

# Resolve your help desk's biggest challenges with analytics



ManageEngine  Analytics Plus

## Introduction

“The Wi-Fi is down!”

“The printer isn’t working!”

“I deleted an important file. Can you get it back?”

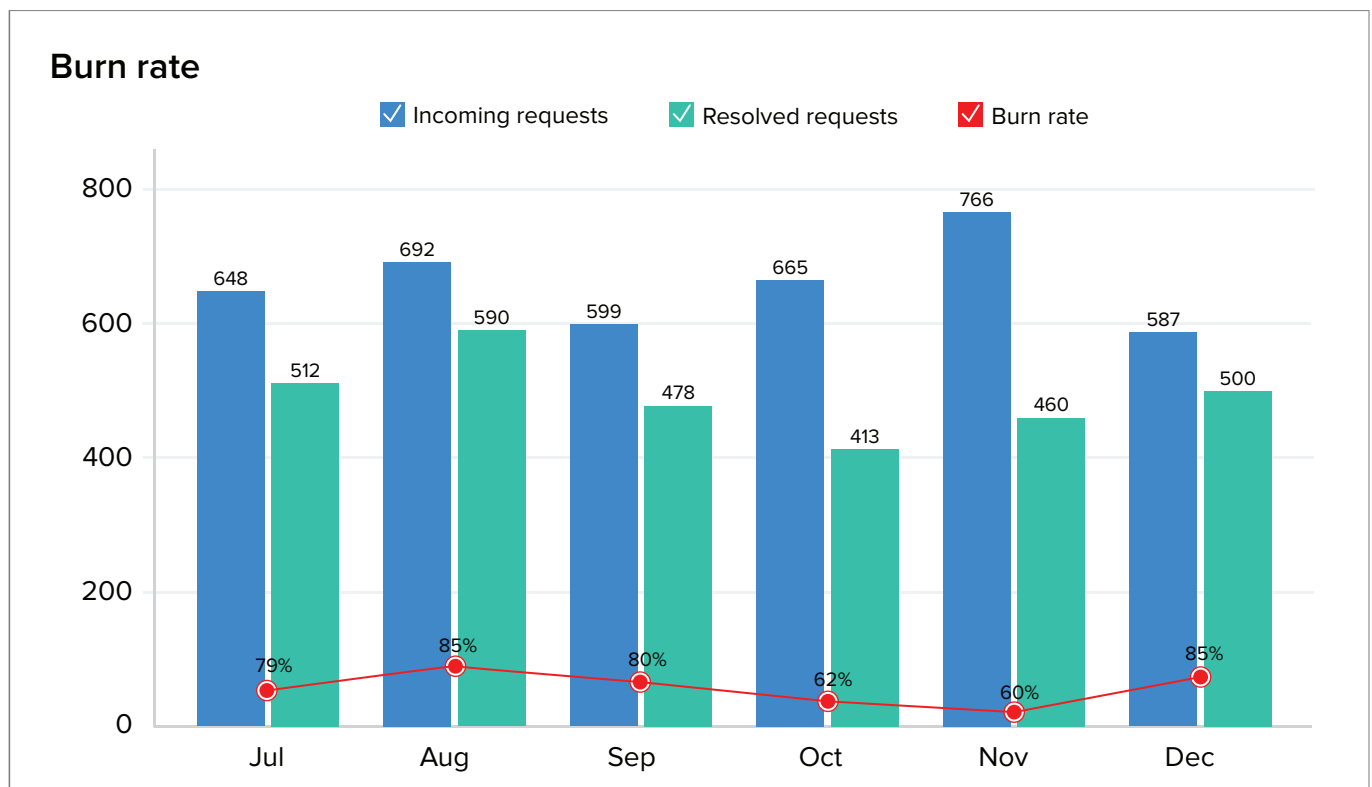
Your IT help desk is the go-to destination for technical problems like these faced by your end users. But the IT help desk itself has challenges of its own. In this e-book, we’ll discuss some of the biggest challenges faced by IT help desks, and how analytics can help you resolve them effectively.

