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The Web-based Service Desk Extending the Reach of Service Management

A discussion paper from Numara Software

The Executive Summary

Regardless of the demands placed upon your organisation IT has a fundamental role to play - making IT available 24/7.

As a public sector organisation, communities and citizens will expect to use on-line services to pay bills or seek advice. Private sector organisations will share similar demands for online services from its customers and suppliers but also its workforce will be dependent upon access to files and applications as their working hours go beyond 9 to 5.

The reality is transactional e-channels, applications, communications and systems all need to be available 24/7 - anytime, anyplace. So why should the IT Service Desk be any different?

To keep pace with the seemingly endless stream of support requests, today's service desks must be agile and scalable. They also need to be flexible and versatile (as do the IT support staff) in order to address more complex business requirements. To maintain control and achieve optimal performance levels, organizations are embracing sophisticated technology solutions in conjunction with industry-based best practices and methodologies such as the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL®) framework, COBIT and specific industry sector frameworks such as Basel II (Financial Services) and Six Sigma as developed by Motorola and in used widely to provide support services around the manufacturing process.

Another driver changing the role of service desk is the new era of IT governance. Across all industries, government regulations and compliance initiatives are driving the need to document policies and procedures, especially publicly-held organizations. For instance, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) and through to e-Government have forced organizations to improve and enforce compliance and risk management, placing added pressure on IT departments and service and support centers to ensure that systems are available and their output transparent.

These factors create more demanding service and support environments, new industry standards, IT governance controls, and budgetary pressures and have reinforced the need to implement technology solutions, giving support and IT departments better tools to serve the needs of their business. This confluence of factors has redefined the traditional help desk into a multi-dimensional service desk, capable of managing all type of business-critical processes and applications.

Organizations spanning a range of industries are utilizing service desks to centralize service request activities, incident and problem management as well as other business-critical processes, such as IT change management. C-level IT executives as well as their support managers, agents, and technical personnel that run the service desk are being pressured to operate IT operations more efficiently with reduced staff levels and fewer resources; and extend the reach of service management.

This paper will provide a perspective on the requirements demanded to achieve the increased complexity of service management delivery and why organizations and its personnel, suppliers and customers can benefit from deploying of a web service desk.

The Web Based Service Desk

Service Desk software and solutions come in all shapes and sizes. Some are still 'traditionally' client/server, others more adaptive having adopted the design concepts inherent in application environments such as .Net and JavaScript are light; infinitely configurable and web-enabled. Many remain in-house while others are hosted; all are defined as on-demand solutions, or should we say in-demand.

In many respects this class of software could be deemed to be in its 5th Generation as defined as:

- 1st Generation were largely LAN-based xBase products
- 2nd Generation became Client/Server architected utilising ODBC for greater scalability in terms of numbers of transactions and its use across WANs
- 3rd Generation provided a web browser extension with limited functionality for the user and very little for the customer (or end-user).
- 4th Generation moved the browser application into a portal with added functionality such as knowledge base integration allowing equal interaction by a users and customers.
- 5th Generation Service Desk solutions largely reside on more adaptive frameworks utilising the design environment advantages of .Net and JavaScript to radically enhance the user and customer experience. Access is web-based while the application itself still retains strong database management capabilities and offering increasingly open and varied integration points.

Web-based service desk systems are highly process defined yet easy-to-use put support managers and analysts in control of their complex and business critical infrastructure. Specifically these service desks have proven to be extremely effective in improving incident management and problem resolution rates, standardizing numerous business processes, tracking IT governance, and automating customer service across multiple channels.

How? Well the reality is IT is omni-present in every organization and often an intrinsic part of revenue generation. So downtime of anything from a web page to a CRM application is unacceptable. Whether deployed for the internal help desk or external customer support the web-based service desk offers a trusted solution. It's adaptive nature means it is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of today's growing service and support environments, while giving internal and external customers a range of multi-channel access points to engage the help desk or call center with demands for service.

