









5 IT PRACTICES THAT YOU SHOULD STOP DOING RIGHT NOW

- An insightful guide to uncover obsolete IT practices to discard and propel your business forward.

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Introduction

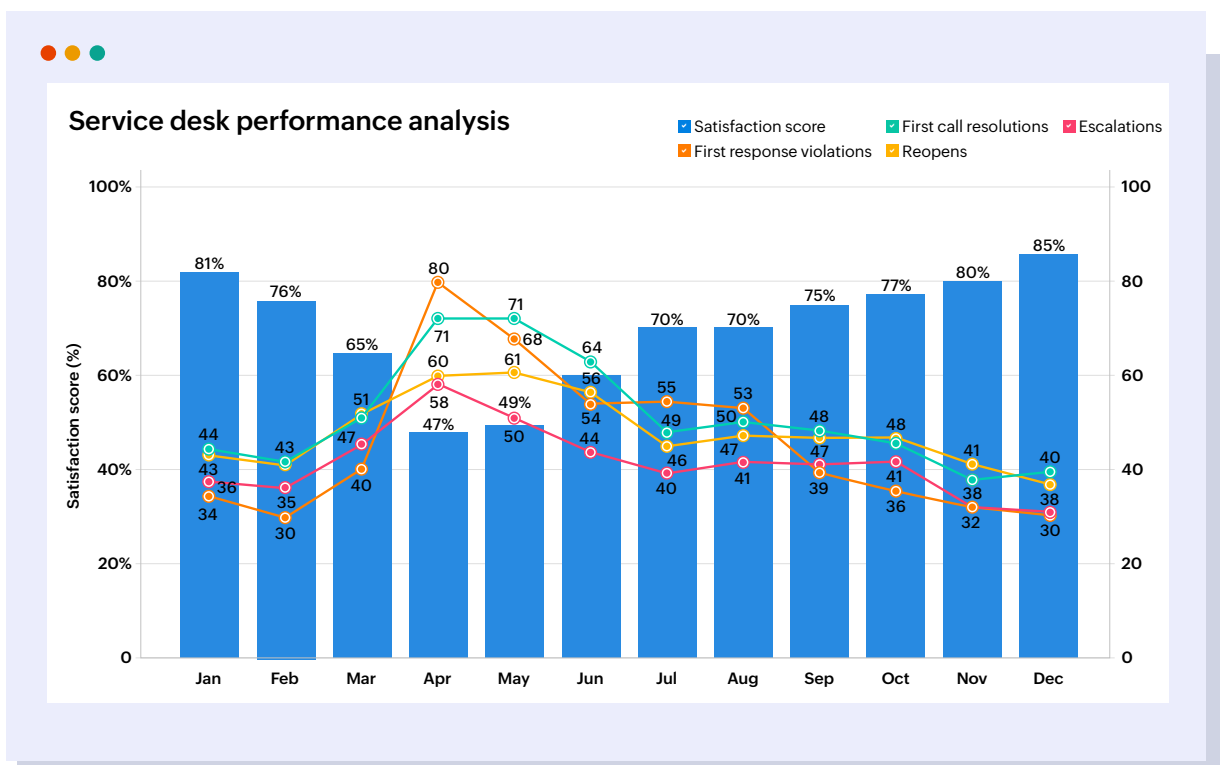
In the dynamic landscape of modern business, effective IT practices lay the foundation for an organization's ability to adapt and thrive. However, in the rush to keep pace with technological advancements and industry trends, ineffective practices can silently seep into organizational routines. These practices, if left unaddressed, can significantly impact your organization's efficiency, productivity, and ultimately, its sustainability.

That's why it's crucial to shed light on inefficient IT practices that are often overlooked, understand their consequences, and make necessary improvements.

This e-book uncovers five inefficient IT practices that you should stop doing right now. By harnessing the following data-driven insights, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of your IT operations, pinpoint areas of inefficiency, and devise targeted strategies for improvement.

Not addressing end-user pain points effectively

One widespread avenue of IT inefficiency is the failure to address end-user pain points effectively. When end users encounter challenges in their interactions with IT support, or fail to receive effective solutions for their issues, it disrupts their workflows and places additional burden on IT support teams in the form of escalated and reopened tickets, contributing to ticket backlogs and SLA violations. In this context, understanding and addressing end-user pain points is paramount for optimizing IT operations and ensuring productivity.



This visualization is a powerful tool for understanding the relationship between various service desk events and user satisfaction, enabling organizations to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in their service desk operations, implement targeted interventions to improve service delivery, and ultimately enhance the overall support experience for end users.

By tracking KPIs alongside satisfaction scores, this analysis uncovers patterns and relationships within service desk operations. Fluctuations in satisfaction that align with reductions in the first call resolution rate indicate a direct link between timely resolutions and user satisfaction, while spikes in reopens or escalations may signal underlying support quality issues impacting user satisfaction. Understanding these correlations enables organizations to prioritize effective and timely resolutions and deliver an excellent end-user support journey.

In addition to analyzing user pain points across the service desk at an overarching level, IT managers can dig deeper to understand the service desk team's offerings and performance across different categories. The following analysis aims to identify specific categories within the service desk where user satisfaction scores have been consistently decreasing, indicating potential problem areas that require their immediate attention. By identifying these categories, organizations can implement targeted strategies to address specific pain points and improve the quality of incident resolution.