## Not having sufficient staff

IT help desks are primarily regarded as cost centers since they don’t generate direct revenue for the organization. Add budget restrictions and low employee turnover to the mix, and the result is a help desk that doesn’t have enough manpower to handle incoming requests. For a help desk to function efficiently and provide uninterrupted services, it must be sufficiently staffed around the clock, including holidays.

Although there’s no industry-wide standard for determining the right number of staff for a help desk, the following report can help determine if you have sufficient hands on deck:

**Request Burn Rate** shows you the percentage of requests resolved compared to the total incoming requests in a given month. A burn rate of 80 percent or above indicates that your help desk is able to resolve incoming requests within the same month. Anything below 80 percent is an indicator that your help desk needs more hands.

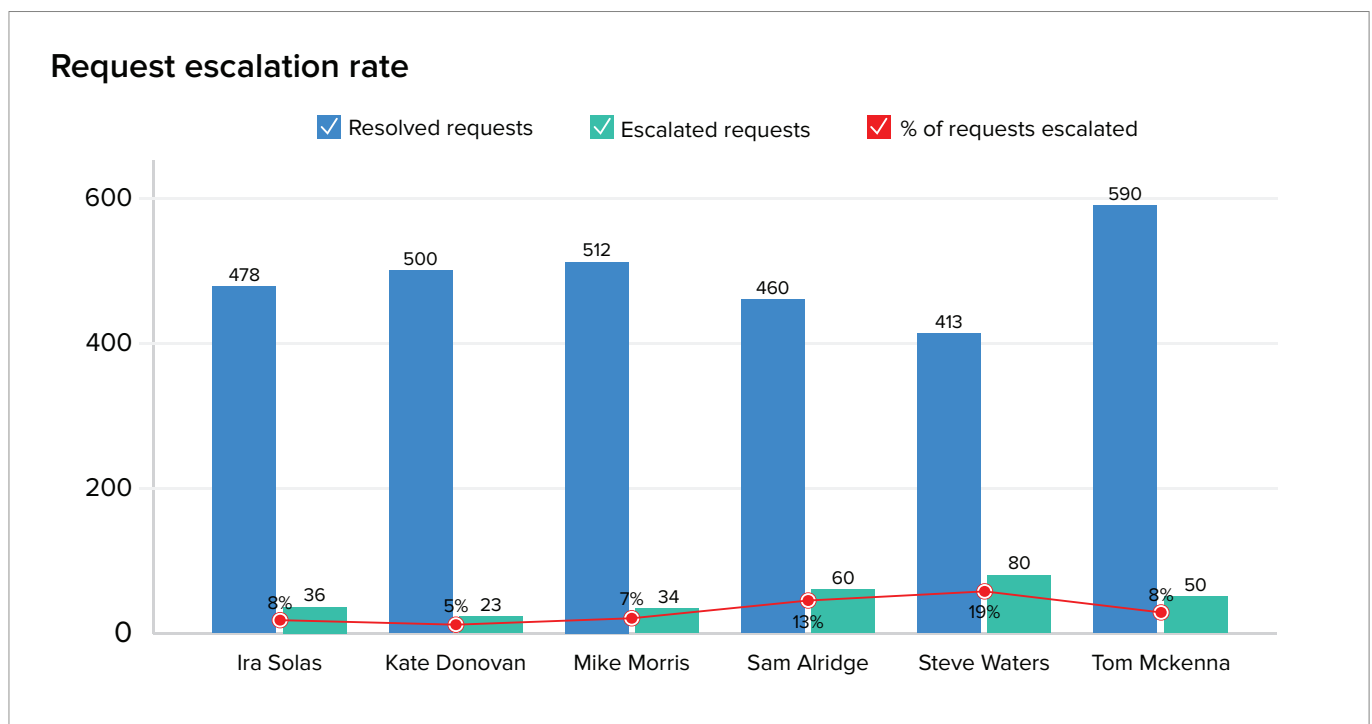


The report above is a useful measure for determining help desk needs as it encompasses several key performance indicators—incoming requests volume, resolved requests volume, request backlogs, and the ratio between resolved and incoming requests—traditionally used to gauge help desk staff requirements.

