customer satisfaction (CSAT) and drill into the potential causes between dips and spikes.



Two-thirds of IT organizations resolve less than 80 percent of incidents at the first point of contact¹²

¹¹ http://www.thinkhdi.com/~media/HDICorp/Files/Library-Archive/Rumburg_SevenKPIs.pdf

¹² <http://sqmgroup.com/employee-satisfaction-for-fcr-effectiveness/>



ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

One technology company reviewed first call resolution rates across different regions and found a longer MTTR was driving FCR down. Upon further analysis, their IT team traced a spike in repeat calls from customers back to slow hardware delivery times in Europe. By identifying the root cause of the problem, IT was able to take preemptive steps to improve first call resolution rate — and customer satisfaction.

AUDIT SLA COMPLIANCE

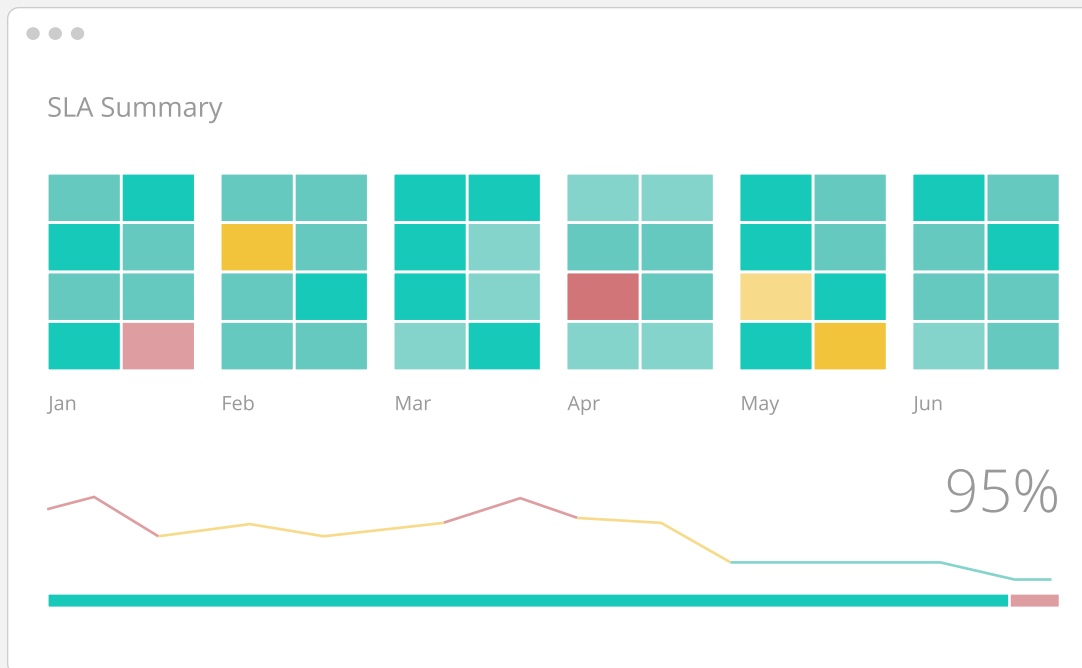
Like FCR, service level agreement metrics provide rudimentary value as a standalone insight. Yet SLAs can also offer a window into underlying performance issues when explored further with analytics. Service managers can overlay metrics such as SLA fulfillment, service availability, and defect rates onto other service desk data to understand whether a missed SLA is the result of improperly trained employees, inadequate resources, a service disruption originating from a change, or another element.

“IT Analytics empower support groups to proactively manage their queues and SLAs as they work to quickly resolve tickets and meet customer commitments.”

- PAUL MITCHELL

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

Lacking visibility of SLA fulfillment, a computer networking vendor set a goal to achieve 95 percent compliance across all major assignment groups. The company’s IT executives implemented an SLA summary dashboard to monitor compliance and eliminate taxing report processes. IT used the dashboard to quickly identify and correct assignment groups with declining SLAs, improve the fulfillment average from 80 percent to 90-plus percent, and remove manual report building efforts that wasted 25 hours each month.



