

BMC Remedy with Smart IT

Releasing the Brakes on IT Service
Desk Mobility



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To maximize employee productivity, it's essential to deliver the right information to the right people in the right place at the right time. But the right place is not always the employees' desk and the IT service desk staff is no exception.

While first-line service desk agents typically spend most of their time at a fixed location, second- and third-line agents engage in many activities that require them to be away from their desks for extended periods of time. And field support technicians spend most, if not all their time, on the go. The right place for these mobile employees can be just about anywhere from their office to their home to somewhere in transit.

To ensure the high productivity of the IT service desk staff, it's essential to deliver the power of the enterprise service desk solution to all members of the staff, regardless of where they happen to be. That makes mobile access a strategic imperative. As such, it must be a fundamental and integral part of the service desk solution.

Some service desk solutions offer mobile device access, but they typically deliver only a cut-down version of the functionality of the core solution. Traditional mobile solutions don't exploit the native features of mobile devices such as location recognition, camera, and barcode scanning. What's required is not merely to extend the larger desktop, forms-intensive user experience to mobile devices but to deliver a whole new experience geared to mobile users. That experience must address the needs of the mobile workforce and leverage the unique capabilities of mobile devices.

This paper discusses why extending the reach of the IT service desk through mobile access is a strategic necessity. It describes the criteria that are crucial to mobile access. Finally it presents how BMC Remedy with Smart IT meets these criteria and closely aligns the service desk staff with business users in support of enterprise success.

MOBILITY, A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

For first-line service desk agents the most efficient work environment continues to be a traditional office setting and a desktop computer. But mobility is in the DNA of many IT service support personas outside of first-line support personnel.

Whether they are employees who work at remote locations, office employees away from their desks, or mobile workers, IT service support people need flexibility in how they work. So mobility is not an optional capability that would be nice to have. The ability to be fully productive from any location is a strategic necessity. And pulling out a laptop, starting it up, and logging into the enterprise network from a remote location just doesn't cut it.

Mobile employees, especially younger digital natives, understand the power of mobile devices. What makes these devices so compelling is their accessibility and ease of use. And they have native features such as cameras, barcode scanners, and GPS that aren't available (or are available in only limited ways) with desktops and laptops. These features are far more useful on mobile devices because of the small size and portability of the device.

To work as efficiently and productively as possible when they are on the go, mobile service support employees need to be able to tap the power of the service desk solution from anywhere using their mobile devices. Done the right way, mobile access offers tremendous potential for unparalleled convenience and productivity to IT service support people, and a high level of satisfaction for their customers.

A NEW APPROACH TO MOBILE ACCESS IS REQUIRED

Traditional service desk solutions require users to manually key information into multiple forms and access several systems to get what they need. Doing that from a desktop or laptop computer is cumbersome and time-consuming. Doing it from a mobile device is even more difficult because of the lack of tactile keyboard and the smaller screen size. A new approach is needed, one that should bring the full power of mobile devices to IT service support staffers who are on the go.

There are several key criteria that mobile access must meet to create a compelling and productivity-enhancing experience for mobile users.

Embrace the Consumer Experience

A few years back, savvy marketers recognized the growing consumer demand for transactions and interactions using mobile devices. IT organizations worked closely with these marketers to create compelling and competition-crushing mobile experiences for consumers. High-tech companies such as Apple, Google, and Uber have created mobile apps that truly unleash the power of mobile devices. And a number of companies outside of the technology arena such as banks and consumer packaged goods providers have followed suit to bring engaging mobile experiences to their customers.

These mobile apps leverage features such as voice recognition, global positioning, barcode scanning, photo and video capture, to simplify and enhance interaction. And they take advantage of social networking and collaboration tools to develop closer relationships with customers.

The service desk system should bring to the service desk staff the same richness of the consumer-style mobile experience to their professional lives that they have become accustomed to in their personal lives.

Optimize the User Experience to Mobile Device

It's important to give mobile users more than just a cut-down, miniature-screen version of the desktop and laptop user experience provided by the service desk system. Instead, mobility should leverage the full power of the native features of mobile devices to optimize the experience:

- Touch screens enable users to select tasks, resources and options with a tap.
- Predictive text and voice recognition speed the entry of information.
- Barcode scanners accurately capture asset data without laborious, error-prone keyed entry.
- Cameras allow support people to take snapshots and videos to share with colleagues who are assisting with installations, troubleshooting, or other tasks.
- Global positioning systems help technicians quickly navigate their way from one user site to another to minimize transit time.
- Push notifications enhance customer service by allowing technicians to alert customers of estimated arrival times.

At the same time, it's important that the solution take into account the limitations of some mobile devices, such as a relatively small screen size and the lack of a tactile keyboard. Instead, it should optimize the use of mobile screen real estate. It should also minimize the need for keyboard entry. Input should be formless wherever possible, and predictive text and autocorrect should be employed to speed entry.

While optimizing the user experience to mobile devices, however, it's important to keep the user experience consistent across mobile and non-mobile devices. Inconsistencies can interfere with user productivity and adoption. A consistent balance between desktop and mobile experience accommodates those people who use both mobile and non-mobile devices in the course of their jobs.

Take a Total Approach to Mobile Device Functionality

Some vendors offer only limited-functionality mobile versions as a subset of their core solutions that have been designed for use on desktop machines. The mobile versions are often limited to specific processes such as change approvals, work orders, or task management. Instead, the core IT Service Management solution should be built with a mobile-first mentality that focuses on how processes should be managed in the mobile environment.

