



ITSM for higher education

Unified Service Management for campus IT users



www.freshservice.com

Executive Summary

Educational institutions earn and build reputation based on their ability to attract the best faculty, create high-quality educational courseware and foster a diverse and highly intellectual pool of students. Providing a world-class teaching method, state-of-the-art technological infrastructure, hassle-free campus experience, onboarding experience and placements are some of the pillars that factor into the decision-making process of students and faculty in choosing the right institution.

Higher education is undergoing a paradigm shift with the advent of innovations like Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), Communication tools, Collaboration tools, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), VR Classrooms etc. Leveraging Information Technology plays a pivotal role for Institutions to modernize their services and provide students and faculty with a connected campus and enriched learning experience. With today's hyper connected, always-on, personalized experiences making inroads into all forms of online interactions, IT Service Management plays a pivotal role in improving the campus experience for all stakeholders.

Problem statement

The current problems faced by higher education institutions that are hindrances to an effective service support and delivery are:

- Increasing complexity due to fragmented IT services across schools, departments and administration in a university
- Unable to meet expectations of tech-savvy student and faculty group
- Lot of time spent in performing transactional tasks during seasonal peak days
- Lack of communication and collaboration within the university campus

Drivers of ITSM in academic transformation

IT plays a huge role in transforming the way the education ecosystem works and drives academic transformations. Let us discuss the primary drivers of ITSM across the higher education industry.

Emerging Technologies

The education support system is seeing a steady increase in application of cutting edge technologies in areas of Learning Management Systems (LMS) and collaboration technologies, helping geographically scattered students to connect with Professors and peers. Trends such as adaptive learning, personalized learning and virtual reality will potentially improve students' classroom experience. Classroom & collaboration apps will provide newer definitions to teaching. Social learning is a new cognitive concept that includes learning from each other through observation and modelling. Instant messaging apps such as Slack are popularly used across campuses to foster open communication and effective knowledge sharing in the IT community.



Gartner predicts Global Higher Education Sector Technology Spending to Exceed US\$38.2 Billion in 2016.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) & BYOD

Online courses and distance education have resulted in the usage of multiple custom applications by students and faculty. Availability of MOOCs help students to access courses anywhere and from any device. This is an effect of BYOD and consumerization. Students and faculty use personal devices in university campus thus putting pressure on IT department to provide seamless service and ensure security.



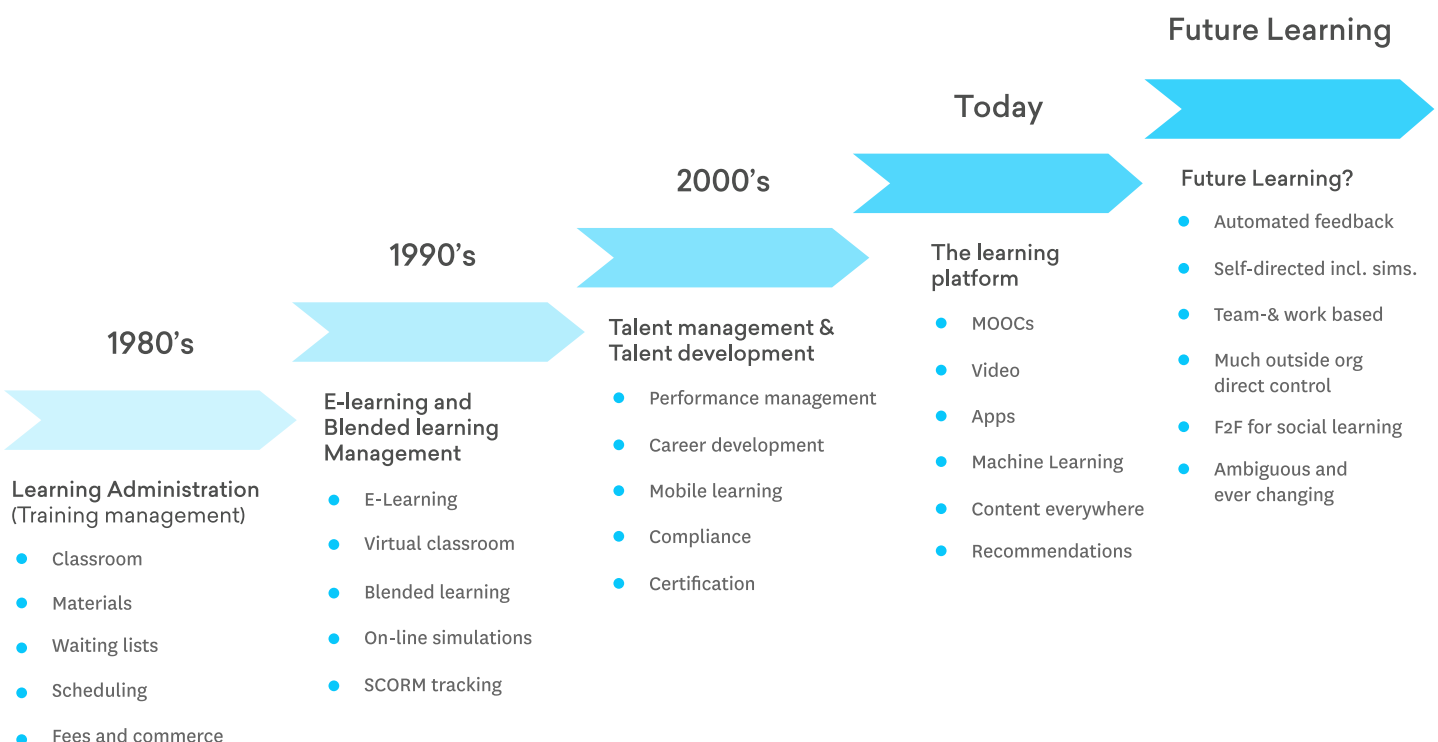
In a nutshell, it means that interactive technologies, from smartphones to websites to mobile apps to SaaS apps, need to provide the most usable, self-guided, hiccup-free, efficient user experiences in history - Wired.