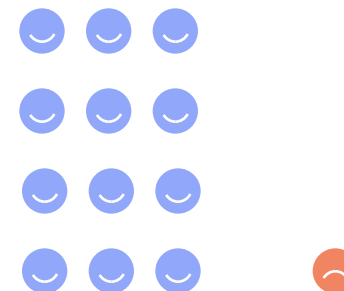
B. Monitor Customer Perception

Every non-compliant SLA, reassigned incident, outage, and unhelpful service action can result in an unhappy customer (or worse, turn a current customer into a former one). And according to customer service software vendor Parature, it takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for one bad occasion.¹⁴

Your service desk operations need to reflect this shift in expectations by prioritizing process improvements that satisfy end users — otherwise you risk prompting customers to circumvent internal processes or use other applications. Service managers can utilize performance measurements in conjunction with customer surveys and satisfaction metrics to understand feedback, then incorporate those insights into the refinement process.

POSITIVELY INFLUENCE CSAT SCORES

Just as forensic evidence can bring new information to light for investigators, the customer satisfaction (CSAT) score can provide valuable intelligence to service desk managers. CSAT scores offer insight into customer expectations and give you a better understanding of what service issues have the greatest impact on customer satisfaction. In addition, service managers can use CSAT scores to see how problems with demand or resources affect the customer's perception of service.



12

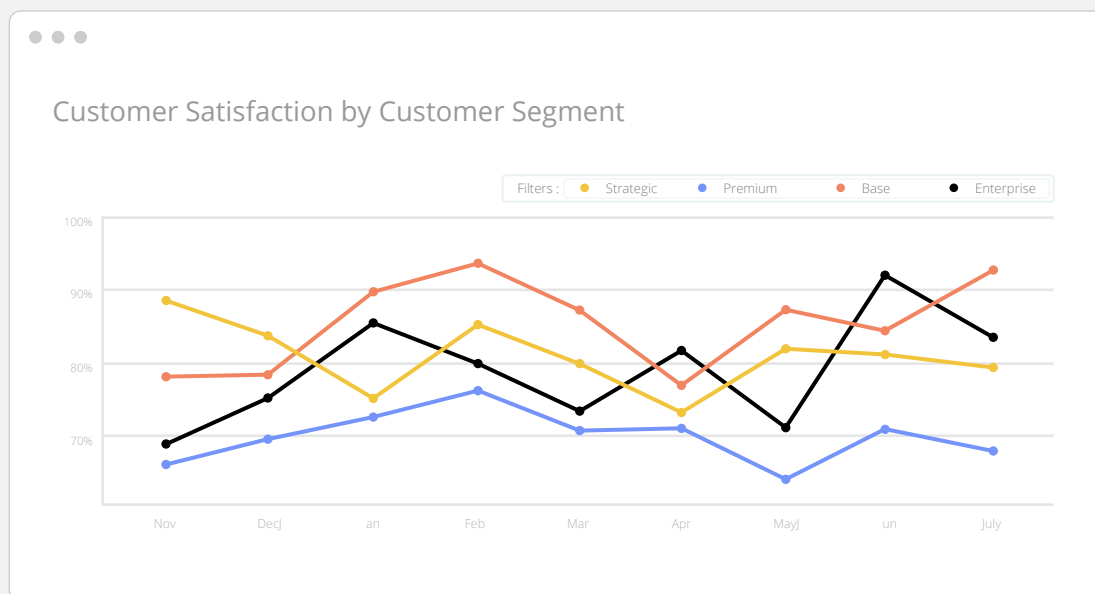
The number of positive customer experiences it takes to make up for one bad one.

¹⁴ <http://www.parature.com/infographic-financialcustserv/>

For example, you can compare weekly CSAT levels to trends in service volume to evaluate whether customers are less satisfied with service during high-volume periods. If CSAT dips when spikes in volume occur, you can take steps such as providing additional agent training or installing an on-call backup team to improve satisfaction during those situations.

