

# 2015

# Support Center

## Practices & Salary Report



TICKET  
MANAGEMENT



TECHNOLOGY



OPERATIONS



METRICS



STAFFING



SALARY REPORT



DEMOGRAPHICS



ABOUT THE REPORT



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# Ticket Management

Technical support centers 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.



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- Reasons for increased ticket volumes
- Reasons for decreased ticket volumes
- Time typically spent on tickets versus other activities
- Ticket resolution by level
- Ticket resolution strategies used
- Ticket handling when the support center isn't staffed
- Measuring incidents and service requests
- Ticket types received by the support center
- Support channels used to contact support
- Tickets per channel
- Cost per ticket

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Ticket volumes have increased in **63%** of support organizations.

## Reasons for increased ticket volumes:

(Organizations that reported seeing ticket volume increase in the last year were asked to select all contributing factors.)



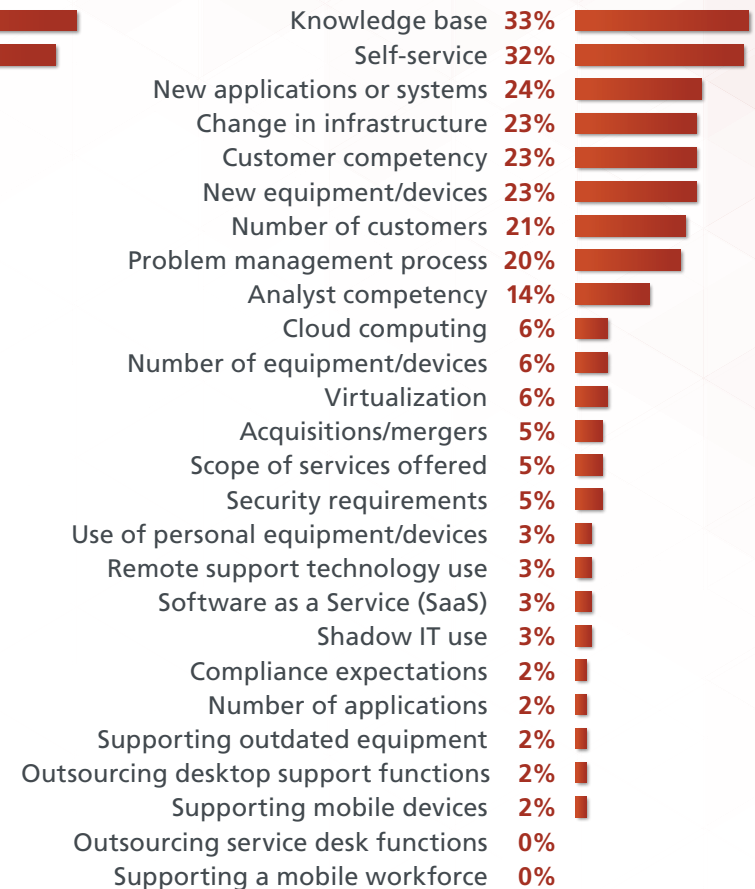
Percentage selecting each factor



Ticket volumes have decreased in **10%** of support organizations.

## Reasons for decreased ticket volumes:

(Organizations that reported seeing ticket volume decrease in the last year were asked to select all contributing factors.)



Percentage selecting each factor

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## Time typically spent on tickets versus other activities:

Level 1 Support



Ticket handling	73%
Knowledge management	6%
Problem management	6%
Asset management	3%
Projects	5%
Other (e.g., meetings, training)	6%

Level 2 Support



Ticket handling	45%
Knowledge management	10%
Problem management	14%
Asset management	4%
Projects	16%
Other (e.g., meetings, training)	9%

Support Center Manager



Ticket handling	12%
Knowledge management	11%
Problem management	14%
Asset management	5%
Projects	27%
Other (e.g., meetings, training)	31%

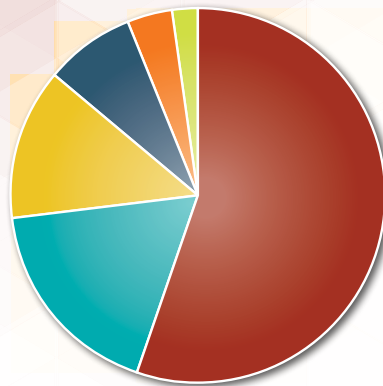
Percentage of time spent on each activity



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## Ticket resolution by level:



Level 1 Support	56%
Level 2 Support	18%
Desktop Support	13%
Level 3 Support	8%
Management	4%
Other	2%

*Percentage of tickets resolved at each level*

## Ticket resolution strategies used:



### 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 that use each strategy*

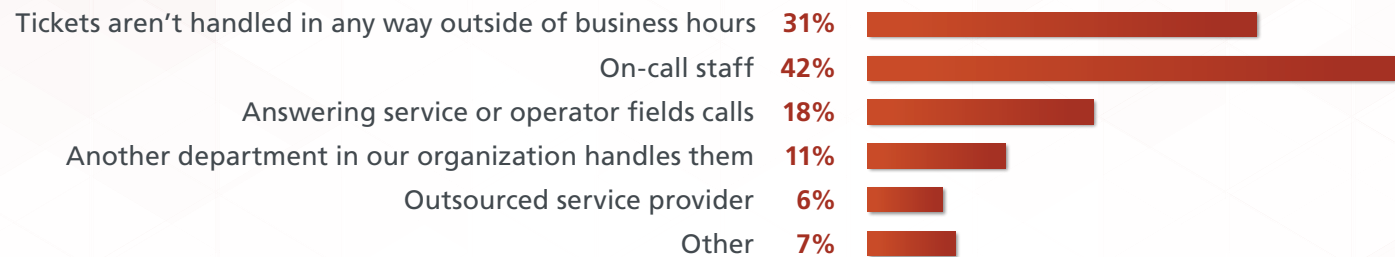
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**74%** of support centers  
are not staffed 24x7.

## **Ticket handling when the support center isn't staffed:**

(Organizations without 24x7 support were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)

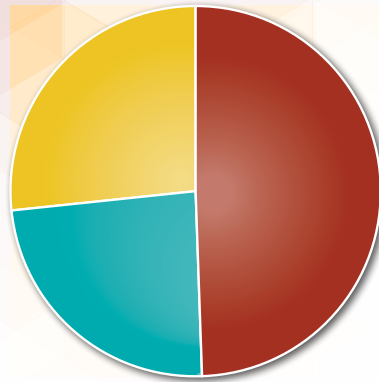


*Percentage of support centers using each method*

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## Measuring incidents and service requests:



- We measure incidents and service requests separately **49.5%**
- We distinguish between them, but do not measure them separately **23.9%**
- We do not distinguish between incidents and service requests **26.6%**

*Percentage of support centers*

## Ticket types received by the support center:

Unplanned work required to  
fix something



**54.2%**  
**Incidents**

Nothing is broken, but a service is  
needed; this is usually planned or  
scheduled work



**41.4%**  
**Service requests**

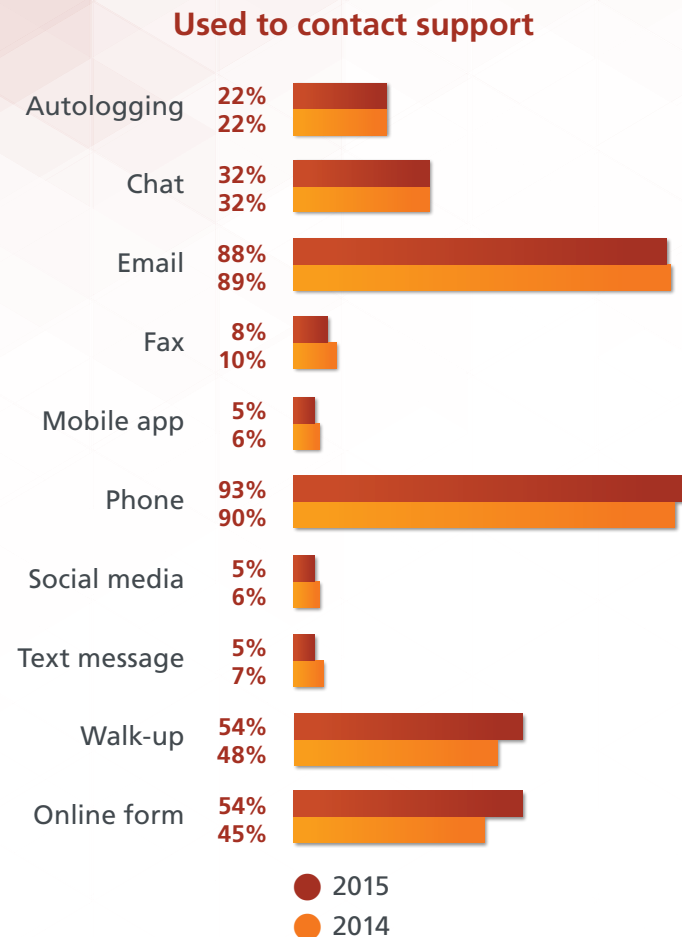
**4.4% Other**

*Percentage of tickets*

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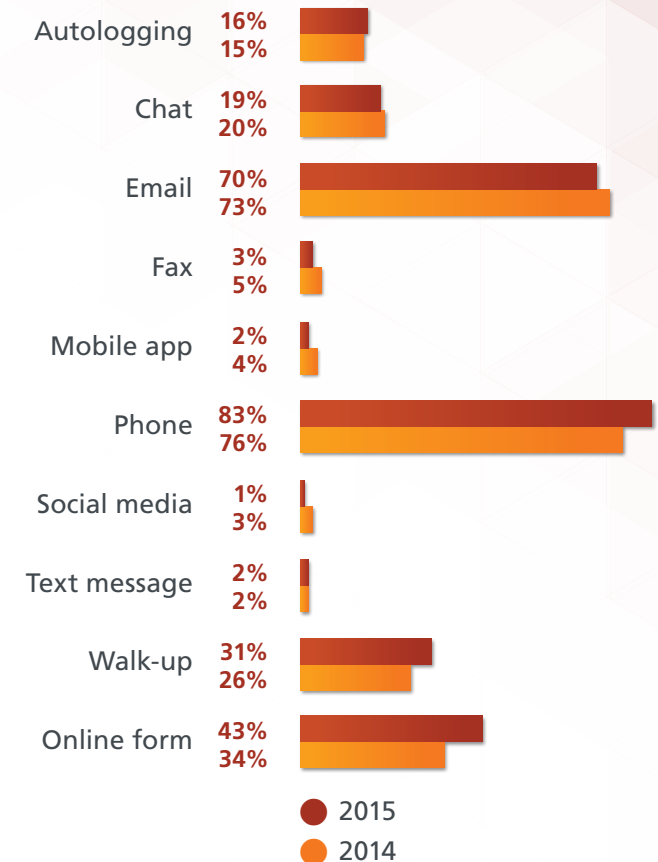
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## Support channels used to contact support:



Percentage of support centers using each channel

## Formally measured



Percentage of support centers measuring each channel



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## Tickets per channel:

(Organizations that use each channel were asked to report the percentage of tickets received through that channel.)

Autologging	16%
Chat	10%
Email	35%
Fax	5%
Mobile app	21%
Phone	52%
Social media	3%
Text message	9%
Walk-up	9%
Online form	21%

*Percentage of tickets*

## Cost per ticket:



*The cost of the support center's operations (including people, support infrastructures, and overhead) divided by the total number of tickets resolved through any channel*

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Support centers 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

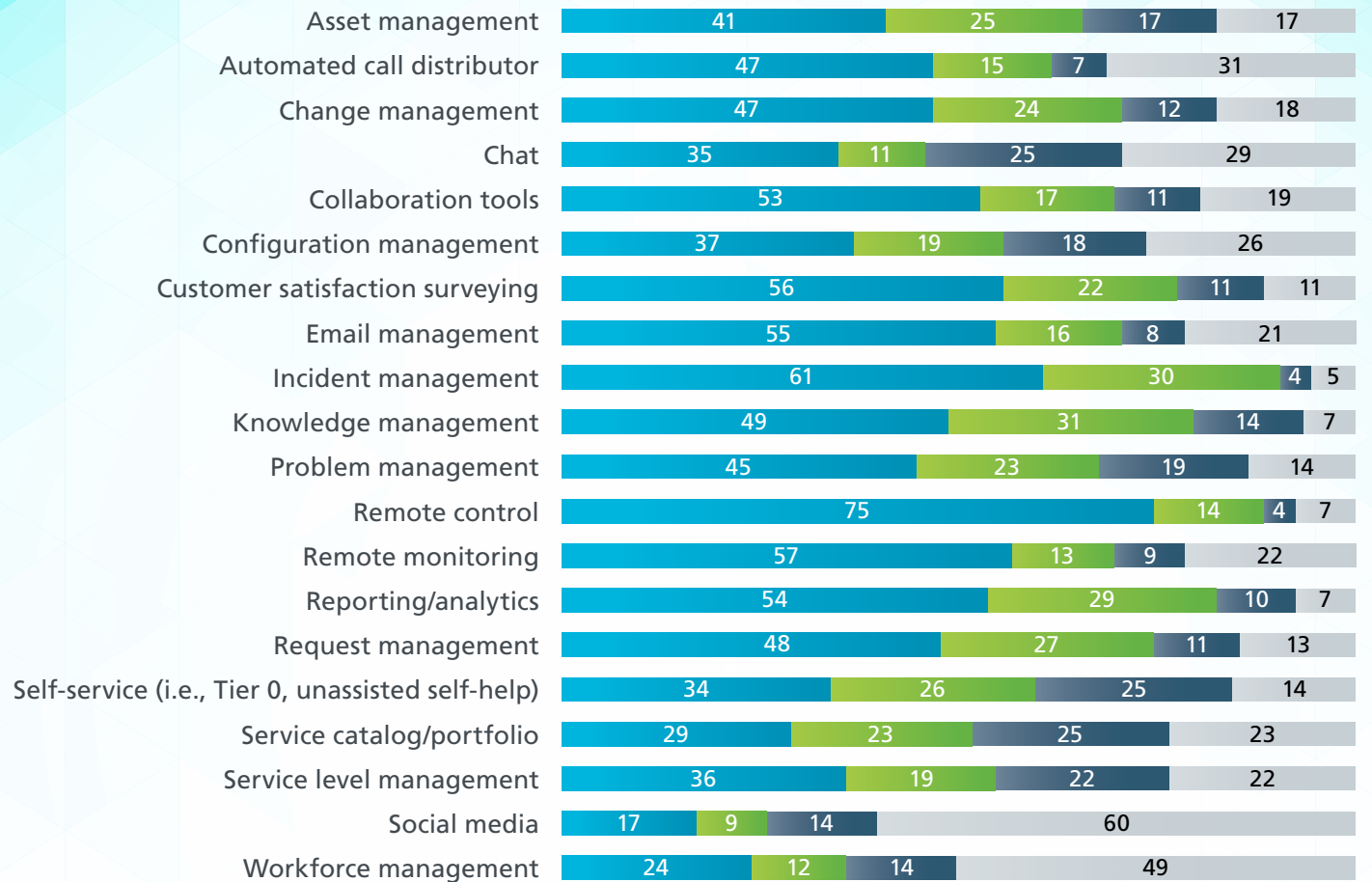
## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Technology use
- Technologies required to provide successful end-user support
- Positions involved in selecting new technology for the support center
- Social media applications
- Self-service (i.e., Tier 0, unassisted self-help) tools
- Incident/ticket management solutions used

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## Technology use:



- Use it, with no plans to replace or update it
- Planning to add it
- Use it, but planning to replace/update it
- Don't use it

Percentage of support centers

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## Technologies required to provide successful end-user support:

(Survey respondents were asked to select up to five “must-have” technologies.)



