



2017 TECHNICAL SUPPORT Practices & Salary Report

▼ CLICK/TAP ICONS TO JUMP TO A SECTION



TICKET MANAGEMENT



TECHNOLOGY



OPERATIONS



METRICS



STAFF AND STRUCTURE



SALARY



DEMOGRAPHICS



ABOUT THE REPORT

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▼ FOR SECTIONS

- Ticket Management
- Technology
- Operations
- Metrics
- Staff and Structure
- Salary
- Demographics
- About the Report

Ticket Management









Technical support organizations manage tickets received through a variety of channels, which require various levels of support. This section shares the current practices and experiences involved in managing end-user tickets.



▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Average number of tickets resolved per month
- Factors leading to increased ticket volume
- Factors leading to decreased ticket volume
- Average time spent on tickets and other activities
- Ticket resolution by level
- The nature of the relationship between the support center and desktop support
- Classifying desktop support tickets
- Channels through which desktop support tickets are received
- Ticket resolution strategies
- After-hours ticket handling
- Expectations for technician travel
- Vehicle use and reimbursement policies for technician travel

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Average number of tickets resolved per month:



19%	●	Fewer than 500
22%	●	500-1,000
30%	●	1,001-5,000
13%	●	5,001-10,000
12%	●	10,001-50,000
2%	●	50,001-100,000
2%	●	More than 100,000

Percentage of organizations

71% of tickets received are for **internal** end users/customers
(that is, employees/contractors within the company or
organization that your team supports)

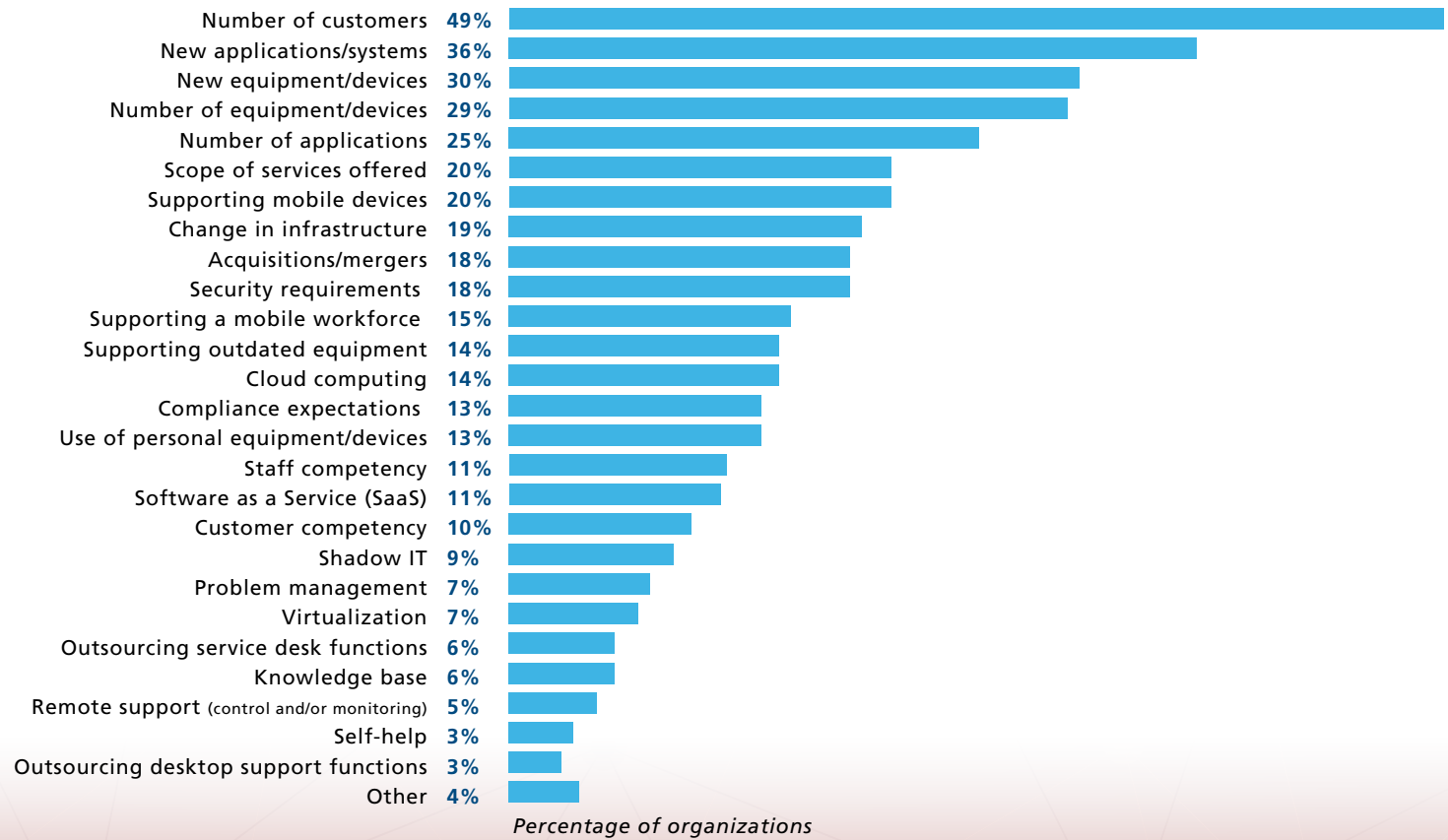
29% of tickets received are for **external** end users/customers
(that is, customers or consumers outside your company or
organization that your team supports)

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55% of support organizations saw an increase in ticket volume over the past year.

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They attribute this increase to the following factors:

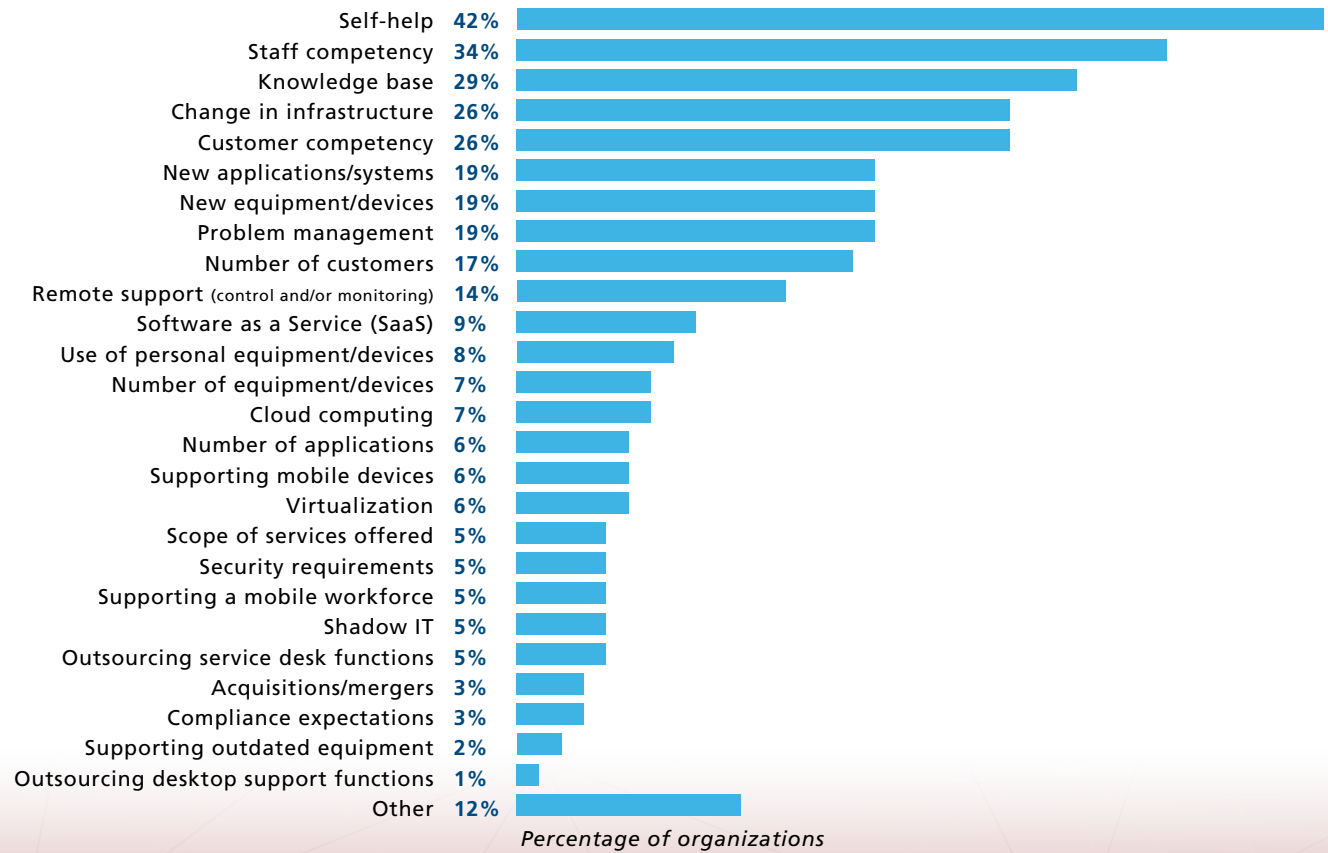


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15% of support organizations saw a decrease in ticket volume over the past year.

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They attribute this decrease to the following factors:



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Average time spent on tickets and other activities:

- Ticket handling/resolution
- Knowledge management
- Problem management
- Asset management
- Projects
- Training end users/customers
- Professional development (training and/or certification)
- Meetings
- Information security
- Other



47%	6%	6%
6%	4%	4%
4%	4%	4%
3%	3%	4%
4%	19%	



24%	4%	4%
7%	4%	4%
6%	5%	4%
3%	4%	7%
6%		



12%	3%	3%
5%	4%	4%
7%	5%	5%
3%	5%	5%
11%	45%	



26%	4%	4%
5%	4%	4%
5%	4%	4%
5%	4%	4%
7%	36%	



7%	4%	4%
6%	5%	4%
6%	18%	4%
4%	5%	30%
15%		

Percentage of time spent on each activity

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Ticket resolution by level:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| ● Less than 10% | ● 51-60% |
| ● 11-20% | ● 61-70% |
| ● 21-30% | ● 71-80% |
| ● 31-40% | ● More than 80% |
| ● 41-50% | |

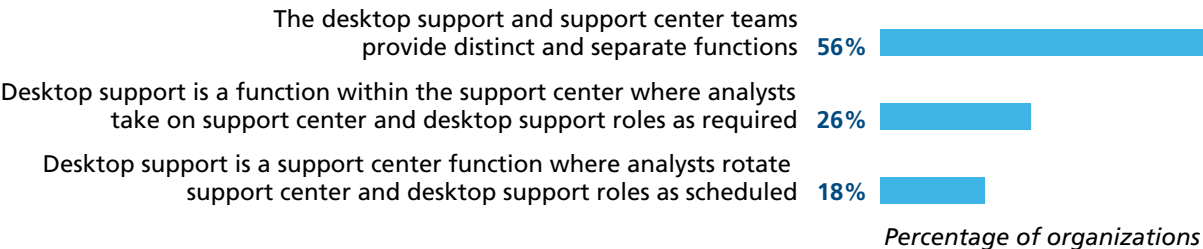


Percentage of tickets resolved

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The nature of the relationship between the support center and desktop support:

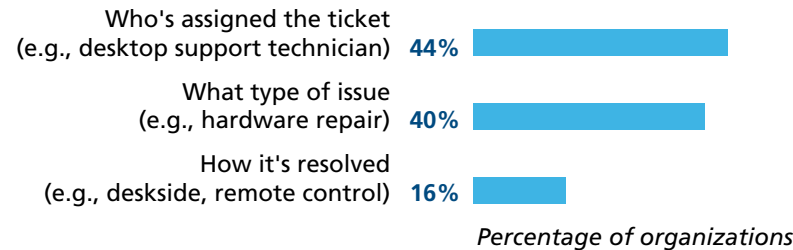


54% of organizations track tickets resolved by desktop support separately from other tickets.

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Classifying desktop support tickets:



61% of tickets submitted by internal end users/customers are for desktop support services.

30% of tickets submitted by external end users/customers are for desktop support services.

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Channels through which desktop support tickets are received:



- 39% Assigned by support center/service desk/help desk
- 11% Desktop support technician provides support at a formal tech support station
- 11% End users call desktop support directly
- 11% End users contact desktop support directly via email or chat
- 11% End users submit a web request directly to desktop support (not assigned by the support center)
- 9% End users informally walk-up/drop-in/drive-by on a technician
- 8% Other

Percentage of organizations

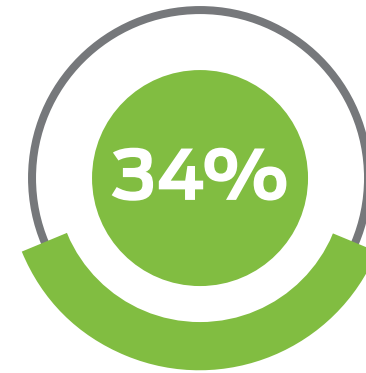
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Ticket resolution strategies:



Skills-based routing:
Matching an end user's specific needs with an analyst, or group of analysts, who has the skills required to resolve the specific incident or request



Intelligent swarming:
Aligning resources by assigning the correct people with various appropriate skill sets (regardless of tier) to "swarm" around issues as they occur

Percentage of organizations using these strategies

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After-hours ticket handling:

Includes responses only from those organizations that don't provide 24x7 support



- 33% ● Tickets aren't handled outside of business hours
- 32% ● On-call staff
- 16% ● Answering service or operator fields calls
- 9% ● Another department in the organization handles them
- 6% ● Outsourced service provider
- 4% ● Other 4%

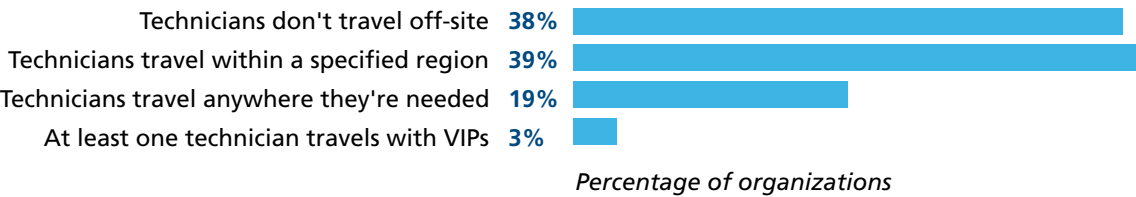
Percentage of organizations

29% of support organizations are staffed 24x7.

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Expectations for technician travel:



65% of organizations that dispatch technicians off-site record travel time.

Vehicle use and reimbursement policies for technician travel:



	Personal vehicle	Company vehicle
Vehicle use	66%	64%
Reimbursed for gas	59%	
Reimbursed for mileage	84%	

Percentage of organizations

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Technical support organizations rely on technology to provide successful end-user support. This section reveals the current practices and plans around technology used to provide technical support.



Technology

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Devices supported
- Number of devices supported
- Technologies used to provide support
- Must-have technologies for providing successful support
- Key factors motivating new technology implementations/upgrades
- Alignment between technologies and specific methodologies/frameworks
- Positions involved in selecting new technologies for the support center
- Incident/ticket management solutions used to provide support
- Individuals/teams responsible for providing remote support
- Percentage of tickets resolved remotely
- Remote support technologies used by support
- Self-service (i.e., Tier 0, unassisted self-help) tools made available to end users/customers
- Application packaging software used by desktop support
- Imaging systems used by desktop support
- Systems management tools used by desktop support
- Hosting practices for support technologies
- Licensing models for support technology

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Devices supported:



Desktops/laptops
(PC, Mac, etc.)

90%



Peripherals
(printers, scanners, etc.)

83%



Mobile devices
(smartphones, tablets, etc.)

81%



Telecom
(desk phones, PBX, headsets, VoIP, etc.)

72%



Audio/visual (presentation equipment, projectors, TVs, sound system, video walls, etc.)

70%



Network devices
(routers, switches, WAPs, hubs, etc.)

70%



Other
(SIM client, POS, kiosk, etc.)

58%



Internet of Things devices
(wearables, exercise equipment, smarhome devices, etc.)

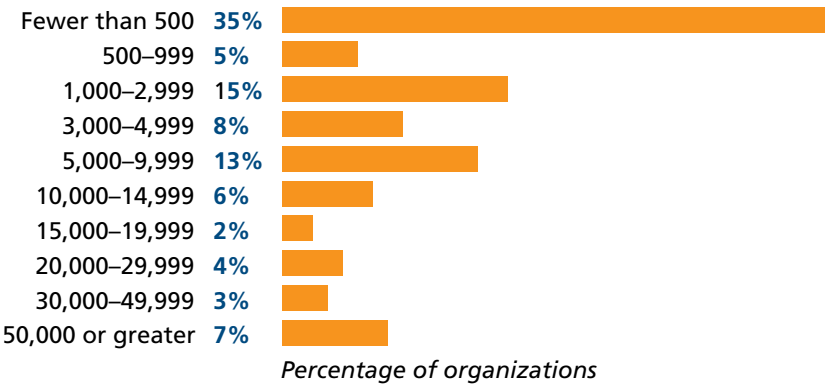
49%

Percentage of organizations

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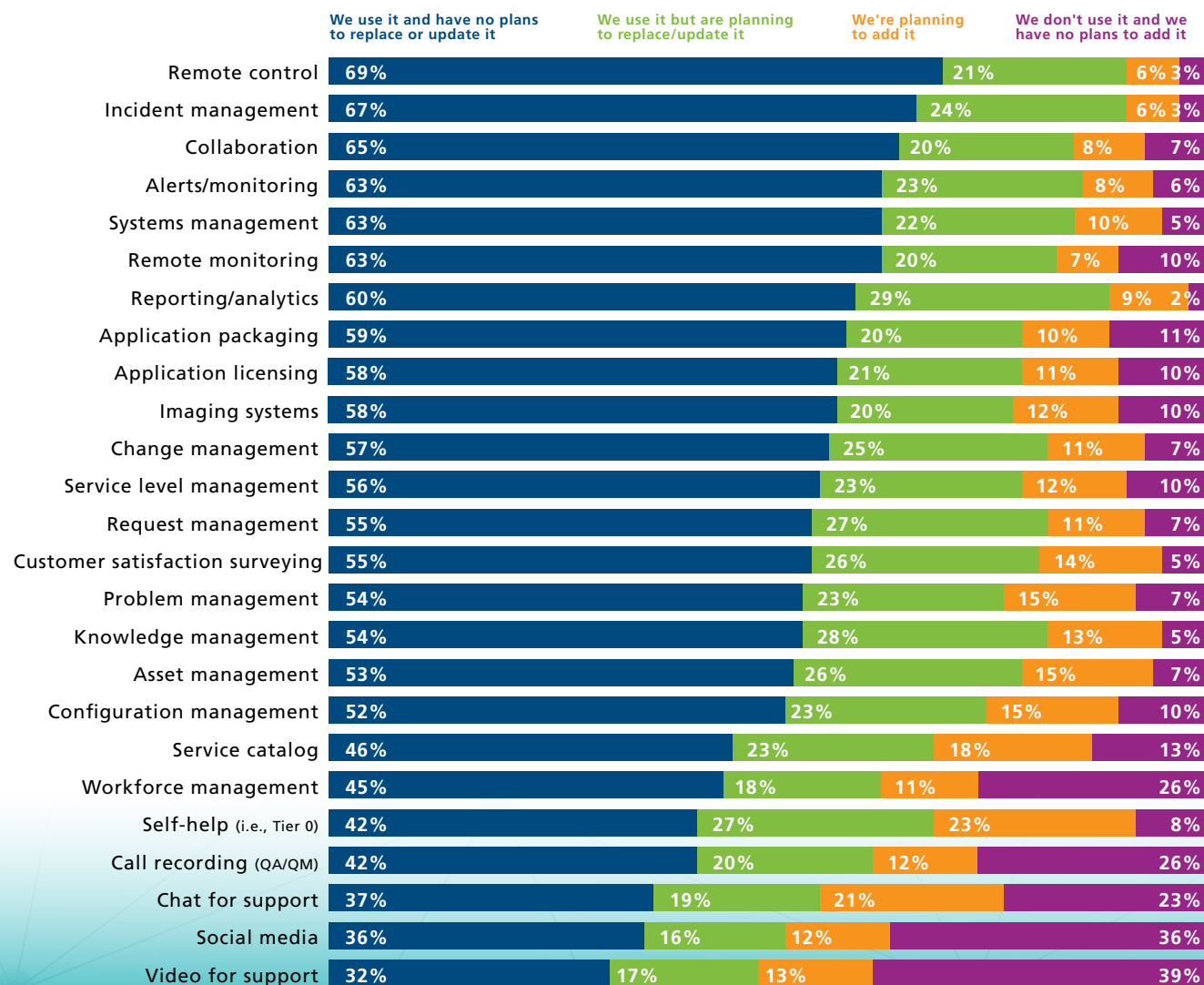
Number of devices supported:



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Technologies used to provide support:

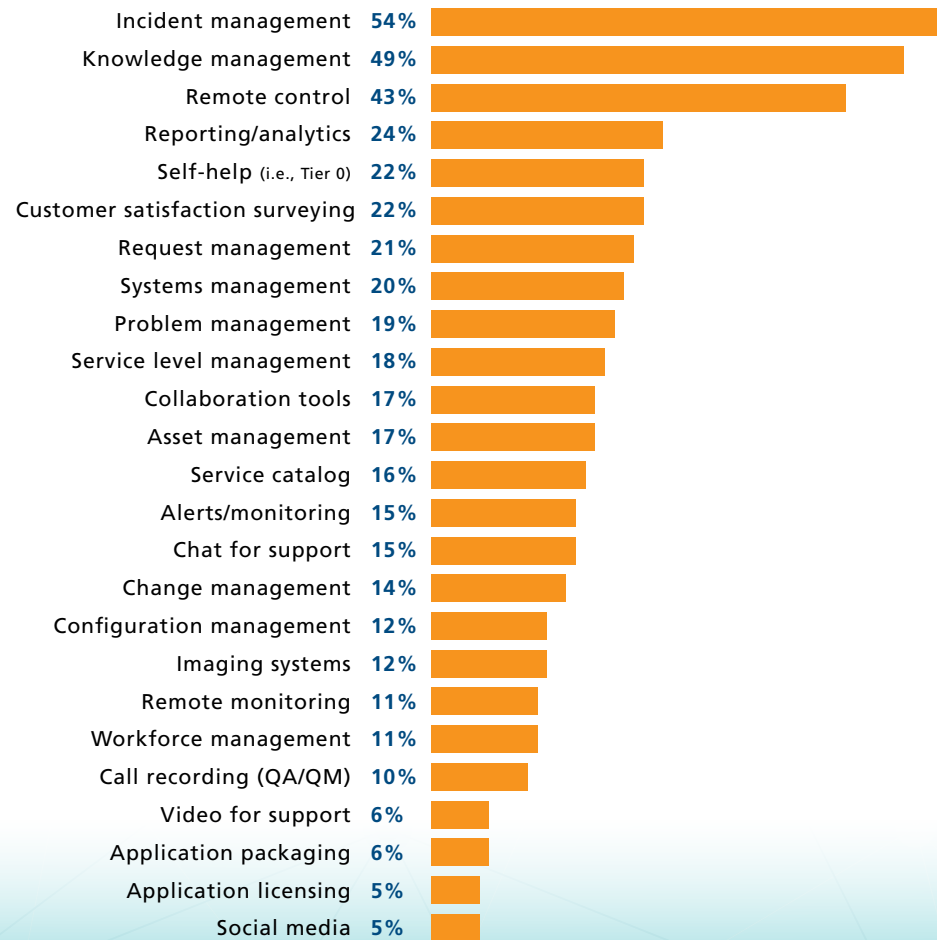


Percentage of organizations

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Must-have technologies for providing successful support:

