MTI104 - IT Services

Session-01:

The Service Desk

PRU/SPMI/FR-BM-18/0222

Alfa Yohannis

Service Desk in ITIL Framework

- The service desk is integral to the ITIL framework.
- Most ITIL implementations prioritize the service desk.
- It is a people-led practice, different from process-led practices.
- Acts as the face of the service provider organization.
- Single point of contact for users, suppliers, and customers.
- Example: Calling the service desk for mobile phone billing issues.

Importance of the Service Desk

- Becomes the face of the service provider organization.
- Professional etiquette is crucial for service desk representation.
- Organization's image depends on the service desk interaction.
- Poor service desk interaction can damage the provider's reputation.
- Service desk is included in the ITIL Foundation exam.
- Key practice with 3-4 questions expected in the exam.

Service Desk in ITIL Framework

- In ITIL, service desk was once a function, now a practice.
- No distinction between processes and functions in ITIL 4.
- Responsible for defined deliveries and set objectives.
- Purpose: Capture demand for incident resolution and service requests.
- Acts as the entry point and single point of contact for users.
- First line of support, with escalation to second and third lines.

Why a Service Desk?

- Previously, no need for service desks in small organizations.
- Direct rapport with technical teams was sufficient.
- Increased IT end users require structured support.
- Service desk channels triggers and prioritizes incidents.
- Facilitates the proper routing of incidents to the right teams.
- Service desk is now essential for IT service management.

Benefits of Having a Service Desk

- Improves accessibility to IT staff for users and customers.
- Optimizes usage of IT resources.
- Enhances customer service and excitement.
- Provides faster turnaround on service requests.
- Optimizes the cost of providing IT support.
- Entry-level employees reduce operational costs.
- Provides a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

Business and Technology

- Service desk was originally called a help desk.
- Help desk: single point of contact for users to report issues.
- ITIL expanded service desk to support suppliers and customers.
- A mature service desk manages 50
- Service desk handles various functions, including first-line support.
- Success due to use of less skilled, cost-effective resources.

Evolution of the Service Desk

- IT became a partner in decision-making with businesses.
- Service desk reimagined for wider business functions.
- Not limited to IT issues, but also janitorial, electrical, etc.
- Modern service desks handle multiple types of issues.
- Specialized agents handle different types of requests.
- Channels to reach the service desk have evolved over time.

Channels to Reach Service Desk

- Walk-ins: Physical visits to the service desk were common.
- Telephones: Most popular means, but can be time-consuming.
- Emails: Easier for non-urgent issues, but slower than calls.
- Chatting: Non-intrusive and efficient; allows multitasking.
- Portals: Self-help tools for users to log incidents directly.
- Messaging: Modern options like WhatsApp and SMS are emerging.

Social Media in Service Desk

- Communication channels taken over for service provider organizations
- Popular channels: Twitter and Facebook
- Users interact with service desk by raising issues via social media
- Responses sent back through the same channels
- Public nature of interactions discourages use of social media
- Interactions not private, on public pages instead
- Feature available but not always preferred by users

Service Desk Structures

- Organizations have varying service desk structures
- Structures driven by strategy
- Traditional organizations: hierarchical structure
- Start-ups and new age organizations: flat structure
- Structure impacts value creation and resource utilization
- Core objectives dictate service desk structuring
- Three common types: Local, Centralized, Virtual

Typical support lines in a DevOps organization
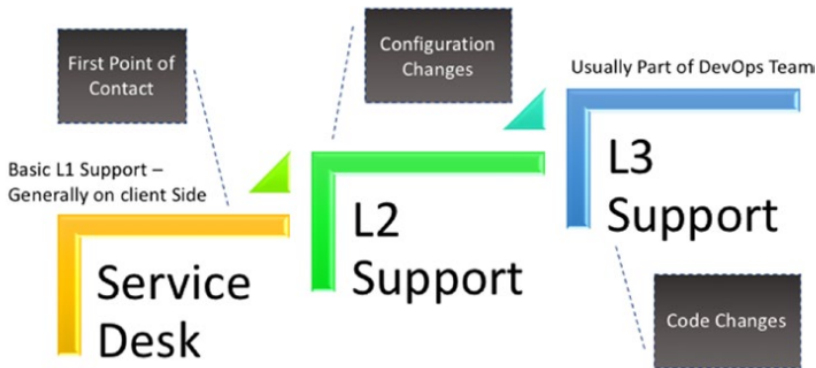
Local Service Desk

