

Seven reasons your help desk needs **analytics**



Introduction

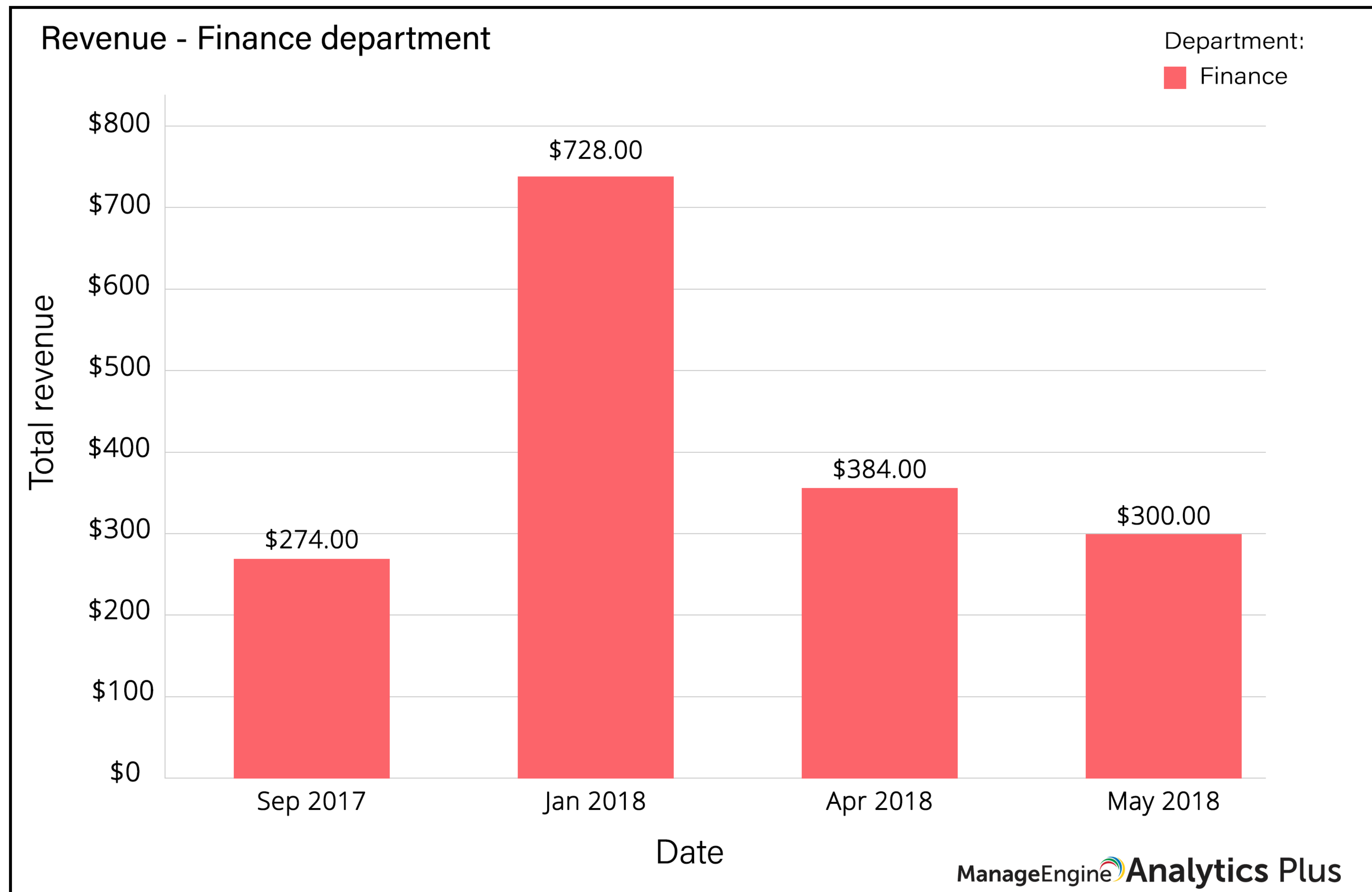
Analytics tools require significant time investment and effort to set up, integrate, and maintain. If analytics tools require so much effort, then why, as a help desk manager, would you invest in an analytics tool when your help desk application has a native reporting module? In this e-book, we'll explore how analytics tools solve problems that help desk managers face everyday.

Analytics in help desk management

Here are seven instances where an analytics tool will make your life easier.

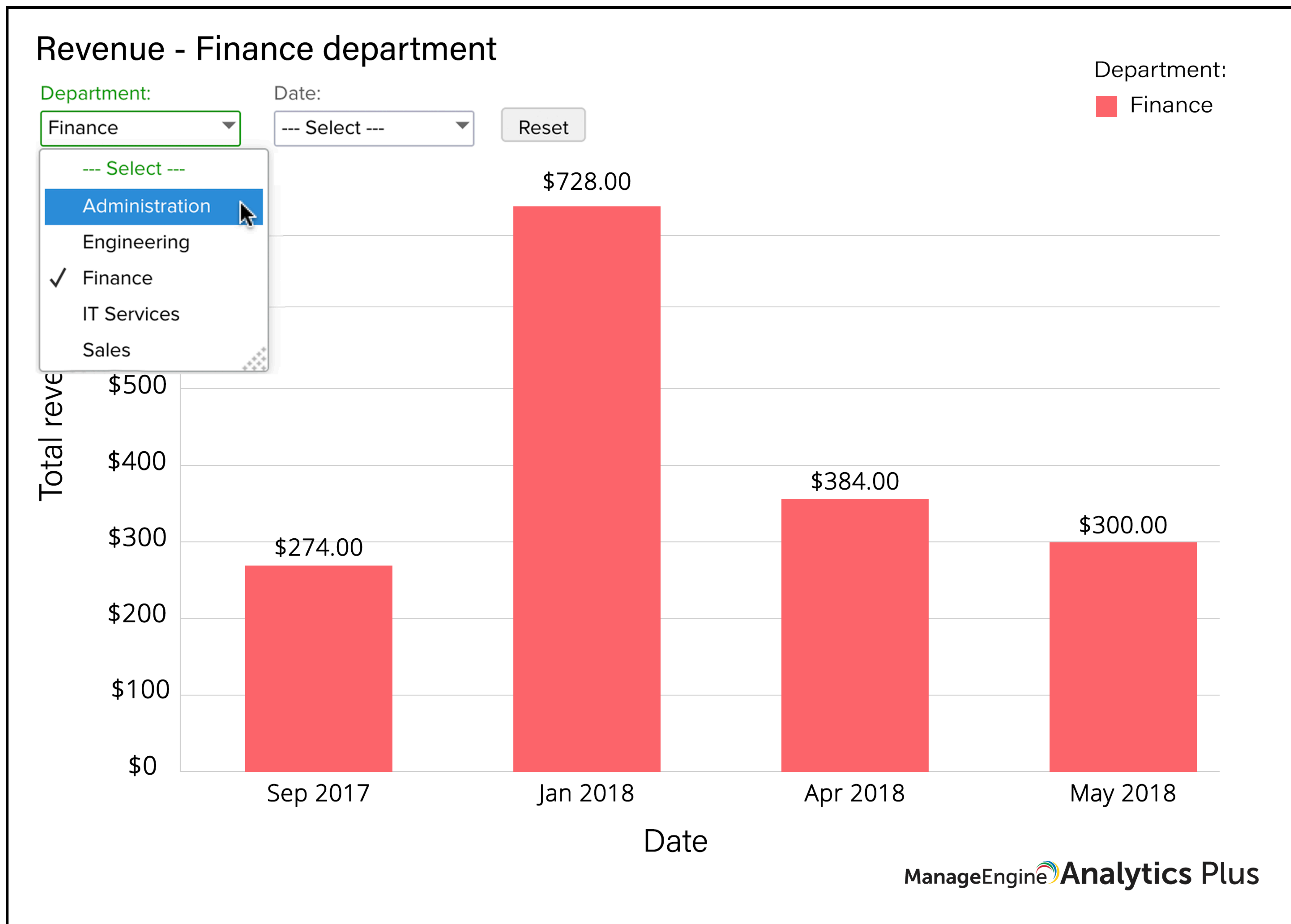
1. Creating multiple versions of the same report

You might have to create reports—not just for yourself, but also for other help desk technicians. You might find yourself creating the same report for different people or departments: for example, a revenue timeline report for a department, like Finance, as shown below.



