



Reporting & Metrics

To Improve B2B Customer Support



Table of Contents

1. 5 Metrics to Assess Customer Support Success
2. The ROI of Customer Support
3. Customer Service Reporting - Improve ROI
4. What KPIs matter most for B2B customer service?
5. Top 3 customer support metrics you should be tracking
6. Learn More

5 Metrics to Assess Customer Support Success

When providing customer support, the holy grail is of course customer satisfaction. Are your customers happy, did they have a good customer experience, and will they continue to do business with you? While this is essential to measure your company's success, it is not the only metric that can provide insight into how your customer support team is doing.

Here are 5 other metrics that you should aspire to understand:

1. **Accessibility:** How easy is it for clients to get in touch with a customer service representative? Are there **multiple channels** through which to do so?
2. **Responsiveness:** When customers get in touch with the support team, do representatives respond quickly and with concern? How long to clients need to wait to receive an answer to their problems?
3. **Knowledge:** Are customer service representatives **fully informed** and prepared to answer even the most complex questions?
4. **Professionalism:** Do support team members take their jobs seriously and treat customers with respect?
5. **Resolution:** How quickly, and how often, are support teams able to find a full resolution to client issues?

Remember, customer satisfaction is made up of many components, and your customer support team is a key contributor. Make sure they have the **right tools** to manage customer relationships, and that you are tracking the right information on a regular basis to better understand your customers.

For more tips on Customer Support Reporting, [download our white paper](#)

The ROI of Customer Support

Forward-thinking businesses are beginning to realize **customer service as a profit center** rather than a cost center. In fact the analysts at Constellation Research feel the same way, and have published an informative research paper on exactly this topic. You can [access the full report here](#), or read on for the highlights.

According to Constellation, investing in customer care can boost ROI in 6 areas:

1. Reducing customer support costs by increasing first contact resolution

Every time a customer has to contact your support center more than once costs you unnecessarily. For the sake of comparison, let's say a single contact costs you \$100. If a customer resolves their issue with you at the first contact, the cost of that solution is \$100. If they have to contact you 3 times about the same issue, the cost is \$300 PLUS the opportunity cost from that agent spending time re-addressing an issue rather than solving a new one.

2. Increasing agent productivity by lowering average handle time.

If you can reduce the time it takes to solve (handle) an issue you automatically increase your agent's productivity. If an issue used to take 10 minutes to resolve, and implementing customer support software reduces that time to 8 minutes you've increased their efficiency by 20%. Multiply that across the number of agents and volume of issues they handle, and you'll see a significant increase in profitability.

3. Increasing self-service/call deflection/knowledge base efficiency/FAQs and reducing agent-related support costs

The more your customers are able to serve themselves, the less your agents will spend time answering simple and repeat issues. Increase your **customer self-service** options, make use of **ticket deflection** and improve your knowledge base and FAQs to reduce your agent-related support costs.

4. Reducing or eliminating agent training

Using a collaborative customer support software can greatly reduce the amount of agent training needed, and that's great because training is one of the largest (and least recognized) expenses in any company. **Internal collaboration** and group-based ticket management allow new agents to learn from their peers while addressing customer issues quickly and efficiently.

5. Improving existing processes or eliminating redundant processes/steps

By spending the time and money to improve your customer service, you will naturally identify inefficient or outdated processes and redundancies. The right customer service software should also help you improve these, thereby increasing efficiency and improving ROI. In fact we truly believe that **choosing the right customer support software will pay for itself!**

It's also important to remember that on the flip side the cost of poor customer care is significant - according to Microsoft's Global Customer Service Report 62% of consumers have stopped doing business with a brand this year due to a single poor experience. So not only can investment in customer service increase ROI through reduction in costs, it can also improve customer retention.

Customer Service Reporting - Improve ROI

Many areas of business have become data-driven and **customer service reporting is essential** for many companies. With fewer customers picking up the phone and replacing these interactions with form submissions, live chats, and emails there are now many data points that create customer (and thus agent) intelligence that did not exist only a couple decades ago. But how can companies make sense of their customer service data and make it actionable to improve their overall bottom line? Read on to find out...

Choose a software with highly customizable reports

Selecting the right software for customer service reporting is important, especially for business to business (B2B) companies. Not every business has the same processes or needs, and it's important to get the information you need as a unique company. Software that is designed for B2B generally has a higher level of customization, allows for more access to necessary information, and can minimize duplication in reports. It's also important for companies to find software that can help automate reporting so less time is spent manually pulling and compiling data. By automating tasks and decreasing report duplication, companies can save money by spending less time creating and editing reports.