## Not having skilled technicians

Your technicians are your help desk's biggest assets. Technically sound and highly skilled technicians make good problem solvers and improve customer satisfaction by making technology a little less frustrating for end users. Poorly skilled technicians often complicate problems, leading to longer resolution time, request reopens, and escalations.

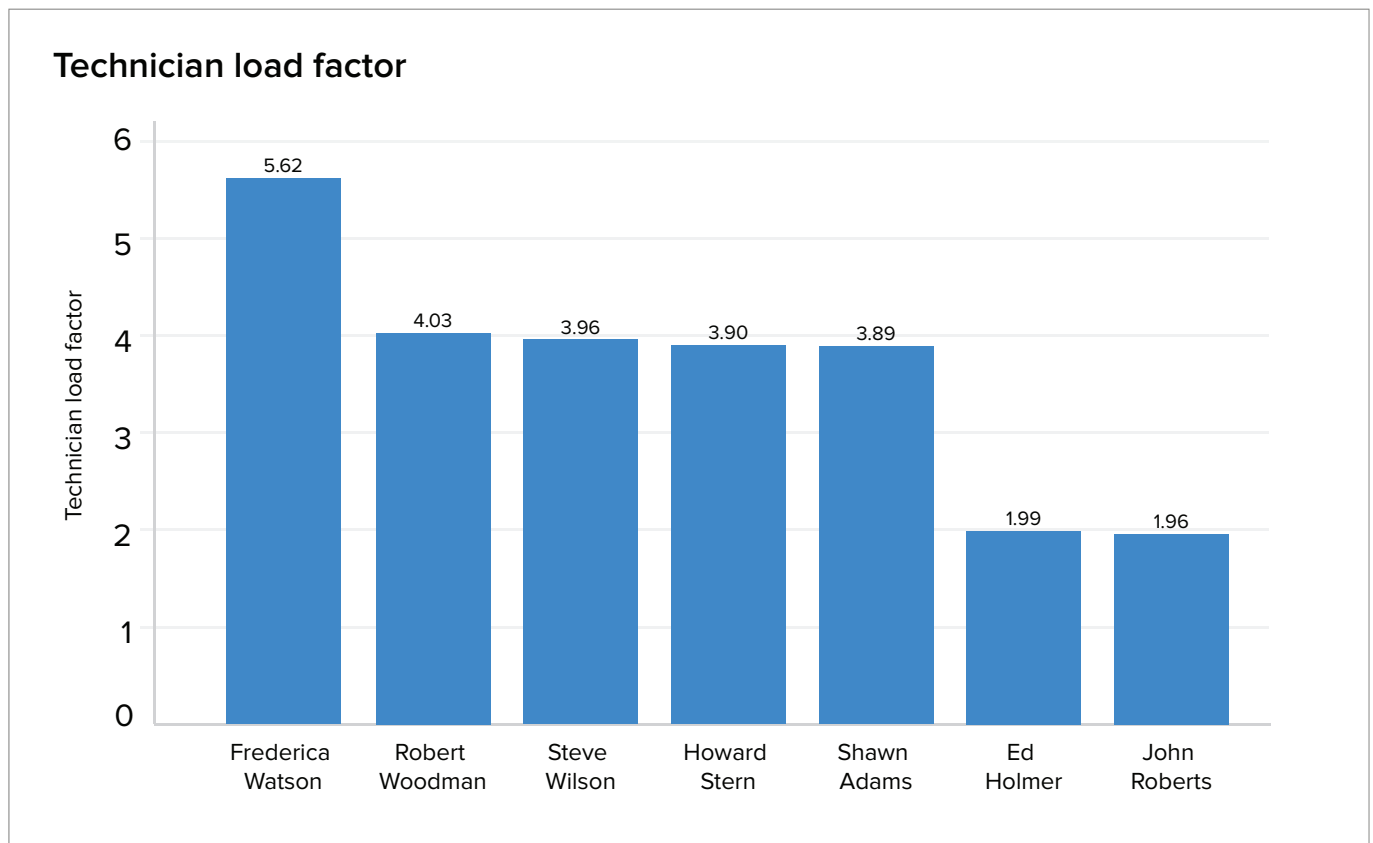
To know if your help desk is experiencing a problem of poorly skilled technicians, look into technicians with a higher-than-average rate of **request escalations**.