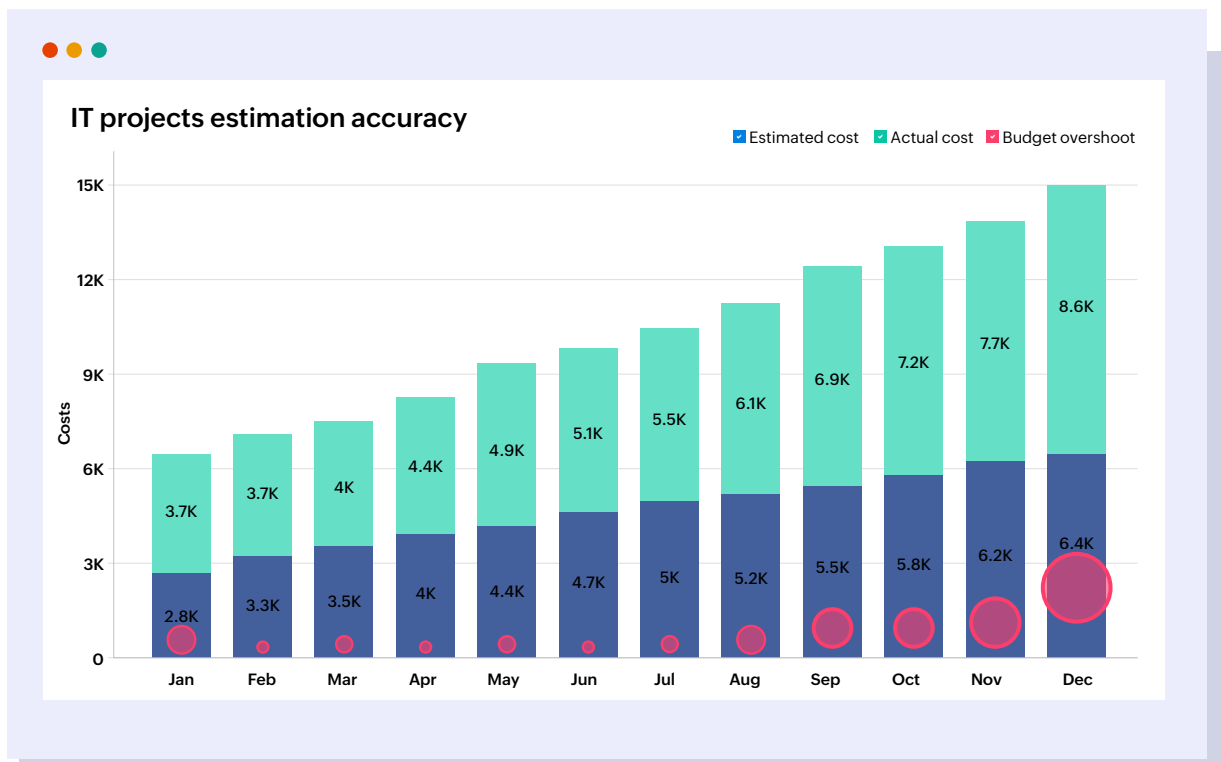
Categories with deteriorating satisfaction scores

	Categories	Q4 2023		Q3 2023		Q2 2023	
		Avg. score	Compare to prev. quarter	Avg. score	Compare to prev. quarter	Avg. score	Compare to prev. quarter
1.	Network connectivity	65%	-4%	68%	-6%	72%	-4%
2.	Email configuration	70%	-13%	80%	4%	77%	1%
3.	Printer setup	60%	-19%	74%	9%	68%	15%
4.	Application installation	77%	8%	71%	-4%	74%	23%
5.	Security concerns	66%	6%	62%	3%	60%	9%
6.	Software issues	58%	-12%	66%	2%	65%	3%
7.	Hardware issues	55%	10%	50%	11%	45%	1%
8.	Data recovery	63%	9%	58%	-17%	70%	3%
9.	System updates	67%	-13%	77%	3%	75%	7%
10.	User account problems	63%	7%	59%	2%	58%	16%

By comparing each category's satisfaction scores with scores from the previous quarter, IT managers can quickly catch areas with consistently declining performance, indicating an underlying inefficiency. This approach allows managers to implement tailored strategies, such as providing targeted training for support staff, streamlining processes, and enhancing communication channels, to resolve issues effectively and elevate user satisfaction scores.