Percentage of support organizations



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## Positions involved in selecting new technology for the support center:

	Involved in ADVISING/ INFLUENCING	Involved in SELECTION PROCESS	Involved in PURCHASING DECISION	PURCHASE APPROVAL	OTHER ROLE	NO INVOLVEMENT
Executive level	22%	26%	45%	67%	4%	4%
Support manager/ director level	48%	62%	57%	25%	3%	3%
Support staff or other users	55%	33%	7%	3%	4%	19%

*Percentage of support organizations*



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## Social media applications:

	SHAREPOINT	WIKIS	FORUMS/ DISCUSSION BOARD	BLOGS	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	YAMMER	LINKEDIN	GOOGLE+	CHATTER
Total percentage using each:	64%	38%	25%	21%	18%	17%	17%	15%	14%	12%
To push out information	22%	12%	9%	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>
To receive information	15%	8%	<b>13%</b>	8%	9%	7%	7%	6%	6%	<b>6%</b>
To share knowledge	<b>51%</b>	<b>26%</b>	12%	8%	3%	4%	7%	6%	4%	<b>6%</b>

Percentage of support centers using each application

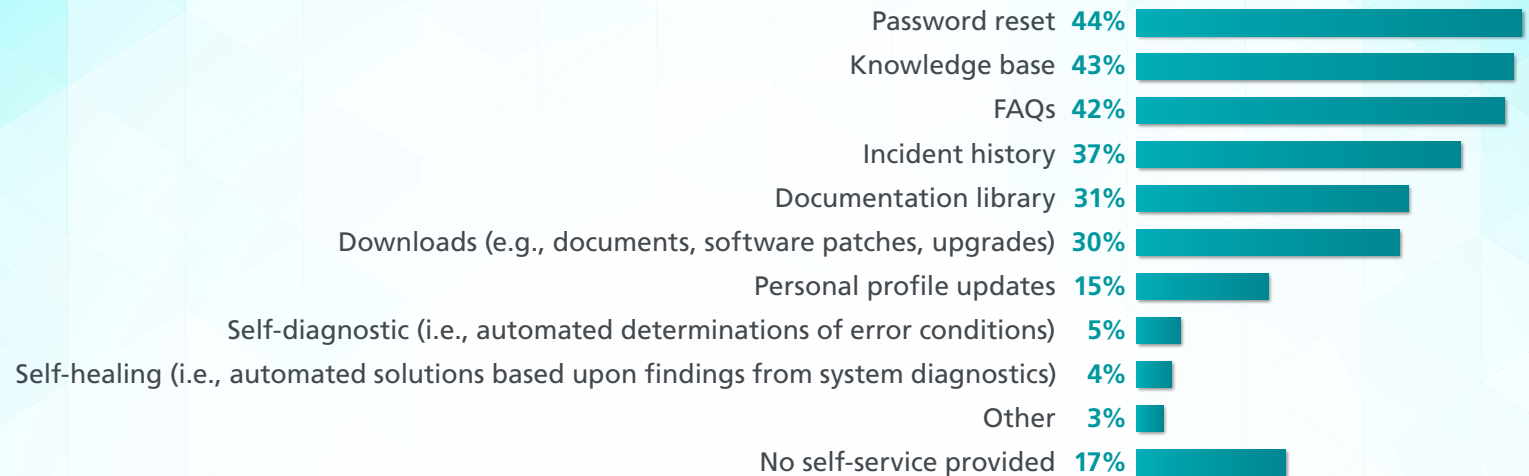


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### Self-service (i.e., Tier 0, unassisted self-help) tools:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)

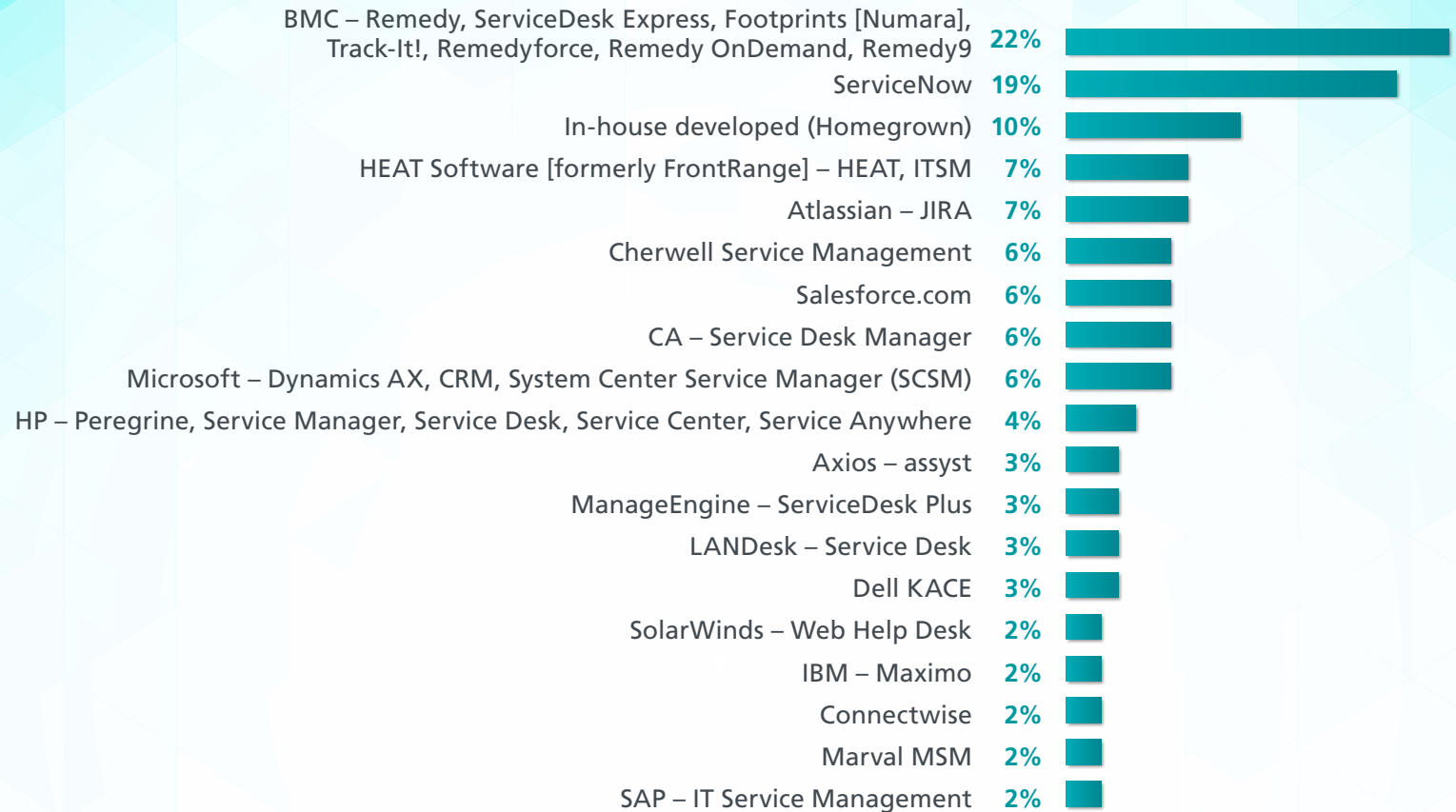


*Percentage of support organizations that make each self-service tool available to end users*

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## Incident/ticket management solutions used:



*Percentage of support organizations using each solution  
(Chart includes systems being used by more than 1% of support organizations.)*



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



# Operations

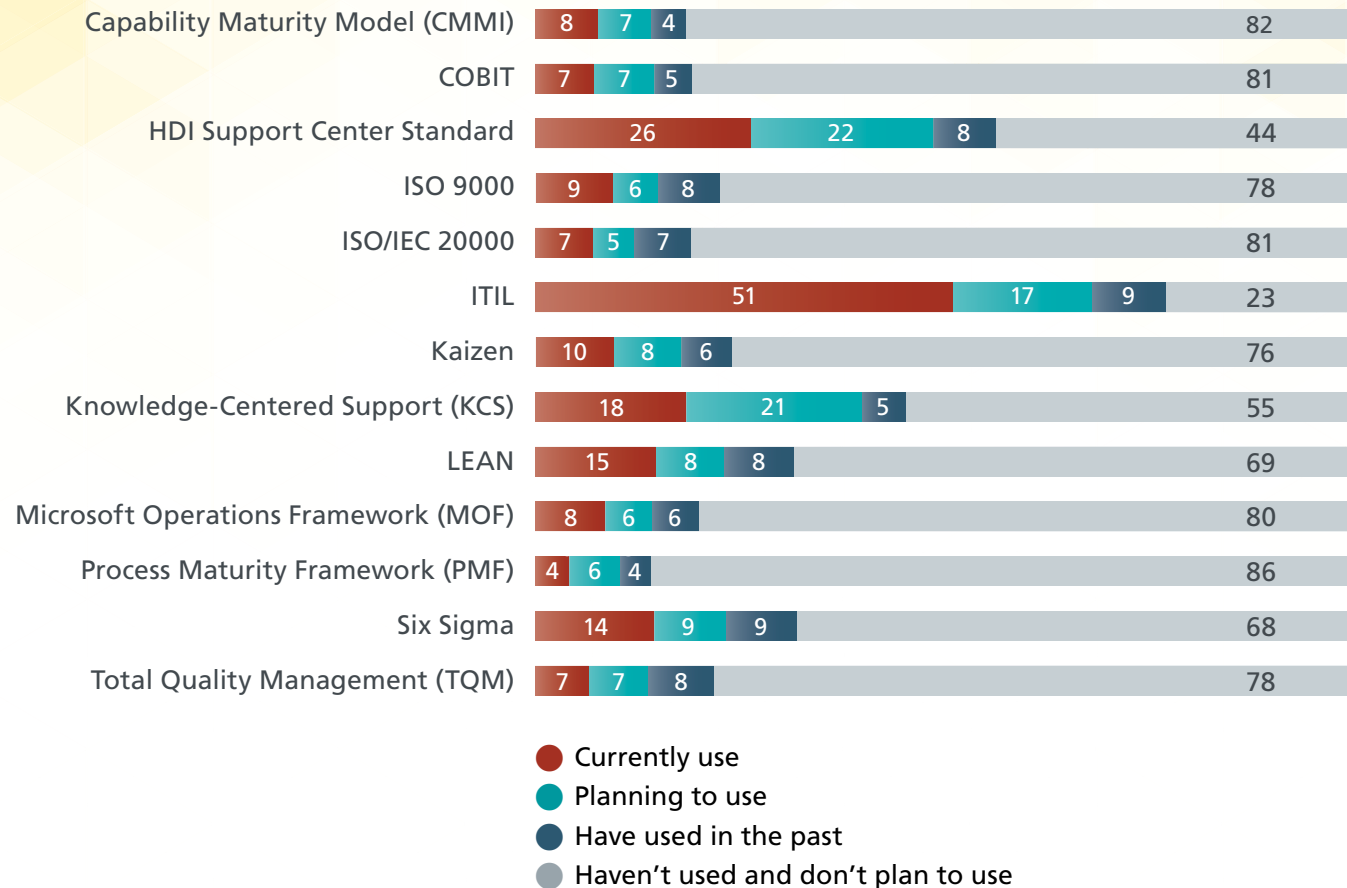
## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Methodologies, frameworks, and processes
- Service management processes
- Problem management practices
- Support center staff involvement in knowledge base
- Maintaining service level agreements
- Tickets meeting SLA/OLA goals or targets
- Charging internal customers for support services
- Charging external customers for support services

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## Methodologies, frameworks, and processes:

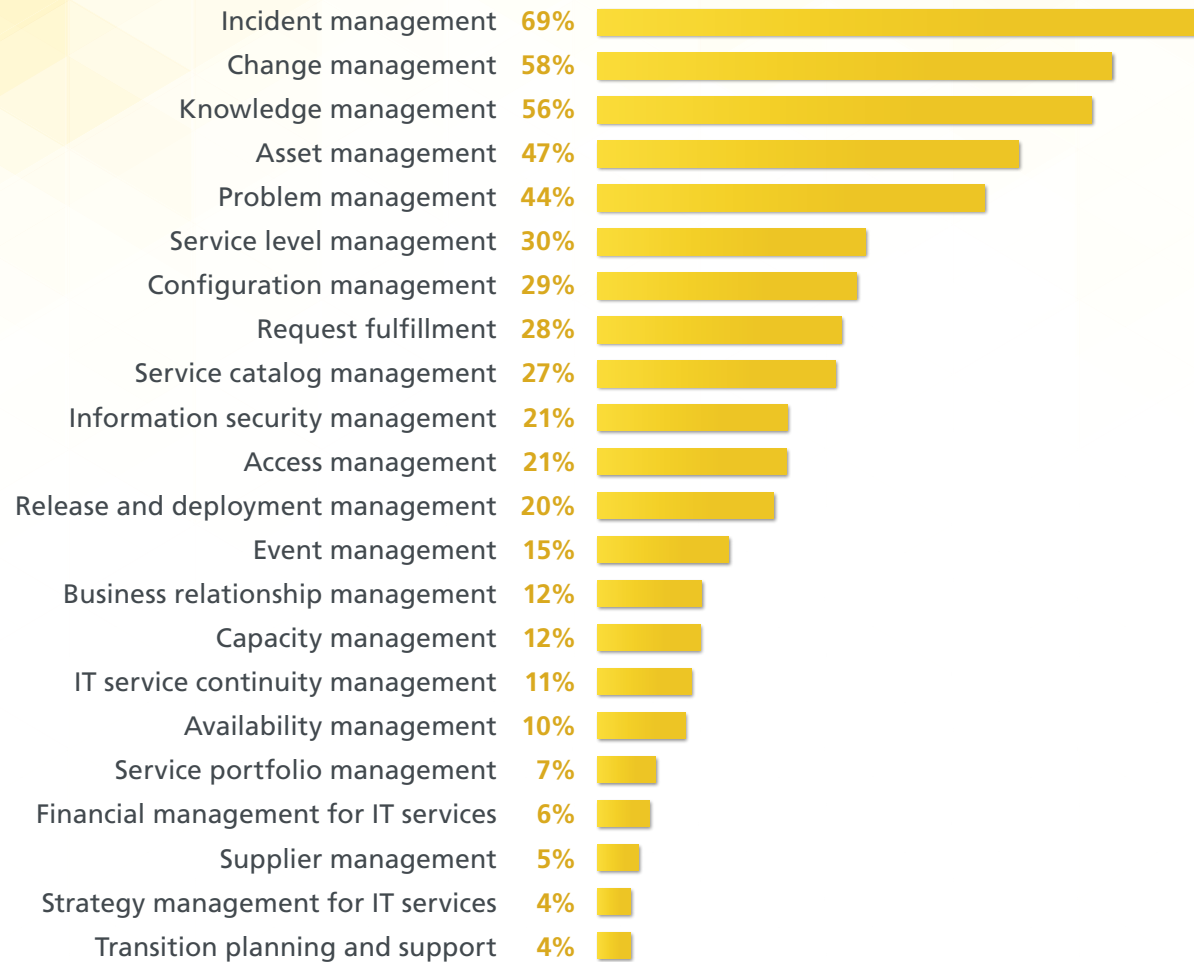


Percentage of organizations using each methodology, framework, or process

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## Service management processes:



*Percentage of organizations that have adopted each process*

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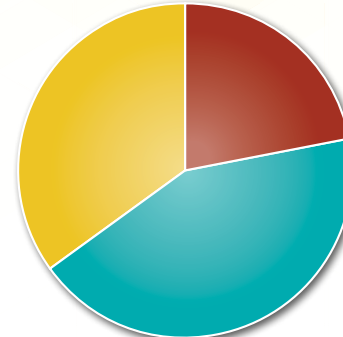
## Problem management practices:

(Includes only organizations with problem management.)