Student self-service expectation

Students who are the end users expect self-service technology to resolve issues and want to access relevant resources by themselves. They also use technologies like 3D printing, online LMS, virtual reality and so on. Self-service expectation drives the need for a fully-fledged ITSM strategy. Sometimes, student workers work part time as service desk agents in universities. Therefore, both agent and end user experience of service desk have to be seamless and intuitive in order to match their expectations.

Student IT leadership

Students getting employed in university departments as part time service desk agents improves the association between administration and student group. Training is an important component here which helps students to get familiar with ITSM and receive hands-on experience about processes followed. Therefore, there is a need to deliver a great user experience and build a holistic training academy.



Challenges faced by higher ed.

According to the National Center for Educational Studies (NCES), approximately 2.9 million students graduate in a year from all educational institutes in the USA. This includes undergraduates and postgraduates. The scale of stakeholders also increases multi-fold with the 1.54 million teaching professionals (statistics from Bureau of Labor Statistics) that are part of the education sector. Every University or educational institution in its entirety can be viewed as an enterprise by the sheer scale of operations. Due to this large scale, challenges faced by university departments also increase proportionately.

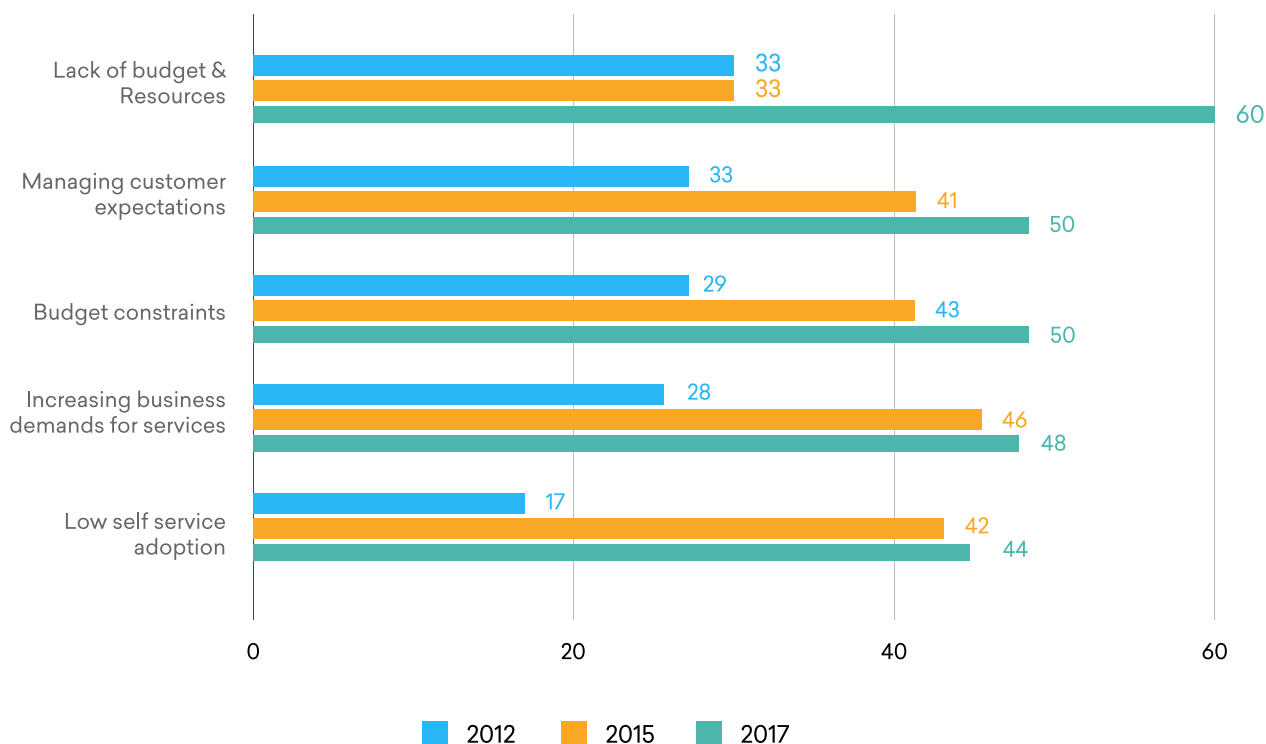
Fragmented data

Data is distributed in campuses between central IT and siloed departments. Central IT is responsible for procurement, implementation of new applications and resource allocation whereas department service desks resolve issues raised by their department students and fulfill their service requests on time. Due to this setup, data is fragmented and lacks consistency across the system. Also, there are multiple service desk tools that are implemented in an ad hoc manner. Decision-making gets tougher because of the fragmented data.

Tighter budget

Educational institutions face resource constraints in terms of IT spending, staff recruitment and procurement of a service desk tool. Increase in competition and growing demands from staff & students pose major challenges to IT. It is quite challenging for an IT team to convince the management of the benefits of technology adoption and how it improves efficiency. Demand and supply mismatch exists in most institutions as students increase year by year whereas support staff remains the same.

In your daily desk life, what causes you the most pain?



Diverse customers & seasonal volume