This report cannot be used by any department other than Finance. If another department requires a revenue timeline report, you will have to create a new revenue timeline report for that department. This is where things get complicated. Let's say that there are ten departments and they all require revenue timeline reports. Creating and maintaining ten different revenue timeline reports is too time-consuming.

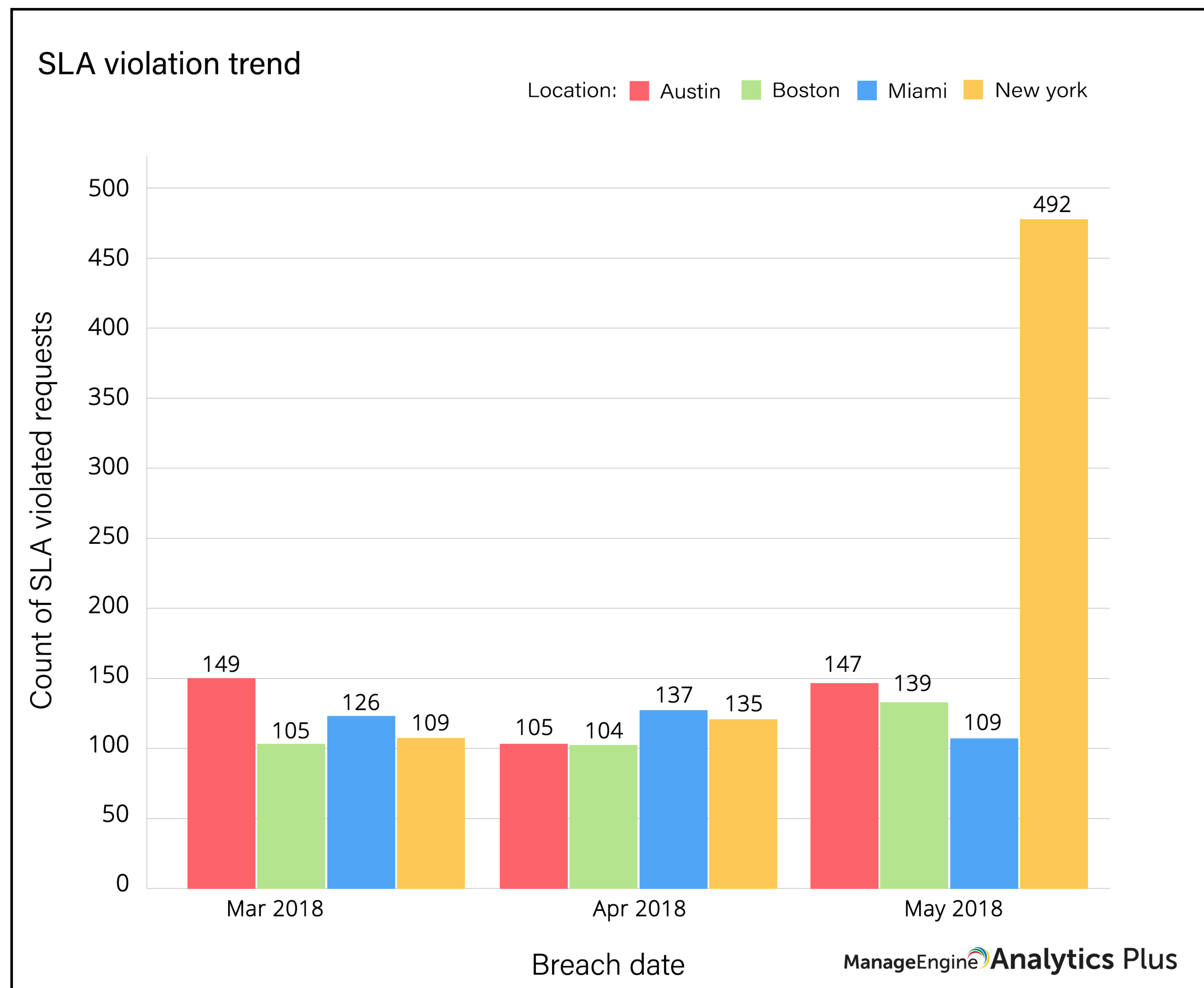
Instead, you could use an analytics application like Analytics Plus to create one revenue timeline report and leave the Department field as a customizable filter as shown below.



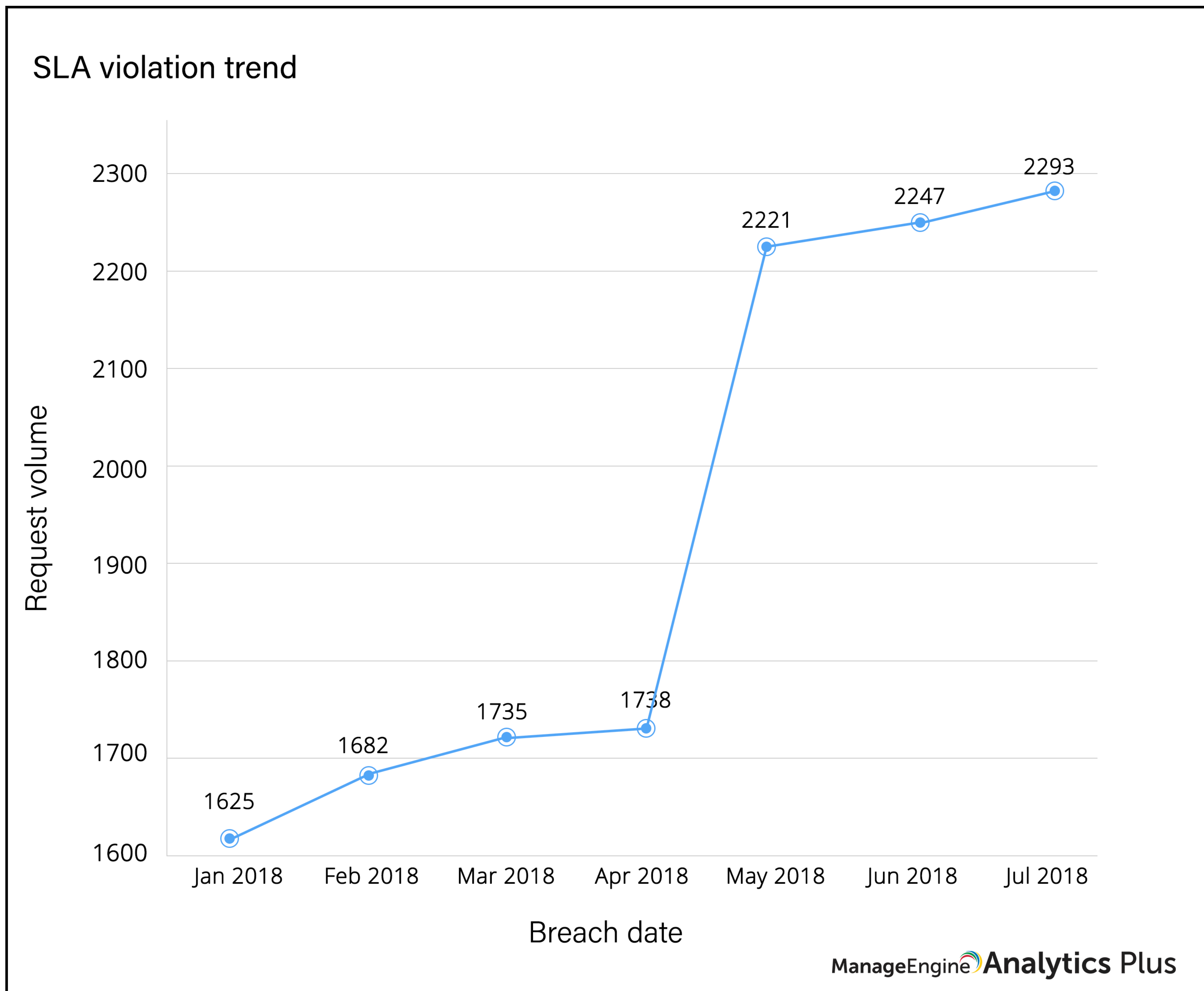
Department managers can view the revenue data for their departments without requiring assistance by using the customizable user filter. You can even add a filter to let department managers view reports by date.

2. Performing investigative analysis

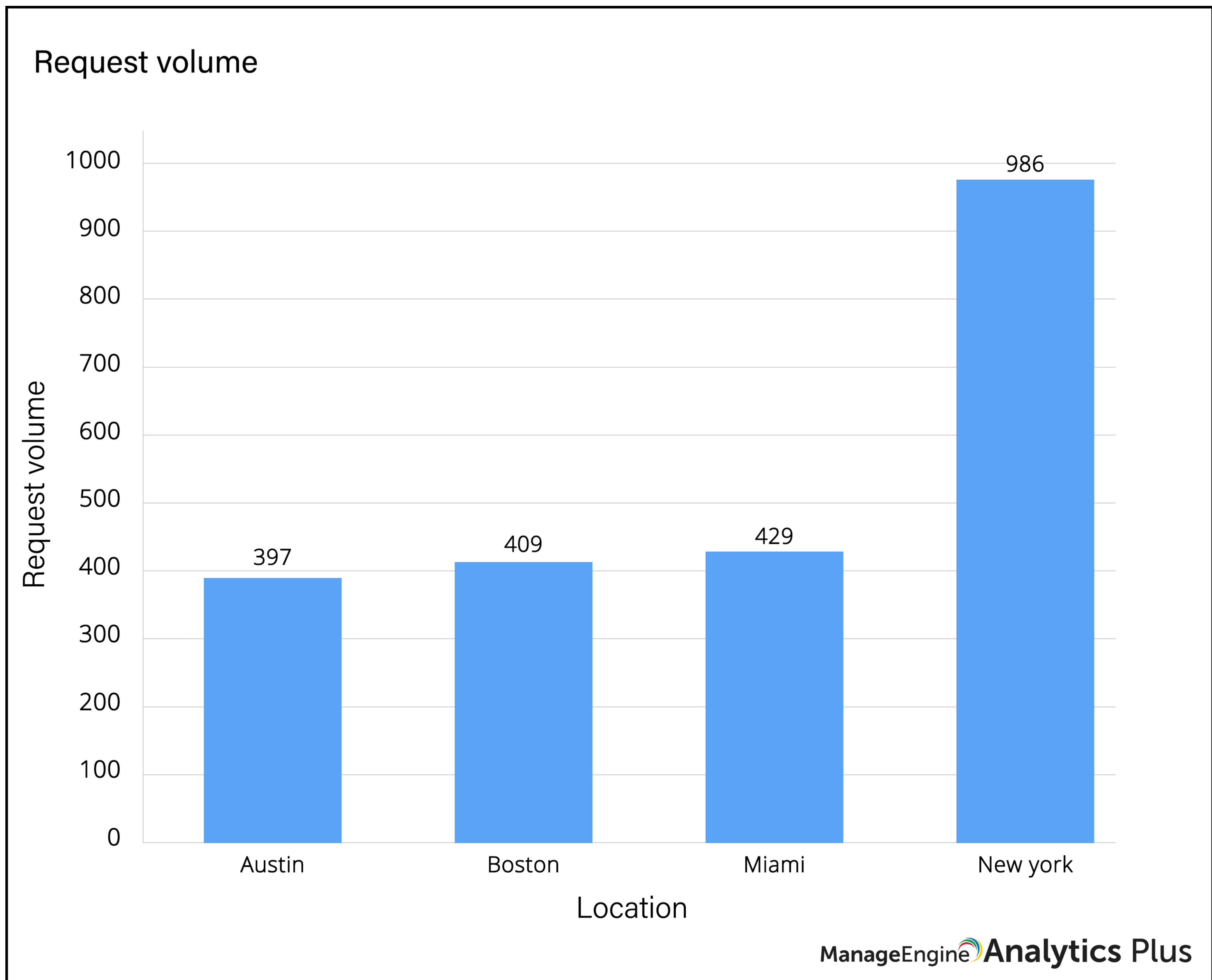
The data in your reports may not always have a steady rise or a steady fall. There will be times when the data in your reports have sudden peaks or troughs. Here is an example of an **SLA violation trend** in different locations of a help desk.



In May, there's a spike in SLA violations for the New York office. To figure out why, let's take a look at the **Request volume** report. The **Request volume** report shows the number of requests that came into the help desk in a month. However, this report is cumulative and doesn't show the request volume for each location.



Tools like Analytics Plus let you drill down into portions of a report to get more information. In the request volume report, we can drill down on the request volume for a particular month, then compare it against secondary parameters like priority, location, etc.



Drilling down on the request volume for May and comparing it against locations shows us that there is a spike in the request volume.

It looks like this spike in the request volume has caused the sudden flood of SLA violations in the New York office. You can now use this insight to take corrective action.

3. Building custom metrics for your help desk

Let's say you want to track the SLA compliance rate of your help desk. You would start by looking at the trend of requests that violated their SLAs in the past few months. However, merely comparing the number of SLA-violated requests isn't the right approach because SLA violations may fluctuate with the increase or decrease in request volume.

A more accurate way is calculating the percentage of SLA-violated requests out of the total number of incoming requests.

For example, in November, 250 requests came in to the help desk and around 25 of them violated their SLAs. This puts the SLA violation percentage at 10 percent. In December, 325 requests came in and around 30 violated their SLAs. The SLA percentage for this month is 9.2 percent. Even though the number of requests that violated the SLA in December is higher, we can see that December's SLA performance is statistically better compared to November based on its lower SLA violation percentage.

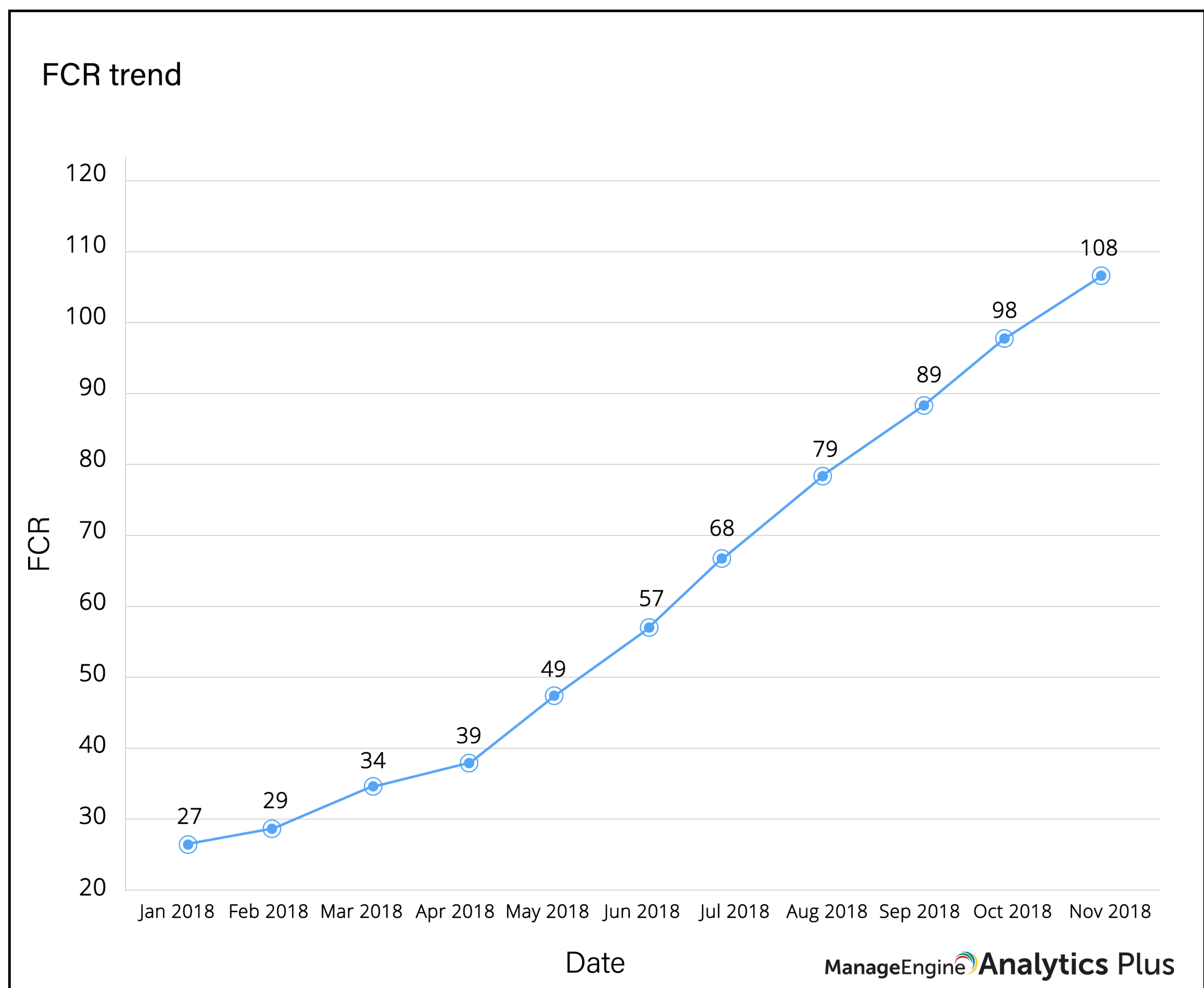
Most analytics tools let you create custom metrics, including Analytics Plus.

