

5 TIPS

TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR HELP DESK SURVEYS

Survey results contain valuable feedback that can unearth solutions to hidden problems in your service desk. Discover tricks, tips, and hacks to make the most of your survey data.

Introduction

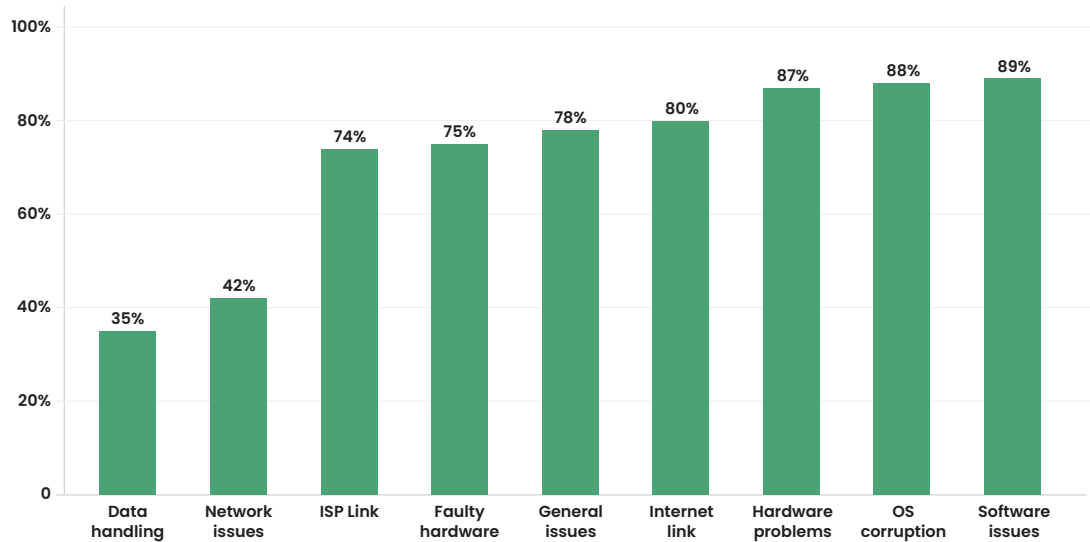
Putting together a survey and gathering user feedback is just the first step. Gathering actionable information from the survey results, and feeding those insights back into the help desk completes the survey process. A cautionary note about surveys is that not all users who approach your help desk with requests will take up the survey, and not all unhappy users voice out their concerns. [Contact Center Satisfaction Report 2020^{\[1\]}](#) states that only 36% of end users will provide feedback in customer satisfaction surveys, regardless of whether services were good or bad. This makes it critical to carefully analyze every piece of information that you do get through surveys, and use it to make improvements and deliver better services. In this e-book, we've put together five tips to help you get the most out of your survey results.

