



ARE YOU LOSING MONEY ON YOUR IT?

Discover hidden cost centers buried
within IT departments and overcome
them with AI-powered analytics



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Introduction

IT and technology as a whole are the driving forces behind an organization's sustainability and profitability, regardless of the industry. However, technology can be a double-edged sword, as it becomes a costly investment when accounting for the operating and capital expenditure incurred.

In the current economy, as organizations strive to recover from the lasting impact of the pandemic while simultaneously fortifying themselves against the looming economic downturn, removing costly and often hidden redundancies and inefficiencies in IT operations becomes critical. In most cases, a lack of visibility leads to an inability to identify and handle redundancies and cost drains.

Join us as we walk you through various hidden cost centers buried within IT departments, and highlight ways to overcome them using AI-powered analytics.

1

Is your help desk burning resources?

It is no secret that a service desk is considered IT's biggest cost center. Think about the multitude of incident and service requests handled by your IT support team, and it's no surprise that costs start to pile up.

Most organizations therefore make their IT help desk a de facto starting point while aiming to cut costs. The good news is that it's not difficult to reduce IT spending without affecting your employees' productivity—you just need to know where to look.

There are several ways in which you can reduce the expenses incurred by your support team without compromising on productivity or the quality of services provided. When you break down IT help desk costs, the two key constituents are the cost to complete a service and technician costs.

a. Reducing service costs

An interesting metric that sheds valuable insight on your IT service costs is your cost per ticket. This is the average cost an organization incurs while resolving a ticket or providing a service or equipment. While it might not be easy to reduce the direct costs incurred while purchasing essential equipment such as servers or software, indirect costs incurred due to delayed resolutions and escalations can be controlled easily.

Blindly reducing your cost per ticket can be a risky play, as you run the risk of compromising on the quality of service. To avoid such scenarios, it's best to execute calculated strategies that are cemented by facts and data.

One such undeniable fact is that the cost of a help desk request increases the longer a ticket is open and unresolved. Therefore, by merely bringing down the time spent on resolving a request, you can curb service costs.

However, simply cutting down on a ticket's resolution time may not be the smartest move, as it can come at the cost of the quality of resolution offered, resulting in a high number of request reopens. A better option is to address and reduce the time elapsed due to ticket reassignments and escalations. By configuring accurate request assignments to the correct technician or service group, you can reduce unnecessary escalations and delayed resolutions.

The report below identifies the most frequent technician reassignments that occur in a help desk. You can infer that requests pertaining to network access are being reassigned to Henry Penn, while requests on OS corruption are rerouted to Jen Smith, irrespective of the initial technician assignment.

Technician reassignment behavior

	Category	Technician change	Request ID ↓	Timespent in minutes ↓
1	Administrative	Jen Smith to Victor Zeke	7	153
2	Application downtime	Admin to Shawn Adams	8	150
3	Connectivity issues	Luke Ryan to Harry Penn	7	148
4	Data handling	Harry Penn to Will Dyke	1	78
5			3	92
6			5	105
7			6	145
8	Network access	Jen Smith to Harry Penn	2	91
9			6	89
10		Will Dyke to Harry Penn	1	131
11	OS corruption	John Stern to Jen Smith	4	140
12		Mark Leed to Jen Smith	2	133
13		Rob Matt to Jen Smith	7	85
14	Software request	Luke Ryan to John Stern	5	180

On conducting such careful analysis of technician reassignment behavior, avenues for improvement can be identified. IT managers can leverage this report to identify common reassignment trends and rework the help desk's ticket assignment workflow accordingly.