End users of IT in education include students, staff, alumni, faculty and support agents include administrative staff, central IT staff and department support staff. Therefore, it is difficult to understand every user persona and meet individual expectations. Also, there is a seasonal demand which is high especially during admission and graduation times. Service desk ticket volume is usually high and it is challenging to handle seasonal peak with the available resource.

Information security

This includes protecting resources such as student data, research materials and academic content. BYOD and consumerization increase the threat of security breach and information loss. It is necessary to have a proper Information security policy and asset management policy in place to be more proactive. Having a cloud based solution increases the necessity of proper information security.

Solution

What could we do now to step up and accelerate current processes in the higher education industry? We have analysed various schools and universities' IT practices and proposed solutions below for an effective ITSM strategy and improved user experience.

Hybrid IT strategy

Having a central IT team helps educational institutions to consolidate the fragmented data. This would become a single source of truth to analyse performance, ROI and accelerate the decision-making process. Centralized IT strategy allows a single service desk tool to be implemented eliminating the overhead of managing multiple tools. It also helps in easier knowledge sharing and clearer ownership but IT governance gets difficult and needs to be handled carefully. Department level and school level distributed teams cannot be ignored as local IT teams fulfill service requests and resolve issues raised by students. The overarching IT strategy includes

- Academic Technology
- Administrative Technology
- Communications Technologies
- Data Management Services
- Infrastructure
- Library Technology
- Support Services



Balancing centralized IT with local support teams is the key to success.

Identify the roles and responsibilities and communicate them clearly to the stakeholders. It is vital to create a university wide service management that is extended to departments beyond IT such as administration, faculty, hostel, research, admission office etc.

Hybrid IT

Create a swarm including members of central IT and department support teams. Follow an effective collaboration strategy to form a hybrid IT team to handle business critical issues that demand collaboration between central and local IT. Local teams could be the first point of contact but issues need to be managed centrally in a single tool and central team that can collaborate with local teams to troubleshoot L2 and L3 issues. Distinguishing the roles of central and department IT teams will help to provide better context.