### Formal problem management processes

Yes	52%
Somewhat	43%
No	5%



### Dedicated problem manager

● Main role	22%
● Part of their role	43%
● No	35%



### Fewer recurring incidents since implementing

Yes	30%
Somewhat	45%
No	25%

Percentage of support organizations



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## Support center staff involvement in knowledge base:

(Includes only organizations with knowledge management.)



Search for articles to resolve issues



Note articles that need improvement



Modify articles that need improvement



Contribute new articles for others to use



Review articles and make them available for use

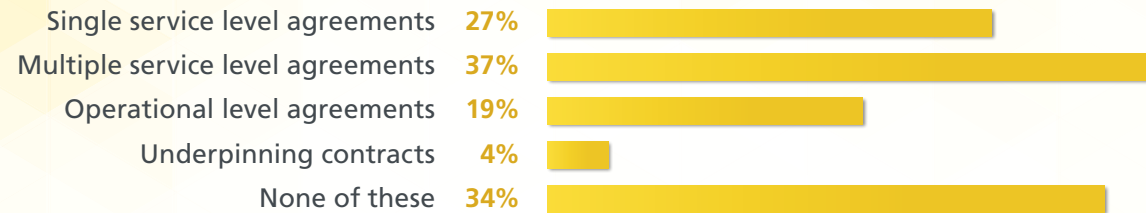
Percentage of support centers

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## Maintaining service level agreements:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage of support centers*

## Tickets meeting SLA/OLA goals or targets:

(Includes only support centers with SLAs/OLAs.)



### Percentage of tickets

<span style="color: #c00000;">●</span> 50% or less	<b>5%</b>
<span style="color: #00a0c0;">●</span> 51–60%	<b>7%</b>
<span style="color: #c0c000;">●</span> 61–70%	<b>10%</b>
<span style="color: #004080;">●</span> 71–80%	<b>18%</b>
<span style="color: #ff6600;">●</span> 81–90%	<b>30%</b>
<span style="color: #99cc66;">●</span> 91–100%	<b>30%</b>

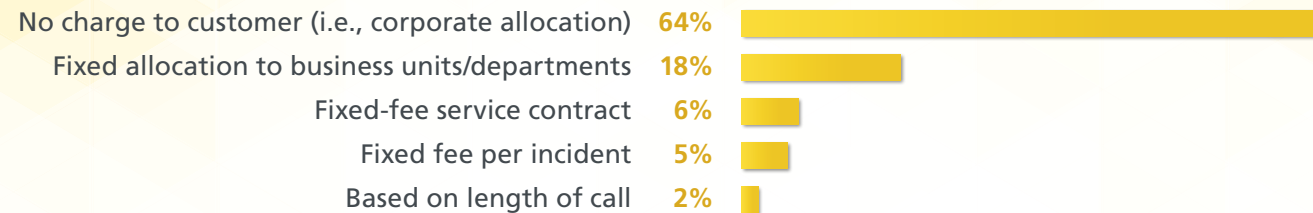
*Percentage of support centers*

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### Charging internal customers for support services:

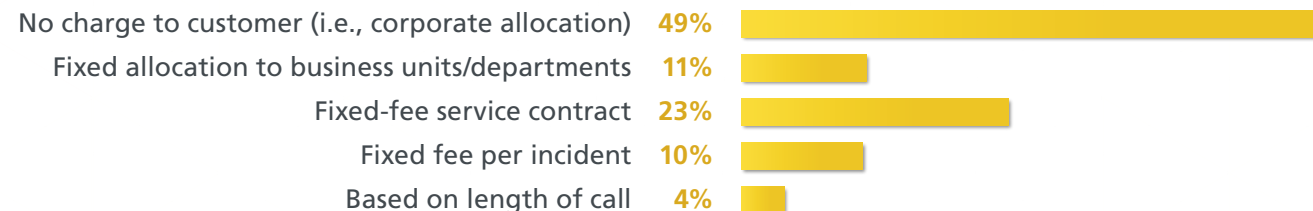
(Includes support centers with internal customers. Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage of support organizations*

### Charging external customers for support services:

(Includes support centers with external customers. Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage of support organizations*

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Support center metrics are used for multiple 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. Results for each metric are based on the responses received by organizations that measure them.



# Metrics

## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

## QUICK REFERENCE

- Summary of industry metrics

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

- How satisfaction with ticket resolution is measured
- How customer satisfaction with overall support center is measured
- Factors contributing to an increase in customer satisfaction

## RESPONSE TIMES

- Average speed to answer the phone (i.e., speak to a person)
- Average time to respond to voicemail
- Average time to respond to email
- Average time to respond to chat
- Average time to respond to a ticket submitted through online form

## CALLS ABANDONDED

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

## TIME SPENT ON TICKETS

- Average talk time on the phone (from answer to hang up)
- Average handle time on the phone (talk time and wrap-up time [i.e., effort])

- Average handle time of tickets received through email (i.e., effort)

## TRANSFER TO ANOTHER CHANNEL

- Percentage of tickets converted from email to another channel (e.g., phone) before being resolved

## RESOLUTION RATES

- Percentage of tickets resolved by any level as long as it is 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 initially opens the ticket (first contact resolution)

## REOPEN RATE

- Percentage of tickets reopened after being closed (all channels)

## TIME TO RESOLVE

- Average time to resolve tickets (from open to final resolution)

## KNOWLEDGE BASE

- Percentage of tickets closed using a knowledge base article/document
- Percentage of tickets that generate new knowledge base entries

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## QUICK REFERENCE: Summary of industry metrics

Customer satisfaction with ticket resolution	87%	of customers are satisfied with ticket resolution
Customer satisfaction with support center overall	87%	of customers are satisfied with support center
Reopened ticket rate	2%	<b>Median</b>
Average time to resolve	INCIDENTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
	8–24 hours	<b>Median</b> 1–2 days
Percentage of tickets resolved without hierarchical escalation (i.e., first level resolution rate)	68.0%	<b>Average</b> 68.0%
Percentage of tickets resolved by the initial person who opens the ticket (i.e., first contact resolution rate)	66.0%	<b>Average</b> 66.9%

PHONE		
Average speed to answer	21–30 seconds	<b>Median</b>
Abandonment rate	5%	<b>Median</b>
Average talk time	INCIDENTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
	5–8 minutes	<b>Median</b> 5–8 minutes
Average handle time	8–10 minutes	<b>Median</b> 5–8 minutes
Percentage of tickets resolved by any level as long as they are resolved on the initial call (i.e., first call resolution rate)	72.1%	<b>Average</b> 64.0%

VOICEMAIL		
Time to respond	15–60 minutes	<b>Median</b>

EMAIL		
Time to respond	1–4 hours	<b>Median</b>
Tickets transferred to another channel	10–20%	<b>Median</b>
	INCIDENTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
Average handle time	8–10 minutes	<b>Median</b> 10–15 minutes

CHAT		
Time to respond	60–90 seconds	<b>Median</b>

ONLINE FORM		
Time to respond	1–4 hours	<b>Median</b>
Tickets transferred to another channel	Less than 10%	<b>Median</b>

\* Incidents: Includes tickets for any unplanned work required to fix something.

\*\* Service requests: Includes tickets where nothing is broken, but a service is needed. This is usually planned or scheduled work.



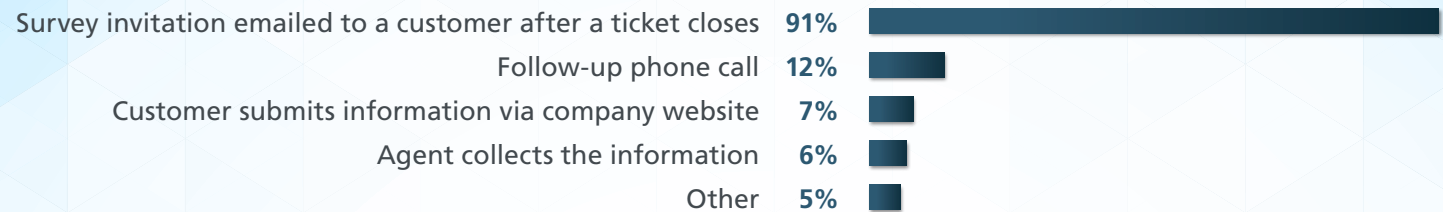
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## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

### How satisfaction with ticket resolution is measured:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage of support centers using each method*

On average, **87%** of end users are satisfied with ticket resolution.

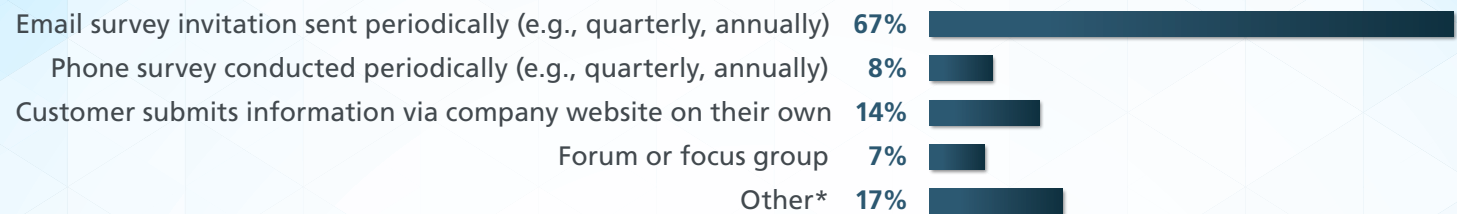
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## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION CONT.

### How customer satisfaction with overall support center is measured:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage of support centers using each method*

*\* Most of the "Other" responses were from organizations that include these types of questions on their ticket-based surveys.*

On average, **87%** of end users are satisfied with the support center overall.

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## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION CONT.

### Factors contributing to an increase in customer satisfaction:

(Percentages are based on support centers that reported an increase in customer satisfaction.)



**45%** of organizations report an increase in customer satisfaction.

Remote control	26%	Scope of services offered	13%
Customer competency/training	23%	Expanded channels (e.g., walk-up support)	11%
Proactive monitoring	22%	Request management	10%
New support center technology	19%	Shift left (e.g., Tier 0, Tier 1.5)	8%
Change management	18%	Brought functions back in-house	7%
Problem management	17%	Scope of devices supported	5%
Marketing your services	16%	Outsourcing service desk functions	2%
New applications/software	16%	Security and compliance requirements	2%
New equipment/devices	16%	Consultant	2%
Communication plan (including social media strategy)	14%	Outsourcing desktop support functions	1%

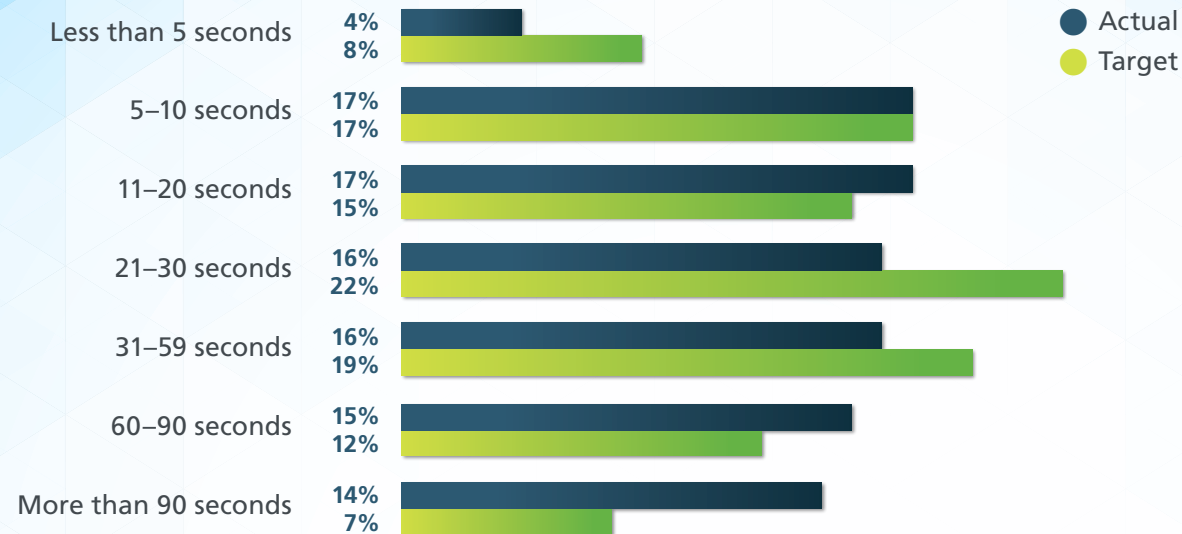
Percentage of support centers selecting each factor

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## RESPONSE TIMES

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



*Percentage of support centers*

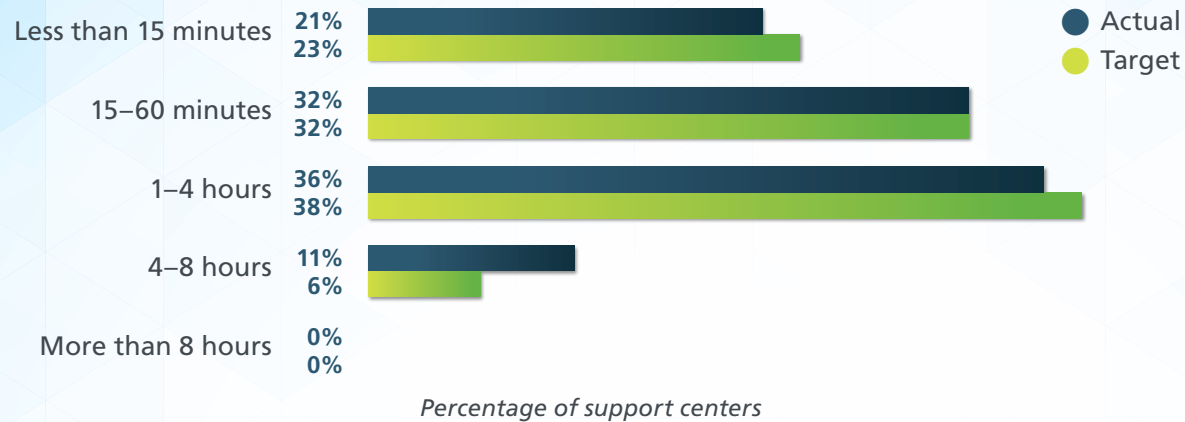
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## RESPONSE TIMES CONT.

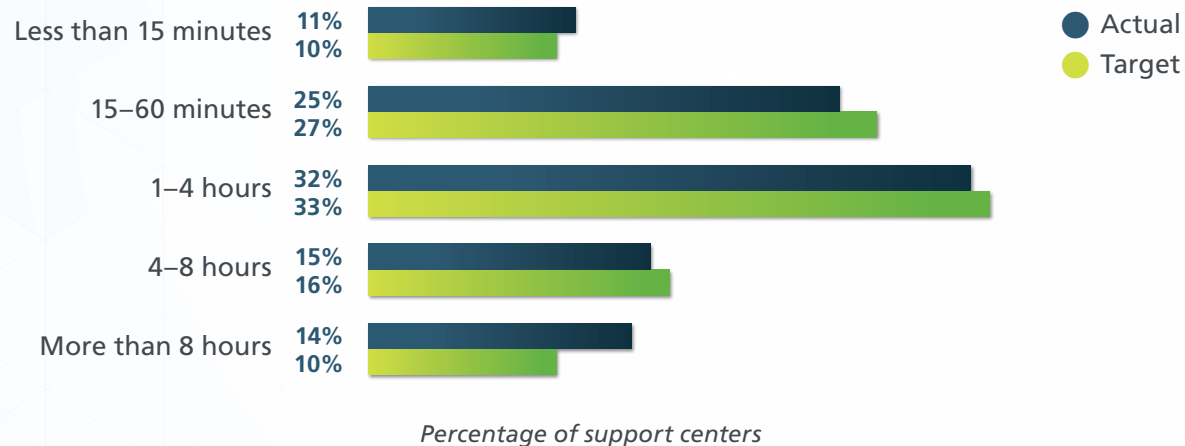
### Average time to respond to voicemail:

(Includes regular support hours only.)