While there are many different solutions and deployment scenarios to choose from, the good news is you do not have to spend your entire budget to get one and, significantly, the open and adaptive nature of a web-based solution also means limited investment is needed to realise other service desks.

The Benefits

Pragmatism In Design Will Deliver Effective Service Delivery

The benefits provided by a web-based service desk are largely derived from the flexibility and choices offered to those charged with improving service delivery. Because the objectives and demands placed upon organizations will change so the enabling mechanism for service delivery will need to adapt. Without doubt if the service desk's inherent workflow is set-in-stone delivery will eventually fail. A configurable service desk solution allows service delivery behaviour to be modified, evolved or completely overhauled without the expense of new software or long consultancy engagements.

Flexible Design - by providing an adaptive framework changes to configurations can be easily realised with limited vendor support and additional views and forms can be scripted with little or no programming skills just a desire for service.

Being form and template driven enables exponents of service management to easily alter the behaviour of service desk.

Flexible Integration - open and common interfaces allow for far greater integration allowing Active Directory, customer, asset and/or configuration management databases to be added in order to establish the core information needed against which to deliver services.

Beyond this the integration points are those that speed resolution and support analysts' effectiveness; elements such as integration with telephony, knowledge management and network management.

Flexible Access - Web-based service desks by virtue of their construct offer various means of access to the service desk and many of its attributes, such as its knowledge base, via web channels; 24/7/365.

In fast and dynamic organizations the needs of users, management, end-users and customers is a simple one, when issues arise they need to engage with the service desk through the web, chat, e-mail and telephony which ever medium is appropriate at any given time.

Flexible Intelligent Workflow - A web-based service desk solution can help improve customer satisfaction and increase employee productivity. Having a system that will automate workflow processes and trigger escalations ensure issues do not fall through the cracks.

The key however to a web-based service desk is having the capability to modify the workflow to adapt to changing needs.

Flexible Scheduling - managing and allocating resource is fundamental for a busy IT support manager if workloads and projects are to be satisfied in a timely manner governed by Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Performance visibility, skills-based escalations are all critical elements of a service desk where accurate allocation will ensure resolution times within the SLA are achieved.

Flexible Decision Support - access to performance data and trends is a critical part of improving service delivery as well as providing the justification for investment in human resource and infrastructure. End-to-end service management reporting from within a fully configured service desk will illustrate recurring failure points both in the infrastructure and support group performance.

Access to these reports can be 'stored' for further analysis via intranets or published in HTML.

Consequently a fully configured and process aligned service desk will improve service delivery and achieve tangible results in so many ways:

Improved Productivity

Recently, a joint Kelly Services and Purdue University study concluded that 92% of US consumers form an image of a company based on their experiences using its contact/support center. The same report found that 63% of consumers stop using a company's products or services based on a negative contact/support center experience. Within any organization, the same can apply. If an employee is not receiving prompt service from the support or IT department, productivity will be impacted and they will likely pursue other means to resolve their issue, such as asking a peer.

95% Customer Retention Rate Through Proactive Support

An integrated service desk should improve the customer support experience within an organization. Out of all the industry facts and figures available, the one provided by John T. Self, a lecturer at The Collins School of Hospitality Management at California State Polytechnic University (Cal Poly Pomona), says it best: "Of customers who register a complaint, between 54% and 70% will do business again with the organization if their complaint is resolved. That figure grows to an impressive 95% if the customer feels that the complaint was resolved quickly."

With a web-based service desk, organizations can transform their help desk and/or customer support center into an efficient operation capable of centrally managing customer incident tracking, delivering online self-service, providing knowledge bases for agents and users, delivering comprehensive two-way email management, offering automated reporting, and more. Comprehensive workflow and business-rule automation are other key areas where a web-based service desk can seamlessly link support processes.

