



ManageEngine  
Analytics Plus

# The IT manager's handbook for Year-end IT reporting

Dreading the prospect of year-end reporting?  
Here's a handy guide to make your life simpler.

# The IT manager's handbook for year-end IT reporting

**E**ven if you publish daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on critical IT stats, year-end reporting is still crucial. It helps showcase your team's efforts in helping the organization achieve its business objectives. Additionally, year-end reporting also helps in:

- Showcasing the return on IT investment.
- Quantifying your IT team's performance.
- Providing insight into how the IT budget is used within the IT department.
- Evaluating achievements and failures on a broader perspective.
- Discussing goals and objectives, and setting realistic targets for the next year.

# Challenges with year-end reporting

**D**espite the benefits, year-end reporting is still a much-dreaded task for the following reasons:

- **Too much or too little data:** Data available is either raw or voluminous, taking time to clean up into something usable.
- **Data silos:** Data siloed in multiple IT applications is one part of the problem. The other is that IT operations data is often maintained by individual DRIs on spreadsheets, paper, or handheld devices. Collecting it all can take months.
- **Security of data:** Concerns over data security results in organizations burying critical data under security layers, making it difficult to access.
- **Communication and collaboration:** Sharing information in a visually-appealing, easy-to-understand format straight from the analytics application is a challenge.

# The key to building year-end IT reports

**Y**ear-end reports are much like baseball scoreboards. Display critical metrics against their targets. Include a projection for the next year. But first, select four or five critical areas to focus on. In this e-book, we suggest these five areas:

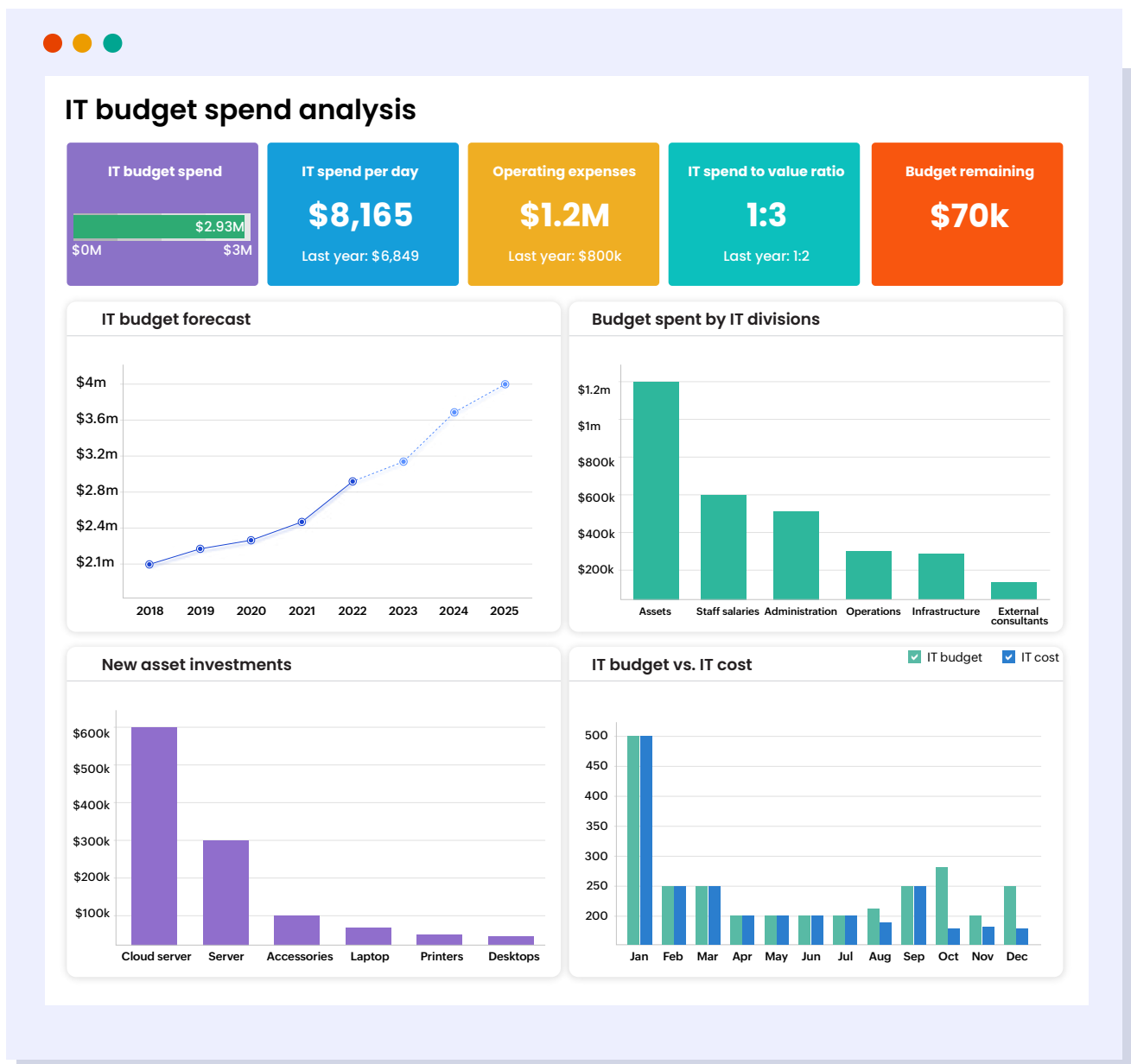
- ☐ **IT budget spend**
- ☐ **Agent performance**
- ☐ **Infrastructure performance**
- ☐ **Customer satisfaction**
- ☐ **ROI of IT operations**

