

DapperDesk

Solutions That Work

WebSite Creations

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Online Help Desk Software As a Solution to the Challenges of Supporting Customers Online

Increase your support department's organization and efficiency.

Any successful company or organization that does business online understands the importance of providing a method of online support to its customers. While supporting customers via email and via telephone is sometimes useful, the advantages provided by the successful implementation of an online help desk solution far out-weigh the benefits of either email support or telephone support. The difference between a support center that uses an online help desk solution and one that uses email or telephone support only can be the difference between retaining a customer or losing them to a competitor.



Consider the following 3 scenarios involving companies that support their customers via email, via telephone and via an online help desk such as Dapper Desk.

Scenario #1 Support Via Email

Company 1 sales widgets using an online shopping cart on their web site. Occasionally, a customer needs further instructions on how to use the widget. This results in the customer making a visit to the companies contact page in order to seek information on how to ask a question.

Company 1 provides support via email only, so the customer, whom must have an email address, sends an email to the support email address for Company 1. Company 1 must then monitor their support email address inbox and reply to any valid support requests they receive in a timely manner.

Problems With Supporting Customers Via Email

1. When a customer decides to seek support from Company 1, the customer receives no guidance on how to format their email in order to receive a proper reply. The customer must decide how best to describe their problem in the email in their own email program software. Hopefully they will put in the correct details necessary for a customer service rep to give them a meaningful reply. However, often times, the first reply to the customer will be a request for more information as the customer has left out important details, which increases the amount of time that a customer service rep spends on the issue.

2. The support department will need to maintain a robust anti-spam and anti-virus solution for this email inbox. An email inbox filled with spam alongside of valid customer support requests is confusing for the customer service rep and leads to missed opportunities for support. The anti-spam measures must be measured closely though to ensure that valid support emails are not mistakenly identified as spam.
3. How does a busy support department with multiple customer service reps delegate the workload based on the queue of an email inbox? It is difficult and would require intervention of a person or persons to follow closely behind the customer service reps to ensure the workload is distributed evenly without any missed requests.
4. Archiving of support requests is necessarily limited by the features that a particular email program provides. Typically, archiving an email support request is based on which folder to put it in when it is in progress and when it is closed. Regardless, the email must be manually moved, in most cases, to the appropriate folder.
5. Except for the basic search feature that a typical email program may have, there is little opportunity to cross-reference current and future support emails based on customer name, company name, etc.
6. Follow-up on a support request necessitates wading through hundreds and sometimes thousands of existing emails in order to find the particular email a customer service rep would need to open.

Summary of Email Support

Supporting customers via email leads to many problems, least of which is a lack of organization of support requests. Protecting the email inbox from spam and viruses becomes a critical concern. Ability to cross-reference tickets based on customer name, company name, etc. is difficult and rudimentary.



Scenario 2 Support Via Telephone

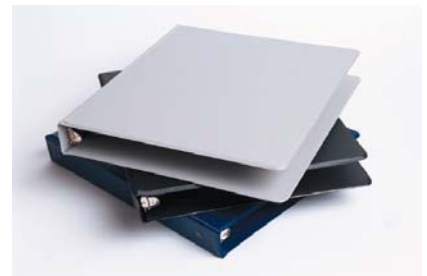
Company 2 also sales widgets using an online shopping cart on their web site. Occasionally, a customer needs further instructions on how to use the widget. This results in the customer making a visit to the companies contact page in order to seek information on how to obtain support.

Company 2 provides support via telephone only, so the customer, whom must have access to a telephone, and usually the ability to call long distance, places a call to the support telephone number.

Problems With Supporting Customers Via Telephone

1. The support department must staff their telephones continually throughout the support hours dictated in their service hours.

2. Depending on how many customer service reps you have, they may all be busy on the telephone serving customers and additional calls may go unanswered or may go to voice mail, which may exasperate the customer.
3. The customer service rep must take the information, which is presented verbally by the customer over the telephone, and document it in a program such as a program call log, or manually via pen and paper.
4. Unless the company has kept good call logs, there is little chance a customer service rep can cross reference previous calls from this customer.
5. Any chance at properly implementing a telephone support system would require the purchase of a third party software in order to document the calls and the customer information.
6. Telephone support is real-time. When the customer calls, usually they are expecting immediate results. Thus, your customer service reps must work on each issue during the call or risk upsetting the customer by telling them they are in the "queue", which would necessitate further calls from the customer to the support center or from the support center to the customer.
7. Because most customers will expect immediate results, it will require a larger staff to provide support in real time, allowing each customer service rep to work during each call. Short staffing may result in missed calls, which will result in a lower satisfaction rating from your customers.
8. Much time is wasted during a support telephone call as the customer service rep keeps the customer online while he/she works on the issue, even when both parties are silent and not communicating.
9. Not every technical person is suitable for providing telephone support. Telephone support requires a personable person on the company's end of the call. This requires training and management of calls by an administrator or manager to ensure a proper quality of service.



