

# ITSM at a Crossroads: What Will it Take to Move ITSM Into the 21st Century?

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## Introduction

A recent, deep-dive study on IT Service Management (ITSM) reveals that users on both sides of the help desk are frustrated, overwhelmed, and under-served by current product offerings. The technology is ripe for progression to the next level, but a new vision focused on how ITSM can better impact modern organizational structures is required.

## The 80s Called: They Do *Not* Want Their ITSM Solution Back

Today, the smart phone in your pocket has more computing power than all of NASA had when it put Neil Armstrong on the moon<sup>1</sup>. Technology has been rapidly progressing for decades, but in the last fifteen years specifically, we have seen the explosion of the global Internet, the proliferation of mobile devices, and the subsequent emergence of the app economy. Innovative entrepreneurs have leveraged these technologies to give life to new companies like Uber and Nest, driving us towards an Internet-of-Things world. Everything has changed. Except ITSM.

Today's business user simply has to fill out a help desk ticket to re-live the technologies of the late 80s. Sure, help desk forms are now accessible on the under-visited and impossible-to-navigate corporate intranet. And we can now key in the fields rather than fill them out by hand. But other than that, today's IT service management systems look eerily similar to those created decades ago. They are still forms-based, poorly designed, and cluttered with unnecessary information.

These ITSM solutions are no picnic for IT analysts either. Outdated tools and processes work nothing like Google so the search for information is arduous and time consuming. And in order to consult with other team members who have expertise relevant to the issue at hand, analysts are forced to work outside the system.

The result is that individuals on both sides of the service desk still have too much work and too little assistance. And because the ITSM experience in no way reflects the technology experience that today's users have grown accustomed to, IT is perceived as doing things the old-fashioned way. For an industry that claims its purpose is to uniquely transform services, the technology seems hopelessly static.

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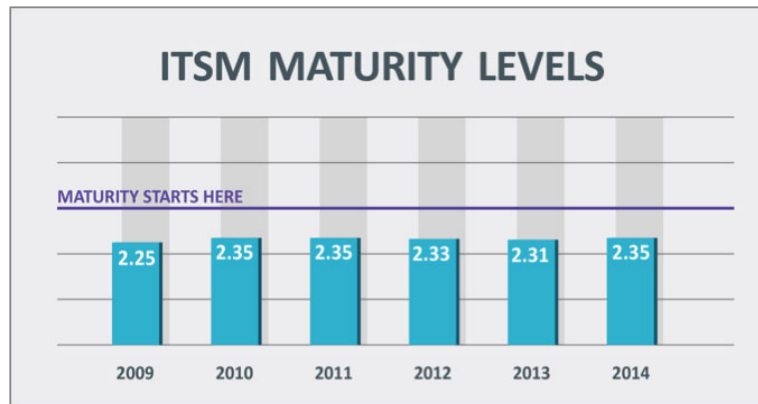
1. <http://knopfdoubleday.com/2011/03/14/your-cell-phone/>

## ITSM: Why the Lack of Progress?

In our tech-focused world, entrepreneurs everywhere are racing to build the next big app to revolutionize the way that we live, work, and play. So, why the lack of progress in ITSM? Some providers point to their cloud-based solutions as evidence of advancement, but do not be fooled. A little analysis reveals that these so-called revolutionary products offer little more than the same old ITSM system with fancier buttons and a monthly payment plan. ITSM, as many leading IT analysts would attest, has made little headway towards maturity.

*According to HDI studies<sup>2</sup>, the average cost per help desk ticket has remained relatively static for the last several years because ITSM tools have remained trapped in technological adolescence. And until those tools begin to drive productivity gains, the cost to service tickets will remain static, or rise with wage increases.*

**Figure 1: Source: CA Technologies, multiple industry analyst reports.**



So, what is the core issue? We are making simple modifications to an antiquated system. We are trying to modernize the fax machine when we should be designing electronic signature software. It is time to rethink ITSM from the ground up. And the starting point is the human element. We need to understand the people, the environment, and the culture of the ITSM system.

## Survey Reveals the Culture of ITSM

In 2015, CA Technologies conducted an in-depth study to identify the key reasons why ITSM is failing organizations. The study was designed to explore the foundation upon which companies manage ITSM, and to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations behind both business users and IT teams.

## Creating a New Vision of ITSM

The study provided us with some surprising insights into the many underlying factors associated with the use of an ITSM system. With a thorough understanding of the environments in which people use the product, and the goals they expect to accomplish, we can deliver a high-value solution that better meets the needs of the modern enterprise. The study found the following insights.