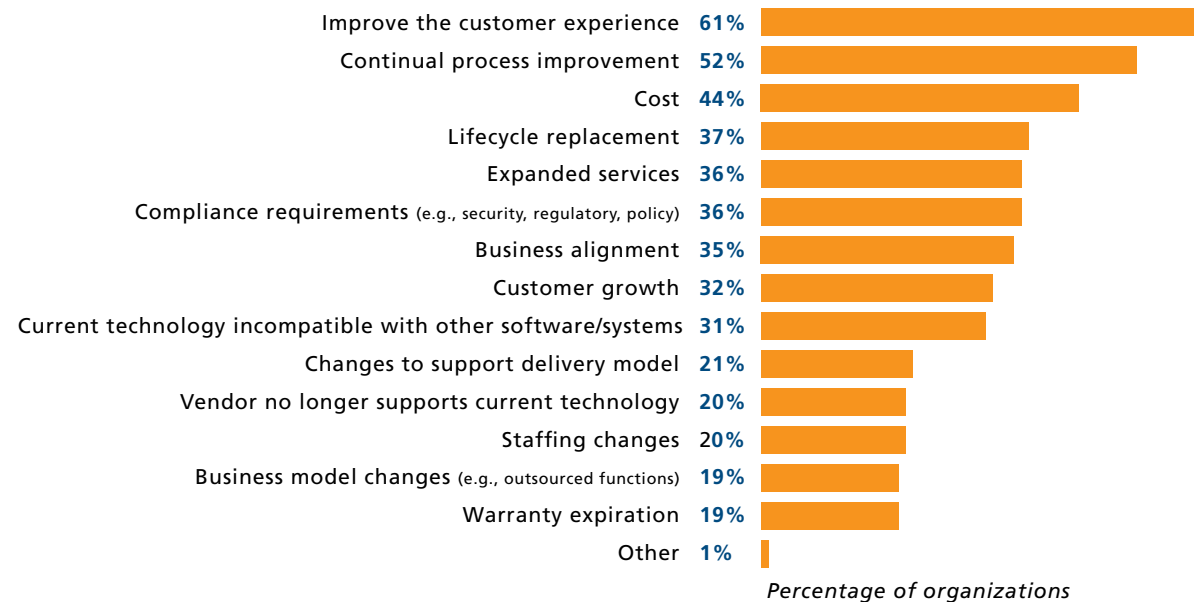


Percentage of organizations

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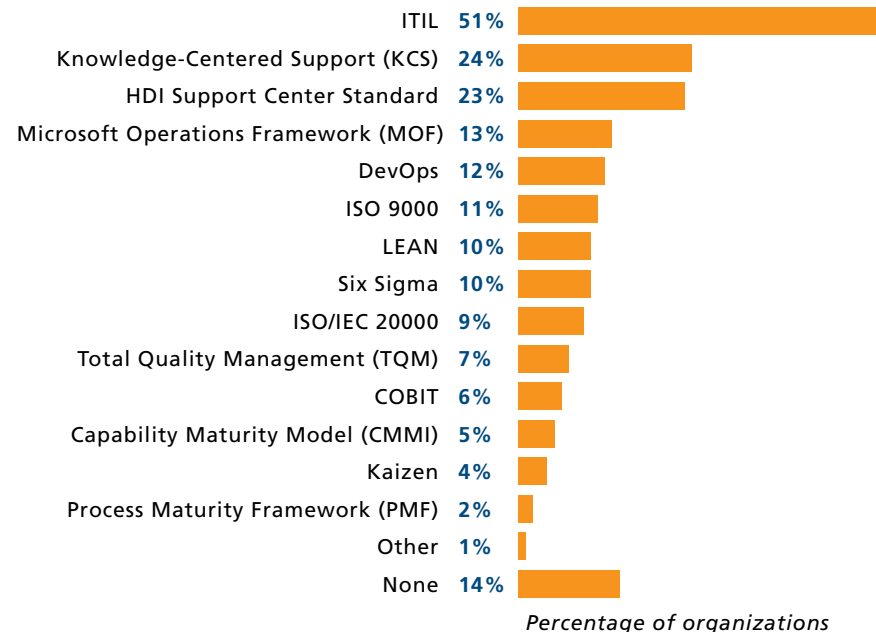
Key factors motivating new technology implementations/upgrades:



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Alignment between technologies and specific methodologies/frameworks:



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Positions involved in selecting new technologies for the support center:

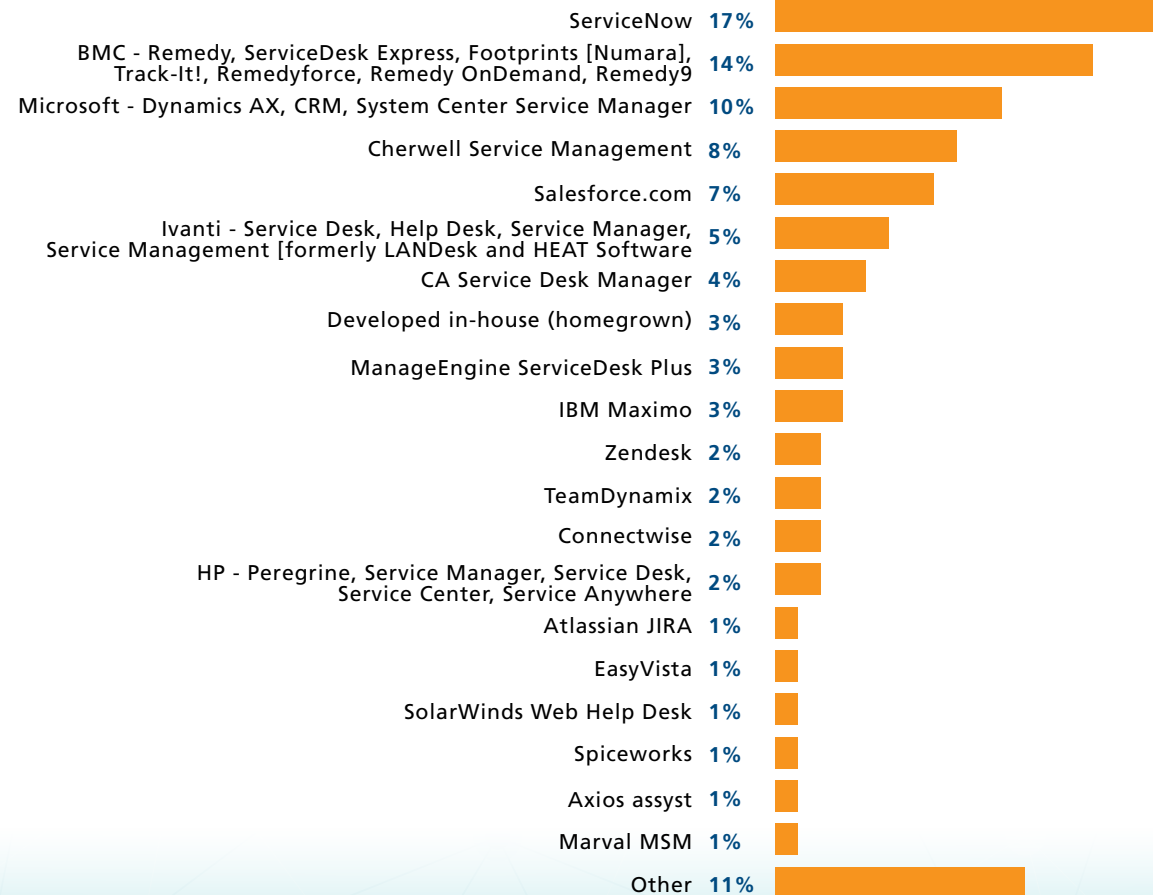
	Involved in ADVISING/ INFLUENCING	Involved in SELECTION PROCESS	Involved in PURCHASING DECISION	Involved in PURCHASE APPROVAL	Other involvement	No involvement
Support staff level	63%	40%	17%	8%	1%	20%
Support manager/ director level	73%	84%	94%	46%	18%	4%
Executive level	40%	43%	69%	82%	17%	5%

Percentage of organizations

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Incident/ticket management solutions used to provide support:

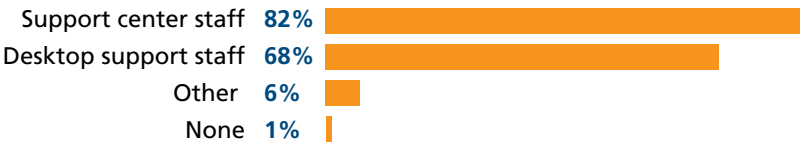


Percentage of organizations

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Individuals/teams responsible for providing remote support:



Percentage of organizations

40% of organizations formally measure the percentage of tickets resolved using remote support.

Percentage of tickets resolved remotely:



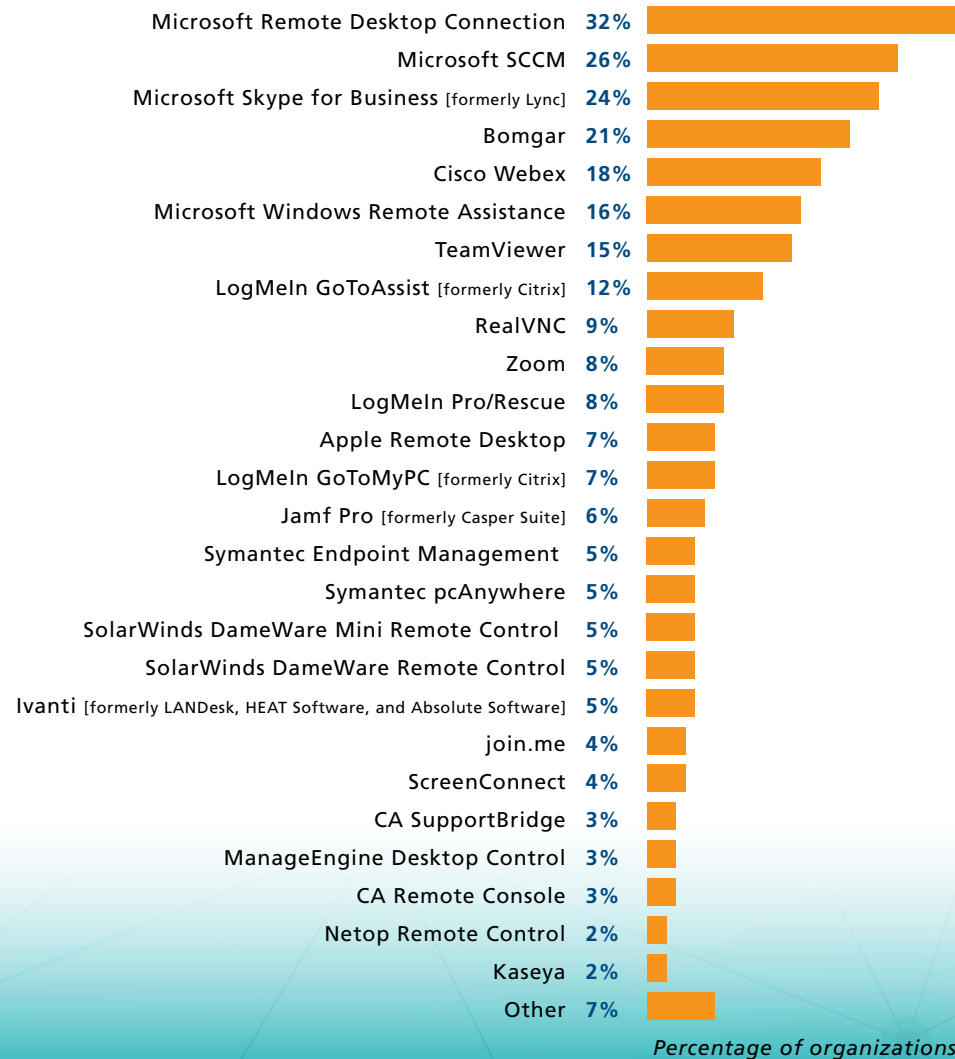
- 22% ● 1-25%
- 30% ● 26-50%
- 28% ● 51-75%
- 13% ● 76-99%
- 6% ● 100%

Percentage of organizations

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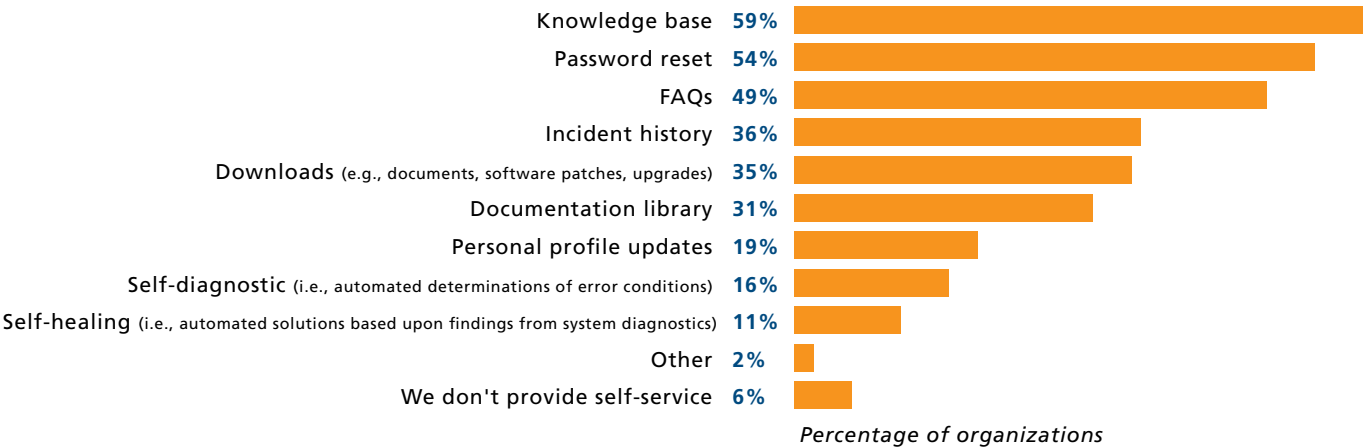
Remote support technologies used by support:



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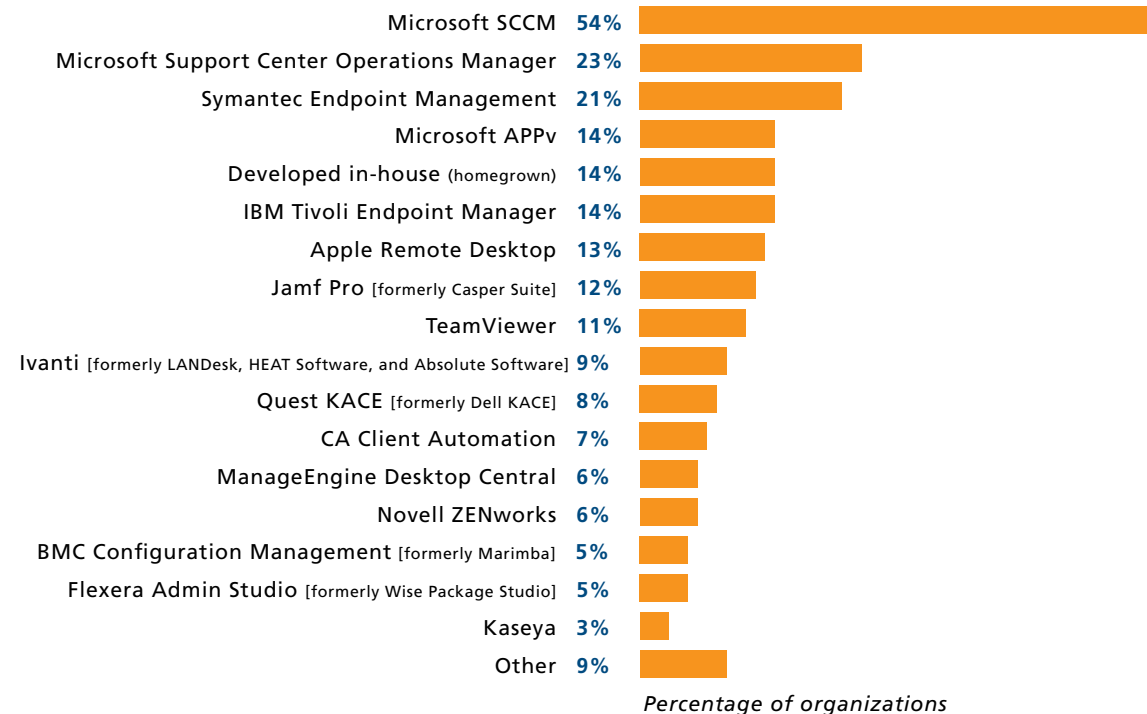
**Self-service (i.e., Tier 0, unassisted self-help)
tools made available to end users/customers:**



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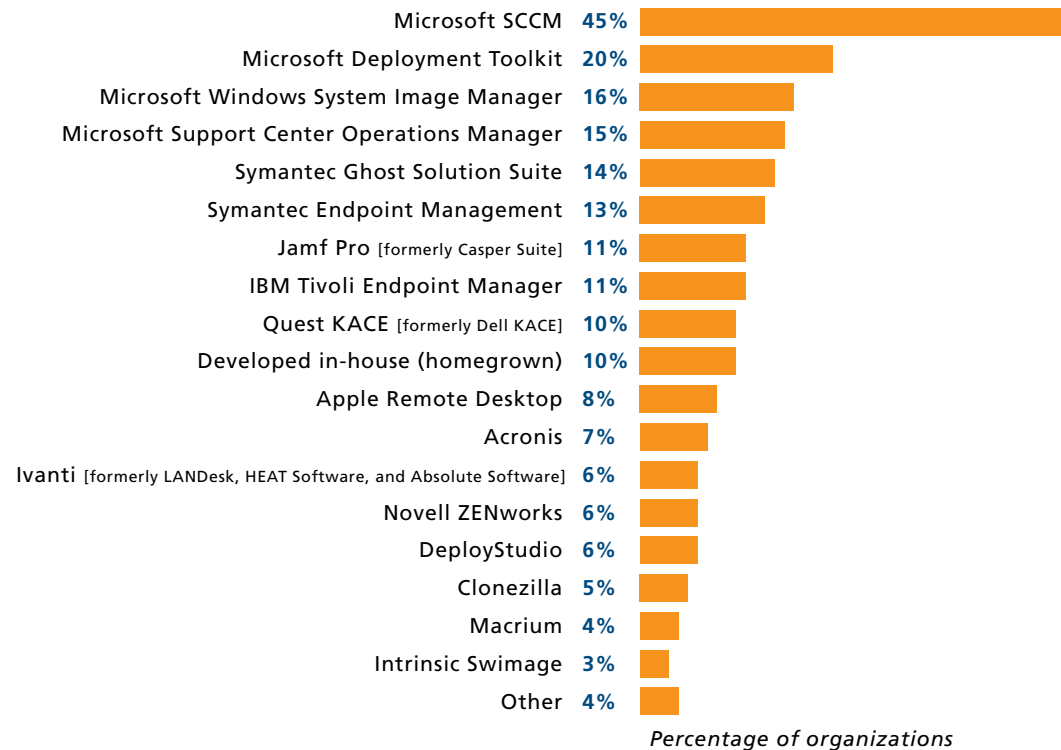
Application packaging software used by desktop support:



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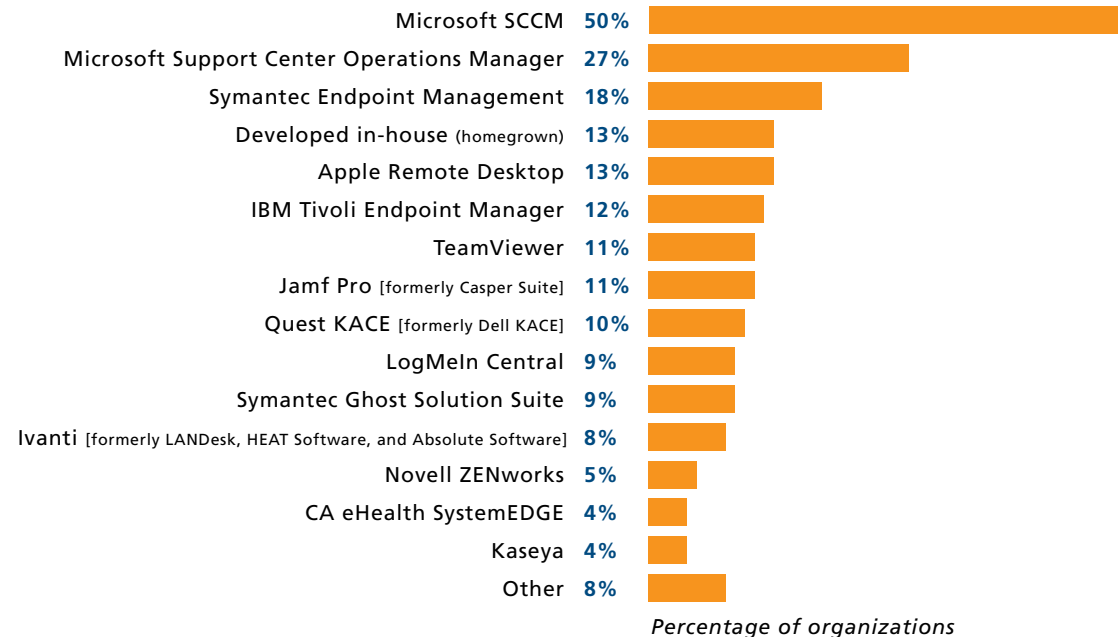
Imaging systems used by desktop support:



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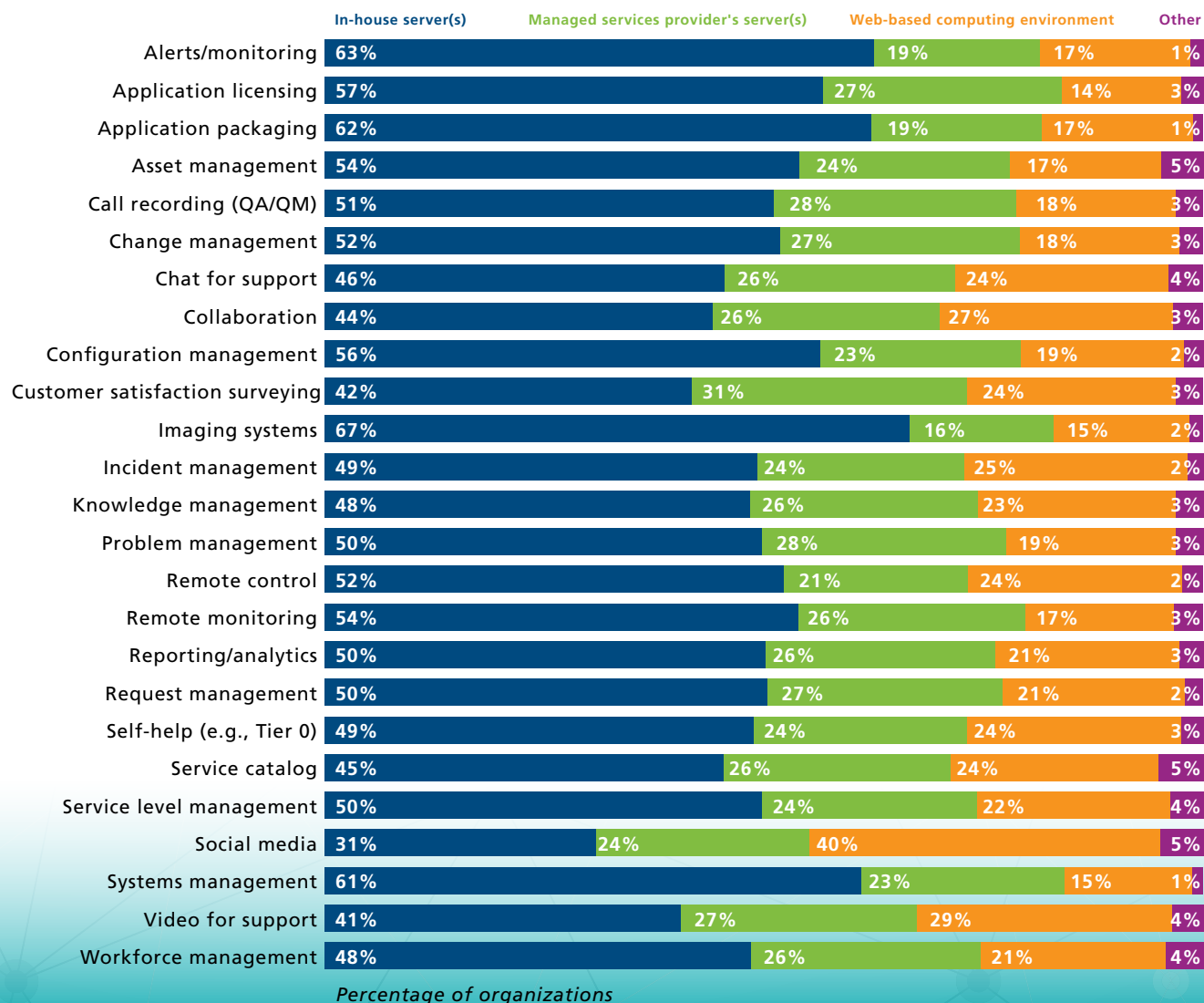
Systems management tools used by desktop support:



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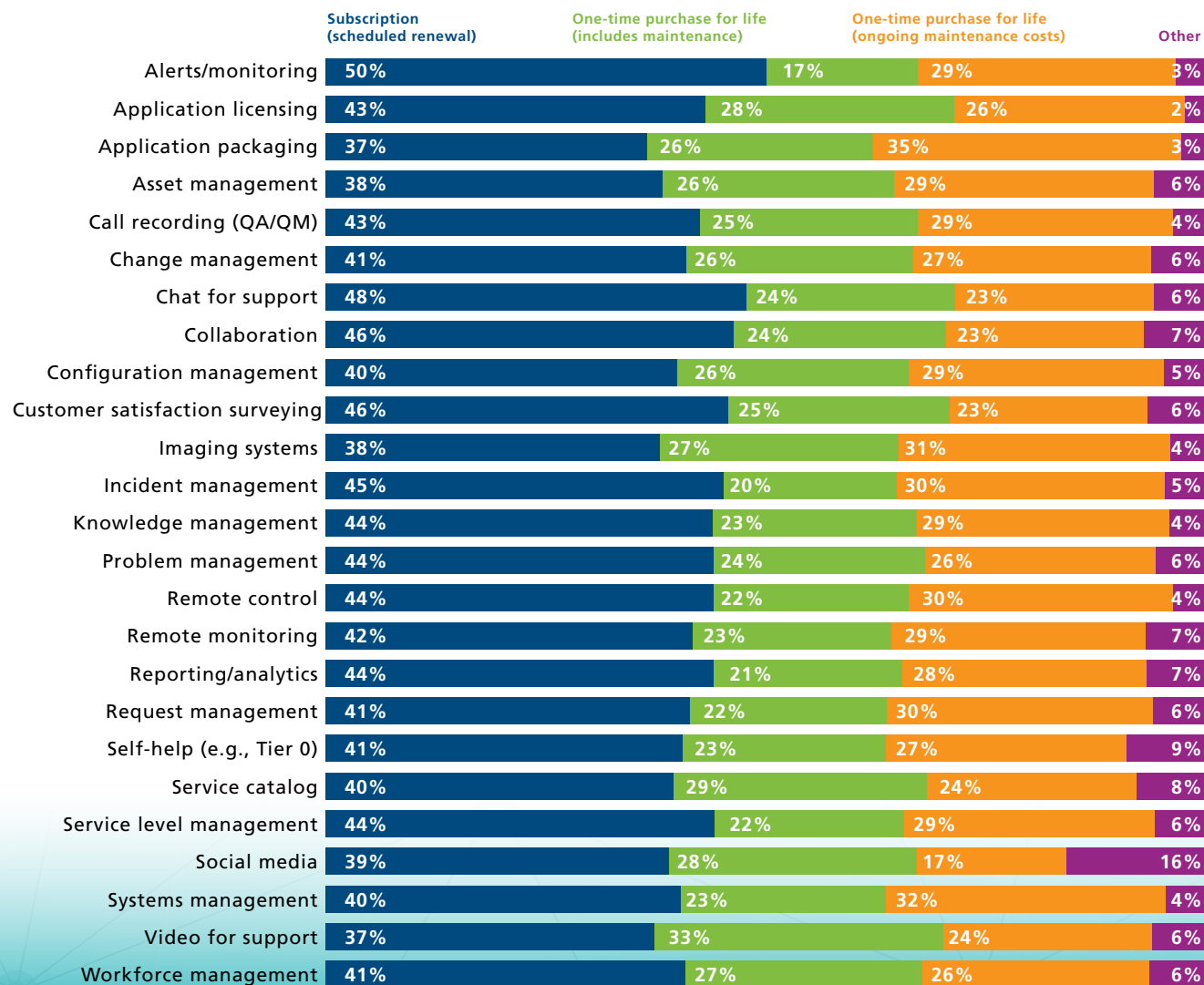
Hosting practices for support technologies:



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Licensing models for support technology:



Percentage of organizations

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Numerous methodologies, frameworks, and process guide the technical support industry. This section identifies those that are being used and reveals insights into the internal operations of the technical support organizations and its relation to the business.



Operations

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Current and planned use of specific methodologies, frameworks, and processes
- Service management processes support organizations have adopted
- Techniques for enforcing compliance with support processes
- Staff involvement in knowledge management
- Problem management practices, processes, and roles
- Maintaining service level agreements
- Percentage of tickets that meet SLA/OLA goals or targets
- Process maturity in desktop support
- Charging end users/customers for support services

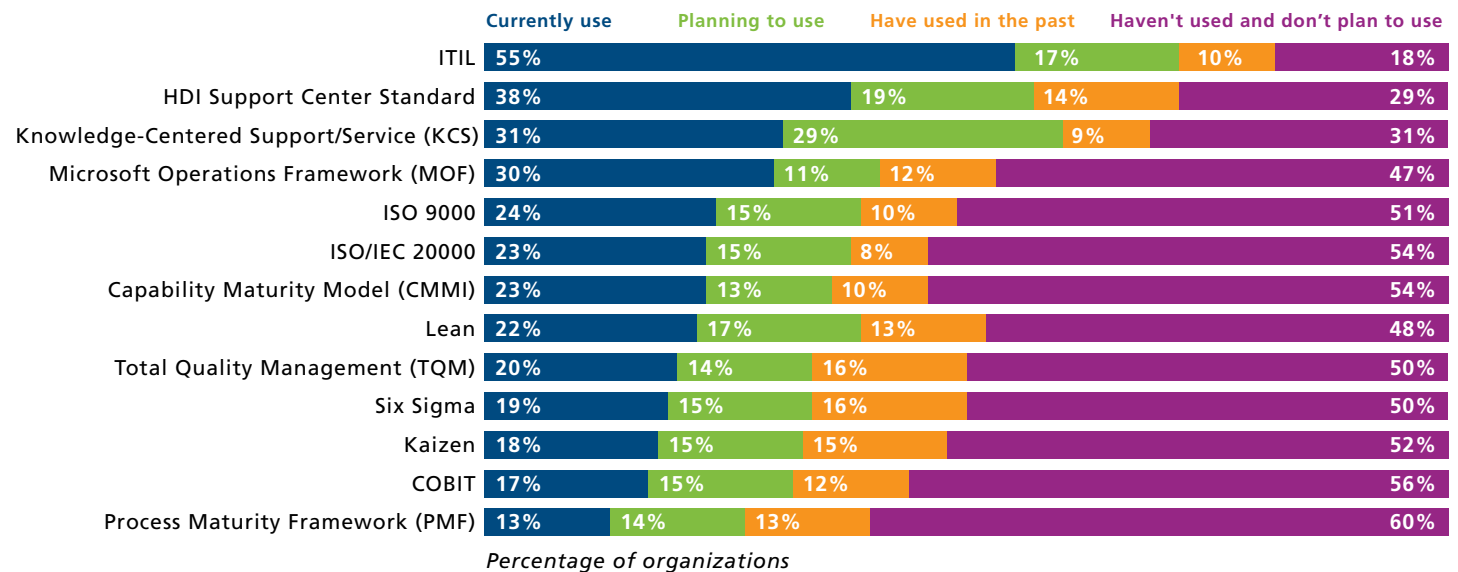
Outsourcing

- Expectations for outsourcing support services over the next year
- Distribution of outsourced staff
- Outsourcing status for support functions
- Factors influencing the decision to outsource or consider outsourcing
- Factors influencing the decision not to outsource

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Current and planned use of specific methodologies, frameworks, and processes:



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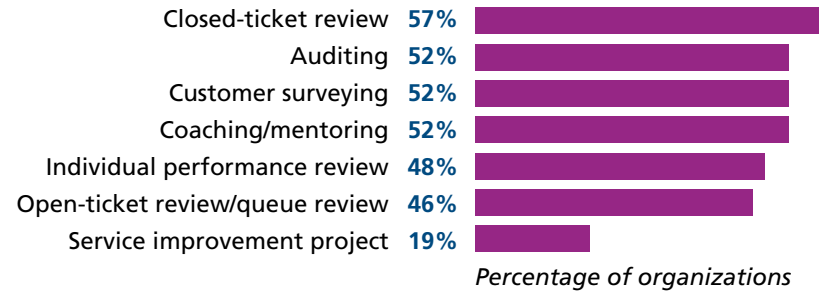
Service management processes support organizations have adopted:



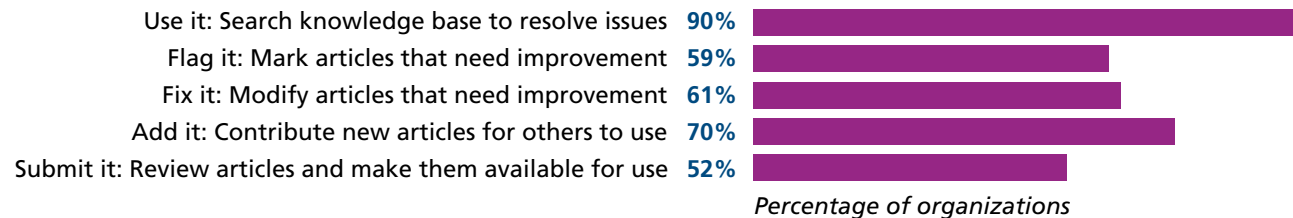
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Techniques for enforcing compliance with support processes:



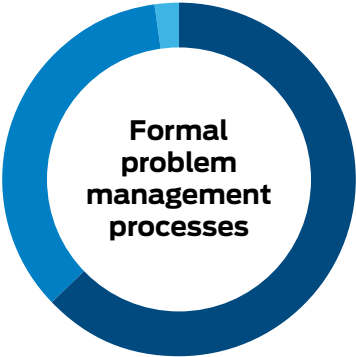
Staff involvement in knowledge management:



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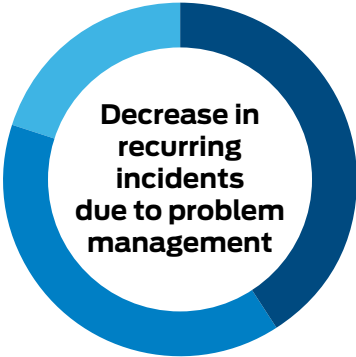
Problem management practices, processes, and roles:



63% ● Yes
35% ● Somewhat
2% ● No



30% ● Yes
44% ● Somewhat
26% ● No



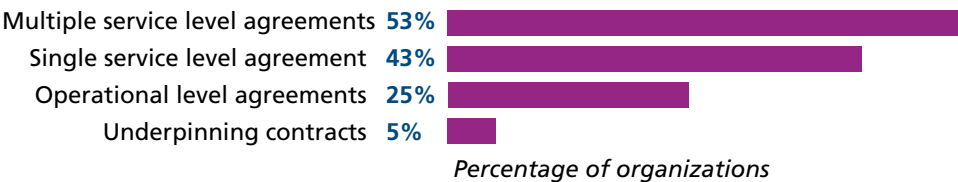
41% ● Yes
39% ● Somewhat
20% ● No

Percentage of organizations

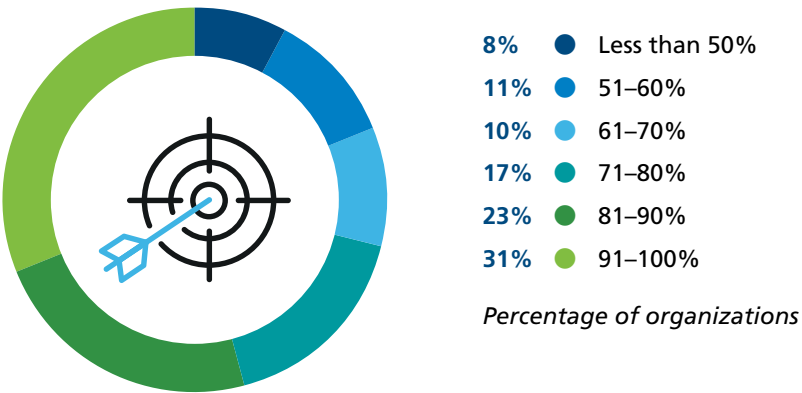
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Maintaining service level agreements:



Percentage of tickets that meet SLA/OLA goals or targets:

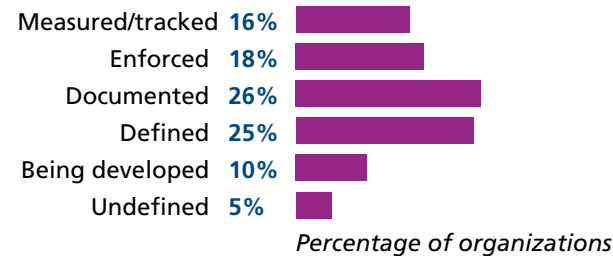


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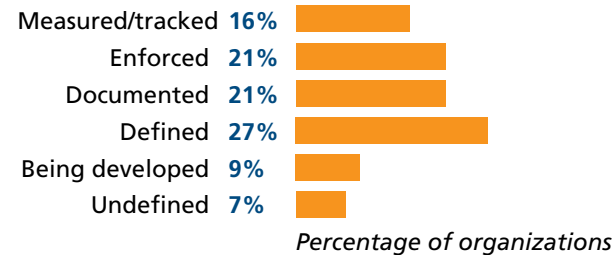
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Process maturity in desktop support:

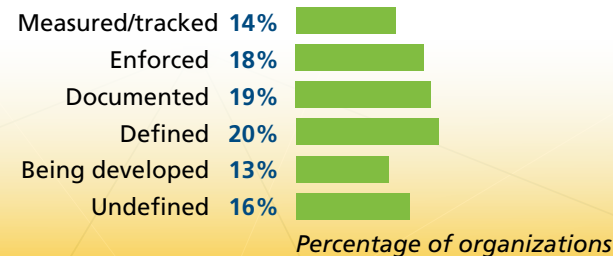
Hardware asset management



Large-scale deployments/projects



Maintenance depot

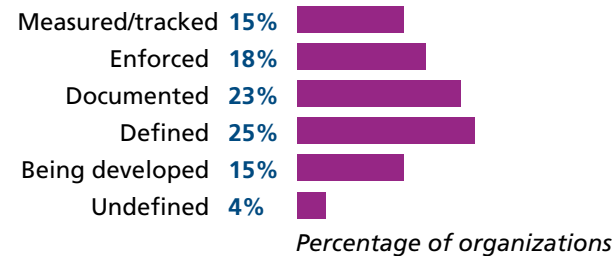


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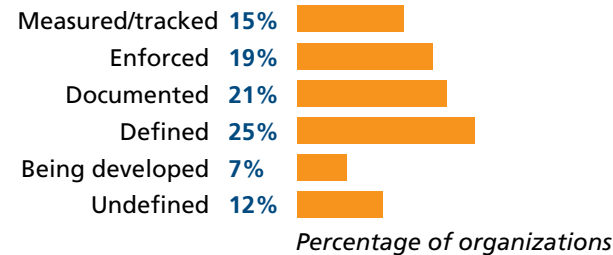
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Process maturity in desktop support (cont'd):

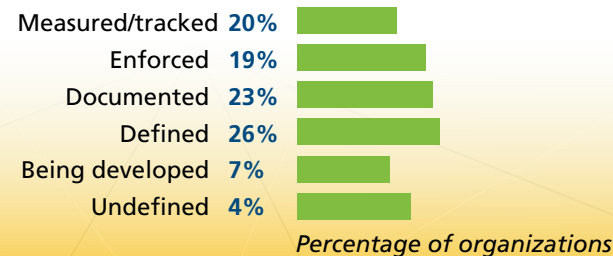
New hire provisioning



Self-maintenance (nonwarranty repairs)



Service request fulfillment

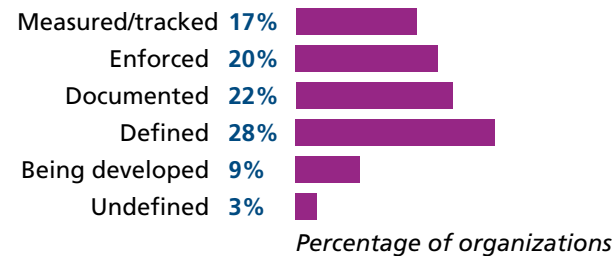


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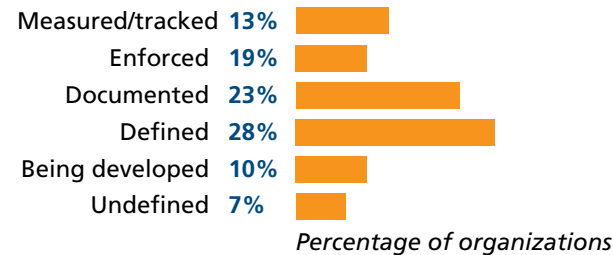
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Process maturity in desktop support (cont'd):

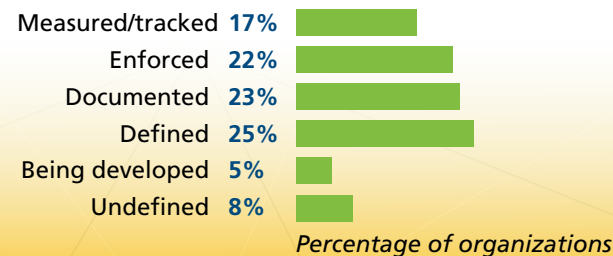
Software and hardware procurement



Termination asset recovery



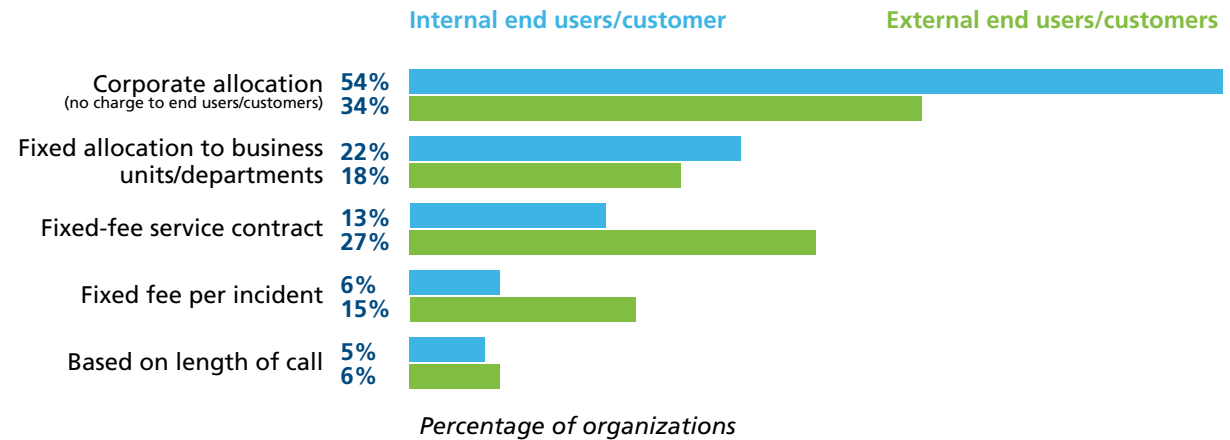
Warranty repairs



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Charging end users/customers for support services:

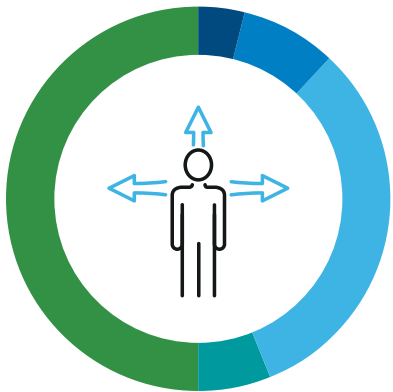


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Outsourcing

Expectations for outsourcing support services over the next year:

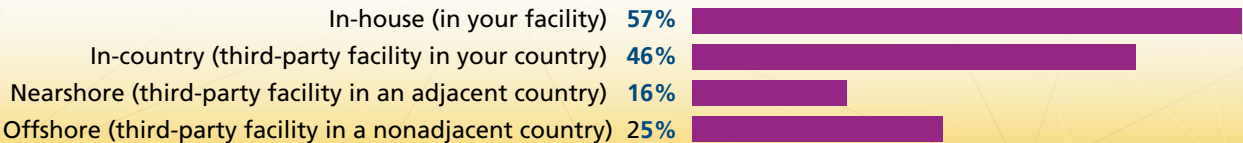


- 4% ● Begin outsourcing
- 8% ● Outsource more
- 32% ● No change in the current level of outsourcing
- 6% ● Outsource less
- 50% ● We don't outsource and have no plans to start

Percentage of organizations

60% of organizations that are currently outsourcing are outsourcing less than half of their support services.