Analyze qualitative and quantitative data separately

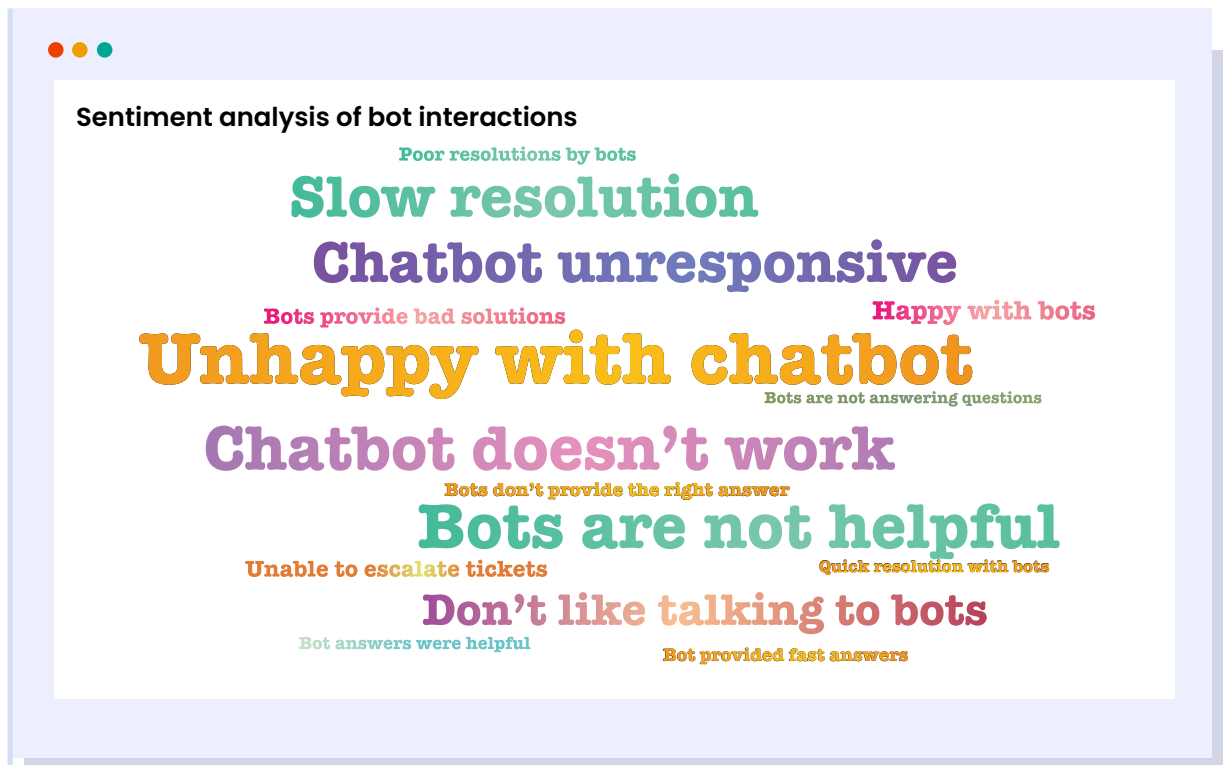
Surveys typically carry both open-ended and closed questions. So, it would be prudent to analyze the results from these questions separately. Open-ended questions, such as "What can we do better to improve our services?" and "Describe your experience in interacting with our bots," can have varying answers from different end users. Finding a common theme amongst these answers can help you reach consensus and better understand user sentiments. Closed questions, like when users are asked to rate the service experience on a scale of one to ten, can be analyzed statistically to identify trends, frequencies, and changes. Here are a couple of examples.

The report below shows the average satisfaction score of users against different categories of tickets. While some categories have a satisfaction score of above 70%, categories such as network issues and data handling have a lower satisfaction score, indicating that these are areas of the help desk that need to be improved. This is an example of quantitative survey analysis.

Avg. satisfaction scores across categories



Here's another report that shows the results from an open-ended question where users were asked how they felt about interacting with bots. While some users seem to like having bots to help with their requests, a majority of users expressed displeasure, indicating that it could either be too early for bots or that users need additional training for interacting with bots.



This report can be further drilled down into to find out if there are any commonalities such as ticket categories or complexities that contribute to end users' dissatisfaction with bots.

Split survey data by demographics to understand the audience better

When analyzing survey data, it's important to consider the influence of demographics in survey results. For instance, consider the feedback of end users from different core functions such as DevOps, support, sales, or marketing. Development or core product teams might expect technicians to be more highly skilled than end users from other streams such as sales, marketing, administration, or HR. Since DevOps and core product teams are technically skilled themselves and can solve most of their own issues related to hardware, software, or networks, then any tickets that come in from these groups of end users are likely to be complex and might require the expertise of skilled service desk technicians. So unless technicians assigned these tickets match these expectations, they're likely to be awarded lower satisfaction scores.

The pivot table below illustrates this situation better. Visibly, there's a drastic difference in the satisfaction score of the general audience and the satisfaction score of technically-skilled end user groups for various technicians. However, as expected, technically-skilled end users set the bar for technicians' ticket-resolving skills higher than their peers in other departments.