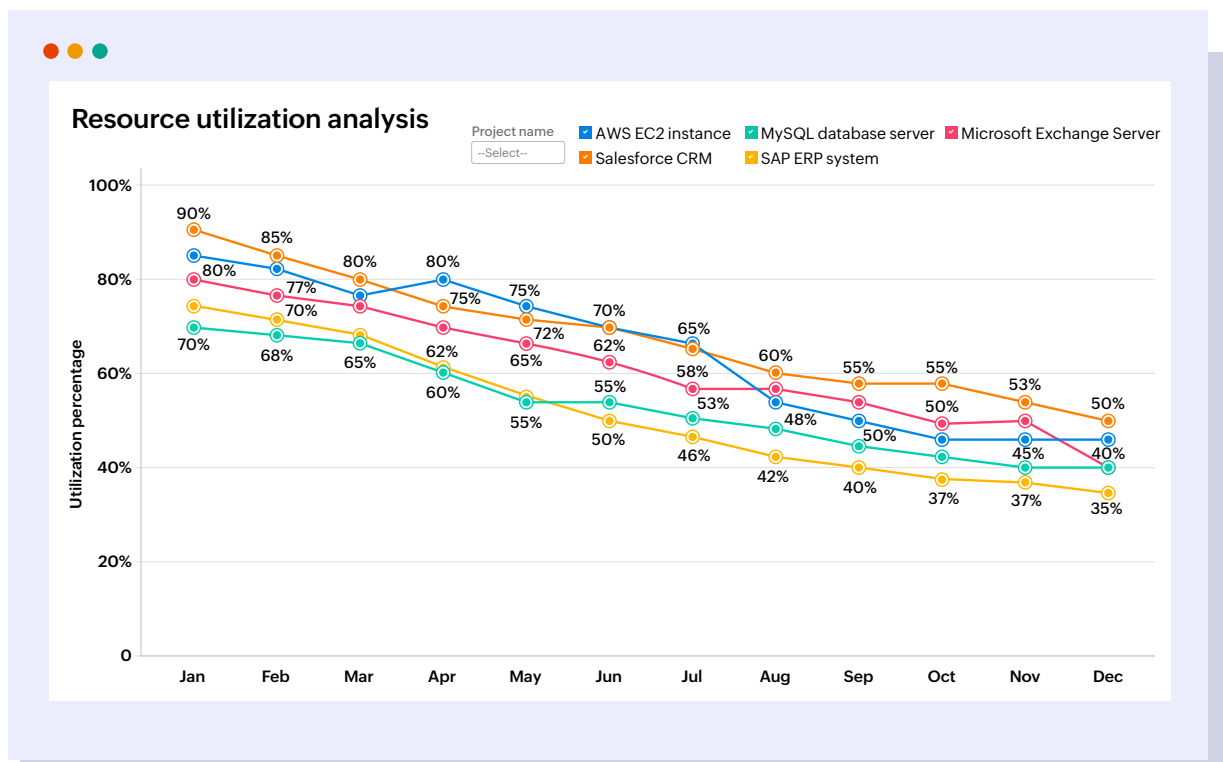
Overestimation of project timelines

When initiating a new project, IT teams typically assess the work involved to achieve major milestones. These estimates provide insights into the project's duration and the associated costs. However, when project timelines are overestimated, resources may be allocated inefficiently, resulting in a significant cost drain. To address this issue, organizations should adopt more realistic and data-driven approaches to project planning and budget estimations, ensuring that timelines are accurately aligned with actual project requirements. This ensures streamlined project execution, improved resource management, reduced cost wastage, and enhanced overall IT efficiency.



This analysis provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of IT project planning and estimation, enabling organizations to optimize resource allocation, mitigate budgetary risks, and enhance overall project management practices.

By comparing estimated costs with the actual costs incurred over time, the analysis sheds light on instances where project managers have requested more funds than necessary. Having visibility into budget overshoots due to overestimation helps to highlight inefficiencies within the organization's project management practices. Consistently over-estimating a project's budget requirements leads to inflated budget allocations and excess allocation of resources. This practice can strain the organization's financial resources, impacting overall budget management and potentially affecting the allocation of funds to other strategic initiatives.