Faster Resolution with Self-Service

An organization's service desk can optimize its operations by integrating self-service capabilities, such as access to knowledge bases and frequently asked questions (FAQs). Such self-service features were once a luxury, but employees now rely on them, especially during off-peak business hours. These self-service tools can also be utilized to reduce level-one call volumes. In a report, Forrester Research recently found that of the consumers who retrieve information from companies online, almost 50% of them sent an email, and 44% searched for immediate answers by turning to the FAQs section of a web site. Less than 30% of consumers picked up the phone to call the service desk for a real-time, human contact. Given the choice, users actually preferred FAQs to email or any other online customer service channel. (Source: Forrester Research, Online Customer Support Is In Need Of Assistance)

Powerful Analytics Aid Decision Support

A web-based service desk should provide a consolidated, real-time view of multiple service desk activity and performance metrics with fully customizable and automated administrative and agent dashboards. With this functionality organizations can instantly deliver comprehensive audit trails for organizational and governmental auditing, and effectively manage agent time tracking for performance reporting, departmental charge backs, and customer billing. Additionally, agents gain the ability to view their own activity and performance.

Realise One or Many Service Desks

Despite the clamour regarding 'the alignment of IT to true

business needs' the reality is in organizations where service delivery processes are defined, often due to the adoption of best practice such as ITIL®, IT will lead the way setting the service standard for others to follow.

The adaptive nature of the framework used for web-based service desks makes the realisation of one or more service desks from a single instance of one application a reality. The design interface will allow new templates to be created reflecting the service drivers for other parts of the organisation.

- HR/Payroll
- Facilities Management
- Fleet Management
- Procurement
- Compliance & Governance
- External Customer Service & Support

Unlike more traditional client/server service desk systems the web-based variants offer very intuitive design environments which allow organizations to build other service desks without the burden of programmers, additional software and heaps of consulting services.

The DNA of a Web-based Service Desk

The Pragmatic Route to Improving Service Delivery
To select the right web-based service desk solution, an organization must first assess how a product's features and functionality will fit into its existing operation. Above all, it should provide a framework to enable process automation and streamline comprehensive workflow.

There are key features and characteristics that should be mandatory in a web-based service desk solution. It should be an easy-to-use, comprehensive system that offers you the power of a single, centralized system to control all support operations. In addition, it should work within a single system to efficiently manage non-technical activities, compliance, and other business processes.

An organization should not overlook the importance of overall cost and flexibility when choosing the right service desk. Choosing between two very similar products may indeed come down to which one can scale with the organization.

The Web-Based Service Desk Improves Agent Workflow

Despite the capability of the service desk to intelligently manage and route service requests it is still the perceived role of service analyst which successfully resolves issues. A web-based service desk simply enables accurate allocation and resources to an issue.

- Business rules and escalations. Enables organizations to adapt their web-based service desk to support their organization's unique business rules, create rules based on customizable criteria to automatically assign and update issues, and notify the right users.
- Follow-the-sun escalations. Provides global, 24/7 support with escalations to escalate issues to different teams within "local" time zones based on availability.
- Field level permissions. Enables administrators to set up and control access to specific fields based on specific roles of individual agents and on the status of issues.
- Assignment teams. Enables administrators to organize agents into teams for assignment purposes and designate team leaders and supervisors for escalation notification and auto-assignment.
- Agent availability matrix. Automates the process of defining work schedules for all agents and generating individual work schedules for all team members.

In its recent report, Thirty-One Best Practices for the Service Desk, Forrester Research surveyed 2,138 technology users at US companies to uncover their opinion of their company's IT organization and its technologies. The study found that "while users are generally satisfied with the technologies their company has adopted, such as desktop technology and business applications, the IT organization needs to work on its service desk support and communication. Just 53% of users report being satisfied or very satisfied with their service desk support. This is cause for concern. As the service desk is the face of the IT organization, loss of credibility can negatively affect IT perception, potentially resulting in tighter budgets, longer approval cycles, and a reduction in the overall role of IT in driving business change."