### Average time to respond to email:

(Does not include automatic receipt acknowledgment. Includes regular support hours only.)





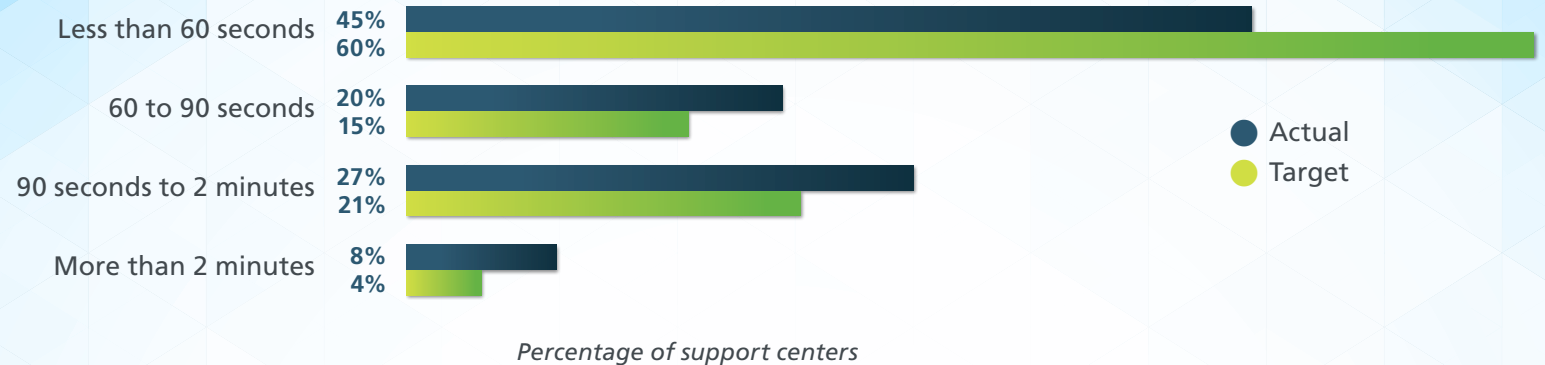
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## RESPONSE TIMES CONT.

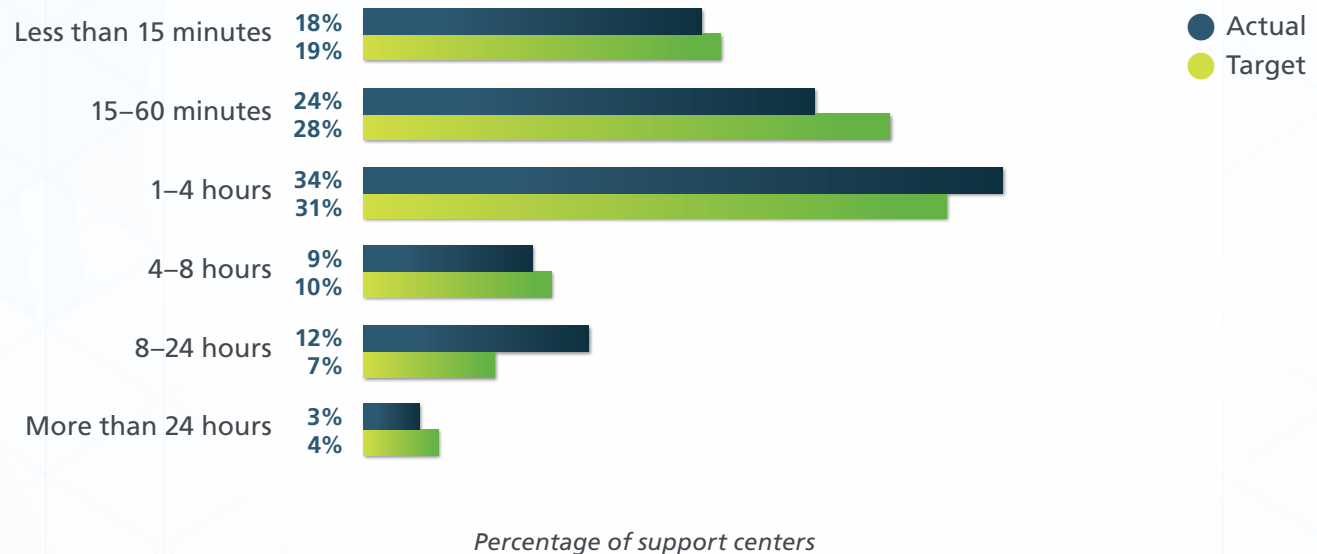
### Average time to respond to chat:

(Does not include automatic receipt acknowledgment.)



### Average time to respond to a ticket submitted through online form:

(Does not include automatic receipt acknowledgment. Includes regular support hours only.)

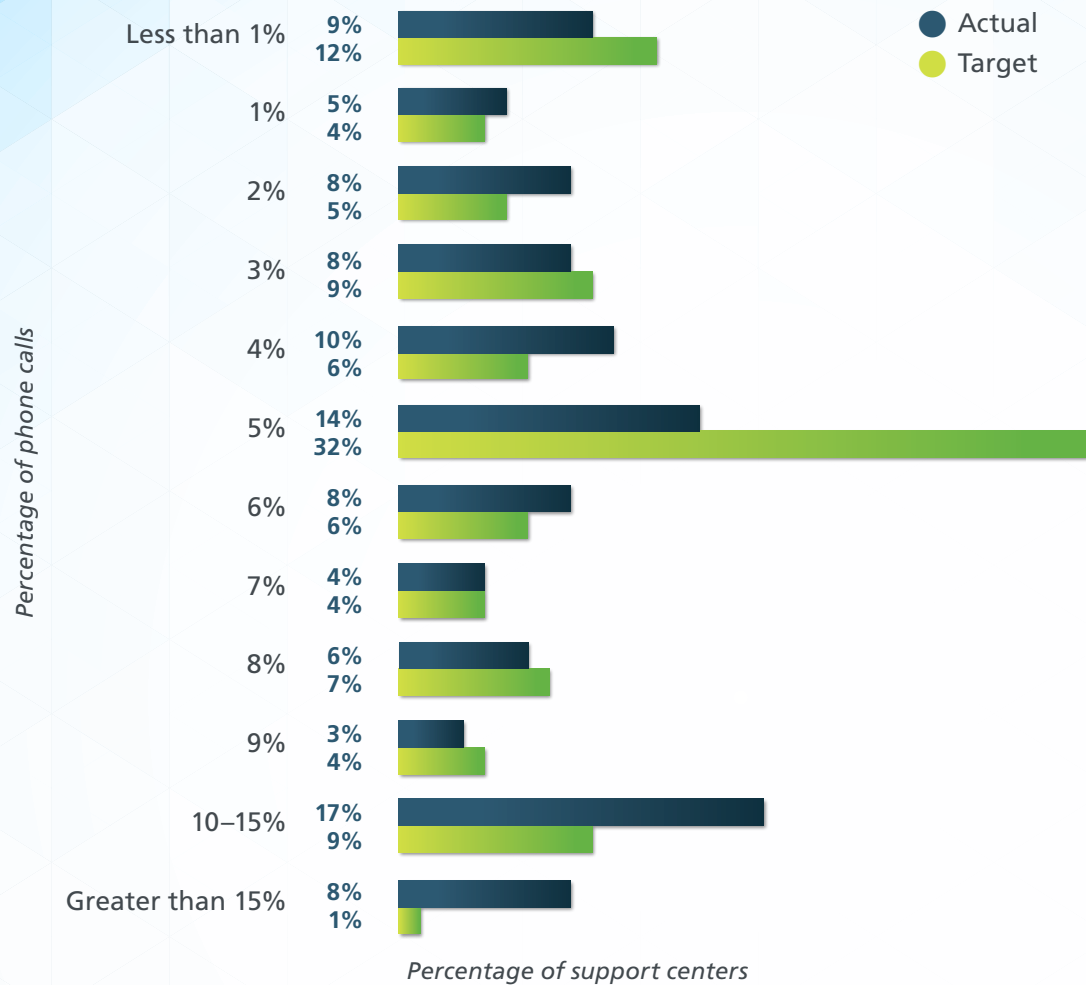


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## CALLS ABANDONED

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

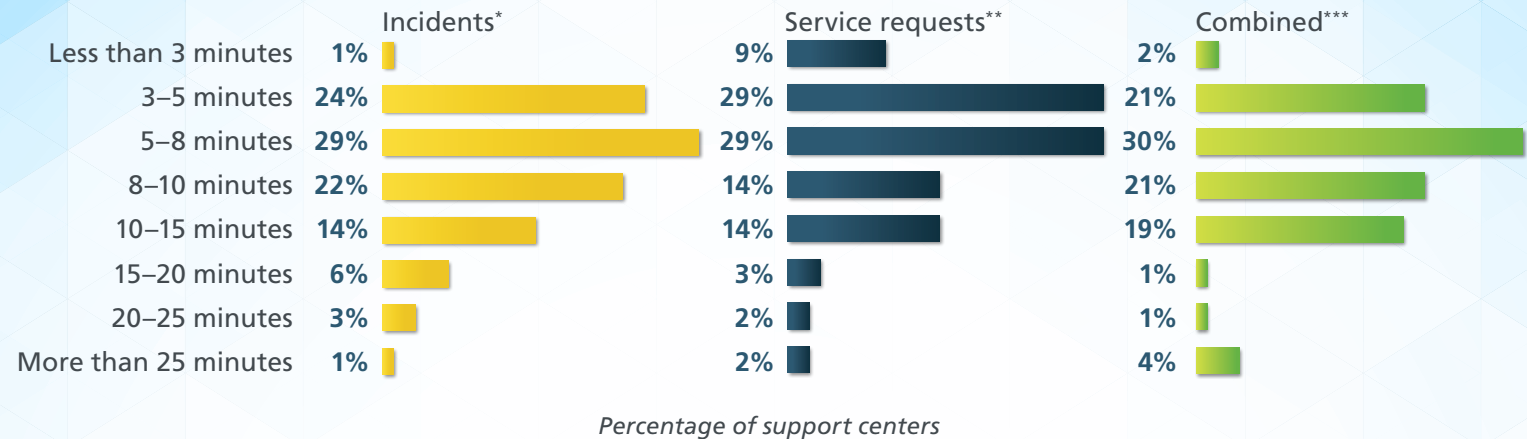


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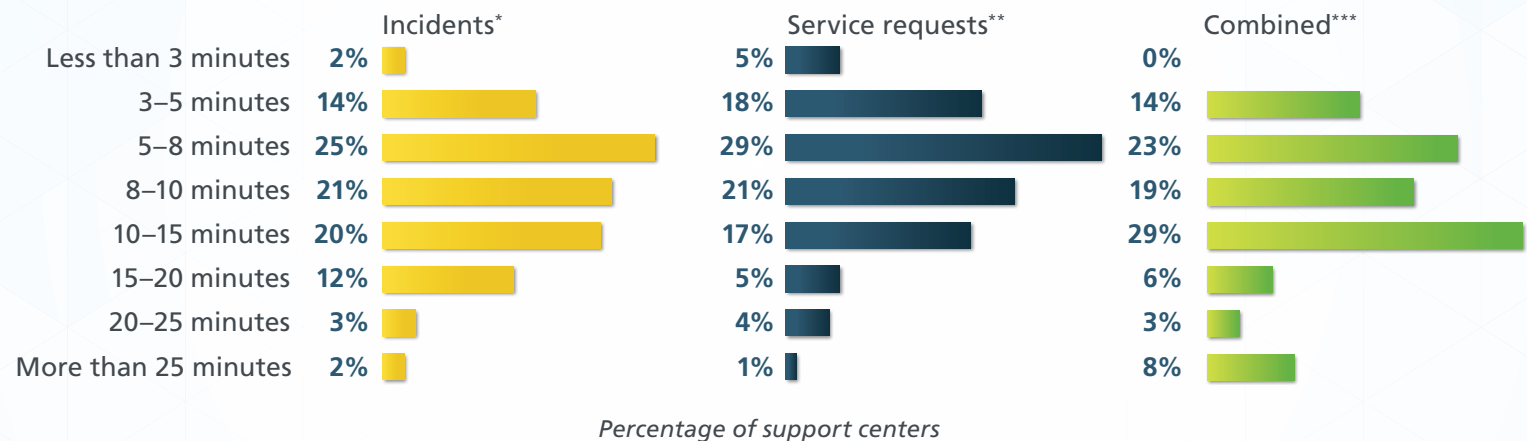
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## TIME SPENT ON TICKETS

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



### Average handle time on the phone (talk time and wrap-up time [i.e., effort]):



\* Incidents: Includes tickets for unplanned work required to fix something.

\*\* Service requests: Includes tickets where nothing is broken, but a service is needed. This is usually planned or scheduled work.

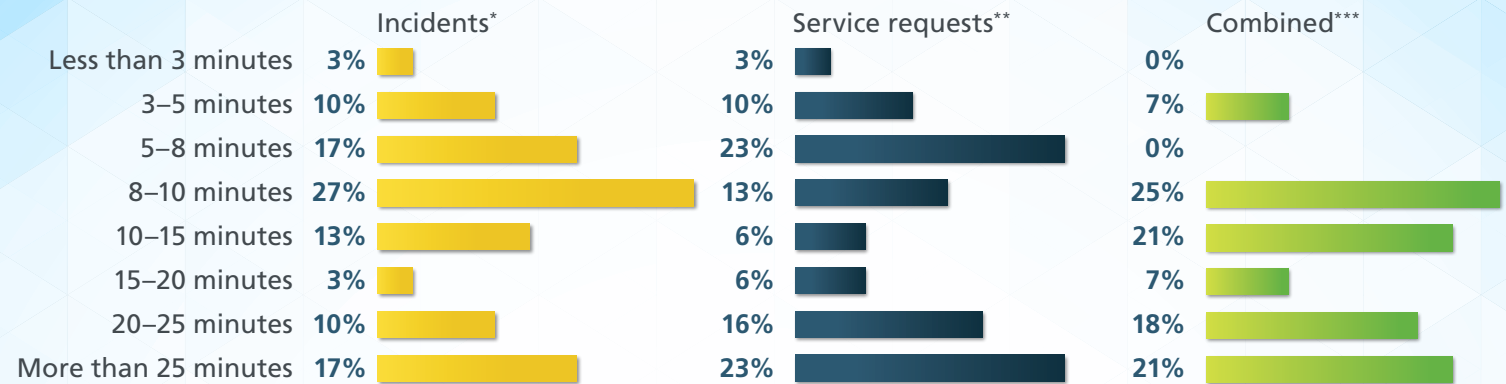
\*\*\* Combined: Includes all tickets from support centers that do not measure incidents and service requests independently.

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## TIME SPENT ON TICKETS CONT.

**Average handle time of tickets received through email (i.e., effort):**



Percentage of support centers

\* Incidents: Includes tickets for unplanned work required to fix something.

