Revolutionising the Service Desk for the future
Introduction

IT Service Desks are generally seen as the front-line support and ‘single point of contact’ for users seeking assistance with IT service. However, very few businesses see the IT service desk as a business function that needs longer-term strategic consideration and innovation. For many organizations, the IT service desk exists only when things go wrong and is perceived as a function that costs a lot of money but generates no value.

Traditionally the company leaders have viewed the IT service desk as a cost constraint. At Coforge, we believe that business leaders must develop a long-term vision for the service desk, so that they see the IT service desk as a real business accelerator and a driver for growth.

Commandments to re-imagine the Service Desk

As millennials and centennials dominate the global workforce, they have created a next-generation support function which is critical. Today our users expect the same experience, quality of self-service, responsiveness, and personalization as they get on Uber or Amazon. The employee who was once content to wait for hours for IT support teams to resolve an issue now expects everything to work at a much faster rate.

In addition, the pandemic has changed the way IT and support work. Prior to the COVID-19, users would call the IT service desk for every trivial matter, and the team would then take control of the screen and troubleshoot it. With the onset of the Coronavirus, the employees started working in various locations, which lead to huge number of calls being made to the IT service desk. As the volume of calls skyrocketed, services tickets zoomed to unmanageable levels. This resulted in an absolute need to pivot the service desk from being reactive to proactive, providing tools to help employees help themselves.

These factors created a diversified global workforce, which required a different and more targeted approach. Organizations are also demanding more agile, flexible, innovative, and cheaper solutions to maximize their employee utilization, eliminate overhead costs while adopting Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

Future of IT Service Desk

At Coforge, we truly believe that the IT service desk needs a radical new vision - in terms of how it works, how it serves, who use it and its place within an organisation and its role in effectively driving and increasing in value. It is an enabler and one of the key differentiators.

The future of Service Desk is a seamless combination of people, processes, and tools delivering an inclusive one-IT experience from anywhere, anytime, and on any platform. They can access company tools from anywhere in the world using their favourite apps on their own preferred devices. This Service Desk is automation-led and powered by end-user data analytics and self-help tools. This makes it cost-effective, efficient and the virtual agents complement the human agents bringing proactive resolution. This Service Desk is now a one-stop shop for all IT needs.

The elements that have led to an advanced the Service Desk are:

- User experience measurement & enhancement
• Automation led operations
• Omni-channel support
• Proactive experience management using data analytics
• High-performance bots, powered by Azure cognitive services, performing various tasks, reducing IT service desk staff, and learning through feedback
• Device-agnostic self-service portals emulating search engines like Google, allowing users with corporate network access to resolve IT queries 24x7

**User experience enhancement:** User experience is vital today, end-users want to stay in the flow, remain productive, and make meaningful progress in their work. Traditional SLA-based models of measuring the quality of services are based on process measurements and do not provide the complete picture leading to what is known as the ‘Watermelon’ effect. Today, the focus is on XLA’s (Experience Level Agreements) which provides a ‘True Green’ picture. Part of this journey is managing and measuring the emotional segments of the user journey that can be done through AI-based perception management solutions.

**Automation Led Operations:** Automation of tasks is the difference between a high-performing IT service desk and one delivering mediocre results. Enabling automation has removed additional overhead from the Service Desk to make them lean, agile, skilled, and focussed on generating value rather than working on redundant tasks. It does not limit them to ticket handling and solving making them valued contributors.

Automation can be achieved through both script-based and agent-based solutions such as ‘ElfTouch™’ and have proven to increase agent efficiency by 40%.

**Omni-Channel Support:** Service Desk is not limited to calls but provides a high-touch services through multiple contact channels; phone, chat, web portal, and email around the clock. The ease of usage is also simplified through one-click solutions such as ‘Click-IT®’. Natural language processing voice enabled contact channels help with the breakthrough the language barriers. Users don’t have to listen to tiresome IVR options and go through long menus and just speak about their issues.