Distribution of outsourced staff:

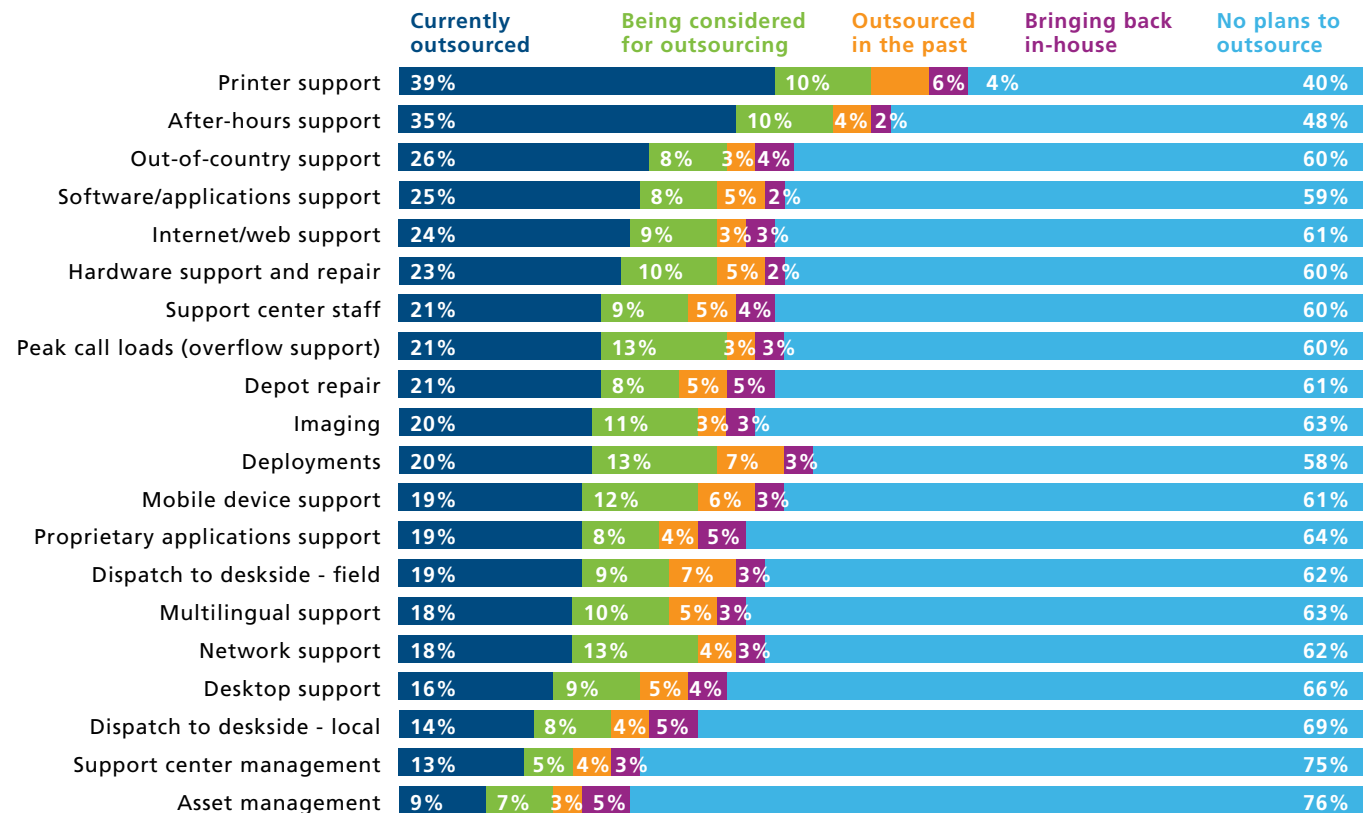


Percentage of organizations

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Outsourcing status for support functions:

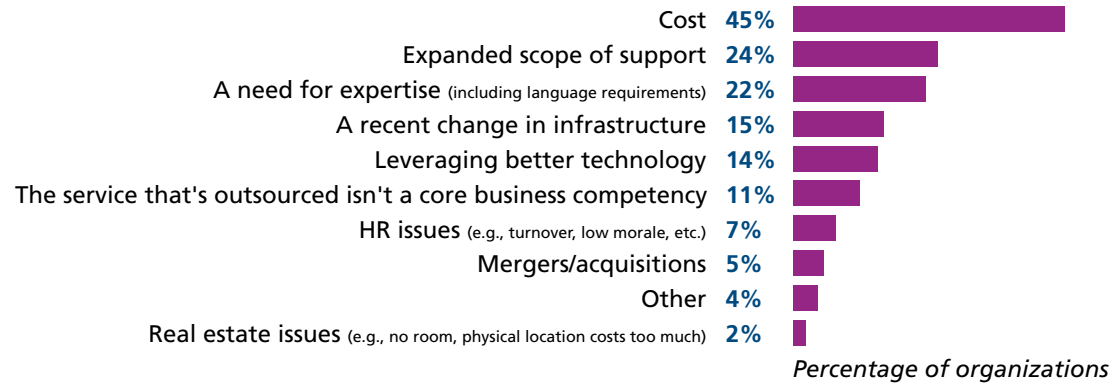


Percentage of organizations

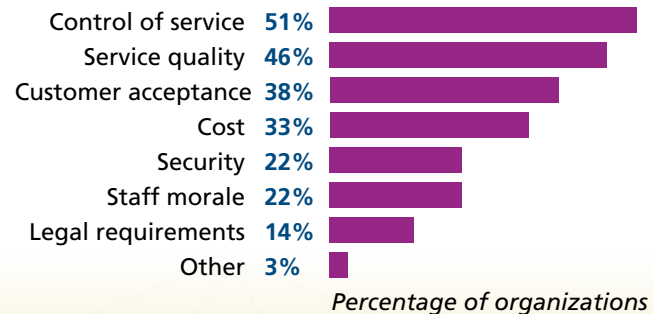
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Factors influencing the decision to outsource or consider outsourcing:



Factors influencing the decision not to outsource:



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Metrics are used for many purposes, from performance evaluations to staffing and budgeting decisions. This section starts with a summary of common industry metrics for quick reference and is followed by a closer analysis about each of the metrics.



Metrics

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Quick reference guide
- Top 10 metrics tracked/measured by support organizations
- Channels used to contact support
- Percentage of tickets received via support channels
- Measuring incidents and service requests
- Ticket types received by the support organization
- Cost per ticket

Customer satisfaction

- Methods for measuring customer satisfaction
- Frequency of formal measurement of customer satisfaction
- Factors that contribute to increased customer satisfaction
- Factors that contribute to decreased customer satisfaction

Response time

- Average speed to answer the phone
- Average time to respond to email
- Average time to respond to voicemail
- Average time to respond to chat
- Average time to respond to tickets submitted via online forms
- Average time to respond to tickets received by desktop support

Time spent on tickets

- Average talk time on the phone
- Average handle time for tickets received by phone
- Average handle time for tickets received by email
- Average handle time for tickets received by chat

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Metrics (cont'd)

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

Reopen, transfer, and abandon rate

- Percentage of tickets reopened after being closed, across all channels
- Percentage of tickets transferred to another channel before being resolved
- Percentage of calls that are abandoned

Resolution time and effort

- Average time to resolve, across all channels
- Average time to resolve a desktop support ticket
- Average amount of dedicated work time spent on a desktop support ticket
- Average amount of effort end users/customers expend to get an issue resolved

Resolution rates

- Percentage of tickets resolved on the initial phone call (first call resolution)
- Percentage of tickets resolved without hierarchical escalation (first level resolution)
- Percentage of tickets resolved by the person who opens the ticket (first contact resolution)
- Percentage of desktop support tickets that are resolved on the technician's first attempt
- Percentage of desktop support tickets that are escalated from desktop support to another department/level
- Percentage of tickets escalated to desktop support that could have been solved by Level 1
- Average amount of time desktop support tickets spend in the queue

Knowledge base

- Percentage of tickets resolved using a knowledge base article/document
- Percentage of tickets that result in the creation of new knowledge articles/documents

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Quick Reference Guide

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction with ticket resolution	85%
Customer satisfaction with desktop support services	85%
Customer satisfaction with support center overall	86%

Ticket handling

Reopened ticket rate (median)	3%	
	Incidents	Service requests
Average time to resolve (median)	1-2 days	1-2 days
Average time to resolve a desktop support ticket (median)	8-24 hours	8-24 hours
Percentage of tickets resolved without hierarchical escalation [first level resolution rate] (average)	66%	65%
Percentage of tickets resolved by the person who opens the ticket [first contact resolution rate] (average)	67%	62%
Percentage of tickets assigned to desktop support that are resolved on the technician's first attempt (average)	69%	72%
Percentage of tickets escalated from desktop support to a higher level (average)	50%	50%

Phone

Average speed to answer (median)	21-30 seconds	
Abandonment rate (median)	5%	
	Incidents	Service requests
Average talk time (median)	8-10 minutes	8-10 minutes
Average handle time (median)	8-10 minutes	8-10 minutes
Percentage of tickets resolved on the first call, by any level [first call resolution rate] (average)	68%	68%

Voicemail

Time to respond (median)	15-60 minutes
--------------------------	---------------

Email

Time to respond (median)	1-4 hours	
	Incidents	Service requests
Average handle time (median)	10-15 minutes	15-20 minutes

Chat

Time to respond (median)	60-90 seconds
--------------------------	---------------

Online form

Time to respond (median)	1-4 hours
--------------------------	-----------

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Top 10 metrics tracked/measured by support organizations:

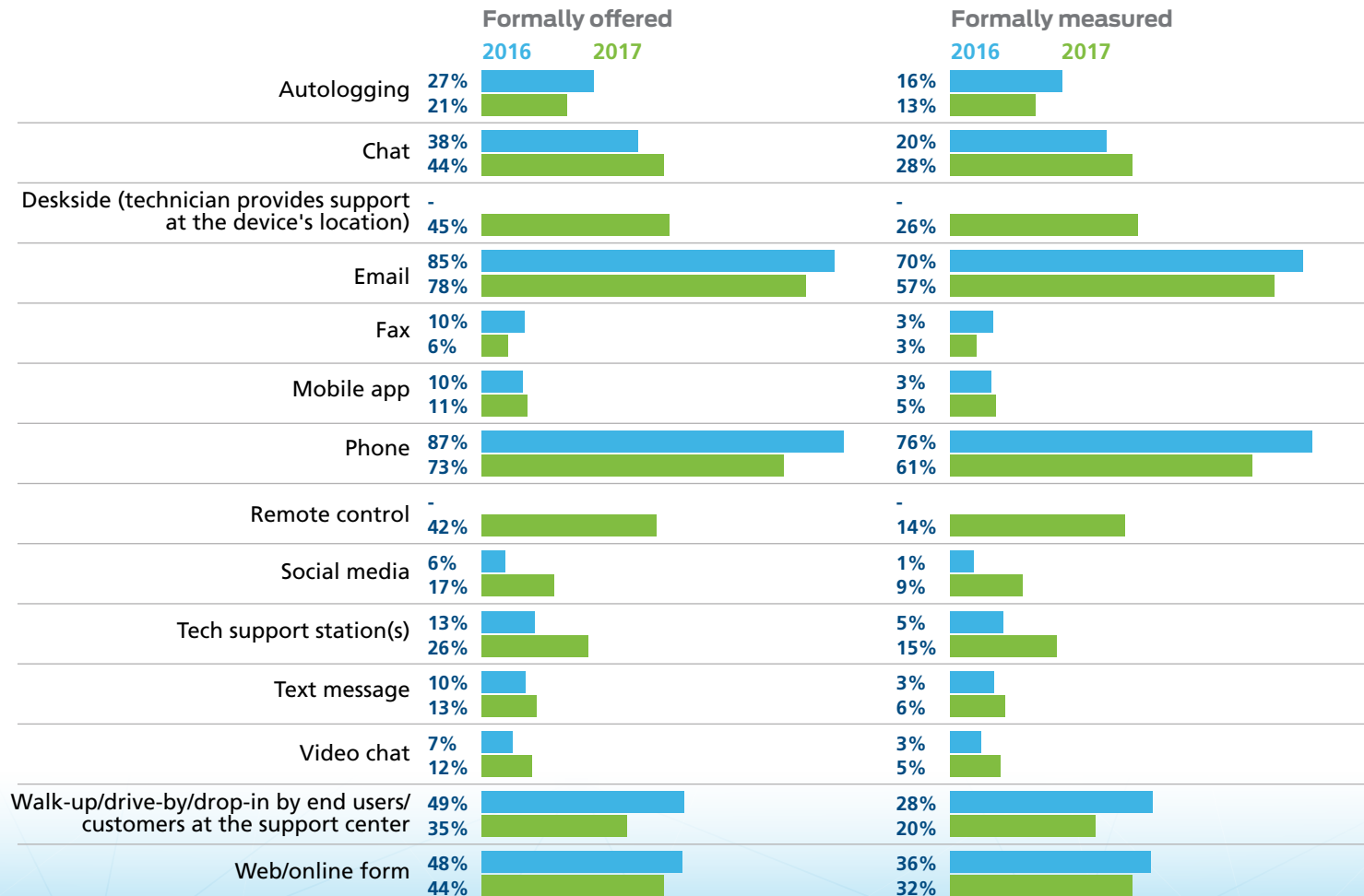
- | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|
| 1 | Average time to resolve tickets | 6 | Average speed to answer (phone) |
| 2 | Customer satisfaction with ticket resolution | 7 | Average time to resolve desktop support tickets |
| 3 | Customer satisfaction with support overall | 8 | Average handle time (phone) |
| 4 | Average number of tickets resolved per staff member | 9 | Average talk time (phone) |
| 5 | Abandonment rate (phone) | 10 | Percentage of tickets resolved by the initial person who opens the ticket |

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64% of an organizations end users/customers contact the support center for support or service.

Channels used to contact support:



Percentage of organizations

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Percentage of tickets received via supported channels:

Autologging	19%
Chat	18%
Deskside (technician provides support at the device's location)	16%
Email	30%
Fax	10%
Mobile app	14%
Phone	42%
Remote control	8%
Social media	16%
Tech support station(s)	17%
Text message	11%
Video chat	10%
Walk-up/drive-by/drop-in by end users/customers at the support center	10%
Web/online form	18%

Percentage of tickets

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Measuring incidents and service requests:

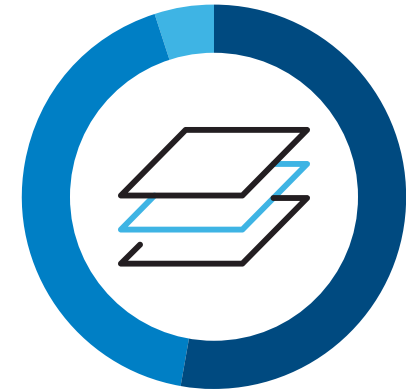


- 53% ● We measure incidents and service requests separately
- 23% ● We distinguish between them but don't measure them separately
- 24% ● We don't distinguish between incidents and service requests

Percentage of organizations

Ticket types received by the support organization:

Includes responses only from those organizations that measure incidents and service requests separately



- 53% ● Incidents
- 42% ● Service requests
- 5% ● Other

Percentage of tickets

An **incident** is defined as any unplanned work required to fix something. A **service request** is usually planned or scheduled work (that is, nothing is broken, but a service is needed).

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Cost per Ticket



Cost per ticket (all channels):

The cost of operations (including people, infrastructure, and overhead) divided by the total number of tickets received through any channel

\$25.00
median



Cost per ticket (desktop support):

The cost of operations (including people, infrastructure, and overhead) divided by the total number of tickets received by desktop support

\$30.00
median



Unburdened cost per ticket, labor only (desktop support):

The cost of labor divided by the total number of tickets received by desktop support

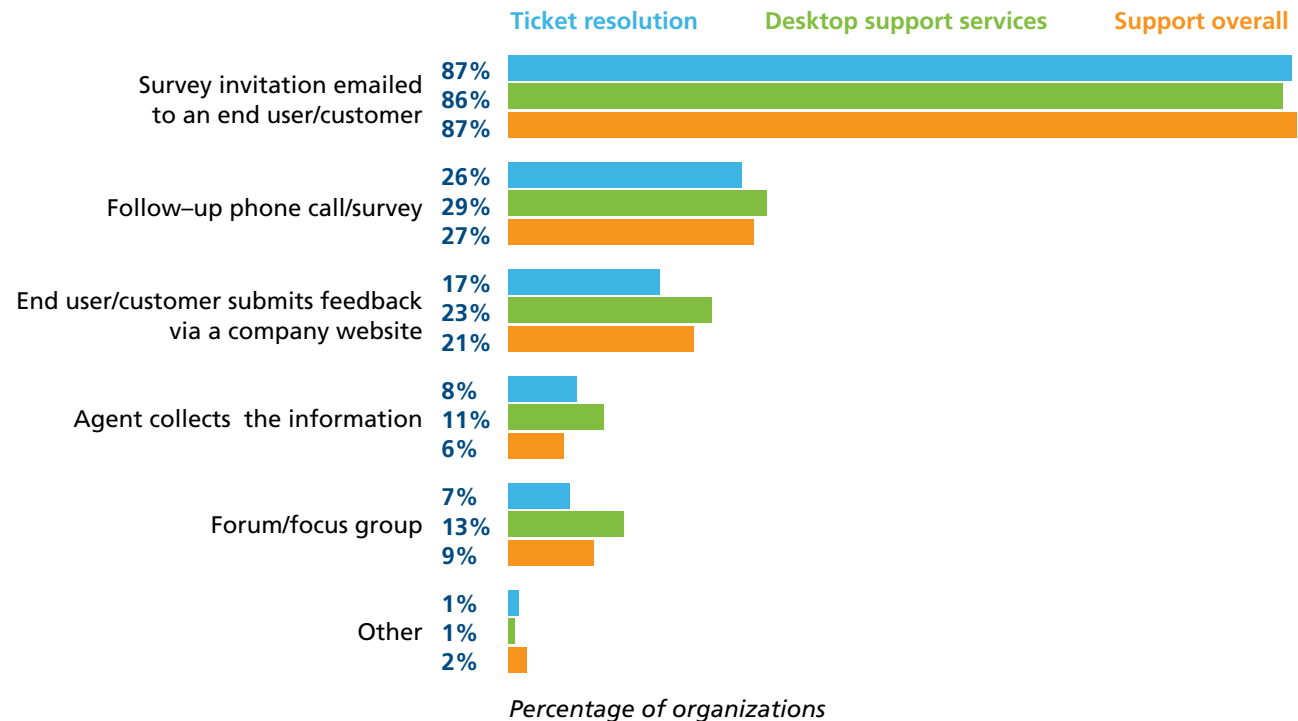
\$17.00
median

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Customer Satisfaction

Methods for measuring customer satisfaction:



On average...

85%

of end users/customers are satisfied with ticket resolution.

85%

of end users/customers are satisfied with desktop support services.

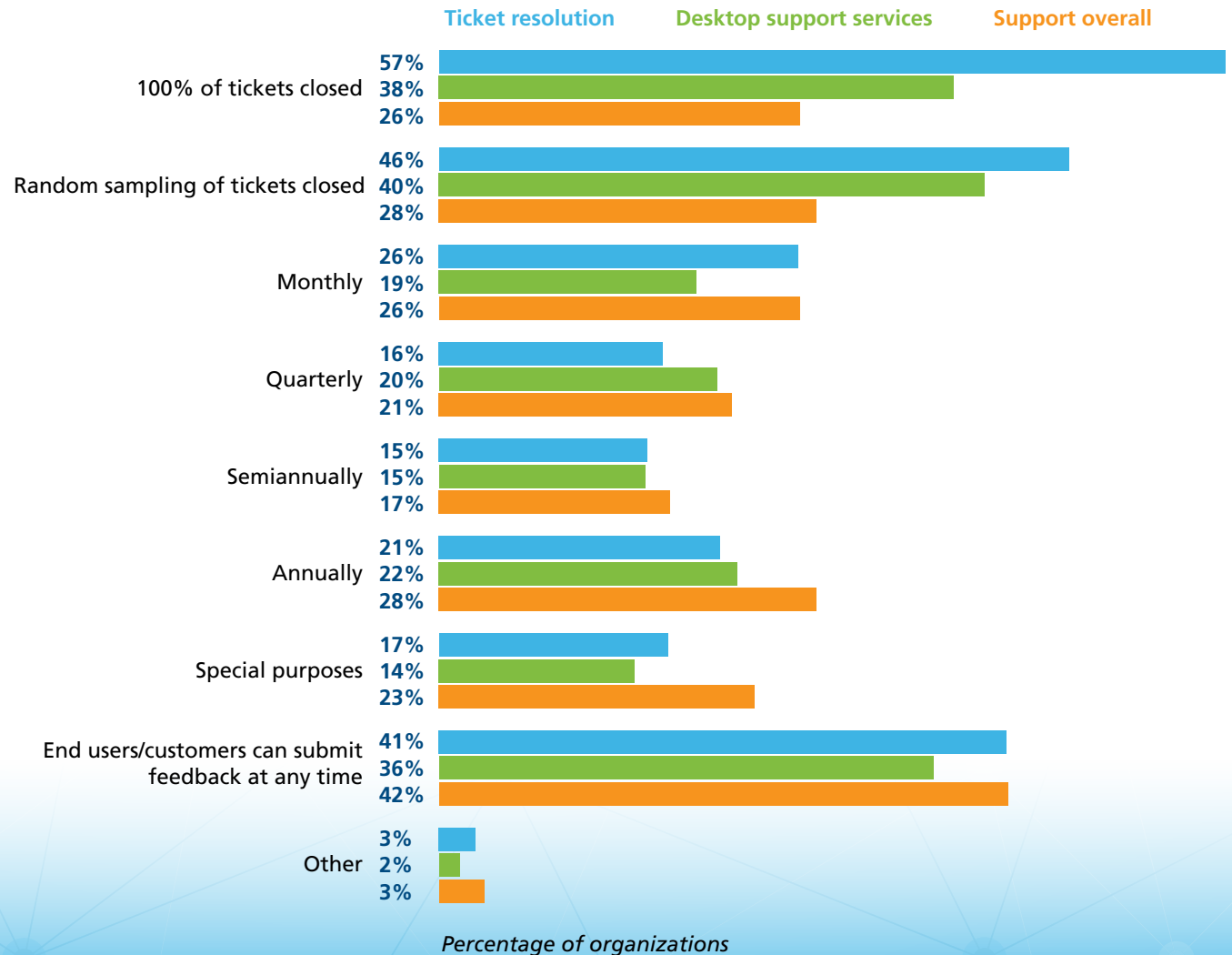
86%

of end users/customers are satisfied with support overall.

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Frequency of formal measurement of customer satisfaction:



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Factors that contribute to increased customer satisfaction:

 Staff competency/training 58%	 Availability of support 41%	 Knowledge management 37%	 Additional staff/resources 32%	 Proactive monitoring 25%	
New support center technology		24%	Scope of services offered		11%
Remote control		22%	Expanded channels (e.g., walk-up support)		10%
New applications/software		21%	Brought functions back in-house		10%
Self-help (e.g., Tier 0)		20%	Scope of devices supported		8%
Shift-left		17%	Communication plan (including social media strategy)		8%
Problem management		16%	Security and compliance requirements		8%
End user/customer competency/training		16%	Outsourcing desktop support functions		8%
Change management		13%	Consultant		6%
Marketing your services		12%	Outsourcing service desk functions		3%
Request management		12%	Other		3%
New equipment/devices		12%	Percentage of organizations		

42% of organizations report an increase in customer satisfaction.

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**6% of organizations report a decrease in customer satisfaction.
These are the top 5 reasons why:**

- 1** Lack of staff/resources
- 2** Staff competency/training
- 3** End user/customer competency/training
- 4** New applications/software
- 5** Scope of devices supported | Availability of support (tied)

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Response Time

Average speed to answer the phone (i.e., speak to a person):

Includes regular support hours only



- 5% ● Less than 5 seconds
- 18% ● 5–10 seconds
- 14% ● 11–20 seconds
- 21% ● 21–30 seconds
- 14% ● 31–59 seconds
- 15% ● 60–90 seconds
- 12% ● More than 90 seconds

Percentage of organizations

81–90% of tickets submitted via phone meet the stated SLA (median).

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Average time to respond to email:

Includes regular support hours only; doesn't include automatic receipt acknowledgement



- 11% ● Less than 15 minutes
- 35% ● 15–60 minutes
- 40% ● 1–4 hours
- 12% ● 4–8 hours
- 3% ● More than 8 hours

Percentage of organizations

81–90% of tickets submitted via email
meet the stated SLA (median).

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Average time to respond to voicemail:

Includes regular support hours only



- 19% ● Less than 15 minutes
- 50% ● 15–60 minutes
- 27% ● 1–4 hours
- 4% ● 4–8 hours
- 0% ● More than 8 hours

Percentage of organizations

71–90% of tickets submitted via voicemail meet the stated SLA (median).

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Average time to respond to chat:

Doesn't include automatic receipt acknowledgement



- 40% ● Less than 60 seconds
- 27% ● 60–90 seconds
- 20% ● 90–120 seconds
- 13% ● More than 120 seconds

Percentage of organizations

81–90% of tickets submitted via chat
meet the stated SLA (median).

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Average time to respond to tickets submitted via online forms:

Includes regular support hours only; doesn't include automatic receipt acknowledgement



8%	●	Less than 15 minutes
26%	●	15–60 minutes
45%	●	1–4 hours
16%	●	4–8 hours
3%	●	8–24 hours
3%	●	More than 24 hours

Percentage of organizations

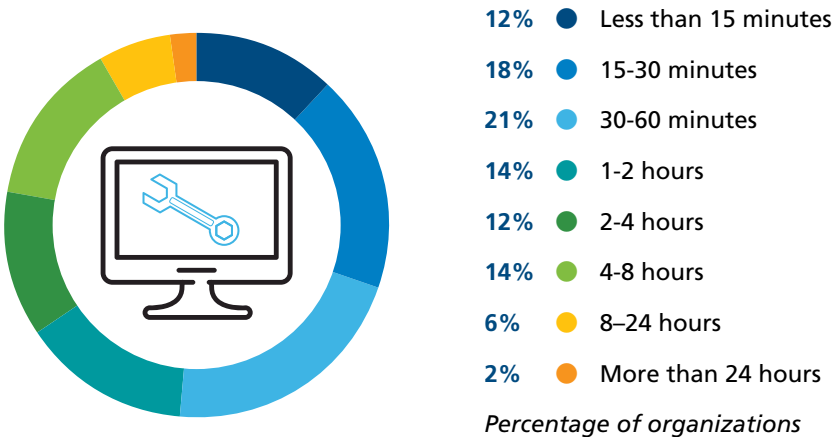
81–90% of tickets submitted via online forms
meet the stated SLA (median).