\*\* Service requests: Includes tickets where nothing is broken, but a service is needed. This is usually planned or scheduled work.

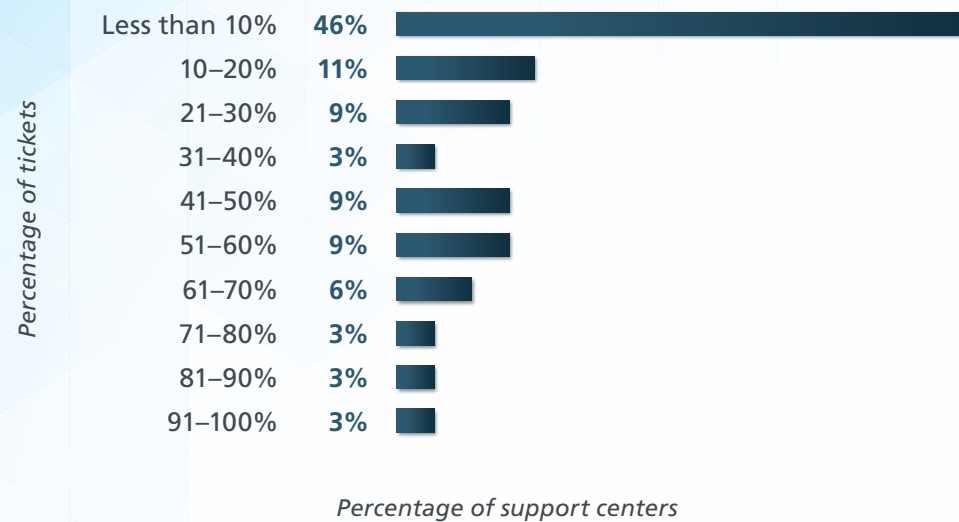
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## TRANSFER TO ANOTHER CHANNEL\*

**Percentage of tickets converted from email to another channel (e.g., phone) before being resolved:**



*\*Due to limited data about transferring from other channels (e.g., chat and online form), email is the only channel reported.*



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## RESOLUTION RATES

**Percentage of tickets resolved by any level as long as it is resolved on the initial phone call (first call resolution):**

	INCIDENTS*	SERVICE REQUESTS**	COMBINED***
Average	72.1%	64.0%	65.3%
Target	73.2%	67.4%	71.4%

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

	INCIDENTS*	SERVICE REQUESTS**	COMBINED***
Average	68.0%	68.0%	74.9%
Target	70.4%	70.6%	82.2%

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

	INCIDENTS*	SERVICE REQUESTS**	COMBINED***
Average	66.0%	66.9%	66.2%
Target	68.4%	68.2%	76.4%

\* Incidents: Includes tickets for unplanned work required to fix something.

\*\* Service requests: Includes tickets where nothing is broken, but a service is needed. This is usually planned or scheduled work.

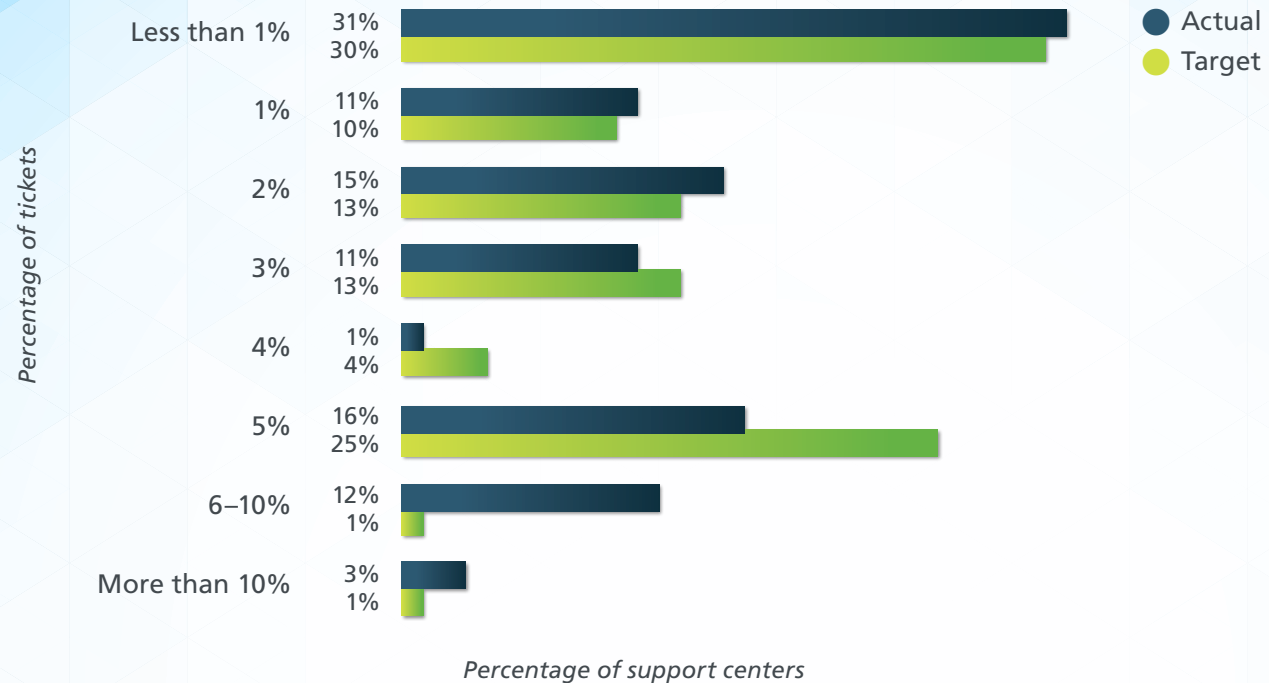
\*\*\* Combined: Includes all tickets from support centers that do not measure incidents and service requests independently.

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## REOPEN RATE

**Percentage of tickets reopened after being closed (all channels):**



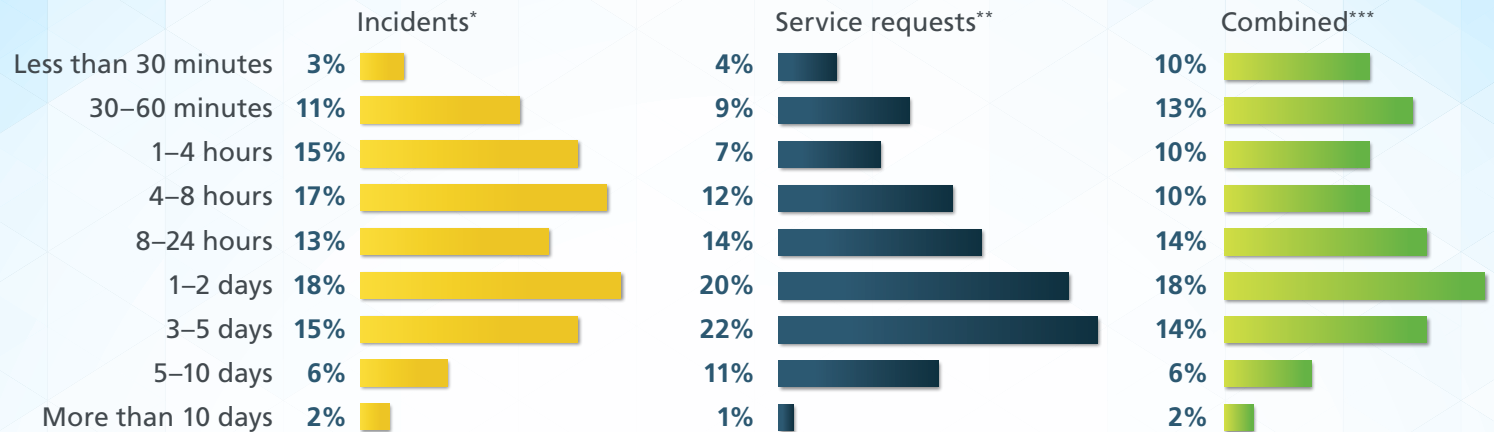
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## TIME TO RESOLVE

### Average time to resolve tickets (from open to final resolution):

(Includes only nonurgent tickets.)



Percentage of support centers

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## KNOWLEDGE BASE

**Percentage of tickets closed using a knowledge base article/document:**



### Percentage of tickets

0%	0%
1–5%	1%
6–10%	7%
11–30%	21%
31–50%	13%
51–70%	21%
71–90%	19%
91–100%	17%

*Percentage of support centers*

**Percentage of tickets that generate new knowledge base entries:**



### Percentage of tickets

0%	2%
1–5%	29%
6–10%	22%
11–30%	14%
31–50%	10%
51–70%	16%
71–90%	6%
91–100%	0%

*Percentage of support centers*

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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.



# Staffing

## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Hiring over the next twelve months
- Top ten sought-after skills for hiring and promoting staff
- Staff working from home
- Managing the support center

## TRAINING

- Training areas by position
- Amount of training by position
- Methods used to train new hires to the front line
- The primary training focus for new frontline hires
- Time needed for new frontline hires to work proficiently on their own

## CERTIFICATION

- The industry's position on frontline staff certification
- Frontline staff certifications

## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

- Support staff attrition rates
- Average tenure for each position in the support center
- Frequency of formal measurement of support staff satisfaction
- Average support staff satisfaction level
- Factors contributing to a satisfied staff
- Factors contributing to a dissatisfied staff

## OUTSOURCING

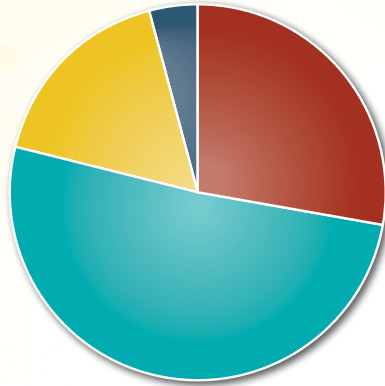
- Outsourced staff
- Outsourced functions
- Reasons for outsourcing
- Reasons support organizations don't outsource more
- Outsourcing expectations for the next year



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### Hiring over the next twelve months:



- Expanding – creating and filling new positions **28%**
- Filling openings – filling current positions as they come open **51%**
- Frozen – not filling open positions **17%**
- Cutting – staff will be smaller than it is now **4%**

*Percentage of support organizations*



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## Top ten sought-after skills for hiring and promoting staff:

Rank	FRONTLINE SUPPORT	DESKTOP SUPPORT	MANAGEMENT
1	Customer service	Customer service	Leadership skills
2	Communication skills	Troubleshooting/problem-solving skills	Management skills
3	Ability to learn quickly	Communication skills	Communication skills
4	Troubleshooting/problem-solving skills	Ability to work under pressure	Strategic thinking
5	Ability to work under pressure	Ability to learn quickly	Customer service
6	Adaptability	Adaptability	Business knowledge
7	Teamwork skills	Self-motivated, independent worker	Integrity
8	Interpersonal skills	Teamwork skills	Ability to work under pressure
9	Support experience	Interpersonal skills	Project management
10	Integrity	Support experience	Adaptability

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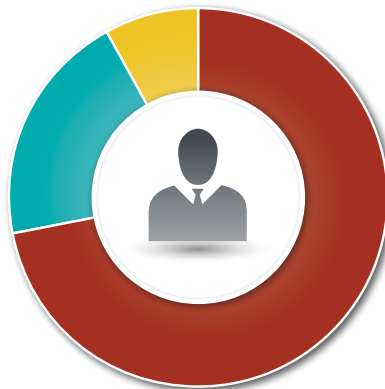
## Staff working from home:



Percentage of support centers

- All support staff work from home at **all** times 6%
- All support staff work from home **part** of the time 9%
- Some support staff work from home at **all** times 9%
- Some support staff work from home **part** of the time 25%
- Planning to implement this in the next twelve months 5%
- None, and no plans to implement this in the next twelve months 46%

## Managing the support center:



Percentage of support centers

- Dedicated support center manager 72%
- Support center manager oversees other areas as well (e.g., desktop support) 20%
- No support center manager 8%

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## TRAINING

### Training areas by position:

(Includes only those organizations that have each position.)

	LEVEL 1 SUPPORT	LEVEL 2 SUPPORT	SUPPORT CENTER TEAM LEAD	SUPPORT CENTER MANAGER
Customer service (e.g., communication, what to ask, how to ask)	<b>72%</b>	53%	42%	33%
Leadership	11%	21%	<b>58%</b>	<b>63%</b>
People management (e.g., coaching, performance management, recruiting)	12%	15%	49%	61%
Project management	8%	20%	30%	44%
Self-management (e.g., stress, time, assertiveness, interpersonal skills)	40%	39%	41%	42%
Service management process skills	28%	28%	36%	39%
Teamwork skills	49%	45%	44%	41%
Technologies used by customers	59%	59%	45%	36%
Technologies used to provide support	64%	<b>61%</b>	48%	38%
Troubleshooting/problem-solving skills	58%	51%	40%	28%
Other	8%	8%	9%	11%
No formal training	13%	14%	17%	13%

Percentage of support centers training in each area

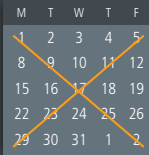
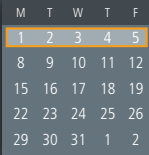
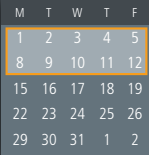
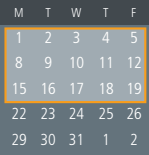
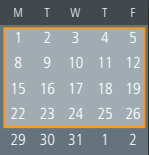
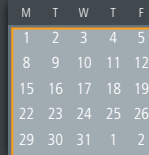
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## TRAINING CONT.

### Amount of training by position:

(Days per year staff spend on formal training, excluding new-hire training.)

						
	NONE	1-5 DAYS	6-10 DAYS	11-15 DAYS	16-20 DAYS	MORE THAN 20 DAYS
Level 1 Support	11%	50%	23%	8%	4%	4%
Level 2 Support	12%	43%	28%	10%	4%	4%
Support Center Team Lead	12%	36%	29%	15%	4%	5%
Support Center Manager	12%	34%	25%	17%	6%	6%

*Percentage of support centers*



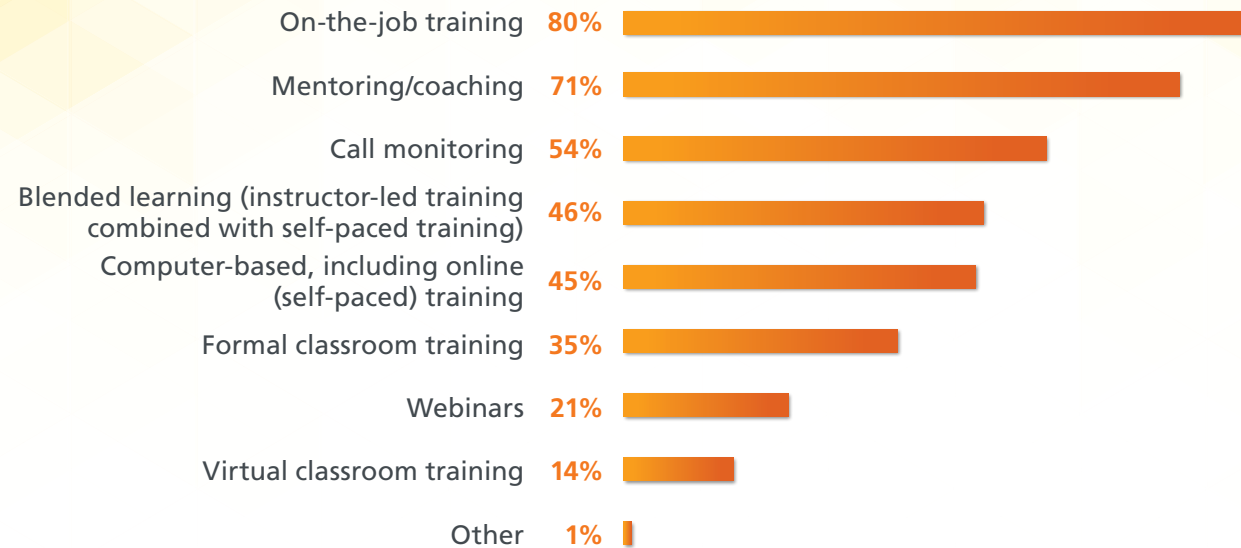
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## TRAINING CONT.