Central IT	Department IT	Hybrid approach
Define processes	Fulfill ad Hoc requests	Better tracking & accountability
Classify and assign tickets to the right group	SLA commitment & Incident resolution	Better collaboration & faster resolution
IT resource planning	Student workers as agents	Better resource utilization
IT asset audit & compliance	Asset tracking	Better ROI
Technology adoption	Smooth operations	Better end user experience

Proposed Steps

- Define IT mission and vision
- Distinguish roles and responsibilities between central IT & department teams
- Define relevant service level agreement for different services offered
- Establish performance metrics and ways for continuous improvement
- Extend ITSM strategy to non IT department offices
- Communicate IT policies to stakeholders
- Implement a simple service desk solution

Advantages of hybrid IT model

- Standardization of core processes
- Localization of IT support services
- Easily accessible data & reporting
- Lower cost and increased efficiency
- Consistent service experience and SLA commitment
- Realistic resource allocation
- Scalable integrated architecture
- Centralized knowledge

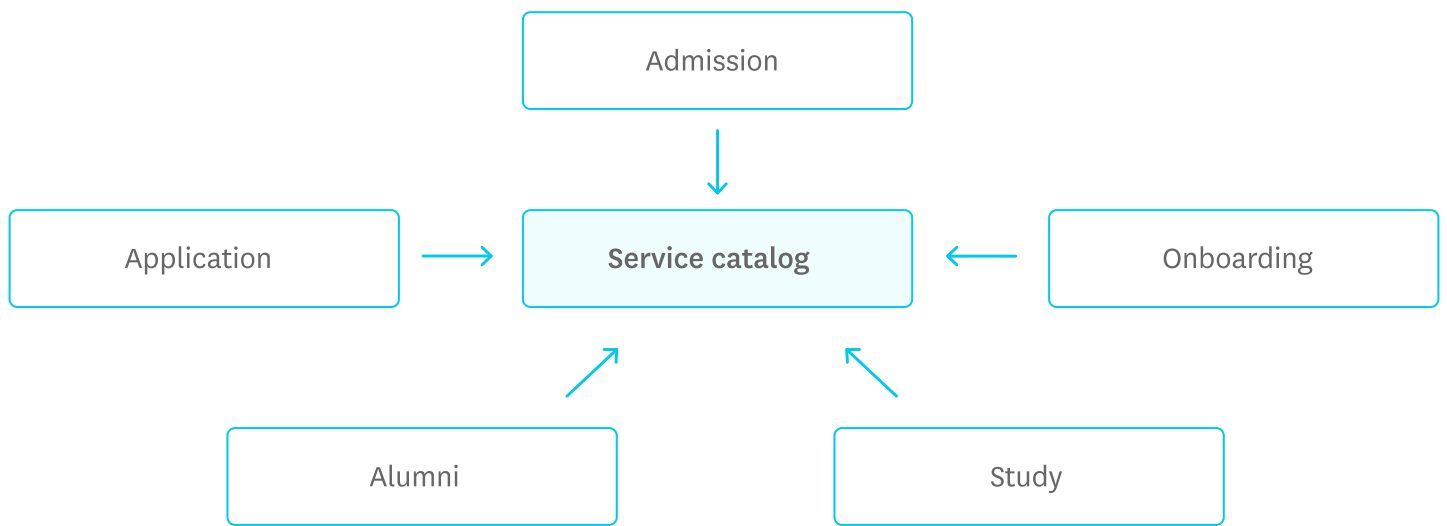
Campus wide Service management

ITSM bridges the gap between university IT and non IT departments by extending IT Service Management practices across campus. Students reach out to their respective departments for immediate resolution or walk into the IT help desk kiosk. The Administration office, admissions, examination controller, faculty, hostel, alumni, research and paid services handle a number of queries and requests on a daily ad hoc basis. Central IT and these departments work in silos as discussed above and there is no standard operating procedure across these departments.

