CASE STUDY

WHERE HELP IS JUST A HI OR AN AI AWAY

How AI-enhanced solutions automated away 41% of the IT helpdesk tickets for one of the world's largest furniture retailers

Abstract

Mikael Mansson, Head of the Global IT Service Desk, at one of the world's largest furniture retailers, had a long list of problems he needed to solve, including its lack of efficiency, self-service options, automation, and metrics visibility. This case details out how he gained all this and more when he called on Infosys BPM for help. His new digital Service Desk — transformed by AI — would go on to deliver a whopping 41% automation of tickets, 23% savings in time to resolve tickets, and a significant 20% improvement in user satisfaction

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When the phone lines get jammed

Mikael Mansson is the Global Service Manager at one of the world's largest furniture retailers. One day, walking across his operations floor, Mikael observed an agent desperately toggling between tools and screens while trying to provide live IT support to the employee on the other end of the phone. This scene played itself out multiple times each day because Mikael's helpdesk, which served employees across over 60 countries worldwide, did not have a centralized knowledge base. The resulting manual toggling and note-taking for ticket descriptions not only prolonged resolution times, but also threw up inconsistent answers.

The problem was only one in a long list of issues Mikael needed to deal with to ensure consistent service delivery. As the organization had grown rapidly across all regions, the service desk team were quickly overwhelmed by the over 2,000 IT-related service requests coming in each day. Their average time for first response often clocked over 3 hours, while resolution times spanned multiple days for low-priority tickets. Yet, nearly 60% of the helpdesk's tickets related to repetitive, low-value tasks such as password resets, software access, and VPN troubleshooting.

Of late, employees were expressing their frustration with the increasing delays in getting support and the poor quality of solutions provided. Mikael too was dissatisfied with the poor visibility he had into ticket progress and performance, and with the long onboarding times for newly hired agents who had to painstakingly learn the helpdesk's complex, manual processes.

Thinking through the challenges, Mikael realized that the answer to making the overloaded helpdesk operations smoother for both employees and agents would be to automate its Tier 1 IT support interactions. Real-time automated support would not only reduce the need for employees to connect with agents, but also improve employee satisfaction through providing 24/7 self-service capabilities.

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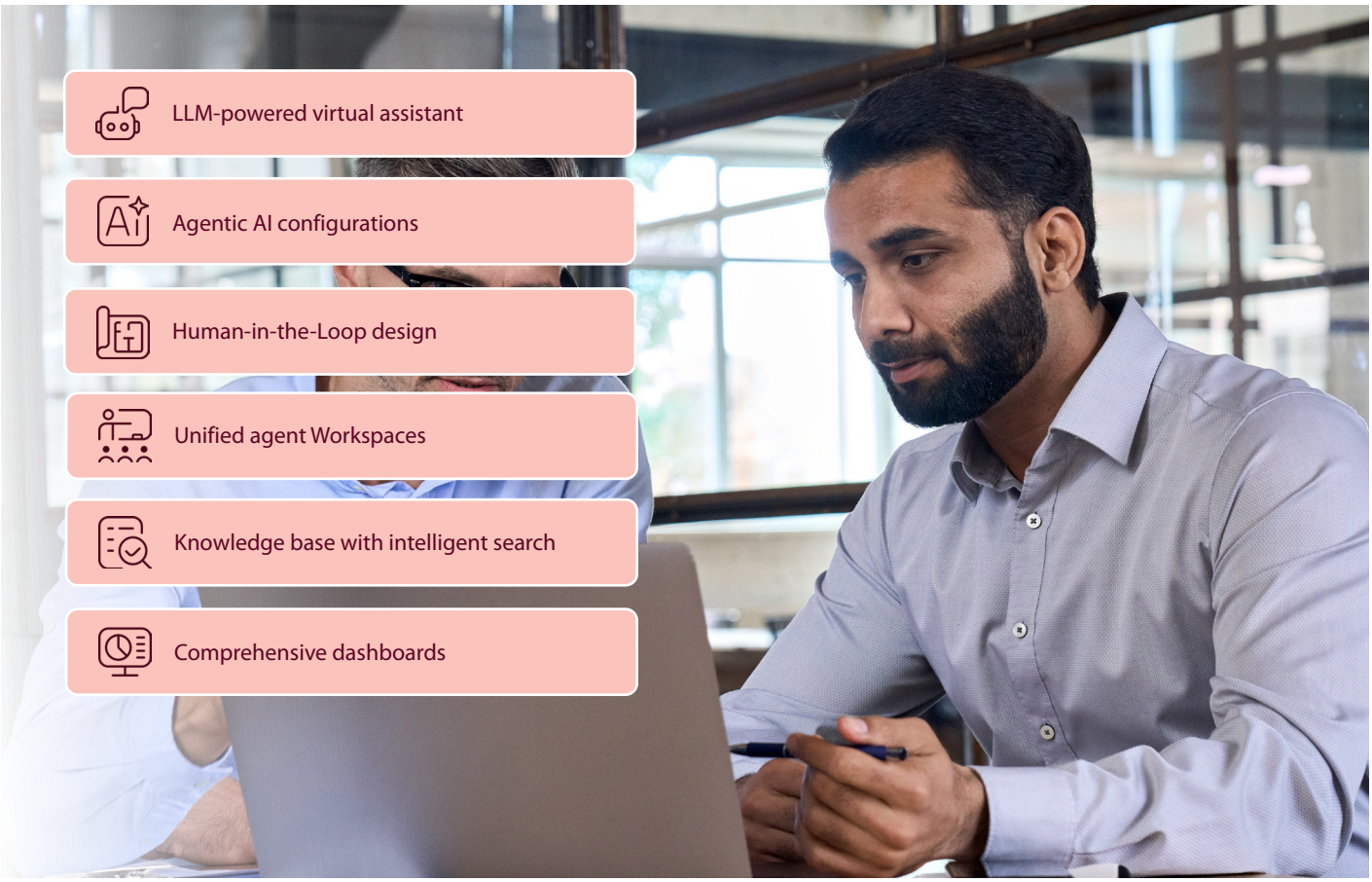
Calling for outside help

The path forward now clear, Mikael moved quickly. In 2024, he brought in Infosys BPM as a strategic partner to help him automate and transform the helpdesk's legacy processes. The Infosys BPM team headed by digital transformation expert Rajesh Vyas was soon on board and aligned with Mikael's vision.

Rajesh and his team first studied the Service Desk's processes in depth and found an alarming lack of standardization across regions. Also, the entire helpdesk setup was completely manual with neither automation nor self-service options. The need for transformation to digital was obvious and Rajesh set his team on the job.

Approach summary



Their first order of business was to deploy Now Assist, ServiceNow's AI-powered assistant, which would enable users to troubleshoot first level issues themselves. Among the first teams to explore Service Now's Now Assist capabilities, Rajesh's team was quick to learn and implement. They first configured prompts with few short learnings for the virtual assistant on ITSM topics such as password reset, email setup, and software requests, also enabling it to automatically create incidents when needed. Then they configured Now Assist to use AI agents so that it could move beyond Q&A and static flows to understand user goals and not merely intents. Thus, the assistant could make decisions autonomously based on the user's context and service desk policies. It could also collaborate with backend systems like Microsoft's Active Directory and System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) to execute actions like account unlocking or software installations on its own.

The team's solution was constructed to include a Human-in-the-Loop design, with the assistant escalating to a human agent only when necessary, ensuring when doing so to also transfer the full conversation context. Rajesh then fed in curated agent responses back into the system, which ensured smooth escalation and training of the Agentic AI model. Shortly thereafter, he rolled out the virtual assistant across the company's helpdesk portals for end users to use.

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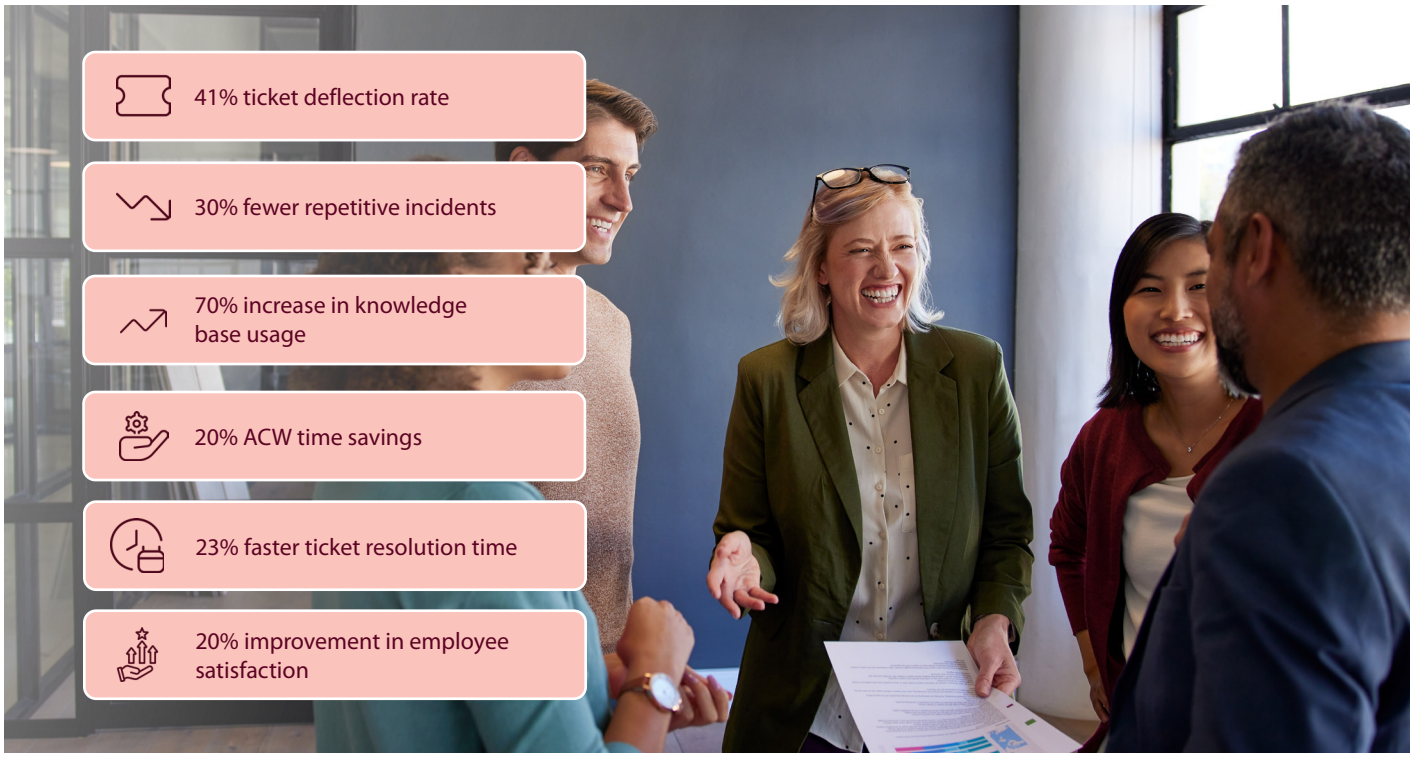
Then, for the live agents on the operations floor, Rajesh directed his team to implement ServiceNow's Agent Workspace. It unified agents' multiple interfaces which they had to earlier constantly keep toggling between, bringing together all in one place the needed information on employees, their tickets, chats, emails, and collaboration tools. The team also implemented a knowledge base which could be accessed from within the Workspaces. It featured an intelligent AI search function to help agents find the right answers in real time for faster assistance of users, and they could also easily update older articles or create new ones. Further, the Workspace platform featured agent persona packed with new AI features like guided workflows for common issues which could automatically generate case summaries from chat and notes, saving agents' time. Finally, Rajesh and his team built dashboards for Mikael, giving him comprehensive views on live SLAs, ticket progressions, and agent performance metrics.

Ending the calls with wide smiles

In the end, Mikael was amazed at how quickly and seamlessly the Infosys BPM team accomplished the massive transformation. Due credit went to Rajesh, who being a veteran of many similar transformation projects had anticipated that the organization's security approvals and worker-council approvals could take longer than expected, causing critical delays to his overall roll-out plan. So, he had kicked off these activities well beforehand, saving both himself and Mikael a lot of heartburn. He had also proactively engaged with Mikael to replace some of his early proposed transformation solutions with Now Assist functionalities, as and when ServiceNow upgraded their AI model's capabilities.

Key benefits



But what impressed Mikael the most was the new-found effectiveness and efficiency of his transformed service desk operations. Based on the transformed metrics, he could now anticipate that 41% of tickets would be automated away by the assistant deflecting them from human agents, who along with the anticipated 30% fewer repetitive incidents would realize a dramatic reduction in their workloads. The new Workspaces further simplified their handling of the remaining tickets, causing a massive 70% increase in the agents' usage of the knowledge base due to its now increased relevance. Thus, productivity soared with the agents saving close to 20% of their time spent earlier on after call work (ACW) – tasks that they had to complete immediately after a call with a helpdesk user. Unsurprisingly then, with the metrics trending towards a 23% faster ticket resolution time (MTTR), employee satisfaction too resultantly improved by 20%

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These greatly improved levels of effort and service quality made both Mikael's agents as well as the helpdesk's users happier than ever before. Ultimately, the organization would reap the benefits of the transformation, for the happy employees would inevitably serve the retailer's end-customers better.

**Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the people involved.*

For more information, contact infosysbpm@infosys.com

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