4. Focusing on what matters most

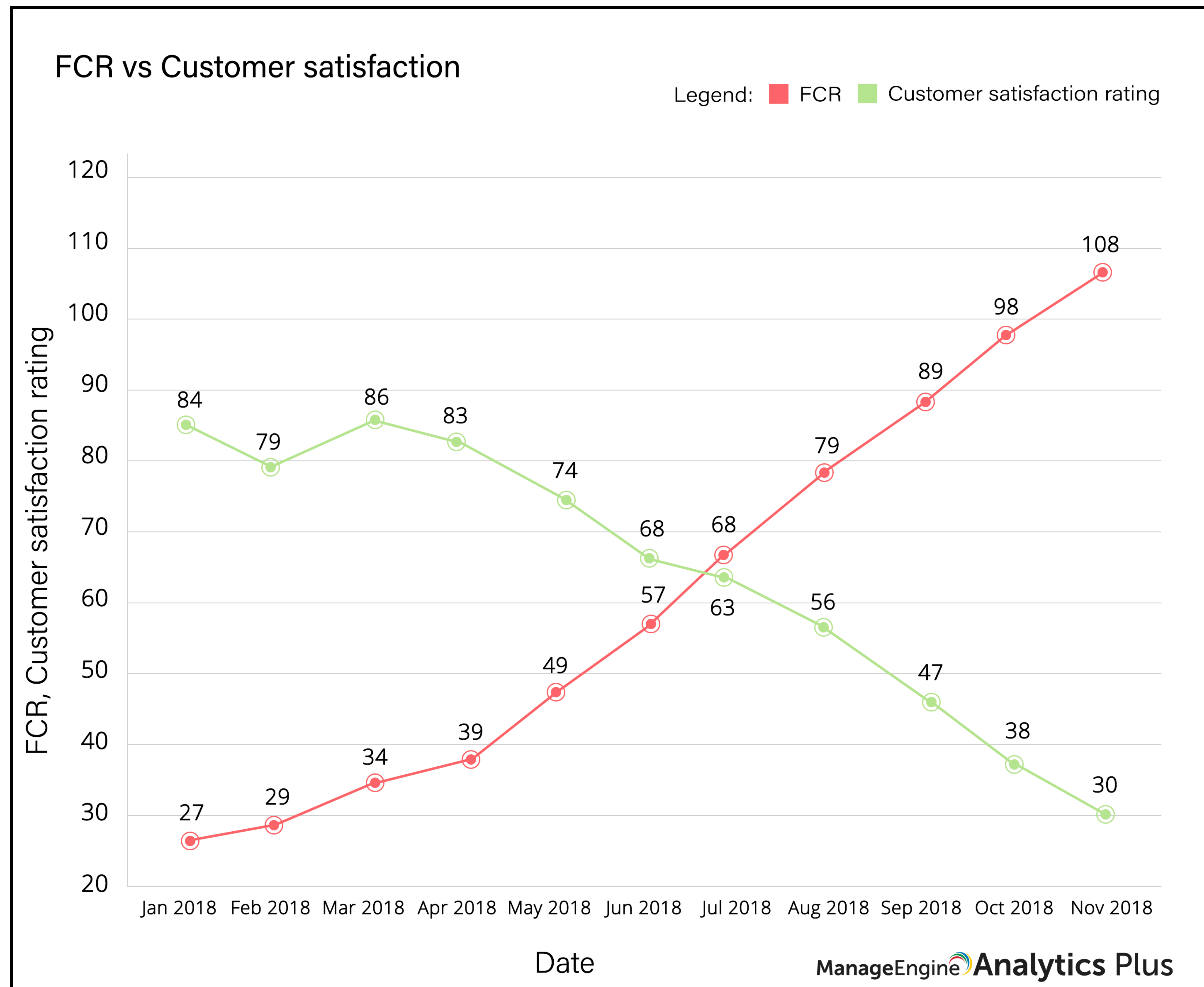
The core function of a help desk is to correctly resolve and close requests in the shortest time possible. A metric that help desk managers pride themselves on is the first call resolution (FCR). FCRs are the requests that are resolved during the first interaction with the customer.

It's easy for help desk technicians to get caught up in the rush of closing requests as soon as possible, and they can sometimes lose sight of key metrics that aren't as straightforward as FCR.

Take this report for instance:



The above report shows the number of first call resolutions in the past year. Though it's important to improve your FCRs, you should make sure that these FCRs don't come at the cost of your customers' satisfaction levels. Let's overlay customer satisfaction data of the last year on this report to see if there is correlation between these metrics.



You can see that the customer satisfaction rate has declined with the increase in FCRs. This could mean that technicians are more invested in getting FCRs than solving customers' problems. In such cases, shifting the focus from FCRs to customer satisfaction may give your help desk the boost it needs.

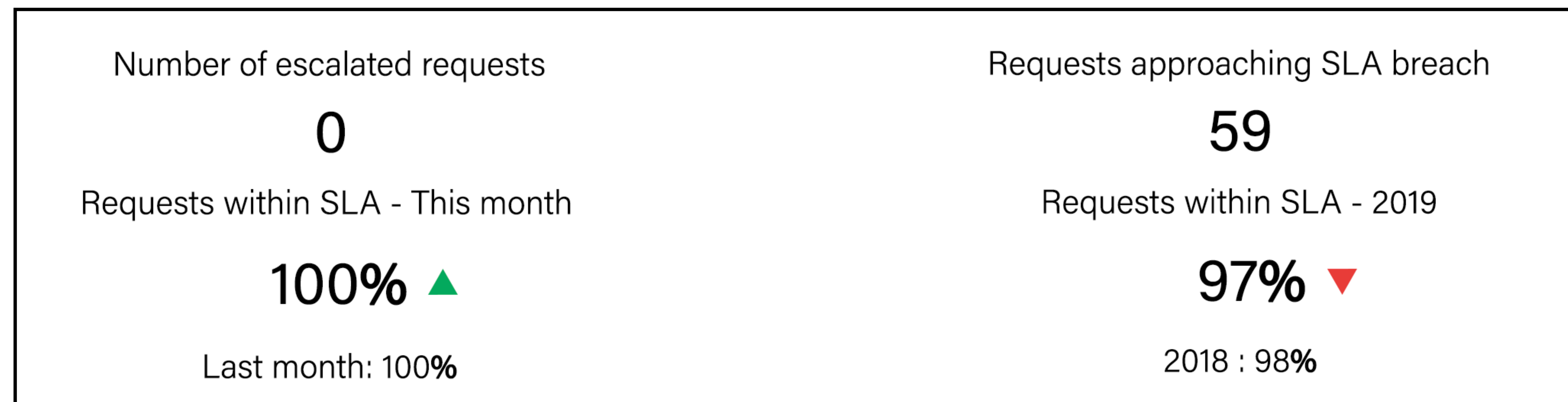
With tools like Analytics Plus, you can add multiple metrics to the same report for a comparative analysis. This will let you obtain insight that would have been overlooked otherwise.

5. Visualizing important metrics

Reports and metrics make the most sense when viewed along with similar metrics; this is why dashboards are created. Dashboards are a combination of similar reports and metrics put together for a particular purpose. Here is a dashboard on the SLA compliance of a help desk.



However, creating dashboards for your help desk can be tough. How do you include all the required metrics while also ensuring that the dashboard isn't so large that your viewers can't easily draw insight from it? It can be a tough balancing act. Swing this task in your favor by creating KPI widgets in your dashboards. KPI widgets are used to display those important metrics that you don't want your viewers to miss, even if they're in a hurry.