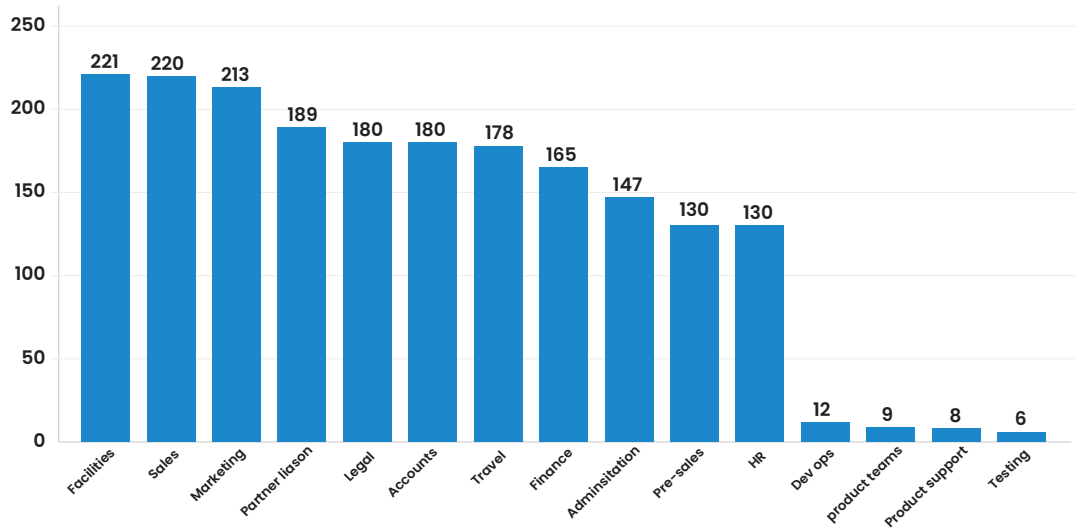
Technician satisfaction scorecard

Technician	General users		Technically skilled users	
	Surveys responded	Avg. satisfaction score	Surveys responded	Avg. satisfaction score
Brad Gessup	14	80.3%	-	-
Bruce Waters	21	71.9%	2	40.5%
Ed Holmes	24	80.1%	-	-
Frederica Watson	23	79.2%	-	-
Heather Storm	22	78.6%	-	-
Howard Stern	31	77.9%	1	40.0%
Joe Williams	29	82.3%	-	-
John Roberts	25	84.1%	-	-
Lynn Hendricks	26	78.9%	2	35.0%
Robert Whitman	28	79.6%	-	-

Interestingly, the number of surveys responded by these users is just a fraction of those responded by other teams, hinting that skilled end users may have raised fewer tickets than others. This information can be quickly cross-verified by pulling up a report to see the number of tickets raised by different end user groups.



