



## Microsoft IT Integrated Lync with IT Global Helpdesk

Microsoft Information Technology (Microsoft IT) is working with the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk to create a powerful support solution that integrates the IT Support systems with the capabilities of Microsoft Lync. This solution reduces costs, increases productivity, and “Gives Time Back” to both technicians and users—improving the overall support experience.

### Situation

The Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk currently receives over 500K calls per year from internal users requesting IT support. To address these requests, Microsoft IT implemented a variety of solutions. As Microsoft has grown, solutions have been added over time but they weren't fully connected. For internal users and Support Technicians, this meant that resolving IT issues could be inefficient. Microsoft IT saw an opportunity to leverage Microsoft technologies to improve IT support.

### Solution

Microsoft IT developed an integrated IT support solution using Microsoft Lync, improving the overall support experience. Lync is available on all network-connected desktops and is “always on”. Leveraging Lync's native capabilities, Microsoft IT built an easy-to-navigate User Interface (UI) to replace the interactive voice response (IVR). Users can read helpful self-service articles, access resources, and—if necessary—contact the IT Service Desk, all within the solution UI. As part of this solution, an Agent Portal provides Support Technicians with faster access to support tools and visibility to relevant user information for every call or service request.

### Benefits

- Increased productivity for employees and service suppliers
- Improved service and increased support capacity
- Direct reduction in corporate support and service costs
- Improved communication and internal customer service
- Improved overall user and technician experience

### Products and Technology

- Microsoft Lync Server 2013
- Microsoft Lync 2013 Software Deployment Kit (SDK)
- Microsoft Unified Communications Managed API (UCMA) 4.0 SDK
- Internet Information Services (IIS) for Windows Server
- Microsoft Silverlight
- Microsoft SQL Server 2012
- Microsoft Lync Client

## Introduction

Microsoft Lync is a comprehensive communication platform connecting employees across organizational and geographical barriers. The Lync platform can be extended to vendors, partners, and customers. Lync is also a key component of Microsoft's Enterprise Social Experience that focuses on the value of merging social technology with business tools and processes.

With social technologies, such as Lync, collaboration and productivity increase (in some cases, productivity improves by 20 to 25 percent). Lync allows teams to see and work on projects simultaneously. Users can discuss ideas, respond to opportunities, and make important business decisions almost instantly with presence, chat, phone, and sharing capabilities.

Because Lync is deployed throughout Microsoft and available on every network-connected desktop and is "always on," Lync also presents an opportunity to develop solutions addressing broader business challenges and improving operational systems within the enterprise.

Microsoft IT recognized this opportunity. And by combining the native capabilities of Lync with additional Microsoft technologies, they have been able to make IT Support services more efficient and easier to use. This, in turn, reduces corporate support costs and gives time back to employees and service providers.

## Situation

A thriving enterprise dedicates valuable resources to supporting corporate infrastructure and internal systems. Whether the situation involves Human Resources and payroll, facilities and building management, administration, or Information Technology (IT), it's critical that employees get the support they need. As the enterprise grows, the need for support may increase. To meet the support demand, it's common to layer additional processes on top of existing infrastructure. This effort—if not planned carefully—can increase support wait times and/or the perceived level of difficulty to access support resources. Complexity and frustration with support systems can lead to increased costs, missed opportunities, and lost time.

For Microsoft, these same challenges exist. Microsoft is a growing enterprise with over 100,000 employees, and the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk currently receives over 500,000 calls per year from internal users requesting assistance with IT issues.

In order to manage and respond to these requests, the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk has evolved into a single point of contact Service Desk that provides a variety of support resources and tools to assist users with IT Issues:

- FAQs and Known Issue articles published to the IT Support Portal for self-service support
- Legacy Portal to start the support engagement via chat or direct to a ticket
- Direct-dial Assisted Support (phone number and location-specific International Dialing Code lookup required)
- Local Field IT Managers (Support is possibly location specific. Incident response can be influenced by experience, training, or current communication channels as well as timely access to shared information.)

Microsoft's IT support resources were not directly connected, and each resource might apply only to a specific set of issues or user questions. Navigating through the tools and exploring available options to determine the best way to resolve an issue was often confusing and time consuming for both internal users and IT Support Technicians.

## An example of one user's support experience:

John is a Microsoft consultant who has a home office in Switzerland and often travels for work. This week, John is working in Belgium. John is experiencing an issue with Outlook and must resolve it as soon as possible. To get help with his IT issue, John may have to navigate a support path with multiple steps:

John visits the IT support portal to search for and read self-help resources.