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2. 2007-2010 HDI Practices & Salary Reports; 2011-2014 HDI Support Center Practices & Salary Reports (ThinkHDI.com/Research)

**Figure 2: Details about the 2015, CA Technologies study:**



### **Study Insight #1: Today's ITSM is Built for IT Processes and Not People**

Business users feel under-served by today's ITSM systems, but they are not alone. IT analysts on the other side of the ticket feel equally frustrated by the technology's shortcomings. Many analysts feel that rather than facilitate the process, ITSM tools complicate it with incomplete ticket information, insufficient situational context, and clunky workarounds. In fact, current ITSM tools are perceived as failing analysts in a number of ways:

#### **Multiple Screens and No Prioritization**

To perform a single task, help desk analysts are frequently forced to work from independent queues across multiple systems. Switching back and forth between ITSM screens, queues, and solutions might provide some at-desk exercise, but it also increases the time required to work a ticket, provides zero context in terms of what the analyst needs to do to solve the problem, and does not help to prioritize the workload.

#### **No Central Knowledge Base**

Our study showed that today, knowledge is stored in a range of locations from sticky notes to third-party solutions and everywhere in between. IT teams are using SharePoint, Excel, and old-fashioned notebooks rather than the knowledge management tool in the ITSM system. Without a centralized knowledge base from which to leverage existing intel, analysts lack information that could assist in the resolution process. A comprehensive capture of data, including screen-shots, chats, email and voice-mail from resources inside and outside the ticketing system is integral to replacing spotty tribal knowledge with accessible, centralized knowledge.

## **A Maniacal Focus on Service Level Metrics**

Tools and process are typically focused on service level metrics. But this SLA-based approach encourages the analyst to focus on the speed of solving an issue at the expense of everything else, and does not tell the true story about the quality of the service delivered or the business user's overall satisfaction. SLAs can even cause the analyst to avoid pressing issues that need immediate attention in order to meet speed goals. Without more comprehensive resolution targets, analysts will continue to find it difficult to evaluate their own job performance and overall service will continue to suffer.

## **A Failure to Communicate**

Strong communication features within the ITSM system are needed to cultivate team collaboration and ensure successful ticket transfers. But today's tools lack those capabilities and the result is failed ticket hand-offs, lost data, incomplete ticket information and a lot of aggravation.

## **Study Insight #2: Collaboration is Most Often Done Outside of the System**

There is no one individual capable of solving every IT issue that arises. Therefore, IT departments regularly depend on collaborative teamwork to get the job done.

But ITSM systems are not designed with features that foster effective collaboration. First, it is a challenge for analysts to even locate other team members with the expertise required to help solve specific issues because there is no easy way to identify their skills sets.

And even if analysts have become aware of each other's strengths, the one-individual to one-ticket mindset that is meant to ensure accountability, makes it difficult to collaborate on a ticket simultaneously. In fact, most tools are currently designed for agents to handle only one ticket at a time; and if help is required, they have to abandon the tool in order to communicate with other analysts face-to-face, or through IM programs.

External interaction among analysts cannot be tracked or captured in the system. And since they must rapidly move onto the next ticket, external communications are almost never inserted into the system after the fact.

This lack of centralized, trackable collaboration significantly reduces visibility and introduces several disadvantages. When tickets are escalated or sent to co-workers for input, when analyst assignments change, or when queues are shuffled, contextual ticket information is lost and the issue reverts back to square one. Other tickets fall through the cracks and are lost entirely. And without any record of interaction, knowledge that could be leveraged to resolve future issues is lost as well.

## **What Collaboration Should Look Like**

Collaboration within the system at every stage of the support process would mean that as soon as an issue arises, the right help desk analysts with the right skill sets are leveraged to assist in the shortest amount of time, achieving rapid resolution without driving up support costs.

*A Deloitte study<sup>3</sup> found that companies that prioritize collaboration are twice as likely to be profitable and twice as likely to outgrow competitors. Collaboration is an important factor of success.*

Tracking and recording communication means it can be referenced when future issues arise to deliver faster resolution. In addition, new employees learn best from seasoned co-workers; so, effective collaboration tools that create a natural student-mentor relationship between newer employees and their veteran counterparts will help to inspire, engage, and educate.

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3. <http://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/collaborative-economy-unlocking-power-of-workplace-crowd.html>

## Study Insight #3: People Go to IT as a Last Resort

A survey by Harris Interactive<sup>4</sup> revealed that 53% of office workers opt to fix their own computer problems or ask someone else for help, instead of relying on an IT professional or help desk.

Figure 3: This chart illustrates what users actually do when they encounter an issue with a business app, such as email.



## What Sends Users Running from ITSM?

Today's business users have grown accustomed to the ease and speed that technology brings to their lives. They expect quick and easy access, straight-forward transactions, and readily available information. And they expect results in minutes or hours, not days or weeks.

So, of course business users look for every way possible to bypass the ITSM process, preferring to use administrative assistants and other IT helpers to facilitate communication between themselves and IT, or when necessary, defaulting to familiar tools like email or phone to communicate issues.

Users find self-service tedious because many of today's help desk systems do little more than combine disparate tools and features together, without any real consideration of the human element behind the process. And that missing human element materializes in a number of ways:

- Users cannot readily access solutions buried in the corporate intranet.
- Forms and knowledge materials are riddled with IT jargon.
- IT categorization is confusing.
- Menu navigation is laborious.
- Users lack involvement in the process.
- The learning curve is steep.
- System performance is slow.
- There is no integration with the business software that users use.