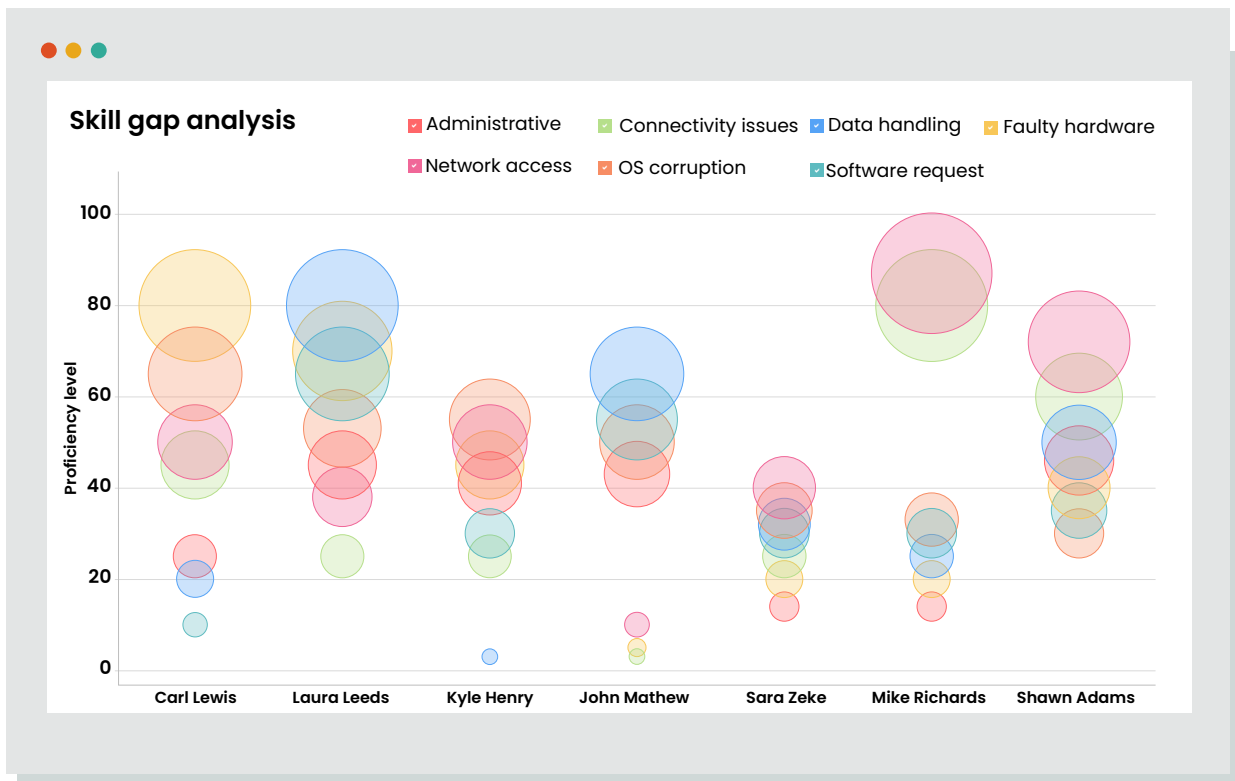
b. Tackling technician costs

Beyond service costs, the other factor that constitutes a good chunk of your help desk's spending is technicians. Skilled technicians are adept at navigating the various incidents faced in a help desk and provide accurate and immediate resolutions, thereby ensuring too much time isn't spent on requests.

On the other hand, despite timely training, there might be some technicians who aren't well versed in certain request categories. This results in either longer resolution times as technicians struggle to find resolutions in areas they aren't as skilled in, or a greater number of escalations and reassignments as they pawn off these requests to other technicians. The skill gap among help desk technicians can quickly rake up service desk costs and become a costly inefficiency in your IT department.

To tackle this, IT leaders can conduct a skill gap analysis across their department that identifies gaps in subject matter expertise among technicians.

The report below tracks the proficiency levels of help desk technicians across the various request categories. Each color represents a request category, and the size of the bubble corresponds to each technician's proficiency in handling requests from that category.



You can infer from the above analysis based on the spread of bubbles in all categories that Shawn Adams and Laura Leedes are skilled all-rounders.

Technicians like John Mathew and Mike Richards who display discernible gaps in bubble distribution can benefit from focused training and additional resources specific to the areas they lack exposure. You can also configure a threshold to ensure your team's skills are above a permissible standard across all avenues.