If self-help doesn't solve the issue, John must navigate to the ticketing portal. The ticket options may not fit the issue or it's more complex than the symptoms listed. John finds he'll need to call support.



Now, John must go back to the first portal to look up the phone number and international dialing code, make the call, navigate the Interactive Voice Response (IVR), and select the IT support queue that can help with the issue.



When the technician answers, John has to start over and explain the issue to the technician who has no context. This loses more time for John and the technician who answers the call.



Microsoft IT learned that users spent an average of 63 seconds navigating the IVR before they were able to get to a support queue. Sixty-three seconds may not seem like much time lost. However, when multiplied by over 500,000 calls per year—the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk call volume—the loss of time and productivity to the enterprise is substantial—a potential loss of 364 full days per year.

## Support Technician Experience

For a Support Technician, the experience could be equally challenging.

- **Managing customer frustration:** An IT Support Technician's success is measured by how quickly and effectively they respond to and resolve each request. They can be faced with frustrated users. And to resolve the request, the technician must cut through that frustration to gather complete and accurate information about the issue (potentially requiring the user to repeat information they previously entered into the system).
- **Lack of tool integration:** Because IT support tools were not integrated, the technician sometimes needed to access multiple tools and to launch various applications to resolve the issue. Example: A pure Lync environment didn't exist within the IT Service Desk, so phone support and Lync were not completely integrated. A technician sometimes answered calls via the telephone and then sometimes had to switch to Lync to contact the user and complete the call. This created a work-around that added time to the interaction without necessarily adding value.

Looking at each of these issues, Microsoft IT determined that there was a valuable opportunity to leverage existing technology to improve the end-to-end support process through development of a new support solution.

## Solution

To create the solution, Microsoft IT evaluated many different business factors including: cost, effort, and risk.

### Cost

- Investing resources in developing and implementing a new support solution need to include direct and indirect costs. How is the return on that investment (the ROI) measured to ensure that the investment is worth it?

### Effort

- To create an implementation plan that didn't disrupt key day-to-day functions.
- To evaluate tools and technology and to design a solution that answered current and future support requirements.
- To shift Support Technicians to a new support paradigm (often the toughest audience if they don't quickly see the WIIFM-the "What's in it for me!" benefit)
- To shift users to a new way of engaging with support services. Will it be easy to use and better than before? How will I know?
- To create measurements and tracking mechanisms that align previous support goals with the new solution.

### Risk

- Risk impacts all three key business factors. A new solution may improve the entire support model. However, the new solution can also be perceived as a potential threat.  
  
If legacy systems have been in place for a long time (telephone vs. online services) and they seem to "work just fine!", users and technicians may create work-arounds and roadblocks that may be intentional but most likely unintentionally based on fear of how their department or job functions will be impacted by the new solution.
- Implementation is best made in stages with ongoing measurements to show value and clear communication in order to minimize roadblocks. Without willing participation, the cost and effort of implementation will increase, and the risk to the success of the solution will grow.

Although it involves both internal departments and external call center vendors with legacy systems, the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk also offered an established system with clear communication channels; predictable, repeatable processes; and the potential and opportunity for measurable improvement.

### The Hypothesis:

By utilizing Microsoft technologies available within the enterprise and leveraging Lync server technologies and the Lync client that already existed on every user's PC, then by integrating them with IT Support, Microsoft IT could improve the end-to-end support experience.

The goals were straightforward:

- "Give time back" to users, IT Support Technicians, and the enterprise.
- Get users (and Support Technicians) to the right support options and tools as quickly as possible.
- Utilize Microsoft technology and remain Windows version agnostic.
- Leverage "always-on" opportunity within Lync. For users connected to the Microsoft network, Lync is open on every desktop and available 24/7.

To accomplish these goals and to minimize investment costs, risks to success, and effort needed to make this solution successful; Microsoft IT implemented the solution in stages starting with the low-

hanging fruit. They developed a support entry point that was more efficient and effective than the current IVR phone tree.

### First Stage:

Microsoft IT implemented a visual representation of the IVR tree. The team began by leveraging the fact that Lync is always open on employee desktops within Microsoft. Then they enabled a presence within Lync, established a trusted application endpoint, and began hosting a Silverlight application in the Conversation Window Extension (CWE) native to Lync.

By removing the IVR phone tree, Microsoft IT began to “Give Time Back” to users who no longer had to navigate the IVR and activated the ability to seamlessly route users directly into the correct support queue.

