COMARCH ICT

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO OUTSOURCING YOUR SERVICE DESK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO CURRENT OUTSOURCING TRENDS

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For businesses new to outsourcing their services, outsourcing the service desk functionality can be an easy first step.

Businesses need to ensure that their employees can carry out their jobs efficiently, with the tools and support that they need. The right solution will have the capacity to handle the number of queries you are likely to get, be flexible enough to cope with unexpected demands and will give your employees the right level of support.
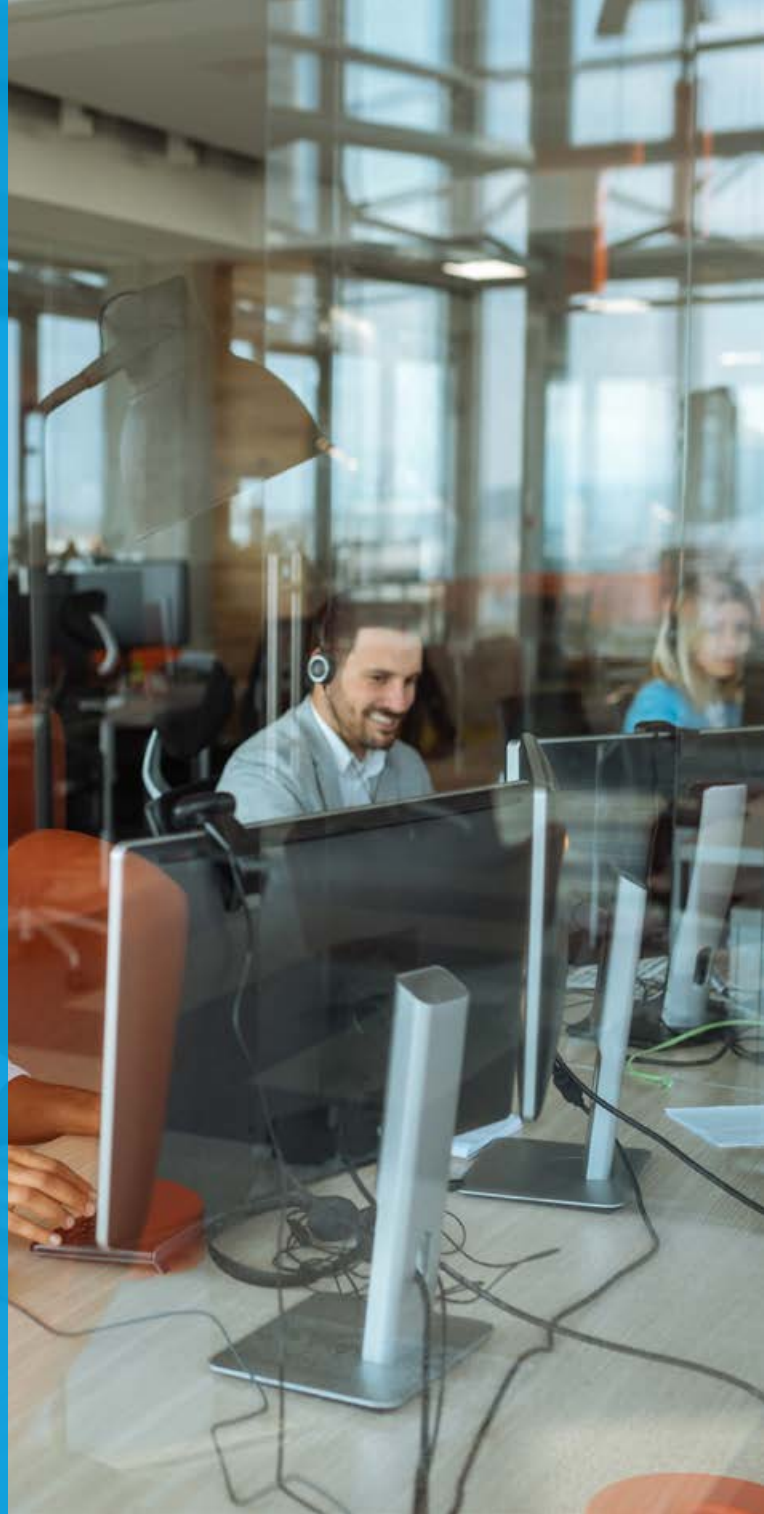
In this practical guide to implementing a next-generation service desk we'll look at:

trends in outsourcing

finding the right approach to outsourcing your service desk

implementing an outsourced service desk quickly and simply

why an outsourced service desk is a good option for business

TRENDS IN OUTSOURCING

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Trend 1: Nearshoring

Nearshoring is becoming more popular than far-shore outsourcing. We're seeing a dismantling of Indian outsourcing centres and a move towards nearshore options.