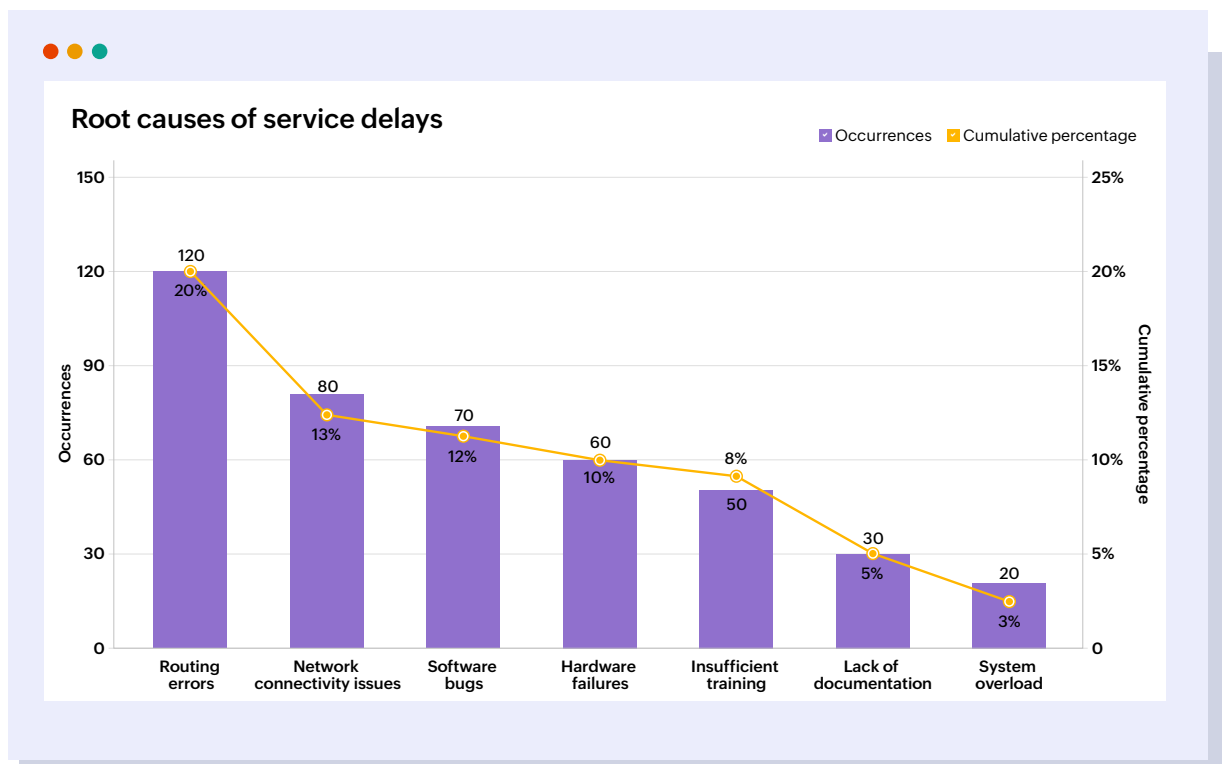


Another significant result of overestimating project timelines is inefficient resource utilization, which can be uncovered using the previous analysis. When project timelines are overestimated, resources may be allocated for a longer duration than necessary. This leads to an under-utilization of resources, as depicted by a substantial decrease in utilization percentages over time. Project managers can view every resource associated to different projects through the user filter at the top of the visualization and closely track their actual usage to identify avenues for improvement. Inefficiencies in project resource utilization has several negative implications for the business, resulting in increased costs as resources remain underutilized for extended periods.

It's clear that overestimating project timelines has significant implications for business operations. To mitigate these negative consequences, organizations must consistently analyze past projects' performance and strive for more accurate project planning and estimation practices, ensuring that project timelines are aligned with realistic expectations and business objectives.

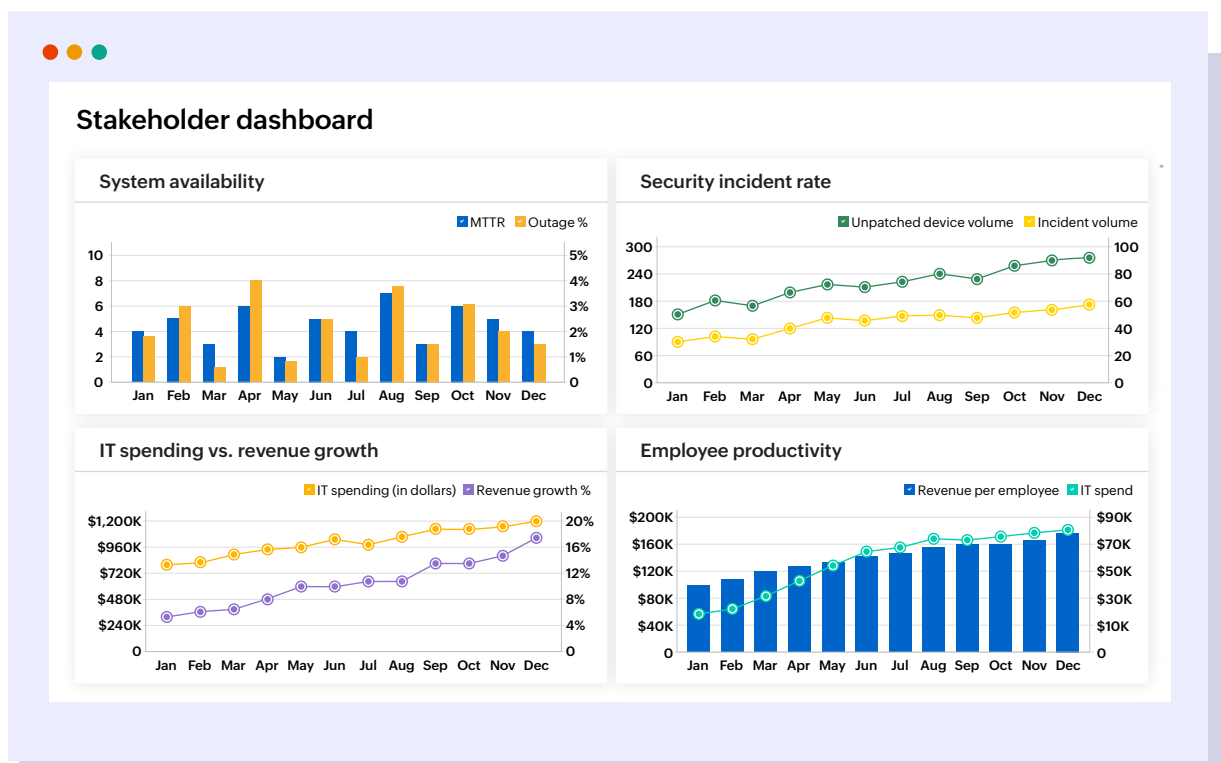
Not translating IT results into business outcomes

Many IT managers face challenges in effectively conveying the significance of their IT initiatives to stakeholders outside the IT realm. This stems from a widespread difficulty in tying IT challenges to demonstrable or tangible business outcomes. IT managers must illustrate how IT aligns with corporate objectives, establishing a direct connection between technology initiatives and the business outcomes witnessed by executives. However, determining the effectiveness of these metrics poses a distinct challenge.



In this analysis, despite identifying the significant root causes of service delays—such as routing errors and incorrect template usage—the significance of these findings remains isolated within the IT realm. Without translating these insights into business terms, such as the potential revenue loss due to delayed services, IT fails to convey its value proposition to the broader organization. As a result, the organization remains susceptible to inefficiencies, missed opportunities for growth, and a lack of alignment between IT initiatives and overarching business goals.

The below dashboard underscores significant inefficiencies in current IT practices and ties them to demonstrable business outcomes.