As a by-product of leveraging Lync, the need for international dialing codes was eliminated. Users no longer had to search for codes or to remember support numbers ensuring that time to service was faster. The use of Lync also reduced toll-free (1-800) phone service costs.

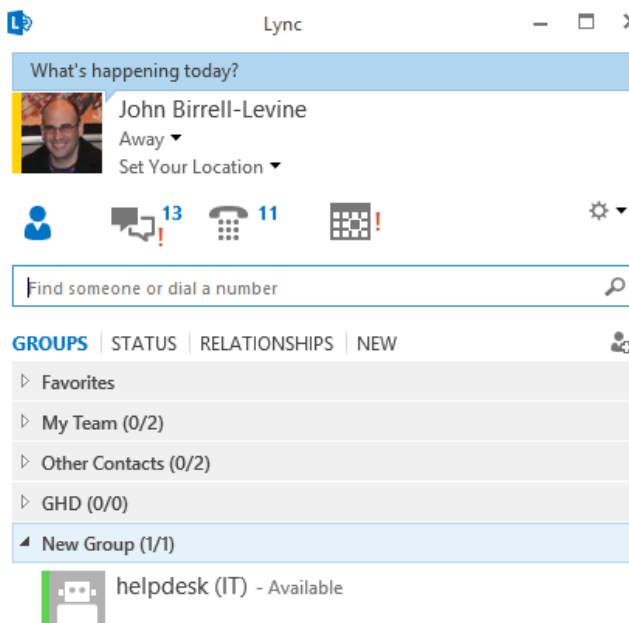
With this success, the team quickly realized that this solution had the potential to do much more.

### Second Stage:

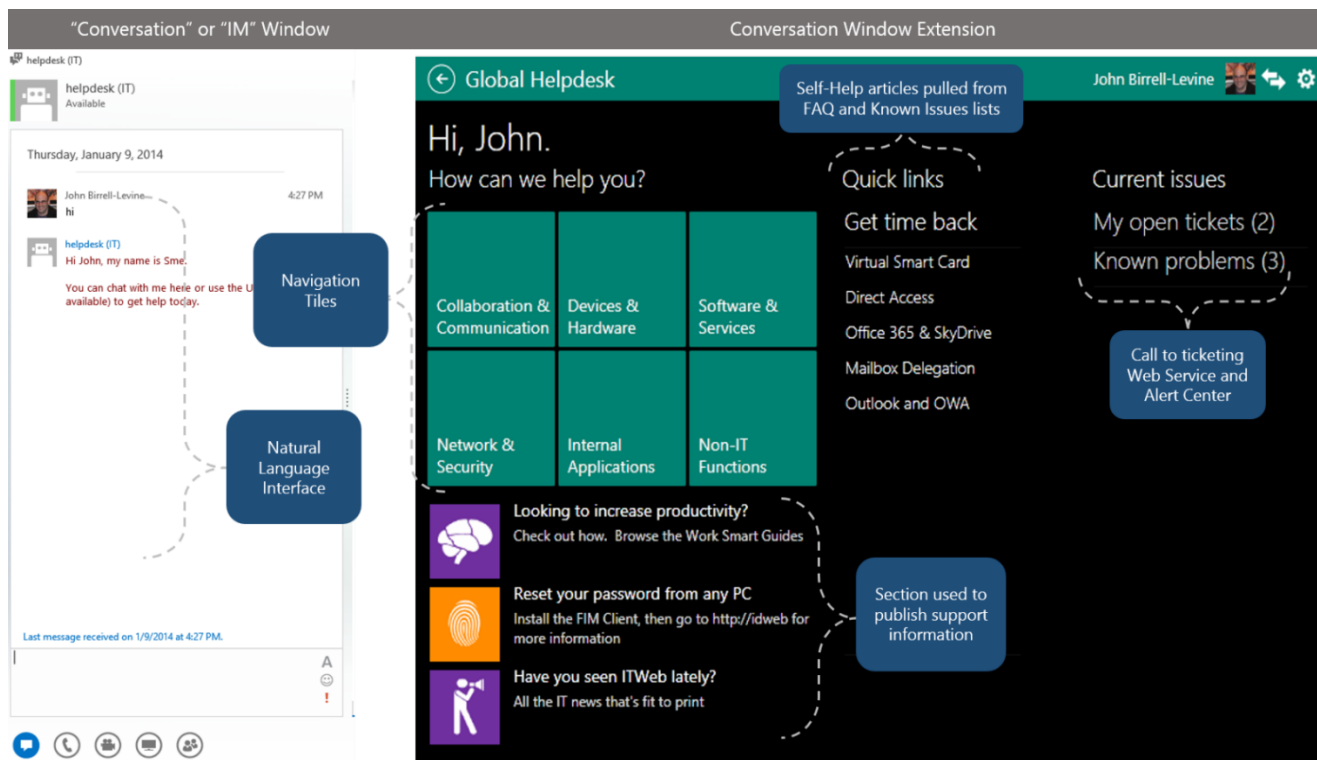
Microsoft IT leveraged SharePoint lists and tied the solution into existing web services for support ticketing. Information relevant to a user’s location and self-service articles were also provided (where applicable) within the CWE, giving users access to resources they needed to save effort and time.

