The Modern Service Desk:
How Advanced Integration, Process Automation, and ITIL Support Enable ITSM Solutions That Deliver Business Confidence
The Modern Service Desk:
How Advanced Integration, Process Automation, and ITIL Support Enable ITSM Solutions That Deliver Business Confidence

Contents
Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
IT Service Management (ITSM): Industry Trends ......................................................... 2
Requirements for Efficient ITSM ............................................................................... 3
Core Requirements ....................................................................................................... 3
Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 ......................................................................................... 4
Key ServiceDesk 7.0 Features .................................................................................... 5
ITIL-based processes ................................................................................................. 5
Process Automation .................................................................................................... 6
Service Catalog .......................................................................................................... 7
New ServiceDesk 7.0 Features ................................................................................... 8
Enabling Technologies for an Optimal ITSM Solution ............................................... 8
Key ServiceDesk Benefits ......................................................................................... 9
Summary ................................................................................................................... 11
Where to Get More Information ............................................................................... 11
Introduction

In today’s turbulent economy, midsize and enterprise organizations are faced with increasingly tough challenges. Due to flat or shrinking budgets, many IT departments are coming under pressure to do more with less, all while expectations for greater IT responsiveness to organizational demands continue to rise. Adding further complication to an already complex environment are new requirements for IT governance and risk management, as well as the need to smoothly integrate upgraded tools and applications into business workflows as technology continually evolves.

To address these challenges head on, IT departments need solutions that enable them to quickly respond to end-user needs and proactively head off problems before they impact the entire organization.

In this white paper, we will discuss some of the issues impacting IT Service Management (ITSM) and outline the key areas that Symantec considers to be essential requirements for a solution that will improve availability and IT service levels while reducing service costs. The discussion will demonstrate how the automated processes enabled by Symantec™ ServiceDesk software help IT resolve incidents, manage changes, and address service requests more efficiently. Because the new, IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) based release focuses on integration, actionable information, and ease of implementation, ServiceDesk 7.0 delivers increased end-user satisfaction, lower operational costs, and improved management of business and IT risk.
IT Service Management (ITSM): Industry Trends

Most midsize and large organizations have implemented help-desk solutions to assist with their ITSM requirements. However, recent research\(^1\) indicates that help-desks are replaced on average every five years, and for good reason: The traditional, reactive help-desk ticketing system is not agile enough to keep up with the IT service demands typically found in organizations today. And the effects of slow service delivery to end-users and customers often extend beyond IT to impact the entire business.

There are several deficiencies of the traditional model that are driving demand for a better solution:

- Common end-user requests take too long to complete.
- Self-service strategies don't work as advertised.
- Support tools can't be upgraded or modified quickly.
- Supplemental systems, such as change and configuration management, are not easily integrated.
- Alignment with process management models such as IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) cannot be achieved.

Because of these and other weaknesses, the traditional help-desk can't keep up with increasing demands. As a result, service operations score low on customer satisfaction and the IT department's reputation and value to the business are diminished. Consequently, many IT teams are adopting a more holistic approach to service management and support, and are considering solutions that incorporate standardized ITSM tools such as modules for incident and change management.

By migrating from a traditional help-desk to a broader, process-driven model, organizations are better positioned to implement industry best practices such as ITIL. In turn, ITIL support has been shown to be the key to automating processes and enabling increased self-service for both IT and business service requests.

Since a large portion of end-user service requests are routine and repetitive, automating the most time-consuming of these processes and offering self-service resolution can significantly reduce the burden on IT. Furthermore, a solution that supports industry best practices and integrates process optimization across the entire environment provides great benefits to the business at large:

- Complete IT life-cycle management drives down the total cost of owning and operating end-user systems.
- Automated processing workflows eliminate repetitive service tasks, freeing IT to focus on business initiatives of greater strategic value.

---

Requirements for Efficient ITSM

An analysis of the current ITSM landscape reveals four primary limitations of traditional help-desk solutions:

1. **Poor service responsiveness**—A solution that provides end-to-end management of endpoints and IT assets is better able to respond quickly and accurately to end-user requests.

2. **Limited integration for point solutions**—A help-desk that integrates solutions such as configuration and asset management as well as patch remediation with existing systems enables improved processes for managing endpoints throughout the entire IT life-cycle.

3. **Inconsistent delivery of end-user services**—By improving service quality and responsiveness with a more efficient delivery system, IT can cope more effectively with cost reduction pressures and budget limitations.

4. **Limited process optimization**—The ideal ITSM solution increases IT productivity and efficiency by delivering common processes out of the box and enabling the easy integration and implementation of processes built on ITIL best practices.