For example, from the SLA compliance dashboard, you could highlight the number of escalated requests, requests approaching SLA breach, and the percentage of requests within SLA, and create KPI widgets for them as shown below.

SLA Compliance

Technician:

All

Group:

All

Department:

All

Period:

--- Select ---

Number of escalated requests

0

Requests within SLA - This month

100% ▲

Last month: 100%

Requests approaching SLA breach

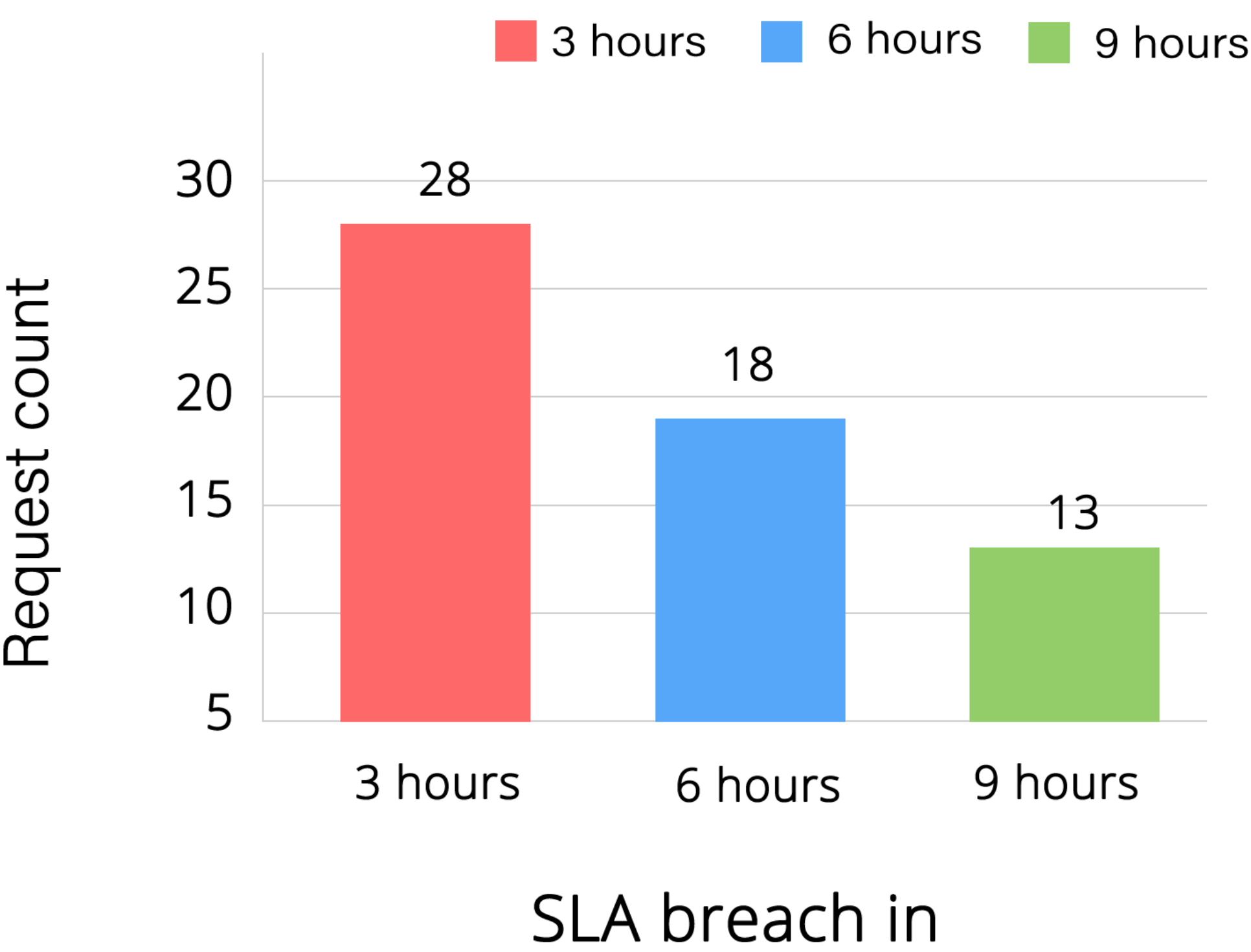
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Requests within SLA - 2019