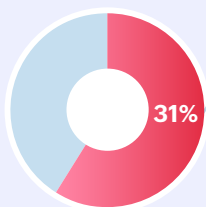
This dashboard was built by correlating data spanning multiple IT applications with the business data generated by the organization. From visualizations that correlate increases in mean time to repair (MTTR) with an increased outage percentage, to those that uncover the contribution of IT spending to overall organizational revenue, this dashboard offers an effective means to associate IT practices to distinctive business outcomes. In a similar manner, IT teams can quickly compare any two KPIs or metrics to understand the degree of correlation and demonstrate the tangible impact of IT practices.

When IT metrics are not translated into tangible business outcomes, organizations face several challenges. They struggle with ineffective decision-making due to a lack of visibility into the business impact of IT metrics, leading to suboptimal resource allocation and strategic planning. This inefficiency also results in missed revenue opportunities and decreased competitiveness, as organizations fail to adapt to market changes or meet customer expectations. Moreover, inefficient IT operations and misaligned practices lead to higher costs and reduced profitability. To address these challenges in a streamlined manner, organizations must prioritize aligning IT metrics with strategic business objectives through consolidated dashboards that drive informed decision-making and sustainable growth.

04 | Not having a self-service portal

An IT self-service portal empowers users to resolve common issues independently. With a user-friendly interface, a self-service portal offers access to KBs, FAQs, and troubleshooting guides. By streamlining request submissions and tracking them, it enhances efficiency for both users and IT teams.

PwC's Tech at Work study indicates

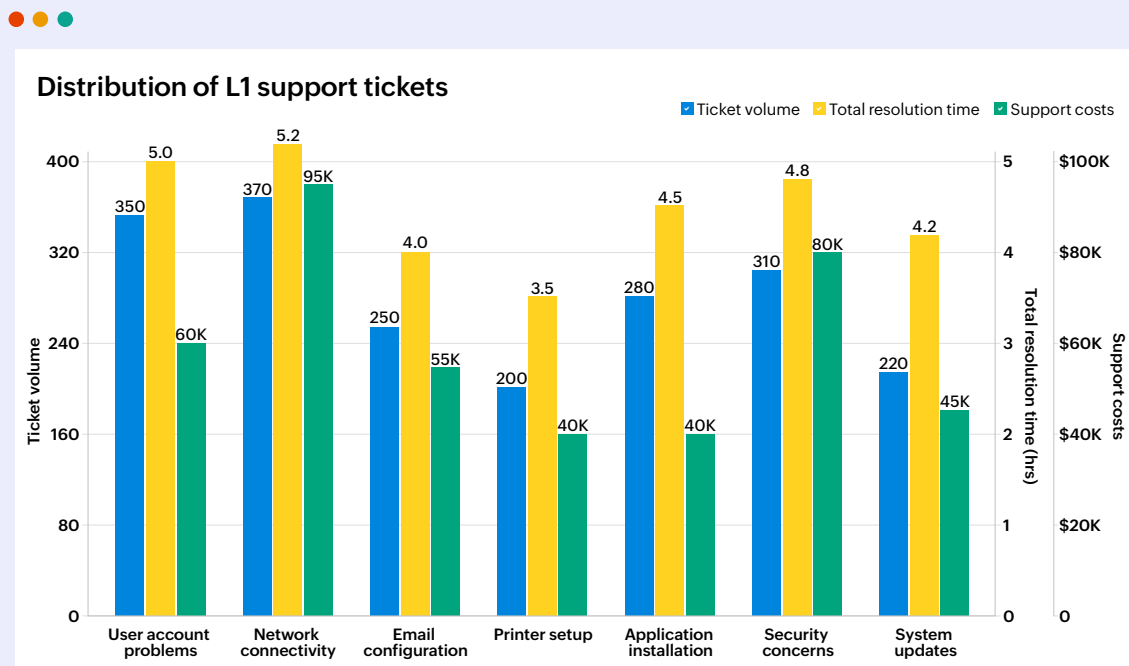


- Employees choose digital self-service over human interaction for addressing complex problems^[1],

Another 27% prefer a hybrid approach involving self-service and agent support. As a result, fewer than half of the employees want direct interaction with service desk agents when they need help.

Gone are the days when IT self-service portals were considered optional additions to an organization's service offerings. Instead, they've evolved into indispensable assets for businesses of all sizes. As IT converges with other organizational operations and user demands move towards constantly accessible self-service options, a successful self-service portal is an essential asset for managing crucial workflows.

The necessity of such portals becomes glaringly evident when analyzing the impact on the distribution of IT support tickets and the subsequent financial implications.



This visualization effectively demonstrates how the absence of a self-service portal leads to higher volumes of level 1 tickets, longer resolution times, and increased support costs. For instance, user account problems and network connectivity issues consistently show high ticket volumes, which directly cause spikes in overall resolution times and support costs. Service desk agents are stretched thin, resulting in delays and increased expenses.

Viewing this data across different request categories reveals the inefficiencies caused by the lack of an effective self-service portal. For example, straightforward tasks like printer setup and application installation result in significant increases in resolution times and costs that could easily be avoided with a self-service solution.

Implementing and fine-tuning a self-service portal allows end users to resolve level 1 tickets independently, enhancing efficiency, reducing costs, and improving overall service desk performance.

From this analysis, it is evident that implementing a self-service portal can be a game-changer for efficiency and user satisfaction. However, it's essential to avoid common pitfalls that organizations might overlook.