Centralized, Multi-Channel Issue Tracking and Management

Support and IT departments must be able to deliver highly effective support with a web-based service desk. The centralized solution will put control in their hands and provide multi-channel support worldwide. Most importantly, service delivery and overall execution will be instantly enhanced. This functionality will enable IT staff to:

- Record and track all problems, incidents, and requests in order to solve issues more effectively
- Work with a single, centralized resource to efficiently manage all requests coming in by phone, email, web, chat, and wireless devices
- Manage multiple workflow scenarios for different business functions, products, groups and locations, such as IT help desk, customer service, development, and facilities management.

Note: a winning solution will ideally allow an organization to run multiple, partitioned project databases at no additional cost; which can be a very big factor in the overall cost of the solution.

Web Self-Service

Web self-service, no longer a luxury for service and support departments, has now become a necessity. An effective self-service solution must:

- Empower users with the ability to submit and track their own issues
- Enable organizations to deploy a simplified, highly customizable single-frame portal that can be configured to match the organizations look and feel without any programming
- Create automatic and proactive alerts and notifications, to keep agents and/or employees informed throughout the problem resolution process
- Give management the ability to design, distribute, and manage their own user satisfaction surveys within the web-based service desk

Two-Way Email Management

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An ideal solution will enable organizations to:

- Manage, age, query, and track all tickets submitted via email
- Create issues from emails, including their attached files
- Send customizable email alerts and notifications, including mass emails
- Ensure complete security for all incoming and outgoing email
- Automatically track email conversations
- Schedule and distribute mass (global) emails with news and updates to address book contacts
- Support Internet Message Access Protocol (IMAP), Post Office Protocol (POP), and Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) emails
- Email also becomes a facilitating medium and handshake when looking to integrate alerts generated by network management solutions

Knowledge Management

Having the capability to create separate technical and self-service solutions knowledge bases for agents and employees to access is a key component of today's service desk solutions. Other features should enable agents to:

- Dynamically access contact and other required information within the service desk from other proprietary knowledge bases or public knowledge bases, such as Google™ Groups or Microsoft® TechNet
- Have fast and direct access to professionally written support solutions and knowledge bases (also known as packaged knowledge) via a seamless link in the service desk

Service-Level Management

A service desk should allow organizations to automate, track, and manage internal and external customer service level agreements with a fully customizable Service Level Agreement (SLA) module for contract information, automated due dates, multi-tiered escalations, and reporting. It should also allow agents to:

- Create service levels based on the problem or incident type, or based on the employee's department, organization, or user ID. Easily set up service level agreements by priority
- Define response time, contract information, and associated escalation rules for each service level
- Automatically generate due dates and times for users' issues
- Report on service level metrics

IT Change Management

“Enterprises that don't properly manage IT changes will lose time, money, and business efficiency.” (Defining IT Change Management, Gartner Group).

IT change management is a process that enables an organization to modify any part of its IT and communications environment, and supports the acceptance, approval and implementation of the modifications. The goal of a formal IT change management program is to meet internal business objectives and external regulatory requirements while preserving the integrity and service quality of the production environment. It has been widely documented that organizations that fail to properly manage IT change processes have significantly lower IT service quality (often at a higher cost) than those that do, which is typically the impact of unplanned downtime.

Managing IT change management with the web-based service desk enables IT and support staff to replace paper trails for change approvals and to develop their own approval processes for change requests, without any programming.

Change management features in a service desk, or in an add-on module, should include a full set of flexible options that can optimize tracking and managing IT change processes, adhering to Sarbanes-Oxley requirements and other IT compliance tracking and general change management mandates.

With the right IT change management solution, an organization can be up-and-running quickly and can easily customize the solution to ensure it is easy-to-use for both technical and non-technical users.

Having the capability to view detailed information on the voting process, including email and web-based summaries of ballots and status offers real-time monitoring and an easy and convenient way to accelerate request for changes. This includes different phases of processes, time spent in each phase, deadlines, etc. As these workflow processes are developed, the system should offer the capability to generate reports, and include granular details for auditing purposes.