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Average time to respond to tickets received by desktop support:

Includes regular support hours only; doesn't include urgent/high-priority tickets



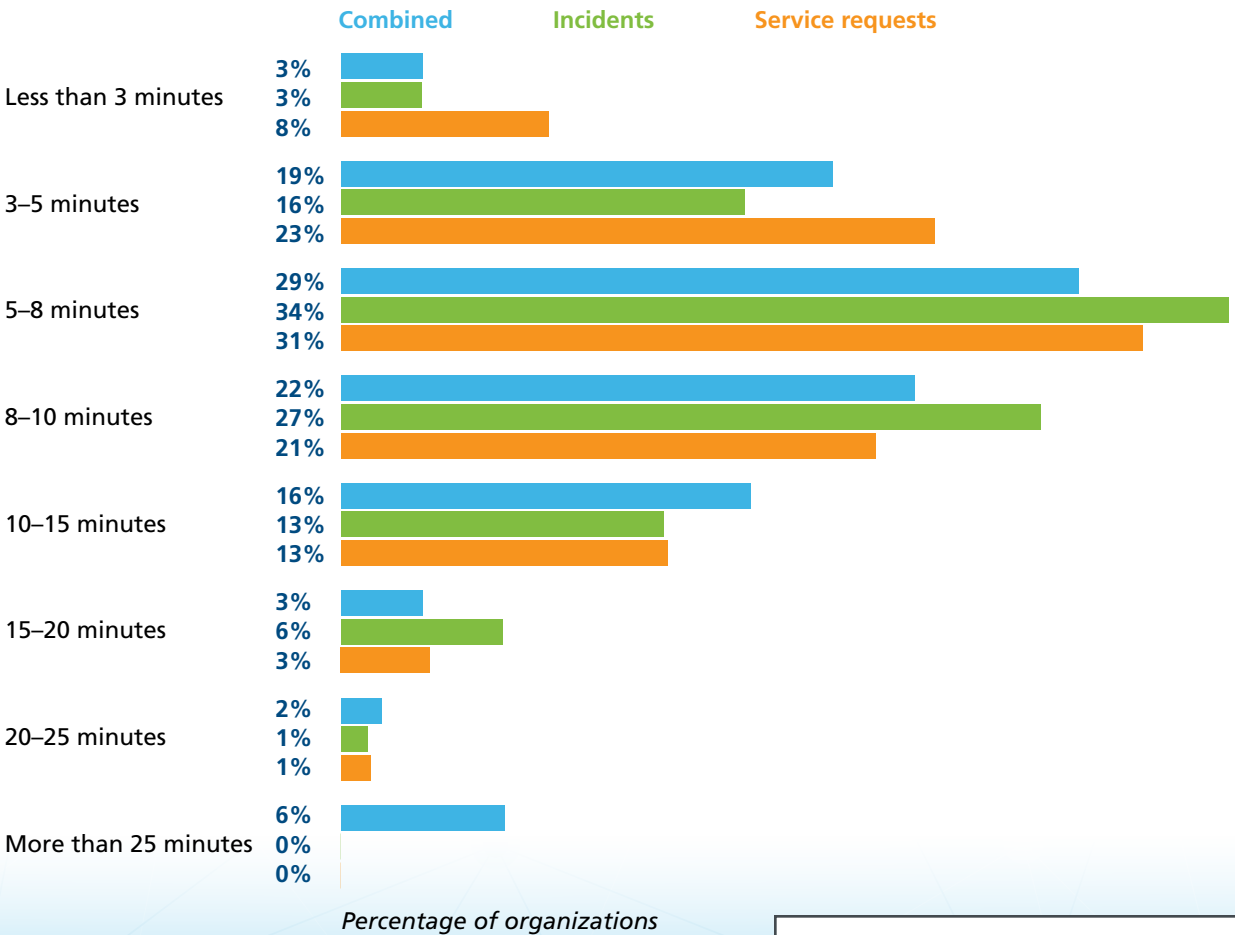
81–90% of tickets received by desktop support meet the stated SLA (median).

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Time Spent on Tickets

Average talk time on the phone (from answer to hang up):



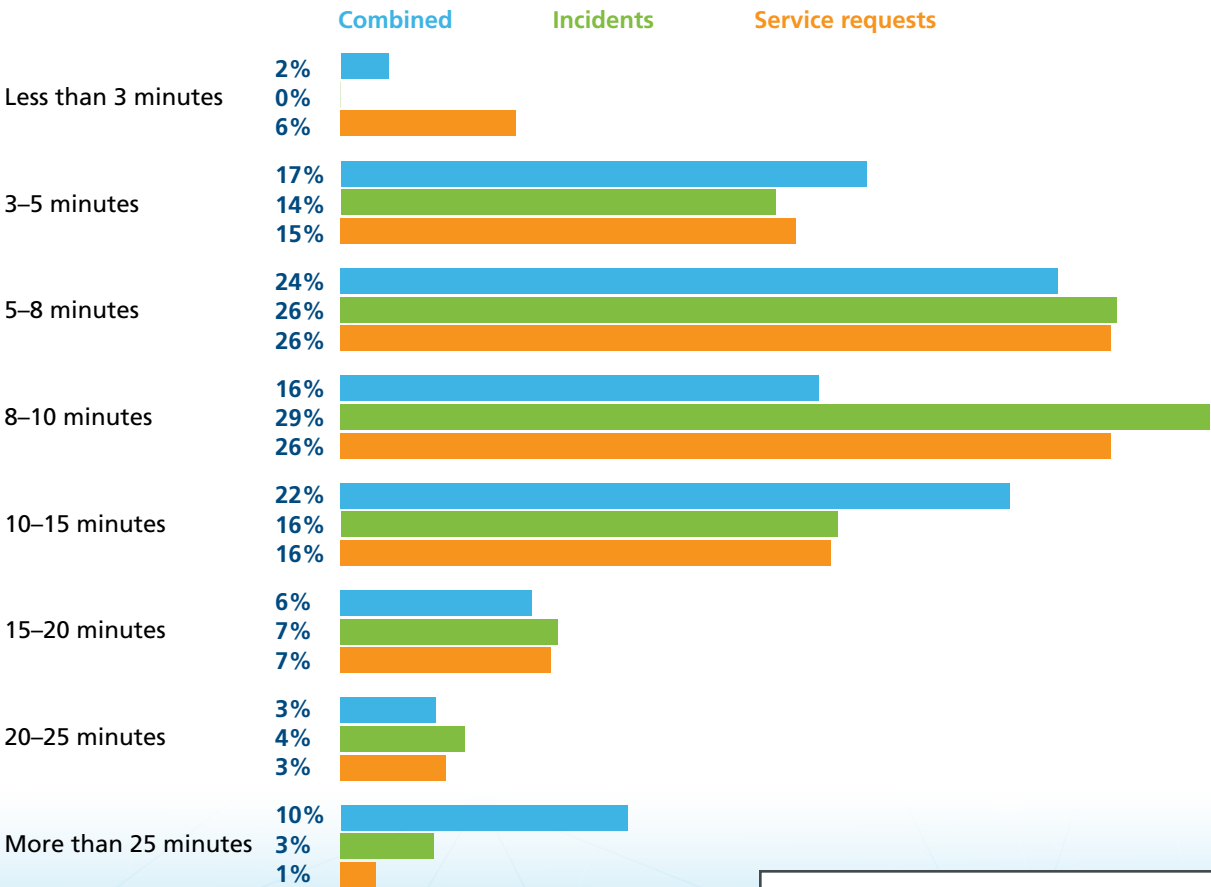
Percentage of tickets that meet the stated SLA (median)

71-80% 81-90% 81-90%

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Average handle time for tickets received by phone
(including talk time and wrap-up time):



Percentage of organizations

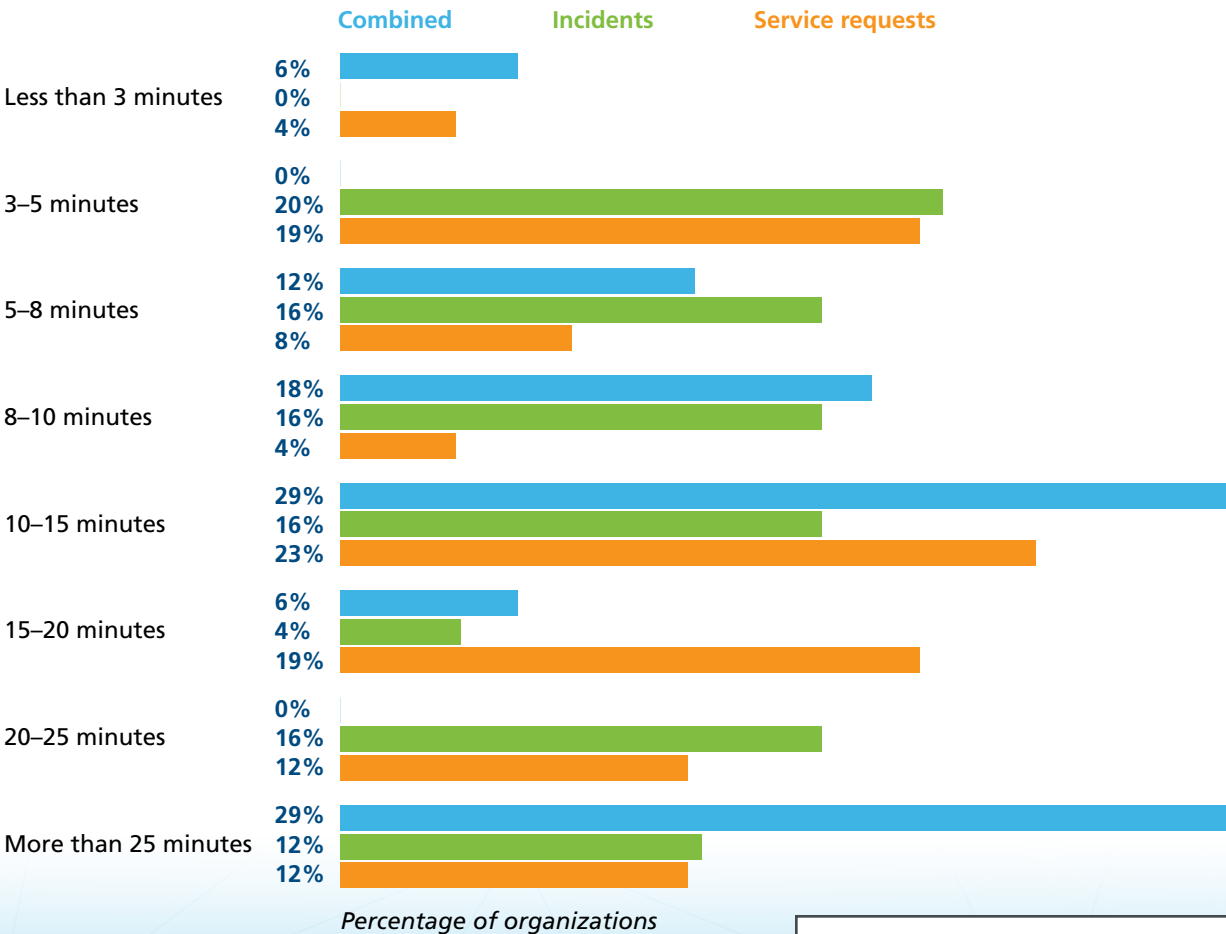
Percentage of tickets that
meet the stated SLA (median)

81-90% 81-90% 81-90%

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Average handle time for tickets received by email:



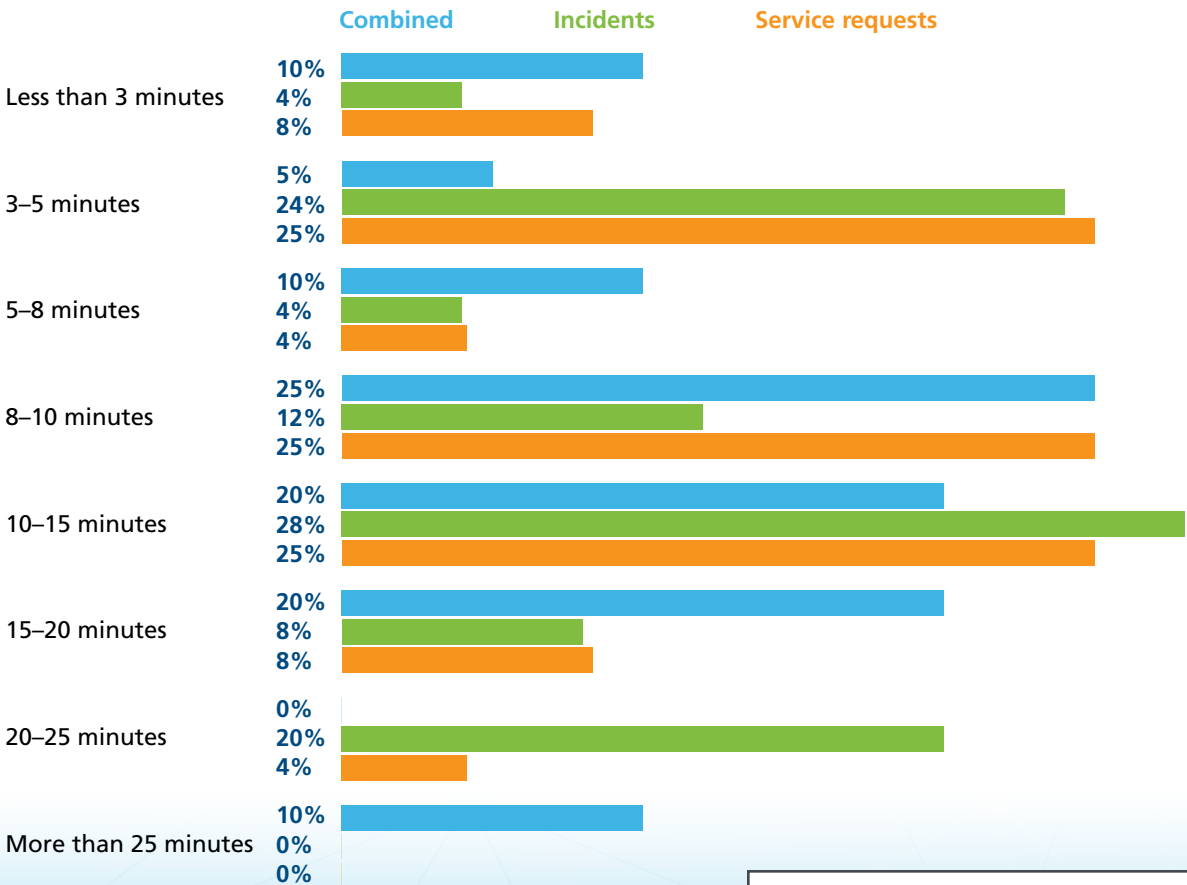
Percentage of tickets that meet the stated SLA (median)

71-80% 81-90% 81-90%

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Average handle time for tickets received by chat
(including chat time and wrap-up):



Percentage of organizations

Percentage of tickets that
meet the stated SLA (median)

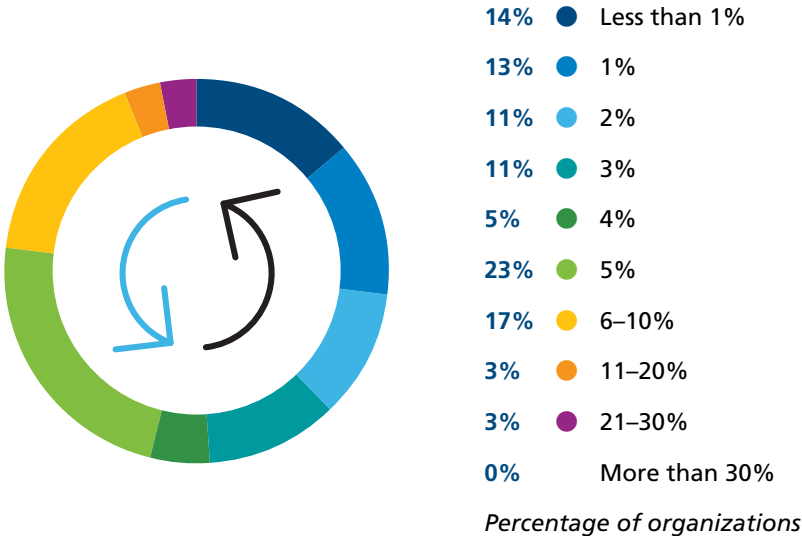
71-80% 81-90% 81-90%

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Reopen, Transfer, and Abandon Rate

Percentage of tickets reopened after being closed, across all channels:



81–90% of tickets meet the stated SLA for reopened ticket rate (median).

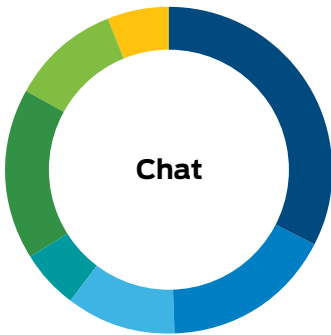
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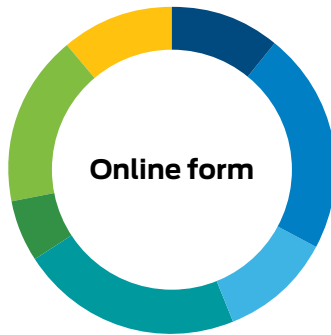
Percentage of tickets transferred to another channel before being resolved:



36%	●	Less than 10%
29%	●	10–20%
14%	●	21–30%
4%	●	31–40%
0%	●	41–50%
7%	●	51–60%
4%	●	61–70%
4%	●	71–80%
0%	●	81–90%
4%	●	91–100%



33%	●	Less than 10%
17%	●	10–20%
0%	●	21–30%
0%	●	31–40%
11%	●	41–50%
6%	●	51–60%
17%	●	61–70%
0%	●	71–80%
11%	●	81–90%
6%	●	91–100%



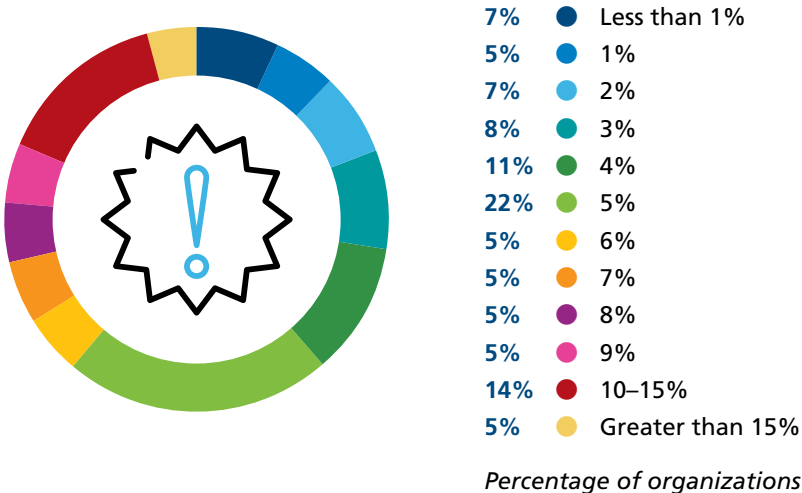
11%	●	Less than 10%
22%	●	10–20%
11%	●	21–30%
22%	●	31–40%
6%	●	41–50%
17%	●	51–60%
0%	●	61–70%
11%	●	71–80%
0%	●	81–90%
0%	●	91–100%

Percentage of organizations

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Percentage of calls that are abandoned (i.e., not answered):



81–90% of tickets meet the stated SLA for call abandonment (median).

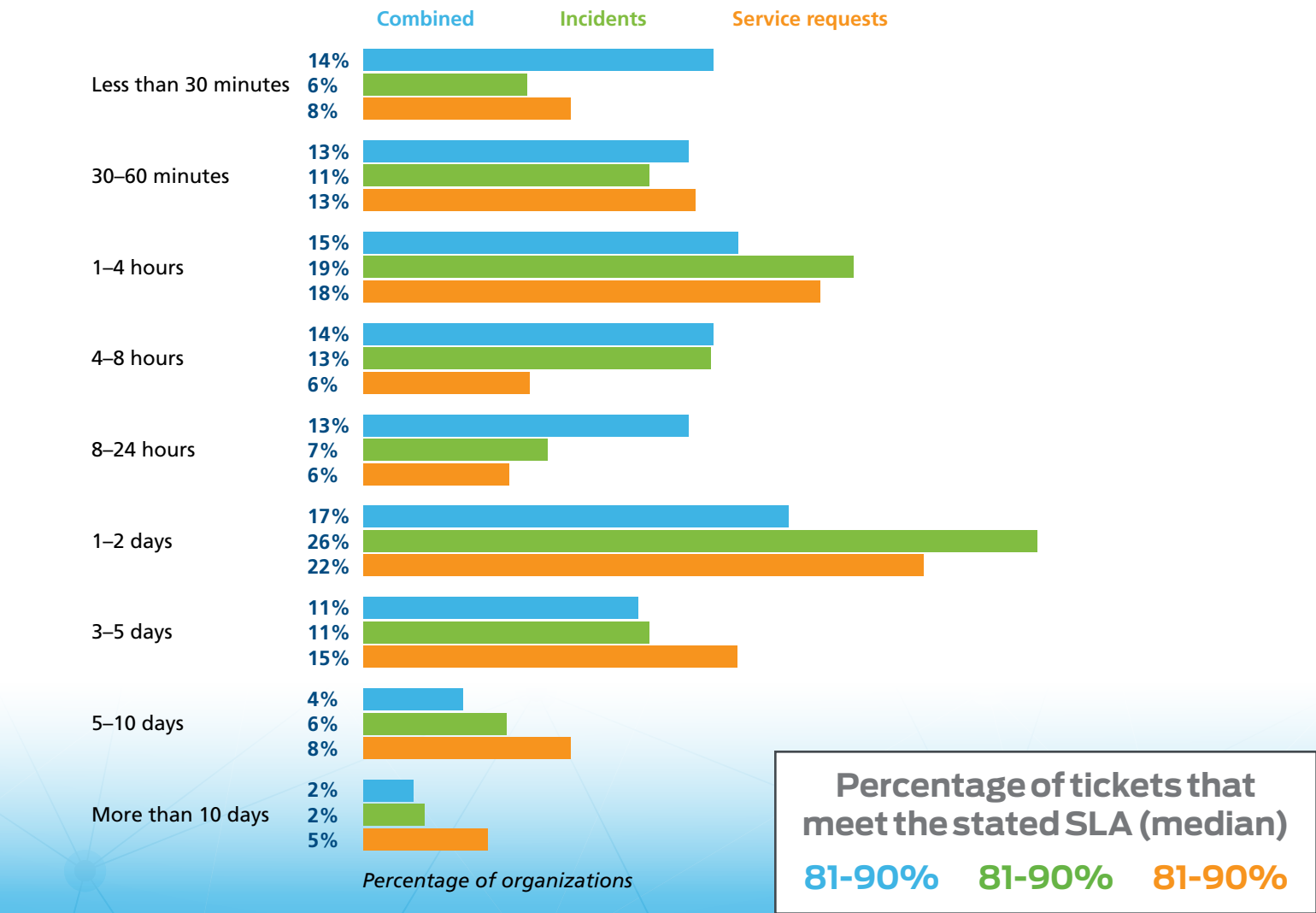
CLICK/TAP
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Resolution Time and Effort

Average time to resolve (from open to final resolution), across all channels:

Does not include urgent/high-priority tickets

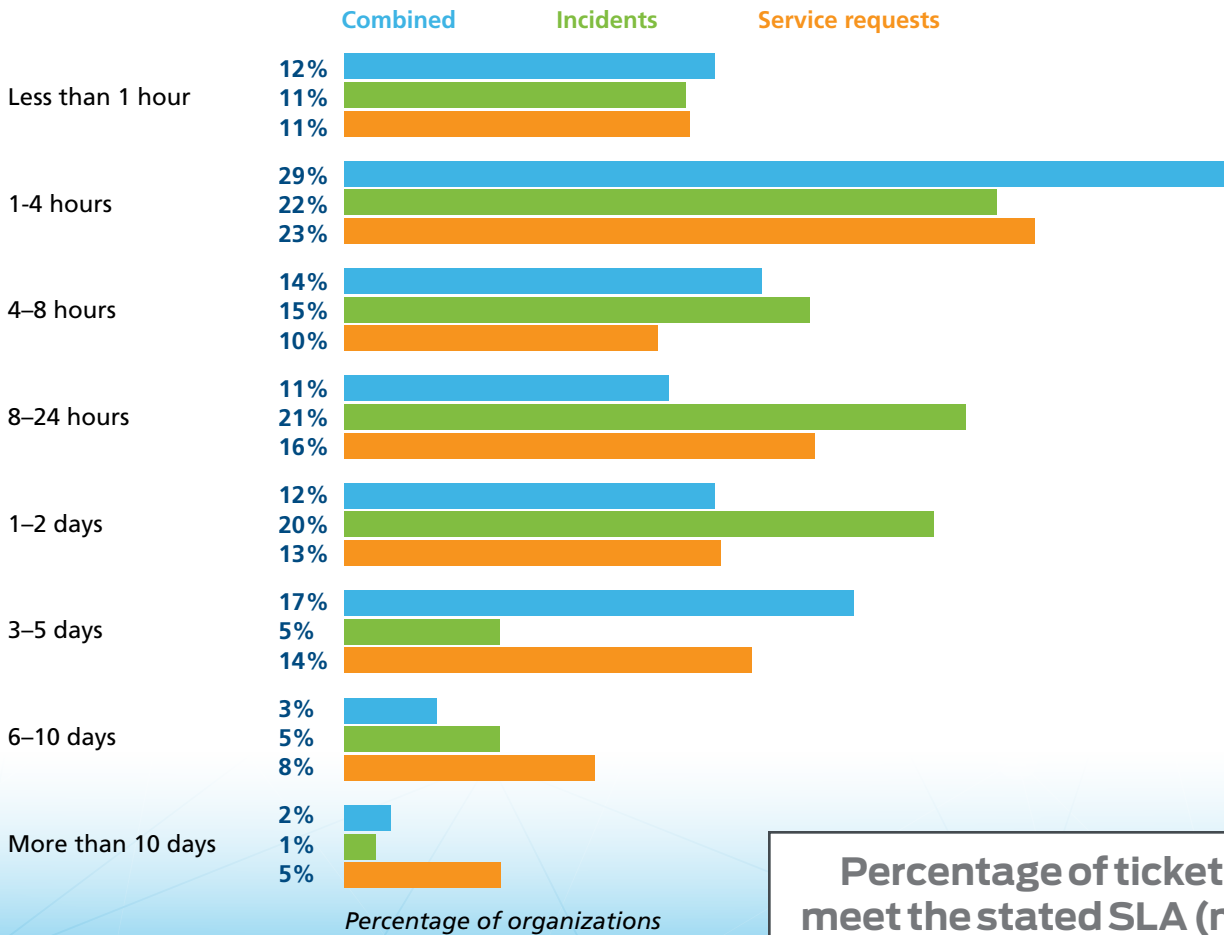


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Average time to resolve a desktop support ticket
(from open to final resolution):

Does not include urgent/high-priority tickets



Percentage of tickets that
meet the stated SLA (median)

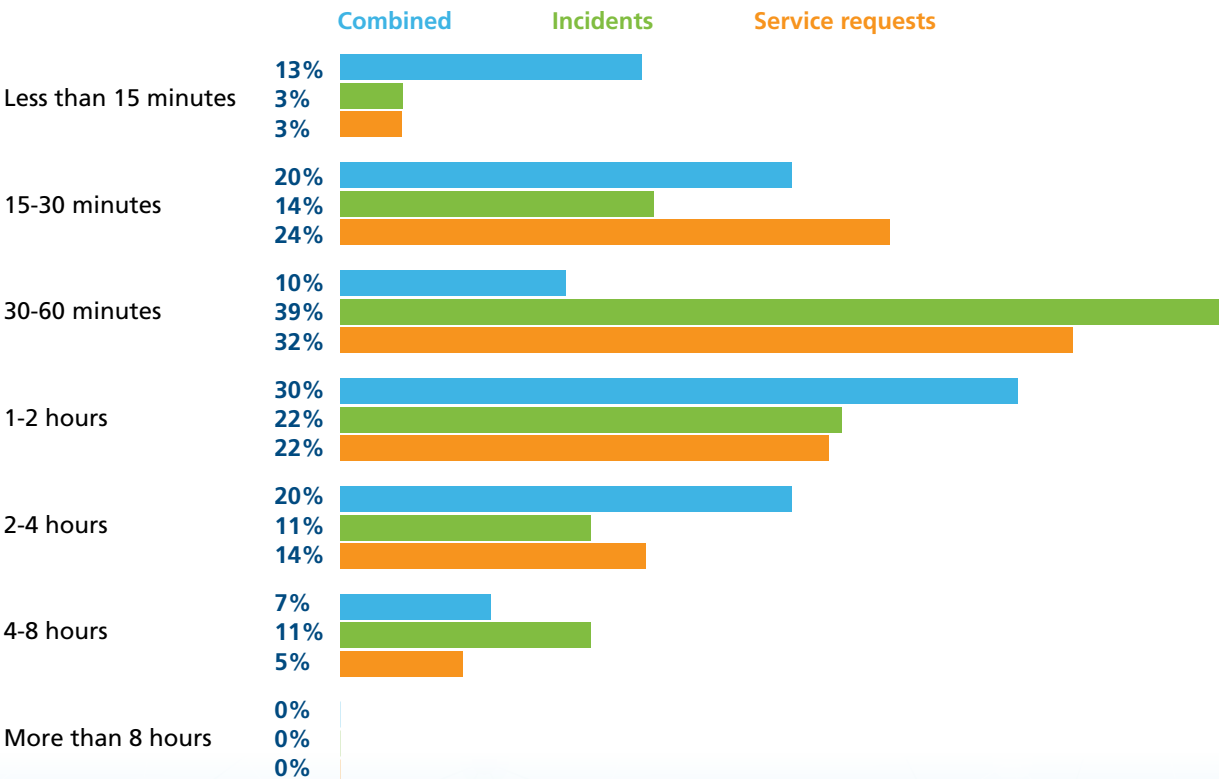
81-90% 81-90% 81-90%

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Average amount of dedicated work time (effort)
spent on a desktop support ticket:

Does not include urgent/high-priority tickets



Percentage of organizations

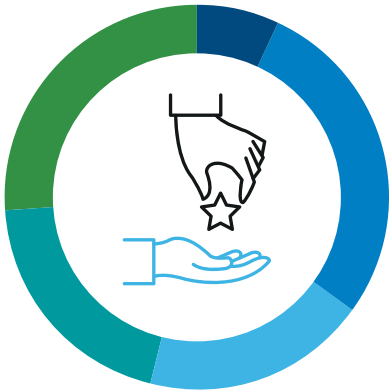
Percentage of tickets that
meet the stated SLA (median)

81-90% 81-90% 81-90%

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Average amount of effort end users/customers expend to get an issue resolved:



- 7% ● Very low effort
- 28% ● Low effort
- 19% ● Neither high nor low effort
- 20% ● High effort
- 26% ● Very high effort

Percentage of organizations

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Resolution Rates

Percentage of tickets resolved on the initial phone call (first call resolution):

	Combined	Incidents	Service requests
Actual	67%	68%	68%
Target	72%	74%	78%

Percentage of tickets resolved without hierarchical escalation (first level resolution):

	Combined	Incidents	Service requests
Actual	68%	66%	65%
Target	70%	70%	75%

Percentage of tickets resolved by the person who opens the ticket (first contact resolution):

	Combined	Incidents	Service requests
Actual	64%	67%	62%
Target	73%	72%	72%

Percentage of desktop support tickets that are resolved on the technician's first attempt:

	Combined	Incidents	Service requests
Actual	68%	69%	72%
Target	78%	80%	81%

Percentage of desktop support tickets that are escalated from desktop support to another department/level:

	Combined	Incidents	Service requests
Actual	33%	50%	50%
Target	32%	49%	49%

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Percentage of tickets escalated to desktop support
that could have been solved by Level 1:

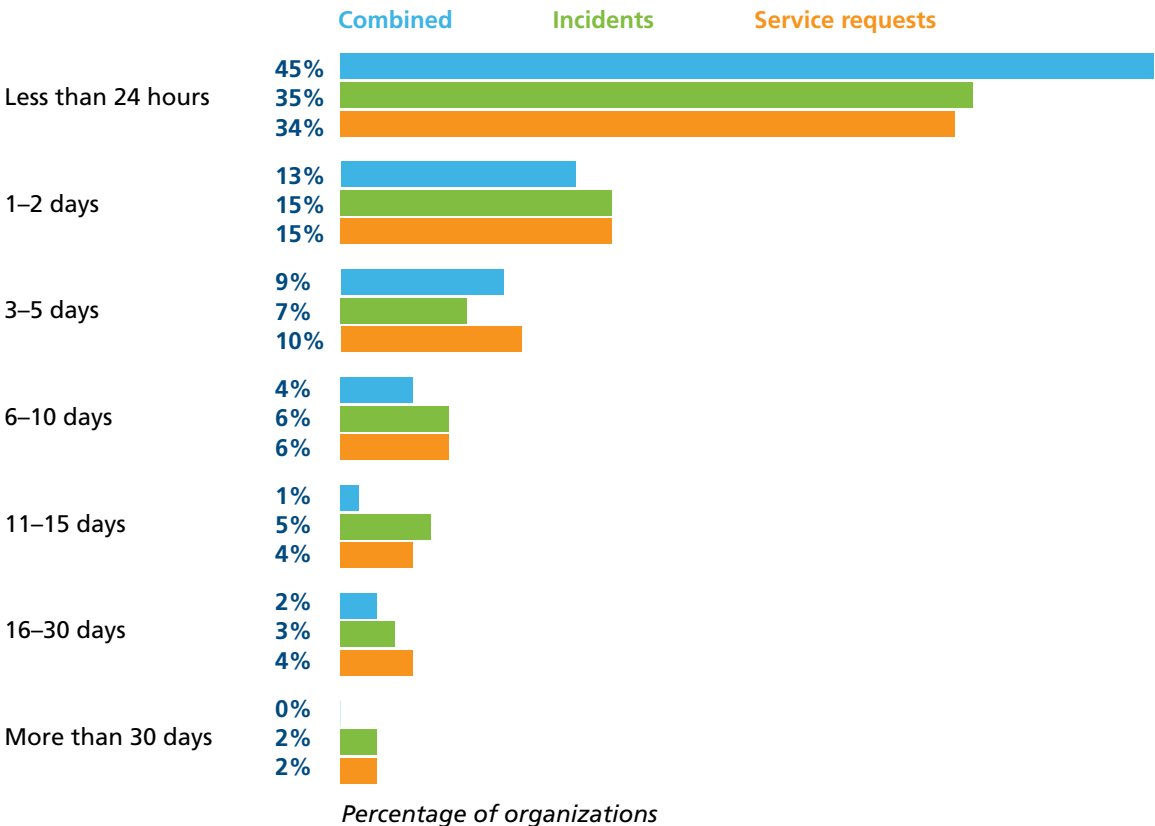
[Number of tickets that could have been resolved by the support center ÷ Total number of tickets received by desktop support]



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Average amount of time desktop support tickets spend in the queue:

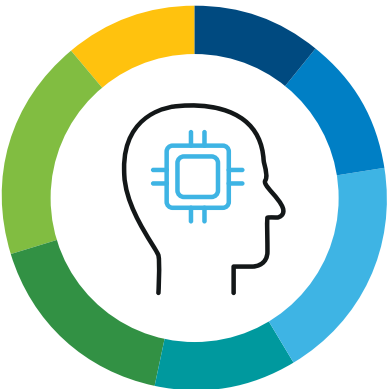


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Knowledge Base

Percentage of tickets resolved using a knowledge base article/document:



- 11% ● 1–5%
- 12% ● 6–10%
- 19% ● 11–30%
- 12% ● 31–50%
- 17% ● 51–70%
- 19% ● 71–90%
- 11% ● 91–100%

Percentage of organizations

Percentage of tickets that result in the creation of new knowledge articles/documents:



- 4% ● 0%
- 15% ● 1–5%
- 19% ● 6–10%
- 28% ● 11–30%
- 9% ● 31–50%
- 9% ● 51–70%
- 9% ● 71–90%
- 9% ● 91–100%

Percentage of organizations

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The quality of service provided by the technical support staff is critical to the reputation of the entire IT organization and/or company. This section sheds light on the technical support industry's plans and practices for hiring, training, certification, and outsourcing, and takes a look at employee satisfaction and tenure.



Staff and Structure

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Roles represented in the support organization
- Leading the support organization

Hiring, promotion, attrition, and retention

- Hiring expectations for the next twelve months
- Top 10 sought-after skills for hiring and promotion
- Average tenure, by position
- Support staff attrition rates
- Current home-based staff policy
- Expectations for allowing staff to work from home
- Differences in expectations and requirements for home-based vs. on-site staff

Training and certification

- Formal training, by position
- Amount of training, by position
- Methods used to train positions at each level
- Primary training focus for new frontline hires
- Time to proficiency for new frontline hires
- Expectations/requirements surrounding frontline staff certification
- Top 5 certifications for frontline staff

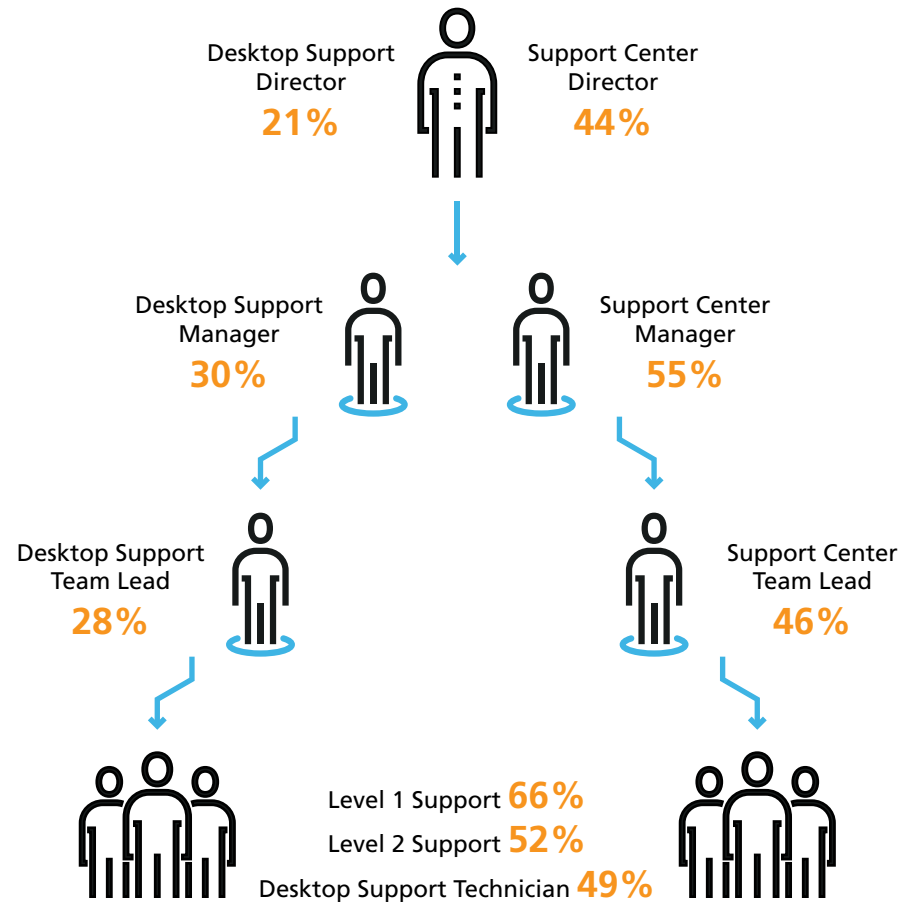
Staff satisfaction

- Frequency of formal measurement of staff satisfaction
- Average staff satisfaction
- Factors contributing to staff satisfaction
- Factors contributing to staff dissatisfaction

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Roles represented in the support organization:



Percentage of organizations that have each role

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Leading the support organization:



- This role is responsible for a specific area (e.g., support center, desktop support)
- This role is responsible for more than one area (e.g., desktop support, network operations)

Percentage of organizations

Top 3 additional areas of responsibility:*

	Support Center Manager	Desktop Support Manager	Support Center Director	Desktop Support Director
1	Service support	Desktop engineering	Service support	Desktop engineering
2	Applications	Service support	Applications	VIP support/service support
3	Network support	Applications	Network support	Network support

** Doesn't include core area (i.e., support center, desktop support)*

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Hiring, Promotion, Attrition, and Retention

Hiring expectations for the next twelve months:



- 29% ● Expanding: Creating and filling new positions
- 48% ● Filling: Hiring for current positions as they come open
- 20% ● Frozen: Not filling open positions
- 3% ● Cutting: Reducing current staff numbers

Percentage of organizations

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Top 10 sought-after skills for hiring and promotion:

Rank	Level 1 Support	Level 2 Support	Desktop Support Technician	Support Center Team Lead	Desktop Support Team Lead
1	Customer service	Customer service	Customer service	Communication skills	Communication skills
2	Communication skills	Communication skills	Communication skills	Leadership skills	Customer service
3	Ability to learn quickly	Ability to learn quickly	Troubleshooting/problem-solving	Customer service	Leadership skills
4	Ability to work under pressure	Troubleshooting/problem-solving	Ability to learn quickly	Ability to work under pressure	Ability to work under pressure
5	Troubleshooting/problem-solving	Ability to work under pressure	Ability to work under pressure	Integrity	Integrity
6	Adaptability	Interpersonal skills	Self-motivated, independent worker	Interpersonal skills	Business knowledge
7	Interpersonal skills	Self-motivated, independent worker	Integrity	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal skills
8	Teamwork skills	Teamwork skills	Teamwork skills	Management skills	Adaptability
9	Integrity	Integrity	Adaptability	Adaptability	Teamwork skills
10	Self-motivated, independent worker	Adaptability	Interpersonal skills	Business knowledge	Troubleshooting/problem-solving

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Top 10 sought-after skills for hiring and promotion (cont'd):

Rank	Support Center Manager	Desktop Support Manager	Support Center Director	Desktop Support Director
1	Leadership skills	Leadership skills	Leadership skills	Leadership skills
2	Communication skills	Communication skills	Communication skills	Communication skills
3	Management skills	Management skills	Management skills	Business knowledge
4	Business knowledge	Business knowledge	Strategic thinking	Management skills
5	Customer service	Customer service	Business knowledge	Integrity
6	Integrity	Integrity	Financial management	Financial management
7	Strategic thinking	Strategic thinking	Integrity	Strategic thinking
8	Interpersonal skills	Ability to work under pressure	Project management	Interpersonal skills
9	Ability to work under pressure	Interpersonal skills	Customer service	Ability to work under pressure
10	Project management	Project management	Interpersonal skills	Project management

Organizations are having the most difficulty finding skilled candidates to fill the following positions:

1
Support Center
Director

2
Support Center
Manager

3
Desktop Support
Manager

4
Support Center
Team Lead

5
Desktop Support
Director

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Average tenure, by position:

	Level 1 Support	Level 2 Support	Desktop Support Technician	Support Center Team Lead	Desktop Support Team Lead	Support Center Manager	Desktop Support Manager	Support Center Director	Desktop Support Director
Less than 1 year	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	5%
1 year	14%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%
2 years	22%	16%	13%	11%	9%	6%	7%	5%	4%
3 years	20%	19%	19%	14%	10%	14%	10%	9%	7%
4 years	9%	8%	10%	9%	7%	7%	6%	6%	3%
5 years	12%	16%	17%	17%	13%	10%	12%	8%	6%
5–8 years	9%	16%	17%	17%	22%	19%	13%	15%	16%
8–10 years	3%	7%	10%	8%	13%	10%	15%	10%	10%
More than 10 years	5%	12%	10%	19%	23%	30%	32%	43%	43%

Percentage of organizations

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Support staff attrition rates:

	Level 1 Support	Level 2 Support	Desktop Support Technician
Left the company in the past twelve months	14%	7%	7%
Left the support organization in the past twelve months, but stayed within the company	9%	7%	6%
Changed positions in the past twelve months, but stayed within the support organization	8%	9%	5%

Percentage of organizations

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Current home-based staff policy:



- 6% ● All staff work from home at all times
- 10% ● All staff work from home some of the time
- 12% ● Some staff work from home at all times
- 29% ● Some staff work from home some of the time
- 7% ● We're planning to implement this in the next 12 months
- 36% ● We have no plans to implement this in the next 12 months

Percentage of organizations

Expectations for allowing staff to work from home:



- 26% ● Increase
- 68% ● Remain the same
- 6% ● Decrease

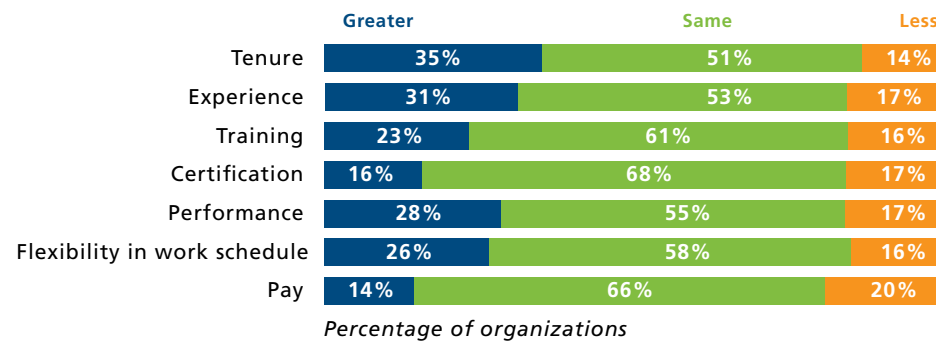
Percentage of organizations

34% of organizations with home-based staff dispatch those staff members to the end user/customer's physical location as needed.

