



From Firefighter to Service Provider

- 1 The Service Desk Dilemma
- 2 IT Routine Between Overload and Shadow IT
- 3 More Automation and Flexibility for the Service Desk
- 4 Onboarding: Ready to Work from Day 1
- 5 Speedier Incident Resolution
- 6 IT as Service Provider for the Customer

1 The Service Desk Dilemma

Today, many IT organisations find themselves in a quandary created by rising customer-side expectations, as well as widespread use of antiquated IT service management (ITSM) software. In their private lives (think iPhone), end users have become accustomed to ordering IT services, apps, or storage space easily and on-demand with a mouse click or the tap of a finger. Many IT organisations are not capable of keeping up with this: their resource provisioning and incident handling processes are not tightly integrated enough, the management solutions in use are too numerous and isolated -

and thus, their response times are too long. Therefore, the daily grind at the service desk all too often simply consists of acting as „firefighters“ when incidents occur. For this reason, the required productivity gains, adherence to service level agreements (SLAs), and, most of all, the continual service improvement IT departments aspire to, are only possible with an up-to-date and flexible service management solution. It's time for a change of approach. This whitepaper explains to you as an administrator the aspects that need to be considered.

2 IT Routine Between Overload and Shadow IT

These days, the administrator has to juggle more conflicts on a daily basis than the head of an extended tribal family. Due to a lack of staff and tight budgets, a workday will usually start with attending to problems, emergencies, and tasks left over from the previous day. Actually, the administrator, along with his team, wants to be the reliable service provider for his customer - the end users in the enterprise; however, work overload and the perpetual perils of IT all too often force him into the role of a fire department captain who, in emergency situations, sends staff to where things are most wildly ablaze - or where someone is yelling „Fire! Fire!“ the loudest.

The administrator has to fight several battles at once: first of all, there are his customers, the end users, who are growing more demanding all the time in IT service affairs. For when it comes to IT service provisioning, the consumer world has long overtaken the vast majority of IT organisations: today, end users are accustomed to conveniently selecting their favourite device in their network provider's store or web-shop from a plethora of available models, activating it in just a few steps, installing new apps on their smartphones by simply tapping their fingers, and acquiring additional storage space on demand - all with sufficient performance and availability.

Thus, administrators keep hearing the same question, posed accusingly, over and over again: „Why can't you do that?“ Of course, they have an answer to that - but one longer and more technologically complex than end users appreciate. Thus, administrators find themselves in an intense competition: with the IT departments of rival enterprises (and, occasionally, with looming IT outsourcing), as well as with IT services provided by Apple, Google, and a multitude of other cloud providers.

In numerous enterprises, this has caused a movement towards shadow IT: end users get the impression that corporate IT is not capable of delivering the services they demand, or is not delivering them fast enough. As a result, they switch to consumer devices, apps, and services, bypassing the IT organisation altogether. Frequently, administrators only learn about this when users turn to the service desk for help - with incidents relating to devices or apps the enterprise has never ordered. In this case, information security is at risk, as is corporate compliance.

Simultaneously, administrators have to fight on a second front, against the annoyance and frustration of the situation for their own staff. In particular, not only do service desk agents in first-level support feel the effects of end user displeasure, they also

have to deal with a multitude of point solutions when handling service requests and incident reports. These solutions offer widely different levels of usability, provide varying levels of information, and usually interact rather inadequately.

IT organisations have long been using professional ITSM solutions for incident, problem, and change management, implementing the core processes according to ITIL best practices. Still, when an end user reports an incident to the service desk, the IT team frequently has to realise that it cannot process the trouble tickets efficiently: which device is the respective customer using? This information has to be extracted from the asset management system first. Is a license available for the required update? The license management software has to provide the answer to this question. Then the service desk agent has to switch to a separate client management tool for deploying the updated software to the device. Subsequently, she has to record and document the update in the ITSM solution to resolve the ticket.

Due to inadequate interaction between the management solutions involved, the service desk agent wastes a lot of time, always aware that she is keeping an impatient end user waiting for the PC to work again.

This not only creates potentially dissatisfied end users, but frequently leads to SLA or OLA (operational level agreements) breaches as well, along with permanently stressed out service desk staff.

Furthermore, administrators have to keep an eye on a third trouble spot: business management demands on IT. After all, they are not only expected to keep IT operations up and running, but also to act as innovation drivers, always providing the lines of business with up-to-date concepts and solutions. However, it is practically impossible to fundamentally reassess fire protection matters while fighting the blaze. Also, many an administrator finds the most obvious way to improving IT service management efficiency obstructed: frequently, the ITSM solution in place has been customised so heavily to fit individual IT organisation workflows that it isn't upgradeable anymore. Therefore, IT has to „freeze“ the release state of the ITSM tool, thus falling behind the technological curve.