4. <http://www.researchscape.com/business/office-computer-user-survey>

## Distributing Costs to Other Departments Does Not Save Money

Many organizations have implemented some flavor of self-service, providing business users with the ability to troubleshoot or create tickets for their own issues. It sounds good, but according to our study respondents, self-service in its current form does not have a significant impact on front-line workload.

The primary goal of self-service is to shift some of the support burden from an overloaded tier 1 help desk back onto business users. This is an attempt to urge business users to solve their own technical issues rather than having them solved by much cheaper help desk analysts. So, rather than focusing on their core job, we have highly-paid business professionals spending valuable time troubleshooting their own technical issues.

While self-help and self-generated tickets may reduce IT support costs on the surface, in reality these costs are really just being distributed through the organization in ways that make little business sense.

According to Compass America<sup>5</sup>, US employees spend 30 minutes each week trying to fix their own problems or helping a co-worker with theirs. In a similar European survey<sup>6</sup>, 65% of respondents claimed they spent an average of four hours a week troubleshooting computer problems. Calculating on the basis hourly wages, study organizers estimated the resulting costs to be €12 million a year for that group of respondents alone. It is hard to imagine what users in that study are doing that requires four hours a week troubleshooting, but whether they are spending 30 minutes or four hours, the cost of lost productivity as business users try to solve their own IT issues adds up fast.

## Our Vision for Next-Generation ITSM

As made evident by the survey, there are significant issues with today's ITSM solutions, but none are insurmountable. And effectively addressing these issues could have a significant, positive impact on both the business and the IT sides of the organization.

With our research results in hand, CA has set out to create a better ITSM solution to support business growth, provide better customer service and user experience, improve workforce productivity and manage costs.

We believe that the key to a more progressive ITSM experience is to factor people into the equation at every step of the way. We can help IT to regain relevance and legitimacy by:

- Improving the lines of communication.
- Addressing user needs through the eyes of the users themselves.
- Moving beyond static forms and rigid check boxes to better leverage information.
- Working with users to identify root problems and to resolve them in a timely, satisfactory manner.
- Busting the silos that prevent IT analysts from using their expertise in a team context.
- Harnessing cumulative tribal knowledge to provide more comprehensive help to customers.
- Using technology as a means to provide personalized service, while managing costs.
- Designing a tool that works the way that people work.

## Clarity Service Management: Designed for Humans, Built for Service

In direct response to our survey findings, CA has reevaluated the design methodology behind our ITSM solution to deliver a tool that better reflects user and analyst goals and motivations, rather than focusing exclusively on underlying technologies or tasks. Our resulting design process includes the following core elements:

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5. <http://www.networkalliance.com/your-advantage/understanding-technology-costs>
  6. <http://www.helsinkitimes.fi/finland/finland-news/domestic/10683-workers-waste-four-hours-a-week-on-computer-problems.html>

## Don't Skip a Beat

Stop solving technology problems and start solving people's problems. Provide customers a simple way to connect with IT and to remain engaged and satisfied across the entire service delivery and restoration process.

Give customers a consistent support approach across any channel, provide information and involvement in every step of the process, and define business terms with non-complex language. Make IT simple and keep customers running at their best.

### SELF-SERVICE

Keeps customers running and makes IT simple.

- Constant contact through any channel
- Continuous interaction to stay on track
- New way for people to engage and make IT simple

### A NEW WORK EXPERIENCE

So analysts can get back to helping people.

- Understand overall work patterns and IT environment
- Ensure each job is prioritized and understood
- Accelerate triage and resolution by analyzing historical interactions

## Make Every Moment Count

Up-level IT intelligence and communication. Provide analysts with awareness of the complete state of the IT environment.

Give them a comprehensive understanding into the importance of the workload, a way to prioritize it with data driven intelligence and a list of activities to get the job done right. Provide them with the expertise to make every engagement valuable.

## Embrace the Team, Not the Ticket

Elevate system and human knowledge to support the business as a unified IT team. Give your service desk a well-organized, single-view solution with easy access to knowledge resources.

Give them a system that leverages team and skills-based capabilities so that analysts can work together to solve issues based on individual strengths, as well as a way to monitor and measure results to improve the level of service. Help teams be productive in the digital workplace.

### ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Built for the modern workplace.

- Connections to strengthen the intelligence of the IT team
- Shared skills for better decision making
- Metrics to improve the overall level of service



## **The CA Technologies Advantage**

CA Technologies, A Broadcom Company, provides IT management solutions that help customers manage and secure complex IT environments to support agile business services. Organizations leverage CA Technologies software and SaaS solutions to accelerate innovation, transform infrastructure, and secure data and identities, from the data center to the cloud. CA Technologies is committed to ensuring our customers achieve their desired outcomes and expected business value through the use of our technology.

For more information about CA Technologies and Clarity Service Management, please visit [broadcom.com/clarity-service-management](https://broadcom.com/clarity-service-management).



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