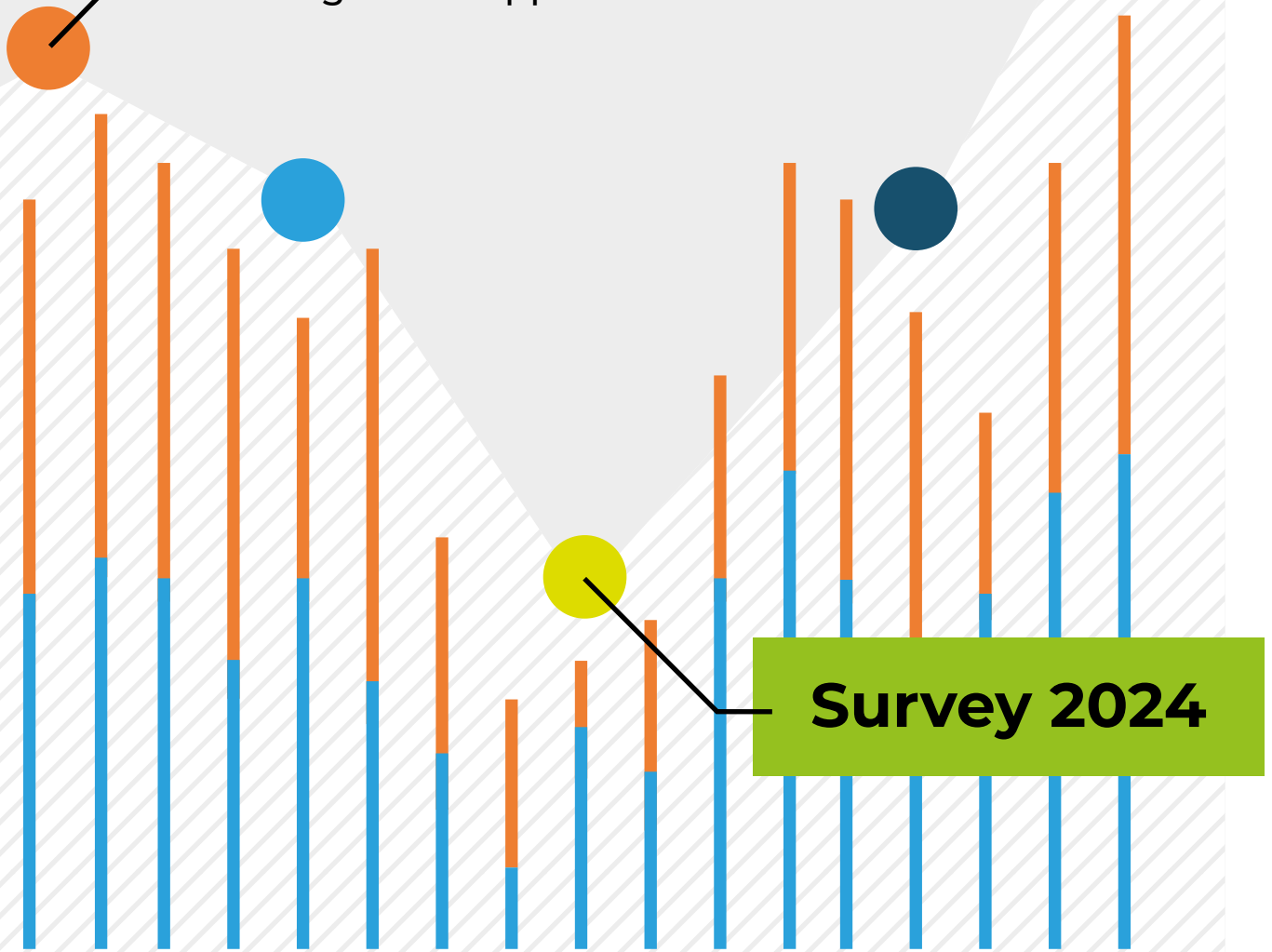


The Service Desk

(R)evolution

How service desk managers navigate challenges and opportunities.