According to the Gartner Group, “The benefits of change management are plentiful and are mainly associated with reducing risk and improving quality of service.” These benefits include:

- Reduced unplanned downtime, by as much as 25 percent to 35 percent, because changes are better planned and tested. In addition, back-out plans are typically required so that quick restoration of the previous configuration can be done in the event of a failure or unforeseen problem during change implementation.
- Reduced planned downtime, by as much as 25 percent or more, because more changes are done in a single downtime period and also because of more appropriate task sequencing, which minimizes recurring tasks such as reboots.
- Improved quality of service (from reduced downtime), which reduces overall costs (IT support and business downtime costs) and corporate risk.
- Repeatable processes that enable faster, more-agile response to continual changes in business requirements and technology shifts, and provide an essential ingredient in evolving toward a real-time infrastructure.
- Increased communication with users, ensuring that downtime occurs during off-peak business cycles, which reduces corporate risk.
- Reduced volume and effects of change-related incidents and requests for technical support by end users.
- Improved client satisfaction and higher levels of customer service through better communication with users and the service desk. Publishing planned-downtime schedules helps to set expectations and reduce user frustration.
- For enterprises that include desktop management in their change management process, reduced support costs are enabled through standard desktop configurations and control of change. This is also true for standard server configuration environments.

(Source: Gartner Group, Defining IT Change Management)

Integration

To manage service to end-users/customers, critical devices, systems, applications and services easy integration is key to discover the ‘who, what, where’ of the IT estate and those resident within it. The purpose of integration is another step in speeding the resolution activities needed to maintain overall productivity.

Dynamic Corporate Address-Book

A service desk solution should offer complete, integrated support for Microsoft® Exchange, Active Directory®, Lotus Notes®, Sun™ ONE, Novell® NDS eDirectory™, and other LDAP Address Books. This quick method of dynamic address book access will save support agents time and eliminate the cumbersome task of maintaining and syncing address book information. The solution should offer this option as a built-in or add-on component, and should not require any external programming or consulting to set up and administer.

SQL Database

Using a Dynamic SQL Database Link within a service desk provides dynamic access to user contact, service contract, asset, and other data stored in an organization’s SQL-based databases (including Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle®, etc.). Also, with a dynamic “field mapper” issue data fields and table views can be populated in a trouble ticket or support request from any SQL-compliant database (including Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle, MySQL®, etc.).

As today’s IT and support environments are working more closely than ever before, this integration is critical for both groups.

Feeding the CMDB

If an organization utilises applications to discover network elements and desktops these datasets can be used to build a federated and relational CMDB within the web-based service desk. From here support analysts will be able to assess the dependencies which exist between elements and end-users. Assessing dependencies is fundamental to minimising the impact that incident, problem or change management activities may have on infrastructure performance and/or end-user productivity.

Telephony

One of the most critical components of incident and problem management is connecting employees to the right person.

The web-based service desk can streamline call management and reduce handling costs by integrating telephony capabilities for efficient, automated call routing and contact data population into trouble tickets. Integrated telephony provides intelligent call treatment, routing, call blending, and management to streamline all aspects of customer interactions.

Through voice calls and voice mail, organizations can deliver a professional and efficient voice experience to customers with only a regular telephone and a PC connected to the Internet. Additionally, organizations can get started with a new or existing toll-free telephone number in as little as a day.

IT Asset Management

Automatically tracking and recording IT assets within the service desk can help organizations substantially speed problem resolution. They can link their service desks to:

- Automatically track all the hardware, software, and other devices on a corporate network (along with changes and physical locations)
- Manage software license compliance and generate comprehensive IT asset reports
- Troubleshoot and resolve technical problems faster with dynamic access to IT assets
- Automate the business-critical desktop management functions of software deployment, asset discovery, and patch management.

Web-based Live e-Support

Secure features such as browser-based remote control, live chat, and advanced features including Voice-over IP (VoIP), white board, and file transfer, will allow organizations to offer employees more flexible and convenient communication channels to get the solutions they need – fast. They will also provide support agents with more effective ways to view, diagnose, and solve problems, deliver software upgrades and more.