# IT budget spend analysis

IT budget is the biggest expenditure in an organization's accounting books, so it's crucial to account for every dollar spent. IT managers can use this as an opportunity to showcase how the IT budget has been utilized efficiently and help build a case for when they pitch for a bigger budget next year. This, however, has to be accompanied by a revenue dashboard that we'll discuss later in the e-book.

When reporting on the IT budget spend, focus on how the IT budget was split among various asset purchases and IT divisions. Let's say you've been actively lobbying to purchase additional cloud storage space for host applications. Here's the chance to show how you've stewarded the budget and later, using the ROI dashboard, showcase how this investment has decreased downtime or improved error rate.

Here's a sample IT budget dashboard:



## Analysis of the IT budget dashboard

Here are a few things you can infer from the widgets:

- IT purchases have been planned well and utilized efficiently because the IT spending has not exceeded the IT budget. In fact, about \$70K is left over, which can be used before the year's end or carried forward to the next year.

- IT spending per day has increased, but that is justified with an increase in IT spend-to-value ratio. This means that IT has taken up new initiatives or refined their processes to bring in more value.
- Operating expenses have increased slightly, perhaps due to the extra effort required in implementing new processes and solutions.

Here's what the reports tell you:

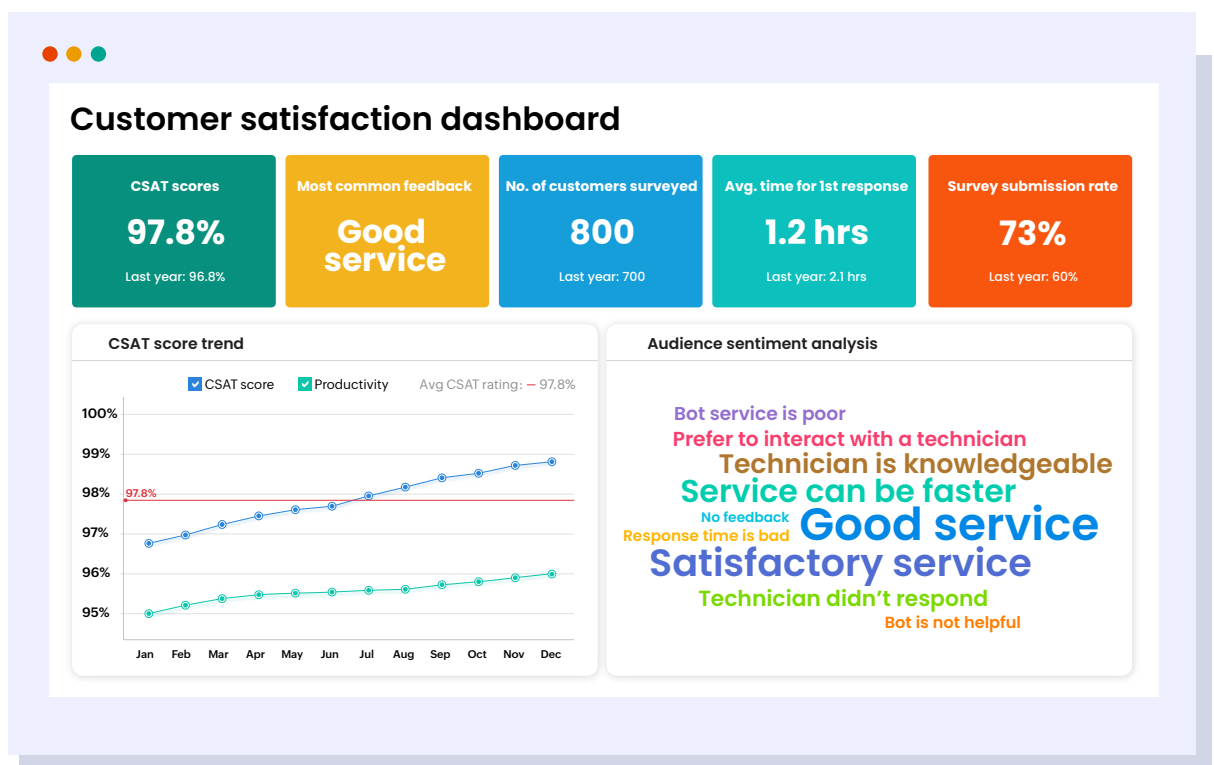
- The **IT budget forecast** outlines the progressively increasing IT budget requirements along with a prediction for the next three years.
- **Budget spent by IT divisions** shows the most and the least expensive divisions of IT. As expected, asset purchases, staff salaries, and administrative expenses top the list.
- The report, **New asset investments**, provides a breakdown of the asset purchases, with purchase of cloud server space taking up the lion's share of the IT budget.
- The last report, **IT budget vs. IT costs**, shows the effectiveness of IT budget planning, as the actual expenditure is equal to the planned expenditure for most months.

# Customer satisfaction analysis

Customer satisfaction scores are a good measure of your service desk's success. Because not all customers take the time to respond to a survey, it's critical to pay close attention to those that do. Feed customer survey results back into your service desk and use your findings to better your processes.

A customer satisfaction dashboard should focus on the areas where your customers are happy with your service and the areas where they are unsatisfied.

Here's a sample IT budget dashboard:





## Analysis of the customer satisfaction dashboard

The widgets show that:

- Customers are quite happy with the services provided.
- There's an improvement in the time taken to respond to customers, which may have contributed to the increase in satisfaction rating.
- Interestingly, there's an increase in the percentage of customers who have taken up the survey.

Here's what the reports show:

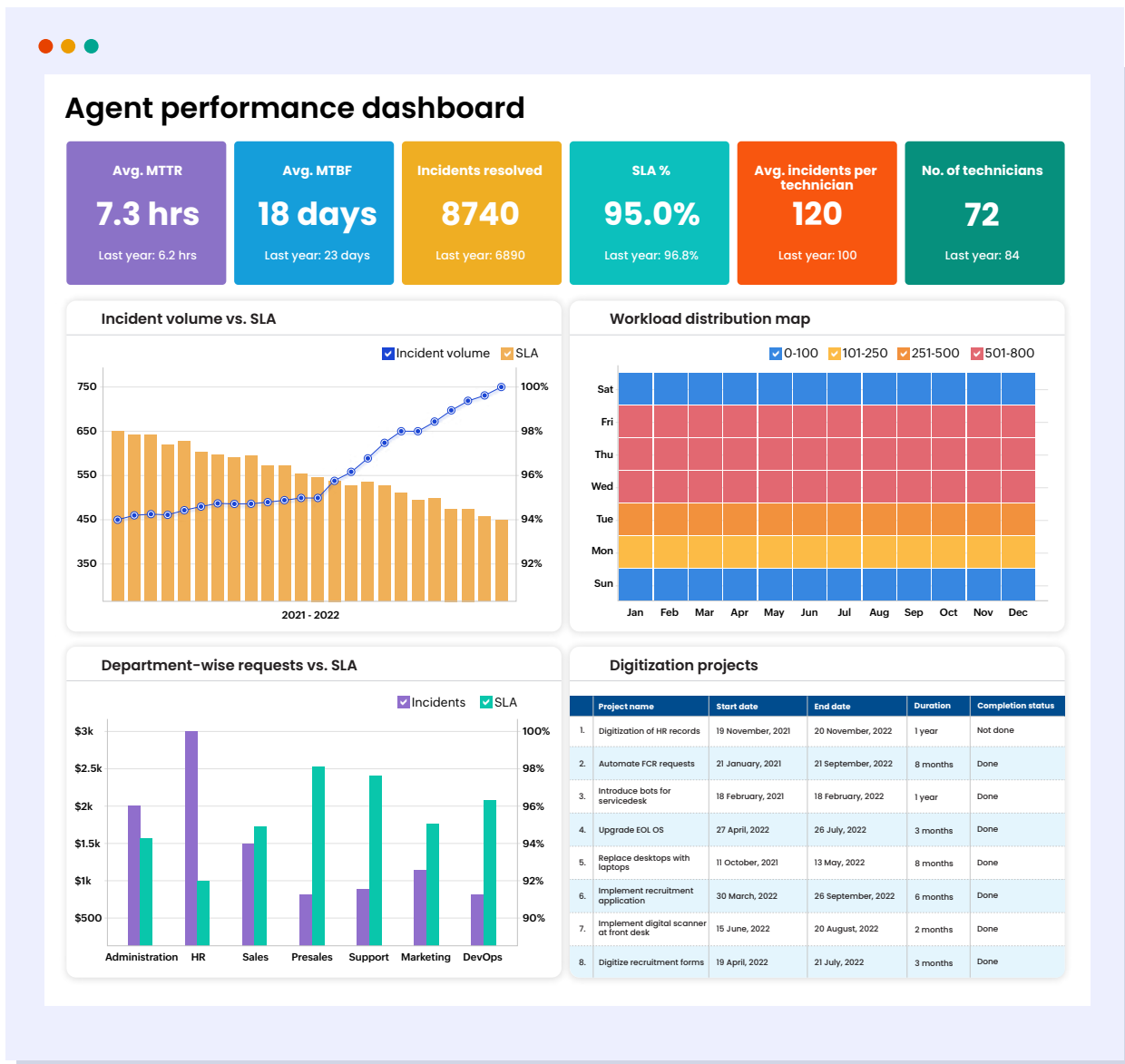
- A comparison of **CSAT scores and productivity** reveals that there's a good increase in productivity, along with an increase in the satisfaction ratings.
- The keyword cloud report, **Customer sentiment analysis**, reflects endusers' sentiments around the services. The negative feedback indicates where customers are unhappy, pointing out areas for improvement.

# Agent performance analysis

Agent salaries are the second most expensive item on any IT budget. That's why it's important to demonstrate agent productivity and efficiency in the year-end reports. If deviations from planned productivity are observed, treat this as an opportunity to investigate further to discover why. Reasons could range from lack of skills to regimented processes, unrealistic SLAs, excessive workload, or other similar reasons.

When building a dashboard to showcase agent performance, there are two key objectives: demonstrate efficiency and justify the expense with the amount of workload handled.

Here's a sample IT budget dashboard:



## Analysis of the agent performance dashboard

The widgets offer these key insights:

- The headcount of agents has decreased by almost a dozen. However, the overall workload has increased by 23% (from 6890 to 8740) this year.

- The workload handled by each technician has also increased from 100 incidents per technician last year to 120 incidents this year.
- As a result, MTTR, MTBF, and SLAs have taken a hit.