Service catalog leverage

Educational institutions handle different kinds of service requests that come from students, faculty, alumni and sometimes parents. Hosting a single catalog to consolidate all these requests enable self-service and this acts as a single source of truth. Certain requests would require approval workflow and service catalog management helps in automation and improving end user experience. Some of the common services include the following

- Student onboarding
- Data management services
- Computers & software
- Academic services
- Teaching & learning services
- Email & calendar
- Hostel services
- Research computing
- Field support services
- Alumni affairs
- Accounts & Authentication services
- Information security services



Tips to create a service catalog

- ✓ Create an intuitive personalized catalog experience for students that include all department requests - add relevant images, themes, logos.
- ✓ Capture all relevant details using the custom service request form
- ✓ Automate the service request fulfillment process
- ✓ Make it available in mobile app for easier access

Helpdesk Kiosk

Walk in requests cannot always be ignored in universities. Having a help desk kiosk helps students and faculty to raise walk in requests easily. This will be of great help in achieving faster resolution and enables one to one communication between staff and students. Tickets reported through the kiosk can be automated using a barcode scanner etc. Once self-service portal adoption is increased, you could eliminate the kiosk completely.

Automate

Implementing the right service desk solution helps in automation of university specific workflows that are mostly redundant such as student onboarding, service request approval etc. Asset tracking and auditing is a crucial task for IT team as students use various types of devices and gadgets. In order to efficiently track hardware and software inventory, use auto-discovery mechanisms that are available as a part of service desk solution.

Automate common processes

University IT offers a variety of services but IT staff resources are limited. Therefore, it is essential to automate mundane processes and provide faster resolution. IT Service desk helps in configuring these workflows and common processes include account access, student onboarding, application access request, password reset services, training services, hardware request etc.

Auto-discovery of Inventory

Automate discovery of IT assets using discovery tools available within service desk to capture details such as asset owner, configuration details, software installed, components, serial number etc. Automate alerts and notifications for warranty, license expiry and approval process. Information security and compliance management are crucial during the asset audit process. Mobile device Management(MDM) is implemented to ensure security and data is protected even if the device is lost or stolen.

Asset loaning

Students loan assets on a temporary basis and an asset management solution should have a provision to include a loan schedule, reminder alerts for return and asset details. For instance, if a student is attending a conference event and needs an iPad just for that duration, it doesn't need to be permanently assigned to them. Once the item is returned to the IT team, it can be made available in the service catalog again and can be reused by another student. Availability of loaner items and reminders should be automated.

Move to cloud

Businesses are migrating towards cloud and IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service) is the key trend in implementing an ITAM solution which is critical to digital transformation. Implementing a cloud solution minimizes cost for setup, maintenance and also improves compliance.



*According to Gartner's prediction, "By 2020, **customers will manage 85% of their relationship with the enterprise without interacting with a human.**"*

Checklist for Implementing ITSM in educational institutions

- ✓ Create a project transition plan
- ✓ Self service awareness for all
- ✓ Build an IT community
- ✓ Integrate your service desk with student apps
- ✓ Go Mobile

- **Create a project transition plan**

When you kickstart an IT Service management program in your university, it is important to understand the IT mission and vision. ITSM is powered by implementing an effective service desk tool and therefore, create a project transition plan to replace your existing solution with a new service desk tool. Change management is crucial for smooth transition and to avoid downtime.