Skill gap analysis can also be leveraged to discern the number of skilled technicians available for each help desk category. A cost-efficient help desk should work towards employing a balanced blend of technicians with varying subject matter expertise.

2

Are you still spending on repetitive tasks?

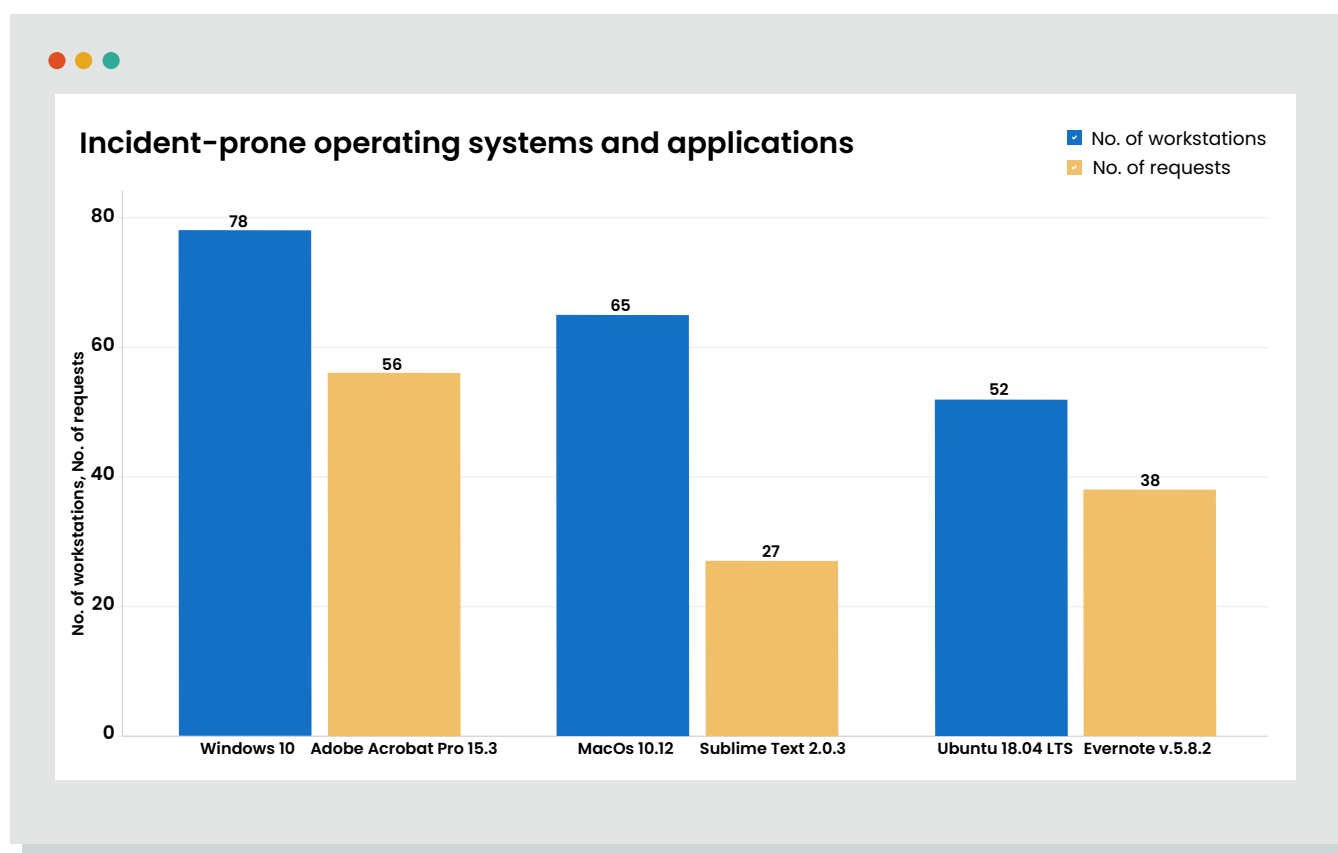
Do you regularly provide fixes for a patchy Wi-Fi router? Are printer problems the norm in your organization?