3 More Automation and Flexibility for the Service Desk

When trying to find one's way out of such a dead-end street, one has to backtrack a few steps and then head off in a different direction. For administrators, this means: in this situation, they should review whether the deployed IT service management solution is still the appropriate one, and should consider starting anew with a more modern solution. Against this background, it's small wonder that numerous IT organisations keep replacing their ITSM solutions every few years.

For in IT service management, time savings, cost efficiency, SLA compliance, and true customer focus can only be achieved by applying a higher level of automation. First and foremost, this requires a powerful workflow engine capable of supporting numerous processes in an ITIL-compliant fashion. Yet at the same time, this workflow engine has to be flexible enough to handle all the different kinds of processes required. Ideally, this should apply to the IT organisation, as well as to adjoining departments, as elements such as asset management are not limited to IT alone.

Beyond comprehensive automation, as shown in the example given above, what is necessary is integration with all the adjacent IT management systems that are relevant for the service desk. It is useful to have an extensive integration with client, asset, license, and

the now critical element of enterprise mobility management - out of the box, if at all possible, or else via APIs. For, as described above, without integrating the contributing point solutions, workflow automation will prove to be inadequate because it lacks system continuity.

The service desk workload can be reduced even further by introducing self-service functionality for end users. By giving them access to an enterprise app store or self-service portal for their orders, service requests, and incident reporting, the IT team are relieved of numerous tasks, which accelerates ticket handling significantly. Ideally, customers should also have access to the IT knowledge base, allowing them to resolve minor incidents by themselves, even while traveling, thanks to a mobile app.

Last but not least, modern service management absolutely requires an easy-to-use, graphically assisted way to modify forms and interfaces - for first- and second-level support, as well as for all kinds of self-service processes. In this way, a modern service management solution facilitates the flexible customisation of individual workflows (e.g. approval and escalation routines) - via pure-play configuration and without coding! After all, the administrator doesn't want to wind up in another dead-end street.

4 Onboarding: Ready to Work from Day 1

Modern integrated ITSM suites such as Matrix42 IT Service Management offer a powerful workflow engine that can be applied in multiple ways. Via a graphical user interface (GUI), the IT organisation can customise workflows and forms for optimising ITIL processes such as incident, problem, change, or service request management very quickly and in compliance with company guidelines. This facilitates end-to-end workflow automation, making the IT team's work easier across system boundaries and, if so desired, across departmental boundaries as well.

By way of example, let's have a look at the arrival of a new field manager and the issuing of the necessary work equipment. As a rule, the onboarding process starts long before the new colleague arrives by registering her in the human resources department's HR system. Then, HR informs IT, who will add the new user to the Active Directory. This step can already be automated using Matrix42 IT Service Management: depending on her area of responsibility, the new colleague is assigned to the proper Active Directory organisational unit, and, based on her user role, will receive all the relevant access rights, including for example, access to the CRM solution. Using the self-service-portal, the appropriate line-of-business manager then specifies via a service request what kind of IT equipment the new staff member is supposed to receive in addition to a company car, e.g. an iPhone, iPad, and Windows 10 notebook. This triggers a workflow designed in an end-to-end fashion.

The IT organisation orders the new hardware, installs the required software packages using Matrix42 Total User Workspace Management, and configures the notebook for the user individually; this includes VPN settings and access rights for file shares, the SharePoint server, the travel expense accounting tool, and, of course, her contacts in the CRM

system. Along with this, the Matrix42 solution will automatically communicate the hardware and software in use to the asset and software asset management solutions, facilitating stringent documentation, as well as license compliance. Software deployment proceeds fully automatically via Matrix42 Total User Workspace Management.

As a result, on her very first workday, the new field manager will receive a fully pre-configured notebook. Now she only has to open the Matrix42 self-service portal to close the service request and, if so desired, comment on it: „What a great start, guys, that's the way we end users like it!“ She will receive a message on her iPhone and iPad linking to Silverback, the integrated EMM solution (enterprise mobility management). Upon tapping that link, Silverback will automatically set up all necessary apps and activate access rights. This way, the new colleague is ready to work within just a few minutes instead of the hours or even days that it would have taken previously.

