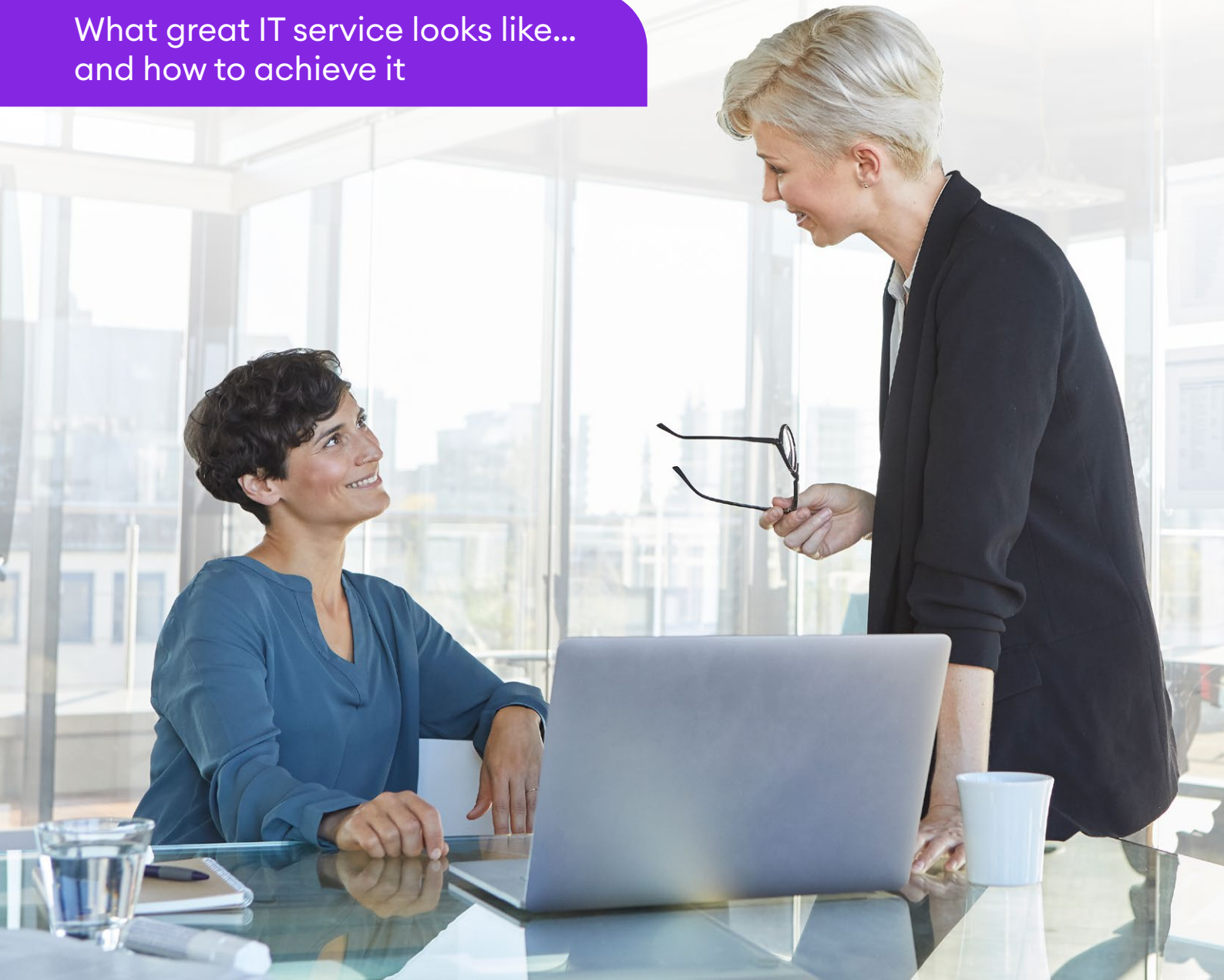




| IFS assyst

# What are you doing to enhance the IT service experience?

What great IT service looks like...  
and how to achieve it





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# Executive \_\_\_\_\_ Summary



In his book, *Digital Disruption*, James McQuivey of Forrester Research talks about the importance of the “**total product experience**” in the consumer world.

In the world of enterprise IT, it’s not about products, it’s about services. The context here is the “total service experience”: the different journeys that IT customers experience when they interact with the IT department to get the business outcomes they need. Negative experiences compromise productivity, frustrate end users and cause damage to the IT department’s already fragile reputation. It’s time for IT to pay attention to the quality of the total service experience.

## The Challenge

- The conspicuous gap between consumer-world experiences and the service experiences end users get from IT
- The pace at which expectations evolve
- The disconnect between IT and end users
- The number of “moving parts” that contribute to the IT service experience
- The breadth of the IT service portfolio
- The number of different end user types, contexts and preferences

## The Solution

Great IT customer experiences don’t happen by accident.

IT organizations must take a strategic approach to designing and delivering better, more flexible service experiences that work across the full variety of end user types, contexts and preferences.

In this whitepaper, we look at how organizations can analyze and improve the service experience - using customer journey maps as a tool to improve service experiences and increase IT customer satisfaction.

Throughout this paper we will highlight insights by discussing the story of a use case, “Eagle5”.



There is really only one set of metrics that matters; the rest are diagnostics. The ones that matter are the experience metrics.

Sean Worthington, Cisco<sup>1</sup>



Part One

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# IT Service Experience Strategy

Defining the vision for a great IT service experience

# What does a great IT service experience look like?

## The right business outcome, delivered in the right way

Successful service experiences go beyond simply delivering the right business outcome. They're also about delivering a service experience that meets the contextual needs and professional expectations of the end user as an individual. Both are critical components.

The wrong outcome wrapped up in a slick customer experience is worthless. Likewise, if the customer's path to getting the right business outcome from IT is long and painful, the end result is the same: a dissatisfied IT customer.

## An experience that fits the end user's context and preferences

Enterprise IT departments deliver a wide range of services to a variety of IT customer types: office users, road warriors, creatives, executives and external associates.

The workforce is multi-generational; comprising Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. IT customers expect service experiences that are comfortable and frictionless - reflecting their personal preferences and dovetailing into their current work context.

Designing optimized service experiences for every possible permutation is an impossible task, so IT organizations must offer a choice of digital and non-digital touchpoints - and let end users select the "best fit" in each instance. Choice is the key to delivering service experiences that fit a wide variety of custom demands.

## Consumerized service experience

End user expectations are influenced by consumer-world experiences. They are a yardstick against which end users benchmark the service experiences they get from IT.

The broad strategy should be to superimpose a consumer experience over the IT customer's service experience journey, mimicking the experiences that customers have come to expect from the consumer goods companies they buy from.

## Better than last time

Consumer brands make constant improvements to the customer experience (in order to optimize satisfaction, loyalty, and revenue) - and IT customers have noticed.

The expectation is now that service experiences should be at least as good as last time. With rapidly evolving consumer experiences driving changes in expectations, consistency is no longer enough and degradation of the service experience won't be tolerated. Standing still is moving backwards, so IT organizations must commit to consistently improve the service experience.



Instant messages, social networks, blogs, and wikis are the Millennials' preferred work communication tools, in contrast to the telephone and conference room meetings of the Baby Boomers."

Forrester Research, Inc.<sup>2</sup>

# Attributes of a great IT service experience

## Mapping Expectations to Strategies

	Expectation	How to achieve it
<b>Functional</b>	The right outcome: The service does what the end user needs it to do.	Co-design (or co-evaluate) services with end users.
<b>Accessible</b>	They know where it is, and how to access it through a choice of communications channels.	Create and communicate digital and non-digital channels, reachable from anywhere, at any time, and on any device.
<b>Frictionless</b>	The effort (thinking and doing) the IT customer needs to put in is minimal.	Use data, automation and integration to eliminate or simplify user-side tasks.
<b>Reliable</b>	Always there when they need it.	Robust supporting infrastructure, monitoring tools and maintenance processes.
<b>Open</b>	IT customers want to know when something is wrong, so they can plan around outages.	Automatically alert service subscribers as part of the Incident process.
<b>Fast</b>	The customer's journey - from request to outcome - should be as short as possible, spanning the fewest possible steps.	Aspire to end-to-end automation of processes for instantaneous delivery.
<b>Flexible</b>	End users don't see their needs as "standard" or "unique". They expect a positive outcome whatever their request.	Standardize processes for fast response to common needs. Build exception-handling capabilities to solve more unique IT customer needs.
<b>Transparent</b>	Where delivery can't be instant, end users want to see what's happening	Notify end users at key stages in the process and provide web/mobile access to more information.
<b>Consistent</b>	What users expect now will be influenced by what they got last time. They won't tolerate a step backwards.	Stable technology, solid behind-the-scenes processes, engaged staff and performance measurement help maintain consistent performance.
<b>Seamless</b>	End users want consistency across multiple channels: web, mobile, email, phone and face-to-face.	An integrated ITSM system enables a single view of the IT customer, the issue and the environment.
<b>Personal</b>	IT knows who they are and what they do – and tailors the experience accordingly.	Populate rich IT customer profiles, carrying information on their role, service subscriptions, support history and preferences.
<b>Respectful</b>	IT people demonstrate empathy and attentiveness, listen carefully, apologize where necessary and are respectful of the customer's time.	Hire for attitude and communication skills. Provide a training program. Measure IT customer satisfaction scores after human interactions to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses.
<b>Accountable</b>	End users want IT people to take responsibility for technology issues and solutions.	Evaluate IT people on IT customer satisfaction.



# Strategy for improved IT service experience




In Forrester’s recent book *Outside In: The Power of Putting Customers at the Center of Your Business*, industry analysts Harley Manning and Kerry Bodine recommend strategy as the essential starting point:

**“Define a customer experience strategy that describes the intended customer experience”.**

They go on to describe how this applies to consumer goods organizations and illustrate the point with a number of case studies. But how does this translate into a strategy for the IT customer experience?

