



Maximizing the Value from your IT Help Desk Partner



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To optimize an IT service desk, organizations have to look past the SLA to the finer details. Only when you evaluate on a deeper level can you determine whether the results are worth the spend. Here, we look at strategies that ensure you get the best ROI should you choose to partner with a third party.

The Big Picture

The most productive service desks will do more than pick up a phone call on the first ring. To really make improvements, the staff needs to understand the larger industry of the client as well as their individual pain points. Communication across departments is the best way to determine what's working and what isn't. Once an IT service desk knows how a company views processes that drive business growth, it's easier to prioritize the next steps.

It should be noted that a service desk will never truly grasp a company's internal objectives the same way that their in-house team will, but they still need to know enough to free up the in-house team's time to focus on the developments that move the company forward. For instance, all Dataprise engineers are HIPAA-certified, so they can work with healthcare professionals without violating compliance regulations. The best service desk provider will have a solid idea of what's ahead, so they can coordinate with all departments to prepare for the changes.

The Contract

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) is a standard tool in the industry, one that sets the base-level expectations of the service desk provider. The goal is to optimize the partnership by unifying response times for clients and ensuring that the correct information is delivered on the proper channels to key stakeholders.

From the moment the contract is signed, your service desk partner should gather information and then provide clients with the means to get in touch with the staff, regardless of what they need or when they need it. While many clients still prefer email, they may be better off either calling or chatting with the service desk for more immediate answers. To ensure that clients actually take advantage of these features, the quality of the responses and the overall experience of the interaction needs to be excellent.

Your service desk partner should encourage clients to consider long-term plans when choosing a service level. For instance, if a company is showing every sign of scaling up in the near future, they may be better off with per-user pricing. This enables them to predict their budgets because they can fold in the new costs based on the number of people they'll need. However, if a company is only going to need one service and their workflow is relatively consistent, per-user pricing may be an unnecessary expense. No matter what a client requires, though, the quality of the responses should be consistent across the board.

Communication and Response Times

To make this process easier for your organization, your service desk partner should make use of omnichannel tools, AI, and automation to categorize and centralize requests. This allows for faster and more valuable communication with clients and makes it easier to spot hiccups before they develop into full-blown issues. To improve consistency, quality checks and assurance methods should be automated and conducted across the board. Workforce management is built into the system, and trends, volume spikes, and escalation rates are easily tracked and reported.

From there, your service desk partner should share this information both internally and externally and follow up if there are any concerning patterns. All engineers are rated based on the quality of their responses and, if needed, provided a coaching plan if they need to improve their performance. Customer satisfaction, whether with the CEO or an intern, is extremely important to Dataprise, which is why the staff has adopted a continuous improvement mindset.

The Improvement Process

- It's crucial for customers that their IT service desk has an improvement process in place as it directly impacts the quality of service they receive. An improvement process allows the service desk to continually enhance its efficiency, adapt to changing technology and customer needs, optimize service delivery, and ultimately provide a better customer experience. By constantly striving to improve, the service desk can address issues more promptly, reduce downtime, and enhance the quality of support provided to the customer. This not only ensures that the customer's IT needs are met effectively but also contributes to cost savings for the customer by reducing operational inefficiencies and potential risks. A service desk with a robust improvement process is better equipped to meet and exceed customer expectations, leading to improved satisfaction and a stronger long-term partnership between the customer and the service desk.
- **Identifying Inefficiencies:**
 - The service desk partner should work to uncover inefficiencies within an organization by engaging with people, asking pertinent questions, and investigating how workflows impact the organization's bottom line. This phase is crucial for revealing breakdowns between different phases within larger companies with disparate departments.
- **Tracking Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**
 - A service desk partner needs to monitor their client's KPIs to comprehend how to intervene and provide assistance. For example, if a manual onboarding process is causing wasted time and errors, the team needs to track the KPI metrics and understand the broader impact on the organization.
- **Taking Action and Implementation:**
 - Once the service desk partner has a clear understanding of the problems, they should devise a plan and execute it. This often involves adding more functionality to the company's workflow, such as developing ways for teams to collaborate seamlessly rather than waiting for department handoffs.
- **Reviewing and Maintaining Solutions:**
 - After implementing the plans, the service desk partner should continuously monitor their solutions to ensure their intended impact on the organization. They should evaluate the success of the changes based on the numbers and make adjustments as necessary. Clients should expect clear reports providing all details related to their service needs from their service desk partner.

The most important quality of an IT service desk is its efficacy. At Dataprise, every effort is made to evaluate each and every interaction with clients so that the process can be continuously improved upon.



Efficient Ticket Escalation and Follow-up

Efficient ticket escalation is vital to resolving IT issues promptly and effectively. A well-defined path for ticket escalation prevents delays and miscommunications between support engineers. Look for an IT help desk partner that has clearly defined service level agreements, fully documented support tickets, and regularly conducts internal audits to optimize ticket escalation and resolution metrics. Additionally, ensure that your IT help desk provider prioritizes consistent follow-up to ensure that the implemented solutions adequately address the underlying IT problems.

Gathering and Optimizing Help Desk KPIs

Help desk managers have access to valuable data that can measure the impact of their service and drive improvements. Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as First Contact Resolution (FCR), Mean Time to Resolution (MTR), and Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) provide insights into the effectiveness and efficiency of the help desk service. A reputable IT help desk partner should be transparent about their KPIs and continuously strive for improvement. During the evaluation process, inquire about their metrics and data-driven approach to ensure that you are partnering with an IT help desk provider committed to delivering high-quality support.

Flexibility and Scalability

Businesses may experience periods of growth as well as contractions. Your organization should be partnering with an IT service provider that offers flexibility and scalability. They should be able to scale their services to accommodate your changing needs and adjust the contract accordingly. Avoid being locked into a service contract that no longer aligns with your organization's requirements.

Differentiating Between Mediocre and Exceptional IT Help Desks

While most IT help desk providers can handle basic incident management, it is crucial to distinguish between acceptable and exceptional service. Look for a help desk team that possesses strong technical and interpersonal skills. Technical qualifications, such as certifications from leading accrediting bodies, are essential, but a reputable help desk team goes beyond technical expertise. They should have a culture of customer service excellence, with friendly engineers who avoid technical jargon and maintain well-maintained knowledge bases. Additionally, ensure that your IT help desk partner offers a clear and efficient path for ticket escalation, with defined service level agreements and regular internal audits to optimize ticket resolution metrics.

Partner with Dataprise

Dataprise is a premier national managed service provider offering comprehensive IT solutions, including 24/7 proactive network monitoring, automated systems management, and end-to-end IT support. With a pool of over 400 certified engineers and subject matter experts, Dataprise is committed to enabling its clients to excel in their endeavors by delivering seamless technology solutions and round-the-clock support. By partnering with Dataprise, organizations can benefit from harmonious IT management, fortified security, enhanced efficiency, and proactive problem resolution, ultimately contributing to uninterrupted business operations, increased productivity, and overall business success. Ready to elevate your organization's IT infrastructure and support to new heights? Partner with Dataprise today to experience seamless technology solutions, fortified security, and round-the-clock support.

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