Receive formal training to make the most of analytics

Having the best software in the world to create reports is only as good as the knowledge of the person behind it. Make sure your software provider **trains employees** (either virtually or in-person) immediately and effectively to maximize your investment. Providers should also grant access to knowledge documentation so employees can learn at their own pace and have something to refer to for simple questions once the initial training is completed. It's also important to enable employees to ask questions to onboarding professionals

after the training – it's not an inconvenience, it is the onboarding team's job to help make you successful in using their software and as a customer they want you to succeed. The more knowledgeable you are about the software the better reports you can create, and the more actionable information your company will have to make profitable business decisions.

Gain visibility into support agent productivity

Direct visibility into your team's productivity can help **reward high-performing agents**, evaluate what ticket types employees are strong or weak at, and understand what tickets certain types of employees like to work on (ie: for a specific company or relating to a specific topic). This understanding and recognition boosts employee morale and satisfied employees are generally more productive, meaning you need less staff to handle the same workload. This visibility can also be beneficial for evaluating agents that are underperforming and to logically make the decision to either reassign them or replace them with better agents.

Understand which customers are unhappy

Customer service software can be used not only to track the amount of tickets (both total and unresolved) but also to determine how satisfied your customers are with you. The latter in particular can be very granular and can be tracked through B2B software at the customer level, in a specific group or department within a customer, or even to individual employees. For example, a company as a whole may be very happy with your service but one employee within that company may not be. Instead of labeling the entire company as unhappy, it makes more sense to address the employee (or their direct report) on a one-to-one level to figure out a resolution to their concerns. Tracking ticket trends like this helps in discovering the root of problems which, once resolved, improves customer satisfaction and retention.

Leverage ways to reduce the number of data points

Don't be the person who creates the 100 page reports. Utilize self-service options to provide simple answers to customers and **offer suggested solutions**

while they create tickets to try to deflect them. Enabling live chat to solve simpler problems or transition complex chat issues directly to a ticket once the problem is discovered can aid in agents not spending an excessive amount of time in chat if they don't know the answer. This reduces the number of data points as fewer tickets are sent in, thus more accurately displaying only the necessary data to make business decisions.

In short, there are several ways customer service reporting and analysis can be utilized to improve the ROI of a company. Customer support solutions have become more proactive as technology has evolved, and as a result many companies are viewing customer service as a way to not only save customers but **increase sales through creating more positive customer experiences** . Those who are skeptic about the impact of customer support will have a difficult time disputing direct and relevant data, showing the strong value of customer support when presented to decision makers

What KPIs matter most for B2B customer service?

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are variables used to measure a business' success. They vary according to industry and department, meaning business-to-business (B2B) KPIs are different than those of a business-to-consumer (B2C) organization. Similarly, a sales team has different KPIs than those of customer support. Below are the most important KPIs for B2B customer service:

Cost per ticket

Support desks are plagued by methods that do not make good use of their agent's time. Instead of focusing on complex tickets that require human input, many reps are forced to solve repetitive, almost tedious issues. In some cases, agents lack the knowledge to handle incoming questions and must hand the customer off to a more experienced employee. The best approach to increasing agent efficiency is to use **collaborative, integrated software for support**. This allows reps to consult with each other quickly and share knowledge, leading to faster answers for customers.

To understand the efficiency of your support organization, consider the cost per ticket - that is, the total cost of running customer support divided by the number of tickets. The more efficient your team is, the lower your cost per ticket will be. Each business must determine for itself the appropriate cost per ticket, especially in relation to the quality of support agents provide. Customer satisfaction is also a factor in revenue, so you should never sacrifice customer satisfaction for a lower cost-per-ticket average.

Volume of tickets

Handling an excessive number of tickets not only uses a lot of agent time, it

is also a costly expense for businesses. There are many simple questions customers can answer themselves through self-service support alternatives like **knowledge base** and FAQ sections. These must be easily located and clearly advertised so customers know contacting the support desk is not their only option. In addition, self-service support must provide clear instructions customers can understand. Otherwise, they're more likely to send an email or pick up the phone. When customers do contact customer support via email, keywords in their query should provide a suggestion for existing self-service resources. This way, customers can choose whether they'd like to explore these options or continue through direct contact with an agent.