If your service technicians are unable to resolve requests within SLAs, or if end users are unhappy with the solution provided by the technician, requests are escalated to second-level and third-level support technicians. These are requests that require further support resource or skills, demonstrating why escalation rate is a good indicator of technician efficiency. As a guideline, you can set an escalation rate of 10 percent or above as an indicator of poor technician skill set.

Service desk agents are often expected to be the jack of all trades in resolving requests, regardless of their skill set. When this happens, you might find your agents cherry-picking requests that suit their skill set, leaving the more complex ones for senior technicians that could have otherwise been handled by a well-trained junior technician. This creates an

imbalance in **technician workload**, leaving a few technicians handling a bulk of the total workload.



The **Technician load factor** report shown above helps you catch issues like these in your help desk early on. As the next step, you can provide on-the-job training and include additional documentation or solutions to help bridge the skill gap among your technicians.

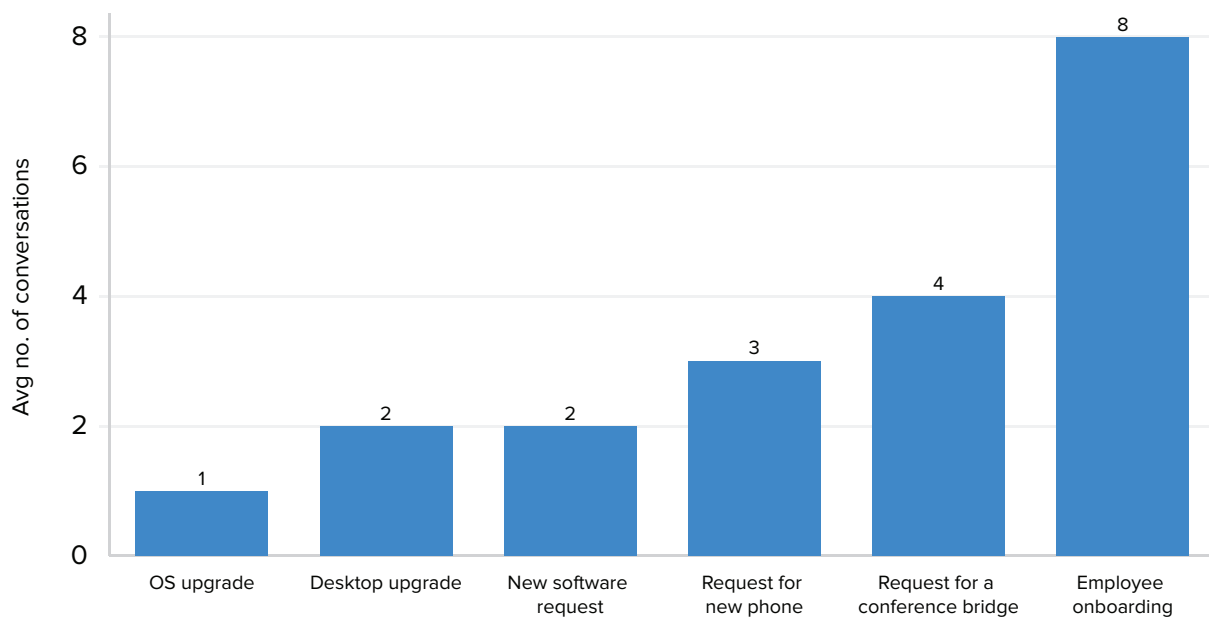
## Lack of proper communication between end users and technicians

Imagine ordering dinner on Seamless or Uber Eats. You're told it will take about 40 minutes to be delivered. After an hour, you're probably anxious, and after an hour and a half, you're definitely frustrated. This is no different than logging a request with your service desk and not getting a quick response or acknowledgement. While it's unfortunate that you can't give end users real-time updates on service requests like a food delivery app can, regular status updates on requests can make your service desk more friendly to end users and help improve customer satisfaction.