Time was also given back to users when they no longer had to sort through available support channels to determine which support option they needed for the product or application they had questions about.

From the primary Lync window on the desktop, the user locates the helpdesk (IT) contact (the bot). This is the application endpoint mentioned earlier.



A conversation with the helpdesk (IT) contact (the application endpoint) can be started by typing "Hi" into the Lync window, and the Conversation Window Extension (CWE) expands to the right of the screen.



The Conversation Window Extension has four main sections:

- **Navigation tiles:** These allow the user to choose the product they are interested in. This starts at a high level. When a tile is selected, the user can drill down to see additional information about the topic they need help with.
- **Marketing and advertising:** This bottom section provides "For your information" links. Each topic links to an external site where the user can review useful information. Although these topics are important, they may not be directly related to an issue that the user currently has.
- **Get Time Back:** *Get Time Back* self-help articles are mapped to the highest call volume within the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk. As users drill down through the navigation tiles, the *Get Time Back* articles that are available change based on the tile and product selected.
- **Current issues:** The ticketing web service allows the user to view:
  - "My open tickets" When the user clicks on the open ticket they are able to see the status of the ticket, the current queue, and any notes about the issue.
  - "Known Problems" This provides users with information about issues relevant to their geographic location, so they can see the known problems before they call support—deflecting the need to request assistance.

#### Conversation Window Extension example:

A user within Microsoft has an issue with their computer. They start a conversation with the helpdesk (IT) bot within Lync by simply saying "Hi". When the CWE opens, they select a navigation tile such as "Software and Services", and then drill down to the next level where they select the "Operating System" tile. This leads to the next level where the user selects the "Windows 8.1" tile. At each level, the "Get Time Back" article list changes based on the tiles selected. This means that the user is able to find helpful, relevant information easily and quickly.

While navigating the CWE, if the user prefers to interact directly with a Support Technician, the user also can contact the IT Service Desk directly via a "Call us" or "Let's Chat" option.

### Third Stage:

Microsoft IT then learned that they could make the solution even easier to use. They learned that by removing the hierarchical structure of the tiles and allowing cross-topic relationships within the UI, users don't need to try to think about products or applications the way a technician thinks about them.

Additionally, Microsoft IT enabled the ability to have natural language conversations in the IM window. Feedback from users indicated that they wanted that experience. It was familiar, faster, and easier to engage with support within the window if they didn't need to learn a new language.

For scale and ease of administration of the complex relationships between tiles and language and actions, the solution needed a relational database. The solution was moved from SharePoint lists to SQL, which enabled a matrix of mappings. And to build the natural language capabilities, a full text search was enabled in SQL.

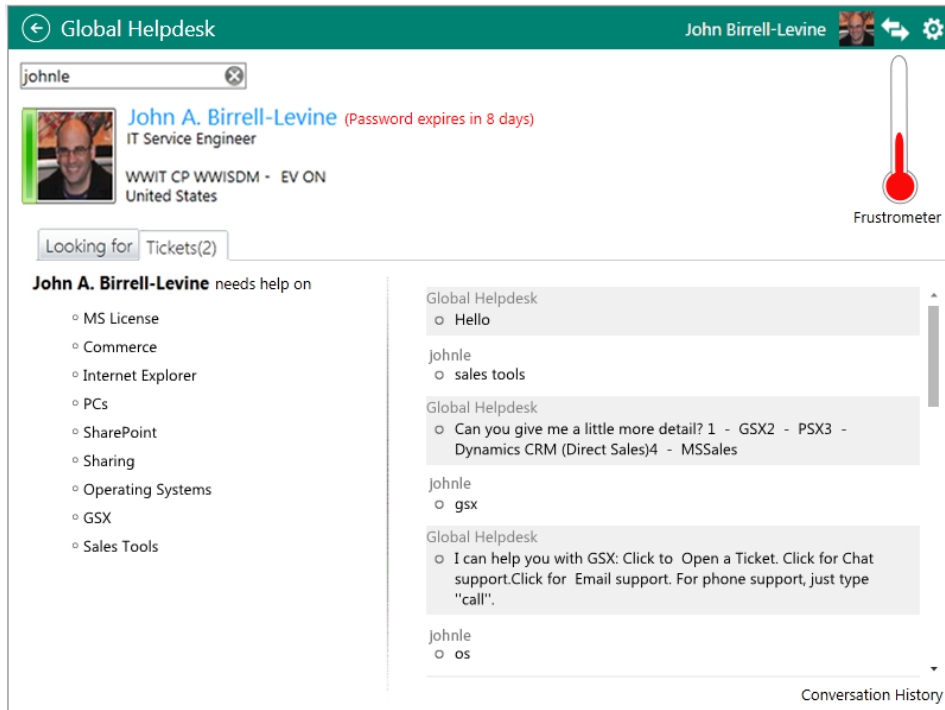
An additional benefit of moving the solution to SQL was that this also provided a database for configuration and analytics.