By providing a rich, full-function mobile experience that includes data access, collaboration, and native device integration, roaming service desk agents and field support technicians will no longer be limited to a subset of IT management functionality, data, or processes. They will no longer have to return to their desks to gather needed information, collaborate with colleagues, or perform other tasks to resolve issues or deliver services. A mobile-first design focus increases workforce productivity, drives down support costs, and improves customer satisfaction at the point of service.

Enable Easy Collaboration

It's essential that the solution enable the mobile staff to collaborate easily with colleagues from mobile devices without having to leave the mobile service desk app. That requires a service desk solution with a social platform built in, one that includes such features as social discussion tools, staff profiles, and collaborative editing of records to promote teamwork and the sharing of knowledge, learning, and success. The full functionality of the solution's social platform should be available from the mobile device.

Minimize Risk

Without a strong mobile capability, some travelling service support team members jot down notes at the remote site and then key the data into the service desk system when they return to their offices. But paper is not known for its security.

Entering information directly into a mobile device eliminates the need for paper notes. But that's not enough to ensure tight security. The easy portability of mobile devices increases their risk of being lost or stolen, which means the data stored on them is at risk.

To mitigate the risk, all data should be fed through to the service desk solution and not stored on the mobile device. In addition, the device should be fully compatible with popular mobile device management tools to further strengthen security with such features as remote wiping of data from lost or stolen devices.

SMART IT: A REVOLUTIONARY NEW IT USER EXPERIENCE

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Intelligent

Smart IT eliminates the traditional cumbersome and time-consuming fill-in-the-forms user interaction with the service desk solution. Instead, users interact with a formless, natural-language approach that delivers more insight with less effort.

With Smart IT, service desk personnel no longer have to manually key information into multiple forms to get what they need. Instead, the user simply enters a brief, natural-language input that describes the situation, such as a customer requesting a service, reporting a problem, or asking a question. Smart IT further reduces the need for keying through predictive text that intelligently and proactively fills in required information.

Smart IT responds to the user's entry by intelligently gathering information that is contextually relevant to the situation at hand and immediately presenting it to the user. From the business user's perspective, it's a much more satisfying experience because the agent doesn't have to continually break the call flow to ask for more information.

By minimizing the number of keystrokes, Smart IT increases productivity and eliminates frustration. That's particularly helpful for people who are working on mobile devices because keyboard entry can be slow and cumbersome on the small keypads.

In addition, Smart IT has a built-in social platform that enables the service desk staff to easily collaborate and share collective knowledge using modern, social interaction technology. And the staff can do it right from Smart IT.

Beautiful

Smart IT presents contextually-relevant information in clean, approachable views that minimize training requirements and maximize productivity. Service support people can, at a glance, gain insight that enables them to interact with customers in an intelligent, helpful, and personalized way. Smart IT optimizes the user experience to the capabilities of the mobile device on which it runs. It leverages the device's built-in capabilities — GPS, camera, touch screen, speech recognition, bar code scanner — to facilitate tasks. It also adapts to the limitations of some mobile devices, such as relatively small screens and lack of a physical keyboards. For example, it optimizes displays to the limited real estate of some mobile screens.

Mobile

BMC Software considers mobility to be a strategic imperative for IT service support. In line with this vision, BMC has made mobility a fundamental and integral part of BMC Remedy with Smart IT with a mobile-first design paradigm.

Closer to Business Users

With MyIT, BMC has empowered business users with the ability to serve themselves in accessing IT services. MyIT is a self-service solution that business users can leverage to request services, submit issues, gather knowledge, and determine the health of IT services. Similar to Smart IT, the powerful self-service functions available in MyIT are accessible from mobile devices. This next-generation app designed for business users reduces IT friction, cuts support costs, and boosts customer satisfaction.

Smart IT integrates with MyIT to create a unified solution that is unprecedented in the industry. This combination brings business users closer to service desk personnel. Business users' requests are automatically forwarded to the service desk, ensuring seamless, prompt attention. The help desk staff can share information such as social posts with business users, and business users can get up-to-date status of their requests. This integration greatly enhances interactions between IT and its customers. The result is increased productivity and knowledge on both sides of the service desk.

CONCLUSION

While laptop computers have helped make mobile employees more productive in the field, the real mobility breakthroughs have occurred in just the past few years with the advent of smartphones and tablets. Mobile devices include a number of innovations that make possible a new and engaging user experience for interacting with technology.

BMC Software views mobility as a strategic imperative for the business and includes mobility as a fundamental and integral part of BMC Remedy with Smart IT. Smart IT brings the power of the Remedy ITSM system to mobile devices, and it does so in a way that is optimized for the mobile experience.

With Smart IT, the service desk staff can be just as effective when they are on the go as they are when working at a desk. By releasing the brakes on IT service desk mobility, Smart IT helps the service desk staff increase productivity, shrink business down time, lower support costs, and improve customer service.

BMC delivers software solutions that help IT transform digital enterprises for the ultimate competitive business advantage. We have worked with thousands of leading companies to create and deliver powerful IT management services. From mainframe to cloud to mobile, we pair high-speed digital innovation with robust IT industrialization—allowing our customers to provide amazing user experiences with optimized IT performance, cost, compliance, and productivity. We believe that technology is the heart of every business, and that IT drives business to the digital age.

BMC – Bring IT to Life.



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