# the Power of AI
in the Service Desk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The intersection of service desk goals and artificial intelligence is nearly a perfect fit. Since office technology was introduced, IT leaders have needed a way to ensure that the employee is enabled by tools and devices instead of impaired by them. The evolution of best practice frameworks (like ITIL), service desk tools and software, plus IT and service infrastructures help ensure a positive, frictionless experience for the employee.

Artificial intelligence, in its current evolution, serves a similar purpose. It takes a traditional user experience and fills in the gaps to remove the friction. Music in your living room? Leave the record player in the '70s, and just tell Alexa what you'd like to hear. A ride to the airport? Don't call a cab; tap two buttons and a Lyft is on its way -- including how much the ride costs, the ETA, and what the driver likes to talk about.

You get the picture.

These are problems, shortcomings, or inconveniences in the user experience that we didn't even know were there until AI came along and showed us a better way.
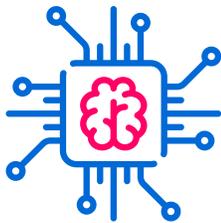
How can AI provide a better service desk experience?

This white paper covers **four key elements** at the heart of service delivery, and outlines how AI is either providing answers or providing shortcuts to answers. The result? A better experience for employees and a coordinated, seamless process for delivery by service providers.

⚷ KNOW WHAT SOLUTIONS ARE AVAILABLE

It's difficult to overstate the importance of the knowledge base. It's the engine for self-service, the first point of reference for tier one agents, and every organization should work toward building an expansive (and constantly updated) set of solutions.

Look no further than the consumer world to find the data that supports this investment. Forbes reports that 40% of customers prefer self-service over an interaction with support, and that number will only increase. A Salesforce study shows that **89% of millennials** will use a search engine before calling customer service. It stands to reason that these preferences will bleed into the workplace as well. Samanage's recent study indicates that 53% of IT professionals believe self-service will be a primary internal support channel for their organization within the next five years.

It's one thing to build a knowledge base for self-service; it's another to get employees to take full advantage of it.

This begs the question: what's the best way to lead employees to the self-service solutions that they clearly desire?

AI and machine learning can power self-service solutions for employees.
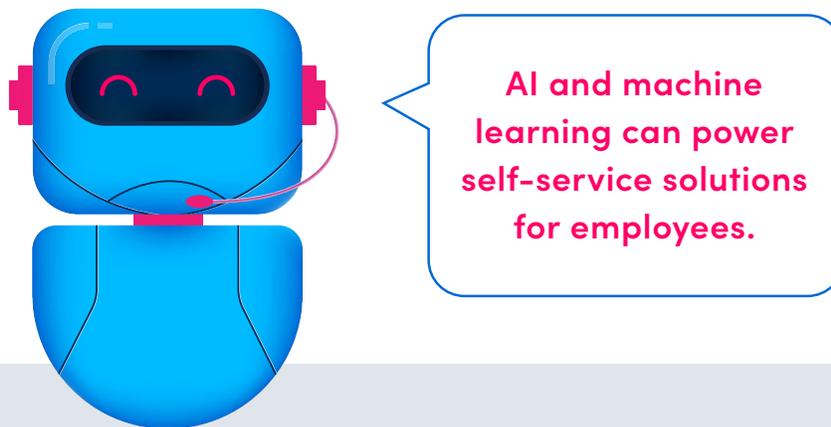
This simple use case for AI can go a long way toward easing the burden of repetitive issues on agents, and it can also connect employees directly to solutions without having to hunt for a needle in the knowledge base haystack, so to speak.

The key is that it will meet your employees wherever they're asking questions. If they're using the search bar in the service portal, it'll be there with a suggested article. If they open a ticket and start typing in their issue, it'll be there with suggested solutions from the knowledge base.

This is a classic example of machine learning, as it spots patterns in the way your teams submit tickets, search keywords, use (or decline to use) articles, and resolve tickets. It can suggest solutions with up to 99% accuracy, satisfying that significant portion of your employee base that would rather fix the issue themselves than interact with support.

KNOW WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE

In the past, IT departments created a phone support line and an inbox, and asked employees to communicate their issues through one of those two channels. Perhaps they'd use some kind of third-party service to create a queue with which to aggregate all of the tickets, divide them up, and start working.

Those were very manual processes, fit for simpler times. Since then, technology has expanded, and so has the responsibility of the IT department. The expectation of employee service has expanded (far beyond IT). The variety of requests from employees has expanded.

The development of service management frameworks and best practices have brought some calm to the chaos, and so has the functionality of modern service platforms.

Now, it's possible to create automated workflows for dozens, even hundreds of service requests from IT or any other department. Whether an employee needs to order a device, make a change to a benefits document, or report a maintenance issue, a form and a workflow can be built to automate that process.
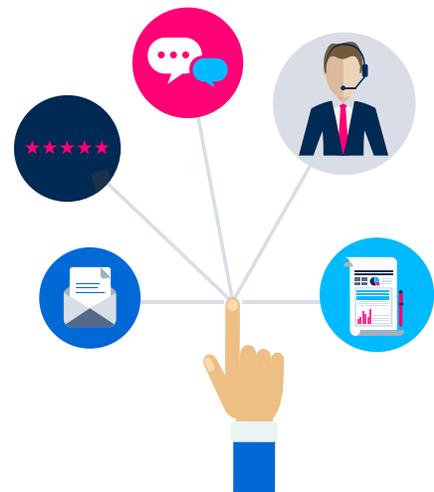
75% of organizations that expand service management outside of IT see an immediate [increase in employee productivity](#), and it's no accident.