### Fourth Stage:

Microsoft IT started changing the way support is done. By continually modifying keywords, responses, tile mappings, and article matches in real time; both users and technicians had the ability to view the most current and relevant information within the support experience.

To fully benefit from this information, Microsoft IT designed and added an Agent Portal to the solution so that all the information related to a user's call is visible to the technician.

### Support Technician view of the Agent Portal:



The screenshot displays the 'Global Helpdesk' interface for a support technician named John Birrell-Levine. The interface includes a search bar with 'johnle' entered, a user profile for John A. Birrell-Levine (IT Service Engineer), and a 'Frustrometer' gauge. The chat history shows a conversation about 'GSX' and 'PSX3'.

**Global Helpdesk** John Birrell-Levine

johnle

**John A. Birrell-Levine** (Password expires in 8 days)  
IT Service Engineer  
WWIT CP WWISDM - EV ON  
United States

Looking for Tickets(2)

**John A. Birrell-Levine** needs help on

- MS License
- Commerce
- Internet Explorer
- PCs
- SharePoint
- Sharing
- Operating Systems
- GSX
- Sales Tools

**Global Helpdesk**

- Hello

johnle

- sales tools

**Global Helpdesk**

- Can you give me a little more detail? 1 - GSX2 - PSX3 - Dynamics CRM (Direct Sales)4 - MSSales

johnle

- gsx

**Global Helpdesk**

- I can help you with GSX: Click to Open a Ticket. Click for Chat support. Click for Email support. For phone support, just type "call".

johnle

- os

Conversation History

When the user types "call" into the IM window, the call routes directly to the appropriate support queue based on the issue indicated by the user.

In the Agent Portal, the technician can type in the user's alias to view information related to this user. The Support Technician can see the user's full name, current open tickets, and the actual content of



the user's conversation from the IM window in order to review what the user needs help with and the progression of the conversation.

In the upper-right corner of the Agent Portal window, there is also a meter that shows the frustration level. This gives the technician the ability to quickly assess what kind of experience the user is having. This meter level changes based on how much the user has bounced around within the UI, words they use in the IM window, how long they interact with the bot, and whether they have gotten the answers they need.

Within the Agent Portal, the technician can also open the user's contact card. From the card, if necessary, the technician can initiate a remote assistance session, schedule a future meeting, or interact with the user via the telephone. This portal also allows Support Technicians to respond to email and chat sessions.

All of these features within the portal provide the technician with the information they need to provide an ideal support experience for the user.

### Next and Future Stage:

The combination of features within this solution helps produce a proactive and predictive support model. A user's actions and behaviors within the solution will indicate when they need support and what kind of help they need. Support Technicians will be provided with this information about the user up front, so the issue is resolved more quickly.

It is said that "Users' actions and their behaviors are truth stored as data." Microsoft IT has created an intersection of Microsoft technology and business data that is generating the next and future stage of this solution.

By using data from the call centers and support tickets, Microsoft IT has written an algorithm that will predict the reason a user will call support back within six months of their current call—based on the product and current contact reason. Details about this future call prediction will be populated in the Agent Portal. The goal of populating the portal is so that the Support Technician can prevent the future call by addressing the future issue before the user realizes they'll need assistance.

- IT support will be able to predict that a new hire employee within a certain discipline will need help with specific things during their first few days. This prediction allows a technician to assist with all of the user's needs during the first interaction and also deflects future calls.
- A systemic issue can be addressed more quickly by using the aggregation of keywords that people type into the IM window to predict a systemic issue gives IT support the ability to address the issue more quickly. And by showing an alert in the CWE, support calls will be deflected.
- Data also allows support to predict the manner that employees within a department or geographical region prefer to interact with the IT support team.