Core Requirements

Given these limitations, IT is looking for new solutions that will minimize the burden on technicians, reduce end-user downtime and service call volume, improve customer satisfaction, and facilitate compliance with service level agreements. To achieve these objectives requires an easy-to-implement solution that provides actionable management intelligence and seamless integration with a comprehensive toolset. At a minimum, the solution should include modules for incident, change, inventory, self-service, knowledge, and service level agreement (SLA) management. As described below, the new release of Symantec ServiceDesk more than adequately meets these core requirements.
Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0

Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 is a completely new software product based on Symantec Workflow, a key enabling technology for process automation and end-user self-service. A flexible, ITIL-based tool, ServiceDesk leverages its underlying Symantec Management Platform to enable the easy integration of Symantec solutions such as security and endpoint management, as well as a variety of third-party products. Straight out of the box, ServiceDesk provides a number of ITIL-recommended best-practice processes, including Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management, and Release Management.

Designed for fast implementation, ServiceDesk can be easily customized for any environment using its drag-and-drop designer to create or modify forms, surveys, processes, and workflows. ServiceDesk provides detailed management information, enabling technicians to rapidly diagnose and resolve issues. Plus, for each particular step in a process, task-relevant screens display only the information fields required, helping eliminate common errors that often result from technicians being able to view and edit more data than is needed.

Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 is integrated with Symantec's complete IT life-cycle management offering, making it a powerful ITSM solution that can substantially reduce the total cost of owning and operating end-user systems.
Like the entire Altiris™ product family, Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 was designed to address the challenges of managing midsize-to-large environments by providing tools to assist at each stage of the IT life-cycle: from acquisition and provisioning, to ongoing support and maintenance, and on through to the eventual disposition of an asset.

**Key ServiceDesk 7.0 Features**
The ITIL industry standard promotes best practices for help-desk environments. Each ITIL-based process is a separate workflow that can be linked to others, and administrators can implement any combination of ITIL workflows to address the specific needs of the organization.

**ITIL-based processes**
ServiceDesk 7.0 includes the following ITIL-based processes out of the box:

- **Incident management** accepts tickets from end-users who have hardware or software issues. The objective is to recognize the issue and return the end-user to normal business operations as quickly as possible.

- **Problem management** is a process that enables analysts to identify root causes and potential incidents in order to proactively deal with issues before they can affect end-users or cause downtime.

- **Change management** is a process whereby changes to the infrastructure are closely reviewed and formally approved before being implemented. ServiceDesk is unique in that it provides steps for the preparation of implementation plans, resource identification, risk assessment, back-out plans, and scheduling.

- **Release management** allows IT to bundle multiple changes into a coordinated release that applies changes sequentially and takes corrective action if one change fails. In that case, a back-out plan can be executed and the entire release halted and sent back to the change committee for remediation and reimplementation.

- **Configuration management** is primarily handled through the Symantec Configuration Management Database (CMDB) and ServiceDesk Notification Server.

- **Knowledge-base management** handles the review and approval process for knowledge-base articles and acts as a document management system for storing articles, FAQs, bulletin board entries, and Wikis tied to a database of known problem information.
Process Automation

The ServiceDesk workflow system can address a wide range of IT processes—from processing purchase orders to resetting passwords. Events and activities that require high levels of human interaction and are repeated frequently are key candidates for process automation. Because ServiceDesk is built entirely on a workflow system, it is a flexible solution that can be changed or modified to fit the needs of specific environments. Additionally, access controls and levels of permission can easily be adjusted to meet diverse security requirements.

Figure 2: The graphical Symantec Workflow designer allows for easy process optimization

Fast, task-relevant screens help technicians provide only the required information to move the process forward. Once a new workflow has been created, it can often be used as a baseline for automating all kinds of other processes.
Common areas for ServiceDesk process automation include the following:

- New employee on-boarding
- New IT equipment purchases
- Ownership validation process (automated physical inventory)
- Loaned equipment reservation and follow-up process
- Business card ordering
- Equipment moves or changes
- Data collection and full audit trails
- End-user satisfaction surveys to evaluate ServiceDesk system performance
- Resetting passwords for internal software applications

ServiceDesk process automation allows administrators to do more with less by automating repetitive tasks:

- Include approvers and decision-makers at the right steps in every process
- Identify the most common causes of incidents and automate fixes (e.g., password reset)
- Increase self-service velocity and customer satisfaction
- Reduce risk of manual errors
- Improve response times
- Escalate issues automatically when events don’t happen on time
- Quickly adapt to organizational changes

Service Catalog

The service catalog is a list of all the activities that can be provided to end-users. It is essentially the front end of the system for automatically activating Symantec Workflow processes for various IT services.
New ServiceDesk 7.0 Features

- **Support for Symantec Management Platform 7.0**—ServiceDesk now supports the latest version of the Symantec Management Platform, enabling the seamless integration of supplemental solutions for security, data loss prevention, systems management, backup and recovery, and more.