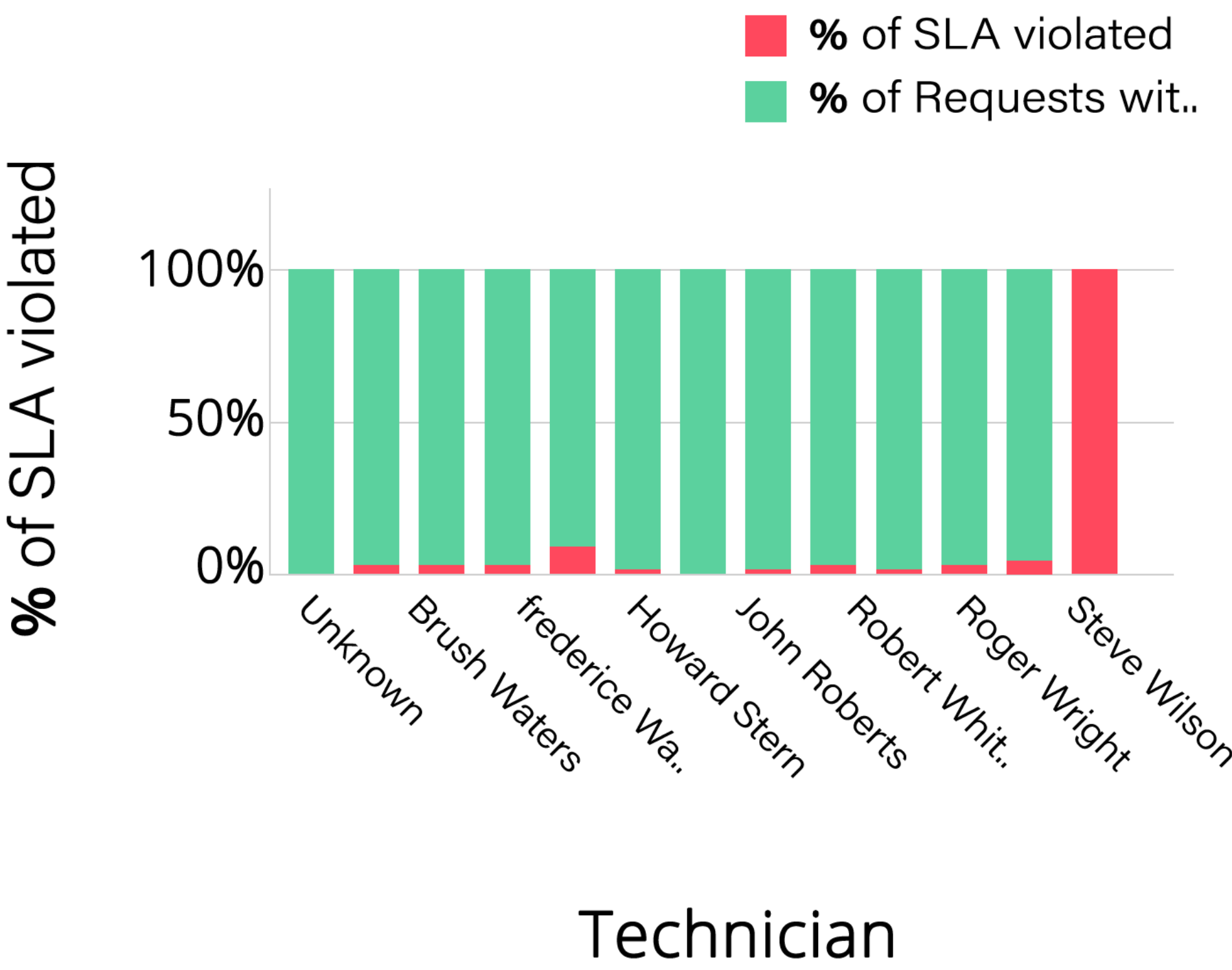
97% ▼

2018 : 98%

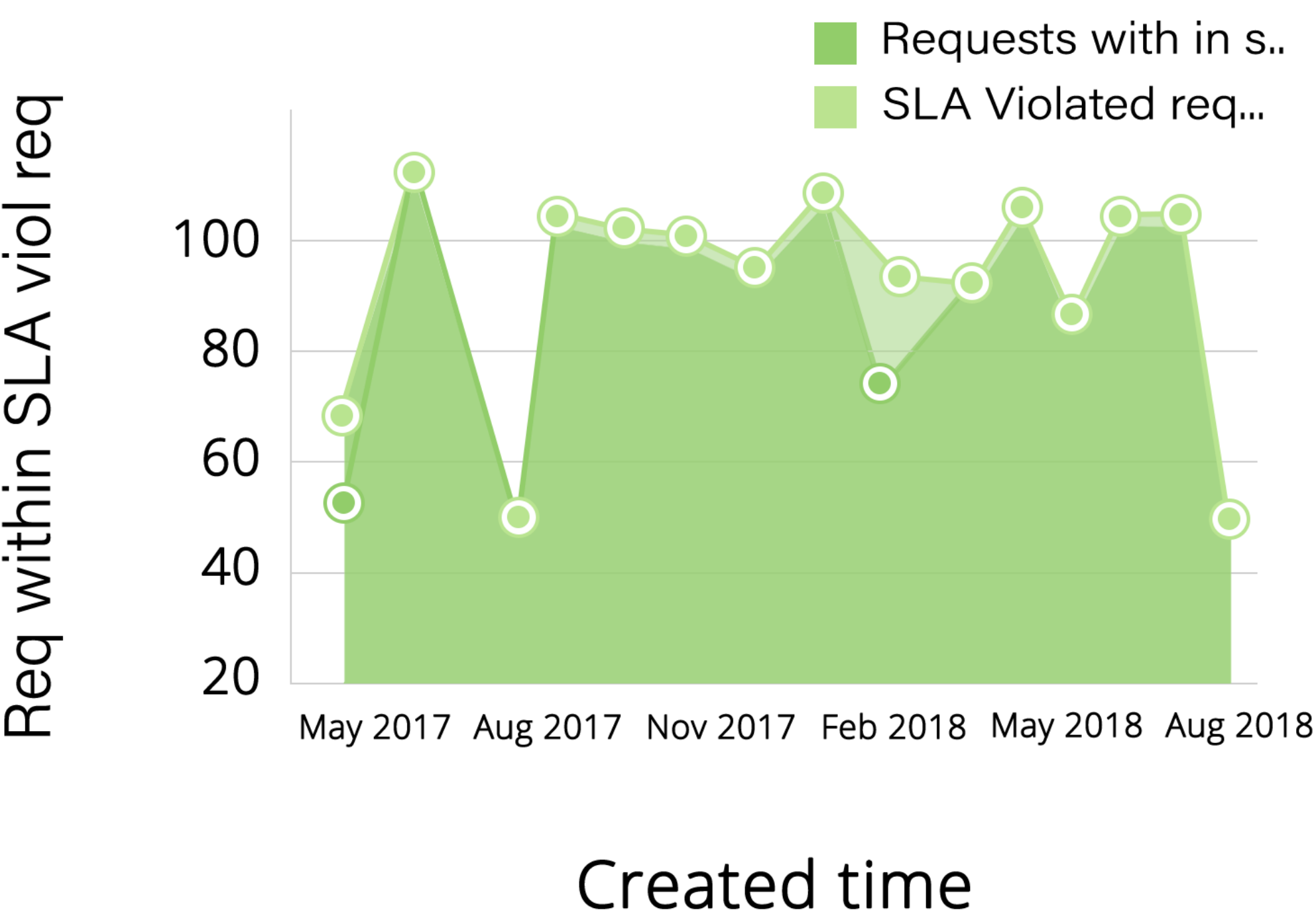
Requests approaching SLA violation



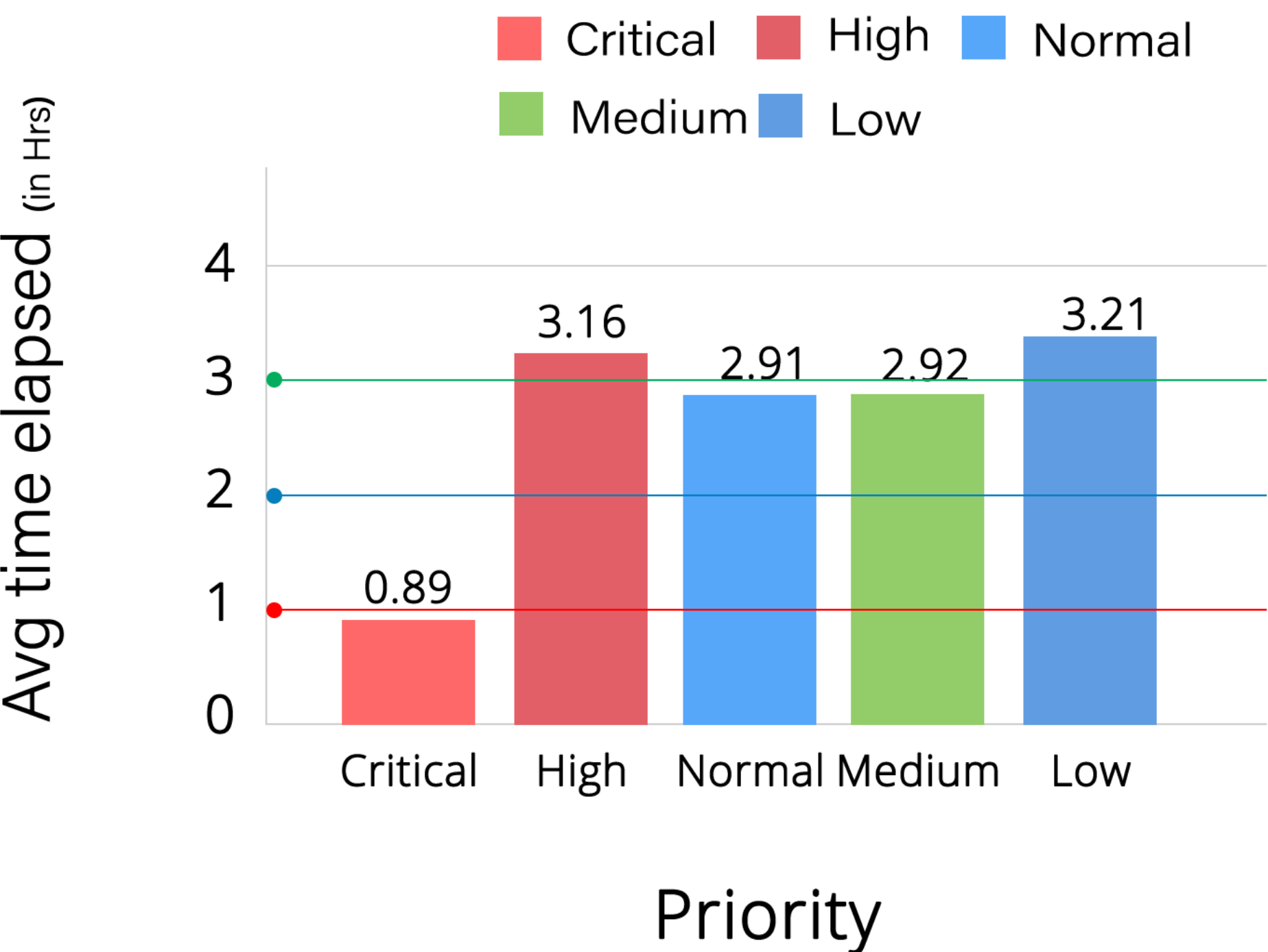
SLA report by technician



SLA compliance trend



SLA deviation



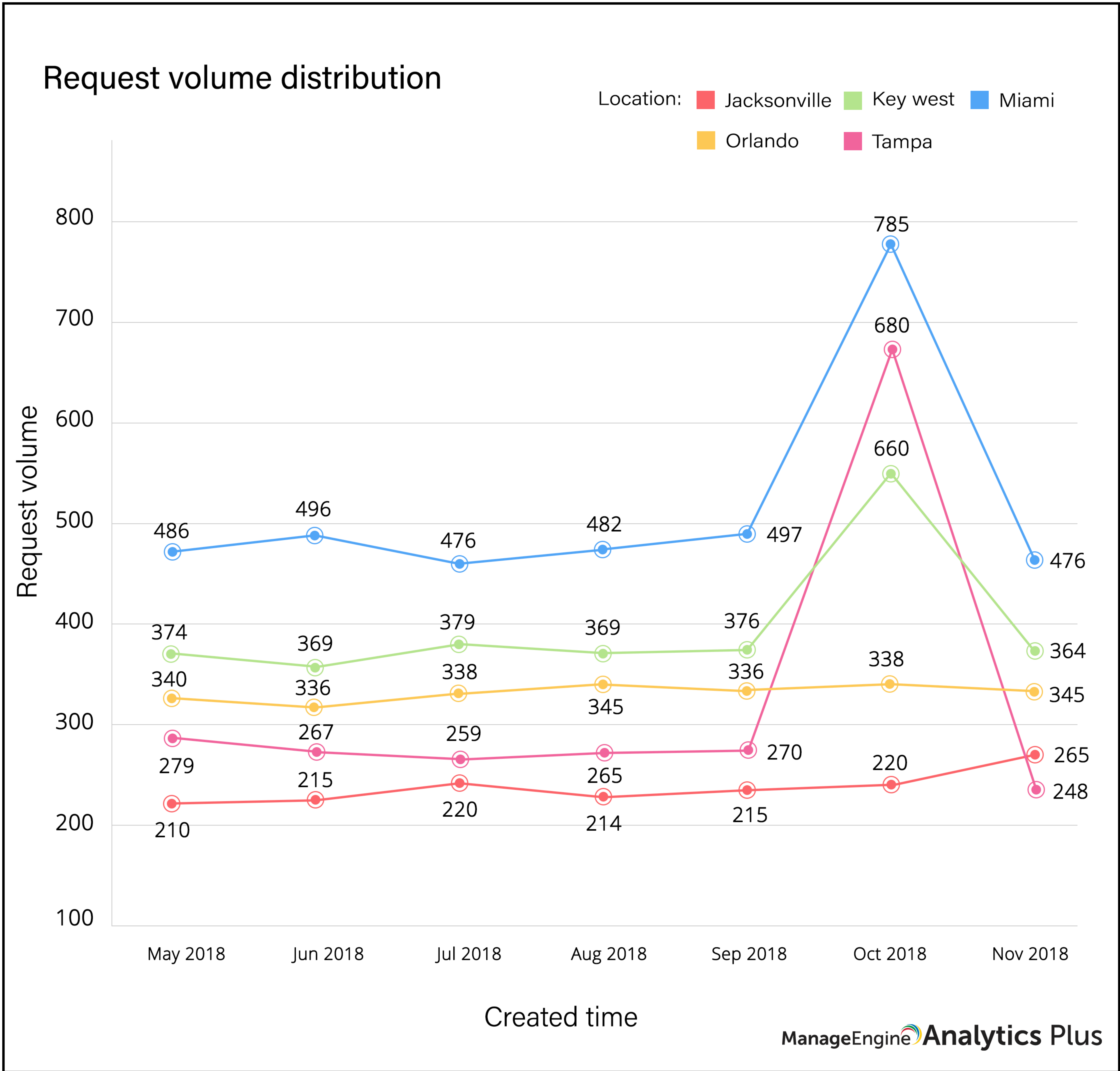
The information displayed with these widgets will ensure that the number of escalated requests, requests approaching SLA breach, and the percentage of requests within SLA are highlighted and displayed at the top of the SLA compliance dashboard.

Make sure you analyze your dashboard thoroughly and create KPI widgets only for the most vital metrics; otherwise you run the risk of cluttering up your dashboard with too many metrics.