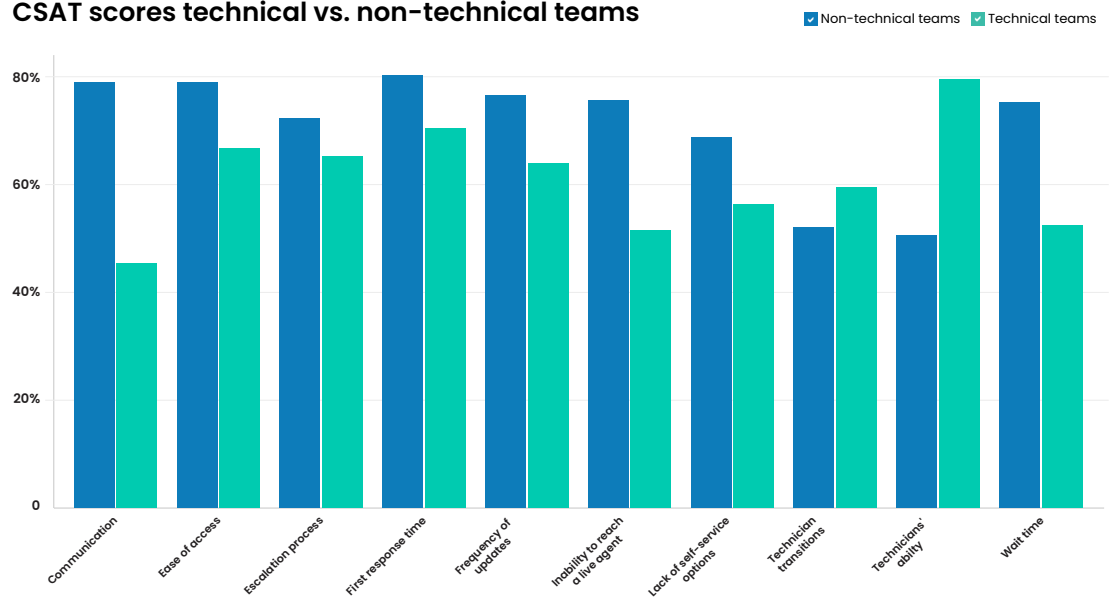
Tickets raised by departments



The graph confirms that skilled end users from DevOps, core product, support, and testing teams raise fewer tickets as compared to end users from other department. Now, let's explore the specific areas of dissatisfaction for these different end user groups.



CSAT scores technical vs. non-technical teams



Analyzing the report above confirms the hypothesis that highly-skilled end users are dissatisfied with technicians' skills and frequent technician transfers (an indirect consequence of poor technician skills), as illustrated by the lower satisfaction scores marked in these areas. Only a few other end users rate technicians' skills as the reason for dissatisfaction; they seem to have other concerns such as communication, not getting frequent updates, wait times, and inability to reach a live agent.

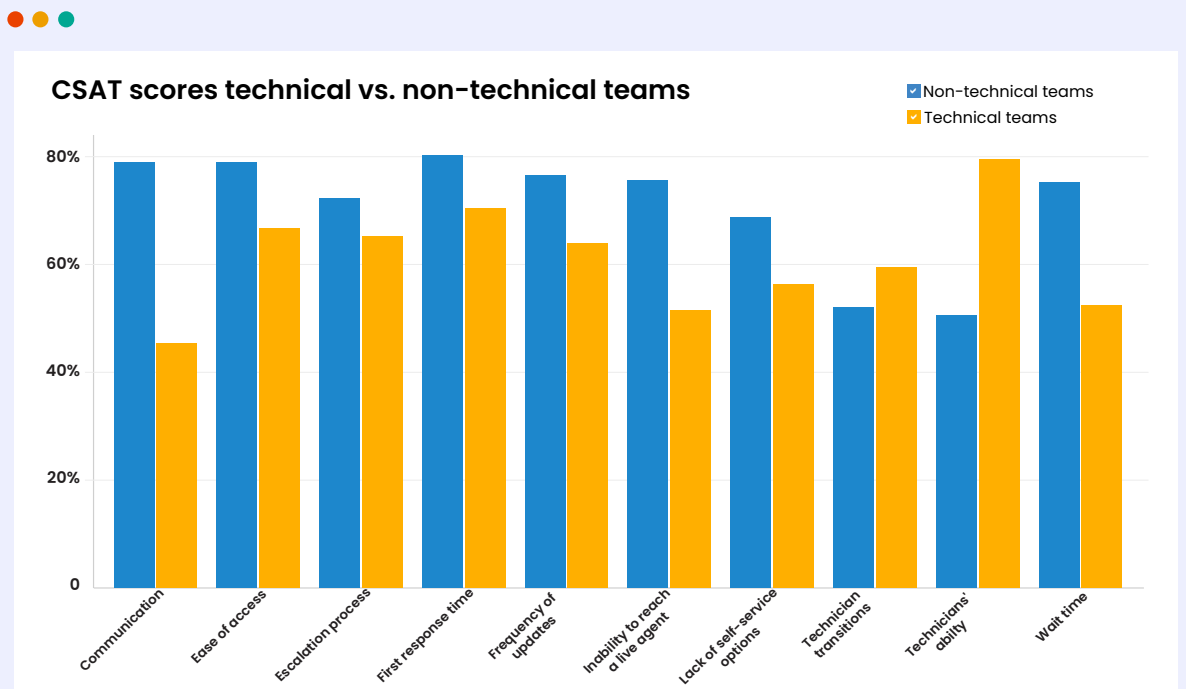
For this use case, the IT manager can choose to investigate further and find out gaps in technicians' skills, or consider the responses from skilled users as outliers. This decision largely depends on the nature of the business, type of organization, and criticality of issues, among other factors.