Know Why

Measuring satisfaction, driving success

**Service Desk
Excellence**



About this research

Survey and respondents

In January and February 2024, we conducted a survey among service desks managers in the UK and in the Netherlands. In total 53 managers responded. All service desk managers of organizations with over one thousand employees.

Know Why

We measure IT Experience and HR Experience, with over 20 years of experience. Our customers are midsize to large organizations. We measure and report end user and customer satisfaction. Continuously, in multiple languages and data-driven.

Why this survey

For our product development it is important to understand service desk organizations. We regularly engage with customers and prospects to see the challenges they face and what information they need to improve. This survey is another way of qualifying (and quantifying) these challenges.

Service Desk Excellence

Service Desk Excellence is a service where we measure and report service desk customer satisfaction upon completion of closed support tickets. With a proven method that requires a minimum effort for the respondent and provides useful insights for continuous improvement.

Our customers



Contact details

Know Why

Measuring satisfaction, driving success

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**Service Desk
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Key findings



The majority of service desk managers expect a substantial or large increase in efficiency and/or effectiveness in the near future.



Performance gains are expected mainly from knowledge management, self service capabilities and new technology.



ITSM software lacks sufficient support for self service capabilities and new technology.



Service desks are actively looking (and finding) add-on software to remedy shortcomings of ITSM software.



Different strategies for a structured approach towards continuous improvement can be identified.



Service desk metrics and customer feedback are considered important sources for improvement. But fall short in most cases.

Performance approaches

The results of the survey give enough clues on viable strategies to elevate the service desk performance to a higher level. Based on all the experiences that service desk managers shared, we believe the following three approaches can be used independently to gradually mature and foster a performance culture.

01

Structured approach towards continuous improvement.

Continuous improvement is important for every service desk. But not every organization has a structured approach. Start (or expand!) with one of the identified strategies (page 5) that fits your organization and gradually bring this to maturation. Using and maturing these strategies provides guidance for your improvement efforts.

02

Fix the information infrastructure.

Service desk metrics and customer feedback provide valuable information on the efficiency and effectiveness of your operations. Yet most service desks are not able to analyze this data and identify improvements. Carefully consider what the current shortcomings are and how these can be fixed. This information will 'power' your improvement efforts.

03

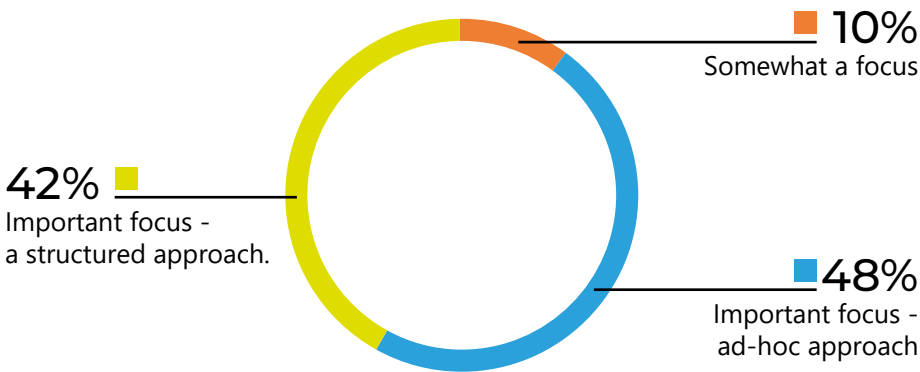
Mitigate the shortcomings of your ITSM software.

Identify one (or two) areas where you expect to make great strides in efficiency and effectiveness. Next, assess if your current ITSM software will support these areas. If not, consider alternative add-on tools to remedy the shortcomings. Waiting for updates of your current ITSM software can be a 'lengthy' strategy that halts improvement and innovation.