Summary of Telephone Support

While telephone support does provide personal service and many customers do prefer this, third party software must be purchased in order to properly document each call and the results of the solution. The quality of the documentation would be based on the third party software that you choose. Additionally, more support staff would be necessary to support a busy support department in order to not miss any calls (dropped calls). The expense of such support may become difficult to justify.

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Scenario 3 Support Via An Online Help Desk

Company 3 also sales widgets using an online shopping cart on their web site. Occasionally, a customer needs further instructions on how to use the widget. This results in the customer making a visit to the companies contact page in order to seek information on how to obtain support.

Company 3 provides support via email and an online help desk. This gives their customer base 2 options to seek support. They can login to the companies online help desk and log their support request or they can send an email to the companies support email address. Fortunately for Company 3, their help desk has a feature that monitors their support email inbox and which turns valid support emails into help desk tickets, while rejecting spam emails. Thus, the company never has to deal with an email inbox again nor the problems which come along with it. All tickets are answered from within the help desk interface.

Benefits of Supporting Customers Via an Online Help Desk

1. Customers can login to the online help desk to seek support, never requiring them to use an email program. (Unless the customer prefers email).
2. Customers can alternately send an email to the support email address to seek support. The help desk will filter the email message, check it for spam, and then turn valid support emails into a help desk ticket just as if the customer had logged in to open a ticket.
3. Each customer support request is automatically given a unique tracking number, allowing the customer service reps and the customer to efficiently track the progress of the support request.
4. The customer can login to the help desk to view the progress of their ticket 24 hours per day. They can view the time the ticket was entered, the status of the ticket and the names of any support personnel involved in the ticket.
5. When a customer service rep responds to a ticket, the ticket is updated in the help desk and also, an email is sent to the customer to notify them that an update has been made to their ticket.
6. Tickets are listed in the order that they are received so customer service reps know which ticket is next in line in the queue.
7. When a customer logs into the help desk to create a ticket, they are given guidance by the help desk and prompted to enter pertinent information such as a category and subject and basic details. The help desk allows the administrator to put custom notes in the ticket creation area to further assist the customer in providing any details necessary.
8. From the customer service reps aspect, the support request is presented to them in an organized manner, with all of the details about the customer and their issue available in one screen.



9. In a busy customer service department, a manager or administrator can choose to use the TICKET ASSIGN feature of Dapper Desk in order to assign certain tickets to a customer service rep of their choice.
10. A customer can choose to close a ticket they have open at any time. This is helpful when the customer solves his or her own issue. Allowing them to close their own ticket takes the ticket out of the queue, reducing the workload for staff.
11. When a CSR or a customer closes a ticket, it is archived and able to be viewed by a customer or a customer service rep. Further, because the ticket information is in a database, the customer service rep can search tickets based on the customer name, username, company name, etc., allowing them the ability to cross reference tickets.
12. Dapper Desk provides Frequently Asked Questions software. If used properly, a company's FAQ topics will be displayed to the customer during the ticket creation process, encouraging them to view the relevant FAQ topics concerning their issue BEFORE they enter a ticket. This saves the customer time and reduces the amount of tickets in the queue.

Implementation of a Help Desk Solution is An Integral Part of a Company's Success

Choosing a robust help desk management solution, coupled with other means of support a company may decide to offer its customers, is a smart investment. If customer satisfaction and/or retention are a company's goal, then providing quick support turn around times is a necessity. A help desk solution such as Dapper Desk can help a company clean up their support queue, and help a company's customer service reps organize their daily tasks. The result will be a faster, more efficient support department with happier customers.

Happy customers tend to be loyal customers. Loyal customers tend to be long-term customers. If a help desk solution can help retain your customers, then the question of a Return On Investment can be answered positively and the financial benefits of realizing an ROI can be achieved in a relatively short time.



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