HORNBILL

Stop Your Service Desk From Being Swamped: Escaping Your Firefighting Loop

Despite significant progress and innovation within the ITSM tools market, firefighting remains a serious issue for many service delivery teams.

Constant firefighting leaves Service Desks with little or no capacity to improve business outcomes, resulting in a negative perception of IT, and putting further pressure on staff who already feel underappreciated.

Surely the way forward is for increased adoption of self-service and automation? Most IT managers know that IT ought to be done better. Similarly, service delivery teams want to focus on activities where they can add real business value. So why doesn't it happen?

Service Desks are often drowned by the sheer volume of low-value interaction. An endless list of low value tasks, which individually, may only take seconds to complete, but the combined volume and frequency drives a torrent of demand that consumes a huge proportion of the Service Desk's time and resources.

Clearly, firefighting is a problem worth solving. We offer a checklist to utilize if you're unsure as to whether firefighting is a problem for you.

For a more in-depth look at how your Service Desk can escape the firefighting loop, read our blog, Break Free of Firefighting, or take a look at our guide, Escape Your Firefighting Loop.

Checklist: Is your Service Desk stuck in the firefighting loop?

If you are an IT, or Service Delivery Manager:

> Does the business view your ITSM function as a cost, rather than a value-adding strategic partner?

> Do you understand the services you offer, and can you identify the services that deliver the most business value?

> Does the Service Desk seem to jump from one crisis to another, rather than being focused on service improvement?

If you are a Service Desk Manager:

> Do you feel that you lack the resources to meet business expectations?

> Does your team spend most of its time in reactive mode?

> Do you feel too short of time to analyze and improve the performance of your services?

> Do you have difficulty driving down the cost of service provision and/or improving service quality?

> Do you feel that the quality of your service is inconsistent?

> Does your team have difficulties in prioritizing work according to its importance to the business?

> Do too many requests get escalated because first-line staff lack the expertise to resolve them?

> Do your staff often seem stressed or frustrated?

> Is time and money being wasted on resolving repeat incidents?

> Does your team find it hard to identify the root cause of problems?

If you are a Support Analyst:

> Do you feel you are working in a stressful, repetitive and high-pressure environment?

> When you need to solve an issue in a hurry, is it difficult to find the relevant information or expert advice?

> Do you spend so much time logging and updating tickets that it's hard to meet your resolution targets?

> Do you sometimes have to resolve an issue that you thought had already been fixed?

> Do you get the impression that your efforts are not appreciated by the business?

> Do users sometimes approach you with 'under-the-table' requests for support, because they want to bypass the official process?

If you answered "yes" to several of these questions, your organization could well be stuck in the firefighting loop. Next, we'll see what you can do to escape it.
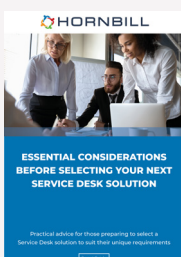
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ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE SELECTING YOUR NEXT SERVICE DESK SOLUTION
Practical advice for those preparing to select a Service Desk solution to suit their unique requirements.

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