Rather than dump any type of request into a queue with limited context, the service catalog can collect the data that drives efficient service delivery. That means these employees are getting what they need even faster.

The only issue that remains is how to direct employees to the correct service catalog items. It's possible to offer dozens or hundreds of services through the service catalog, so how can an employee (who may only submit a handful of requests a year) find a specific request?

How can you make it easy for employees to find the specific request they need within the service catalog?

Again, enter artificial intelligence. As a service desk solution learns from the behavior of requesters and identifies how these service catalog workflows are used, it can meet the requester with suggestions for service catalog items in different areas of their experience. The search bar is a good place to start. As soon as AI recognizes a search query that aligns with a service catalog form, it will present it to the requester.

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Samanage Service Desk
What can we help you with?

mail

ARTICLES
IOS Email Setup Procedure
Google Password | Updating or Resetting
How to Add a Web Linked Icon to your Gmail Signature

Even with all of the education in the world, some employees will always cut straight to entering a ticket, and that's okay. AI will meet them there too. If it begins to identify keywords in the subject line, it can suggest a service catalog form to create a more efficient experience.

The key is, no matter what their habits are, or their level of comfort in identifying services offered by your organization, AI will streamline their experience.

🔑 ENSURE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE DATA COLLECTION

Okay, so we've identified two ways that AI will help provide a better experience for requesters, but it can also help service providers on the back end. One of the biggest areas of evolution in service management is the ability to collect data up front. This data can drive automated workflows, ticket routing and priority, and it can drastically improve your reporting, identifying key areas for improvement.
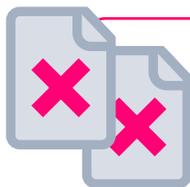
Accurate data is essential to successfully automate processes.

Whether it's due to haste or inexperience, requesters often misdiagnose categories and subcategories, eliminating the advantage of collecting all of that information up front.

This is another opportunity for AI-powered suggestions to ease the burden. Learning from all of the previous tickets from every employee in every department, artificial intelligence can offer suggestions for these fields with up to 99% accuracy.

Automatically route tickets categorized with "Hardware / Laptop" straight to your device support team without any uncertainty as to whether that information is correct.

Hardware / Laptop

Hardware / Laptop

Network

Build progressive fields for "device type" and "model" or anything else that might be useful to collect, depending on the AI-assisted category and subcategory.

This way, reports can pinpoint exactly what types of devices, software, applications, or other areas of the organization produce the most tickets. This will help identify the most common and highest priority types of issues that employees are dealing with.

⚷ USE THAT DATA TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY

At Samanage, we've covered automated workflows and ticket routing and priority rules, but that's only scratching the surface of how data can improve your service delivery. AI can leverage all kinds of service data to help your teams act proactively instead of reactively.

Think about *change management*, for example. It's incredibly dependent on analysis:

- Who will the change impact?
- What's the cost?
- What's the risk?
- How will you prioritize it against other changes?
- When is the right time to schedule a change?

Artificial intelligence provides another (more powerful) set of eyes to complete the change management puzzle. AI can identify the configuration items (CIs) that would be impacted by a change. The predictive nature can help analyze the impact and potential outages caused by a change. It will also help prioritize and avoid change collision. (Wouldn't it be nice to have an added line of defense against collisions?)

Sometimes, potential problems disguise themselves as ordinary tickets. When anomalies pop up in tickets, outages, or impacted devices, artificial intelligence can save precious time in diagnosing an issue that might be less ordinary than it appears.

From the time that first "Outlook is down" ticket comes in, to the time the team actually starts to troubleshoot the issue, internal operations can take a massive hit. In fact, Network Computing reports that IT outages result in a 78% loss in employee productivity and a 17% loss in revenue among North American companies every year.

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Though it's impossible to fully eliminate outages, AI will diagnose them as quickly as possible.

There's a reason 82% of IT professionals feel that AI is "highly important" or "mission critical" to their organizations.

Today's employee has an abundance of tools and technology available to equip them for success. Managing their needs, especially with technology, is an internal service provider's primary goal. By creating an intuitive experience that connects them with things they might not even know they need, it will be hard for them to ever go back to the old way of dropping a request into an inbox.

Artificial intelligence is another vehicle to help provide that experience. AI will streamline services to achieve larger goals in business value and employee experience. The perfect time to examine the role of smart technology in the service delivery processes is right now.
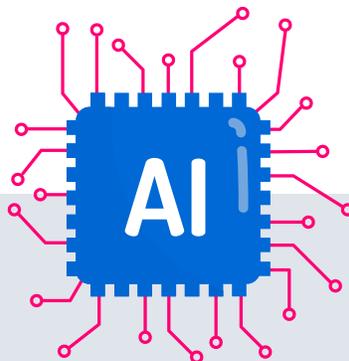
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Samanage, the Service Success Company, is the most reviewed and highest rated IT service desk solution. We are redefining employee service experiences by empowering organizations to maximize the potential from their most important asset – their people. Samanage's cloud-based employee service management platform is smart, easy to use, and inspires companies ranging from startups to global market leaders to simplify complex tasks and automate services across their entire organization. With more than 2,000 customers around the world in a variety of vertical markets, our software can be tailored to meet specific service needs.