- **Self service awareness for all**

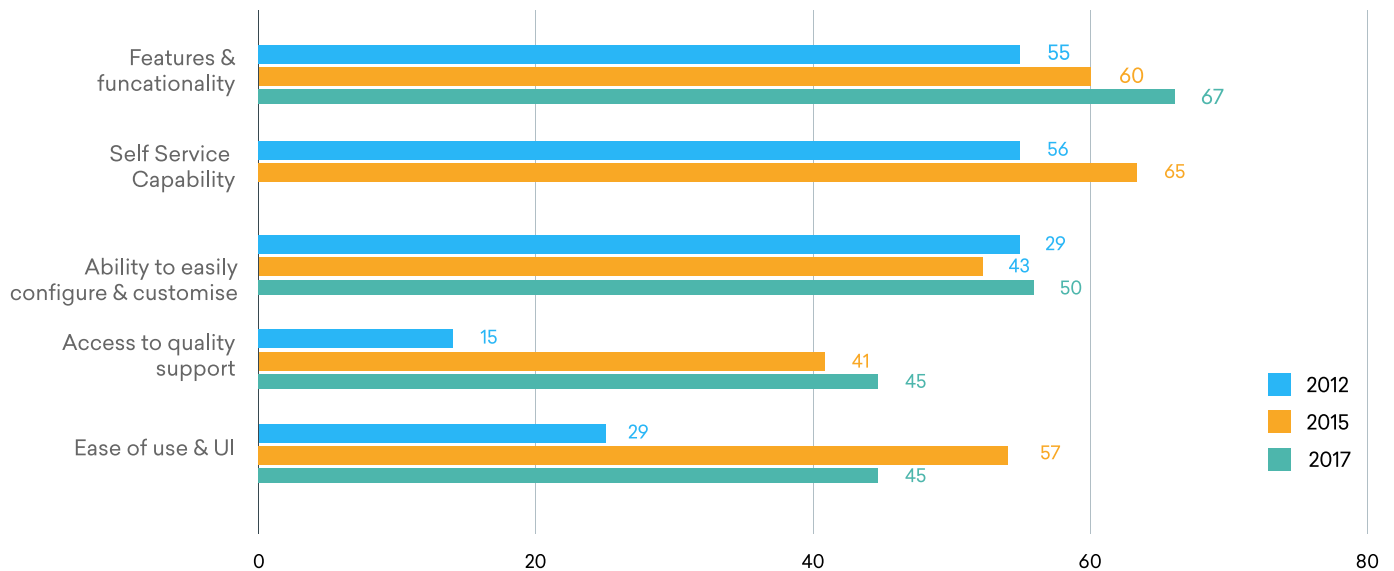
Consolidate services provided by various departments and host them in a unified catalog that can be requested by students/faculty/alumni. Having a self-service portal to enable this would empower end users to identify the right service item and self-help themselves. Student self-service experience includes service catalog, FAQ access, submitting queries, checking for internal announcements etc.

Tips

Gamify your self-service portal to improve end user adoption. For example,

- Have an auto response to emails to the service desk that says "We treat email tickets as low priority. Use self service portal for faster resolution", to improve self service adoption
- Run prize draws for those who have raised a ticket through the Self Service portal for better adoption

What would influence your selection of new ITSM tool?



Source - Service Desk Institute, A View from the Frontline - University Edition

- **Build an IT community**

A University IT community fosters collaboration and engagement across all user groups. Communities include IT academy, research, CIO community, Training community etc. IT community results in innovation through collaboration. Examples include agile, ITIL, Devops and QA communities where experts come together to create internal initiatives and professional development programmes.

- **Integrate your service desk with student apps**

Students use messenger apps like Slack for any internal communication. Therefore, integrate your service desk with student apps to drive adoption and easy accessibility. Marketing your service desk is an important activity to create awareness. It should be available within the student portal, internal websites and wherever easily accessible.