Just like in a consumer experience scenario, the IT service experience strategy

begins with working out how you can address customer needs. In IT, this covers an extremely broad set of demands, so it helps to separate these demands into three distinct strategic categories. Ultimately, anything an end user might need will fall into one of these three categories – value demand, failure demand and information demand:

 <b>Value Demand</b>	 <b>Failure Demand</b>	 <b>Information Demand</b>
Requests	Incidents	Queries
<p>I need access to an IT service that will help me do my job better, faster and cheaper.</p>	<p>Something went wrong, preventing me from doing what I wanted to do.</p>	<p>I need to know something in order to complete a task or make a decision.</p>
<p><b>Example</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I need a desktop PC and desk phone.</li> <li>• I need access to the CRM system.</li> <li>• I need a smartphone so I can access the expenses app on the move.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Example</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can’t get into the CRM app and I’ve got a customer call in ten minutes.</li> <li>• I can’t print a contract to take to my customer for a signature.</li> <li>• My electronic key fob won’t let me into the office.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Example</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do I get the report I need out of the CRM system?</li> <li>• Will the quote system upgrade be completed by Thursday? I have a client meeting.</li> <li>• Where is the smartphone I requested?</li> </ul>

Each of these three types of demand requires a different shape of service experience, giving us a starting point for our service experience strategy: one which defines (in loose terms) what the service experience should look and feel like in each instance. The actual

experience the IT customer gets will depend on which service they are requesting, the type of fault they have encountered, or what information they are looking for. The process underlying the response dictates the precise flow of the customer journey, but all such

experiences should share the general look-and-feel of the strategy. In each instance, it is valuable to work up a handful of example customer journeys – to clearly illustrate the vision for the IT service experience.

# Bad IT service experiences create failure demand

Failure demand isn't just caused by infrastructure issues. It also happens when value demands and information demands aren't properly serviced, e.g. there has been a failure in the service experience.

By default, when the service experience fails, end users revert to the most basic channel – they pick up the phone and call the Service Desk:

- “I can't find the service I want in the Service Catalog”
- “How do I get to the self-service portal?”
- “What's the status on the CRM upgrade? I checked the service portal and there's no information there.”
- “I submitted a service request last week and I haven't heard anything since then.”

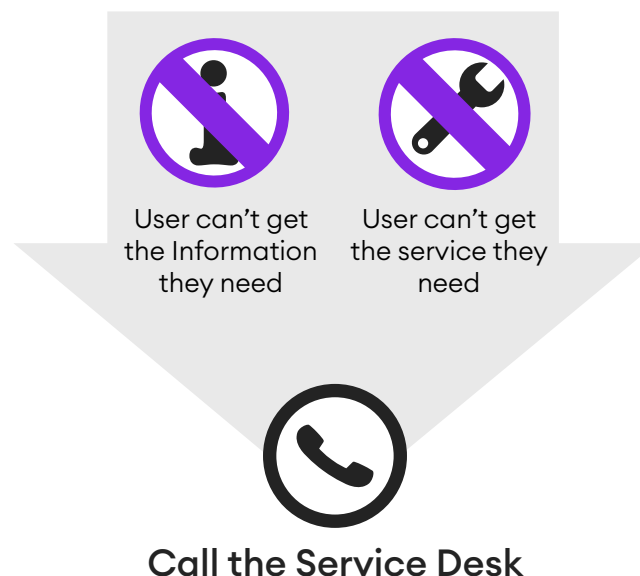
These calls to the Service Desk aren't caused by hardware problems. They're caused by faulty processes, a failure to share information, and inadequate service documentation. Invariably, the causes are non-technical and so are the solutions:

- Provide a search function in the Service Catalog and write service descriptions that help IT customers find them.
- Actively “market” your service portal so that IT customers know it's there and how to find it.
- Communicate important updates to service subscribers through digital channels.

- Make sure your delivery processes are watertight, so service requests don't fall into a black hole.

The primary purpose of a slick, digital service experience is to make things easy for IT customers. But at the same time, digital channels (like a Service Catalog or self-service portal) divert demand away from the Service Desk (where the transaction cost is high).

If the service experience fails, demand is diverted back to the Service Desk and none of the benefits are realized. This is why it's so important to carefully design your service experiences: poorly designed service experiences will actually drive costs up and drive IT customer satisfaction ratings down.





# Customer journey mapping

According to Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon,

**“Customer experience is bigger than customer service in that it is the full, end-to-end experience. It starts when you first hear about Amazon from a friend and ends when you get the package in the mail and open it.”<sup>3</sup>**

The customer experience is a journey, not just a single touchpoint. To provide an optimized service experience, the IT department needs to consider the full journey – from the IT customer’s trigger event, through to the point where the IT customer gets the outcome they’re looking for (and everything in between).

## What are customer journey maps?

Forrester Research defines customer journey maps as

**“Documents that visually illustrate customers’ processes, needs, and perceptions throughout their relationships with a company”<sup>4</sup>.**

They are a tool for analyzing and communicating the customer perspective to the IT

people behind the scenes who are responsible for delivering the experience. In effect, a customer journey map is an “outside in” lens that lets IT people (who often see just one step in the process) see the whole service experience from the customer angle. They enable a data-driven approach to managing the service experience, replacing assumptions with maps of real IT customer journeys.

## Using customer journey maps as an improvement tool

Customer journey maps provide a focal point for engagement between IT people and end users, making it easy to identify strengths and weaknesses in the real service experiences being provided. From there, it is simple to drill down into the people, process and technology elements that need to be addressed to provide an improved service experience:

- Target a few key services and identify what the journey looks like today (“as-is”).
- Run workshops with IT customers to review the experience, pinpoint weaknesses, identify strengths and surface expectations.

- Propose “to-be” customer journey maps that solve for weaknesses and expectations.
- Review new service experience journeys with IT customers to validate the vision.
- Identify the gaps in the service delivery ecosystem (the people, processes and technologies that support the service experience) and architect new capabilities to enable a superior service experience.
- Co-prioritize with IT customers which enhancements to deliver first.
- Prototype, validate, release, communicate and iterate.