Prioritize indicators that impact business objectives

Surveys might throw a lot of data at you. Not all of that data will be critical to your service desk or to the business. So, it's important to filter out the wheat from the chaff, and figure out which data will have a lasting impact on business outcomes. Otherwise, you might end up chasing the wrong data.

To make the most of your survey results, focus on the bigger picture. Pick feedback on areas that have a direct relation to end users' productivity, revenue-per-person, and overall business revenue. Use survey data to identify areas that have the highest impact on productivity and revenue. Don't just stop there. Dig deeper and get to the bottom of what's impacting end users' happiness. Always look for consensus in numbers. Don't get caught on any one comment or a single metric.

Some of the critical areas that the help desk can focus on are customer satisfaction scores for service quality, resolution time, downtime instances, duration of downtime, and bot interactions. In this e-book, we'll focus on ticket transitions. The previous tip's report illustrated that technician transitions is one of the areas of end user dissatisfaction with a score of less than 60%.

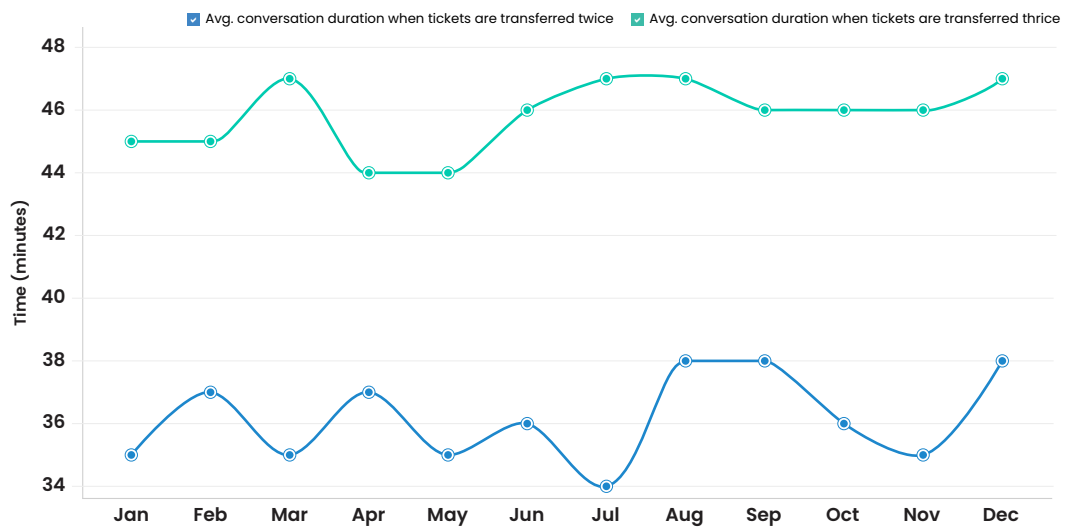


A result of frequent technician transitions is end users having to explain the history of their tickets to the new technician each time their ticket is reassigned. This can drive end users to frustration and impact their productivity. Remember, the longer the time that end users have to spend explaining their issues to technicians, the longer end users go without actively contributing to the organization. This can cause a decline in the end users' output and eventually the revenue-per-employee.