Remember, the longer the end user waits for a response from the help desk, the more likely they are to question whether their request has been picked up, and the more likely they are to become anxious and escalate the request.

The report below shows the **average number of conversations** for the various request categories.

### Average number of conversations

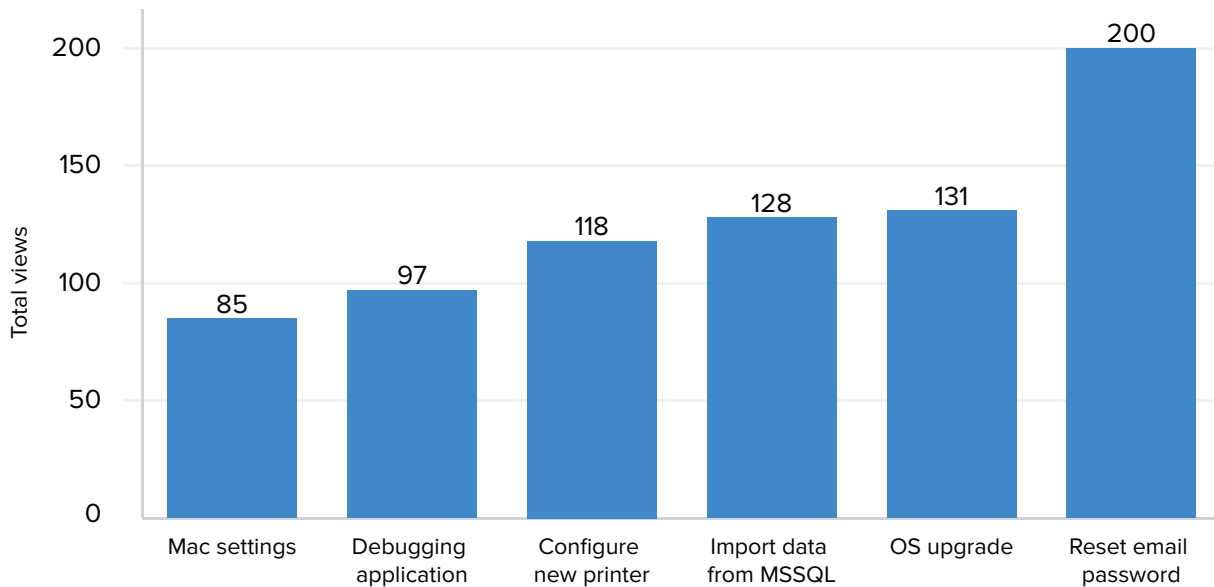


Encourage your technicians to reach out to customers. Update your help desk portal with likely resolution dates for requests. Even if you're unable to respond with a time frame of when the request is likely to be resolved, keep in touch with the customer.

Improving communication between end users and technicians is a long journey. In the meantime, encourage end users to resolve requests on their own using your help desk's self-help manuals, solution guides, and knowledge base articles. Look for popular solutions frequently used by end users to resolve requests, and create more articles and guides around that subject.

Here's a sample report to help you get started on top solutions based on their usefulness.