Efficiency and effectiveness

Continuous improvement

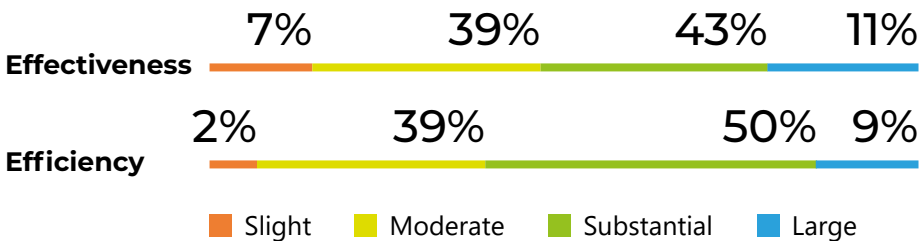
For nearly all organizations continuous improvement is an important or critical focus. But less than half of the respondents said their organization follows a structured approach to foster continuous improvement.



Efficiency and effectiveness

Three out of five respondents expect a substantial or large improvement in efficiency over the next 2 years. For effectiveness the numbers are roughly the same. Just over half of the organizations expect at least a substantial improvement.

Expected improvement in 2 years time



Efficiency:

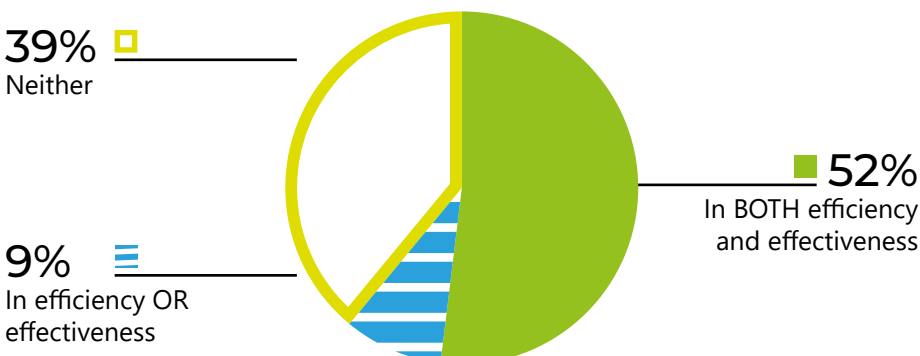
How well resources are utilized to complete tasks

Effectiveness:

How well main objectives and satisfied users are achieved

Big or substantial improvement

Looking at the combined figures, over half of all organizations expect a substantial or big improvement in BOTH efficiency and effectiveness over the next 2 years. At the other end of the spectrum 2 out of 5 organizations don't expect any substantial improvements, neither in efficiency nor effectiveness.



Improvement strategies

We asked service desk managers that adopted a structural approach to continuous improvement to share insights on key characteristics of their approach. Based on the feedback we distinguish the following 5 strategies that help to structure and foster continuous improvement.



Lean and Agile Methodologies

Many service desk organizations use methodologies that enhance operational efficiency and team agility. Lean, Six Sigma and other agile methodologies are adopted to streamline operations and promote efficiency. These approaches can include daily stand-ups and improvement boards.

01



Continuous Monitoring

Implementing continuous monitoring mechanisms and product management frameworks, to ensure ongoing assessment and improvement of service delivery. This approach underscores the importance of structured tracking of service performance and strategic alignment of service development to adapt and improve continuously.

02



Proactive Problem Management and Incident Analysis

Proactively identifying, registering and addressing service delivery issues. Through systematic problem management and the use of tools like issue trackers, organizations translate incidents into opportunities for improvement, highlighting the importance of a structured approach to problem resolution.

03



Team Collaboration and Development

Facilitating regular meetings among team leads and managers to review performance and market developments, coupled with a focus on coaching and employee development. This approach highlights the significance of nurturing team dynamics, encouraging continuous learning and developing skills within the service desk team for sustained improvement and innovation.