The goal is to learn what users are saying and doing so that the IT support team can recognize and predict where the users want to go.

The most important key to this solution? Users only need to open Lync and start a conversation.

## Benefits

Microsoft IT used early feedback from users to help refine the solution at each stage of development. Reactions to the new approach to IT support have been very positive, inspiring the team to continue to explore opportunities and to develop enhancements.

*"I want you to know that I loved the experience. I liked that I could tap options in the shared screen and that it had "1, 2, 3" options that automatically recognized the one I selected. Oh, and I really liked that it offered a phone call when it got to the point that my solution needed a call ... and the fact that it already produces ticket numbers so I can check the status is very helpful."*

Microsoft IT Service Desk Client



### Key Benefits for Internal Customers

Some of the key benefits for users of this solution recognized so far:

- The visual representation of the IVR gave time back to users who no longer had to spend an average of 63 seconds per call listening to and navigating the IVR phone tree. If the user didn't hear their selection during the first round or if their issue didn't fit neatly into one of the options and they had to re-enter the phone tree, a user lost additional time. This solution eliminates this issue.
- Users are able to engage with support based on their communication or learning style preferences. This gives users a sense of control and allows them to decide if self-service or direct assistance is the best path for their issue. And if they want to talk directly to a technician, they can be seamlessly routed into the correct support queue.
- A single point of entry provides users with faster access to relevant support information. Global or regional issues and outages are communicated in real time. Articles, links to resources, and a "for your Information" section within the UI are available to users to quickly resolve issues on their own. If the information doesn't answer their questions, the user can directly initiate a chat or call with a technician.

### Key Benefits for IT Support

Additionally, the solution offers benefits for the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk and IT Support Technicians:

- Because the Agent Portal provides all relevant user information—including contact information, open tickets and the current conversation from the IM window—technicians can respond to requests more efficiently. They no longer need to ask users to repeat information that is already available in the system.
- The Agent Portal provides a UI that allows technicians to accomplish most support tasks. By minimizing the number of applications and tools that a technician must use, the time to resolve an issue is reduced—and the experience improves for both the user and technician.
- Technicians are also able to gauge the user's frustration early in the interaction and then adjust their response. The solution tracks keywords used, time spent in the UI, and conversation history to measure the potential level of frustration.
- Providing self-service tools and resources to users within the Lync Window Extension deflected the number of support calls and led to reduced costs in personnel and vendor support needed to address those requests. This also increased support capacity.
- Data provides the IT Service Desk with a predictive and proactive support model that allows technicians to reach out to users before a call is generated.

Microsoft IT measures many components of interactions including: conversations in IM, actions taken, location, and user's alias. The benefits of this solution are also measured and tracked. Based on over 500,000 requests for IT Support and each user spending an average of 63 seconds navigating the IT support IVR phone tree:

#### Potential time savings:

- 364 full days of time given back to end users who no longer needed to navigate the IT Support IVR phone tree
- 750 days of time given back to end users who no longer needed to search various tools and resources to determine how to get support

As the rate of adoption of the support solution grows, the number of users and time given back continues to grow.

**Actual\* time savings and rate of adoption:**

- Over 25,000 unique contacts through this solution.
- Users are based in 90 countries from all continents (with the current exception of Antarctica).
- Over 9,500 phone calls to IT Support resulted in 166 hours (approximately 18 work days) of productive time given back to employees because users are no longer required to navigate the IT Support IVR Phone tree.

*\*Note: The above actual numbers are based on current data analysis from the August 2013 launch to the time of publishing, January 2014.*

## Best Practices

Microsoft IT continues to collect and analyze call center, service ticket, and solution data and to apply lessons learned as the solution continues to develop—which benefits both Microsoft and its employees.