ANALYTICS IN ACTION:

A private university sought a way to better understand and subsequently improve the CSAT score for their IT service desk. After deploying analytics for customer survey results, the IT team was able to drill into data and correlate dips in CSAT levels with problems in service desk performance. The team also developed a dashboard that allowed them to compare customer satisfaction across segments, break down fluctuations by task type, and tie those dips back to gaps in staff training.



ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK LOOP

Your customer satisfaction metrics can point you toward high-impact problems within your service desk operations — including issues of which you may not be aware. For instance, recurring drops in CSAT levels and repeat keywords found in survey responses provide important clues about pain points that are influencing customer satisfaction. Service managers can even take customer feedback a step further by analyzing CSAT scores in comparison to service demand and resource allocation data. Doing so will allow you to connect low CSAT levels with underlying service desk problems, which you can then work to correct.



“Data is at the heart of everything we do. Using data to instill continuous improvement has amplified our ability to deliver quality service and business insight to our internal customers.”

- MARK GRIMSE, VICE PRESIDENT OF IT AT RAMBUS

Information gleaned from customer feedback points directly to the chain links in need of fixing that are negatively impacting your customers. After the source of a problem is discovered, your service manager can incorporate a solution into the roadmap of process enhancements. Establishing this bond between customer metrics and service desk improvements ensures you're able to address the issues that matter most to customers. A built-in feedback loop also shows your customers that you value their feedback, in turn solidifying your own merit as an IT service provider.

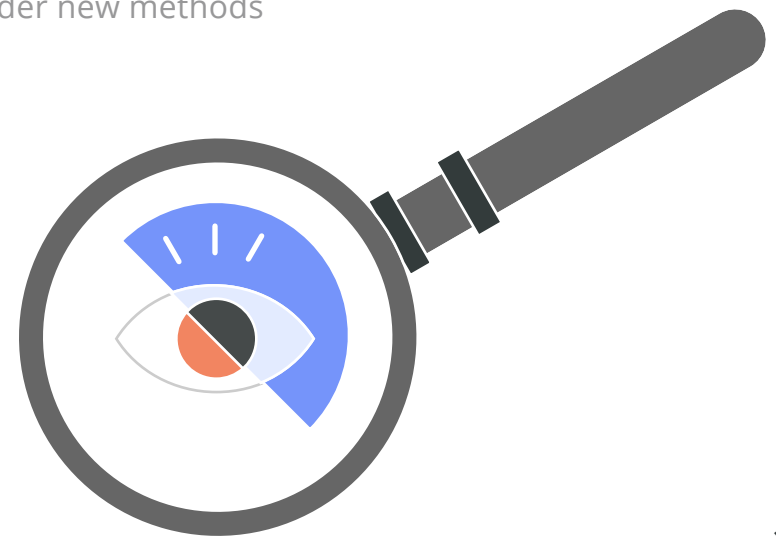


Conclusion

Although the service desk's position as a key touchpoint is well known, only in recent years have IT leaders begun understanding its broader impact on company perception. Customers today have incredibly high expectations and demand instantaneous access to information. As a result, it is of the utmost importance that IT organizations have all the tools at their disposal to ensure prompt, proficient service.

Analytical applications enable service desk leaders to fully leverage their business data in order to meet service demand, maximize resources, and measure and refine processes. With the help of IT analytics, service teams are better equipped to predict, prevent, and protect against their service desk's pain points.

We hope this guide provides welcome insight as you consider new methods for improving your service operations.



ABOUT NUMERIFY

Numerify provides business analytics applications that enable data-driven IT managers to optimize their operational performance. Our suite of pre-built solutions goes beyond reporting to deliver intelligence for service, operations, and development. The cloud-based platform integrates and correlates data across a variety of IT systems and adjacent sources such as call center, HR, and financial applications. Numerify's customer base includes Top 10 companies in the Retail, Travel & Hospitality, Healthcare, Food & Beverage, Media, and Pharmaceutical industries. Headquartered in San Jose, Calif., Numerify is backed by Lightspeed Venture Partners, Sequoia Capital, Tenaya Capital, Silicon Valley Bank, and Four Rivers Group.