- **Go Mobile**

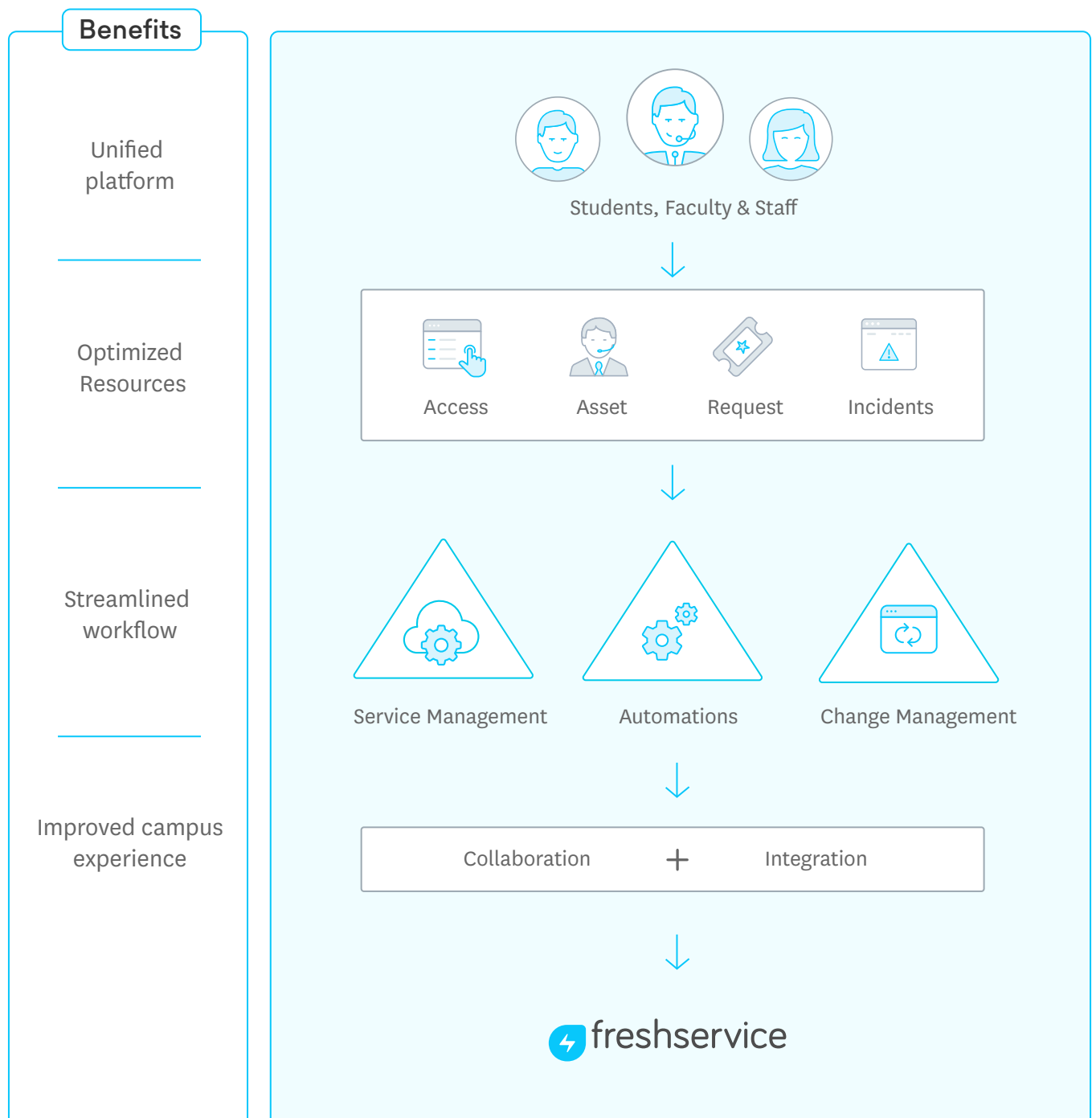
Millennials are power users of smartphones. A service desk mobile app is a game changer in education with hands on functionalities and enables agents to resolve tickets on the move. This is especially helpful for the field services team which needs to report issues on the go and update statuses. Students also find mobile apps more handy in terms of checking alerts, timetable changes and library updates etc.

The Freshservice advantage

Freshservice is an affordable, easy-to-setup and easy-to-use ITSM software that is trusted by over **250 Schools** and educational institutions globally. **With 2800 agents in 250 educational institutions, Freshservice is used by over 200,000 students and faculties around the world.**

Supporting facts

- With service catalog, there is a 30% decrease in resolution time
- Education customers are highest users of asset management
- Education customers are second highest users of knowledge base



Case study - Judson university

Judson University, is an evangelical Christian liberal arts university located in Elgin, Illinois, United States. It was founded in 1963. The university has campuses in Elgin and Rockford, Illinois, and a student body of approximately 1,300. Judson University has more than 60 undergraduate majors, minors, and pre-professional programs and is currently the only evangelical Christian college or university to offer a fully accredited graduate program in architecture

RADICALLY IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND SERVICE



Freshservice enables a ‘work smarter, not harder’ mentality and promotes a culture of efficiency. These automations allowed our IT team’s members to move into more specialized roles where they can have a bigger impact as individuals.

-Ben Greeno,
Interim Director of Information Technology, Judson University

KPI	PRE-FRESHSERVICE	WITH-FRESHSERVICE
First call resolution	20%	70%
Meeting SLAs	Not measured	90%
Customer Satisfaction	Not measured	92%
Managed changes	40%	100%
Serious change related incidents	26	2
Tickets raised via email	50%	33%

Intuitive user experience

Freshservice's modern and intuitive UI requires minimal or no training, and is customizable to IT and non-IT needs. With mobile capability, students and administration can have all this done through a single click on their mobile.

Increase adoption of IT system in your schools

The Service Catalog feature helps improve the campus experience as it facilitates students, faculty, and staff to easily and transparently access services through a shopping cart model. Service Catalog has approval and automation capabilities to accelerate service delivery

Intelligent automation

Freshservice automates ticket distribution, event and time based actions, asset discovery and repetitive tasks in the background, allowing crucial resources to focus on more mission critical tasks.