To implement a service solution based on Lync and to fully realize the potential benefits, Microsoft IT recommends these best practices:

### Assess your current service desk and support model.

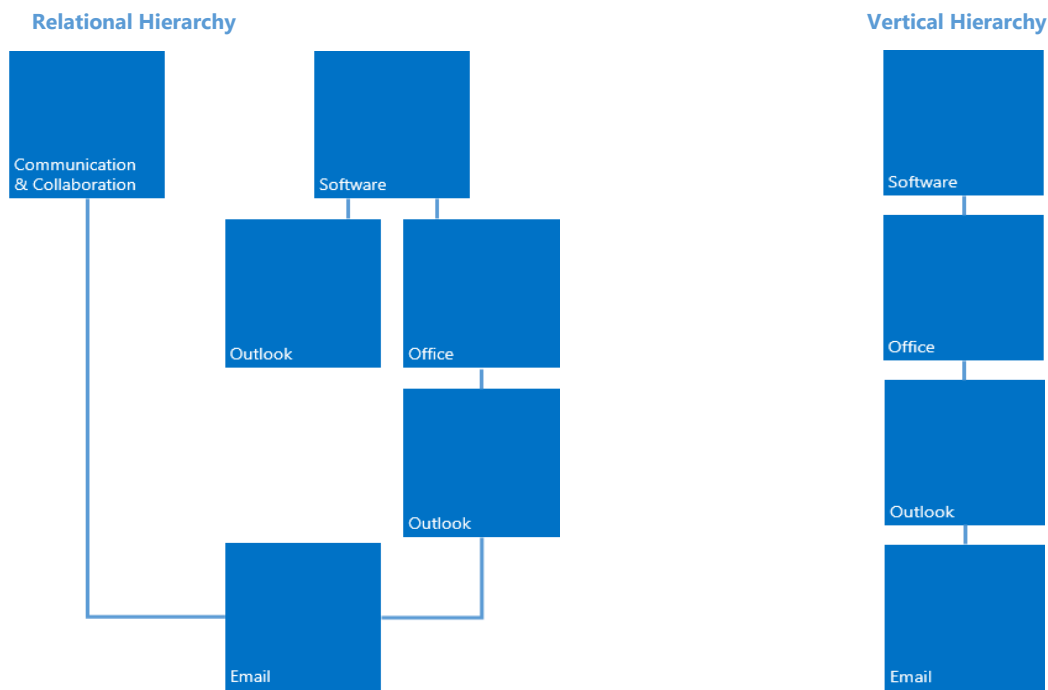
This solution can improve the support experience for both the end user and Support Technician.

- **Assess existing support processes, begin with the basics.** Are there gaps or redundancies in the flow of critical processes? Which procedures and methods are undefined or broken? Continually measuring and improving processes increases productivity and reduces resolution time—improving the experience for both Support Technicians and users. By establishing an environment of continuous improvement, employees become more willing to adapt to future changes and adopt new processes more quickly.
- **Utilize technologies that you know and trust.** After Lync is deployed in your environment, it is possible to create a solution similar to what Microsoft IT created by integrating Lync with IT Support. However, to contain costs and to minimize the effort necessary to build your solution, it's important to utilize well-established Microsoft technologies that are available globally. Because Microsoft technology is familiar, the need and expense of requiring specialized or proprietary skills and knowledge to develop this solution diminish.
- **Make small changes based on what's working.** Understanding that employees were accustomed to existing service desk processes and tools, Microsoft IT simply visualized what was already in place for the first incarnation of this solution. Starting with small changes helped minimize resistance to a new approach to support.
- **Track top support call drivers for your organization.** Use these statistics as well as usage data from your existing IVR to drive the most helpful topics for the information within the Conversation Window Extension.

### Map your hierarchy.

Microsoft IT used data to define the top-level hierarchy of tiles, which was abstract enough to provide a starting point for a majority of users. Then, under the top-level tiles, more specific sub-topics are included.

- One of the most valuable lessons learned was that by mapping sub-topics to multiple top-level tiles, the need to determine how all users think about products, applications, and services was no longer necessary. For example: "SharePoint" can be mapped to "Software and Services," "Communications," "Collaboration," or other tiles. Likewise: "Outlook" can be an email tool and a calendar tool. In both cases, mapping topics in a relational hierarchy vs. a vertical hierarchy makes selecting support topic tiles a friendlier experience.



### Map your top call drivers.

Another important lesson learned was that top call drivers should be used to match and rank articles linked to navigation tiles.

- The focus of this solution is to give time back, so Microsoft IT is careful about the articles that are published.
  - Articles must meet specific style guidelines. Consistent and expected layout of articles makes it faster and easier to get to information that the user needs.
  - Articles must be clear and concise. If it takes a user too much time to work through an article, it may be quicker to utilize an assisted support option.
- By providing top-level buckets that connect to relevant information and that include links to easy-to-use articles that address common issues, users can quickly determine the most appropriate path for resolving their issue: self-service or direct assistance.

### Evaluate your user community.

Determine the interaction and language preferences for your users.