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Differences in expectations and requirements for home-based vs. on-site staff:



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Training and Certification

Formal training, by position:

Includes responses only from those organizations that have each position

	Level 1 Support	Level 2 Support	Desktop Support Technician	Support Center Team Lead	Desktop Support Team Lead
Communication	33%	24%	19%	23%	20%
Customer service	49%	39%	35%	29%	24%
Leadership	7%	10%	7%	37%	32%
People management (e.g., coaching, performance management, recruiting)	10%	15%	7%	37%	28%
Project management	5%	11%	7%	17%	18%
Safety	28%	23%	27%	30%	23%
Security	32%	33%	32%	36%	27%
Self-management (e.g., stress, time, assertiveness, interpersonal skills)	20%	17%	16%	24%	18%
Service management process skills	18%	16%	19%	21%	22%
Teamwork skills	29%	25%	23%	27%	26%
Technologies used by customers	44%	39%	38%	32%	25%
Technologies used to provide support	47%	43%	41%	34%	32%
Troubleshooting/problem-solving skills	33%	34%	29%	24%	21%
No formal training for this position	16%	18%	20%	16%	20%

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Training and Certification

Formal training, by position (cont'd):

Includes responses only from those organizations that have each position

	Support Center Manager	Desktop Support Manager	Support Center Director	Desktop Support Director
Communication	19%	18%	18%	15%
Customer service	19%	13%	18%	17%
Leadership	42%	41%	44%	35%
People management (e.g., coaching, performance management, recruiting)	44%	41%	39%	34%
Project management	23%	23%	25%	18%
Safety	29%	28%	27%	25%
Security	32%	28%	32%	29%
Self-management (e.g., stress, time, assertiveness, interpersonal skills)	23%	16%	21%	19%
Service management process skills	25%	18%	24%	21%
Teamwork skills	19%	15%	19%	14%
Technologies used by customers	17%	17%	17%	14%
Technologies used to provide support	19%	15%	16%	18%
Troubleshooting/problem-solving skills	11%	9%	11%	8%
No formal training for this position	21%	23%	23%	27%

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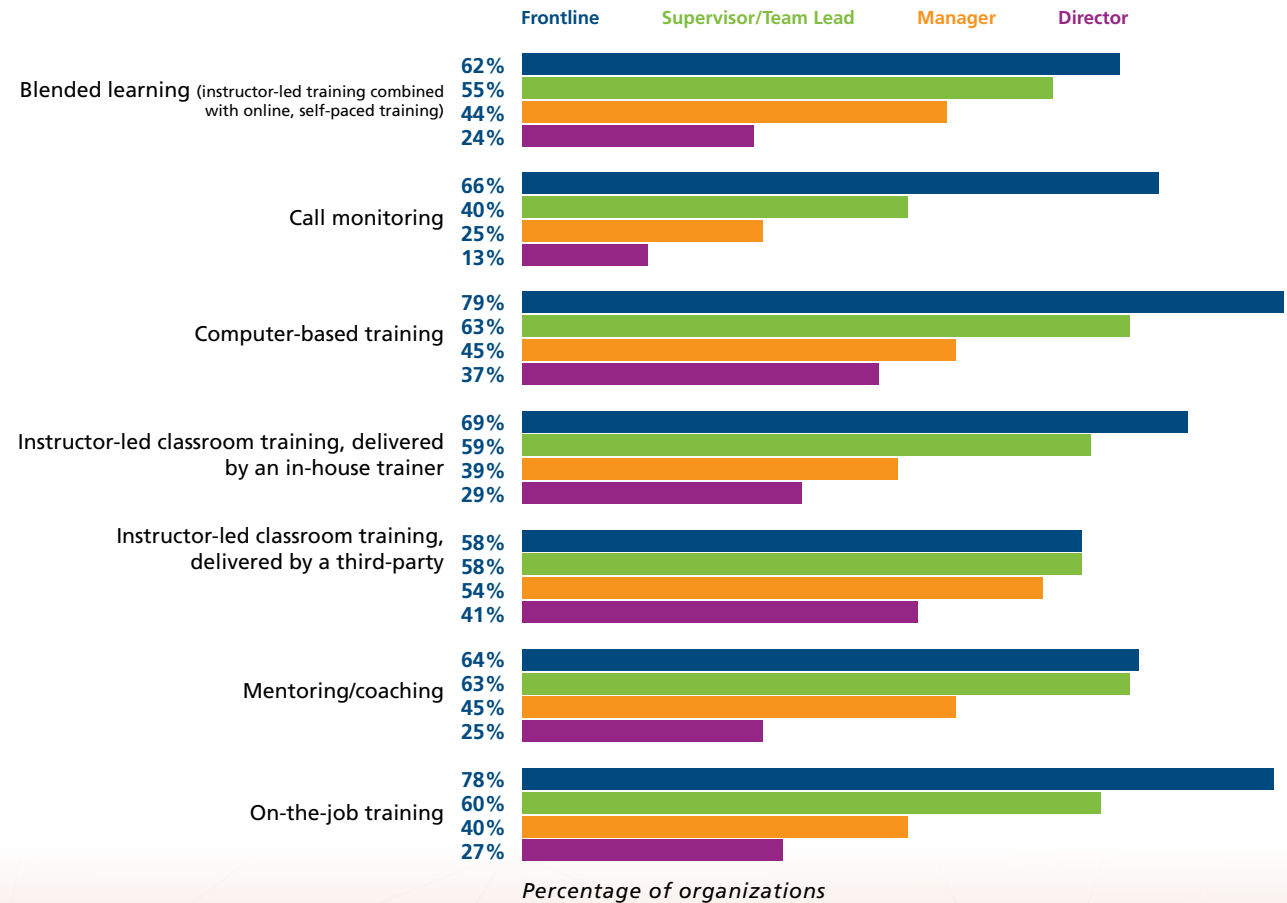
Amount of training, by position:

	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>	<div> <div>M T W T F</div> <div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> <div>16 17 18 19 20</div> <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> <div>26 27 28 29 30</div> </div>
	None	1–5 days	6–10 days	11–15 days	16–20 days	More than 20 days
Level 1 Support	11%	52%	15%	12%	3%	6%
Level 2 Support	11%	43%	27%	10%	5%	4%
Desktop Support Technician	16%	45%	22%	8%	4%	5%
Support Center Team Lead	10%	41%	25%	13%	6%	6%
Desktop Support Team Lead	12%	45%	20%	13%	3%	6%
Support Center Manager	14%	35%	27%	12%	7%	5%
Desktop Support Manager	18%	33%	23%	14%	8%	6%
Support Center Director	18%	32%	22%	15%	8%	5%
Desktop Support Director	21%	32%	22%	11%	9%	5%

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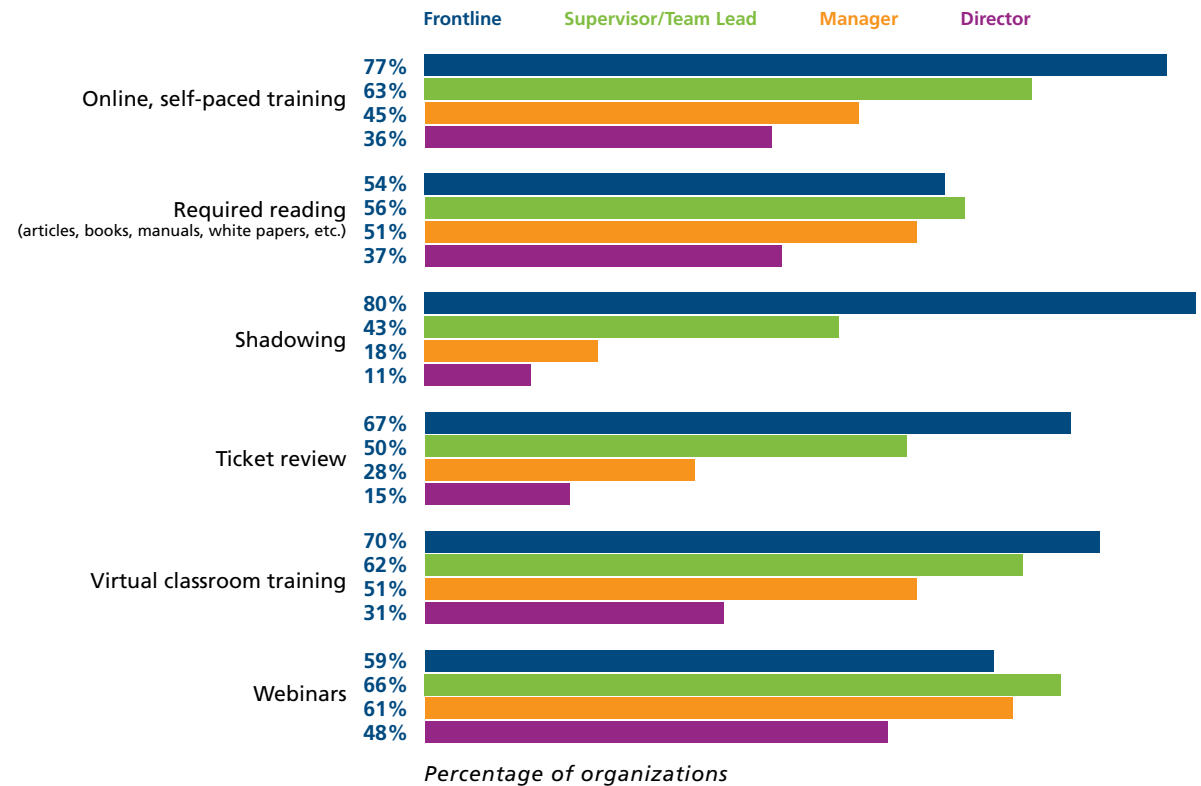
Methods used to train positions at each level:



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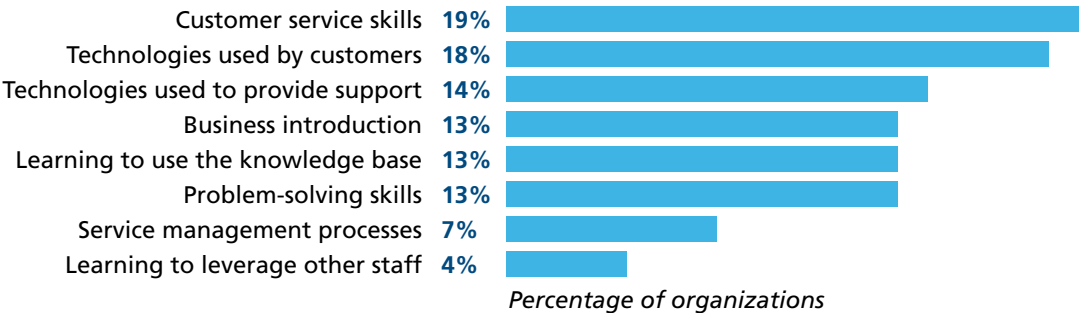
Methods used to train positions at each level (cont'd):



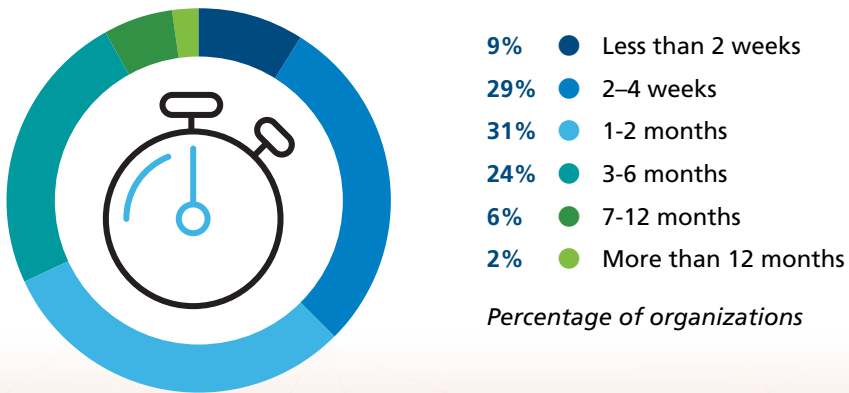
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Primary training focus for new frontline hires:



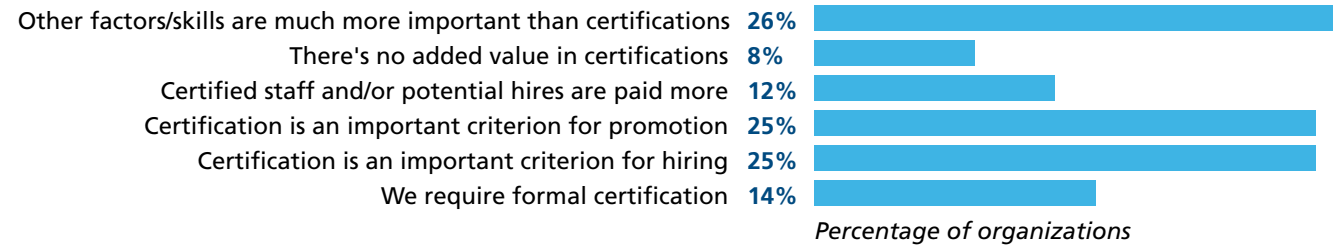
Time to proficiency for new frontline hires:



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Expectations/requirements surrounding frontline staff certification:



Top 5 certifications for frontline staff:

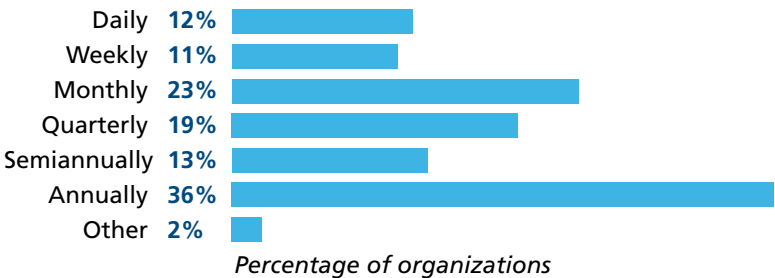
Rank	Required to have	Paid more for having
1	Microsoft	Microsoft
2	Cisco	Cisco
3	HDI	CompTIA
4	Apple	Citrix
5	CompTIA/IBM (tied)	ITIL/HDI (tied)

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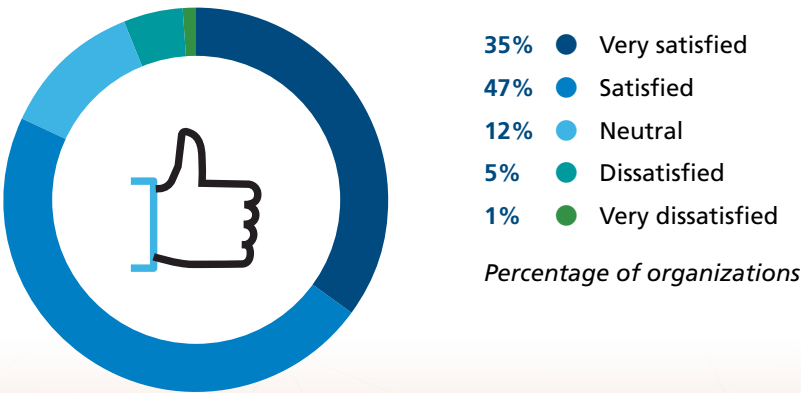
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Staff Satisfaction

Frequency of formal measurement of staff satisfaction:



Average staff satisfaction:



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Factors contributing to staff satisfaction:

<p>Relationships within the team</p> <p>71%</p>	<p>Rewards and recognition programs</p> <p>56%</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>54%</p>	<p>Type of work</p> <p>50%</p>	<p>Organizational culture</p> <p>50%</p>
Compensation (including benefits)				49%
Team development (including social events)				46%
Career-pathing				46%
Paid time off				45%
Training provided				44%
Customers				35%
New technology/devices				35%
Amount of work				34%
Home office				32%
Relationships with support partners (e.g., escalated teams)				26%
Office hours				24%
Certifications provided				21%

Percentage of organizations

Includes responses only from those organizations that reported having satisfied or very satisfied staff

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Top factors contributing to staff dissatisfaction:

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Amount of work | 5 | Management |
| 2 | Customers | 6 | Rewards and recognition programs |
| 3 | Relationships within the team | 7 | Relationships with support partners (e.g., escalated teams) |
| 4 | Compensation | 8 | Career-pathing |

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Compensation practices and competitive salaries are an important part of attracting and retaining a skilled technical support team. This section reveals the skills salaries are based on for each position, as well as bonus and overtime practices. Current salary ranges and average salaries are reported for both support center and desktop support roles (US data only).



Salary

▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Top 5 factors that influence salary increases, by position
- Compensation type, by position
- Overtime compensation practices
- Justification for bonus compensation
- Compensation plans over the next twelve months
- Average annual salary, by position (US data)
- Current average annual salary, by position and region (US data)

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Top 5 factors that influence salary increases, by position:

Rank	Level 1 Support	Level 2 Support	Desktop Support Technician	Support Center Team Lead	Desktop Support Team Lead
1	Quality of work	Quality of work	Quality of work	Management or leadership skills	Customer service skills
2	Customer service skills	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Increased job responsibilities	Quality of work
3	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Customer service skills	Customer service skills	Quality of work	Management or leadership skills
4	Increased job responsibilities	Increased job responsibilities	Increased job responsibilities	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Increased job responsibilities
5	Help desk or support experience	Communication skills	Help desk or support experience	Communication skills	Meeting performance metrics or standards

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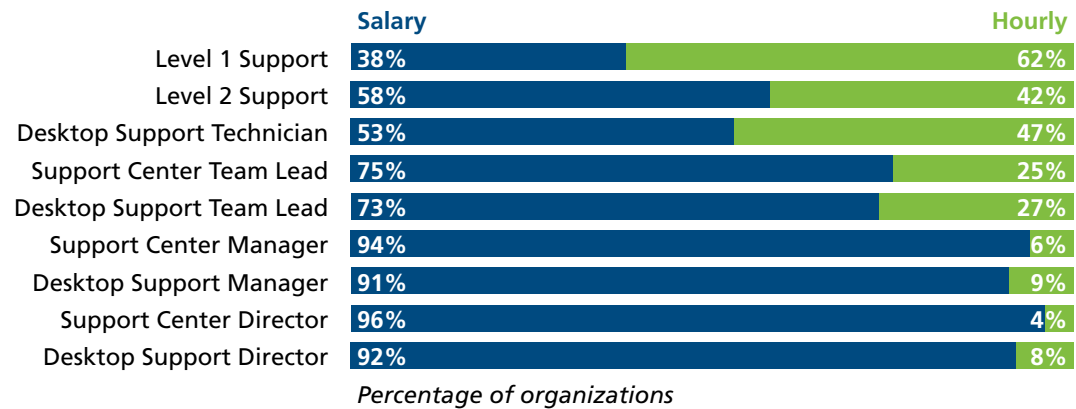
Top 5 factors that influence salary increases, by position (cont'd):

Rank	Support Center Manager	Desktop Support Manager	Support Center Director	Desktop Support Director
1	Management or leadership skills	Management or leadership skills	Management or leadership skills	Management or leadership skills
2	Increased job responsibilities	Increased job responsibilities	Increased job responsibilities	Increased job responsibilities
3	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Meeting performance metrics or standards	Meeting performance metrics or standards
4	Quality of work	Quality of work	Business knowledge	Business knowledge
5	Business knowledge	Business knowledge	Communication skills	Quality of work

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Compensation type, by position:



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Overtime compensation practices:



- 30% ● All staff are compensated in addition to regular wages
- 29% ● Some staff (e.g., nonexempt) are compensated in addition to their regular wages
- 18% ● Comp time in lieu of monetary compensation
- 23% ● None – it's considered to be part of their job responsibilities
- 1% ● Other

Percentage of support centers

Staff are eligible for bonus compensation in **48%**
of support organizations

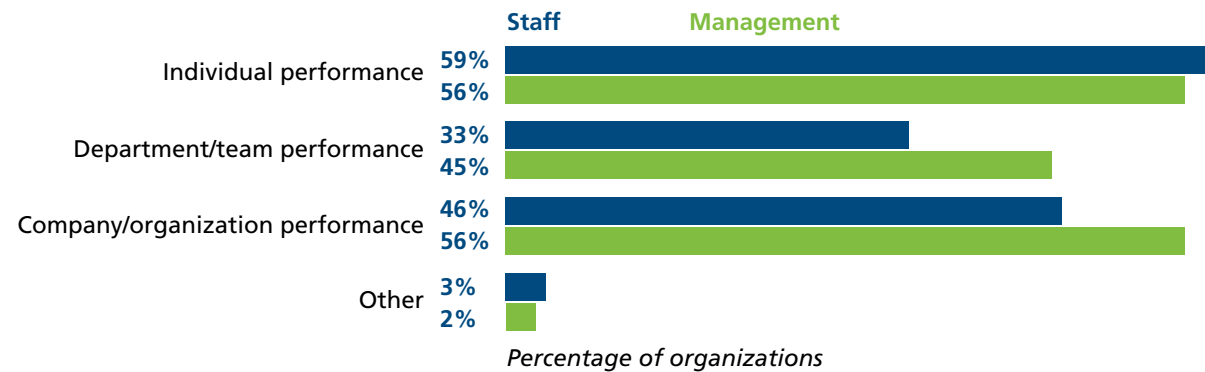
Management is eligible for bonus compensation in **59%**
of support organizations

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Justification for bonus compensation:

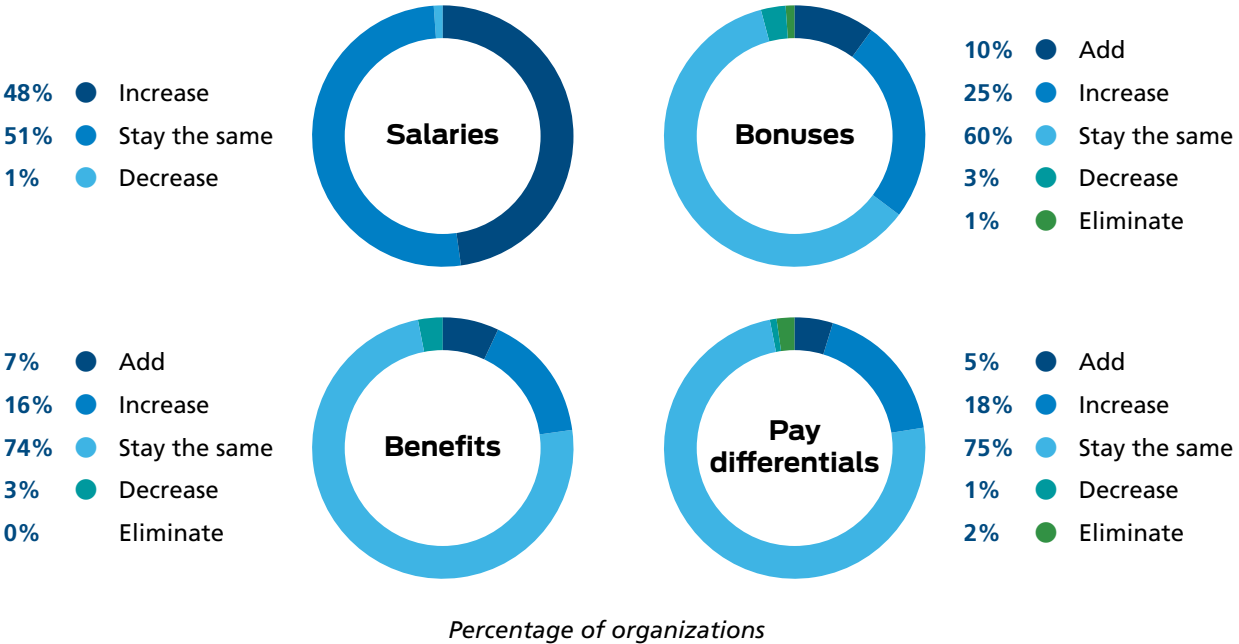
Includes responses only from those organizations that offer bonuses



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Compensation plans over the next twelve months:



45% of organizations adjust salaries based on where staff is located.

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Average annual salary, by position (US data):

Position	Average Annual Salary Range		Current Average Salary
	Low	High	
Level 1 Support	\$36,268	\$52,033	\$43,814
Level 2 Support	\$43,878	\$63,054	\$54,854
Desktop Support Technician	\$41,206	\$53,193	\$49,848
Support Center Team Lead	\$49,734	\$68,685	\$59,213
Desktop Support Team Lead	\$49,966	\$67,488	\$57,544
Support Center Manager	\$66,835	\$92,004	\$78,915
Desktop Support Manager	\$64,674	\$88,107	\$85,667
Support Center Director	\$85,741	\$116,508	\$98,511
Desktop Support Director	\$75,588	\$99,790	\$88,667

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Current average annual salary, by position and region (US data):

Position	West	Central	East
Level 1 Support	\$61,145	\$41,410	\$42,091
Level 2 Support	\$86,202	\$52,088	\$50,016
Desktop Support Technician	\$52,454	\$49,815	\$49,379
Support Center Team Lead	\$68,934	\$58,545	\$57,680
Desktop Support Team Lead	<i>limited data</i>	\$54,655	\$59,095
Support Center Manager	\$75,536	\$79,527	\$78,735
Desktop Support Manager	<i>limited data</i>	<i>limited data</i>	\$69,768
Support Center Director	\$99,460	\$104,070	\$90,581
Desktop Support Director	<i>limited data</i>	<i>limited data</i>	\$80,381

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Technical support centers of every size, from more than twenty industries, participated in this year's survey. This section of the report includes the profile of the 596 survey responses included in the report.