The graphs below depict the time users spend communicating with technicians when tickets are reassigned or transferred. The reports compare the average time spent in explaining issues to technicians when tickets are moved twice and thrice.



Avg. conversation duration when tickets are transferred twice vs thrice



Evidently, an increase in the number of transitions results in an increase in time end users spend on tickets, resulting in greater wastage of end users' time. While this report quantifies the time wasted, there's no way to quantify the psychological or emotional impact of these ticket transitions on the end users that lead to frustration and low productivity. So, it's important that help desk managers take steps to minimize the number of transitions.

Documented reasons for frequent ticket transitions include:

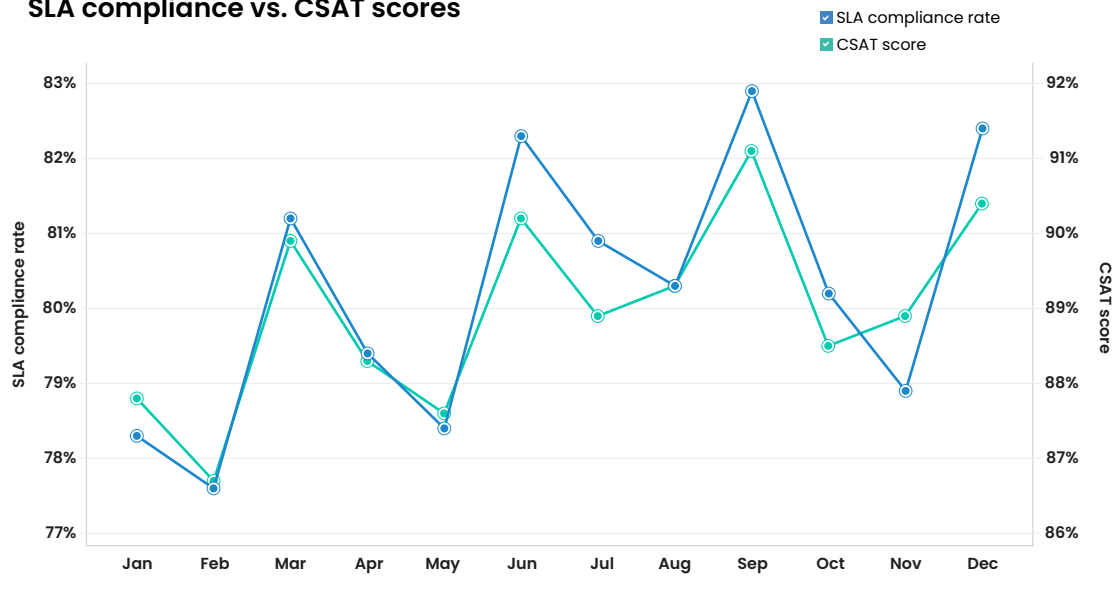
- Lack of problem-solving skills among technicians.
- Poor ticket assignment practices such as using round-robin methods instead of a skill-based ticket assignment technique.
- Process-level flaws.
- Lack of resources/inventory to resolve tickets.
- Unavailability of third-party vendors to assist complex tickets.

Identify and differentiate causation and correlation in survey data

Correlation doesn't really mean causation. Correlation refers to a significant relationship between two variables without an indication as to whether either variable is responsible for the other's changes over time. Causation, on the other hand, indicates that the changes in one variable are responsible for the changes in the other. For example, there's a causal link from an increase in annual rain fall that results in an increase to the water table level; however, an increase in annual rainfall only has a correlation with the increase in the number of people migrating to that area.

Several similar examples can be found in the help desk context. A steady increase in SLA compliance rates can cause an increase in customer satisfaction scores. Likewise, a decrease in backlogs or ticket escalation can also increase customer satisfaction scores, indicating a causative relationship. However, providing multi-channel or multi-lingual support, and providing daily ticket status updates may not directly improve customer satisfaction. There may exist only a correlation among these factors and customer satisfaction scores.