- **Create an automated support presence (the bot) based on your users.** Will a more “human” style of bot with a friendly, human name be the best fit for your corporate culture? Or would users respond better to a mechanized style with a non-human name?
- Microsoft IT originally gave their bot a variety of human names, both female and male and multiple nationalities. However, user feedback was very clear that they preferred that the bot be identified as a bot. Now the bot has one name only: Sme.
- **Determine users’ preference for their support communication entry point.** Do users prefer to interact via instant message or through phone support? By using keywords that map to the appropriate action, you ensure that users are using the communication entry point that works best for them. As an example, Microsoft IT maps “call” and “talk” to automatically initiate the phone call with the right support team.
- **Understand your corporate lexicon.** What are the terms, words, and phrases that users should expect to be used? Within Microsoft, the words Chat, IM and Ping may be used interchangeably, so

it is recommended that those keywords map to the same action. For this solution to be successful, ideally users must be able to rely on a shared vocabulary and not be required to learn a new language.

#### **Include human elements.**

Microsoft IT is continually refining and adapting the natural language to conversation style (that is, using apostrophes) as well as exact match phrases for common items, modifying keys, responses, tiles, mappings, and article matches in real time to show the most relevant information to users and technicians.

- **Human qualities can improve the experience.** Consider programming some human qualities into the system to improve the user experience. Microsoft IT worked at programming empathy into the system. For example, after trying to respond with the appropriate support solution, the bot might respond with “I’m sorry, John, but I’m new at this and we are still learning” or “Sorry you are not having a great experience. This is first-generation technology so please bear with us.” If the user understands the situation, this can improve their experience. It also helps reduce the potential that users speak negatively about the solution while encouraging them to provide helpful feedback for improvement.

#### **Assign communication resources to drive solution adoption.**

As an operational tool, it’s important to ensure that employees are aware of this solution and how it will help them so they will adopt it. Employees tend to revert to legacy systems (especially if they have used them for a long time) if they don’t know about or understand the benefits of adopting new systems.

- **Devote time and resources to promoting the solution and the benefits.** Apply a variety of your communication channels to drive awareness—and to promote and evangelize the solution to ensure that users understand why adopting this as their primary service solution will not only benefit the enterprise but will also improve their experience.

Microsoft IT worked with their Field IT community and Field IT managers from each region to communicate and market this solution within Microsoft and to service providers as well as to train new hire employees.

#### **Make data actionable.**

Analytics provide the ability to refine and improve the system. Investments of time and resources can be aimed at targets within the system that will increase efficiency and productivity while reducing costs, providing the biggest ROI.

- **Decide if your bot will learn and update itself.** Microsoft IT uses analytics to manually update algorithms used for keyword matches to accommodate words that have a similar sound, are spelled differently or have typos, as well as for non-matching keywords. In the near future, Microsoft IT plans for the bot to self-update the algorithms.
- **Ensure the solution is adaptive.** When searching for support, if the user changes their path, it’s best for the bot to be designed to track where the user started and to predict the next likely path—improving the user experience and increasing speed to resolution.
- **Implement predictive support.** With over 6,000 calls per month, password resets are the number one call driver for the Microsoft IT Global Helpdesk. If a Support Technician is able to determine that a user’s password is about to expire, they can proactively address the issue, resetting the user’s password while the user is already on the call—and head off the problem before it occurs. This is only one example of how predictive support can prevent a future issue and lower support volumes, increase capacity, reduce costs, and give time back to both technicians and users.
- **Monitor keyword use to identify trends.** By tracking keywords that are frequently used by a specific team, department, or region; you can identify possible outages or common issues that can be used to create alerts that will inform users before they call support.

## Conclusion

At each stage of development, Microsoft IT explored new ways to leverage the native capabilities of Lync in order to expand services that would further improve the support experience. At the time of this writing, Microsoft IT is developing several enhancements that include:

- Adding an Administrative portal in Lync
- Adding support for FastTrack subscriptions
- Leveraging the solution as a chat platform

As additional service ticket and solution data are analyzed and user feedback is evaluated, this Lync based support solution will continue to evolve. At the same time, the solution provides a successful service model that can be adapted to other internal systems.

By using Microsoft technology, a solution like this can offer increased productivity, reduced corporate costs, and an improved end-to-end service experience for any enterprise.

## Resources

[Microsoft Lync Server 2013](#)

[Lync SDK](#)

[Lync 2013 SDK documentation](#)

[Microsoft IT Integrated Lync into their IT Global Helpdesk to Enhance Support](#)

[How Microsoft IT Integrated Lync and Helpdesk-Video](#)

[Microsoft Enterprise Social within the Microsoft IT Experience](#)

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