## Example IT customer journeys

In this whitepaper, we take a look at how IT can improve the service request and service support experiences. The customer journeys illustrated in this whitepaper are examples of typical scenarios. Every organization is different, and the process of analyzing IT customer personas, needs, habits and preferences is an important discovery phase in the path to providing a great IT service experience.



According to Forrester Research, **81%** of customer experience professionals map customer journeys to improve quality of service and customer satisfaction. But only **21%** of organizations map the ecosystem of people, processes and technologies that are in place to deliver the customer journey<sup>5</sup>.



## Part Two

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# Servicing Value Demand

What the experience should look like when the IT customer needs something new

# Managing value demand

## Making IT service requests simple

### The right outcome is “table stakes”

Delivering a service for an end user is about delivering a business outcome. When an end user requests a new smartphone, they’re not (strictly speaking) requesting a product as an end in itself, but as a means to an end: they need access to information and services on the move.

When Steve is on the train to meet a customer in the neighboring town, he likes to review the customer’s purchase history so he knows what they already have and where there might be an opportunity for cross-selling.

Mobile access to the CRM tool is the service he needs. The outcome is that Steve is prepared for his meeting. Whatever the experience looks like, the business outcome has to be there, or Steve is guaranteed to be dissatisfied.

### Consumer experiences set the standard

For years, Steve went to the toy store to buy birthday presents for his kids. A couple of years ago, he decided to avoid the queues and try Amazon instead.

He found it easy to search for items, read reviews, add them to his basket and complete the order. When he used to go to the store, he would always leave with what he wanted. With Amazon, he was concerned

about his order arriving on time for his son’s birthday, so he opted to pay for next-day delivery.

Once he had completed his order, he received a confirmation by email, with a tracking link. Three hours later he received an update telling him that his order had been dispatched. That evening, while out for dinner, he used his smartphone to track the package and found it had already reached the neighboring city – which gave him immense peace of mind. His gift would arrive on time. Amazon were delivering on their promise.

### The legacy experience

Contrast this to what the process would look like in the days before the Internet and we see how far things have come. The pre-Internet equivalent

would involve browsing a paper catalog, calling a number or completing a paper order form to be sent – by post – to the catalog company for processing.

Everything that happened in between Steve placing the order and receiving the order would happen in a complete communications blackout. If he wanted to check that his order was going to arrive in time, he’d have to call a number and wait in a call queue to speak to a customer service advisor.

This might all sound like a long advert for Amazon, but this experience (and others) in Steve’s consumer life have defined for him what a good service experience looks like today. We all take these expectations into our organizations, so it is our job to make sure the IT service experience matches them.

### Why a weak service request experience is a problem

- It prevents high adoption rates for new IT services. The business never gets full ROI from the IT spend.
- End users can’t find, order and use the technology, so they miss out on the resulting step-up in productivity.
- It contributes to the negative perception of IT, further fueling the shadow IT trend.
- Friction in the service request experience drives unnecessary calls to the Service Desk.

# What a modern IT service request experience looks like

At his last company, Steve would spend a couple of hours at the end of each month working through his expense receipts and inputting the details into a spreadsheet, which he would then send to the accounts department to

be reimbursed. Sometimes he would lose receipts, so he couldn't claim for them and was personally out of pocket. Steve was chatting about expenses with Tony, one of his new colleagues, who showed him the smartphone app, Expensatron,

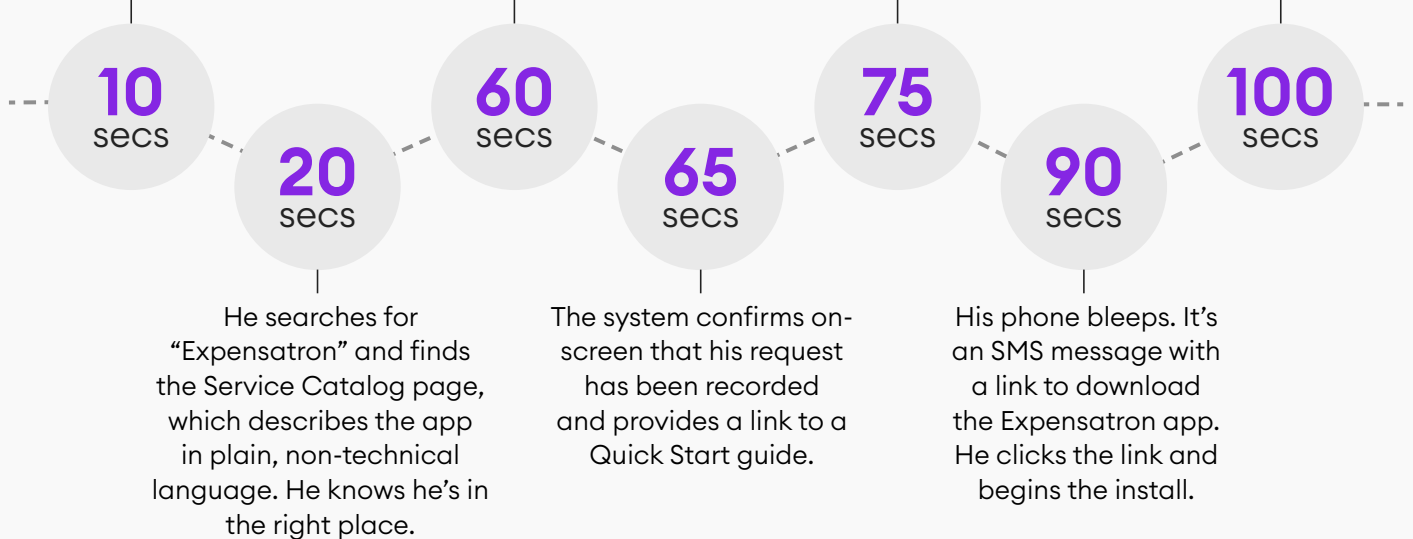
for logging expenses on the move. Steve asked where he could get it, so Tony used his mobile to email him a link to the Eagle5 service portal and told him to simply use his regular Windows password to log in.

