In today’s tough financial climate, an improved Service Desk can help to reduce IT costs and deliver increased flexibility and service levels to customers. But will it happen? Fujitsu, an innovator and practitioner in ITSM for over 20 years, has commissioned research to gather views on how ITSM is being delivered, where it succeeds and fails, and the future intentions of organisations.

From July to September 2010, Fujitsu surveyed the current attitudes of IT Service Management professionals within FTSE 500 companies in the UK. Chief Information Officers and IT Service Managers gave feedback on the ITSM solutions their organisations have adopted, their fitness-for-purpose, and their interest in new delivery models.

Our ITSM Survey: The Service Desk Model Explored reveals that while many organisations have outsourced all or parts of their ITSM function, almost 60% expressed interest in moving to an on demand solution which ensures predictable and all-inclusive costs for IT Service Management. The following sections uncover what the driving factors are behind these findings, as companies seek to uncover new Service Desk efficiencies.

The Service Desk situation today

Service delivery – is it changing?
50% of all organisations surveyed had not outsourced elements of ITSM, while 40% outsourced the function completely. The remaining 10% had only outsourced part of their ITSM elements. In contrast with other aspects of the IT operation, outsourcing appears to be the common and established practice for ITSM – this is backed up by mainstream UK analyst research indicating that Service Desks are the second most popular item of outsourcing.

Which ITSM software?
Organisations were using a wide range of ITSM software, with the majority of respondents – 93% – working with traditional licensed software on-premises. A number of companies were operating relatively older versions of software which have now been superseded, indicating that the cost of change has been prohibitive.
Only 7% of respondents had adopted Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions which use commercial off-the-shelf software to deliver the most up to date ITSM technology. This is in sharp contrast to the 20% of respondents who were developing software in-house, a surprisingly high figure given the financial climate and current resistance to committing cost, time and resources to developing bespoke applications.

30% of organisations stated that their ITSM solution was not easy to customise nor did it integrate well into other systems: this represents a significant gap in Service Desk functionality at a time when organisations need to operate a lean and agile solution.

**Upgrading – hard to do?**

When asked how long it had been since their IT Service Management software was last updated, 56% of all respondents said they had not updated for over a year, while 11% of that number had not updated for 2-4 years. Clearly there are many out-of-date installations within enterprise businesses, and these organisations will not be benefitting from the latest functionality in new releases. It is likely that such lengthy delays in upgrading are due to one or more factors: cost, the resources required for continual upgrades and maintenance, or simply a lack of availability of modern and appropriate software upgrades.

**The Future of ITSM**

**To ITIL or not to ITIL?**

The ITIL framework is a globally recognised set of best practices for IT and IT Service Management. When successfully applied, ITIL can be a vehicle for improving IT service quality and delivering competitive advantage. Currently, when asked if their organisation’s ITSM processes conform to ITIL, 20% of respondents stated that theirs did not. In addition, just under half of the remaining 80% are running a version of ITSM software that supports ITIL v2 (replaced in May 2007), whilst the remainder were running software complaint with ITIL 3. Modern ITSM solutions which fully integrate ITIL best practice are likely to be the focus for software purchasers in the coming months and years.

**Web 2.0 – the intuitive interface**

When asked if their ITSM software included any Web 2.0 collaborative or social networking, only a fifth of respondents stated that they are utilising the power of Web 2.0. In the near future, as organisations seek ways to easily customise the Service Desk, improve integrations and enable collaboration and personalised experiences for users, this level of technology adoption will undoubtedly rise.
On demand is in-demand

A key attraction of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) is that it can deliver—on demand—a lean, cost-effective and future-proof Service Desk solution that has the potential to dramatically reduce costs through per-user pricing. For example, when IT Service Management requirements change, such as requiring more logged in users, this can be achieved easily and with predictable pricing for the future. When asked if an all-inclusive cost for IT Service Management would address commercial needs, over 60% of respondents expressed an interest, indicating that SaaS is now under the scrutiny of a majority of IT professionals as an attractive delivery model.

60% of respondents expressed interest in on demand ITSM software

Summary

The most significant statistics and insights within this survey are that a large percentage of organisations have not updated their ITSM software for a year or more, and so may not be benefiting from the latest Service Desk functionality and certainly will not be running the most up-to-date fully patched system. In addition, the majority of Service Desk software in companies surveyed are not leveraging the ease and flexibility of Web 2.0 collaboration techniques, nor are their Service Desk processes necessarily ITIL v3 compliant.

The potential of an on demand ITSM solution to address the negative aspects uncovered by this research has been recognised by 60% of respondents who are interested and would investigate further. Driving this interest will be the attraction of per-user pricing and savings on licensing, software maintenance and upgrading. The ability to implement and change IT Service Management requirements quickly and easily, with predictable pricing, is one that can address important commercial needs in the future.

About Fujitsu

Headquartered in Tokyo, Fujitsu Limited has an annual revenue of over $47bn, and is now the world’s third-largest provider of IT services. We employ over 186,000 people in over 70 countries worldwide and use our scale to add value to local and global clients.

Fujitsu have been creators and innovators in ITSM for over 20 years and brings in-depth application experience to the Service Desk environment. We currently have over 2,000 dedicated staff supporting over 1,000 business critical applications.

We have proven credentials in SaaS, and a focus on delivering all of the advantages of the latest web software technology for our customers. Fujitsu are rated as a Tier 1 provider of SaaS by Gartner, and have completed hundreds of SaaS projects, including the world’s most complex single phase implementation of Service-now.com. Our expertise means that you can be completely confident that we can help you transform your IT Service Management, innovate and save.

For more information on how Fujitsu’s expertise, experience and collaborative way of working can help you gain new Service Desk efficiencies, please contact Mark Peplow on 07867 835 825 or email mark.peplow@uk.fujitsu.com

Methodology

Our ITSM Survey: The Service Desk Model Explored was conducted by an independent telephone research agency between July and September 2010. The organisations polled were all in the FTSE 500 private sector and included both Fujitsu and non-Fujitsu customers. The results are based on 53 valid responses on attitudes to the ITSM function.

To find out more about our Software-as-a-Service expertise, contact Mark Peplow.
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