Pay what you want

Freshservice offers subscription plans that starts with a free 21-day trial period. There are no hidden costs, no support fees, and you only pay for the features you use. There is 24 X 7 email and 24 X 5 call support with every plan.

Empower your students and faculties to resolve issues

Self-service skips the trouble of bringing another person into the mix and empowers users to quickly find what they need and execute on a solution all on their own. The Knowledge Base is a repository of information for students, faculties, staff and admin. Through this portal admins can share, solution articles for IT issues and self-help, academic curriculum requirements, and governing policies.

Proven Implementation Methodology

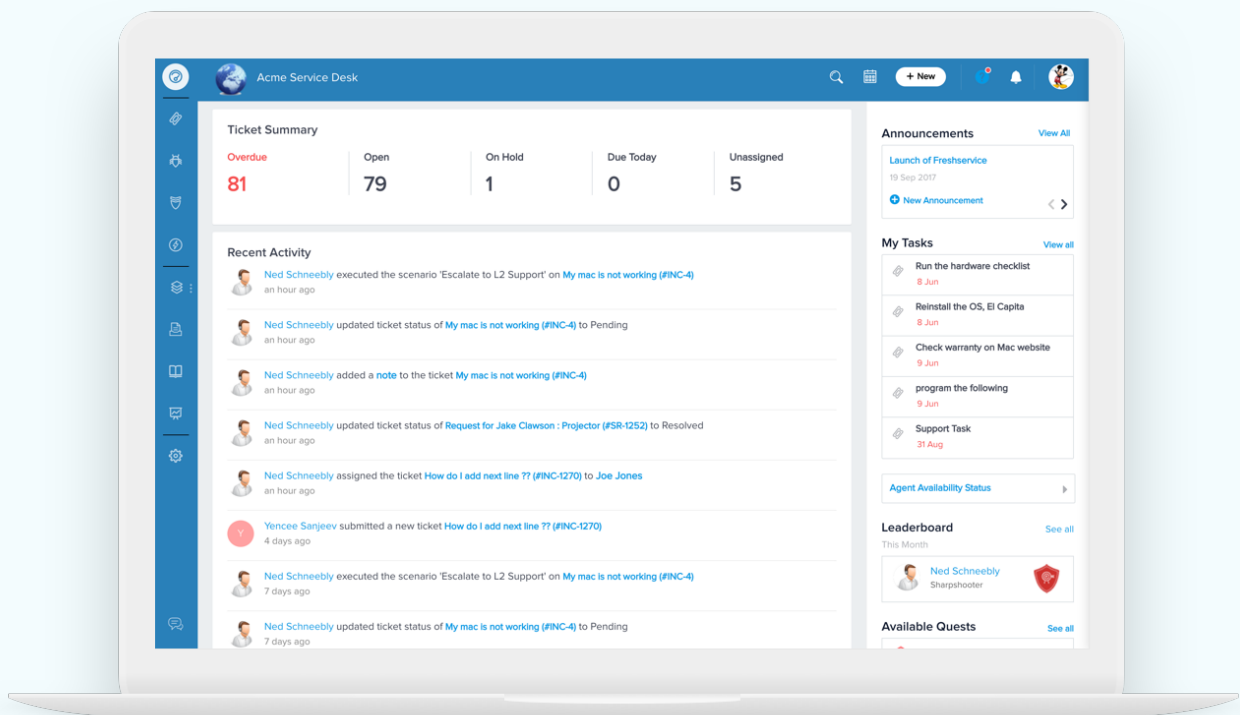
The ease of transitioning and migrating to Freshservice is one of its USPs. Our personalized onboarding team follows a consultative solution approach and this is followed throughout the lifecycle of the customer.

About Freshservice

Freshservice is a cloud-based IT service desk and IT service management (ITSM) solution that is quick to setup and easy to use and manage. Freshservice leverages ITIL best practices to enable IT organizations to focus on what's most important - exceptional service delivery and customers satisfaction. With its powerfully simple UI, Freshservice can be easily configured to support your unique business requirements and integrated with other critical business and IT systems. Are you trying to keep up with the current ITSM trends? Freshservice is on a constant mission to innovate and deliver great experience.

Start your free trial now :

www.freshservice.com/signup



Visit www.freshservice.com for the latest in the world of ITSM.

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