04



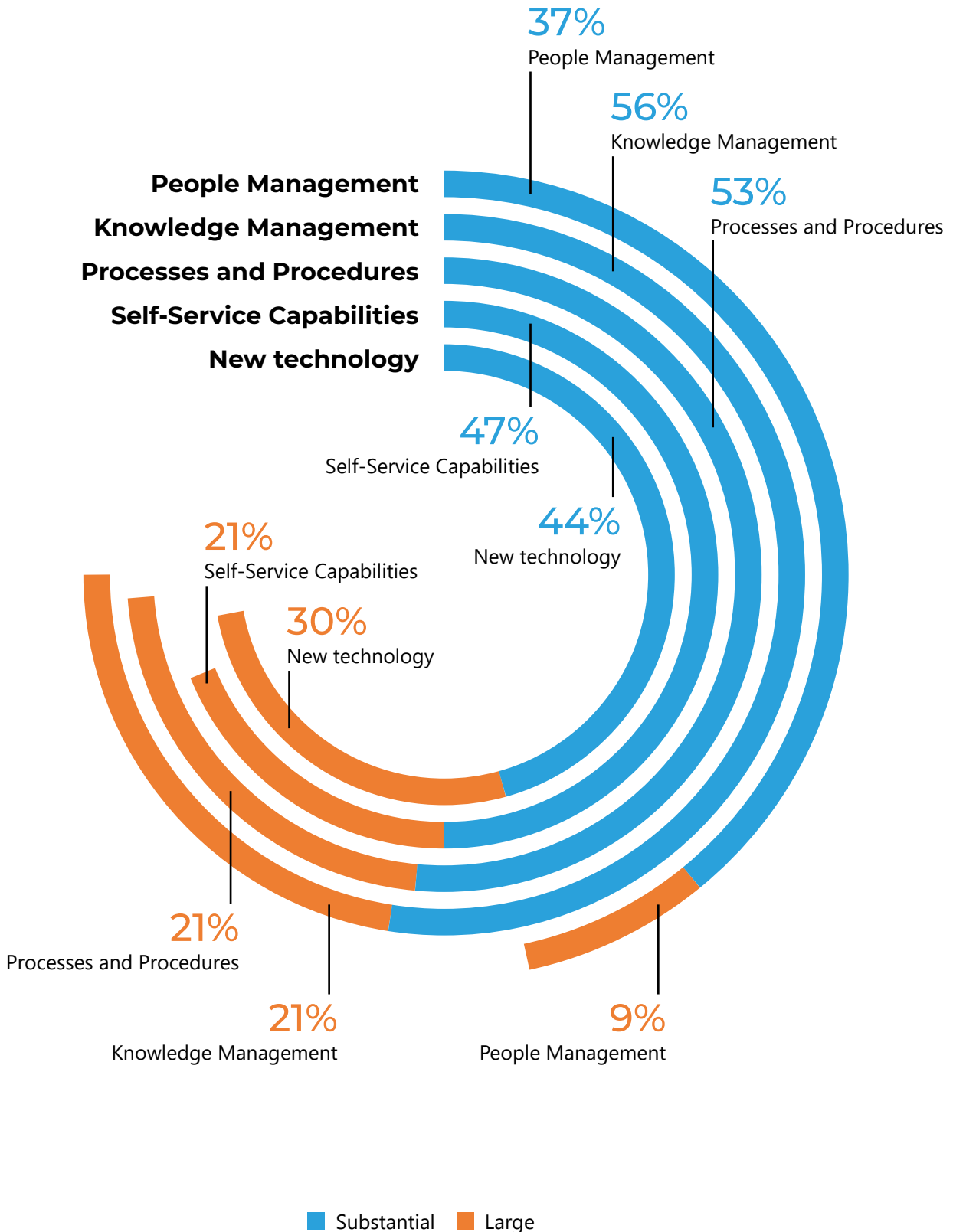
Quality Control and feedback

Regular engagement with end-users through both direct interaction and satisfaction surveys following ticket resolution. This approach focuses on understanding user experiences, actively seeking improvements based on direct feedback and maintaining a high standard of service quality through continuous feedback and responding to negative scores.

05

Contributing areas

We asked what areas will likely contribute to the expected efficiency and effectiveness gains. What stands out is that expectations are (considerably) high for many areas. The adaptation of new technology in particular stands out since nearly one third of all managers expect a large contribution.



