

# Sourcing Insights

STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS LEADERS



## THE TENETS OF WORLDCLASS END- USER SERVICES

### BEST PRACTICES TO EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT A DIVERSE USER BASE

For large organizations today, providing comprehensive end-user services is not just a matter of resolving technical issues based on the assumption that everyone needs the same kind of support, but prioritized by management level (e.g., CEO, EVP, VP, Director, etc). Increasingly, enterprise revenue, productivity and innovation directly correlate to how effectively IT leaders manage end-user services. The reason: Nearly all employees—from the CEO down to the entry-level worker—rely on IT to do their jobs.

Yet IT departments face an enormous challenge. Providing comprehensive and effective end-user services has never been more difficult. There is a huge demand for service from a diverse set of users in terms of their comfort with and dependence on technology. While almost every employee in a large company uses technology, some, such as call center representatives and field salespeople, are more critical in terms of retaining and generating new revenue. If these people don't know how to use the appropriate technologies, or if the technologies stop working, then there's a real risk of lost revenues.



UNISYS

With thousands of end users, it's difficult for IT services professionals in a large organization to determine who deserves the best service, or what type and level of service are required by each function and even jobs within a function. In a survey of organizations with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue conducted by Unisys Corp. in early 2007, respondents say that top executives and corporate managers receive the highest levels of end-user service, yet sales—the function that's closest to revenue—ranks sixth.

Then there's the proliferation of technologies that employees use, including many that they bring into the organization themselves. IT is being used to provide service for applications and devices deployed by the organization as well as consumer-oriented tools that some employees will use to be more productive and effective. The diversity of end users and technology makes it increasingly tough for end-user services to support the organization's need for innovation—especially process innovation that is enabled by technology.

The number of end users and technologies has expanded, yet the technology services in many organizations haven't kept up. Many companies have responded by increasing their end-user services budgets. In the survey, nearly half of the respondents say their organizations have increased their end-user services budgets by at least 50 percent since 2001. At the same time, only 22 percent of respondents say that end users would rate support services as excellent.

The reason for the discrepancy between end-user services budgets and end-user satisfaction lies in the way technolo-

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gy services are provided. Organizations typically use a one-size-fits-all approach to IT support that doesn't recognize the specific needs of employees or their unique relevance to business revenue.

It's not just an issue of providing inadequate support. End-user services organizations are putting productivity, innovation and revenue at risk.

### END-USER DIVERSITY

The challenge for end-user services is to meet the needs of a wide variety of users and technologies while taking into account the relationship of each function to revenue retention (including customer support) and growth. Thus, solving the end-user services crisis requires organizations to better distinguish between functions and jobs within a function that retain or drive new revenue and those that don't. Companies need to restructure end-user services with one overriding objective: to maximize organizational productivity as it relates to revenue. This means redesigning the service delivery process to provide higher levels of service to the users that are most important to revenue. More effective support can be accomplished by sharing knowledge to ease troubleshooting; standardizing processes to gain efficiency; deploying new technologies such as remote diagnostics and self-service; and implementing new ways to measure the impact of end-user service on innovation and productivity in relation to revenue.

Consider the wide variation of service needs required by five types of end users found at large enterprises, as identified by the survey:

- Novices who are just beginning to use technology. Typically, these employees work on basic technology at an office and expect training and personal assistance with IT issues.
- Single-application users rely heavily on one software application. They require very high uptime and expect end-user services to resolve their issues on the first call.
- Multiple-application users require their systems to integrate with those of other departments. They also tend to access confidential information offsite. For such users, 24/7 service and expertise on all applications are expected.

- Power users rely on multiple devices that run multiple applications. Often they run company tools on personal devices. Power users also access confidential information offsite. In terms of end-user services, they want the latest devices and demand mobile support.
- IT professionals are the most demanding of all, using multiple devices and the latest technologies—which they may have brought in to the organization themselves or used to enable organization-sanctioned applications. The top support expectations of IT professionals include remote diagnostics and self-service tools.

Clearly, the five types of end users have different needs, and the IT services organization has to support them all. Some employees are comfortable going to a Web site to seek solutions to their technology problems, while others prefer face-to-face or phone assistance. Add to the mix senior executives, right up to the CEO, who are enthusiastic technology users and place their own demands on end-user services.

With resources limited and user needs so varied, end-user services has to link the level and type of IT support it provides to the importance of different users to the organization's success as measured in revenue. It essentially is a resource allocation issue: End-user services has to determine what people, jobs and functions deserve higher levels of support. Top executives may have the highest profile, but their true service level requirement may not correspond accordingly. Who might deserve the highest level of support? Consider the members of the sales force, who need new pricing and product information on their laptops to close a sale; customer service reps, who depend on desktop systems (in a call center or in their homes) to help customers purchase or use a product; or the field service staff, who use technology to diagnose and repair a customer's product.