- The **incident volume vs. SLA** report demonstrates how incoming incident volume has increased over the last two years. Sudden increases in the first and second half of this year, as compared to last year, could be a result of an increase in employee count. As a result, the percentage of incidents resolved with SLAs has declined.
- The **workload distribution heatmap** shows how IT technicians are practically stretched thin over the course of each week throughout the year. These two reports collectively indicate that it's high time to add more technicians to the team to ease some of their burden and improve SLAs.
- The **department-wise requests and SLAs** report demonstrates how each department within the organization is utilizing the services of the IT team. Generally, when pitching to the senior management for additional staff or budget, other department heads bring up issues regarding requests and resolutions for their own teams. This report can help you demonstrate the volume of work coming in from each department and the SLAs your team is delivering.

- The pivot report on **digitization projects** provides a glimpse into the status of planned digitization activities. From the report, it's clear that despite the excessive workload, the IT team has completed most of the projects, except for digitizing HR records.

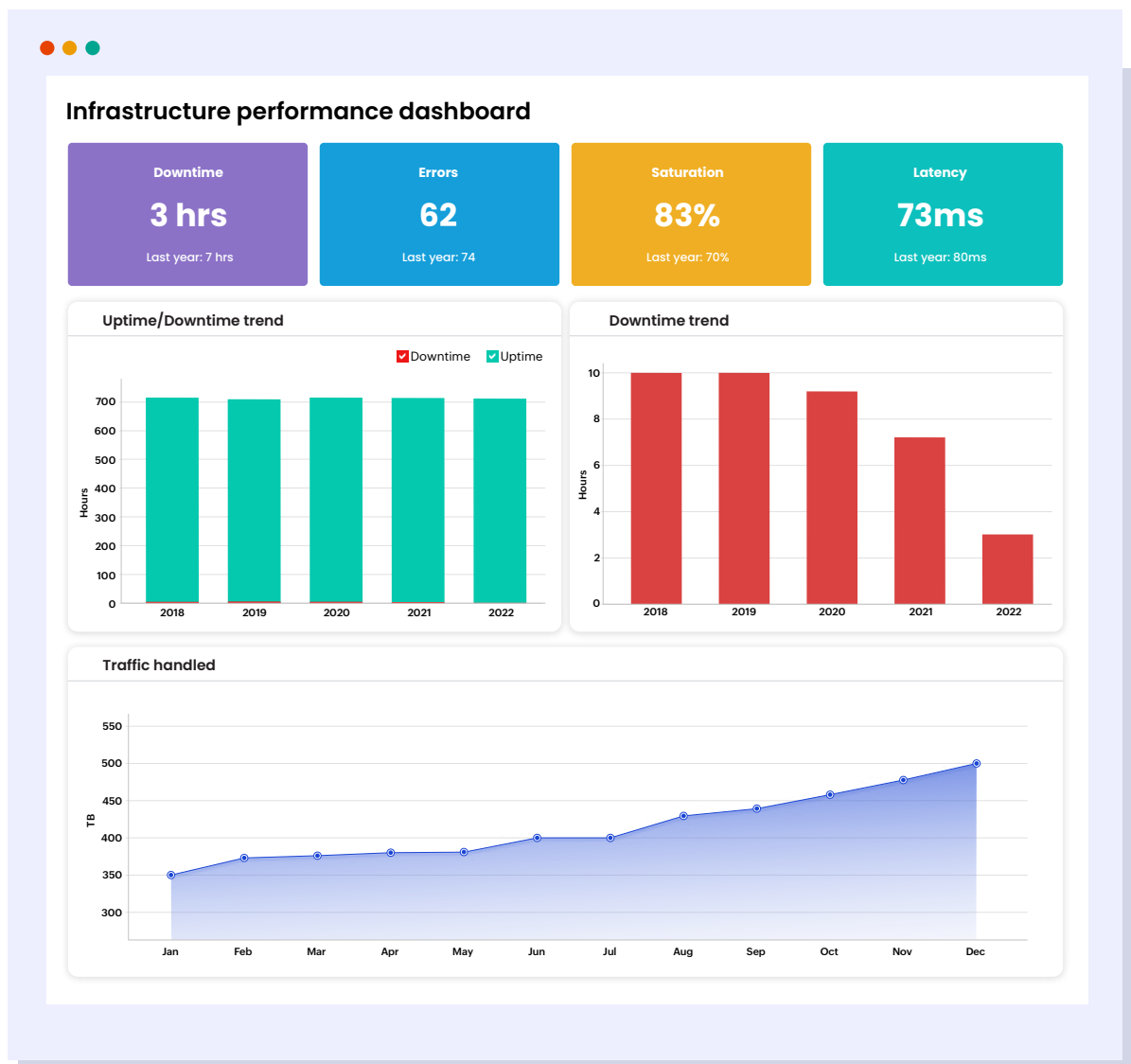
# Infrastructure performance analysis

Infrastructure and IT assets take the prime spot on the IT expense sheet. Given the range, spread, and complexity of infrastructure components—there are in-house and cloud servers, server components, applications and services, communication systems, and the IT environment—it's impossible to quantify infrastructure performance in a single dashboard. A better alternative is to use the five golden signals method that we've borrowed and adapted from **Google Site Reliability Engineering books**<sup>[1]</sup>. The objective is to get a holistic picture of performance of infrastructure components using metrics that demonstrate that your IT environment is reliable and stable.

Here are the five golden signals:

- **Downtime:** When applications, servers, services, or networks go down, users experience downtime. So the longer your services are up and the shorter your downtime, the better the infrastructure health.