SLA compliance vs. CSAT scores



Understanding such nuances can help bring clarity into service desk management and help IT leaders interpret survey results accurately. This empowers them to take corrective measures or plan future strategy to deliver the best results.

Continuously track incremental improvements

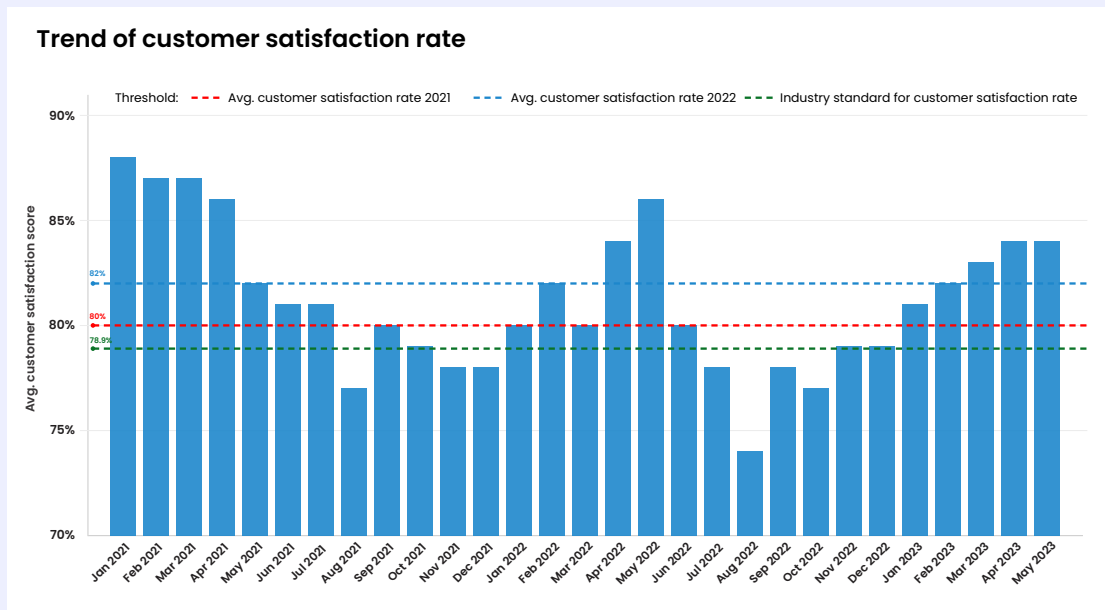
Conducting user surveys isn't a one-time activity. It's a cyclic process that starts with identifying what makes your end users happy or unhappy, and goes on to identifying the root cause of unhappiness, and putting this information back into the help desk to improve end users' happiness.

- Identify what makes end users happy/unhappy
- Isolate incidents that cause unhappiness
- Understand the underlying root causes
- Hypothesize changes to remedy the problems
- Implement changes to your process

Once you implement a set of changes that are based on analysis of end users' feedback, it's critical to go back and view how each change has impacted customer satisfaction scores. Not only does this build trust amongst end users that their concerns are being heard, it also ensures each newly-implemented change has contributed to visible improvement in customer satisfaction levels.