### Top solutions by usefulness



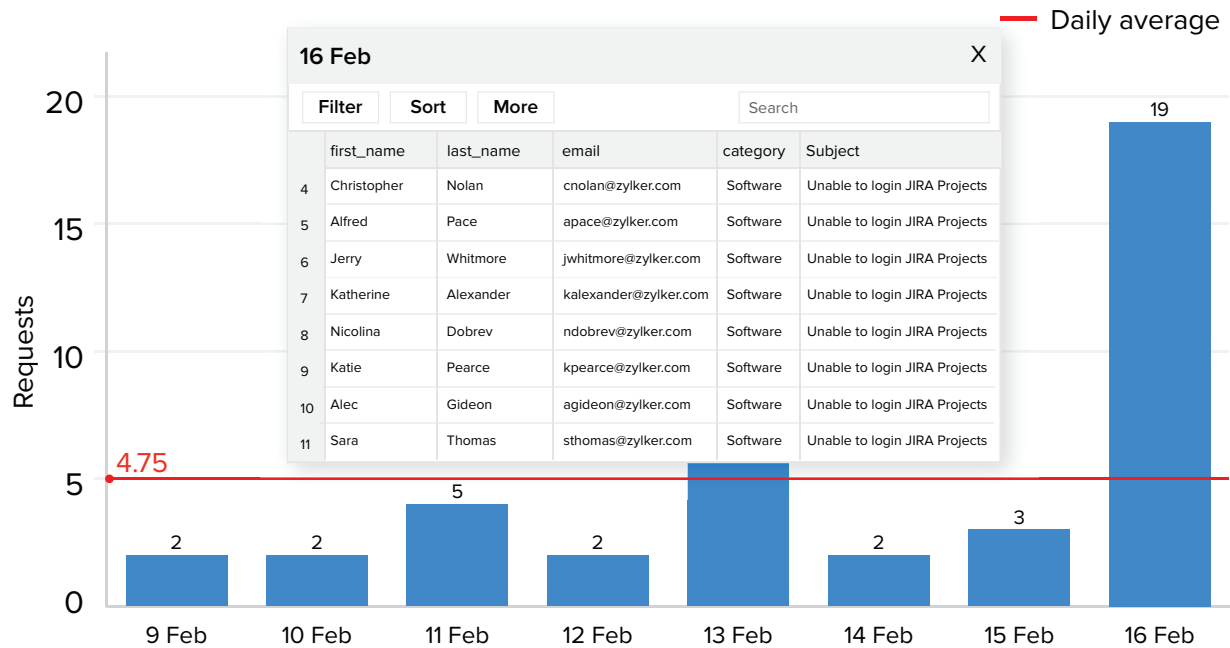
## Lack of coordination between service teams

A lack of coordination between service teams (like the network operations center and IT service management) within the IT department creates duplicates of the same issue, decreases productivity, complicates processes, and delays the completion of tasks. IT teams must break free from silos and operate as strategic partners to resolve issues faster and deliver exceptional customer experiences.

If you have unified IT analytics, you can check for outages in your monitoring software before distributing incidents to different technicians. The following example explains clearly how a unified analytics strategy that combines data from all aspects of IT can be more effectively put to use in resolving user issues.

Imagine being flooded with requests from users unable to log in to their projects application. Instead of rushing to distribute all incoming requests among technicians, a better approach is to check if your network monitoring applications have thrown alarms related to your project management software. This will reveal crucial information about your project management portal's availability and responsiveness that can help resolve user requests faster, and also save your technicians' time.

## Daily incoming requests



While the report above indicates the increase in incidents is because of unavailability of the project management portal, the alarm report below (built using data from a monitoring application) points out that the project management portal is slow to respond. This is known to render applications sluggish and unavailable to end users.