- **Latency:** Latency is the time it takes for packets to reach their destination, indicating whether cloud servers and applications hosted on cloud servers are available and healthy. Higher latency indicates bottlenecks that require further analysis and resolution.
- **Errors:** Components failing to respond to requests expose errors within your IT environment.
- **Saturation:** Utilization of resources to their total capacity indicates 100% saturation. Saturation provides information on resources that applications or services rely on to operate efficiently.
- **Traffic:** Busyness of infrastructure components, load, or demand can be measured using traffic. High or low traffic indicates a need for more resources or a problem, respectively.



## Analysis of the infrastructure performance dashboard

The widgets reveal that:

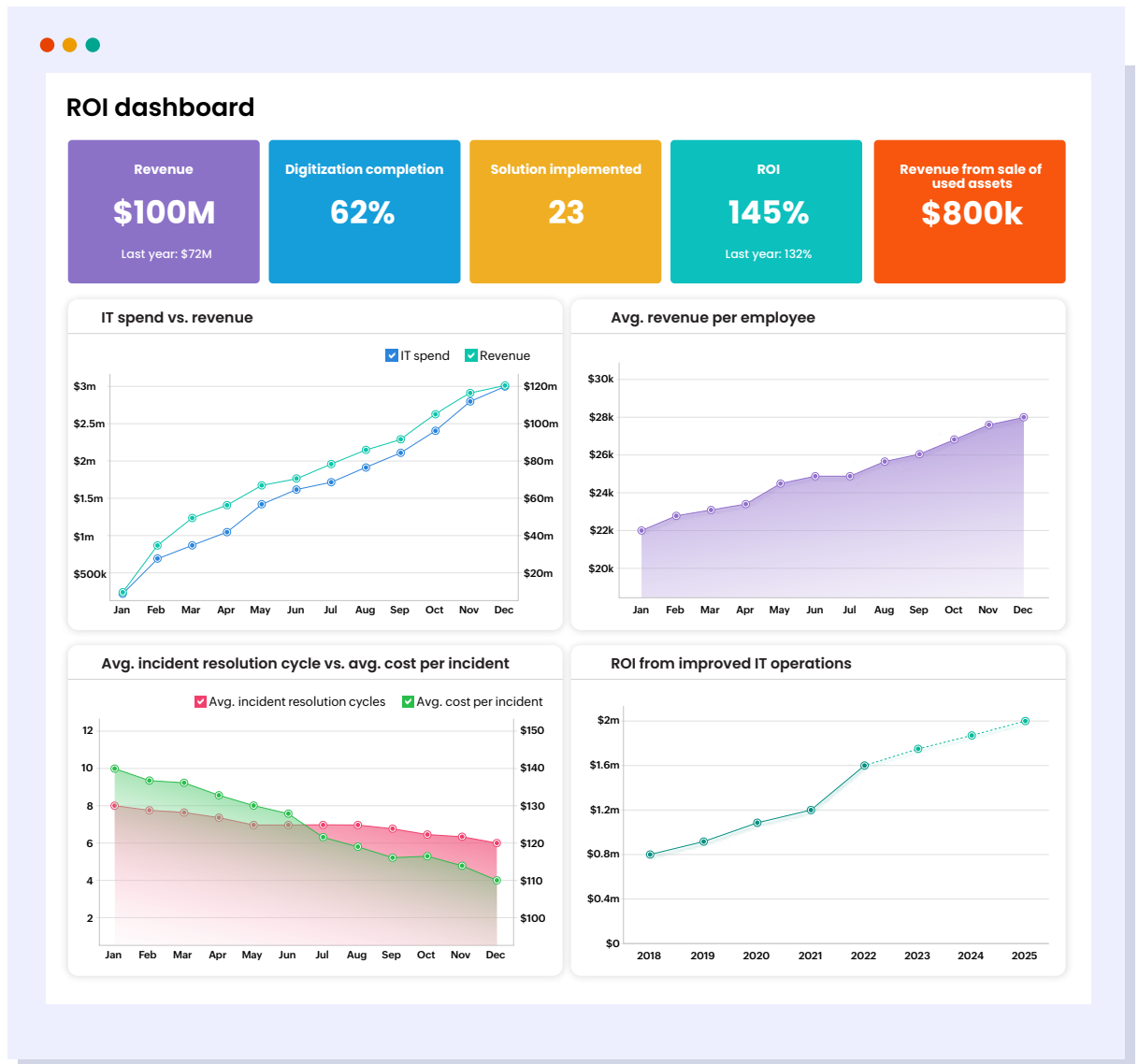
- Downtime for the whole year is just about three hours. The saturation and error rate are also optimal, indicating healthy infrastructure performance.
- The latency is at 73 milliseconds, the industry average, indicating that this organization has made smart infrastructure investments to support their user base and traffic efficiently.

