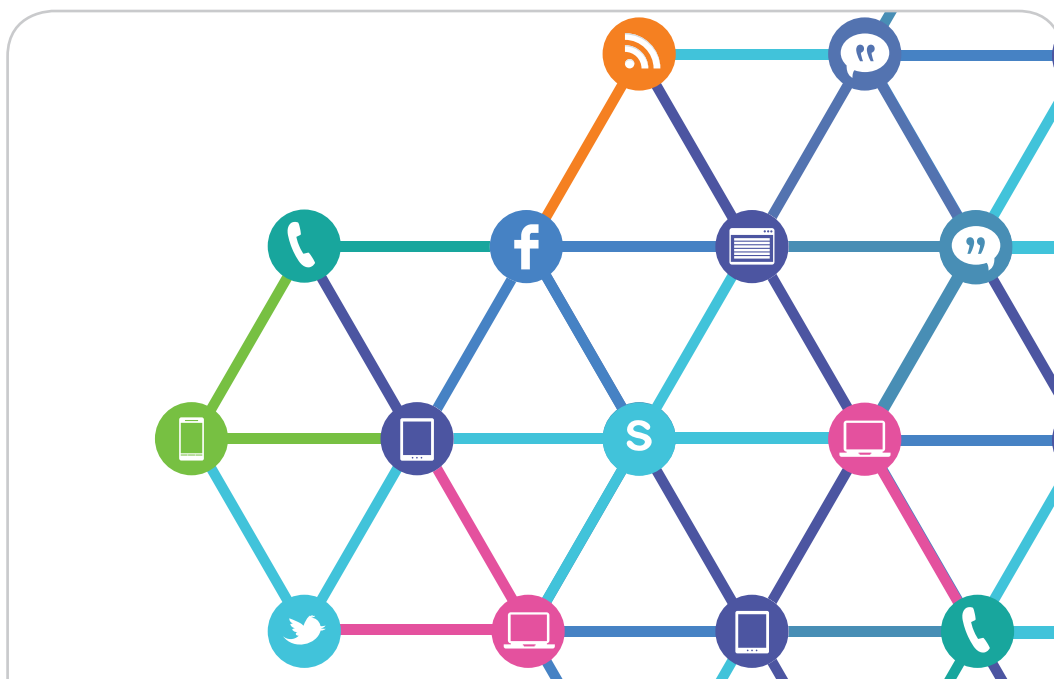




Service Desk and IT Service Management Software



Using Social IT Management to Improve IT Customer Satisfaction and ROI

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Introduction

As consumers, people have an increasing ability to communicate with brands and gain support anytime, anywhere. This level of flexible interaction is quickly becoming an expectation in the workplace, putting pressure on IT departments to change how and when they engage with business users in order to meet demand and stay relevant.

The rise of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) and the consumerization of IT are driving an influx of consumer devices and consumer thinking into the workplace. Business users rightly expect to interact with IT in the same way they interact with their favorite brands.

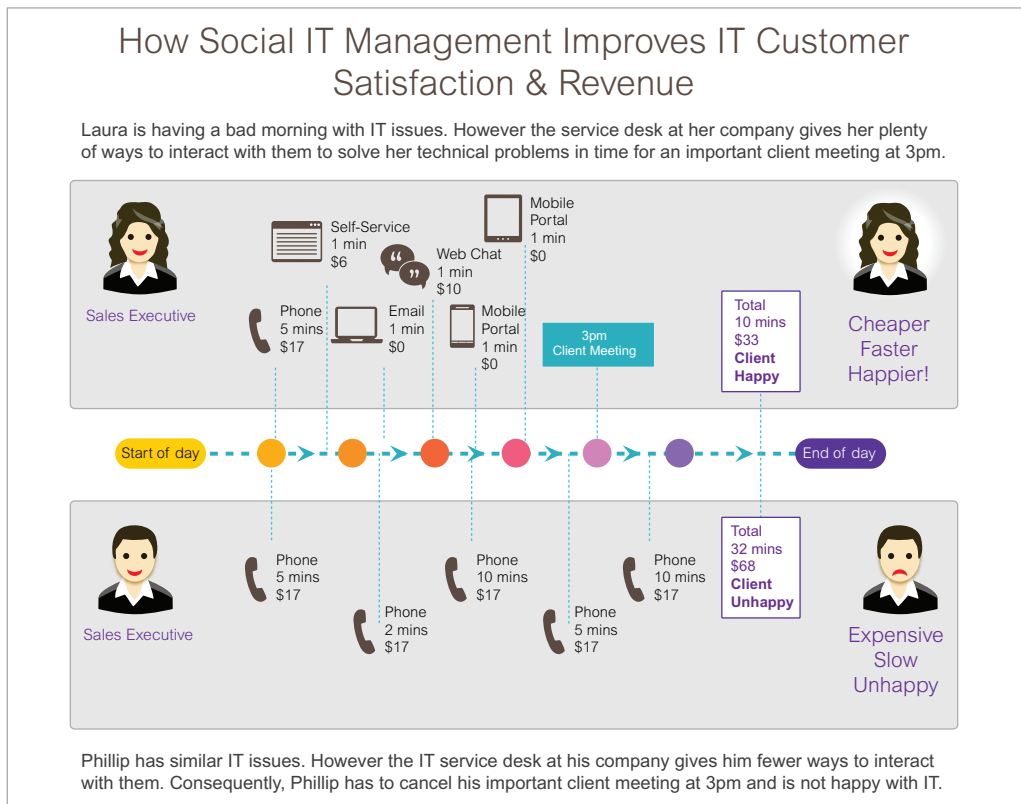
Communication technologies and channels - once few, now many - are converging into a macro system of IT support to serve business users across an array of channels, touch points and devices. It's what we call "Social IT Management."

