



Customer Insights

*A continuing series in which customers discuss their experiences
with CareTech Solutions' products and services*

Using Help Desk Metrics to Assess and Improve Customer Satisfaction

Bruce Kelly, CIO

Mercy Memorial Hospital System
Monroe, Michigan

“To really succeed on a major project you have to have a buy-in from the end users - and the foundation for getting them to buy in, is the Service Desk.”

Bruce Kelly, CIO
Mercy Memorial
Hospital System

“Our vision statement is to provide outstanding healthcare services, which is passed on to everybody ...and CareTech is all about helping extraordinary people, which they hire to do extraordinary things.”

Bruce Kelly

Our Valued Customer

Located between Detroit and Toledo, Mercy Memorial Hospital (MMH) is the only hospital in Monroe county. A classic community hospital, it is licensed for 238 beds, with 9,500 admissions, 45,000 E/R visits, 180,000 O/P visits and 800 births annually.

Challenges of a Changing Environment

Toward the end of 2008, MMH was finalizing a senior management turnover, including a new CIO. The new CIO's first project was to bring IT in-house in a very short time period, hire a staff, build a data center and take over the support for almost 150 applications that were up and running.

MMH recognized that the world of user support was rapidly changing, becoming more complex and demanding due to developments like clinicians using the systems directly, dedicated 24/7 requirements and CPOE. They decided to go with CareTech Solutions to provide the hospital help desk, MMH's direct support line for end users.

Getting a Handle on Performance

Hospital leadership came to believe that if you can understand the problems that users are experiencing, then those problems can be addressed - and resolved. An integral part of that is finding out whether users are getting the help they need and expect from the help desk, but it was clear that previous methods of measuring performance - like surveys - were not working.

Instead, MMH found robust help desk ticketing software, such as Remedy, was necessary to capture traffic and report on user satisfaction with the Service Desk.

Three Key Metrics

Mercy Memorial settled on three key metrics as indicators of customer satisfaction:

- **Time to answer**
Reports show that callers tend to give up after a minute (10 rings); these callers are clearly not satisfied. CareTech and MMH are constantly striving to reduce wait time and have, for the most part, succeeded in reaching this goal.
- **Call duration**
A 5-minute limit is optimal. This is a consistent metric that must be constantly watched. Other industries seem to be more patient, but healthcare clinicians, especially doctors and nurses, want answers immediately. Through training, a deep knowledge base, and on-going, continuous improvement, CareTech has been able to hold most calls to this limit..
- **Resolution of call**
The goal is always that 100% of Tier 1 calls (basic support) be resolved on the first call. MMH is currently running at 98%, which contributes to high levels of end-user satisfaction.

Closing the Loop

When a Service Desk ticket is resolved, an email goes to the end user. If the person is satisfied, they can ignore it and allow it to automatically close. Or, if they are not satisfied, they can click a button to re-open the ticket, which is then tracked, triggering an effort to “close the loop” between the analysts and the end user.

Communication with the end user now becomes imperative; every hospital department meeting stresses the goal of 100% customer satisfaction. Primary questions for the end users are: “Did I solve your problem?” “Is there any other problem you're having that I

A Final Word

“CareTech has the tools in place, they know how to do this and they can deal with multiple calls coming in that I would struggle with, so I see this as long-term.”

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can address while I've got you on the phone?” “Are you satisfied – and are you going to give me a 5 on the survey?” With this method Mercy Memorial has stayed consistent. Only about 0.5% of monthly tickets are re-opened – with 99.5% solved correctly.

An Added Dimension

In addition to the metrics, a report is produced every month that gives an added dimension to the data already gathered. One such report is the “Top 25 Categories of Problems” called in to the Service Desk, which has proven to be extremely valuable for training, education and process improvement. Some typical examples of common problems:

- **Printers** – consistently near the top of the list, but now moving down as the IT department uses this data to get in front of regular issues such as replacing ink cartridges.
- **Passwords** – resets, forgotten passwords and unnecessary duplication/complexity; issues are being minimized and LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) security-compliant.
- **Account locked** – a continuing problem, but quickly handled by Tier 1 analysts.

Satisfy the Staff, Satisfy the Patients

The metrics derived from the Service Desk are, after all, only tools to increase customer satisfaction. The overall philosophy of Mercy Memorial Hospital is that if they can satisfy the staff through the Service Desk, the staff will be happier, be able to do their jobs better and in turn, satisfy the patients.

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