By opting for nearshore providers, businesses benefit from having a service desk provider in the same (or similar) time zones. Localised teams often have a better understanding of local issues and expectations.

Outsourcing is often an intimidating prospect for businesses to consider. It's an option that will only become more daunting as the technology businesses use becomes more complex.

Artificial intelligence and automated technology are both areas where businesses are starting to invest more money. They need an outsourcing provider

that they can develop a good working relationship with to help them manage their services.

Nearshore options can improve operating efficiency and increase the speed of time-to-market for new products and services. It's also better for GDPR compliance, as it's generally easier for a business to comply when it stores and processes data within the EU.

Trend 2: In-house vs outsourced

Outsourcing is increasing in popularity, especially when it comes to collaborative partnerships.

One study of UK businesses found that **27%** were planning to outsource more services, with the primary reasons for outsourcing being to reduce costs (**68%**) and to increase their access to resources (**57%**).

Businesses can't be expected to do everything in-house, but there can be uncertainty about outsourcing various functions such as data processing and storage (by, for example, switching from in-house servers to a private cloud service provider that lets employees access data on the move).

Some larger businesses try to run their own service desk, but can struggle with the shortage of resources and expertise available on the market. Outsourcing the service desk allows businesses to benefit from a wider range of expertise and experience, and provides a good introduction to the outsourcing process. This outsourcing works best when client and provider work in partnership. Both parties should provide clear, frequent communication, and the client should share its goals with its outsourced service provider.

Trend 3: An IT skills shortage?

There's much discussion about the shortage of skills in the IT sector. But it is possible for very large businesses to build teams with the right IT knowledge and certifications. However, it is not just IT skills that these teams need. Global businesses that need to provide support to multiple locations can run into problems when their own IT teams have problems communicating with employees in their native language; and it can be problematic to have the right skills in every time zone.

We're seeing more businesses look to outsource their service desk provision so that they have 24/7 expert advice and advisors who are fluent in the local language. While employees can be trained to provide certain service desk services, those without the appropriate language skills will hamper service desk delivery.

It's still important for businesses to have service desk capability in-house, but there's an increasing need to use outsourced specialists to deliver services to local teams.

Trend 4: Increased demand for outsourcing

Demand for outsourcing will increase as businesses adopt new technology (for example, outsourcing in EMEA increased by 41% in 2017-18 alone).

Businesses that choose not to outsource will find that their competitors – who have access to the resources and processing power that external partners can provide – have the edge over them when it comes to both business efficiency and the delivery of superior services.

Trend 5: Automation will lead to the decline of large-scale outsource operations

There was a time when any discussion of outsourcing would focus on India, but India (and other large outsourcers like China) has seen its outsourcing industry decline in recent years, thanks in part, to automation.

According to Gartner, if outsourcing service providers want to survive, they will need to restructure their services to address automation.

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Intelligent automation will alter the provision of managed workplace services over the next few years, increasing service quality at a lower price. Sourcing and vendor management leaders must prepare to restructure these services and renegotiate contracts to leverage intelligent automation."

**– DD Mishra,
research director at Gartner**

As a result, we're likely to see a shift away from large-scale outsource operations to smaller, more specialised, service providers.

FINDING THE RIGHT APPROACH TO OUTSOURCING FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Why do businesses choose to outsource?

Outsourcing services can be an intimidating concept; however, businesses can benefit from working with experienced engineers when it comes to managing their IT systems. These specialists can guarantee continuity of IT services, allowing the business to focus more time and resources on its core purpose.

External specialists can also act as advisors, guiding the business when it makes decisions about what technology to introduce and when. Suppliers like Comarch have experience that stretches across continents and over many years; they can often provide fresh ideas and new perspective on problems and key decisions.