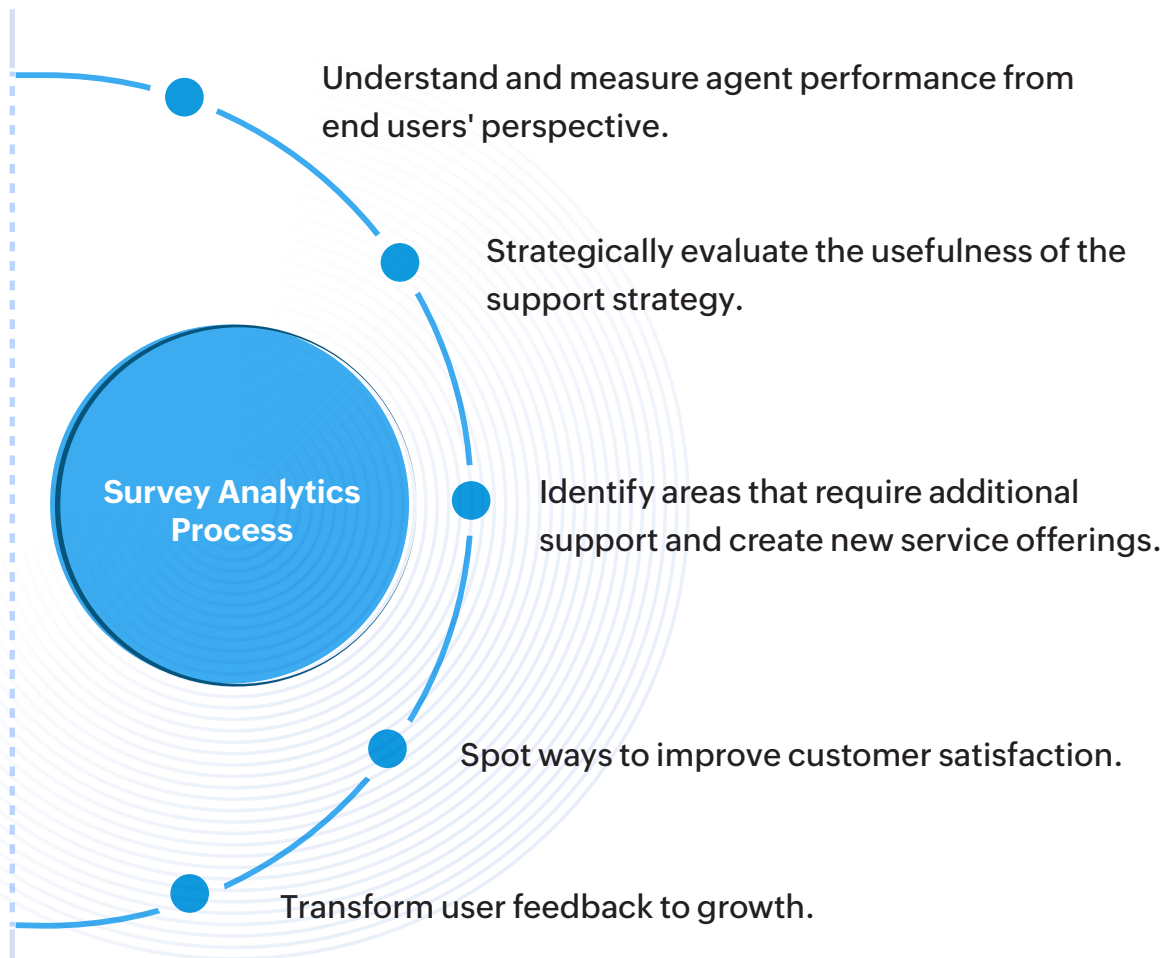
Do this process yearly. If possible, perform this process twice a year or more. As an added benefit, this also helps you set internal benchmarks and compare your performance against the past, as well as compare your performance against industry standards.

The report below illustrates how customer satisfaction scores have gradually improved in the last two and a half years. The satisfaction scores have been greater than industry standards even in the past, but there's also a continuous improvement in the satisfaction scores.



Conclusion

IT departments always perform a survey towards the end of each ticket. However, without analyzing the data from these surveys, there would be no way to understand how end users perceive your services. User surveys provide a window of opportunity for IT leaders to:



We hope this e-book helped you with useful tips on making better use of your survey results. For more interesting ideas on how to leverage analytics to understand IT services and support better, check out our [other resources](#).

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. Available on-premises and on 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, Service Now, 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.

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

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280K
customers
across the world

90+
products
and free tools

190+
countries
served

20+
years of IT
management experience

Reference

1. <https://cfigroup.com/wp-content/uploads/CFI-contact-center-satisfaction-2020.pdf>

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