

HEALTHCARE IT LEADERS LOOK TO SOLVE LONG-STANDING IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Simply seeing a hurdle is typically easier than clearing it. Consider the following: Healthcare IT professionals had no trouble identifying obstacles, as 44% of the more than 100 respondents who participated in a HIMSS Media survey cited lack of resources to manage help desk tickets as one of the top challenges for IT service management (ITSM) operations, 25% poor internal communication, and 34% the inability to view resources across tickets and projects. Relatively few survey respondents, however, recognized solutions to these problems.

“Unless ITSM groups fundamentally change, they’re not going to have the resources available to them to actually deliver service in a fashion that drives satisfaction and results,” said Andrew Graf, Chief Product Strategist at TeamDynamix. “Any ITSM department that is experiencing pain needs to first identify what the source of the pain is and then pick the right processes and tools to address these challenges. Sometimes the source is not obvious.”

The problem is that many healthcare IT professionals don’t want to go beyond the status quo. For example, just 14% identified a good online self-service portal as a means to successfully address these problems, despite the fact that a robust self-service portal could address the primary challenge outlined: *a lack of resources to answer the volume of help desk tickets*. “ITSM departments have been doing things the same way for a long time. They are used to having IT professionals respond to each request and to providing a 1:1 answer over the phone or via email,” Graf said.

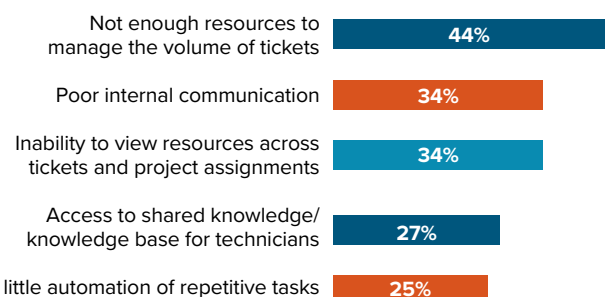


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Moving to a self-service portal, however, could help to reduce the number of tickets flowing into ITSM departments, which could ease the pressure on organizations that do not have enough resources to manage the volume of tickets, an issue that topped the list of ITSM challenges. A good self-service portal could also help address other frequently cited challenges such as poor internal communication and the inability to view resources across tickets and project assignments (Figure 1). In fact, many end-users would prefer to be able to self-service in real time than wait hours or even days for a response.

Figure 1. **Top 5 IT Service Management Challenges**



In addition to failing to recognize a good online service portal as a tool that could help meet common challenges, only 14% of respondents who participated in the *IT Service Management & Project Management in U.S. Hospitals and Health Systems* study are currently using knowledge centered service (KCS®) to continuously update and enhance the articles in a knowledge base. Think crowd sourcing or tribal knowledge capture. Typically, with KCS, every time IT staff members receive a service request, they develop instructional content if it does not already exist, thereby creating a library of instructional materials as a by-product of solving problems. As such, KCS also reduces inbound service requests.

In addition, KCS enables ITSM departments to create meaningful IT career paths. With KCS, staff members can advance their skills and move from a knowledge author and contributor to a coach and reviewer. What's more, offering this knowledge via a self-service portal can result in increased satisfaction from the growing number of "healthcare employees who are digital natives and who can't imagine having to talk to somebody to get a question answered," Graf added.

Managing tickets and projects

While self-service portals and KCS initiatives can help ITSM departments reduce the volume of incoming tickets, they can't eliminate these requests entirely. As a result, IT leaders and staff are still left juggling tickets and IT projects as they strive to offer the

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best service to clinicians and other personnel. Organizations that manage tickets in one platform and projects in another typically experience a huge gap in efficiency and effectiveness.

Not surprisingly, survey respondents said that if they had a magic wand that could grant a single wish, they would ask for coordination, visibility, and/or prioritization across teams (14%), single tool or single view of all work assignments across both tickets and projects (13%), and more people and resources (12%). While magic wands are fictional creations, a unified service platform could help IT departments address these challenges in the real world. With a unified platform, the management team can easily view workloads and manage resources across tickets and projects, making it possible to deliver excellent service and deliver projects on time and on budget.

Indeed, with a unified platform from TeamDynamix in place, Frank Fear, CIO, Covenant HealthCare, is able to go to one source to view projects that are in

need of attention — what's going live in the next 30 days, and what critical tickets are coming in from the help desk. "That's the 'wow.' It's the pieces coming together in a single pane for me as a leader to manage and support our organization," Fear said. As a result, Covenant has gone beyond simply recognizing ITSM challenges and is actually addressing them.

Minimizing strain on resources

Healthcare IT Leaders continue to feel the pressure to deliver more with less — especially as tech spend is on the rise. Taking a look at how to minimize the strain on resources will benefit these organizations. This includes moving toward self-service portals with a sophisticated knowledge base and combining IT Service and Project Management to a single view.

About TeamDynamix:

TeamDynamix offers Service and Project Management together on a single cloud-based platform. TeamDynamix transforms IT from order taker to strategic innovator. Organizations in healthcare, government, and education leverage the solution to improve IT maturity, optimize resources and deliver enhanced end-user service. TeamDynamix offers IT Service Management (ITSM), Project Portfolio Management (PPM) and Enterprise Service Management (ESM) together in one solution. www.teamdynamix.com

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