Such repetitive and redundant processes are the inefficiencies that can quietly drain your organization's resources. A better option is to leverage AI to configure a higher level of process automation that bypasses the human factor and carries out the required processes seamlessly.

A common and costly issue help desk technicians face is when a single and often simple underlying issue results in a plethora of tickets. The cost-effective alternate would be to employ automation to tackle such request resolutions. A smart automation initiative that leverages AI and predictive analytics capabilities can even be configured to tackle repetitive issues before they occur.

Consider this scenario: you just upgraded to the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Pro, and suddenly, you're facing issues while logging in to your workstation. Worse still, you're not alone. Several of your employees face similar hiccups, and now your help desk is scrambling to provide immediate resolutions to avoid business downtime.

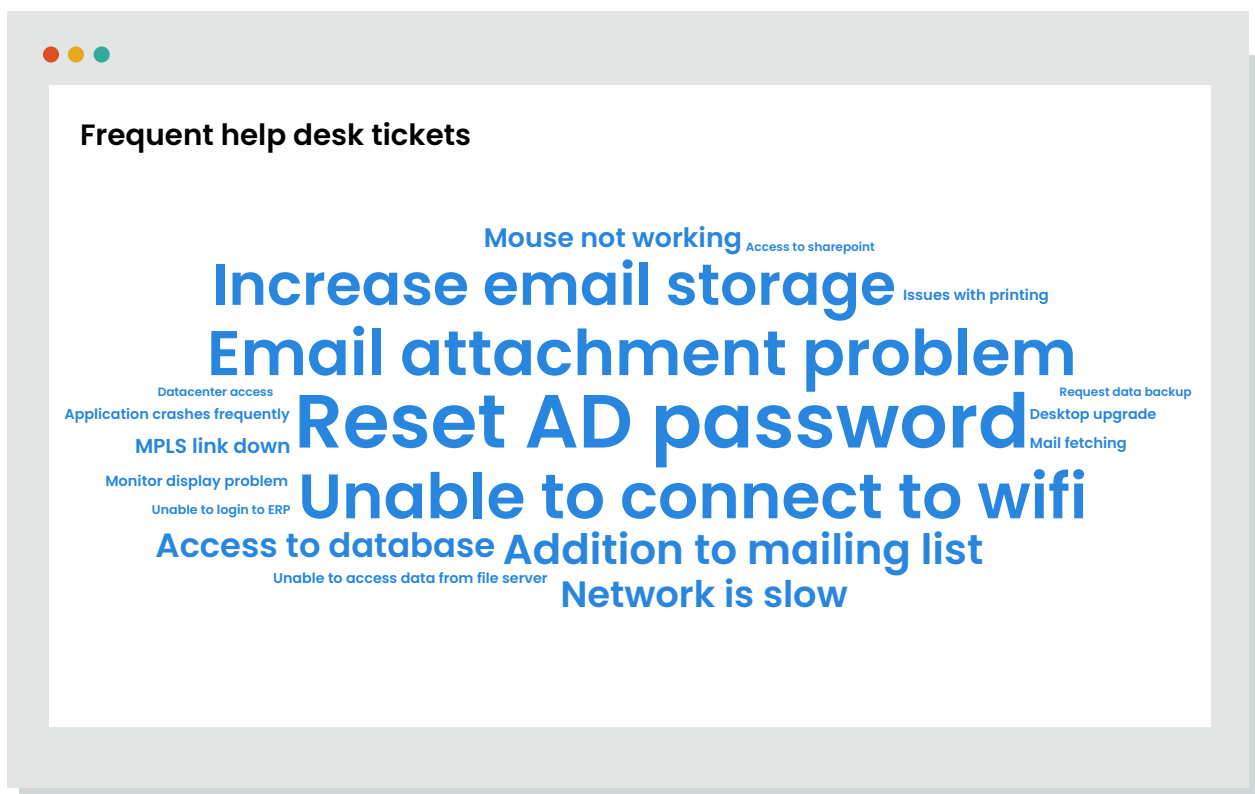
All this stemmed from a simple incompatibility between an operating system and a specific software application or version. By employing automation, you can easily identify the common thread between underlying issues, and mitigate the resulting deluge of requests by curbing the number of employees able to run the faulty combinations. This can be done by publishing a bulletin across the organization or using your endpoint management software to block incompatible installations.