Demographics

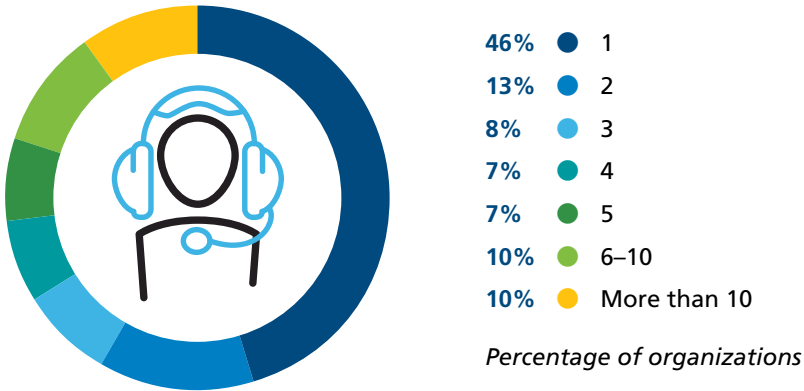
▼ Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Number of support centers in the support organization
- Number of desktop support teams in the support organization
- Distribution of the support centers within the organization
- Distribution of the desktop support teams within the organization
- Type of support provided
- Number of internal and external end users/customers supported
- Distribution of the support organization's end users/customers
- Location of the support organization's end users/customers
- Languages in which support is provided
- Size of the organization
- Number of full-time equivalents on staff
- Support organization's annual budget
- Industries supported

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Number of support centers in the support organization:



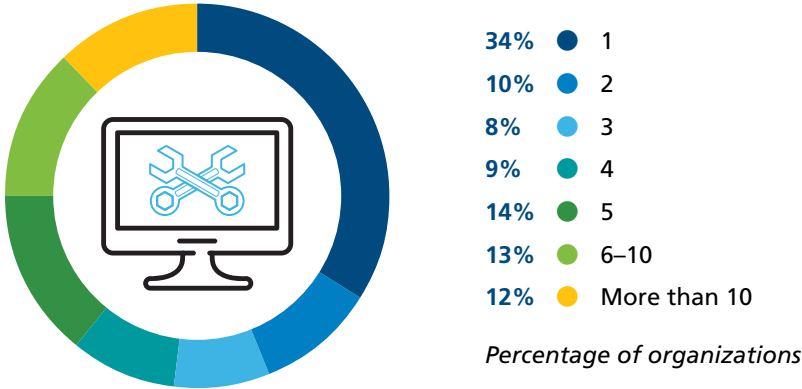
What's the support center called?



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Number of desktop support teams in the support organization:



What's desktop support called?



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Distribution of the support centers within the organization:



- 50% ● Single site/single country (on-site)
- 6% ● Single site/single country (off-site)
- 28% ● Multiple sites/single country
- 16% ● Multiple countries

Percentage of organizations

Distribution of the desktop support teams within the organization:



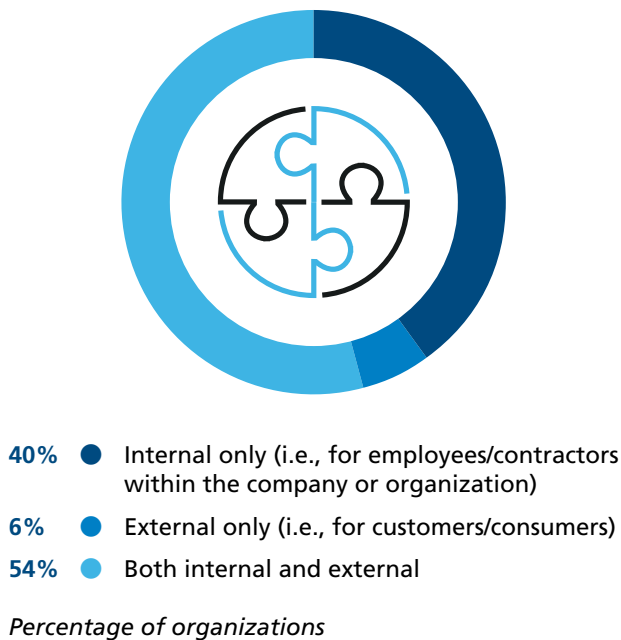
- 48% ● Single site/single country (on-site)
- 6% ● Single site/single country (off-site)
- 33% ● Multiple sites/single country
- 13% ● Multiple countries

Percentage of organizations

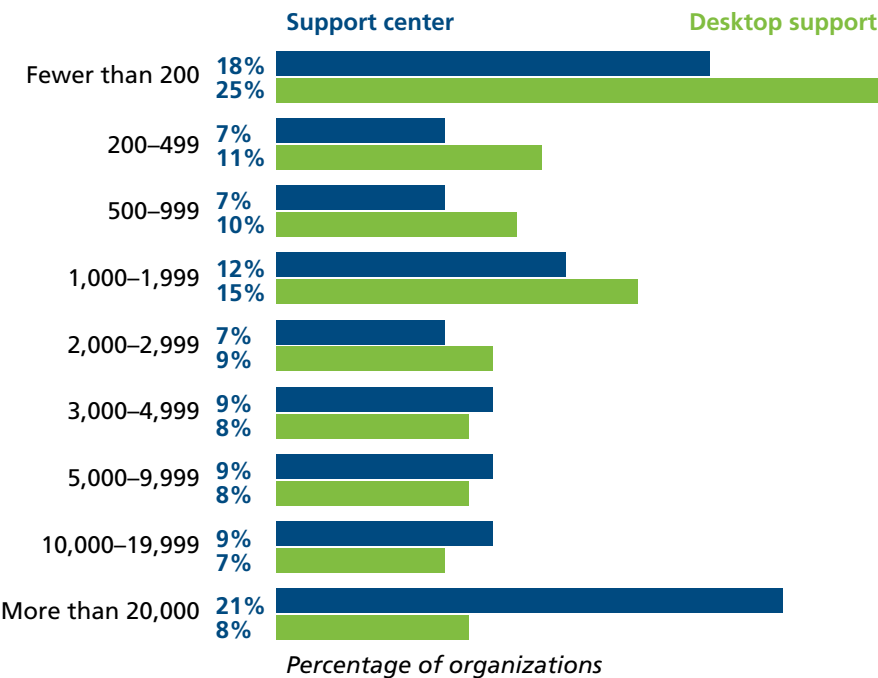
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Type of support provided:



Number of internal and external end users/customers supported:



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Distribution of the support organization's end users/customers:



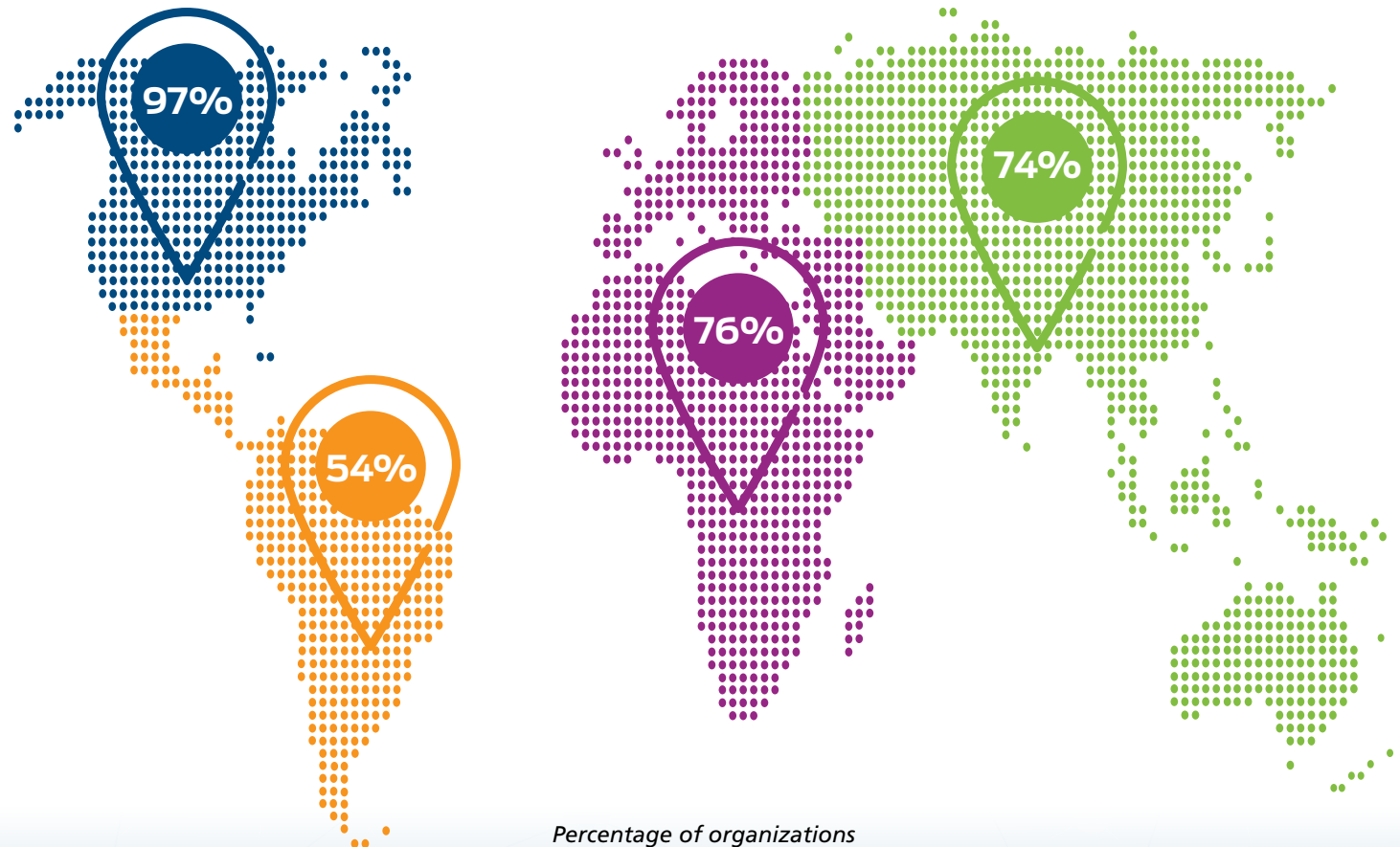
- 23% ● Single site/single country
- 47% ● Multiple sites/single country
- 29% ● Multiple countries

Percentage of organizations

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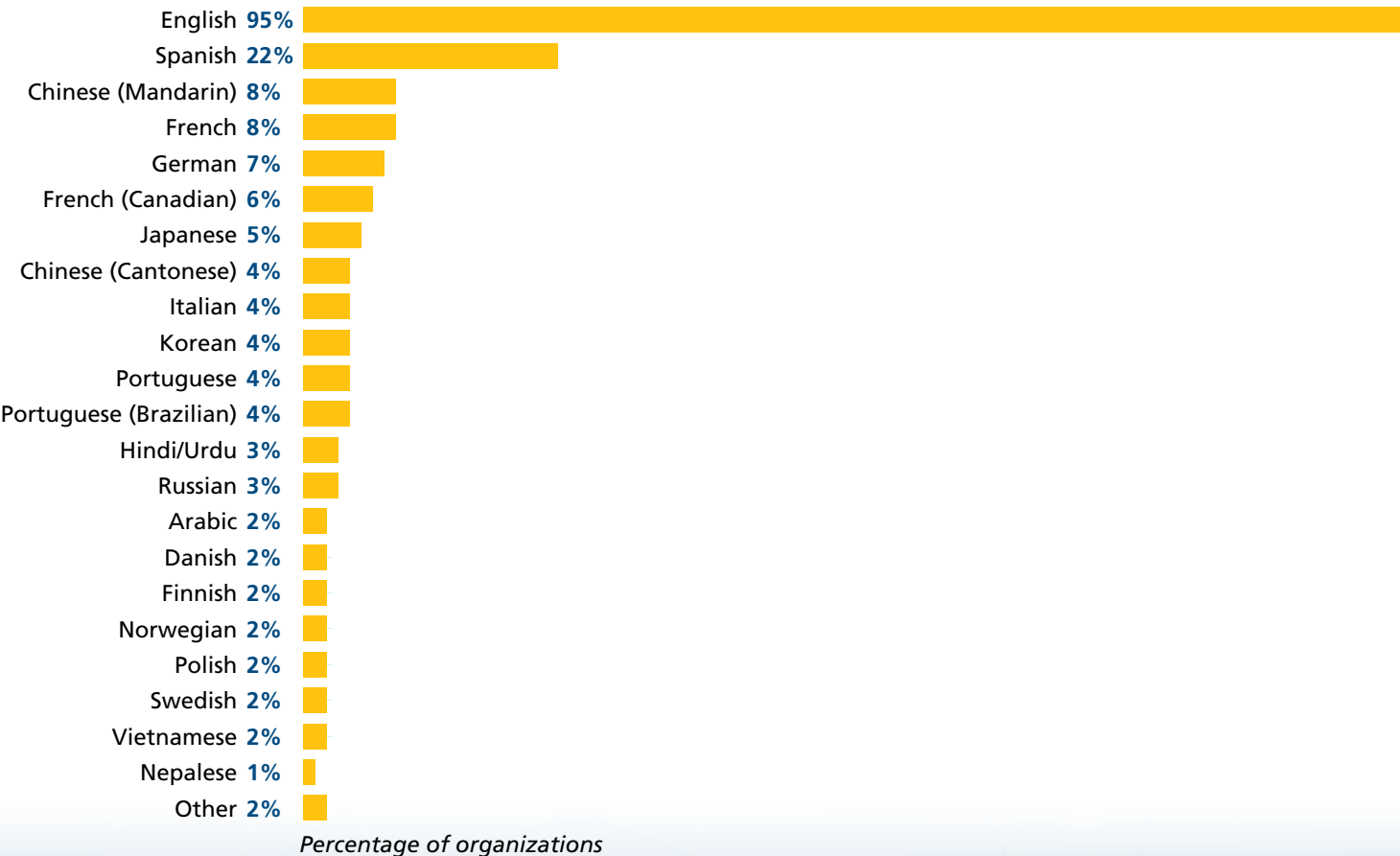
Location of the support organization's end users/customers:



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Languages in which support is provided:



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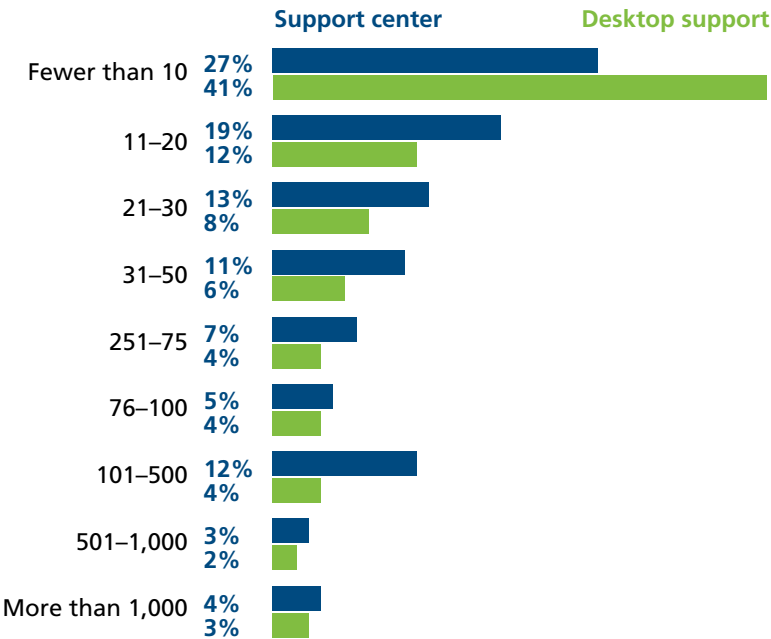
Size of the organization:



11%	●	Fewer than 100
13%	●	100–499
10%	●	500–999
32%	●	1,000–4,999
13%	●	5,000–9,999
8%	●	10,000–19,999
7%	●	20,000–49,999
6%	●	More than 50,000

Percentage of organizations

Number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) on staff:

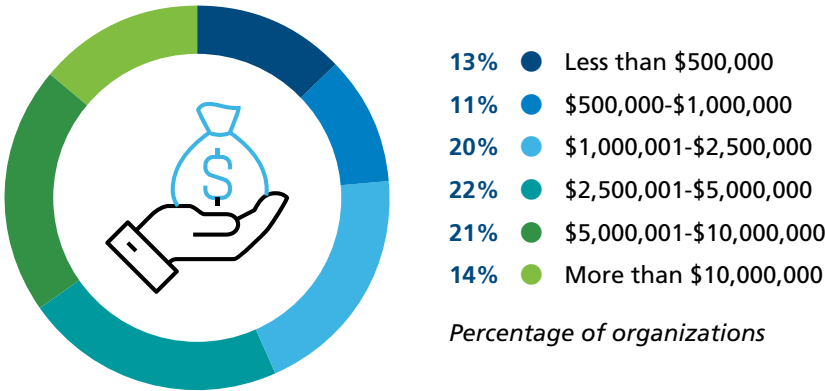


Percentage of organizations

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Support organization's annual budget:

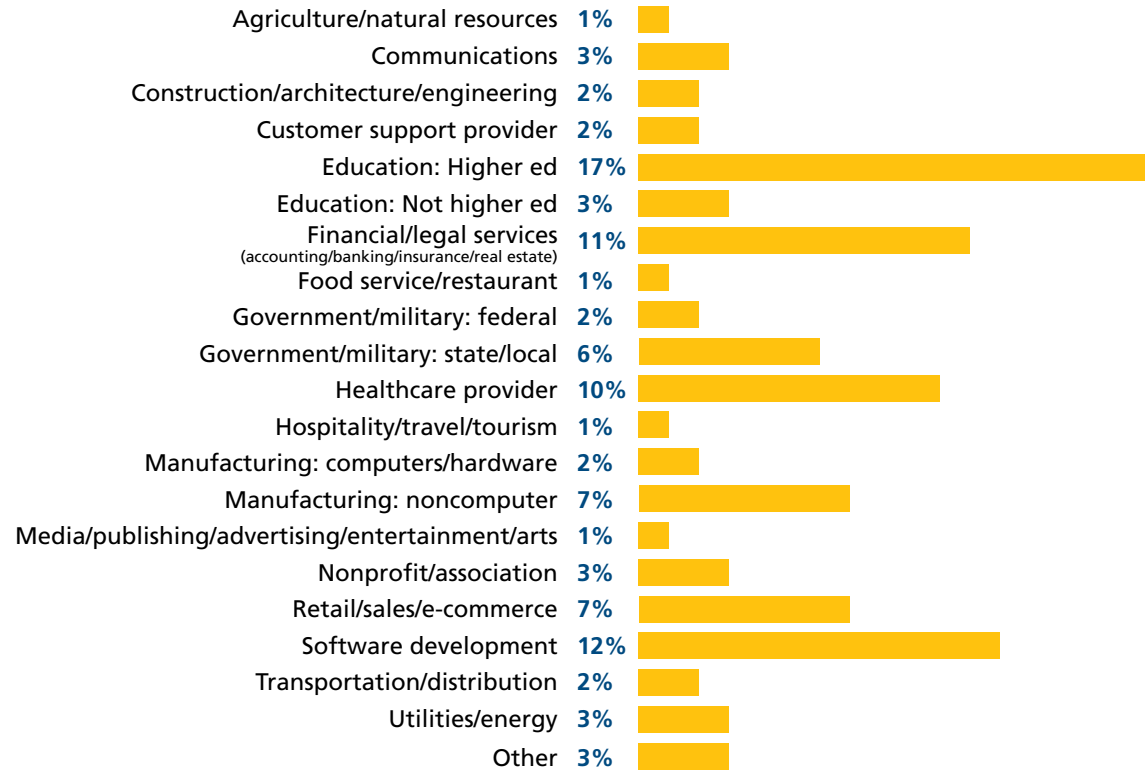


Percentage of organizations

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Industries supported:



Percentage of organizations

* Doesn't include outsourced service providers

Top 5 industries supported by outsourcers

1

Software development

2

Customer support provider

3

Financial/legal services

4

Utilities/energy

5

Retail/sales/e-commerce

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About the Report

The Technical Support Practices & Salary Report is a tool used by technical support leaders to better understand the workings and state of the industry as a whole, and to provide them with the knowledge needed to make research-based decisions that will ultimately improve the support provided by their organizations and help them advance in their careers. This report illustrates current practices, processes, plans, and challenges in a variety of areas, such as metrics, ticket management, technologies, operations, staffing, and salaries.

All survey responses were collected via a web-based survey, open from August to September 2017. The 2016 report compiles the responses from 596 technical support professionals in more than thirty vertical industries. A full profile is available in the Demographics section.



Defining the Support Organization

In this report, some of the information presented refers to individual support centers or desktop support teams, but most refer to the support organization as a whole. The illustration below should help to clarify some of the terminology used for the purposes of this report.



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Job Titles

LEVEL 1 SUPPORT/SUPPORT CENTER ANALYST:

The frontline technical support professionals who receive and handle tickets. These professionals are responsible for providing customers with information, restoring service, providing specific services, and escalating tickets to a higher level of support. These individuals are typically technical generalists.

LEVEL 2 SUPPORT: The technical support professionals who handle tickets that are escalated from level 1.

These professionals require greater technical skills and/or access rights than level 1 support personnel. They're typically technical specialists and may also be responsible for participating in root cause analysis of problems. (This doesn't include desktop support technicians, who are reported on separately.)

DESKTOP SUPPORT TECHNICIAN: The technical support professionals who respond to tickets escalated by the support center that are related to customer equipment; additional skills, knowledge, tools, or authority are required. They may resolve incidents remotely, at the user's location, or via equipment returns. Responsibilities may include hardware and software deployments, moves, adds, and changes.

LEVEL 3 SUPPORT: The technical support professionals who build, maintain, and/or enhance technical products and services. These professionals are typically engineer-level staff. They're involved when the ticket cannot be resolved by either level 1 or level 2, and when there's high business impact or urgency. Level 3 support is commonly provided by either an internal engineering/development team or an external vendor.

SUPPORT CENTER TEAM LEAD: The technical support professionals who oversee the day-to-day activities of a team of support staff. These professionals serve as the communication link between the team and the manager, as a coach or mentor to support staff, and are often the first point of internal escalation within the support center. Other possible titles include coordinator, supervisor, or senior analyst.

DESKTOP SUPPORT TEAM LEAD: An advanced DST who, in addition to DST responsibilities, provides training, mentoring, and/or coaching for a team of DSTs, but does not have direct staff management responsibilities. May have oversight responsibility for processes, project management tasks, and/or providing support to management.

SUPPORT CENTER MANAGER: The management professionals who manage a team of support center analysts and/or team leads while executing the operational and tactical plans of the support center and satisfying customer and business needs. Their responsibilities may include recruiting and hiring, monitoring and managing performance, monitoring and reporting metrics, and ensuring that process are followed and service levels are met. Other possible titles include help desk manager or service desk manager. This position typically reports to the support center director.

DESKTOP SUPPORT MANAGER: Manages a team of DSTs and/or supervisors while executing the operational and tactical plans of desktop support, and satisfying customer and business needs. Responsibilities may include performance management, monitoring/reporting metrics, audits, purchase approvals, and other similar job functions.

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SUPPORT CENTER DIRECTOR: The management professionals who are responsible for leading the support organization as a whole, rather than a specific support center. Their responsibilities may include overall service delivery, strategic direction, business alignment, financial accountability, and performance reporting. In addition to the support center(s), this person may also oversee other departments involved in technical support, such as desktop support. Other possible titles for this position include senior director, senior manager, or vice president. Support center managers report directly to this individual.

DESKTOP SUPPORT DIRECTOR: The management professionals who manage a team of desktop support technicians and/or team leads while executing the operational and tactical plans of desktop support and satisfying customer and business needs. Responsibilities may include recruiting and hiring, monitoring and managing performance, monitoring and reporting metrics, auditing, and approving purchases.

Salary Regions (US)

Where applicable, average US salaries are broken out by region. The fifty US states fall into three regions, as follows:

EAST: Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia

CENTRAL: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming

WEST: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington

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About HDI

In 1989, HDI became the first membership association and certification body created for the technical support industry. Since then, HDI has remained the source for professional development by offering the resources needed to promote organization-wide success through exceptional customer service. In other words, we help professionals in service management better connect with customers, and that's just good business. We do this by facilitating collaboration and networking, hosting acclaimed conferences and events, producing renowned publications and research, and certifying and training thousands of professionals each year.

Technical support professionals love HDI because it provides them with a profound sense of community. At 190,000 people strong, HDI is a community built by industry peers and leaders that gives you the resources, knowledge, and drive to be great at what you do.

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