Steve opens the email on his laptop and clicks the link, taking him to the service portal. He logs in with his regular Windows password.

He enters his smartphone number and operating system type into the web form and clicks OK.

Moments later, he receives an email confirming his request has been received and is being processed.

While the app is installing, he receives an email with his login ID and password for the Expensatron system.



## The Outcome








Within just a couple of minutes, Steve has found, downloaded and installed the app, received his login credentials and viewed a how-to guide that explains

what he can do with the app in simple language. Steve is delighted with how quick and easy the whole process was, and can't wait to try it out. It even lets him take snaps of his

expense receipts instead of carrying around pockets full of till slips. He's happy. He got the service he wanted... and the experience was fast and frictionless.

# How it works

## Mapping the journey to the supporting ecosystem

What Steve sees	What happens behind the scenes
 <p>Steve opens the email on his laptop and clicks the link, taking him to the service portal. He logs in with his regular Windows password.</p>	<p>To reduce the number of application logins Steve has to remember, the service portal synchronizes with his usual Windows password.</p>
 <p>He searches for “Expensatron” and finds the Service Catalog page, which describes the app in plain, non-technical language. He knows he’s in the right place.</p>	<p>The catalog page for this app has been search-optimized to make it easy to find. The keyword “Expensatron” appears in the title, making it the first result. On the page, the service description clearly explains what it is. It also explains what he can expect to happen next.</p>
 <p>He enters his smartphone number and operating system type into the web form and clicks OK.</p>	<p>Having logged into the portal with his Windows ID, the Service Catalog can automatically identify who Steve is, so all he needs to input is his number and OS type.</p>
 <p>The system confirms on-screen that his request has been recorded and provides a link to a Quick Start guide.</p>	<p>The service portal records the request, triggers an automated service delivery process and lets Steve know that everything is OK. It’s configured to display links to useful service documentation so that Steve doesn’t have to spend time searching for information on how to use it.</p>
 <p>Moments later, he receives an email confirming his request has been received and is being processed.</p>	<p>Just to make sure Steve knows his request has been received, the system sends an automated email confirmation.</p>
 <p>His phone beeps. It’s an SMS message with a link to download the Expensatron app. He clicks the link and begins the install.</p>	<p>The ITSM system checks ActiveDirectory to confirm Steve’s eligibility for this app. He’s classified as “sales person”, so it proceeds. It confirms that the number he provided corresponds to a phone that is registered in the CMDB before sending the correct download link direct to his smartphone.</p>
 <p>While the app is installing, he receives an email with his login ID and password for the Expensatron system.</p>	<p>Meanwhile, the ITSM system connects to the Expensatron server to request a new user account for Steve. Expensatron responds by creating a user account and emailing the details direct to Steve so he can log in.</p>





# IT service experience enablers

## Co-design and co-evaluation enable functional outcomes

When chatting with Steve about expenses, Tony recommended the Expensatron app because he uses it himself. He uses it because it does what he needs it to do. The functionality that Eagle5's "road warriors" need is there – and not by accident.

When the finance department met with Susan (their Business Relationship Manager) to talk about automating the way they managed expenses, Susan brought in a handful of sales people into the process. After all, they would be the main users of the system; accounts would simply be taking the data out of the back end to reimburse expenses.

## Service automation enables fast

Instantaneous service delivery represents the best possible service request experience. Because the requested service is itself a digital entity, it can be processed, authorized and provisioned based on a few simple data-driven rules.

There's no need for manual steps in the process - it's possible to apply complete, end-to-end

service automation, so Steve gets what he needs in a matter of seconds.

However, the need for speed doesn't just apply to the behind-the-scenes process, it also applies to the customer experience touchpoints. When Steve clicks the link to the Service Catalog, the web page needs to load fast. If he has to watch a spinning wheel for 20 seconds, the service experience has failed at the first hurdle. IT departments need to continually monitor the performance of every element in the service experience to ensure performance is optimized.

Why? Because in the new technology-enabled, hyper-productive world, the IT customer's time is very valuable.

## If you can't deliver fast, be transparent

Where the desired service involves a physical element (like delivery of a new keyboard, desktop or smartphone), or involves a manual authorization stage, the process cannot be fully automated and instant delivery isn't possible. In this instance, the IT customer will want transparency: if they have to wait, they want to know what they're waiting for.

If they don't have to wait more than a few minutes, they don't care what's happening behind the scenes to make it happen.

## Reducing friction

Friction frustrates. When IT customers have to think hard or work hard to get what they need, they'll be dissatisfied with the service experience – particularly when they're putting effort in doing something that they know a computer could do for them.

In the above example, all Steve has to do to gain access to the mobile expenses system is input two items of data: his mobile number and operating system type. To reduce effort on Steve's part, the ITSM system uses data it already has (Steve's identity), and integration with Eagle5's ActiveDirectory system to source the information it needs to process, authorize and deliver both the app and an activated login.

Everything that can be automated is automated, to reduce the thinking and effort Steve needs to contribute. After all, Steve should be focusing his time on selling – not wrangling with web forms.





## Part Three

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# Servicing Failure Demand

What the IT experience should look like when something goes wrong

# Managing failure demand

## Making IT support simple

### Service continuity is critical

When it comes to IT support, the best strategy is to prevent failure by design rather than clean up afterwards. The best support experience is a flawless continuity of service. Second best is to detect and resolve failures before they impact the end user.

Having a real-time view, knowing what you've got (e.g. in a CMDB) and how it's performing right now is the key at this level.

When services start to “wobble”, a streamlined process for re-stabilization must kick in to resolve the issue before the productivity of IT customers is impacted. But services often fail without warning. Relatively few organizations have truly integrated ITAM and ITSM, and the future impact of this will be the next norm. The best way to treat failure is to not prevent failure occurring in the first place.

Ultimately, designing robust services is the key to avoiding failure, but if you can't build it right (because of time or cost constraints), you'll need to fix it fast when it fails.

You'd better have a good, fast process - supported by good, fast, knowledgeable, polite, helpful and enthusiastic people to sort it out.

### Customer expectations

Expectations of what truly responsive support looks like are heavily influenced by the consumer-world experiences of your IT customers, with the social media arena setting a high standard for speed.

42% of customers who have contacted a brand for support through a social media channel expect a response within 60 minutes. 32% expect a response in 30 minutes. 57% expect the same response time whether it was inside or outside of normal working hours<sup>6</sup>.

77% of consumers won't wait more than six hours for an email response<sup>7</sup>. Clearly, best-in-class consumer support is a tough act for IT to follow. Effective prioritization, automation, knowledge sharing and agent empowerment are critical capabilities for enabling an agile support experience that lives up to this expectation.

### The service recovery paradox

The news is not all bad. The “service recovery paradox” represents an opportunity for IT to repair customer satisfaction scores even when something does go wrong.

Users realize that bad things happen; it's how quickly and effectively you remedy the problem that counts.

When a support organization solves the customer's problem more quickly than expected, the customer is impressed by this responsiveness – faith in the IT department is restored and IT customer satisfaction ratings go up.

### The legacy support experience

At Steve's last company, when something went wrong with the equipment or applications he used, he would call the Service Desk. It was the only way to get help. He had the number on a post-it note stuck to the wall above his desk phone and he'd asked his son to add it to his smartphone contacts for when he was on the move. He'd usually have to wait 10-20 minutes before he got through to an agent, who would take a few more minutes to identify who Steve was, where he was, and what the problem was.

Steve would be told that his “Incident” was logged and they would fix it as soon as they could. Later, if he wanted an update on when, he'd have to wait in the call queue again (which he had learned was a waste of time). If he needed it fixed urgently, he would speak to Scott, his territory manager, who would pick up the phone and shout at Patrick, the Service Desk manager.

# What a modern IT support experience looks like

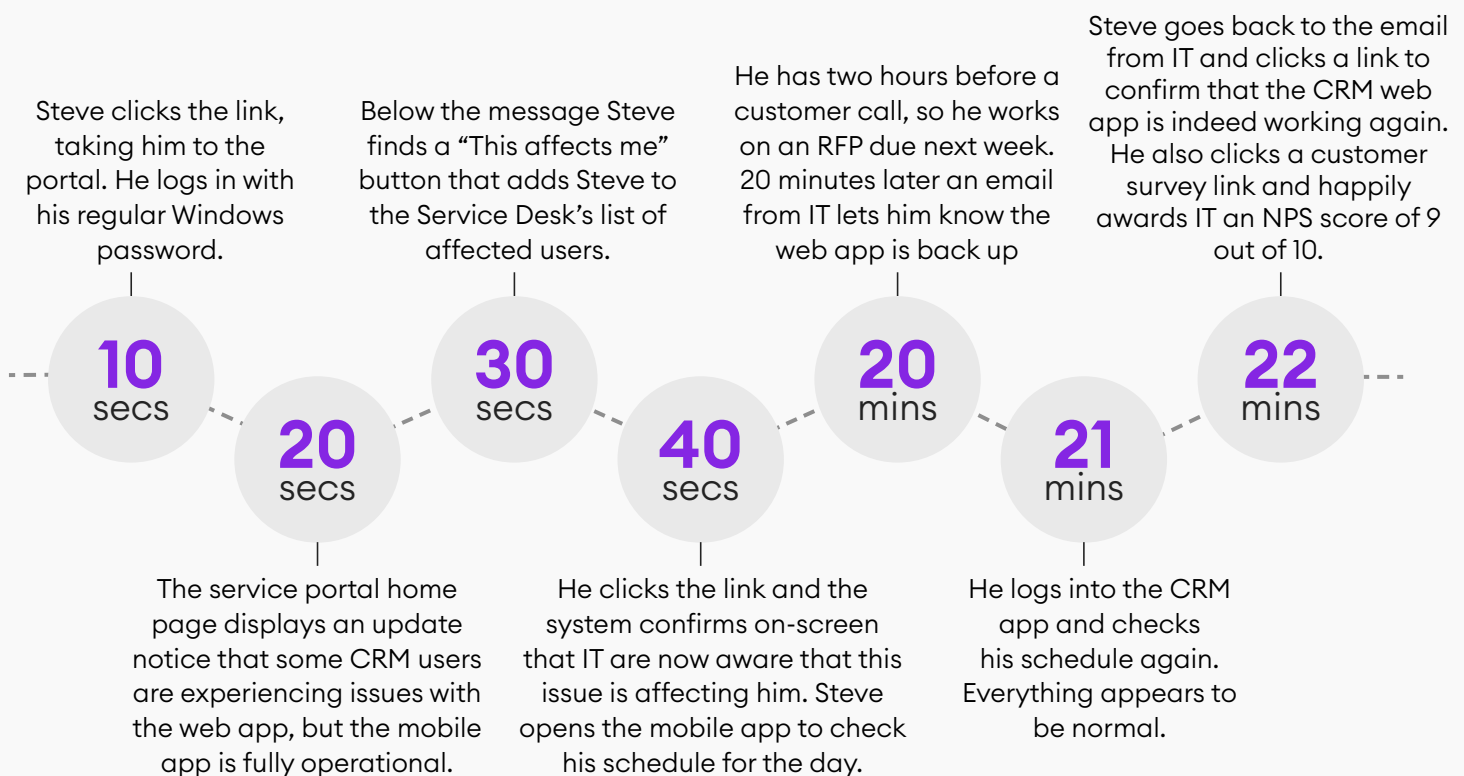
Having worked for Eagle5 for a few months, the services Steve uses have always been up and running. The IT department has done a good job of making sure they're "always on" and Steve hasn't needed support. So far, he's been quite impressed that things just seem to work when he needs them. But this morning, there's a problem with the CRM app.