Opportunities

To get a sense where service desk managers see opportunities to improve the service desk we zoomed in: if an area was seen as a possible large contributor to efficiency and effectiveness gains, we asked how! The topic 'people management' is regarded to contribute the least to future improvements and feedback was too few to say anything useful on that topic. The opportunities for the other 4 area's are summarized below:

01

Knowledge management

No one will argue that an up-to-date understandable and reliable knowledge management system can significantly enhance service desk efficiency and effectiveness. But what are typical possibilities that drive efficiency and effectiveness? Managers expect artificial intelligence (AI) to select relevant knowledge better and more quickly. Making it readily available to end users directly and agents as (real time) suggestion during interactions with an end user. Another idea is using AI to make technical information available in understandable terms for the end user.

02

Processes and Procedures

Processes and procedures are often viewed as the framework within which service desks operate. Service desk managers that mention opportunities in this area, state that efficient and finetuned processes make work easier, faster and less error prone. Interestingly no particular technological development is driving these opportunities. Just a firm belief that high quality processes are the equivalent of productivity and effectiveness.

03

Self-Service Capabilities

Enhancing self-service capabilities through chatbots, AI and service automation is seen by many as a promising strategy for service desks. The push towards self-service (shift left) is expected to evolve rapidly with technology, making solutions more accessible and reducing the demand on service desk personnel. By enabling users to resolve their issues independently, service desks can allocate more time to complex tasks. Automation of resource allocation and service requests are strategies aimed at reducing the workload on service desks.

04

New Technology

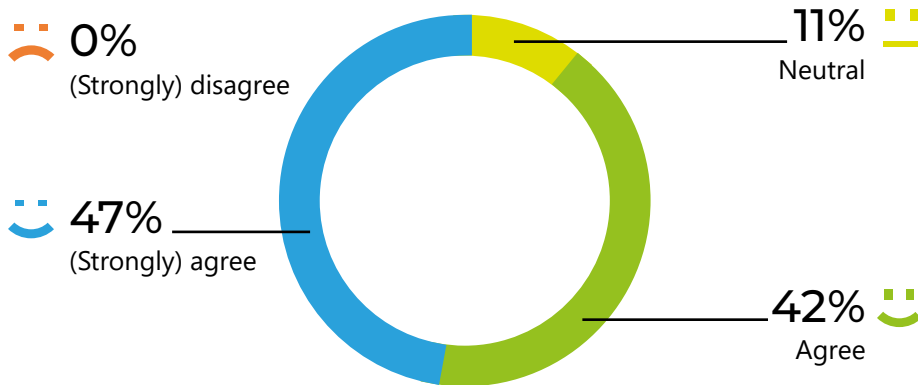
Service desk managers are optimistic about the potential of new technologies, such as AI and cloud services, to transform service desks. These technologies can improve efficiency, enhance service quality and offer personalized support. In particular AI is expected to play an increasingly significant role, assisting agents and potentially reducing their workload. New technologies also foster user selfreliance and open up less time-consuming communication channels.

In summary, service desk managers anticipate that advancements in knowledge management, streamlined processes and procedures, expanded self-service capabilities and the integration of new technologies will collectively drive significant improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of service desks.

Service desk metrics

Metrics important source for improvement

The overwhelming majority of service desk managers agree that service desk metrics are an important information source for improvement. No single respondent disagrees, only a small percentage stands neutral on this issue.



Service desk metrics:

Specific data relevant to the operations of the service desk, like total number of tickets, average closing time etc.

Effective use service desk metrics

Although considered important, service desk metrics are far from being used effectively. The share of service desks that a) collect the right data, b) analyzes these regularly AND c) can translate this data into improvement actions is less than half.