Outsourcing the service desk function can be surprisingly simple and risk-free. So, it makes an excellent place to start for businesses considering outsourcing multiple functions.

But why do businesses need to outsource anyway?

Access to the right skills and specialisms

Sometimes it's a matter of specialism and understanding the fact that the business cannot do everything itself without something suffering negative consequences. Does the business spend a lot of time and money training employees in deep knowledge of service desk support, or does it pay a supplier to provide people who are already trained? If the trained employee leaves, the business is left with the prospect of further training expenses, but by working with a service desk provider, they can guarantee that there will always be trained people available to help.

Access to a global team with the right language skills

It's also difficult to recruit people with the right language skills to manage a global service desk. Clear communication is essential to the efficient work of service desk operations. If employees can't get their support team to understand what's wrong, it takes more time away from their work and leaves them frustrated.

Creating efficiencies in the business

While businesses always need some people in the IT team skilled and experienced enough to work with external service desk providers, by outsourcing the bulk of the service desk work, businesses can reduce operating costs and free members of its IT team to focus on areas that generate profit for the business.

There are good reasons to outsource some business functions. Outsourcing the service desk is a great place to start because it's such a simple process – especially when you work with a service provider who will guide you through the set-up process.

Approach to outsourcing your Service Desk

While outsourcing service desk capabilities can be an easy process, there are three main objectives that businesses must consider when selecting the right service desk provider.

Defining the service desk

The service desk exists to deal with IT issues that employees encounter and also provides strategic support across a range of IT capabilities. For example, while businesses may use the service desk to field IT issues reported by employees, it may also task the service desk team with managing access rights and bandwidth management.

Why it's important

The service desk's role is to ensure that employees get the help or support they need when they need it. Any delay in providing support can cost the business time and money. For example, if an employee can't access software essential for their job, or it takes a week to set a new starter up with their computer and network access, the business loses money. A good service desk provider can ensure an efficient service for businesses, limiting lost productivity and supporting a robust IT network.

Objective 1: Look for the supplier that has a proven record of increasing business efficiency

When employees have a problem with the technology they rely on to do their jobs they expect a rapid resolution. When this problem prevents them from completing their work, it becomes even more urgent to resolve.

Comarch works with clients to implement solutions that make the business more efficient. For example, it automates the ticketing tool to cut down the time between the employee submitting their problem and that issue getting tracked in the system.

It's also important to work with a provider that has extensive experience in outsourcing services and quick process implementation. Some providers can take years to get their systems set up and running

efficiently. Comarch's service desk set up process is quick and efficient.

Objective 2: Find a supplier that will work with and support your team

Businesses need a Service Desk provider that provides a team of people who are responsible for the process of moving to the new Service Desk solution. The business should also have a team dedicated migration. They both need to communicate clearly with each other.
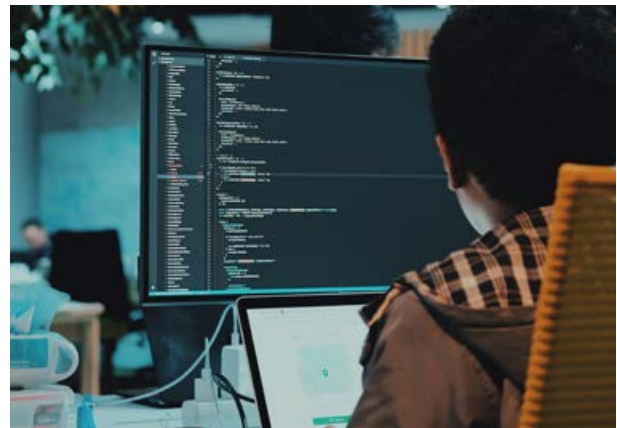
The set-up process needs to be transparent, with no hidden costs. The UK government's transparency in outsourcing roadmap is expected to lead to greater transparency in its own outsourcing processes (which totals £187 million per annum), but this roadmap will also lead to improved standards and expectations in the private sector.

The service desk provider selected by the business must practice transparency by design; providing a clear contract and SLA from the outset.