As Steve is a sales person, he practically lives in the CRM tool. He needs it to work if he's going to be productive today. He shouts over to Tony and asks if he's having problems.

Apparently Steve is the only one in the room experiencing an issue.

Steve remembers an email he got from IT on his first day about

how to get support, but he can't remember if he kept it. He shouts back over to Tony for the Service Desk number and Tony tells him it's programmed into his desk phone, but he should look for the support portal icon on his desktop. There it is: "Support Portal".



## The Outcome








In the time it took Steve's last company to pick up the phone, IT has fixed the issue and Steve is back up and running.

The whole experience was frictionless, end-to-end, and Steve was kept informed of the situation throughout. Because the experience exceeded his expectations, Steve is happy to

take a minute to complete a quick Net Promoter Score (NPS) satisfaction survey, ranking IT highly for quality of service.

# How it works

## Mapping the journey to the supporting ecosystem

	What Steve sees	What happens behind the scenes
	<p>Steve clicks the link, taking him to the portal. He logs in with his regular Windows password.</p>	<p>To reduce the number of application logins Steve has to remember, the service portal synchronizes with his usual Windows password.</p>
	<p>The service portal home page displays an update notice that some CRM users are experiencing issues with the web app, but the mobile app is fully operational.</p>	<p>Monitoring tools are in place to pick up issues before end users are impacted, giving IT a head start on solving the problem. Service status notifications are embedded in the Incident management process, to head-off repeated Service Desk calls reporting the same Incident.</p>
	<p>Below the message, Steve finds a “This affects me” button that adds Steve to the Service Desk’s list of affected users.</p>	<p>The ITSM system tracks “service subscriber” relationships in the CMDB, allowing IT to target announcements to customers of specific applications and services.</p>
	<p>He clicks the link and the system confirms on-screen that IT are now aware that this issue is affecting him. Steve opens the mobile app to check his schedule for the day.</p>	<p>To make the workaround easy, the confirmation page offers users the option to receive an SMS containing a link to download the mobile CRM app.</p>
	<p>He has two hours before a customer call, so he works on an RFP due next week. 20 minutes later an email from IT lets him know the web app is back up.</p>	<p>As soon as IT have found and fixed the issue, they announce this on the service portal and send an email to all service subscribers – so that all relevant users can continue being productive.</p>
	<p>He logs into the CRM app and checks his schedule again. Everything appears to be normal.</p>	<p>Behind the scenes, IT have followed an Incident process workflow to guide rapid resolution.</p>
	<p>Steve goes back to the email from IT and clicks a link to confirm that the CRM web app is indeed working again. He also clicks a customer survey link and happily awards IT an NPS score of 9 out of 10.</p>	<p>Clicking the “confirm” link allows the ITSM system to now eliminate Steve as an affected user. The Service Desk follows up with customers who have either clicked to indicate the issue remains, or didn’t respond either way – ensuring “no end user gets left behind”.</p>

# IT service experience enablers

## An open attitude

When IT's back-end systems monitoring and front-end end user experience monitoring tools flagged issues with the CRM app web server in the early hours of the morning, the IT department could have simply tackled the issue covertly - thinking that because it was an out-of-hours failure they could get it back up and running before anybody noticed.

However, at Eagle5 IT have a policy of openness towards outages and service performance. They understand that work happens at any time of day or night and there's no such thing as "dead time" in which to restore services under the radar.

They also understand that a failure to communicate service status often means a failure to head-off a flood of calls to the Service Desk. Consequently, they pro-actively keep IT customers informed, enabling them to plan around outages and save time seeking information; thus, increasing their productivity.