Metrics bottlenecks

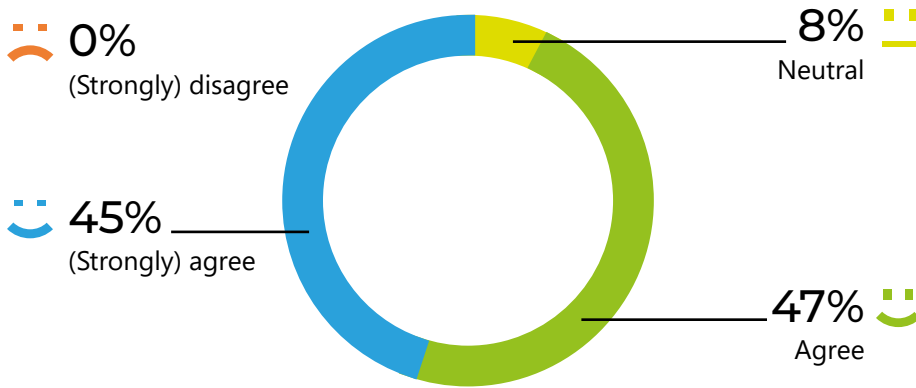
We asked which bottlenecks there are for the effective use of metrics. In the figure underneath we mentioned those bottlenecks that came up frequently.

Availability	Analysis	Actionable
Poor data collection	Lack of functionality	Lack of time
Poor data quality	Lack of time	
Missing useful metrics		

Customer feedback

Feedback important source for improvement

The use of customer feedback is regarded equally (if not higher) important as an important source of information for the service desk. Also, here no single respondent disqualifies the importance. And only very few take a neutral stance.

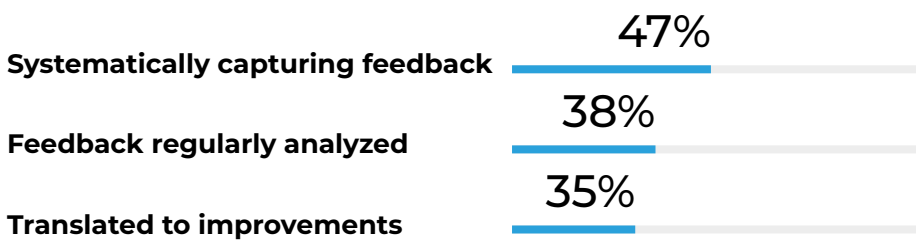


Customer feedback:

Information provided by customers about their satisfaction with the service desk.

Effective use customer feedback

Despite the fact that customer feedback is considered important, in practice the application is far from ideal. Just over one third of the service desk organizations say they successfully collect, analyze AND translate customer feedback regularly into improvement actions.



Feedback bottlenecks

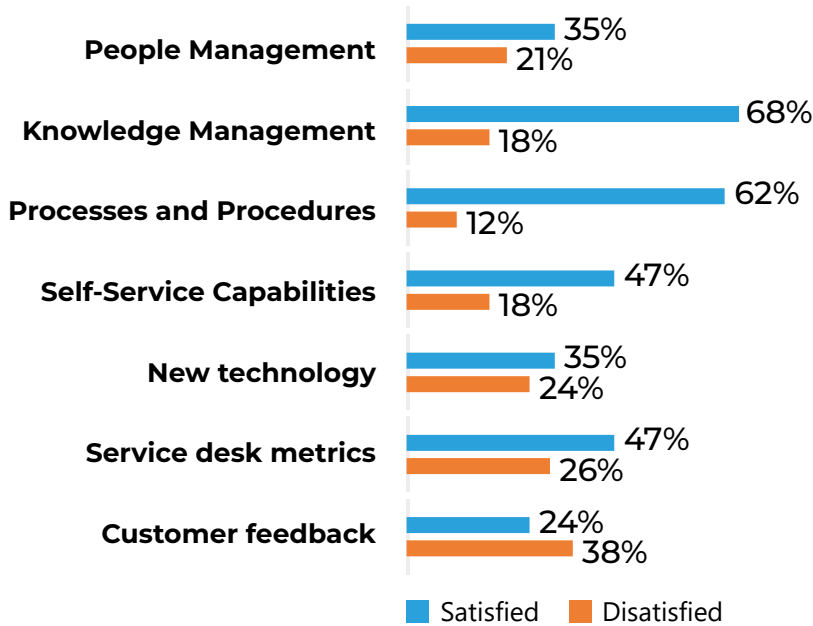
We asked which bottlenecks there are for the effective use of customer feedback. In the figure underneath we mentioned those bottlenecks that came up frequently.

Availability	Analysis	Actionable
Not collected at all	Feedback not meaningful	
Manual process		
Ad-hoc process		

ITSM Support

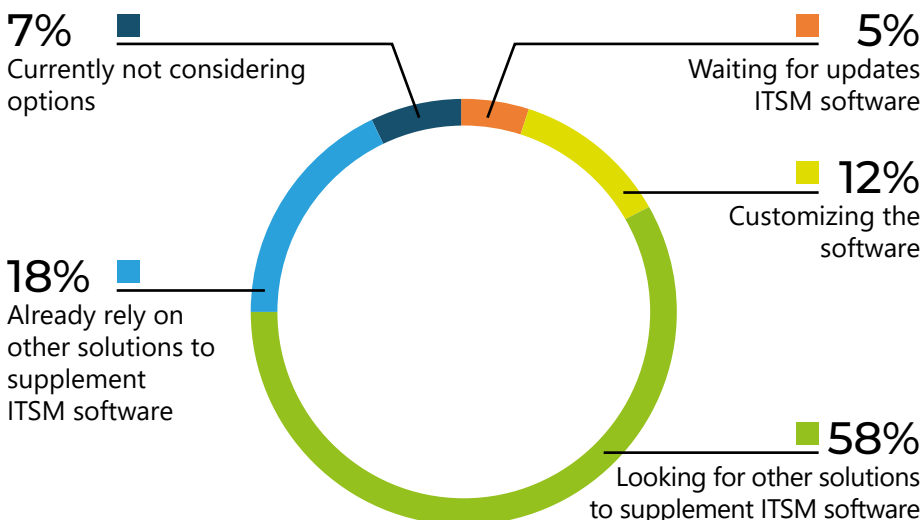
Satisfaction with ITSM software

Service desk managers are most satisfied with knowledge management and the support for processes and procedures in their current ITSM software. Dissatisfaction is the highest for customer feedback (management).