The report above identifies the operating systems that generate the most alarms and software that contributes to the majority of those issues. By identifying such application incompatibility, you can employ AI to forewarn employees of possible complications automatically and provide preemptive solutions and workarounds. Besides providing significant cost savings and reducing labor, this automation in IT also boosts overall productivity by eliminating mundane tasks.

In avenues where an automation of repetitive processes isn't viable, IT leaders can leverage a smart knowledge management system to promote self-service. This is helpful in curbing the number of tickets that come to the help desk and, in turn, bringing down overall costs without negatively impacting end-user satisfaction.

An analytics tool can be leveraged to analyze incoming requests and identify frequently used keywords in the requests' subject and description. This acts as a gold mine that sheds light on frequently raised help desk requests.



IT managers can leverage this report to identify avenues where employees will benefit from detailed and relevant knowledge articles. By streamlining your organization's knowledge management system, handling technically complex issues becomes a breeze. Additionally, new team members become adept with process and workflows faster, and your end users are armed with valuable information that fosters self-sufficiency.

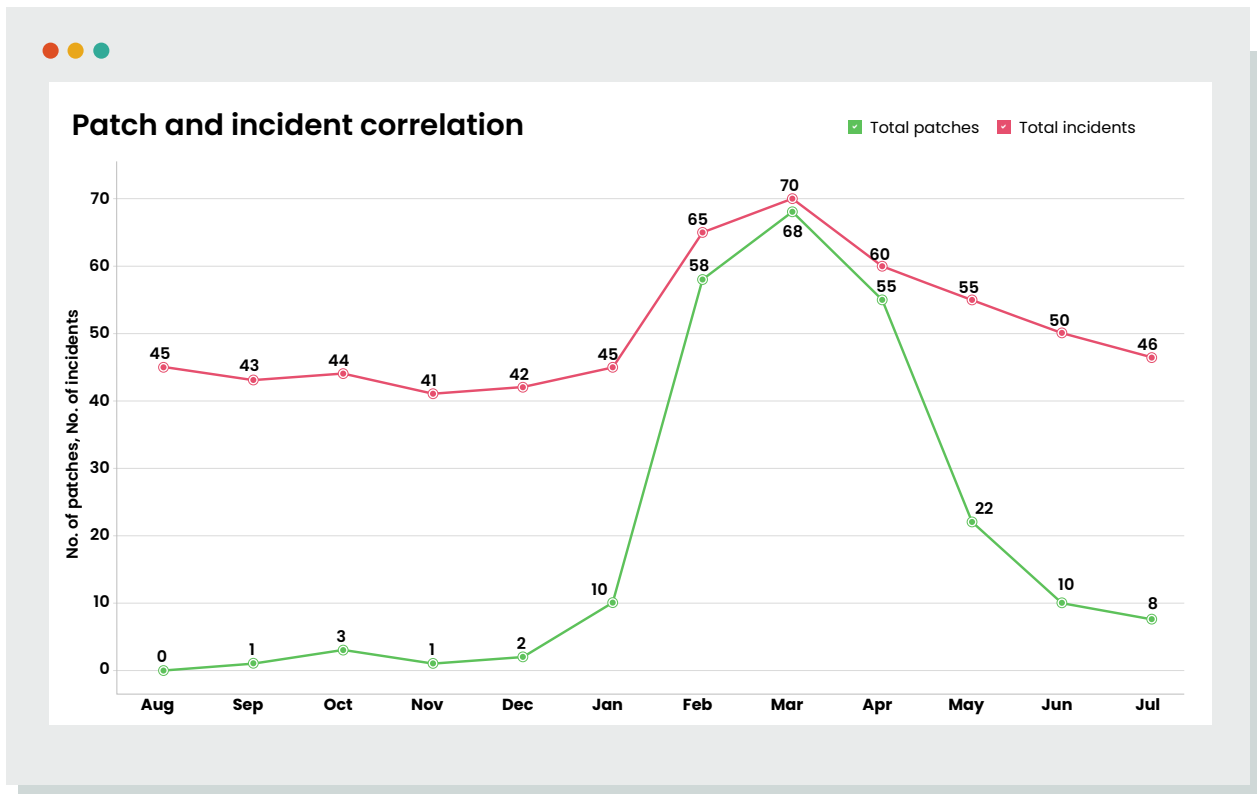
3

Are you constantly putting out fires?

Dealing with an onslaught of IT incidents is no easy feat. The repercussions are far-reaching, ranging from increased service costs to an overall loss in productivity, all of which increases your operating overhead significantly. Such spikes in IT incidents often have a common, underlying problem, which sets off a slew of incidents across various workstations in your organization.

Sometimes, something as simple as the application of new patches can result in an onslaught of IT incidents. Applying immediate, untested patches to a computer inadvertently brings about various issues in the workstation, which ultimately results in a surge in service requests and incidents in your help desk software, increasing the load on help desk technicians.

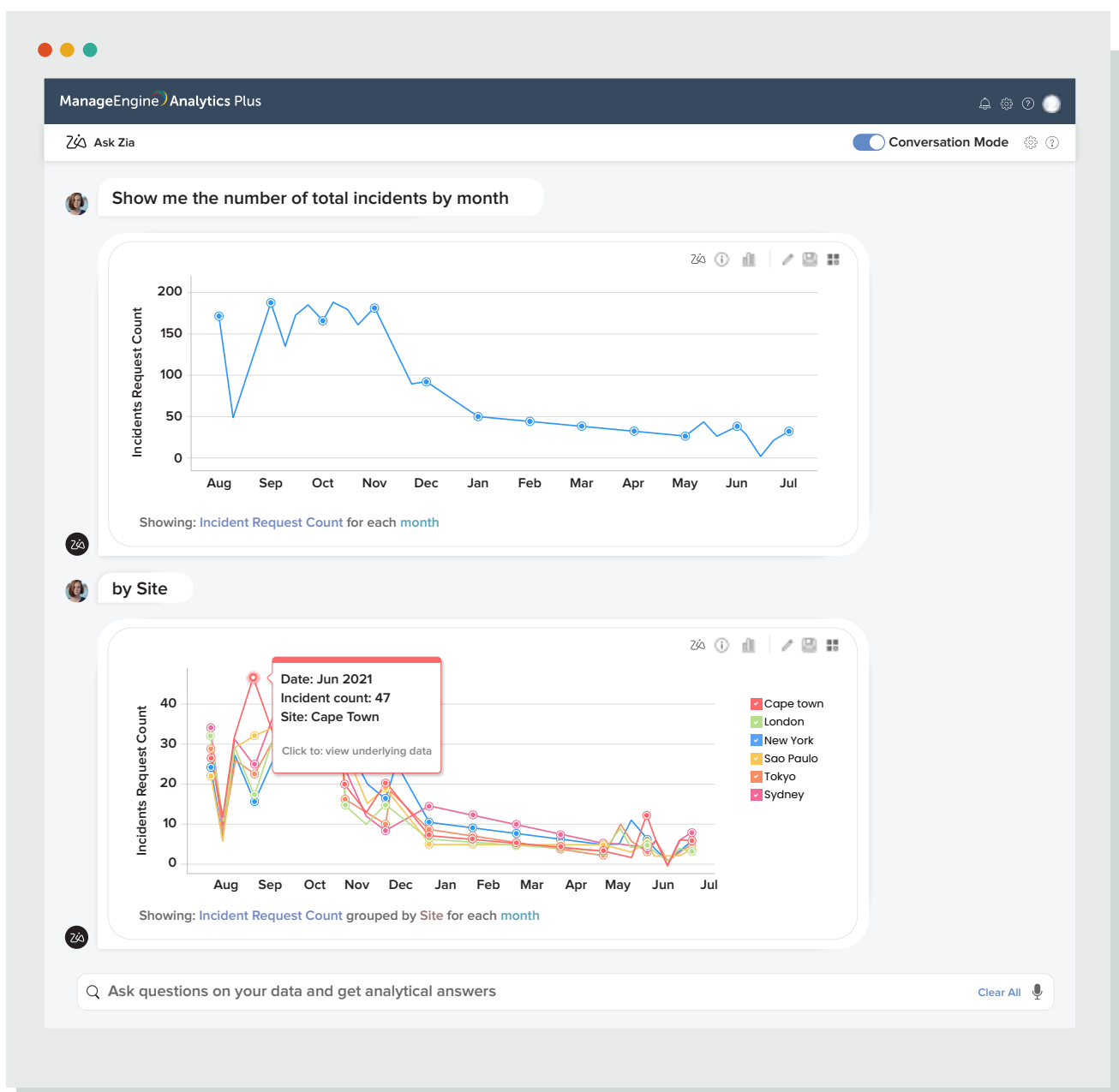
The report below helps IT managers better understand the correlation factor between essential security updates and incidents in the help desk.



To avoid such surges in incidents and the corresponding service costs, ensure you deploy patches during non-business hours. You can also test patches in a subset of your workstations before deploying them across your entire organization. To attain better visibility into future incidents, managers can leverage predictive analytics to gain insights into spikes due to upcoming patch deployment cycles. This helps when planning routine patch deployments, as managers can foresee the increase in help desk incidents and assign additional help desk resources and technicians, or restructure SLAs to prepare for a sudden onslaught of tickets.

While this helps you side-step incidents caused by sketchy patches, what of incidents raised due to other problems?

Performing root cause analysis is the fastest way to uncover the underlying cause of frequent breakages. Traditionally, this would see managers painstakingly dig through weeks worth of data to pinpoint the trigger. An AI-driven analytics tool that integrates NLP technology and machine learning helps IT leaders streamline this ordeal. By simply posting quick questions, you can dig deeper into your data until you discover those pesky hidden issues that are disrupting your business processes.



4

Are you spending on regular maintenance and still facing application downtime?

While often costly to perform, scheduled maintenance ensures seamless availability of applications and workstations. Regular maintenance is crucial in avoiding breakages and downtime, and the increased service desk load and loss of business productivity that comes with it.

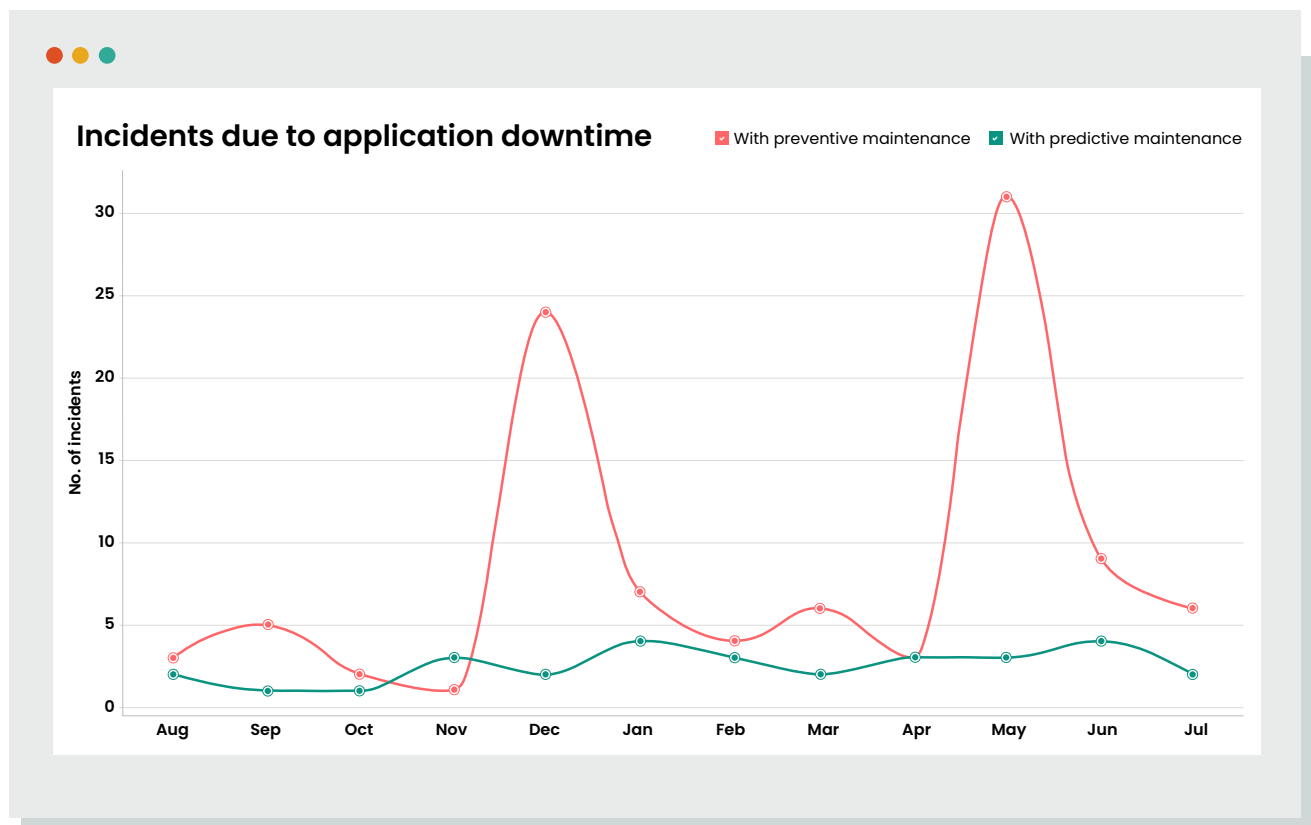
However, some organizations shell out on maintenance and are still plagued by downtime costs. By relying on fixed and preventive maintenance cycles, you fail to tailor support activities to your organization's application usage and risk early application breakages and corresponding business downtime.

The solution to this lies in data.

Careful analysis of past incidents that occurred due to application downtime provides crucial insights on when your organization would better benefit from maintenance activities.