- **Scheduling capabilities and Forward Schedule of Change**—These features provide a real-time calendar of all scheduled change tickets, including monthly and daily views and Gantt views that identify where services overlap or are double booked (an ITIL-recommended practice).

- **Customizable dashboards and analytic reporting**—These allow administrators to mix and match internal metrics and external elements to create integrated reports and customized dashboards that can be enhanced with graphical components to display trends, volumes, ratios, and escalations.

- **Knowledge base**—This feature integrates real-time incident information into processes and enables end-user rating of knowledge-base entries so the ServiceDesk Knowledge Manager can continuously review content for accuracy and consistency and perform updates as necessary.

Enabling Technologies for an Optimal ITSM Solution

Unlike traditional help-desk systems, Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 meets all the essential requirements for optimizing ITSM in today's enterprise organizations. Three key technical advantages give ServiceDesk a competitive edge in the marketplace:

1. **Integration**—Because it can easily integrate Symantec and third-party products (a Symantec Workflow license is required for integration with third-party products), ServiceDesk can better leverage the existing infrastructure and take advantage of an unparalleled breadth of IT life-cycle tools to troubleshoot, deploy, manage, and secure machines. Plus, it can feed processes with data from applications such as Microsoft™ Active Directory® and SharePoint®. This high level of integration enables IT to develop solutions that can diagnose and resolve issues directly from the incident to quickly restore end-user productivity and service.

2. **Automation**—The process automation enabled by ServiceDesk allows IT to offload repetitive service tasks and provide end-users with the highest level of self-service while freeing IT resources to perform more strategic tasks.

3. **ITIL compliance**—Tightly integrated and automated ITIL-based processes make it easier for IT to implement efficient service center operations, resulting in decreased ticket volumes, improved response times, and increased customer satisfaction. Any issue affecting endpoint devices can be remediated through the ServiceDesk system.
Figure 3: The ServiceDesk 7.0 Architecture

Because ServiceDesk is based on the Symantec Workflow Solution engine, automated processes can be built on the Advanced Workflow Server and integrated into a self-service portal to give end-users a central location for addressing any type of business or IT issue. Workflow can be integrated with external systems using an integration wizard capable of discovering a wide variety of technologies including Web services, databases, flat files, and specific applications such as Remedy.

Key ServiceDesk Benefits

Symantec ServiceDesk is a powerful, ITIL-based solution that effectively addresses today’s major ITSM challenges. Leveraging ServiceDesk and the Symantec Management Platform, IT managers can

- Increase end-user satisfaction
- Dramatically decrease incident and problem resolution time via process automation and self-service
- Maximize system uptime
- Ensure consistent IT service delivery
- Improve self-service options so end-users can utilize knowledge management tools to help themselves instead of calling on the help desk
- Provide end-users with a unified, single point of contact for dealing with all of their IT service needs
- Optimize the service desk to achieve more efficient processes, reduce costs, and allow IT to focus its resources on strategic tasks
- Leverage out-of-the-box support for IT life-cycle management tools and third-party data sources, enabling IT to integrate automated processes across the entire organization
Leveraging ServiceDesk 7.0 and the Symantec Management Platform, IT organizations can move away from a reactive help-desk ticketing model to a more proactive, service-oriented management approach. The solution elevates the level of IT sophistication within an organization, enabling greater agility and better alignment between IT and overall business objectives.
Summary
Traditional IT help-desks can't keep pace with the growing challenges facing today's businesses. What organizations need is a full IT life-cycle management approach that automates processes, enables increased self-service for common IT and business service requests, improves availability and service levels, and ultimately drives down the cost of help-desk support. The way to get there is through the integration of ITIL best practices. The all-new Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 is today's most effective solution for achieving that objective. These days, organizations need the agility to quickly adapt to new conditions. ServiceDesk 7.0 delivers all the tools IT needs to keep up with these changes.

Where to Get More Information
For information about Symantec ServiceDesk 7.0 system requirements, technical specifications, licensing, and more, visit the online sales support center. A wealth of white papers, user guides, case studies, and other documentation is available at http://www.symantec.com/business/service-desk. For a product demonstration, contact a sales engineer at info@servicedesk.com.
About Symantec
Symantec is a global leader in providing security, storage and systems management solutions to help consumers and organizations secure and manage their information-driven world. Our software and services protect against more risks at more points, more completely and efficiently, enabling confidence wherever information is used or stored.

For specific country offices and contact numbers, please visit our website.

Symantec World Headquarters
20330 Stevens Creek Blvd.
Cupertino, CA 95014 USA
+1 (408) 517 8000
1 (800) 721 3934
www.symantec.com