Here's what we learn from the reports:

- The **uptime and downtime trend** reports clearly demonstrate a decline in downtime and an increase in uptime that confirms a well-equipped IT infrastructure.
- The **traffic handled** report shows a steady increase in traffic that the infrastructure has supported. It also indicates that the network and infrastructure components are able to handle user traffic, and that services don't fail or degrade with an increase in load.

# ROI analysis

ROI quantifies the outcome of IT investments and expenses. Given the current economic circumstances, organizations are bracing themselves for a slowdown. For IT, this might boil down to budget cuts or intense pressure to increase ROI. Adopt the objectives and key results (OKR) framework to tackle this situation. Demonstrate how IT spending has directly and indirectly contributed to the organization achieving its objectives.



## Analysis of the ROI analysis dashboard

Here are some observations from the widgets:

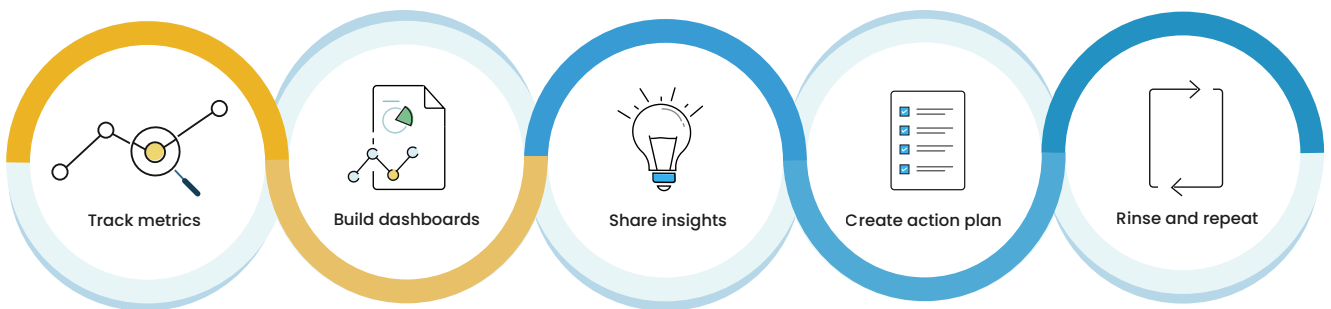
- The total organizational revenue is \$100 million.
- About 62% of the digitization processes have been completed and 23 solutions have been implemented.
- The ROI from IT operations is at 145%, a slight increase from the previous year.
- About \$800K of revenue has come from the sale of used assets.