### TECHNOLOGY CONSUMERIZATION

Another factor that complicates end-user services is the consumerization of technology. Since the 1990s, organizations have seen an influx of technologies—instant messaging, cell phones and PDAs, among others—that were first adopted in the consumer market. As employees bring that consumer technology into the workplace, the complexity for IT services increases considerably.

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## “THE IT GROUP NEEDS TO CREATE STANDARD PROCESSES TO DELIVER AND SUPPORT A WIDE ARRAY OF SERVICES.”

—**STU GAVURIN**, VP, OUTSOURCING STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT, UNISYS

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“Consumer technologies have increased the level of complexity that end users are comfortable with, and are driving their expectations in terms of the kinds of [devices] they should have at work, their ease of use and the service levels they get,” says Dave Worth, director of IT at Underwriters Laboratories (UL), a \$680 million nonprofit testing and certification company.

End-user services must support a technology mix: Employees use corporate technology for personal tasks and personal technology for work-related tasks. In the Unisys survey, more than one-third of the respondents say their organizations allow employees to use company-supplied devices such as desktops, laptops, cell phones and PDAs for both work and personal use. When employees spend a considerable amount of time working during nontraditional hours both in and out of the office, mobile devices can be a boon for productivity and accelerate revenue retention and growth. Yet such productivity brings challenges to end-user services groups that are expected to provide support around the clock—they must be equally responsive whether a key employee calls at midnight from the road or at 1 p.m. from down the hall.

The other challenge brought on by the consumerization of technology is security. While many new consumer technologies present an opportunity to bring innovation and increased employee productivity into the workplace, they also can put corporate information at risk. With a mix of mobile technologies that allow employees to remotely access and download information, it's far more difficult and expensive to provide services that are adequate and cost-effective while maintaining a secure technology infrastructure.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR END-USER SERVICES

In its research, Unisys identifies best practices that some organizations are implementing to evolve the challenging end-user services environment.

**Be Selective.** Among the most critical first steps is to determine which employees or job functions should get which level of service. This is important given that all users are not created equal. Some business functions have more impact on revenue and depend far more on technology than others. It is a best practice to recognize this distinction and craft support initiatives accordingly. By basing support levels on the revenue impact of users' jobs, IT can provide support where, when and to whom it's needed most. At UL, for example, customer service and field service are two functions that have the highest business impact, and hence are at the top of the end-user services food chain.

**Be Productive.** Organizations need to restructure end-user services in order to maximize organizational productivity and reduce costs. This requires deploying technologies such as remote diagnostics and self-service tools in an effort to provide economical service to those employees who do not directly impact the revenue stream. In addition, self-service tools enable IT groups to free up resources so that the highest level of technology services can be focused on the most important users from a revenue perspective.

**Share Best Practices.** The growing complexity of technology and the disparity in end-user sophistication means that no IT services professional or team of professionals can be experts in resolving every technology problem. Effectively resolving a wide range of technical problems requires end-user services to capture and share the collective knowledge of IT services professionals and third parties. Sharing knowledge can improve service quality and efficiency by easing troubleshooting.

**Keep It in the Business Context.** Stu Gavurin, vice president of outsourcing strategy and portfolio management at Unisys, contends that IT needs to think about end-user services from a business view rather than a technical view. "The IT group needs to create standard

processes to deliver and support a wide array of services," Gavurin says. "In that way, IT services can be laser focused on those employees that have the greatest impact on revenue." Organizations that try to reduce complexity by dictating strict technology policies will fail—some employees need nonstandard hardware and software to do their jobs. Therefore, organizations should focus on instituting standard service processes for multiple levels of support. The Information Technology Infrastructure Library, or ITIL®, is a best-practice framework that promotes standardized service and support functions. By standardizing on service processes, organizations can allow some employees certain amounts of flexibility in terms of the tools they use to do their jobs.

**Mind Your Metrics.** With nearly every employee so dependent on technology, traditional service level agreements (SLAs) that measure uptime and availability fall far short of truly assessing the success of end-user services. Organizations must restructure their measurement processes to gauge service success based on the impact they have on productivity as it relates to revenue retention and growth. In effect, end-user services has to take into account the customer experience and its correlation to productivity and revenue rather than simply monitor the performance of technology itself.

## CONCLUSION

"Large organizations must dramatically change the way they provide end-user information technology services," says Gavurin. They need to restructure these services to effectively and efficiently meet a variety of user needs while also safeguarding the company's technology and privileged information. The challenge is to find far more economical and effective ways to serve all end users. To tackle the support challenges brought on by the diversity of end users and technology, organizations should standardize on service processes for multiple levels of support, share knowledge to speed troubleshooting and deploy remote diagnostics among other tools. Above all, they need to identify those functions, jobs and individuals who have the biggest impact on revenue and innovation, and provide them with the highest levels of service. •

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