Objective 3: Establish clear processes

Establish clear responsibilities from the outset. The service desk will provide first line support, but who will deliver second and third line support? Is this something that teams within the business will deliver or does this also need to be outsourced to the service desk provider?

HOW TO ESTABLISH AND MANAGE AN OUTSOURCED SERVICE DESK

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Provide reliable support → **Offer cross-device support** → **Have a team of specialists with a professional attitude** → **Provide a localised service** → **Have a strong service level agreement**

1. Provide reliable support

Employees need access to a dependable Service Desk team that can resolve their issues quickly and efficiently regardless of the time or the employee's location. Every minute the employee has to wait for a solution is an extra cost to the business and added frustration for the employee who sees themselves getting further behind with their work.

Businesses and their employees need to be able to trust that their service desk supplier will be there to support them when the unexpected happens. This is why Comarch provides its clients with three crucial elements: a single point of contact, a support team with high-level technological capabilities, and 24/7 access to this team.

2. Offer cross-device support

The service desk solution should also provide support across various devices, allowing employees to contact the service desk team from the most convenient and relevant device. Of course employees should also be able to get through to a member of the support staff easily across these multiple channels.

This is why Comarch operates a multichannel service desk with automatic queues that support the phone, email and a dedicated ticketing system.

3. Have a team of specialists with a professional attitude

Comarch understands how important it is for service desk specialists to manage their client's problems in a professional, efficient and friendly way. Negative attitudes can lead to a poor client experience and make people reluctant to ask for the support they need to do their work which could cost the business more money in unnecessary delays.

4. Provide a localised service

Service desk solutions are best delivered by local teams - people who speak the native language of the business and understand the unique pressures and demands that the business may be facing.

Comarch's Service Desk solution is available in multiple languages, including: English, German, French, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Russian and Slovak. Comarch can run the service desk in any language that the business requires and works with its clients to discover their specific needs.

5. Have a strong service level agreement

SLA's need to be living documents – something that both parties are fully aware of when they communicate their requirements. When you agree to work with Comarch, the negotiated SLA will specify the quality and availability requirements unique to your business needs and our IT specialists will always have the SLA in mind when working with your business.

COMARCH SERVICE DESK IN ACTION

Comarch's commitments

Benefit from Comarch's modern and efficient service desk solution

Comarch uses technology - like the Jira ticketing system - that's flexible and can be adapted to suit each client's needs.

Comarch's service desk system instantly detects failures, allowing the team to fix issues before they become a problem for the business. Comarch's open-source ticket request system can be tailored to the businesses needs and fully integrated with any existing service desk systems.

Comarch's call center system, the Voxtron Communications Center, is based on modular architecture, allowing Comarch to adapt it to each client's specifications. It supports routing of multiple forms of inbound and outbound communication (such as calls, emails and social media), while the enterprise-wide reporting allows businesses to identify key figures in their daily operations.
While Comarch usually provides its Service Desk services based on JIRA and Voxtron, it can work with the client's existing tools (such as ServiceNow and OTRS). Comarch's priority is creating a service that is flexible enough to fit its client's unique requirements.

Access an expert team any time, any place

Comarch's specialists are available 24/7/365. The service desk solution constantly monitors the businesses IT environment, processes and requests.

Comarch's skilled professionals provide excellent

support to clients across Europe. Local teams work with businesses and their employees to ensure that the right kind of support is in place to support their business needs.

The service desk system registers all activities in a transparent reporting system so the business can see which processes needed attention and when, as well as what was done to remedy the problem.

Comarch's service desk leads to increased efficiency

Comarch adopted the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) approach to its service desk provision because it believes in the importance of the service desk aligning to the client's business requirements.

The main goal of a service desk provider should always be to help its clients meet their business goals. The ITIL approach means that Comarch provides a central point of contact for client queries and general IT service-related provision. Our aim is to reduce the number of calls employees need to make and accelerate the resolution of each ticket raised.

Comarch's commitment to providing the latest service desk technology

Businesses that maintain and manage their entire service desk provision internally face a significant cost when looking to upgrade their system. Comarch is committed to providing its clients with the latest service desk technology as a part of its partnership with the business.