## Add digital channels to improve ease of access

As in the consumer world, IT customers want to choose from a range of digital and non-digital touchpoints to suit their current situation.

When an end user wants to report a minor service performance issue, they won't want to wait in a call queue to speak to an agent. Self-logging via a digital portal is the line of least resistance. Conversely, if the company's e-commerce platform has suffered a catastrophic failure, they will want to speak to a human being - preferably senior.

When you provide a range of channels, you empower the IT customer to choose the mode of communication that is most convenient and most suitable to their current situation. But beware, the "build it and they will come" mantra is a myth. It is critical to communicate the modes of access, how to use them, and the benefits of doing so. The "when" element is the choice of the IT customer.

## Consistent service experiences rely on mature processes

Without mature processes, the quality of IT support and the overarching support experience is unpredictable. This introduces conflicts with the IT customer's expectation that the support experience will be at least as good as the last time around.

Essentially, processes are one of three foundations that enable a great service experience - alongside the people and technology elements. Processes should be automated for speed and predictability, and lean

(with unnecessary steps removed). They should embed the principles of openness and transparency, incorporating steps that keep the end user informed. And they should be designed to minimize friction - the amount of effort the IT customer must put in across the support journey.

## Measurement enforces accountability

At the end of the support journey, at the point at which Steve confirms that his issue has been resolved, he is offered the chance to provide feedback in the form of a Net Promoter Score (NPS) survey ("On a scale of 0 to 10, how satisfied are you with the support IT provided?").

The score that end users will award will be heavily influenced by their experience across the support journey. Low scores indicate a weak experience and allow IT to ask the question, why? - drilling down into individual cases to identify and resolve the specific experience issues (those that traditional ITSM performance metrics like SLAs fail to show up).

Support and training must be provided to ensure that the service experience is not only efficient, but still has the element of human interaction with a customer-focused professional, not one who leaves the CAPS lock on when typing.



# Where do we start?

1. Select a small set of high-value services (perhaps supporting just one line of business) as a target for your pilot project.
2. Assign ownership over the service experience for each of the pilot services, ideally to the Business Relationship Manager or Service Manager who will own this in the long term.
3. Benchmark general IT customer satisfaction, and satisfaction with the chosen set of services in particular. Include open-ended questions in your surveys to get pointers on what's most important to your end user community.
4. If you are focusing on one line of business, benchmark their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to enable a before-and-after view of business performance.
5. Identify who your service customers are. Create customer personas (like Steve) to help better understand their needs, habits and expectations. A single business unit may encompass multiple IT customer personas.
6. Shadow end users to create customer journey maps that capture the existing service experience ("as is"). Examine the experience for weaknesses, referring to the feedback you've gathered in your IT customer satisfaction surveys for additional insight.
7. Create "to be" customer journey maps that tackle these weaknesses and illustrate the overall vision of what an ideal service experience would look like in each case - presenting it from the IT customer's perspective.
8. Analyze the gaps to identify where new technical capabilities, people skills and processes steps are required to enable this new service experience.
9. Implement these new supporting capabilities and architect prototype service experiences that can be validated with real IT customers.
10. Measure satisfaction with prototyped service experiences against the legacy IT customer satisfaction benchmark to demonstrate improvement.
11. Communicate improvements back to the end user community to demonstrate that you have listened and acted.
12. Iterate to expand the scope of your service experience program to improve the service experience in other areas.
13. Continually measure IT customer satisfaction scores in relation to individual service experiences and general IT customer satisfaction - to spot weaknesses and shifting expectations early.



# Takeaways

Great IT service experiences don't happen by accident. Success rests on a number of factors: cultivating a customer-oriented view, commitment to improving the service

experience, a viable approach strategy, engagement with end user communities, effective people and processes, use of strategic tools such as customer journey maps, and a robust

ITSM solution that supports process workflows, service automation and multi-channel interaction.

## Key Takeaways

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**IT customer satisfaction is holistic.** It requires looking beyond individual interactions to optimize the full, end-to-end service experience.

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**Prioritize improvements.** You can't optimize every service experience. For organizations with hundreds of IT services and a wide variety of end user contexts, the number of permutations of service experiences can be huge. Ask IT customers what's most important.

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**Measure IT service satisfaction as a matter of course.** Run transactional surveys (to gain end user insight on specific service experiences) and regular tracker surveys (to track end user sentiment over time). Put IT service satisfaction metrics front-and-center on CIO and Service Desk dashboards.

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**Track consumer experience leaders.** Consumer-world service experience leaders, like Amazon, Southwest Airlines, American Express, Zappos and others, set the standard against which your IT service experience will be judged. Monitoring these leaders will help you keep your finger on the pulse of customer experience best practices and expectations.

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**Get IT people and IT customers on the same page.**

Customer journey maps provide an ideal focal point for the design of a new, more effective service experience.

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**Be agile.** Few improvements are right first time. Co-test service experience improvements with IT customers to validate their worth and keep refining the experience. Improving the service experience isn't a "one and done" project.

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**Consistency is key.** To achieve high IT customer satisfaction scores, the experience has to be right every time. One negative experience can turn a happy IT customer into a frustrated one, so the IT capabilities that create positive experiences must be built for robust and scalable. ITSM solutions are a critical enabler for delivering most of the attributes of a great IT service experience.

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