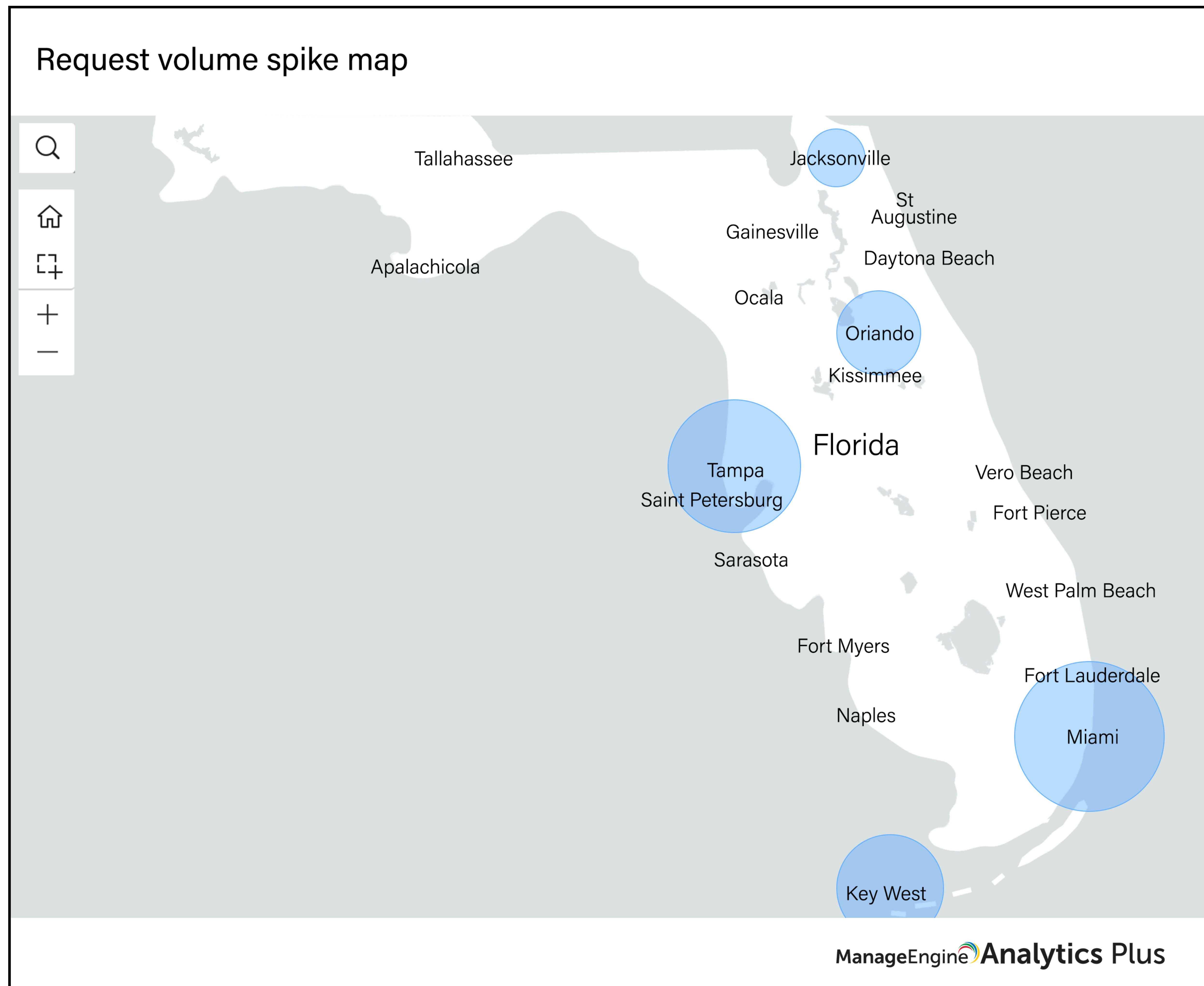
6. Identifying geographical patterns

When you analyze data, it's often easy to overlook potential geographical patterns. Figuring out how geography affects your metrics can be difficult when you use generic chart types like bar charts or line charts.

You can overlay your metrics on maps to gain insight using analytics solutions like Analytics Plus that support geographical map charts. Here's a line chart that represents the volume of requests that came from different office locations of an organization.



The request volume has spiked last month in the Miami, the Key West, and the Tampa offices. Let's overlay the data of the spike in volume on a map of Florida.