Businesses can simply measure the overall volume of tickets they receive, but it's more valuable to track the number of tickets per customer and number of tickets per agent. These metrics give businesses a better idea of the workload reps handle, not just the amount of tickets processed overall. Two different companies with the same number of customers and support reps can have vastly different workloads based on the types of issues agents have to solve. Those handling quick and easy questions make their way through more tickets, while reps tackling tougher issues will address fewer tickets. If your agents are handling more tickets on average, this shows an increase in efficiency. If they're receiving fewer customer service issues on average over time, this is a sign customers are using your self-service support options.

Response and resolution times

To gain an understanding of how efficient your reps are, look at average response times. Are customers receiving a response within an hour, a day, a week? Remember that **most customers expect a response within one hour** . Resolution time is also important - that is, how long does the average customer wait between the time they first open a ticket and the time it's resolved? While **a shorter resolution time isn't always better**, you need to understand average response times as well as ticket resolution times so that you can set a benchmark for your KPI. Look closely at causes and processes, which can cause many customers to suffer from unnecessary delays. Often they're shuffled between numerous agents until they're finally given one with the appropriate experience to help them. Other times, their question is simply lost in a chaotic, disconnected computer system. Collaborative customer support software that can assemble information and customer

correspondence from multiple channels is the key to solving this issue. The best solutions also allow agents to chat internally and add notes to customer profiles, ensuring anyone who accesses that data has the same information. Great software also generates tickets automatically, and auto-assigns based on urgency, topic, or customer.

Customer satisfaction

The most important aspect of B2B customer support is the customers themselves. Their satisfaction is key to a business's growth, making this the most important KPI of all. While emotional states are difficult to quantify, there are various metrics businesses can use to get an understanding of how their clients feel. Retention or churn is the major one. Customers leaving in large numbers is a definite warning that something is wrong.

Businesses can also determine customer satisfaction by looking at "live agent" ratios. When customers do speak directly to representatives on the phone, businesses should measure the amount of time the agents and customers actually speak to each other versus the amount of time the customer is put on hold. **Long wait times are frustrating and decrease satisfaction** tremendously.

Of course the best way to measure customer satisfaction is to ask your customers. You can do this through annual customer satisfaction surveys, NPS (Net Promoter Score), or by our preferred method of transactional surveys. Transactional surveys ask your customers how satisfied they are after every interaction with your company. By measuring satisfaction rates consistently over time you will get the most accurate measurement and will also be able to set benchmarks for your unique organization. This will allow you to make the most of your KPIs by identifying upward or downward trends quickly so that you can make adjustments as needed.

Customer satisfaction is the result of various influences, including operational efficiency, ease of access, and interactions with agents. Support reps must be friendly and personable with all the tools and information they need at their disposal. This allows them to put customer needs first. While individual businesses have their own specific goals, these KPIs reflect the priorities of any support team. They're best addressed with B2B customer support software that provides for a collaborative, integrated working environment.

Top 3 customer support metrics you should be tracking

While providing great customer service is critical, tracking the right metrics is just as important. When you pay attention to your company's customer support numbers, you can identify what you're doing right and what you need to improve upon. According to Bufferapp, tracking metrics provides **a view of customer satisfaction** with support that is honest and free of any influencers. Data compiled when creating metrics can be used to create baselines and goals.

1. First response times

When a customer has an issue, how long does it take you to respond? The amount of time that elapses between the moment your customers reach out to when they are first helped needs to be as low as possible. Customers don't like waiting for a solution because it usually means putting whatever they're doing on hold. The concept holds true especially in the B2B sector. If customers run into an issue, you're not making their job easier if you're slow to reply. This reduces satisfaction, and eventually your customers may decide to find a different company who can provide them with a better solution to get more work done.

Even if you can't fix their problem right away, make sure you're contacting your customers with updates to show them that you're working to resolve their issues. Most customers don't expect you to be perfect, but they do expect you to respond to their issues and resolve whatever is going wrong in a timely manner. A high-quality **B2B customer service software** can help you manage tickets in the most efficient manner possible by automating portions of the ticket management process and by providing answers through an internal knowledge base.

When you track response times, you can easily see how many minutes, hours or days it takes to respond. Additionally, you'll be able to see what customer service reps are responding quickly and which ones are struggling to do so.

According to Business2Community, knowing **who is a fast responder** and who isn't can help you identify where customer service team managers need to focus their training and guidance. Measuring time to first response can also help set new goals for the future and improve customer satisfaction.