From the reports, we see the following:

- The **IT spend vs. revenue** report shows the organization's revenue increase closely mirrors increasing IT spend. This confirms that digitization and modernization efforts combined with smart investments in IT infrastructure has helped end users work efficiently, thereby increasing revenue.
- The above statement is supported by the **average revenue per employee** report, which shows revenue per employee increasing steadily over the year.
- The **incident handle cycle and cost per incident** comparison reveals that IT teams have improved and streamlined operations. That is, the cost per incident has decreased steadily with a decrease in average handle time. This indicates operational efficiency of the IT team.
- The **ROI from IT operations** report quantifies the financial benefits of improved IT operations. For instance, improvements in uptime means services and applications are available longer, increasing productivity, business availability, and revenue. Likewise, increase in MTTR means users are getting faster resolutions and can resume their work in less time, resulting in increase productivity and revenue. **Here's our e-book<sup>[2]</sup>** that details calculating ROI from IT operations.

# How to automate reporting



**Y**ear-end IT reporting isn't a one-time affair. It's an annual process. So, it's best to automate the reporting process so you can cut straight to creating action plans rather than building reports manually each year.

To automate IT reporting, follow this simple, 3-step plan:

- Identify data sources: Gather data from all the applications, databases, and data sources needed for reporting. For instance, your NOC data can come in from applications and network monitoring solutions, while security data can come in from password and endpoint management solutions.

- Collate data: Build a central warehouse for data to gain visibility into IT operations, and deal with only a manageable amount of data. Alternately, set up live connections between your data sources and your analytics application, so you don't have to connect them each time you want to create reports.
- Automate report creation and sharing: With a central data warehouse, it's easy to plug the data into a BI application and create reports. With live connectors that collate data directly from the sources, set up frequent sync schedules so your BI application has the most up-to-date data for reporting. Set up automated email schedules to deliver key insights into your team's inbox periodically.

**Read our blog<sup>[3]</sup>** on why off-the-shelf BI applications won't work for IT and why you need a specialized IT analytics solution to report on key IT metrics and KPIs.

### **Five tips to build inspiring year-end dashboards and reports**

Creating a dashboard is easy. Creating one that is inspiring, informative, and prompts action—all while not boring your audience with a barrage of numbers and figures—is the real challenge. To ensure your dashboard helps drive insights home, follow these tips:

- Decide on what you want to report: Select the right set of metrics to get your point across. Think of what you want your audience to see and build to cater for that need.

- Deliver a clear message: Don't clutter your dashboards with an array of charts. Pick one topic and build a dashboard for it. If you're showing a dashboard on agent performance, stick to metrics that showcase agent performance. To track revenue, service management, or other topics, build separate dashboards.
- Select the right visualizations: Your choice of visualization impacts how your reports are perceived. Use pie charts to show parts of a whole, and line or area charts for trends, and so on. **Here's a guide<sup>[4]</sup>** to selecting the right visualizations for your IT data.
- Report on the full picture: Notice a spike in infra spending? Provide the full picture by showing how infra spending has increased over the years. A partial picture of performance creates tunnel vision, impacting the quality of decisions, and robs the ability to identify opportunities and threats.
- Provide context to your visualizations: Answer the 'why' using your dashboard. Asking for additional funds? Show how the IT budget is being spent currently to justify your demands. Need more technicians? Show their current workload, and propose how an increase in headcount can improve your SLAs.

# Conclusion

The year-end IT reporting process shouldn't be set in stone. As a business evolves, so do its objectives, goals, and targets. Refine your metrics and KPIs to reflect these changes, and present meaningful, actionable information to your senior management. We hope this e-book helps you understand the basics of year-end reporting. For more information on reporting and analytics, [reach out to us](#).

## About

ManageEngine Analytics Plus is a self-service, AI-driven IT analytics solution that helps organizations implement complex initiatives that address the 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, ServiceNow, 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 time spent for a data analyst to create reports, while enabling organizations to make faster, data-driven decisions.

[Kick start your free trial of Analytics Plus today.](#)

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products  
and free tools

**190+**  
countries  
served

**20+**  
years of IT  
management experience

## Reference

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