Designing An ITIL Service Desk

To remain competitive in the global economy, many organizations are undertaking business re-engineering projects -- where departments and jobs are redesigned to increase efficiency and reduce costs. As a result, many IT organizations are seeking to restructure their Service Desk and are wondering how to reconfigure it to best meet IT and business objectives.

To determine the best structure for an organization, it is important to consider a number of key issues. ITIL’s Service Support book lists a number of elements to take into consideration -- summarized here:

- The size and nature of the business
- Business objectives and deliverables
- Budgeting, costing and charge back mechanisms
- Quality of management information required
- The current organizational structure
- Range, number and type of applications that require support
- User and support staff skill levels
- Current incident volumes

Service Support also describes several types of support structures as well as their advantages and disadvantages -- information IT professionals can use to determine which configuration works best for their organization. The book identifies three in particular: local, central and virtual. Here’s a quick overview:

Local Service Desk

This structure features a Service Desk located at each business office or facility around the world. Here’s an example of this structure -- as featured in Service Support:

![Local Service Desk Diagram]

According to Service Support, this design is quite practical until multiple locations require support. Then, it becomes expensive to maintain duplicate resources, skills, technology, and physical structures.
Central Service Desk

A Central Service Desk features one physical location that records and resolves incidents for a number of business sites -- whether these sites are located in the same building, region, country or continent. Each Service Desk has its own phone number or e-mail address.

A centralized format offers numerous business benefits, including:

- Reduced operational costs. That's because less IT resources are required to provide support
- Management is consolidated, therefore reducing overhead costs

Service Support provides an example of the configuration:
Virtual Service Desk

This format provides a single point of contact for every user in the entire organization -- regardless of location. That means all users contact the Service Desk via a single phone number, e-mail address or website.

When the user contacts the Service Desk, his/her inquiry is routed to the physical structure currently accepting calls. For example, imagine calling an airline for a plane ticket using a 1-800 number. The call is answered by a customer service person that assists with a reservation. The client is unaware that the call was routed to the service center currently available -- whether it’s in Africa, Europe or North America.

Here’s an example of this structure:

This structure offers the same benefits as the Central Service Desk, plus numerous others. For example, with a Virtual Service Desk there is a seamless transition between support desks. That means when one Service Desk is busy or not in service, calls are automatically routed to another available desk.

Redesigning the Service Desk can sometimes seem like a challenge; however, with the proper tools -- such as ITIL’s Service Support book -- IT professionals can face the task head on.
Want To Learn More?

1. Read ITIL's *Service Support* book, which features more than 30 pages about developing a successful Service Desk.
   
   - Attend Pink Elephant’s **ITIL Service Manager Certification Program**, if you’ve already achieved Foundation Level Certification, take another step in your ITIL education journey. The Service Manager program gives you a very in-depth look at the IT service management process model, including comprehensive discussions about the Service Desk and all ten processes, and also reviews of management and quality principles, organization structure and implementation strategies.

   For further information about our courses please call Caroline Wyatt on + 44 (0) 118 965 3415, email **info.emea@pinkelephant.com** or visit our website at www.pinkelephant.com

2. Attend Pink Elephant’s **ITIL Implementation Road Map** at these locations:
   
   - Johannesburg, March 17-18, 2005
   - Copenhagen, March 22-23, 2005

   The program features sessions delivered by Pink’s highly experience consultants about implementing an ITIL Service Desk, define ITIL organization structures and roles, and how to implement ITIL process.

   Click here to view the detailed program: