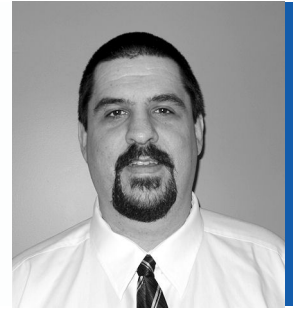


White Paper:

Service Desk Metrics: Measuring Success and Driving Continuous Improvement



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Today's business world is increasingly data driven. Whether the organization is a Fortune 500 investment firm or a regional manufacturing company, data and metrics are key tools used to make informed business decisions and to assess the overall performance of an organization. The IT Service Desk, which may be providing both IT and business process support to employees and customers alike, generates massive amounts of data which can be sliced and diced into any number of formats for various audiences. Although the collection part of the equation is relatively easy, the art is in understanding how best to utilize the data and metrics collected to provide the most benefit to the organization.

Quality Over Quantity

Thankfully, ACD (Automatic Call Distribution) software and incident management tracking applications make data collection a relatively easy task. When the time comes to prepare weekly, monthly or yearly reports for executives and stakeholders in the organization, we tend to get report happy. It is very easy to fall into the trap of creating a towering stack of reports simply because you can.

Executives are generally concerned with the overall performance of the Service Desk and the benefits that it is providing to the organization. Executive reports should focus on Service Desk performance against the Key Performance Indicators identified by the organization. Your CIO may not be interested in the fact that 75% of your email related incidents are reported on Wednesdays, however metrics that show how an increase in the usage of self help tools is improving IT's bottom line will certainly garner some attention.

Whenever possible, tie your reported metrics to the organization's business objectives. For CDI IT Solutions, focusing on the client's goals, milestones and ongoing initiatives is paramount in providing flexible, customized reporting that can provide a consistent view of the health of the Service Desk while still being agile enough to provide ad-hoc reporting when necessary.

Marketing the Service Desk with Metrics

While executives may not need to see the detailed nuances that make up your monthly metrics, you can use this information to help market the Service Desk within your organization. Metrics such as Calls Answered, Average Speed to Answer and First Call Resolution Rate are great for communicating to your user community the overall health of the Service Desk. Your metrics can help convey the amount

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of work that flows through the department and can help you and your counterparts across the organization make educated decisions on staffing and technology.

CDI IT Solutions partners with its clients to create reporting that not only presents raw data in summary form, but helps celebrate achievement across the IT organization. This information can then be used outside of IT to help introduce new areas of the company to the service or to help address a specific business unit's needs. You can also use this context specific data in a company newsletter, or share the metrics via a display board. Does the leadership of your organization know how many calls to the Service Desk came from their respective area? Do you know how well you are supporting each unit's specific IT needs? You can use the answers to these questions to effectively market the services provided as well as identify areas that need improvement.

A Focus on Feedback

A Service Desk Analyst's job is a stressful one. If you've never sat in that seat and put on a headset, it can seem very daunting. The job description will say "the analyst will provide IT support via telephone, email and other contact methods to the user community". The reality is that analysts

are on the phone all day long and nearly every call is from a user unable to complete a task as expected. And chances are, they are not happy.

What keeps these diligent IT professionals going? There is certainly the aspect of helping others in the organizations to remain productive but there are other factors as well. Service Desk Analysts are motivated in many ways. Some analysts thrive on verbal praise. Others respond best to a written note.

Along with these motivational tools, consider using metrics to motivate. CDI IT Solutions utilizes a weekly scorecard incorporated into one-on-one discussions with its Service

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Desk analysts. It is important to not only use metrics to identify deficiencies, but to also use individual statistics to drive performance and to acknowledge a job well done. Each analyst will have different strengths and a well-designed scorecard will ensure you can point out positives for each member of the Service Desk. A regular view into personal performance should mean no surprises at annual performance review time, and allows you an opportunity to offer praise and guidance on a regular basis.

Making Customer Satisfaction Surveys Count

You would be hard pressed to find someone that would argue the importance of measuring customer satisfaction. A large amount of time and resources are invested in creating surveys, determining their frequency and distribution and compiling the results. It is important to note that surveys should go beyond simply asking if the customer is satisfied. The survey should gauge the effectiveness of the solutions provided, the courtesy of the agent, and allow the user to provide free form commentary.

What you do with the data received from these surveys can be the most important work you do with metrics. In a perfect world, all of the feedback received would be glowing descriptions of the perfect support experience. Even if your Service Desk scores very well in these surveys, make sure proper attention is given to lower scores. If a poor survey response is received, perform a review of the incident in question and become familiar with the documented issue description along with the steps taken to resolve the issue. Take the opportunity to reach out to customers that provided

negative feedback via the survey. Treat these responses as opportunities rather than data points that simply brought down the average score. By contacting these customers and discussing their interaction with the Service Desk, you can identify areas of focus for training and processes that may need retooling. More importantly, you are sending a strong message that feedback, both positive and negative, is appreciated and that concerns are taken seriously.

You should also consider using the survey to help you answer one of the most important questions you can ask your customers - “What is important to you?” Especially if your organization is not capturing this data in other ways, offer four or five initiatives that are on your organization’s IT radar, and ask each customer which is the most important to them. Imagine if you had this type of data when analyzing the IT budget for next year or determining which projects to start and which you need to shelve for awhile. Don’t simply create a customer satisfaction score. Without an analysis of Customer Satisfaction Survey data and acting upon it, you are simply computing a number.

The collection of metrics and statistics has become a real time, almost completely automated process. Just as the Service Desk focuses on the human element of technology, how we deal with the data we receive on a daily, weekly and monthly basis allows us to personalize the view into the support our area provides. It is simply not enough to merely measure metrics. Instead of spending large amounts of time compiling report after report, use the time to provide information that can drive change, improve performance and accurately gauge the effectiveness of the Service Desk and the support organization as a whole.

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