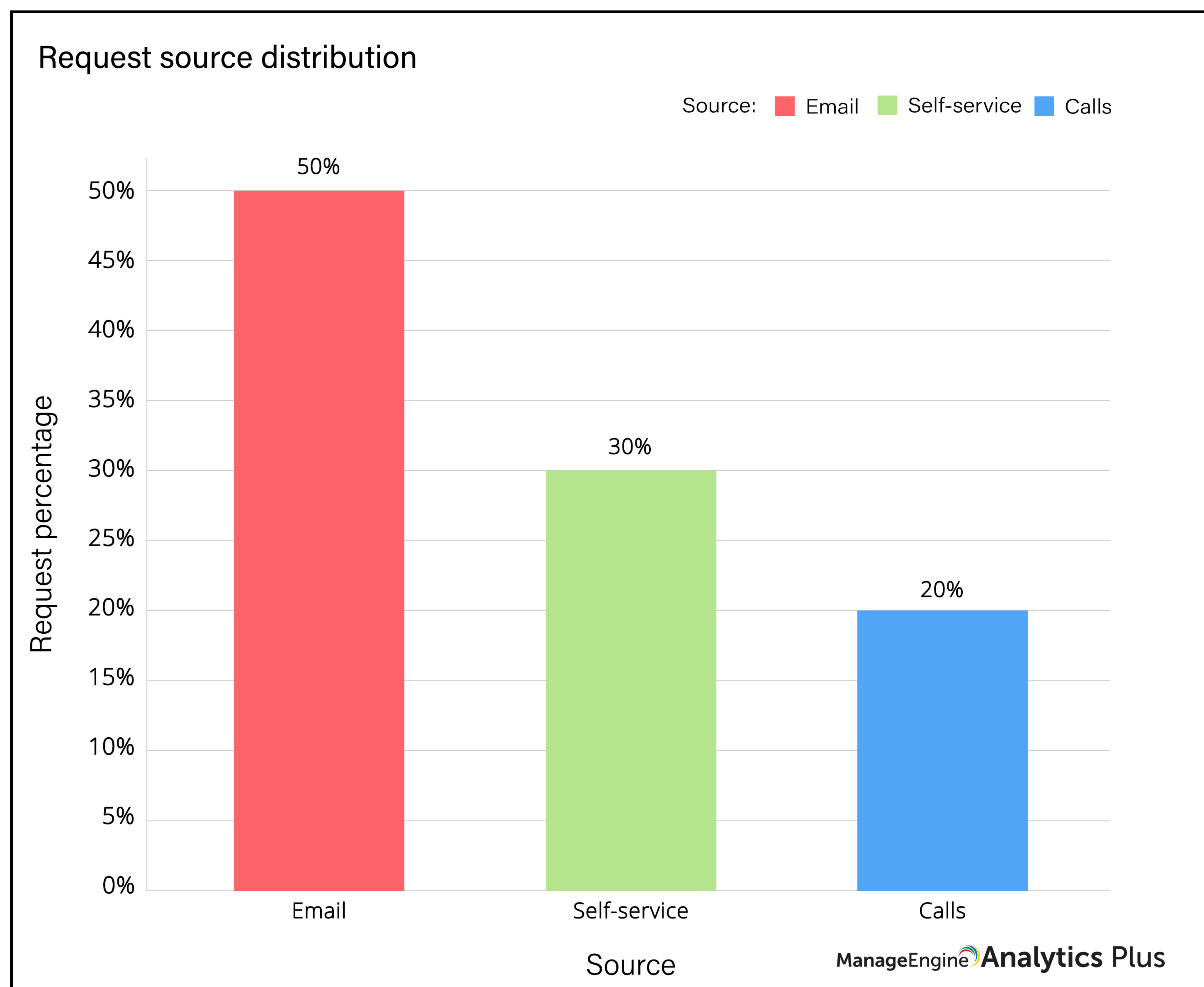
You can see that the spike in request volume has happened in the offices that are in the hurricane-prone region in Florida. You can now dig deeper and find out if there had been a hurricane, and that would give you the reason for this localized spike in request volume.

7. Choosing the right visualization

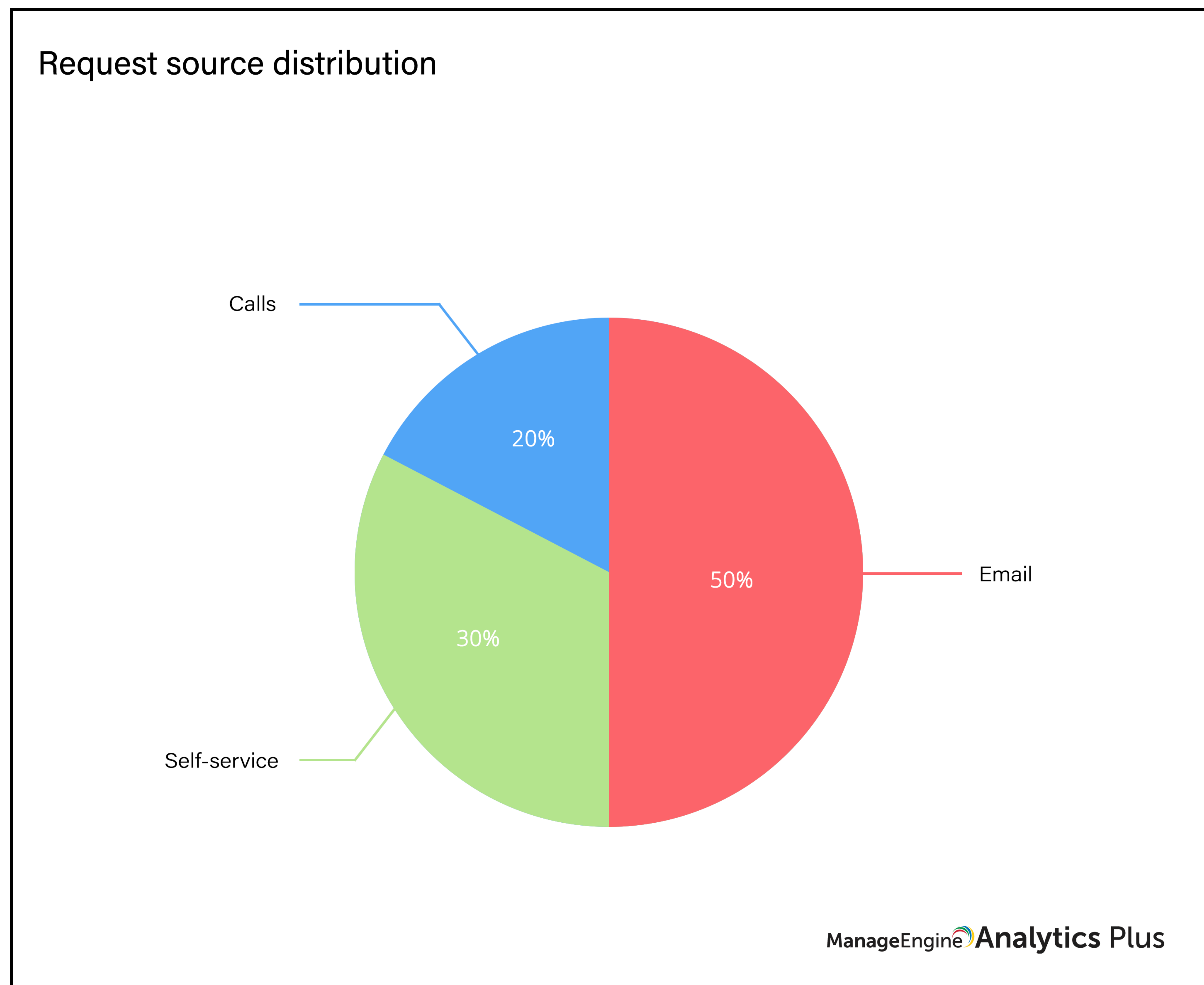
As you begin creating reports for your metrics, you'll realize that most metrics can be represented by more than one visual, however, most metrics will have one visual that represents it best. For example, let's use a request source report that shows the methods in which requests are raised. Let's say it has the following data:

- 50% of requests are raised through emails.
- 30% of requests are raised through self-service.
- 20% of requests are raised through phone calls.

You could represent this data using a bar chart or pie chart that visually distinguishes source type.



Now take a look at the same report with a pie chart visual.



These two charts represent the same data. However, with the pie chart you can see how much of the pie is occupied by each source. This creates a bigger impact for your viewers as they can gain insight by visually analyzing the data. Instead of having to recreate reports with different visuals, you can simply change the visualization in reports with a few clicks. Try out a few different visualizations to find the right one for your metric.

Conclusion

The instances in this e-book demonstrate how analytics tools will return the investment you made to set them up, integrate them, and maintain them many times over.

Analytics Plus is an IT analytics solution that leverages ManageEngine's IT expertise to give a comprehensive set of out-of-the-box reports and dashboards for your IT data sources.

Check us out at <https://www.manageengine.com/analytics-plus/>