- Limited boundary, serves a subset of the overall function
- Specific to an office, location, or region
- Examples: Bangalore, Sydney, Zurich service desks
- Users, technical teams, suppliers reach out to their respective local desk
- Advantages: better understanding due to common language, culture
- Customized service for VIP users
- Increased customer satisfaction
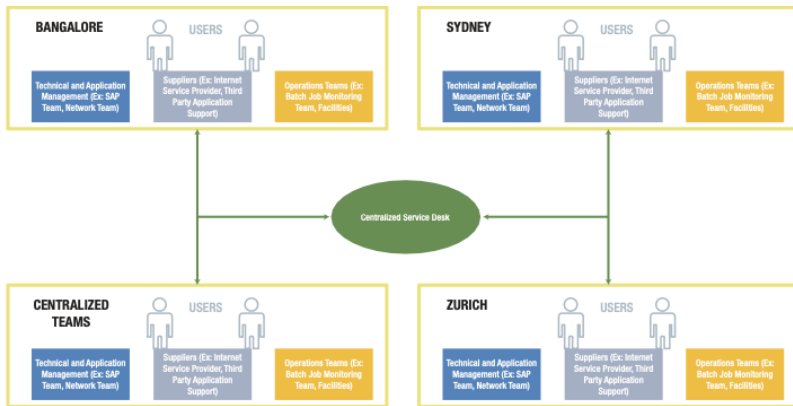
Local service desk
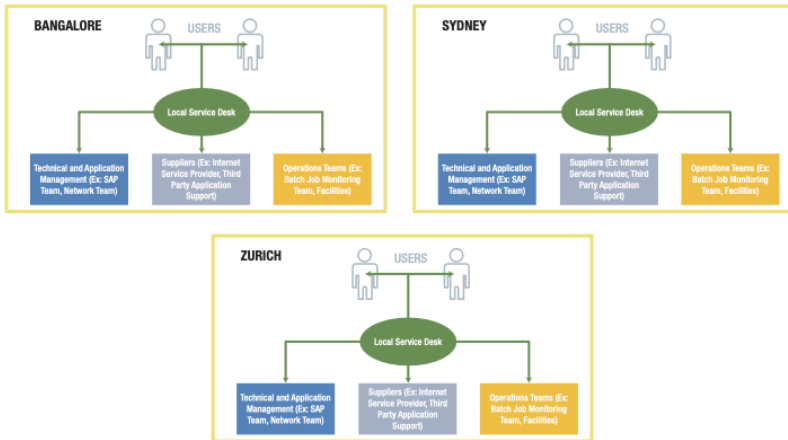
Disadvantages of Local Service Desk

- Expensive due to duplication of infrastructure, applications
- Call volumes may not justify existence of local desks
- Lack of standardized processes and tools
- Differential treatment possible due to non-standardization

Centralized Service Desk

- Most popular structure among organizations
- Single service desk at a strategic location
- Example: Centralized desk serving Bangalore, Sydney, Zurich
- Centralized technical teams manage respective technologies
- Provides a single point of contact for all end users
- Cost-effective compared to local service desks
- Easier to achieve standardization

Centralized service desk

Advantages of Centralized Service Desk

- Economical due to single setup
- Optimized resource utilization
- Better management overview of performance
- Centralized processes, procedures, standards

Disadvantages of Centralized Service Desk

- Loss of local flavor, language, culture
- Some users prefer proximity and personal touch
- Centralized service may not satisfy all locations

Virtual Service Desk

- Centralized service desk achieved through technology
- Service desk agents operate from different global locations
- Common Service Knowledge Management System (SKMS) used
- Seamless integration of disjointed parts into a single unit
- Off-shoring, near-shoring, and outsourcing of service desks
- Follow-the-sun model for 24/7 global support
- Specialized service desks based on expertise

Virtual service desk
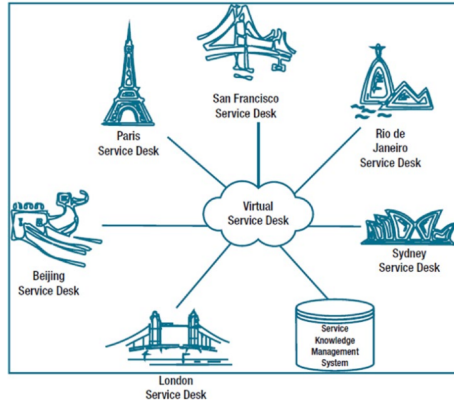
Advantages of Virtual Service Desk

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- Resilient with multiple service desks
- Cost-effective, especially with home-working professionals
- No infrastructure costs for agents working from home
- Avoids additional wage costs for working beyond set hours

Disadvantages of Virtual Service Desk

- Challenging alignment of processes, procedures, and language
- Coordination between virtual and technical teams can be difficult
- Possible differences in service quality across locations
- Requires extensive management efforts and automation

Qualities Expected from Service Desk Staff

- Communication and soft skills are essential
- Service desk is the first point of contact for users
- Staff must be calm and assure users during incidents
- Frequent communication with engineers for updates
- Technical orientation is necessary for resolving issues
- Ability to prioritize and escalate incidents correctly
- Probing users effectively for accurate and quick resolutions

Empathy and Social Intelligence

- Empathy is crucial when dealing with frustrated users
- Understanding users' problems is the first step
- Social intelligence can separate excellent staff from the rest
- Example: Amazon service desk agent's empathetic response
- Empathy builds trust and customer satisfaction

Service Desk and Automation

- Automation is increasingly integrated into service desks
- Reduces service costs while maintaining service levels
- Replaces repetitive tasks traditionally done by humans
- Capital investment in automation leads to long-term benefits
- IVR systems often replace initial human interaction
- Automation is beneficial if it provides correct answers
- Some processes are better automated, but human touch remains vital

Multiple Choice Question

Under which of the SVC activities does the service desk play a major role?

A. Obtain/Build

B. Design and Transition

C. Improve

D. Engage