Web Services

The ideal solution should provide an interface that allows support, IT, and business line managers to integrate their applications, in real-time, with their service desk environment. XML Web Services enables organizations to leverage service-oriented architecture by dynamically linking the service desk to other IT environments to boost efficiency and remove data silos.

PIM Synchronization

In today's service desk environment, agents are not tied to one application, device, or even a single work location. With increasing ticket volumes and tighter response times, it's more critical than ever that agents, support staff, and technicians have access to data when and where they need it. Having the capability to two-way synchronize calendars, appointments, contacts, and tasks stored in personal information managers (PIMs) with the service desk makes agents more productive.

PIM applications such as Microsoft® Outlook, Outlook Express, IBM Lotus® Notes®, and Palm Desktop®, as well as Pocket PC and BlackBerry® devices are widely used by agents and field technicians. Synchronizing information between the service desk and PIMs minimizes the need to maintain multiple calendars, improves data accuracy, enables organizations to optimize their resources and improve problem resolution.

Best Practice Realisation

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The emergence of ITIL and other best practice frameworks has changed how service desks operate. According to Forrester Research, “Over the past three years, many corporations have been looking to improve their infrastructure management processes, as demonstrated by the strong interest in ITIL and other process rationalization methods. The ITIL approach is quickly becoming the de facto standard for IT service delivery — Forrester expected implementation levels in \$1 billion-plus companies to grow from 13% to around 40% by the end of 2006.” (Source: Forrester Research, Point Solutions for Enterprise Infrastructure Management)

And its not just ITIL, COBIT support Sarbanes Oxley and Basel II is more standard than framework in Financial Services industries. Whether best practice for service delivery improvement, compliance or governance process re-engineering is the assessment of how well services are designed and delivered. These frameworks do not necessarily require enabling technology but the transparency of issues and performance is given true immediacy through a web-based service desk.

IT Governance Defined

At its most basic definition, IT governance is the process by which decisions are made around IT investments. How decisions are made, who makes the decisions, who is held accountable, and how the results of decisions are measured and monitored are all parts of IT governance.

Based on this definition, everyone has some form of IT governance. Unfortunately for many firms, the governance process is ad hoc and informal. There is no consistency across the enterprise, accountability is weak — if present at all — and there are no formal mechanisms to measure and monitor the outcomes of the decisions.

(Source: Forrester Research: IT Governance Framework: Structures, Processes, and Communication.)

To ensure a service desk can manage and automate industry-backed best practices, an organization should verify that it has received ITIL Service Support Certification through a recognized body such as Pink Elephant's PinkVerify™ Program.

Pink Elephant's PinkVerify certification is recognized as the IT service management industry's foremost program for granting ITIL compatibility; important to organizations that wish to align their IT practices with their business objectives and deliver effective IT service management.

This ITIL certification affirms a service desk's commitment to developing web-based support automation solutions that help organizations improve their service desk operations and efficiencies and incorporate industry best practices.

Summary of Findings

As this paper explained, more demanding service and support environments, new industry standards, IT governance controls, and budgetary pressures have made it mandatory for support and IT departments within an organization to collaborate more effectively. Additionally, organizations must find cost-effective methods to gain control of their demanding and fluid environments.

The right web-based service desk solution will serve as the central communication platform to integrate workflow management into all critical business processes, including service and support, change management, IT governance tracking, and more.

Key Features

How to Select a Web-Based Service Desk

The following are optimal service desk characteristics for support and IT organizations:

- Sophisticated customizable workflow automation for various business processes, including incident and problem management, change management, configuration/IT asset management, service level management, and more
- Dynamic integrations with leading best-of-breed solutions and corporate databases
- Built-in support (and templates) for best practices, such as ITIL® allow for rapid process realisation
- Web-based architecture
- Easy-to-use (administer, customize, and access)
- Dynamic access to decision support tools and information

Whether responsible for the internal help desk, external customer support, or both, the web-based service desk offers a trusted solution. It is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of today's growing service and support environments, while giving internal and external customers a range of multi-channel entry points to engage the help desk or call center.