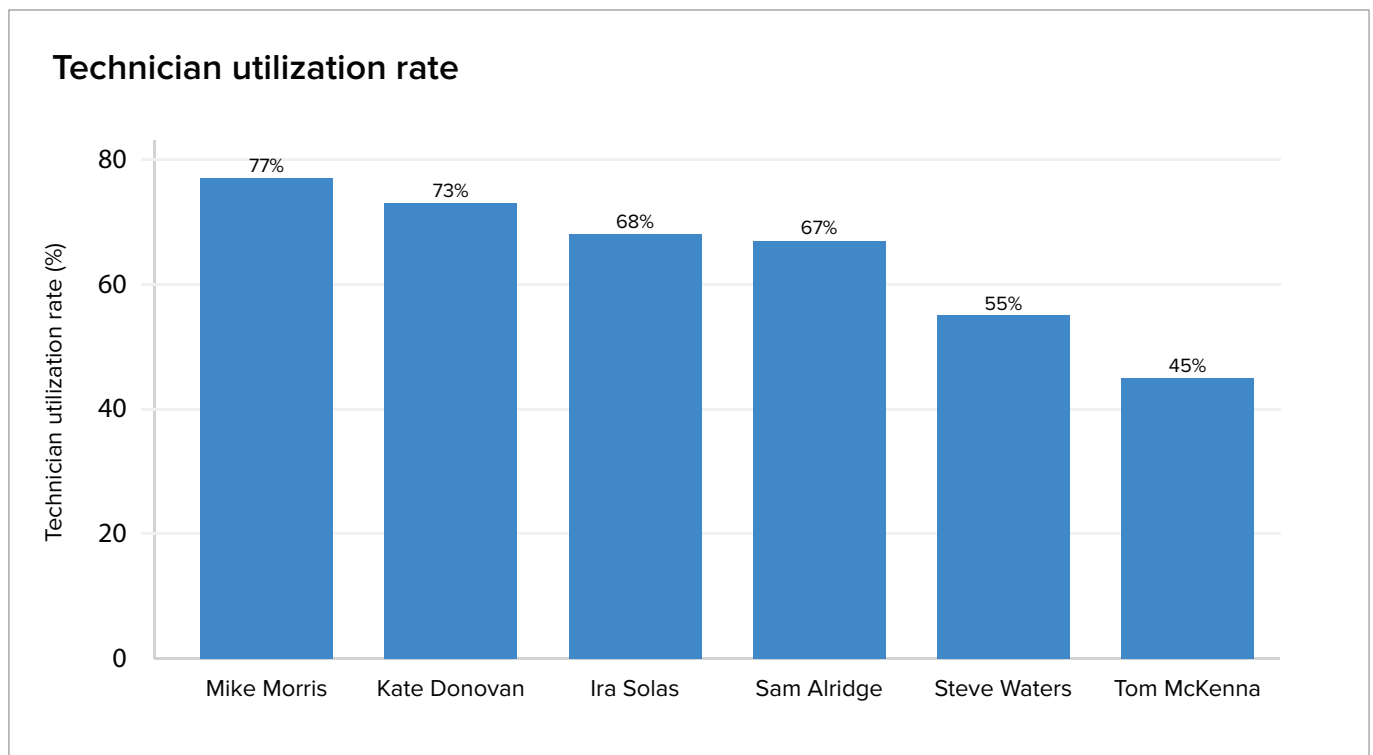
## Application alarms

	Resouce ID	Monitor Name	Message	Attribute	Average Value
1	10025772	192.21.134.154	JIRA is not responding	Response time	675 ms
2					876 ms
3			JIRA url is not responding	Response time	675 ms
4					876 ms
5	10025772	IF-app-centons	Unreachable host. JIRA Server	Response time	675 ms
6					876 ms
7					576 ms
8	10025772	172.21.153.168	JIRA url is not accessible	Response time	576 ms
9					657 ms
10		it360-m4600-1.csez.		Response time	576 ms

Such seamless data exchange between teams within a department brings clarity into everyday operations, boosts productivity, and helps you approach incident management strategically.

## High technician turnover

Service desks are obsessed with maintaining SLAs; as a result, they may overwork technicians in their drive to close more tickets. This can be tracked as a metric, the **technician utilization rate**, which is the ratio of the number of hours actively spent in resolving requests to the total number of working hours. However, extremely high technician utilization rates increase technician turnover as technicians are pushed too hard, causing burnout.