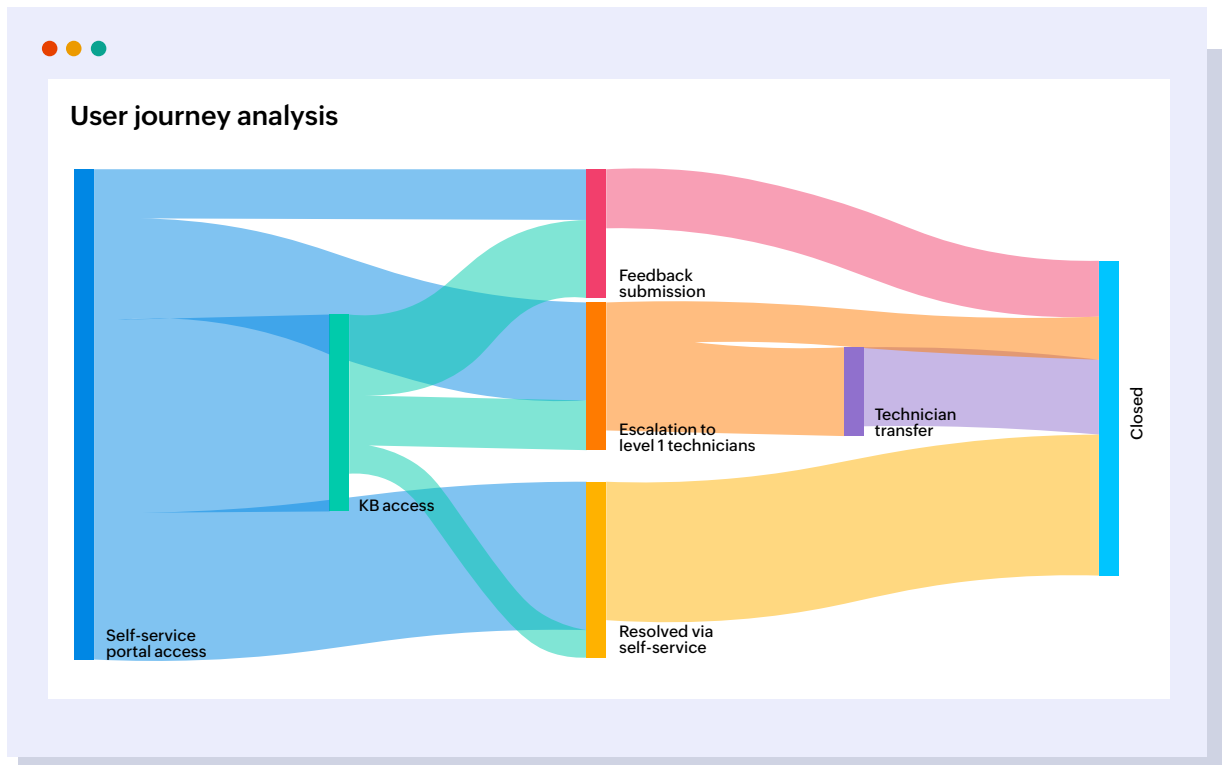
One often overlooked aspect is the importance of thorough planning and customization. An organization might rush into deploying a self-service portal without tailoring it to its specific needs and workflows. Customization allows the portal to align closely with the organization's processes and unique usage, making it more intuitive and effective.

Integration with existing IT systems is also key. A seamless integration ensures that the self-service portal functions as part of the larger IT ecosystem, allowing for smooth data exchange and minimizing disruptions. Automating routine processes, such as password resets or software installations, can save time and reduce the burden on IT staff.

It is also vital to continually update and enhance KB articles in conjunction with the self-service portal. KBs provide valuable resources for users seeking self-help solutions, and regularly updating them with relevant information can empower users to resolve issues independently. Organizations should implement a feedback loop and regularly monitor the self-service portal to identify emerging issues that would benefit from detailed guides.

By investing in both a self-service portal and a comprehensive knowledge base, organizations can create a robust support infrastructure that enhances efficiency, reduces reliance on IT staff, and ultimately improves the overall end-user support experience.

Self-service portal implementation is not a one-time process; it requires constant enhancements to optimize the system's performance and maintain successful outcomes. The below analysis offers a great tool for IT leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the portal, underscoring the need for and the importance of continuous process improvements.



Having a visual representation of the user experience within a self-service portal offers valuable insights into areas where IT practices may be lacking. The analysis outlines the various stages users traverse, from initial access to successful resolution, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the self-service portal. Despite the availability of a KB, a significant portion of users encounter challenges requiring escalation to level 1 technicians, suggesting potential gaps in the comprehensiveness or accessibility of help documentation, highlighting the need for further enhancement in KB content. Moreover, a notable number of tickets result in technician transfers, indicating inefficiencies in the support process.

These findings highlight areas where improvements can be made to enhance the effectiveness of the self-service portal and streamline the support workflow. Additionally, the relatively low rate of feedback submission suggests an opportunity to encourage user engagement and gather insights for further enhancements.