How Comarch has put these promises into action

Valeo Group

Valeo is an international group specialising in the design, production and sale of vehicle parts and systems for the automotive industry. It employs almost **83,000** people across **30** countries and lists businesses such as **Renault**, **Fiat** and **BMW** as its partners.

Comarch works with Valeo Group across **26** locations, servicing **10,000** end-users globally. It supports Valeo with **600** servers and **60** specialists in various fields.

With such a big operation the telecommunications and server infrastructure is vital to the efficiency of daily operations.

Valeo Germany had its own IT infrastructure department which managed its systems, but seeking to improve its services further, Valeo decided to find an external partner for IT outsourcing and end-user support. After having a poor experience with a supplier Valeo Group started working with Comarch in 2011 (in the case of Valeo Poland and Valeo Slovakia). Norway, The Netherlands and Germany signed contracts with Comarch in 2013.

Comarch provides centralised service desk services in German and English, offering full **24/7** monitoring and local support from its team of highly skilled engineers. Comarch's work with Valeo in Poland, The Netherlands and Norway gave it unique insight into the businesses goals and expectations.

Working together, Comarch and Valeo made a detailed plan of the transition from its old outsourcing company, mitigating the risk of switching and enabling a seamless transfer of responsibilities.

Comarch provides Valeo with a central service desk with a single point of contact, a fixed service cost (with a monthly fee clearly established in the initial agreement) and a guarantee of continuous operation. Comarch provides the support of experienced and certified engineers who help maintain the high quality of business processes and work to optimise operational costs.

How Comarch has put these promises into action

The European Southern Observatory

The European Southern Observatory (ESO) is a leading intergovernmental astronomical association based in Europe and is home to the most effective astronomical observatory in the world. The ESO provides astronomers with state-of-the-art research equipment. It employs more than **700** people in **Germany** and **Chile**, with its headquarters (based in Germany) housing the scientific, technical and administrative divisions of the organisation.

ESO's German and Chilean operations had sourced IT support from a mixture of outsourcing and body-leasing. Projects were paid for on a per-project basis; however the organisation decided to switch to a service-based model with a well-defined scope of services and SLA. This way the ESO could be sure to receive on-going monitoring and support services from experienced engineers and the organisation would have more predictable costs.

Comarch submitted a tender to become the ESO's service provider and it was recognised as fulfilling the technical requirements and providing the most attractive fees. After the agreement was signed in May 2015, Comarch began a three-month phase-in process in from July to October. The scope of services provided covered service desk support but also incorporated other outsourced services – such as the administration of the telecommunications infrastructure and server infrastructure administration.

The phase-in period aimed to familiarise Comarch with the ESO's infrastructure and internal processes, perform on-site audits and build the right team to support the client. Once work was underway, Comarch provided a team of experienced engineers that worked on-site for ESO Chile and a team that worked both on-site and remotely for ESO Germany.

SUMMARY: WHY YOU SHOULD OUTSOURCE YOUR SERVICE DESK

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An outsourced service desk provides your business with a single point of contact for end users, all centralised and delivered from Poland (Krakow) - shared resources, tools and agents - or provide locally in customers' locations.

The local service desk teams are located close to your regional offices or can work in your offices with your employees.

Comarch's service desk solution increases business efficiency at a fair price for the business. The monthly service cost gives your business a clear, predictable cost for its service desk support.

Comarch's specialists offer tailored support to your teams.

Outsourcing the service desk is an easy first step into outsourcing for businesses keen to increase their use of external specialists and remain competitive.

COMARCH

ABOUT COMARCH

Founded in 1993, Comarch is a global manufacturer and supplier of IT solutions, and has been listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange since 1999. Comarch carries out projects for leading global brands in important sectors including telecommunications, finance, banking, insurance, trade and services, infrastructure, public administration, industry, health care and small and medium-sized enterprises. Thousands of global brands in over 60 countries on 6 continents have used Comarch services, including: London Heathrow Airport, Thomas Cook Group Plc, BP, Telefónica, Carrefour, Heineken, Goodyear, Pepsi, Vodafone, T-Mobile, E-Plus, KPN or MTS, BNP Paribas Fortis, Allianz, Aviva, AXA, BZ WBK (Santander Group), CitiFinancial (Citigroup), Delta Lloyd Life, Deutsche Bank PBC and ING Insurance.

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