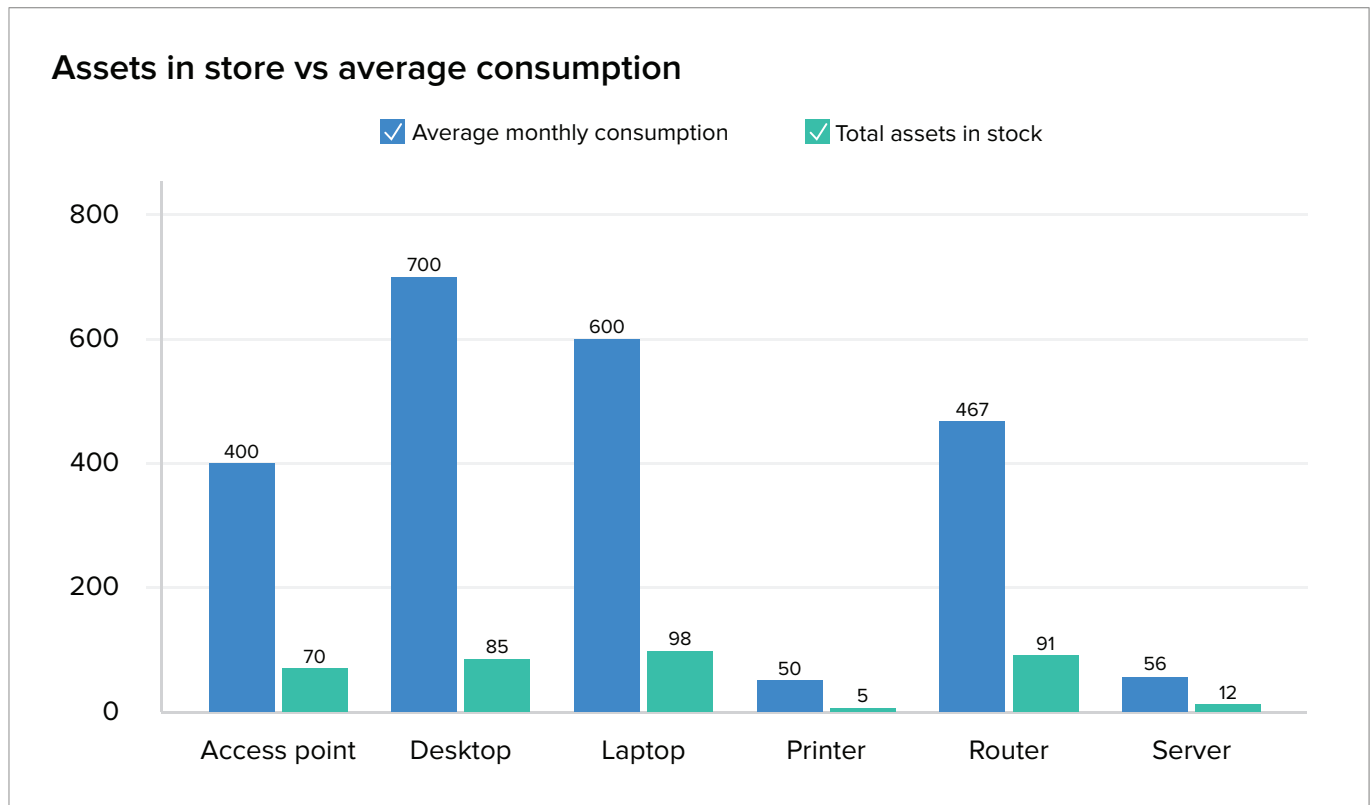
Set a cap for technician utilization rate at 70 percent; anything beyond that and you're likely to experience high technician turnover. The solution here is to focus on realistic metrics, recognize technicians for their achievements, and incentivize them to provide quality solutions to end users.

## Having too many assets in stock

The biggest challenge for IT departments is to optimize asset inventory. Having enough IT assets in your inventory is essential, but too many can be a sign of inefficiency, and too few could leave you unable to fulfill user requests. You need to strike the right balance. To



know if you are appropriately stocked, compare your **average monthly consumption** with your inventory.



If the assets in stock are anywhere between 20-30 percent of your average monthly asset consumption, you're in the green. Anything more means you have too many assets in your inventory. These stock assets are for replacing broken, lost, or malfunctioning assets in your organization; if you have too many of them in stock, they reduce available cash flow to purchase new assets that can address shifting user demands and changing technology trends.

## Conclusion

No help desk is without its set of challenges. However, advanced IT analytics can offer visibility into your help desk problems, and provide insights to resolve them. This can help you transition from a problem-laden help desk constantly fire-fighting to a high-performance help desk capable of achieving peak IT performance.

[Click here](#) to discover more about how advanced IT analytics can help you troubleshoot, optimize, and streamline your help desk operations.