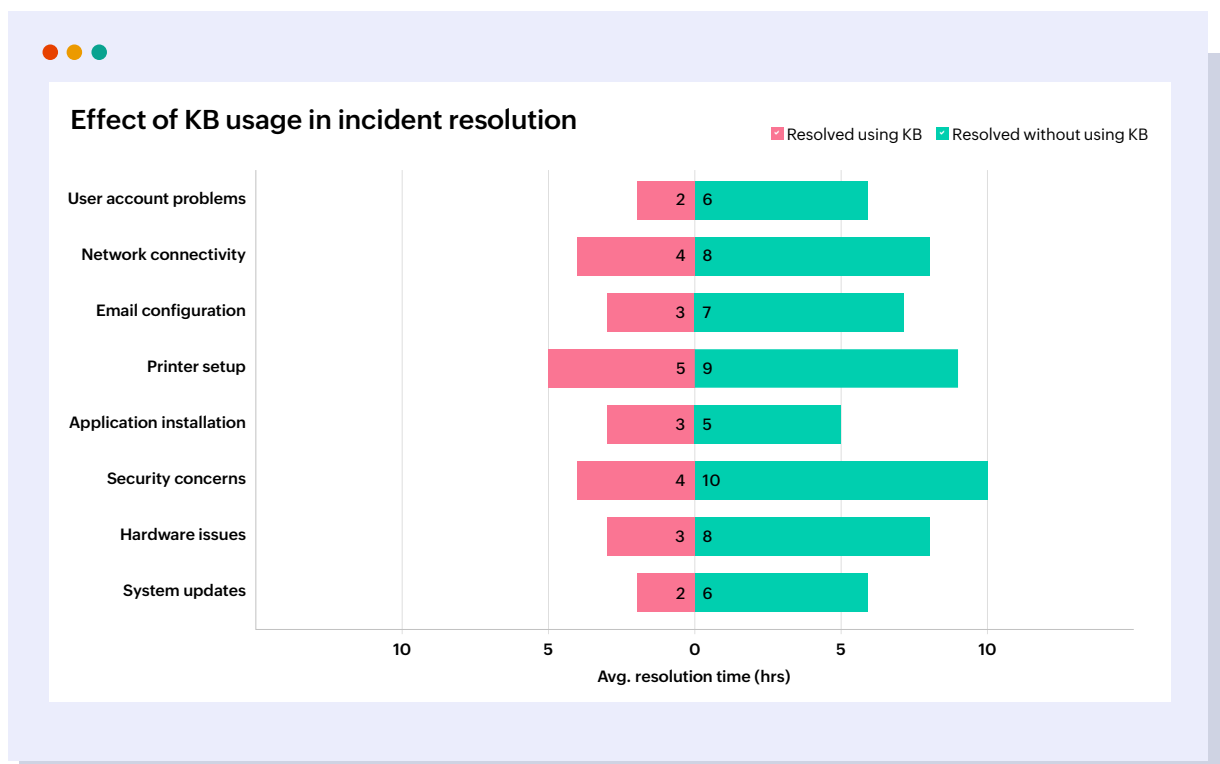
Ensuring consistent improvement in the self-service portal ensures ongoing effectiveness, responsiveness, and alignment with user needs.

Not investing enough time in building KB articles

It's no surprise that self-service KBs are becoming increasingly popular, providing significant benefits for both customers and IT teams. These platforms reduce the need for agents to handle repetitive questions, allowing them to concentrate on more complex problems. By shifting away from constantly dealing with repetitive issues, IT teams can dedicate more time to developing long-term solutions and improving practices such as problem management.

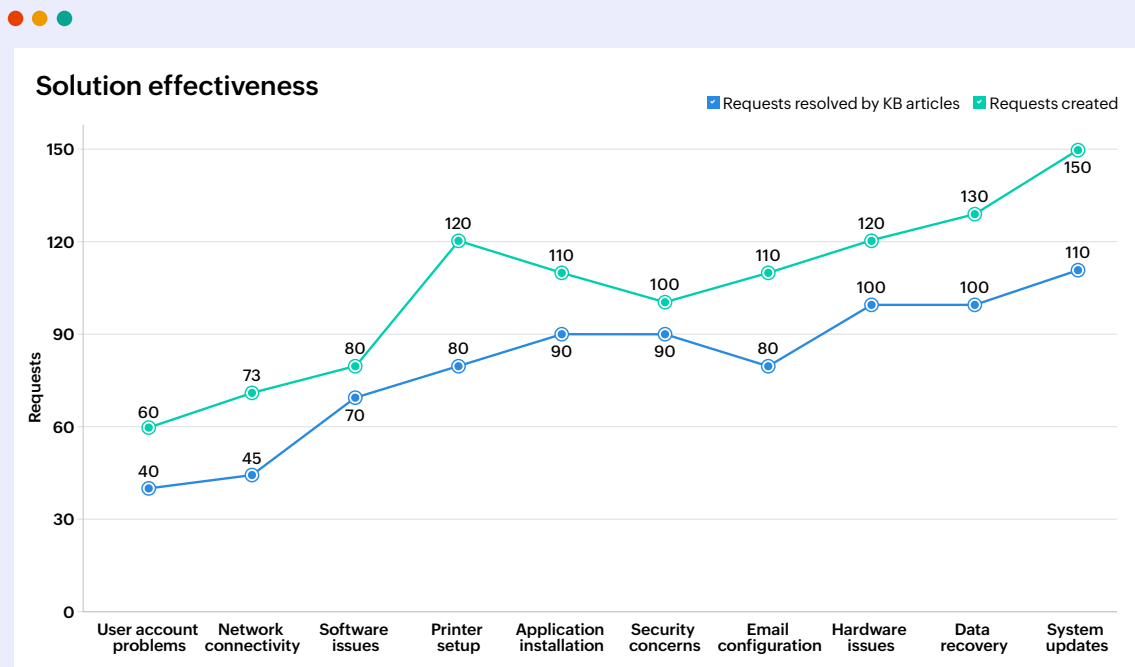
Furthermore, a robust KB contributes to cost reduction. With fewer inquiries, less time is spent on support, allowing IT teams to allocate more time to other critical tasks. As the adage goes, time is money.