In this paper we'll look at the benefits to business user satisfaction and productivity that Social IT Management can bring. But the benefits are not only felt by the business user. For IT, there are tangible efficiency improvements and cost savings to be gained from a Social IT Management strategy as well as more satisfied customers. Enabling business users to request services and support via multiple channels will drive greater engagement and improve the experience.

What Is Social IT Management?

Before we start though, let's just be clear about what we're talking about when we say "Social IT Management."

What we refer to as Social IT Management is widely known in the consumer world as "multichannel" and is about delivering engagement and sales, customer service and support in a way that fits in with the individual consumer's personal life – through a mixture of in-store service, call centers, websites, mobile, email and web chat touch points.



When consumers are looking to buy products or services, they want to engage with other consumers across these channels to find recommendations – the success of Amazon reviews is a great example of this. The Nielsen Global Online Consumer Survey 2009 shows that 70% of Internet users trust peer recommendations online – from friends, family, colleagues and complete strangers.

Consumers also want to engage directly with brands through the channel of their choice such as web chat, Twitter and Facebook to get the information they need to make an informed decision. Companies that restrict themselves to in-store business are finding themselves left out in the cold. Having to go to a retailer is not always convenient for consumers with busy lives. The in-store model has its place, but it's rapidly becoming a niche, pushed aside by web and mobile commerce that are a better fit with the consumer's life.

When it is time for the business transaction - the purchase itself – customers are looking for trusted transaction points that enable them to easily and securely buy what they want, when they want, where they want and how they want. The choice to buy in-store, by phone, web or mobile depending on factors such as location, purchase type or urgency is critical today.

From a support perspective, consumers “pull” support through a broad range of channels. The use of Twitter, online branded forums, web chat, phone, self-

service portals and mobile apps are commonplace. Leading B2C brands such as Marks & Spencer, Tesco and JCPenney are putting their Social IT Management strategies at the center of what they do - to the extent they many have even changed their brand straplines to highlight this approach. Now more than ever, consumers are looking beyond the products and services themselves. They want to know how brands do business before they make a choice.

In the world of IT, Social IT Management is about delivering and supporting services in the way that fits in with the business user's *work* life.

Social IT Management is about supporting your business users where, when, and how they need it. Within a Social IT Management environment, traditional support channels such as phone and fax sit alongside newer technologies such as web chat, self-service portals, mobile and enterprise social platforms. Social IT Management gives business users the choice of when and how they engage with your Service Desk.

There's no steadfast rule about what defines a support channel. Some channels and touch points within ITSM have grown out of the original Service Desk models – phone, fax and walk-up for example. Others leveraging the advances in technology and mobility include:

- Email
- Web Chat
- Instant Messaging (IM)
- Enterprise Social Networks
- Wikis
- Discussion Forums or communities
- Crowdsourcing/collaborative IT
- Online Catalogs

Undoubtedly, the rapid evolution of technology, combined with continually changing consumer behavior, will result in even more channels and touch points in the future.

Consumers want to buy the products they want on the move via their mobile device. In the workplace, they want to order the IT services they need to be productive wherever and whenever suits them best. Mobile technology is a critical enabler for this, but as new technologies are developed consumer behavior will

change as they adopt the technologies that work best for them.