Once the right service desk solution is deployed, entire support organizations and IT staff will be able to do more with less, and will have the tools they need to meet the service delivery challenges of the day – while optimizing existing resources and delivering the best possible customer experience. Although this paper places strong emphasis on the key features that organizations should look for in a service desk solution, simplicity and ease-of-use should also be taken into account when searching for the best solution. Even the perfect product will ultimately fail if employees and customers cannot use it, and management teams cannot effectively administer, integrate, and customize it. After narrowing the field, the final decision should be based on the one product that offers the perfect union of features, functionality, and usability.

The mantra for any web-based service desk must be immediacy of service. Be it the ease with which end-users/customer can access service desk channels, the speed resolution activities are expedited or the decision support information available to management; the reality is a web-based service desk has something for everyone.

For the IT Service Delivery Manager

Those charged with improving service delivery will appreciate the transparency of issues arising across the IT estate and the performance of support groups to resolve these issues quickly.

The optimal web-based service desk solution should be an easy-to-use, comprehensive system that offers a single, centralized system to control worldwide support. For support recipients, including employees and customers, such a web-based system requires them to have a working knowledge of only the Internet and email in order to request support, check status, and accomplish a myriad of related tasks. For the IT Support Manager he needs to be able to access status information so he remains in touch with emerging issues and is able to manage the expectations of the CIO.

For the CIO

For the CIO the demand on him is to ensure that his service desk remains aligned to the ever-changing needs of the organization. Although not needing the details of specific issues the overview available through reports and dashboards will allow the CIO to decide when to intervene when status and performance is not what it should be.

Customization of the solution is also critical for a CIO as all service desk projects need to fit an organization's unique requirements while keeping data intact. Specifically, the solution should enable an organization to continuously modify the interface, adding and deleting fields and drop-down menus to capture pertinent information.

A web-based service desk offers that adaptive design environment which can be controlled by the user with little or no additional cost of consulting services.

For the CEO

The one thing every CEO expects is business change and what s/he will expect is an IT service management solution that has the ability to manage change projects with little or disruption to the operations of the organisations.

More than this where the organization evolves its mode of operation and how it utilises IT for its success service delivery behaviour will need to evolve too so IT is able to address these changing demands.

And where IT has become the service standard bearer so design and deploying the web-based service desk into other service areas becomes a compelling event to improving the working environment and customer experience.

For the CFO

The ideal solution will eliminate the need for costly administration and programming. Additionally, the web-based architecture of the service desk solution will enable the organization to easily and affordably adapt the system to changing business needs.

Low cost of ownership will be critical for this investment. Being fast to deploy and with low system administration the immediate burden for any organization is minimal. More than this by using a single web-based service desk to power internal support, external customer service, and a host of other critical business processes, the ROI can be realized in a four to six months, based on improved first-call resolution rates, efficiency and performance gains across numerous departments, and gains in agent/department efficiency.



About Numara Software

Founded in 1991, Numara Software is a global provider of service desk management solutions. Its flagship products, Numara Track-It! and Numara FootPrints, support over 50,000 customer sites worldwide making it the leader in this market for small to mid-sized enterprises.

About Numara FootPrints

Since its launch in 1996, the Numara FootPrints line of support automation solutions has evolved as a flexible, pragmatic web-based service desk suite with a low total cost of ownership and fast ROI. Today FootPrints is used by over 2,400 organizations worldwide and its rapid deployment methodology appeals to SMEs and Corporates alike.

The Numara FootPrints product line, which has garnered many industry awards and is frequently recognized by industry analysts, consists of four principal applications, including Numara FootPrints, Numara FootPrints for eService, and Numara FootPrints Hosting Service. These products are complemented by numerous add-on modules to help organizations extend the value of their Numara FootPrints investments, including, Numara Asset Manager, Numara FootPrints Integration with Microsoft SMS Asset Management, Numara FootPrints Deploy, Numara FootPrints Sync, and Numara FootPrints Telephony Integration.



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