### Methods used to train new hires to the front line:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support organizations.)



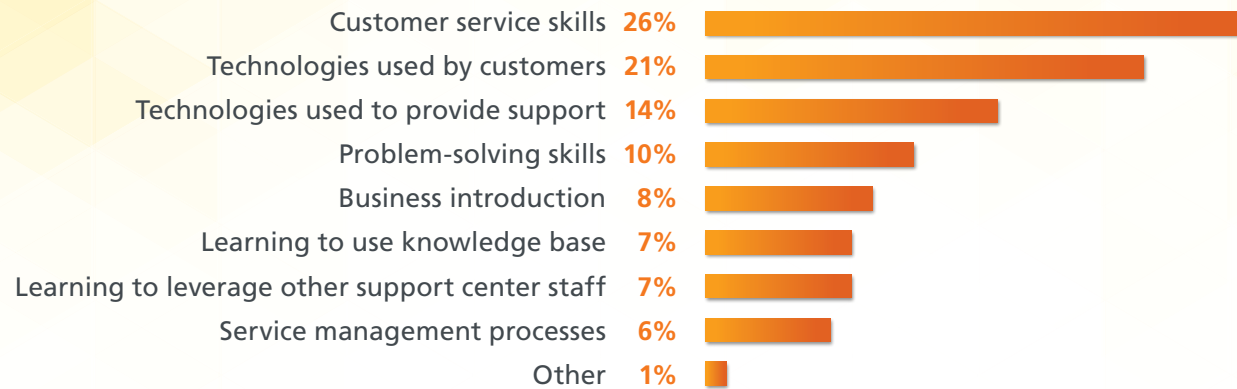
*Percentage of support centers using each method*

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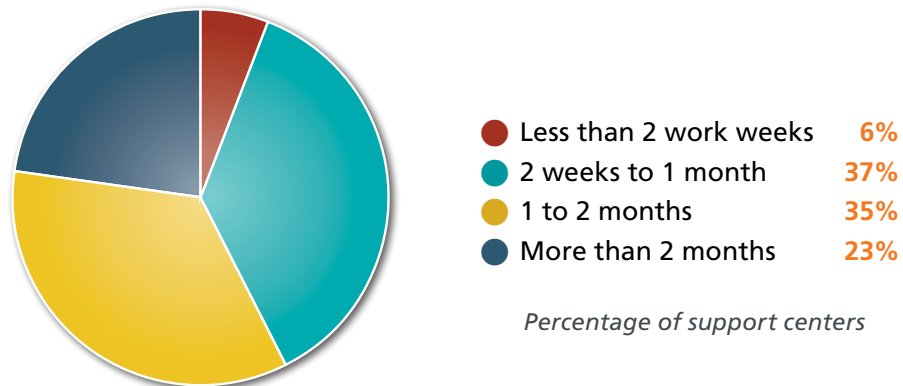
## TRAINING CONT.

**The primary training focus for new frontline hires:**



*Percentage selecting each factor*

**Time needed for new frontline hires to work proficiently on their own:**



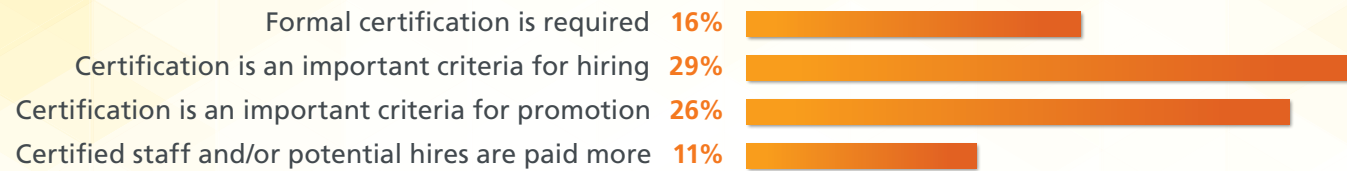
*Percentage of support centers*

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## CERTIFICATION

### The industry's position on frontline staff certification:



*Percentage of support centers*

### Frontline staff certifications:

Rank	TOP FIVE CERTIFICATIONS frontline staff are <b>required</b> to have
1	HDI
2	Microsoft
3	ITIL
4	CompTIA
5	Cisco

Rank	TOP FIVE CERTIFICATIONS frontline staff are <b>paid more</b> for having
1	Microsoft
2	Cisco
3	HDI
4	ITIL
5	CompTIA

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## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

### Support staff attrition rates:



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## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION CONT.

### Average tenure for each position in the support center:

(Includes only those organizations that have each position.)

	LEVEL 1 SUPPORT	LEVEL 2 SUPPORT	SUPPORT CENTER TEAM LEAD	SUPPORT CENTER MANAGER
Number of responses	472	411	351	465
Less than 1 year	4%	2%	3%	4%
1 year	13%	5%	5%	3%
2 years	<b>29%</b>	13%	11%	7%
3 years	15%	18%	12%	7%
4 years	10%	12%	12%	5%
5 years	8%	12%	13%	13%
5–8 years	10%	<b>19%</b>	16%	18%
8–10 years	5%	10%	9%	13%
More than 10 years	7%	10%	<b>17%</b>	<b>31%</b>

*Percentage of support centers*

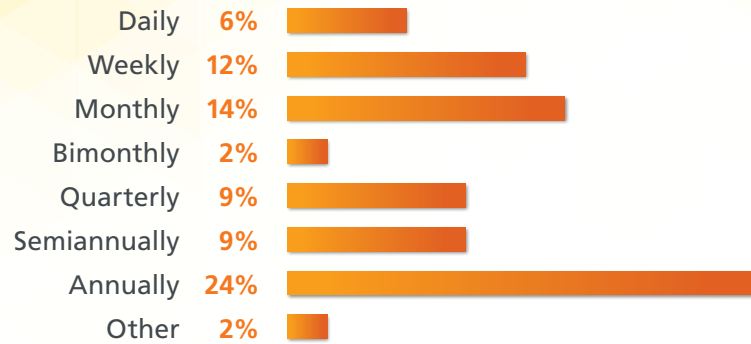


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## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION CONT.

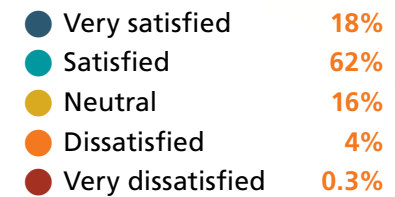
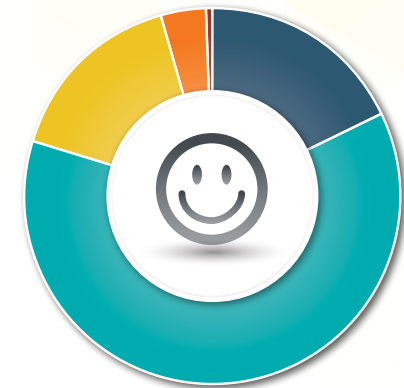
### Frequency of formal measurement of support staff satisfaction:



Percentage of organizations

### Average support staff satisfaction level:

(Includes only those support centers that measure support staff satisfaction.)



Percentage of support centers

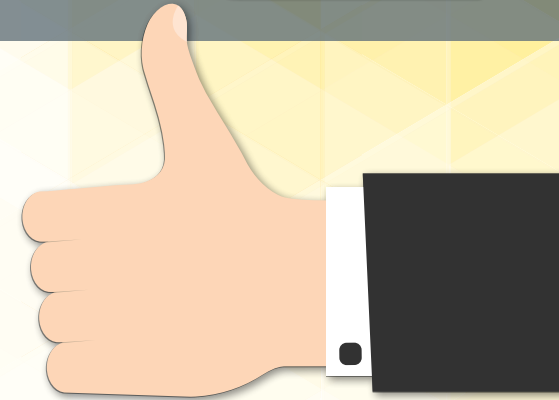
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## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION CONT.

### Factors contributing to a satisfied staff:

(Includes the 465 organizations that reported having satisfied or very satisfied staff.)



Type of work	46%	Relationships with support partners (e.g., escalated teams)	25%
Team development (including social events)	41%	Certifications provided	24%
Training provided	38%	New technology/devices	23%
Amount of work	35%	Career-pathing	21%
Rewards and recognition programs	31%	Home office	13%
Customers	31%	Other	4%
Office hours	28%		

Percentage selecting each factor

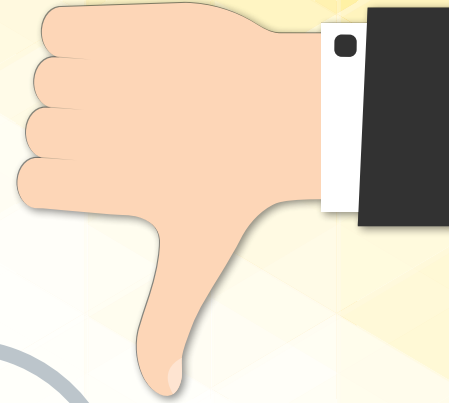
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## EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION CONT.

### Factors contributing to a dissatisfied staff:

(Includes the 71 organizations that reported having dissatisfied or very dissatisfied staff.)



Relationships within the team  
 Relationships with support partners  
 (e.g., escalated teams)  
 Training provided  
 Office hours  
 Customers

27%  
 27%  
 20%  
 20%  
 13%

Home office  
 New technology/devices  
 Team development (including social events)  
 Certifications provided  
 Paid time off  
 Other

7%  
 7%  
 7%  
 0%  
 0%  
 7%

Percentage selecting each factor

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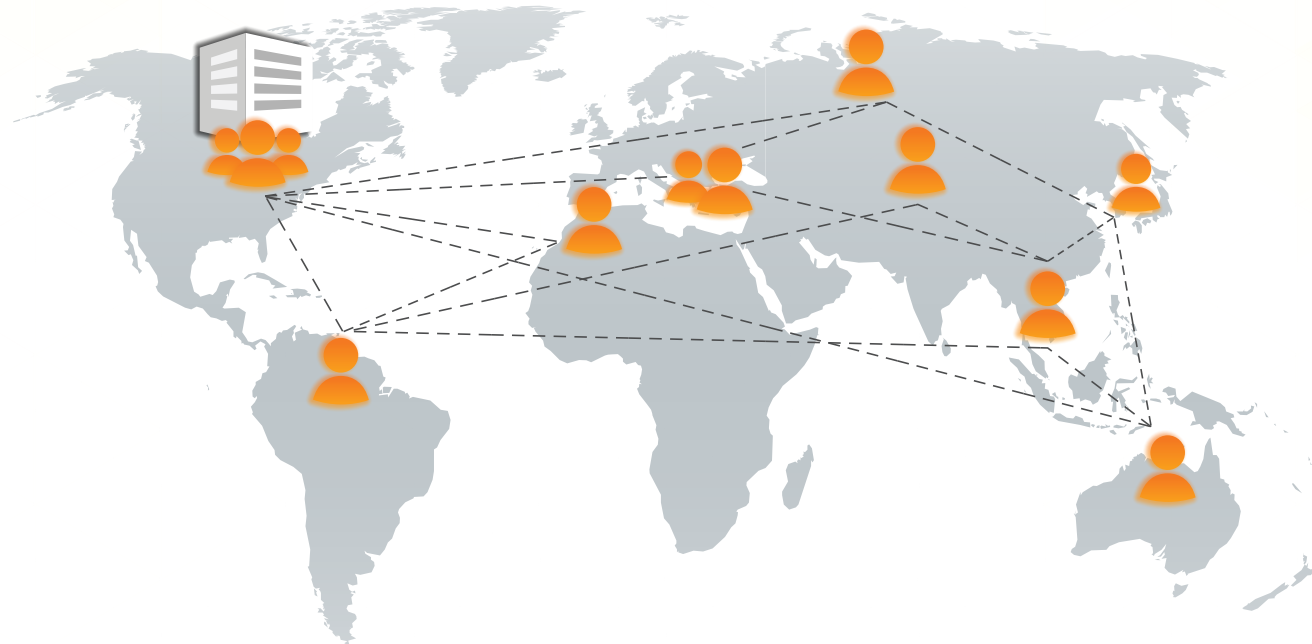
## OUTSOURCING

### Outsourced staff:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage with outsourced support staff in each location*

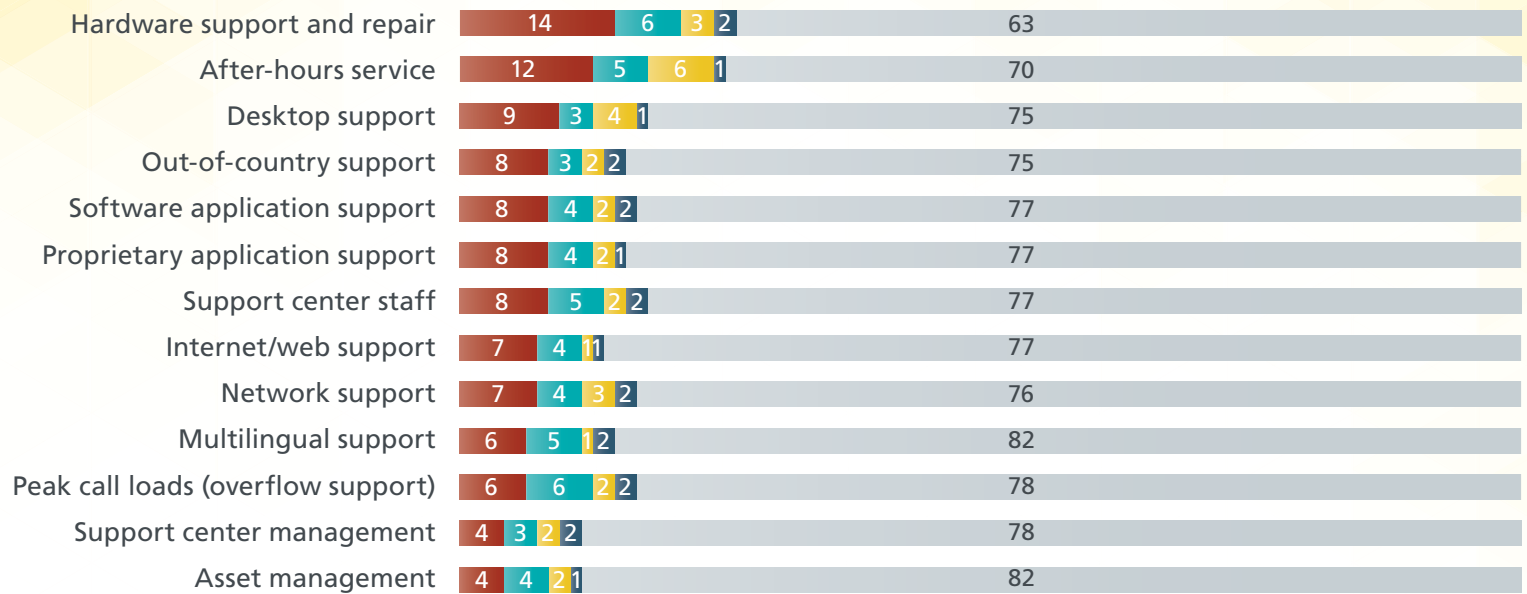


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## OUTSOURCING CONT.

### Outsourced functions:



- Currently outsourced
- Being considered for outsourcing
- Outsourced in the past
- Bringing back in-house
- No plans to outsource

*Percentage of support organizations*

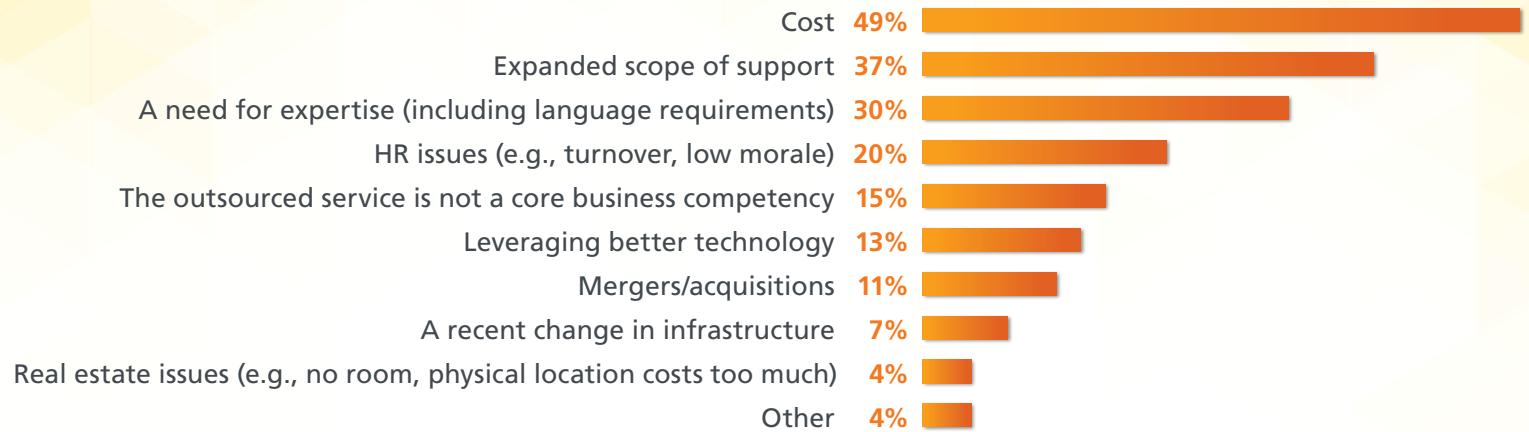
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## OUTSOURCING CONT.

### Reasons for outsourcing:

(Includes support centers that are currently outsourcing or are considering outsourcing.)



*Percentage selecting each factor*



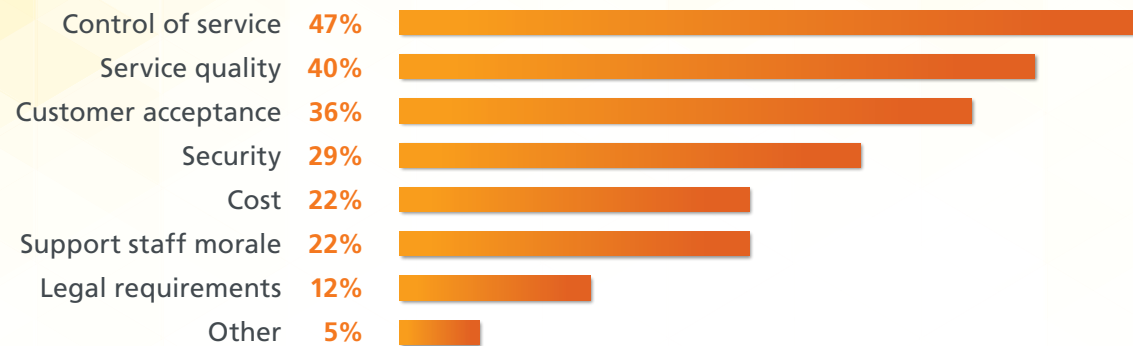
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## OUTSOURCING CONT.

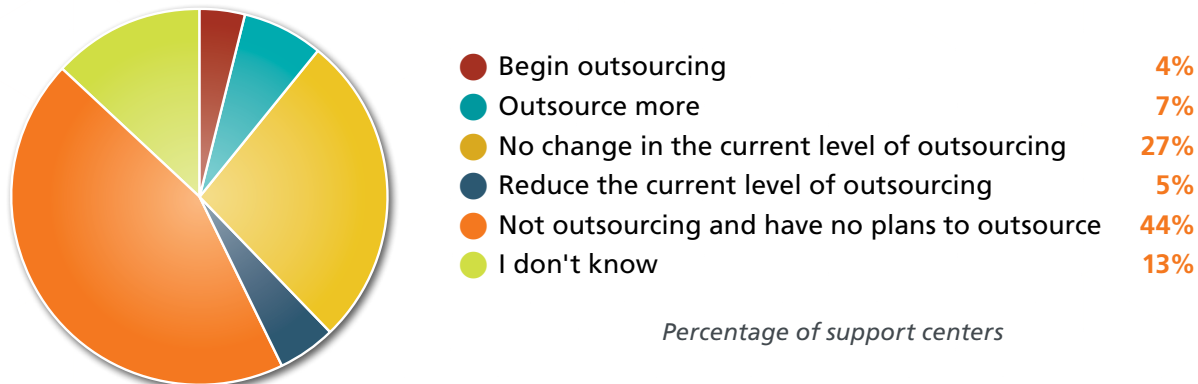
### Reasons support organizations don't outsource more:

(Survey respondents were asked to select all options that applied to their support centers.)



*Percentage selecting each factor*

### Outsourcing expectations for the next year:



*Percentage of support centers*

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Compensation practices and competitive salaries are an important part of attracting and retaining a skilled support team.

This section reveals the skills salaries are based on for each position, as well as bonus and overtime practices. Plans for the next year are followed by current salary ranges and current average salaries (US data) reported for the US as a whole, by region, and by size of organization.



# Salary Report

## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

- Top five factors that influence salary increases for each position
- Overtime compensation
- Bonuses
- How bonuses are determined
- Support center compensation plans for the next twelve months
- How each position is compensated
- Average annual salary (US data)
- Current average salary by region (US data)
- Current average salary by size of customer base (US data)

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## Top five factors that influence salary increases for each position:

Rank	LEVEL 1 SUPPORT
1	Customer service skills
2	Quality of work
3	Meeting performance metrics or standards
4	Help desk or support experience
5	Increased job responsibilities

Rank	LEVEL 2 SUPPORT
1	Quality of work
2	Increased job responsibilities
3	Customer service skills
4	Meeting performance metrics or standards
5	Communication skills

Rank	SUPPORT CENTER TEAM LEAD
1	Management or leadership skills
2	Quality of work
3	Increased job responsibilities
4	Communication skills
5	Customer service skills

Rank	SUPPORT CENTER MANAGER
1	Management or leadership skills
2	Business knowledge
3	Communication skills
4	Quality of work
5	Increased job responsibilities

Rank	SUPPORT CENTER DIRECTOR
1	Management or leadership skills
2	Business knowledge
3	Quality of work
4	Communication skills
5	Financial management

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### Overtime compensation:



*Percentage of organizations that provide monetary compensation for work performed outside of an employee's normally scheduled working hours (e.g., on-call coverage, holiday coverage)*



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## Bonuses:



*Percentage of organizations that award bonuses to each level*

## How bonuses are determined:

(Those that offer bonuses were asked to select all options that applied to their organizations.)



*Percentage of organizations*

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## Support center compensation plans for the next twelve months:

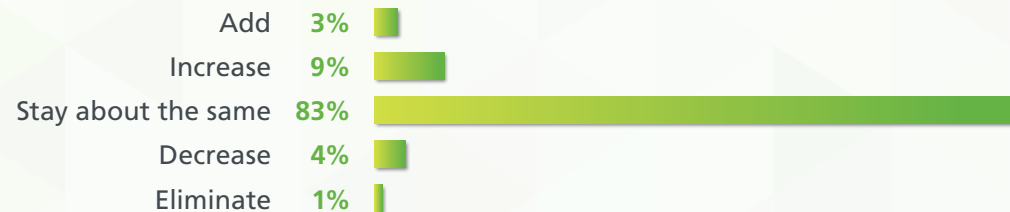
### Salaries



### Bonuses



### Benefits



### Pay differentials

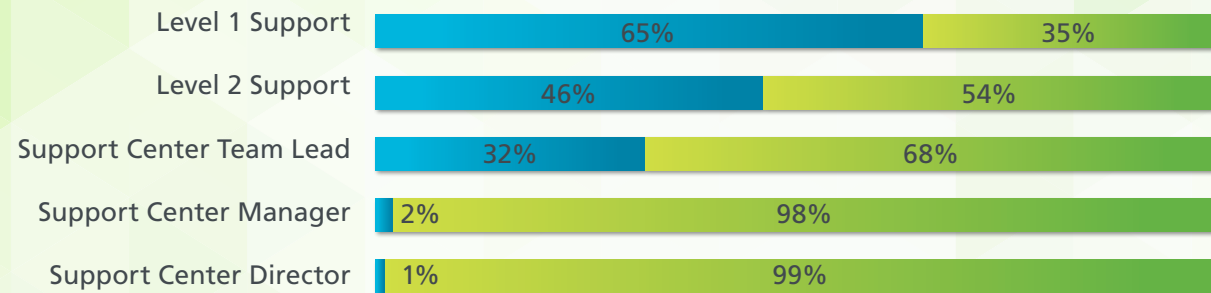




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## How each position is compensated:



● Hourly

● Salary



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## Average annual salary (US data):

JOB LEVEL	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY RANGE		CURRENT AVERAGE SALARY
		LOW	HIGH	
Level 1 Support	278	\$37,059	\$52,169	\$43,975
Level 2 Support	197	\$44,837	\$62,304	\$52,515
Support Center Team Lead	172	\$53,790	\$68,614	\$61,661
Support Center Manager	115	\$71,285	\$94,153	\$85,475
Support Center Director	135	\$91,222	\$116,025	\$106,196

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## Current average salary by region\* (US data):

		WEST	CENTRAL	EAST
NUMBER OF RESPONSES		30	135	85
	Level 1 Support	\$49,301	\$43,058	\$44,632
	Level 2 Support	\$60,883	\$50,851	\$53,755
	Support Center Team Lead	limited data	\$60,940	\$60,438
	Support Center Manager	limited data	\$83,940	\$86,769
	Support Center Director	limited data	\$101,718	\$107,434

*\*See About the Report section for the list of US states in each region.*

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## Current average salary by size of customer base (US data):

	SMALL (fewer than 2,000 customers)	MEDIUM (2,000–10,000 customers)	LARGE (more than 10,000 customers)
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	94	98	86
Level 1 Support	\$44,672	\$44,912	\$42,235
Level 2 Support	\$53,768	\$53,455	\$50,130
Support Center Team Lead	\$63,814	\$64,182	\$58,180
Support Center Manager	\$84,663	\$86,827	\$84,898
Support Center Director	\$105,304	\$105,584	\$107,527

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Technical support centers of every size, from more than thirty industries, participated in this year's survey. This section of the report includes the profile of the **803 survey responses** included in the report.



# Demographics

## Click/Tap Each Entry for Charts

## ABOUT THE SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

- Number of support centers within the support organization
- Physical location of support centers within the support organization

## ABOUT THE SUPPORT CENTER

- The support center is referred to as
- The support center provides desktop support in addition to frontline support
- Physical location of the support center's customers
- Regions where customers are located
- Type of support provided by the support center
- Number of end users (internal and external) supported by the support center
- Size of the support center's staff
- Average tickets per month
- Industries supported
- Number of languages in which the support center provides support
- Languages in which the support center provides support:

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## ABOUT THE SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

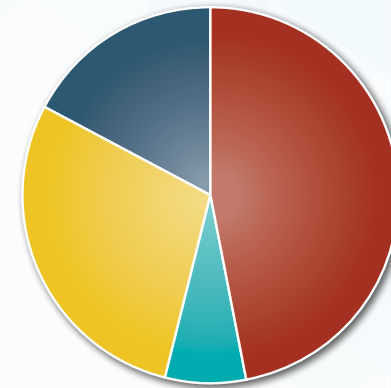
**Number of support centers within the support organization:**



1	52%
2	15%
3	10%
4	5%
5	5%
6-10	8%
More than 10	5%

*Percentage of organizations with each number of support centers*

**Physical location of support centers within the support organization:**



Single site/single country (on-site)	47%
Single site/single country (not on-site)	7%
Multiple sites/single country	29%
Multiple countries	17%

*Percentage of organizations with support centers in each location*



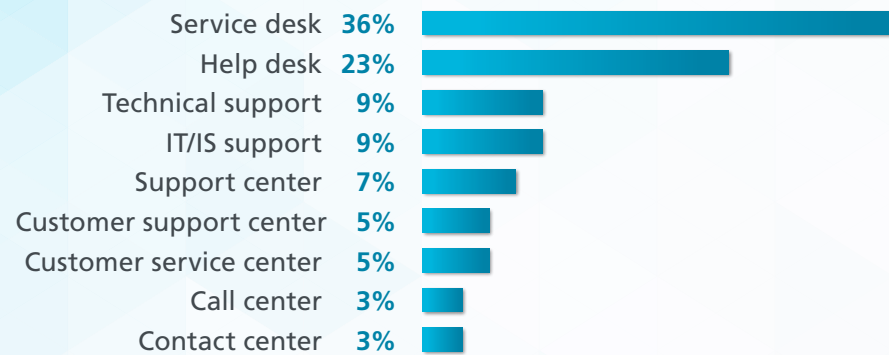
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## ABOUT THE SUPPORT CENTER

### The support center is referred to as:

Respondents were asked to select the closest match to their support center's title

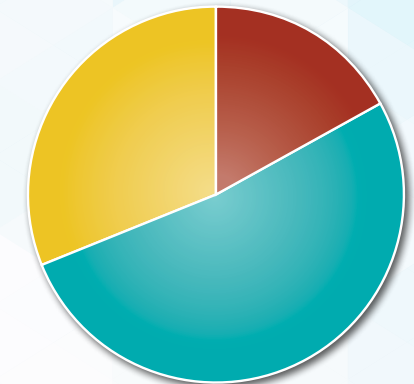


*Percentage of support centers*

### The support center provides desktop support in addition to frontline support:



### Physical location of the support center's customers:



- Single site/single country 17%
- Multiple sites/single country 52%
- Multiple countries 31%

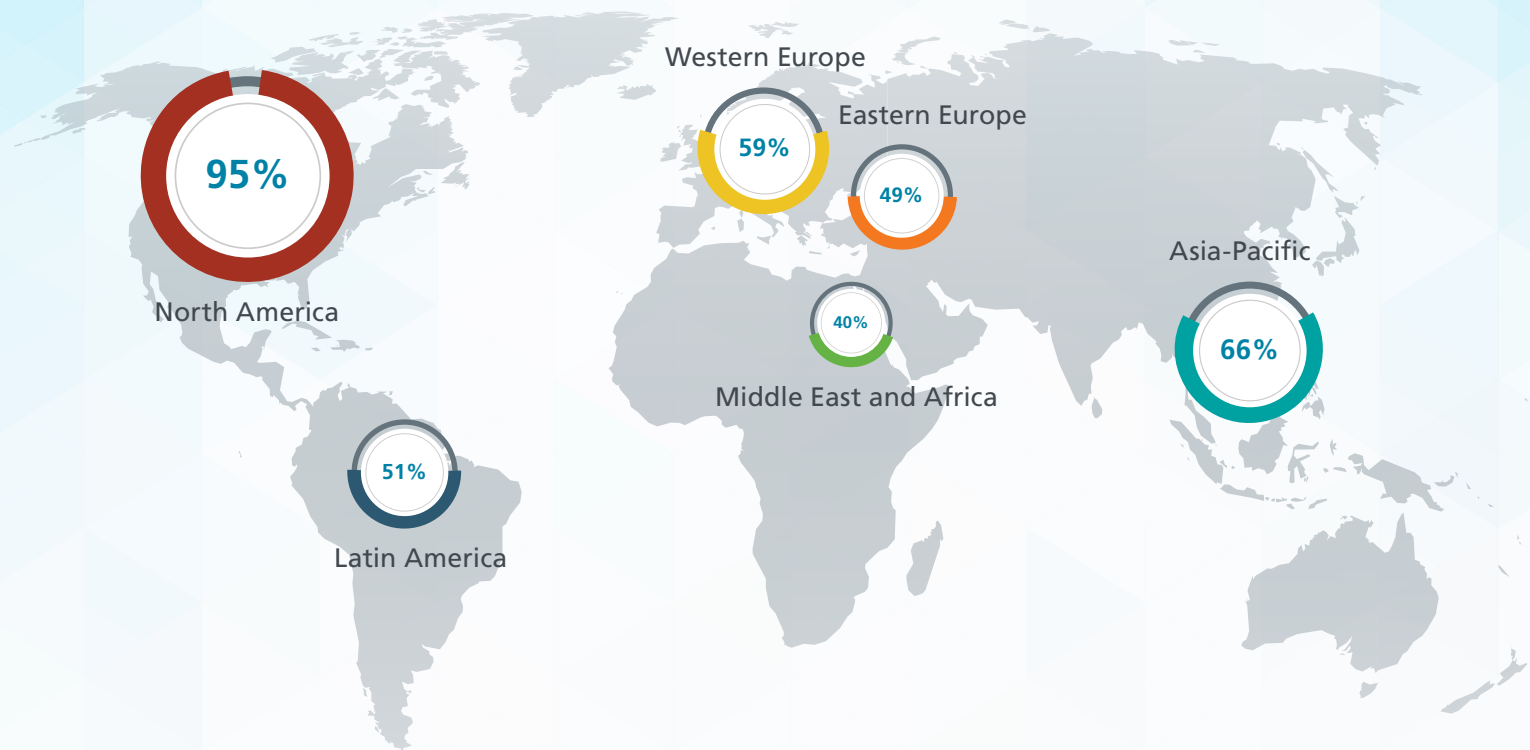
*Percentage of support centers with customers in each location*

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## ABOUT THE SUPPORT CENTER CONT.

**Regions where customers are located:**



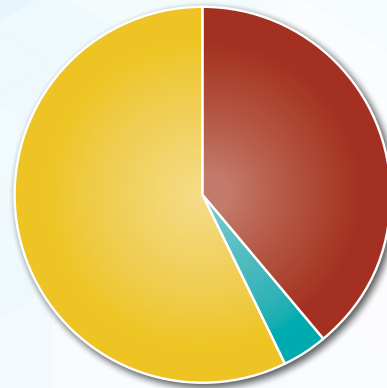
*Percentage of support centers with customers in each region*

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## ABOUT THE SUPPORT CENTER CONT.

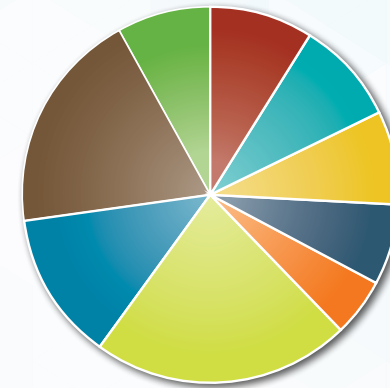
**Type of support provided by the support center:**



- Internal only (i.e., support employees/contractors within your company or organization) **39%**
- External only (i.e., support customers, consumers) **4%**
- Both internal and external **57%**

*Percentage of support centers with each type of customer*

**Number of end users (internal and external) supported by the support center:**



- Fewer than 100 **9%**
- 100–499 **9%**
- 500–999 **8%**
- 1,000–1,499 **7%**
- 1,500–1,999 **5%**
- 2,000–5,000 **22%**
- 5,001–10,000 **13%**
- 10,001–50,000 **19%**
- More than 50,000 **8%**

*Percentage of support centers with each customer count*

**78%** and **22%** tickets from the survey sample are from internal and external customers, respectively (mean).

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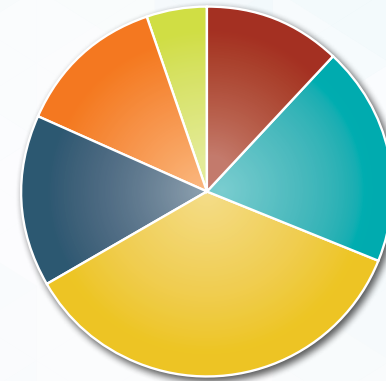
### Size of the support center's staff:



5 or fewer	19%
6–10	19%
11–15	16%
16–20	11%
21–30	12%
31–40	7%
41–50	4%
51–100	7%
More than 100	6%

*Percentage of support centers with each staff size*

### Average tickets per month:



Fewer than 500 tickets	12%
500–1,000 tickets	19%
1,001–5,000 tickets	35%
5,001–10,000 tickets	15%
10,001–50,000 tickets	13%
More than 50,000 tickets	5%

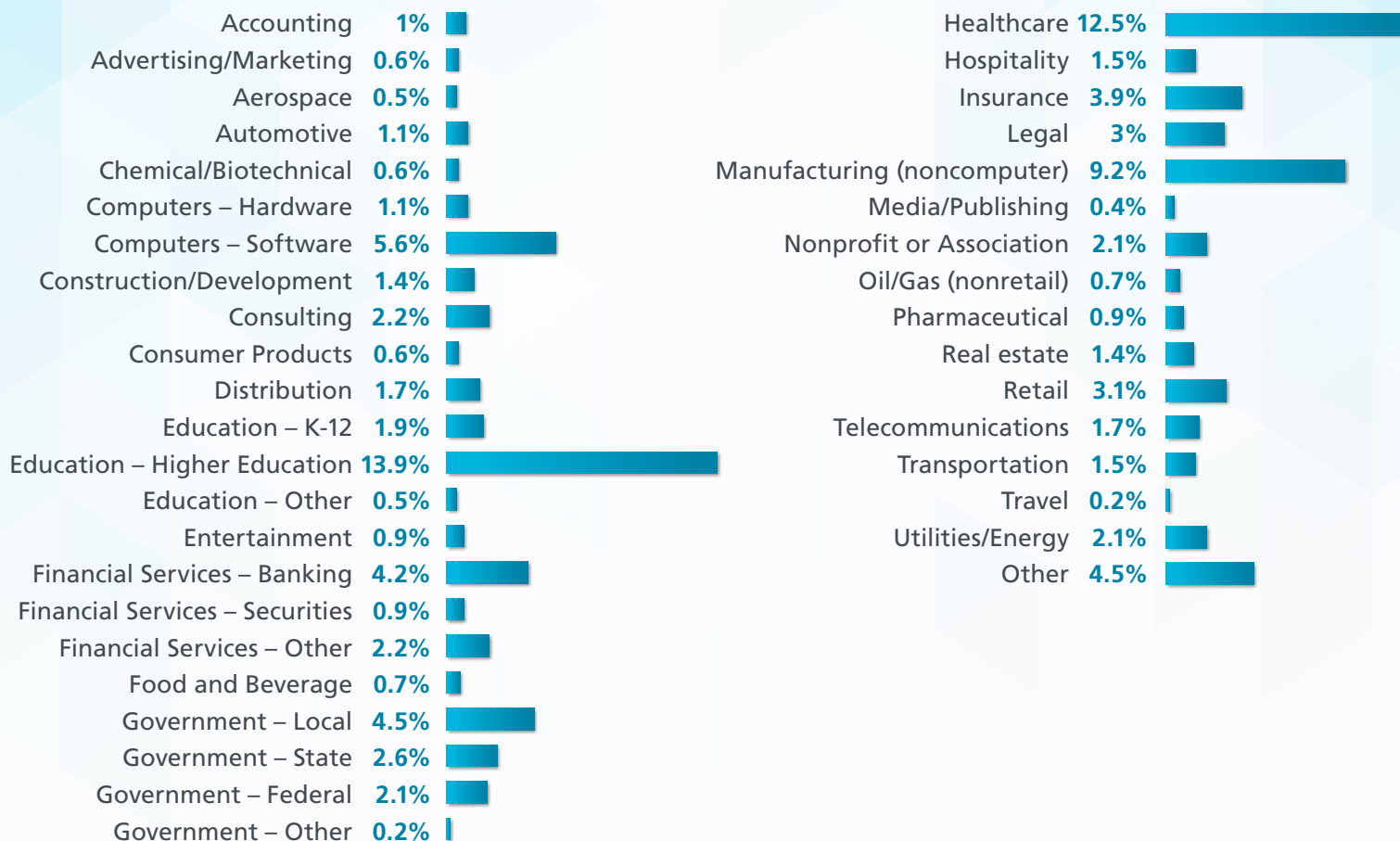
*Percentage of support centers with each average ticket count per month*

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## ABOUT THE SUPPORT CENTER CONT.

### Industries supported:



Percentage of support centers supporting each industry

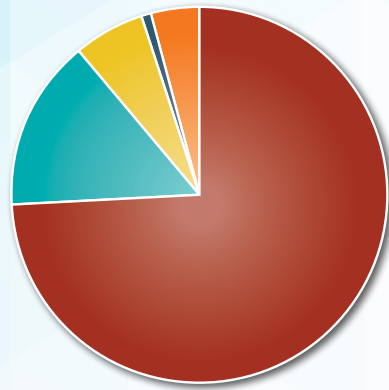


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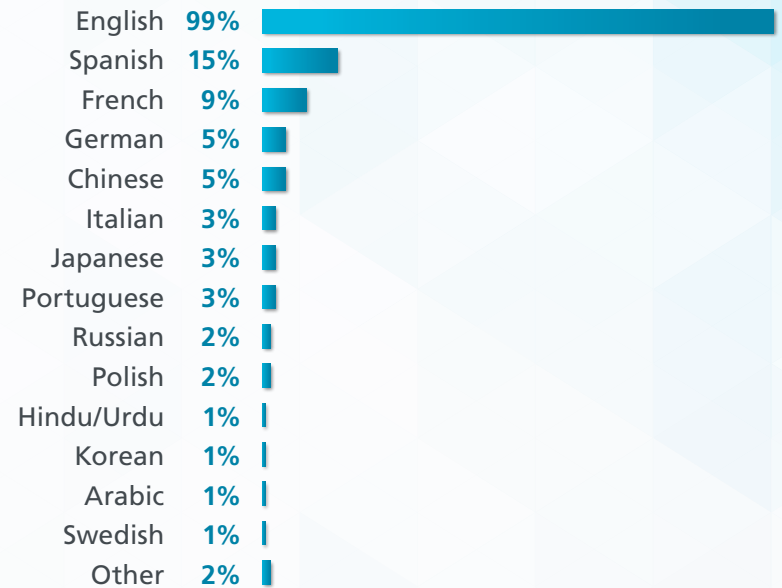
**Number of languages in which the support center provides support:**



● One language	75%
● Two languages	15%
● Three languages	6%
● Four languages	1%
● Five languages or more	4%

*Percentage of support centers supporting each number of languages*

**Languages in which the support center provides support:**



*Percentage of support centers providing support in each language*



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# About the Report

## INTRODUCTION

The Support Center Practices & Salary Report is a tool used by technical support center 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 even help them advance in their careers. This report illustrates current practices, processes, plans, and challenges in a variety of areas, such as performance metrics, ticket management, technologies, adopted frameworks, outsourcing, staffing, satisfaction, and salaries.

HDI is thankful for the outstanding response to this year's online survey. The 2015 report compiles the responses from 803 technical support professionals in more than thirty vertical industries. In addition to the 803 responses included in this report, we collected responses from more than 250 outsourced support centers. With such an impressive turnout for the outsourcing segment, HDI plans to report the results for the outsourced support centers independently (coming in 2016).

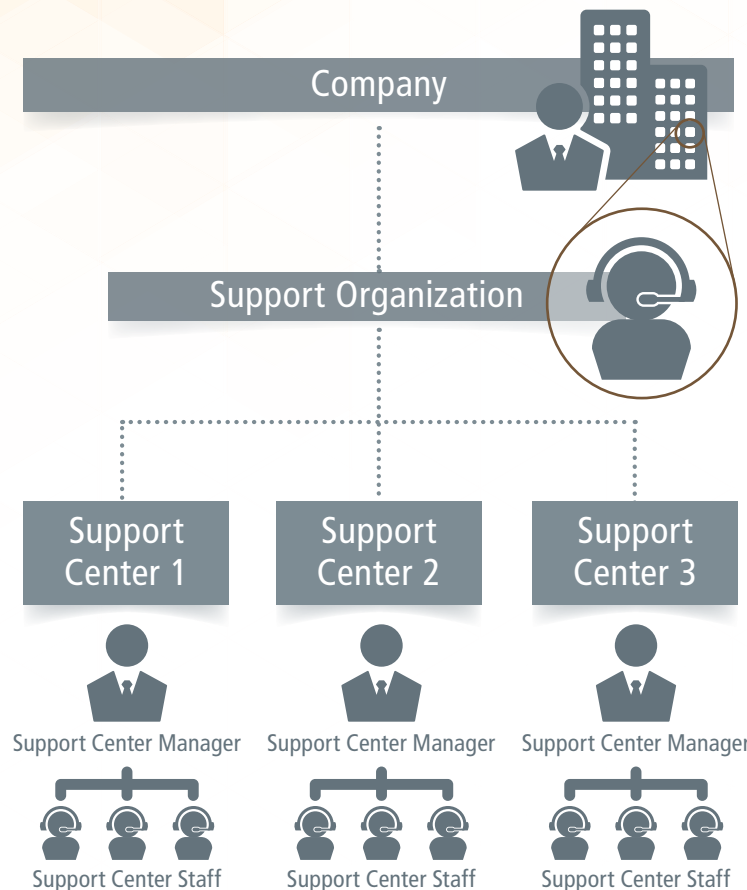
All survey responses were collected via a web-based survey, open from June to July 2015. The findings are based on responses submitted by support center managers and professionals in similar positions in support centers from around the world, with 85 percent from the United States, eight percent from Canada, two percent from Australia, and the remainder from a variety of countries, including India, Poland, and the Philippines. The 2015 Support Center Practices & Salary Report comprises current practices and salaries from support centers of all sizes; about 27 percent of support centers are supporting more than 10,000 customers, while about 26 percent support fewer than 500 customers. Support centers in this study vary in the location of their customer base (ranging from on site to global), and they represent organizations that provide support to internal end users, external end users, or a blend of both. A full profile is available in the Demographics section.

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## DEFINITIONS

The illustration below should help to clarify some of the terminology used for the purposes of this report. A few of the survey questions refer to the company and support organization; however, most of the information in this report refers to the individual support center.



## 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. (Does not include desktop support technicians, who are reported on separately in this survey.)

**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.

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**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. (Previously referred to as support supervisor.)

**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 (defined below).

**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.

## SALARY REGIONS (US)

Average US salaries are broken out by the region of the United States in which the support center is located.

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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