The following analysis underscores the crucial role that a well-maintained KB plays in modern IT support practices. It highlights the significant impact of leveraging solutions during request resolution across various IT support categories. There is an evident reduction in average resolution time across every request category when KB articles are employed during the resolution process.



Investing in a comprehensive KB system not only streamlines the resolution process but also ensures consistent and accurate support for users, reduces training time for new technicians, and enables the support team to handle a larger volume of tickets. This leads to improved productivity, higher user satisfaction levels, and a more efficient IT support environment.

Building on this analysis, the following visualization delves into the KB's effectiveness, identifying areas of strength and avenues for improvement.



This visualization demonstrates a notable increase in the utilization of KBs for resolving requests in certain categories, showcasing the comprehensiveness and success of existing solutions in addressing common user queries. However, a few request categories show stagnant or declining KB utilization rates, hinting at potential inefficiencies in existing solutions. These findings suggest the need for enhancements in the KB content and accessibility to ensure efficient issue resolution across all support categories.

By leveraging this analysis, IT teams can quickly identify areas of improvement and rework existing content to provide extensive solutions to users. In addition to improving technician efficiency, this proactive approach fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the IT support ecosystem.

Conclusion

The IT practices we've discussed pose significant challenges to organizations and can hinder your IT team's ability to operate efficiently and effectively. By recognizing and addressing these practices head on, you can pave the way for improved productivity, enhanced customer satisfaction, and better alignment with strategic business goals.

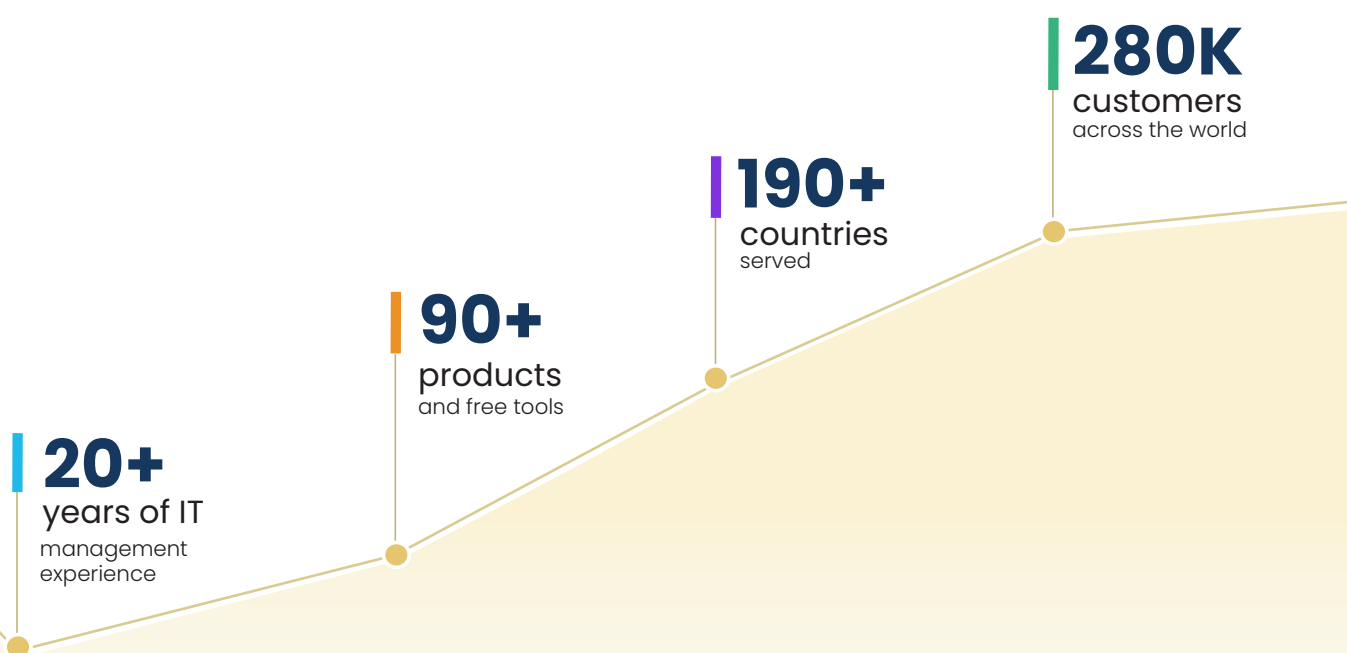
About

ManageEngine Analytics Plus is a self-service, AI-driven IT analytics solution that helps organizations implement complex initiatives to address the requirements of expanding businesses. Available on-premises and in the cloud, Analytics Plus visualizes IT data from several applications and integrates out of the box with several popular IT applications such as ManageEngine ServiceDesk Plus, Jira, ServiceNow, Zendesk, and ManageEngine Endpoint Central. Analytics Plus features an AI-powered analytics assistant that responds to voice and text prompts to provide meaningful visualizations. This eliminates the need for a data analyst to aid help desk managers and reduces report building time while enabling organizations to make faster, data-driven decisions.

Kick-start your IT analytics journey with a free trial of Analytics Plus.

Want to learn more about the product before giving it a try?

Sign up for a free, virtual tour with one of our solution experts.



Reference

1. <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/library/consumer-intelligence-series/tech-at-work.html>



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