By leveraging the report below, IT managers can discern that their help desk faces a sudden spike in incidents due to application breakages approximately every five months. This is a good indicator that your IT department would benefit from running routine application maintenance on five-month cycles.

Help desk managers can also use this report to identify future spikes and assign additional resources to tackle rising incidents during that period. Failing to prepare your help desk for such scenarios would inevitably result in SLA breaches and escalations, all of which would raise the overall costs incurred by your help desk.



Migrating to an AI-based predictive maintenance strategy facilitates easy detection of anomalies and prevents equipment failure. Not only does this ensure seamless business operations, but it also helps organizations curb expensive downtime costs.

Conclusion

IT departments are often riddled with several hidden inefficiencies that drain overall costs and hinder productivity. By leveraging an AI-powered analytics tool that supports process automation, IT executives can effortlessly side-step these inefficiencies and migrate from a cost center to a revenue generator.



About

ManageEngine Analytics Plus is a self-service, AI-driven IT analytics solution that helps organizations implement complex initiatives that address requirements of expanding businesses. Analytics Plus visualizes IT data from several applications, and integrates out-of-the-box with several popular IT applications such as ServiceDesk Plus, Jira, Service Now, Zendesk, and 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.

[Download a 30-day free trial of Analytics Plus](#) to kickstart your IT analytics journey. Want to know more about the product before giving it a try?

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280K
customers
across the world

20+
years of IT
management experience

90+
products
and free tools

190+
countries
served

ManageEngine Analytics Plus

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