**Proactive Experience Management:** Historically, Service Desk agents always have a reactive approach to problem resolution i.e., they try to find a solution after the issue has occurred and a ticket has been logged in. The Service Desk approach today includes continuously monitoring the end-user environment and providing real-time analytical capabilities to help the agent discover and resolve the issue even before the user experiences it. Data-driven solutions such as ‘InsightX®’ help can help businesses achieve enhancing end-user productivity and experience.
**Cognitive Agents:** A cognitive agent is a computer software that simulates a conversation to deliver interactive or text-based information in a service desk environment. These agents provide accurate, personalized, fast, interactive information to users via websites, phones, social media sites, and instant messaging applications. Future Service Desks are platform agnostic and are clubbed with virtual agent solutions that rely on AI & ML to eliminate issues even before they reach a technician. Solutions such as ‘Amyra®’ are available on mobile and laptops to provide users with a helping hand in resolving issues.

**Self-Service Portals:** Self-service portals and knowledge bases are two essential requirements for the future of the Service Desk. These are ideal tools for simple incident and service request resolution. By having access to searchable content on readily available portals, users find the right information at the right time on the device of their choosing. The benefits of deploying a self-service platform are the more users accessing a portal, the fewer the number of calls to the service desk - fewer agents are required, saving IT departments money, and making more time available for other IT and business projects. Solutions such as ‘ExperienceGO®’ can be used by organizations to empower their users.

**Our Approach**

**Coforge’s Future Service Desk** provides a high-touch single point of contact for all end-users IT-related services along with omni-channel support for incidents, and automated service request fulfilment. Our Service Desk manages all user interactions to accelerate incident resolution while minimizing agent involvement and support costs. Our intelligent support services empower end-users to raise issues through various contact channels and touchpoints. We also understand the troubles the end-user and organizations face in adopting these new technologies and help them in the same through training sessions if required. Our ‘Embrace®’ program which brings organization behaviour change helps businesses achieve the change that is required. We bring everything that a modern digital-savvy employee needs, in one place and provide a truly personalized, adaptable, and easy-to-use help experience delivered through virtually
any internet-enabled device. Our Service Desk has the following features:

- **User-Centric**: It mirrors a consumer-like experience that suits the needs and preferences of our digital workers.
- **Proactive & Invisible**: It changes the support paradigm and acts proactively. Many day-to-day computer issues are resolved in the background.
- **Automation-Led**: Following the philosophy that “whatever can be automated is automated”, it takes advantage of automation, powered by AI, cognitive analytics, and standard workflow, and takes up mundane tasks.
- **Machine First**: Intelligent deployment of Cognitive Virtual Agent to help identify and resolve issues automatically and displace human representatives from lower-level support tasks.
- **Enterprise IT Desk**: It expands its capabilities beyond IT Infrastructure services and offers holistic IT support which includes applications also. It is an integrated function that acts as a single point of contact.

**Final Thoughts**

It is important for organizations to realize the true potential of a fully enabled Service Desk. It enhances end-user productivity and satisfaction for users and help build an efficient and empowered workforce. For organizations. It can reduce IT operation costs, promote flexibility, embrace technology, and help them make informed decisions.

Automation & AI/ML are no more the things of the future. They should be inculcated as an integral part of the business while remembering the importance of human touch. Both need to complement each other and work in tandem to promote the organization’s business goals.

In its truest sense, a Service Desk is a differentiator for companies, and it is here to stay.
Coforge is a leading global IT solutions organization, enabling its clients to transform at the intersect of unparalleled domain expertise and emerging technologies to achieve real-world business impact. A focus on very select industries, a detailed understanding of the underlying processes of those industries and partnerships with leading platforms provides us a distinct vantage. We leverage AI, Cloud and Insight driven technologies, allied with our industry expertise, to transform client businesses into intelligent, high growth enterprises.

Today our proprietary platforms power critical business processes across the Financial Services and Travel industries. Our 11,000 technology and process consultants engineer, design, consult, operate and modernize systems across the world.

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