At this point, a new colleague will often decide that she requires a particular piece of software for her job, e.g. because it better suits her working style. In this case, the new co-worker will simply select the desired software in the self-service portal and request it. This will automatically trigger an approval workflow, the sales manager will receive a software requirement notification on his PC - or, if he's on the road, on his smartphone via the Matrix42 Companion App. Upon approval, Workspace Management will automatically initiate software distribution, and the software package will be deployed to the field manager's notebook. In all other cases, escalation routines would be triggered automatically, such as when there are no more licenses available for the desired software, or if the user requests software usage rights for a limited time only.



5 Speedier Incident Resolution

Within the IT department's daily routine, the advantages of a tight integration between ITSM and workspace management are felt not only during onboarding, but also especially when end user side incidents occur. If, for example, users discover that they cannot connect to the local printer anymore, they can initiate trouble tickets using the Service Management self-service interface or the mobile app. They might even check the knowledge base for a resolution before turning to the service desk - frequently the easiest path to resolution.

End users can also resolve other procedures, most of all the vexing „forgotten password“ situation, all on their own, thanks to self-service and workflow automation: ideally, they simply initiate the standard workflow and a new password will be sent to their personal e-mail addresses automatically, without having to involve first-level support at all. This automated process can be tied to security conditions via rules that define, for example, that a workflow can only be initiated from a corporate-owned device.

Incidents that end users cannot (or are not allowed to) resolve on their own will, in time-proven fashion, arrive at the service desk in trouble ticket form. Here, the tickets can be distributed in a rule-based way, tracked in detail, and can automatically be escalated if an OLA breach occurs. Meanwhile, end users can track the ticket resolution status in their self-service portal interfaces. This spares the IT organisation unnecessary inquiries.

The integration of IT service management with client management speeds up ticket resolution even more: if need be, service desk agents can initiate client-related tasks directly from their interfaces, e.g. install a new software package, deploy an update, or support the field manager remotely in dealing with VPN access problems. Again, every change in the software asset state will automatically be transferred to the software asset management environment, so as to maintain license transparency and compliance.

The workflows applied here can be modified via the graphical interface at any time. For example: after an acquisition, the organisational structure changes, so that IT has to insert an additional decision layer for a specific group of staff members. In the Service Management GUI, this can be done just as easily as adding a new type of client. If, for example, the enterprise decides to allow privately-owned devices, one can add the device group „private iPhone“ easily with only a few inputs, making it a selection list bullet point within all the relevant forms. This is achieved via a configuration, so the Service Management solution remains fully update-able. When updating to the next version of the software, these configurations can be transferred at the push of a button.



6 IT as Service Provider for the Customer

By leveraging a modern ITSM solution such as Matrix42 IT Service Management, an administrator will considerably enhance the IT organisation's efficiency. That's because Matrix42 IT Service Management offers a high degree of ITSM workflow automation, and full integration between client, software asset, and mobility management, as well as customisable workflows and forms tailored to market needs, and comprehensive self-service support. This relieves the burden on IT staff quite drastically! The IT department can resolve service requests and trouble tickets more swiftly, and thus will finally be able to act as an effective service partner for end users. For their part, users can trigger numerous

workflows via self-service and at times even complete tasks themselves - just as they have become used to doing in their private lives. As workflow support is based on configuration alone, rather than on custom programming, the solution will always remain updateable, and IT will never again find itself in a dead-end street.

Matrix42 IT Service Management combines productivity gains with flexibility within a future-proof solution. This lays the groundwork for IT departments to become powerful service providers that delight their customers. This allows IT, at last, to step out of the shadow cast by shadow IT.



Find more interesting information such as webinars and case studies.



▶ Visit: matrix42.com/en/products/matrix42-it-service-management

Matrix42 AG

Matrix42 is a top provider of workspace management software. The company offers forward-thinking solutions for modern work environments under its 'Smarter workspace' motto. More than 3,000 customers around the world, including BMW, Infineon, and Carl Zeiss, currently manage approximately 3 million workstations using workspace management solutions from Matrix42.

Matrix42 operates successfully in seven countries – Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States of America. The company's headquarters are in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Matrix42's products and solutions are designed to manage modern work environments simply and efficiently – across physical, virtual, and mobile workspaces.

Matrix42 focuses on user orientation, automation, and process optimisation. The company's solutions meet the requirements of modern employees who want to work from any location using a wide range of devices, while also addressing the needs of IT departments and businesses.

Matrix42 offers its solutions to organisations across different sectors who value forward-looking and efficient workspace management. The company also successfully collaborates with partners who provide on-site consultation to Matrix42 customers. Some of these leading partners include TAP.DE Solutions GmbH, Consulting4IT GmbH, and DSP IT Service GmbH.

For further information, visit: www.matrix42.com

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