

Using Help Desk Management Software

As you can tell from this chapter, running an efficient help desk is a big deal. And having an effective help desk is vital to your company's overall performance. The sooner the help desk can resolve your users' issues, the sooner your users can get back to productive work.

Instead of attempting to cobble together all the various pieces needed to run a help desk, consider acquiring a comprehensive package that includes all aspects of IT service management. Such software isn't cheap, but it can save your company money in the long run.

Good help desk management software should include the following features:

- » **Ticket management:** Comprehensive management of trouble tickets from their inception to their resolution, with the ability to sort and filter by status, category, user, technician, and other factors. The ticketing system should allow for custom fields so that you can integrate your company's unique needs into the system.
- » **Self-service portal:** The software should make it easy for you to stand up a self-service portal that enables your users to find solutions without engaging the help desk.
- » **Knowledge base:** A good, customizable knowledge base is a must.
- » **Reporting:** The software should keep track of important performance metrics and should have reporting features that let you track how the help desk is doing.
- » **Asset management:** A definite plus. Some products offer this as an extra-charge feature.
- » **Deployment flexibility:** Ideally, you should have the option to deploy the software on-site or use the software as a cloud-based service.

Search the Internet for *help-desk software* and you'll find many options to choose from. Here are just a few of the better known products — note that this list is by no means complete:

- » **Zendesk** (www.zendesk.com): An excellent cloud-based solution that charges a monthly subscription fee for each member of your help desk team. Most organizations opt for the Professional plan (\$19.99 per month, as of this