pds

A Business Case for Service Desk Partnership:
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR PROFILE

PDS helps fuel a world of Connected IT. Connecting people to people, people to technology, and technology to technology but most importantly, helping IT connect value back to your organization.

WHAT WE DO

Help organizations reduce risk and total cost of ownership, and to move closer to the vision of fully Connected IT.

EVALUATING THE BENEFITS OF SERVICE DESK PARTNERSHIP

Due to an increased emphasis on evolving technologies, government regulations, and changes in market expectations, digital technologies have become a significant part of healthcare operations. These systems offer myriad benefits to both healthcare administrators (including greater efficiency and cost savings) and providers (including consistency, easy access, and portability). Electronic medical records have streamlined the patient and provider experience, but have complicated the implementation and maintenance of digital systems for healthcare IT teams. Providing 24/7/365 support for a large and diverse set of user needs requires an equally large and diverse skillset and resourcing is often a challenge.

Many healthcare organizations face the choice of adding in-house IT support desk services or outsourcing their service desk to a third party. Providing effective healthcare IT support requires an understanding of core clinical processes, organizational structures, regulations (e.g. HIPAA), along with system knowledge and expertise in the various applications that are in use. Evaluating the need for your organization, understanding the risks, and determining the best solution can be a tall order, but here's an outline that should help to get you started.

STEP 1: REVIEW THE CURRENT STATE

STEP 2: EVALUATE THE RISKS

STEP 3: ASSESS THE BENEFITS OF OUTSOURCING

STEP 4: REVIEW THE OUTSOURCED SOLUTION

1 REVIEW THE CURRENT STATE

Define the current environment, resources, and requirements to determine gaps.

To weigh these options most effectively, the current state of the healthcare organization must be assessed. This can be done by working with leadership across the organization to create a snapshot of the current environment, resources, and requirements, and to identify the primary pain points:

Over-Stretched Resources

This is often evident in the amount of overtime logged by current staff.

Bottlenecks and Misaligned Resources

This reveals itself in an increased focus on level 1 and 2 requests, a lack of prioritization, or neglect of more advanced/time-consuming issues.

New Initiatives

If an organization is adding a new product or service line (e.g., a customer portal, or major EMR change), this will have a significant impact on the service desk.

Meeting Demand

Is your existing support team meeting the demand of all users? What is your current support request volume? Do you support users 24/7? Do you have dedicated patient support?

Cost Constraints

Are you being asked to more with less? Adding more FTE to cover support can be cost prohibitive.

The assessment should also identify current ownership of the support desk function and highlight any recurring issues such as missed goals, low customer satisfaction levels, non-compliance, and other problems. The end result offers a clear picture of whether the existing support infrastructure and resources are sufficient, if there are short-comings or efficiency issues, and helps determine how wide the gap is between the current state and the ideal solution.

2 EVALUATE THE RISKS

Managing support internally can impact support quality, cost efficiency, productivity, and more.

Rigid Support Capacity

Utilizing an internal team locks you into a fixed capacity for support. If demand spikes and exceeds that capacity you leave users under-supported, or if demand is low you're left over paying for support.

Slow to Ramp Up

Delayed impact of new hires due to lengthy on-boarding and training processes.

Additional Costs

Hiring, managing, and firing additional full and part-time support teams to cover your support is expensive and inefficient.

Distraction

Password resets, navigation issues, and other basic support needs can keep skilled resources off of mission-critical IT work.

Non-Compliance

New hires often miss requirements due to a lack of experience and a steep learning curve.

Poor Quality

Patient support, go-live support, and other healthcare specific support requires expertise to ensure users and patients get the accurate and timely support they need.

Unhappy Customers

Reduced customer satisfaction and loss of reputation in the marketplace.

Security Risks

Reduced privacy and protection of patient data.

3 ASSESS THE BENEFITS OF OUTSOURCING

Outsourcing management of customer support provides numerous potential benefits to health care service providers.

Increased Staff Productivity

As lower-impact requests are handled by the external support team, skilled internal resources can devote time and energy to more strategic, long-term initiatives.

Increased Process Efficiency

Healthcare providers can streamline support and resolution processes due to increased flexibility and adaptability.

Improved Compliance

Organizations can be more service-focused, which improves patient outcomes and boosts regulatory compliance as the outsourcing provider has the appropriate expertise built into its practices.

Improved Alignment with Company Goals

With the right partner, outsourcing of support can play a pivotal role in keeping the organization in line with its goal to provide excellent end-to-end care.

Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Outsourcing typically involves a lower total cost of ownership for support services than providing an in-house solution.

Calculating TCO

$15.00	Hourly Wage
$1.38	Government Mandated Costs (FICA, Fed & State Unemployment, Workers Compensation)
$1.73	On-going Overhead (Facility & Equipment Costs, Management, Software Licensing, Training)
$5.78	Benefits (Healthcare, Time-off)
$23.89	Total Hourly Cost
$49,691.20	Total Annual Cost/Analyst
8	Number of Full-time Analysts
10,000	Number of Annual Incidents
$397,529.60	Total Annual Cost
$39.75	Current Cost Per incident

Table: Example Cost-calculator. Costs not considered above include: Hard costs such as On-boarding Hiring/Training Costs and Turn-Over Costs, Soft Costs including Leadership involvement in Managing, Organizing and Optimizing.

4 REVIEW THE OUTSOURCED SOLUTION

The quality of IT support for patients and administrative and clinical users has a direct impact on experience and outcomes for your organization.

For this reason, it is critical to choose a partner who has a robust client roster and extensive experience in the healthcare space. An IT help desk for healthcare must provide a combination of technical skills and soft skills to create a positive customer interaction, or what PDS calls "bedside manner over the phone". Other benefits include:

- **On-shore analysts** offering **24/7/365 customized support** for patients

- **Experience** in the software and hardware your organization uses, with a 4-week training cycle

- **Help Desk Institute certification** in customer service, with advanced technical knowledge

- Deep knowledge of HIPAA and other **compliance regulations**

- **Flexible Coverage** that gets you support when you need it, and saves you from paying for it when you don't.