Mitigating dissatisfaction

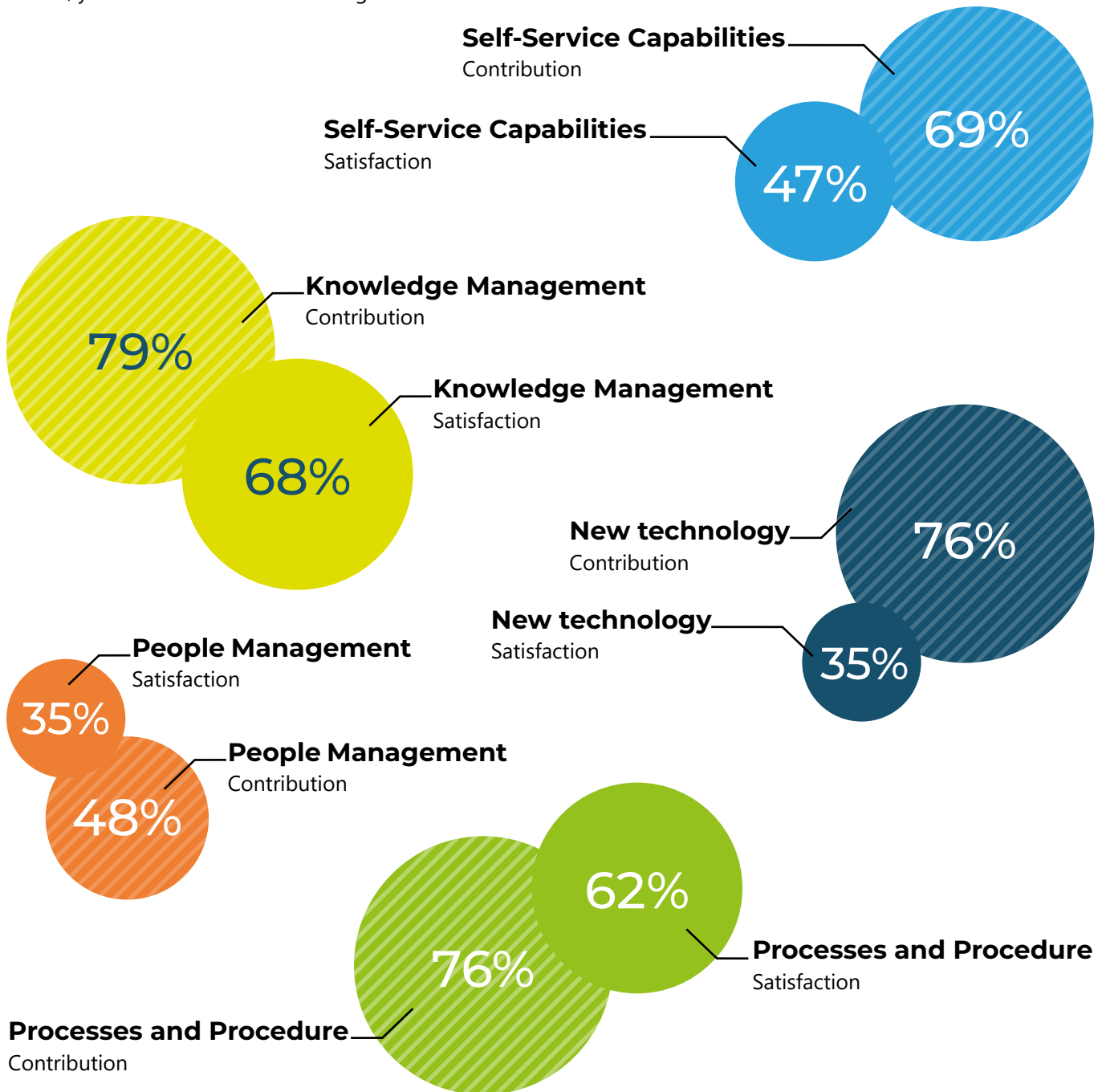
Service desk managers are proactively mitigating the shortcomings of their ITSM software. In just 5% of the dissatisfied cases customers rely on future updates of the software. Making adjustments to the software is also pretty rare. Using other tools to supplement the shortcomings of ITSM software is a popular strategy. Although in the majority of cases managers are still on the lookout for suitable solutions



The ITSM software 'gap'

Contribution versus satisfaction

In our survey we asked managers what areas will likely contribute to expected efficiency and effectiveness gains (page 6). And we asked them about their satisfaction with their ITSM software for the same areas. If you combine these results, you can draw some interesting conclusions.



The biggest 'gap' is clearly 'New technology'. The (perceived) lack of ITSM vendors to incorporate emerging technologies is in clear contrast with ambitions to elevate efficiency and effectiveness. ITSM vendors will have to do a better job here to hang on to their customer base. A second gap, though less big we can see for 'Self-Service capabilities'.

Improve Effectiveness through Feedback

Service Desk Excellence is a proven method for measuring customer satisfaction in practice. Through online surveys, end users provide feedback on quality, speed, effort and areas for improvement, based on which ticket handling is classified from failed to excellent.

The story of:

Maastricht University measures customer satisfaction using the Service Desk Excellence method. The service provision is improved based on continuous feedback. Product Owner Servicedesk Roel Bleize explains why customer satisfaction is important and how the results are utilized.



Improving service delivery is a team effort with direct input from our end-users.

Roel Bleize

Product Owner ICTS Service Desk

E-presentation

Get the presentation containing information about the method, reports and applications.

- ✓ Method: Three characteristics of every successful ticket handling
- ✓ Ticket qualification from failed to excellent
- ✓ Reports and analyses
- ✓ Sample surveys
- ✓ Application areas
- ✓ Integration with ITSM tools
- ✓ Security and GDPR compliance
- ✓ Service provision and costs

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