Business Drivers for Social IT Support

The role of ITSM is to enable business. We accomplish this by understanding business users' needs and expectations and offering solutions that match these needs.

B2C Businesses need to serve their consumers by engaging them where *they* are. Previously, this meant in-store. Today it means much more – combining in-store, web, mobile and social media.

Increasingly, business users also expect their IT support to be available to them where *they* are. Social IT Management support is how ITSM meets this need. Since Social IT Management lends itself to greater business user satisfaction, the resulting boost in productivity and ROI are the largest business drivers for implementing this type of support.

Many analysts believe that the consumerization of IT and the Internet generation (Generation Y) are driving wider adoption of Social IT business strategies at a management level, as Generation Y and Z move up the corporate ladder and join the workforce respectively. With the rise of globalization, business takes place in airports, hotels, coffee shops and home offices. As a result, the ability to access support in a multitude of situations drives the need for IT support to be responsive through many touch points.

How Do Your Business Users Want To Be Supported?

Not every business user will use every channel or touch point. They will use what is right for them at any given time.

To know what's right for you, you must understand the needs and expectations of your business users.

- **Mobility** - Are your business users physically present at a site or a number of sites? Do they work from home, travel frequently or visit remote locations?
- **Technology Comfort Level** - Are your business users comfortable enough with technology to troubleshoot and apply fixes on their own? Do you want them to? Are they likely to seek out or avoid self-service channels?

By providing multiple channels of communication, IT gives the business user more choice and can bring lower cost support methods into play. Consequently, the Service Desk is under less pressure to answer phones and staff can focus on pro-actively improving service levels.

Some channel types are steadily rising in popularity – web, mobile and enterprise social platforms - others remaining static and others declining – e.g. fax. It is important to take these trends into context and consider the external factors that influence this - such as the evolution of new web and mobile platforms, business and delivery models.

Improving Business User Experience

Social IT Management improves the availability of services and support by extending the Service Desk out to the business user's laptop, tablet and mobile. This delivers increased availability of services and support to business users – helping you to achieve better service levels from the business user's perspective. ITSM solutions help you achieve these benefits by simplifying the complex task of deploying and managing multiple channels.

A Social IT Management strategy drives improvements in the business user experience through:

- **Service Catalog** – Presents all available services and costs to business users, with an easy-to-use ordering system. A UK government organization diverted over 60% of their calls from the service desk by implementing a web self-service portal that incorporated a Service Catalog
- **Self-Service and Mobility** – Help your business users to help themselves by diagnosing and resolving their own problems quickly, and checking the status of tickets
- **Social IT** – Give business users a familiar social experience when interacting with IT
- **Service Updates** – Push service status messages out to users via their preferred communication channel

Savings and ROI

There are cumulative savings to be gained from adopting a Social IT Management

strategy, and in some cases more channels translate into lower costs so long as we are realistic about how we adapt them to the needs of business users. Let's look at an example.

This table takes a simplified view of the impact that Social IT Management support has on Service Desk costs, which over time will result in increased ROI.

Channel	Burdened Cost Per Contact	Cost Per 1,000 Contacts
Phone as the Sole Channel	\$17.00 X 1,000	\$17,000.00
Total Sole Channel		\$17,000.00
Phone 70%	\$17.00 X 700	\$11,900.00
Chat 20%	\$10.00 X 200	\$2,000.00
Self-Service 10%	\$6.00 X 100	\$600.00
Total Social IT		\$14,500.00

This represents a saving of almost 15% per thousand contacts. In large organizations, this translates into savings that are significant to IT and the business.

The burdened costs we've used here are adapted from the *HDI Support Center Practices and Salary Report, 2011*. They illustrate that each channel has a different cost, and these are typically lower for certain channels, such as self-service and chat. Combining this knowledge with your business user types (e.g. sales, marketing, finance) can help predict the potential cost savings and ROI of investing in new support channels.

Conclusion

Business user satisfaction is a top priority for the business and IT, and Social IT Management business models are often the key to delivering the best customer

experience possible. Multiple support channels for business users drives increased productivity, which adds value to the entire business.

A Social IT Management strategy also offers significant cost savings. With a well-planned and executed strategy, the initial investment in Social IT Management can provide significant ROI.

As IT suppliers, we continue to strive for innovation and cost effectiveness in our solutions. Thanks to technology advances, ITSM is becoming even more cost effective, and Social IT Management is another step forward in delivering value from ITSM.

Find out more at axiossystems.com