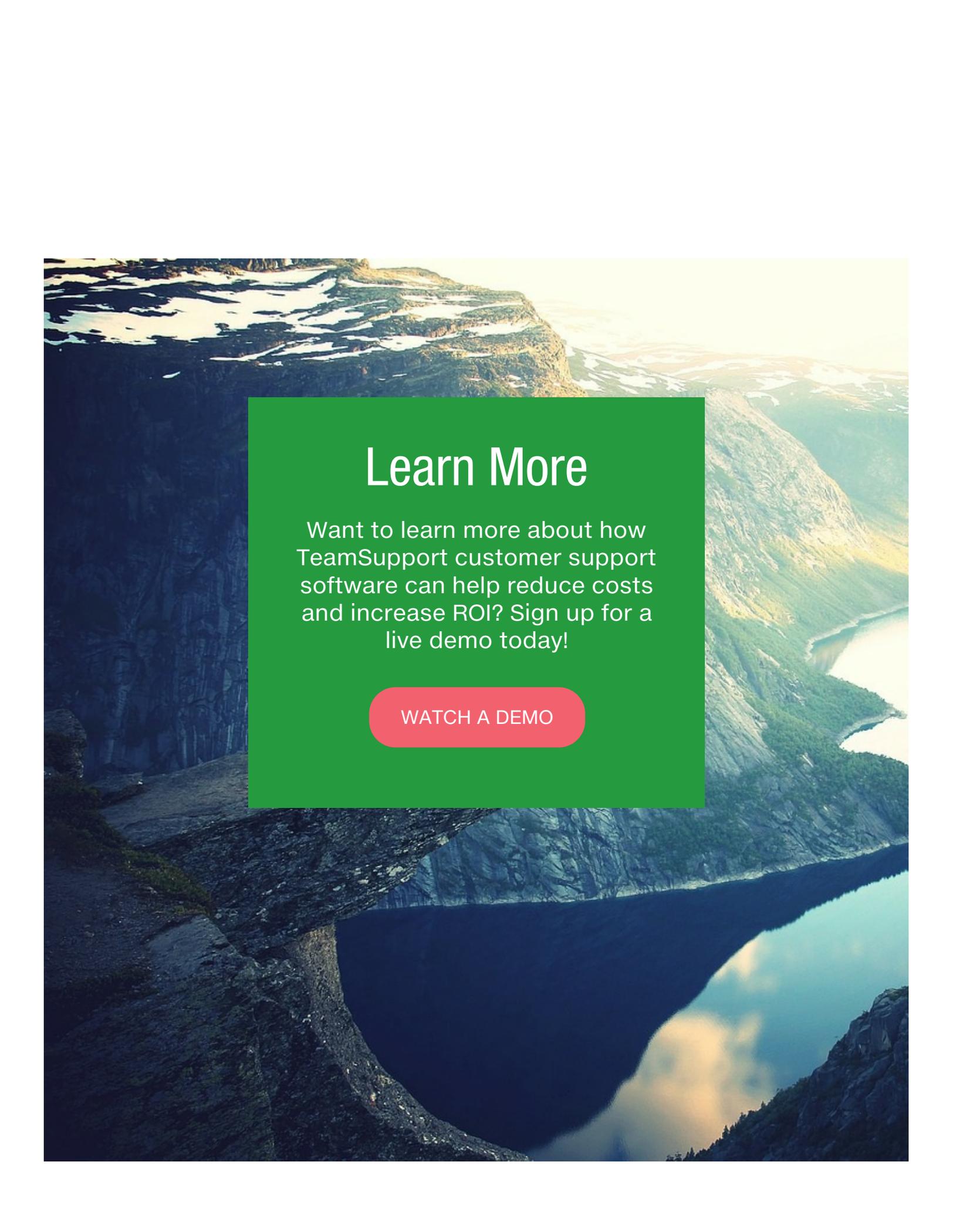
2. Overall problem resolution time

While responding to your customers quickly will help with customer satisfaction, their patience will fade if you don't also identify a solution quickly and accurately. If your team provides the customer with an answer and then a week later the same customer comes back with the same issue, it wasn't resolved the first time. This should be factored into the resolution time that you're tracking. For this reason, ensure you're keeping track of why the customer is calling in.

Customer support software can ensure that all of your customer service information is collected in a central repository so no matter who is helping the customer, reps can see the history of any tickets created in the past. The availability of past customer information will not only improve the support the customer gets, but it will help you more accurately track problem resolution metrics by identifying if the issue was actually resolved.

3. Abandonment rates

This metric measures the number of customers who give up before being helped by a service agent. Abandonment rates are often linked to long first response times. When you track this metric, you can see at what point in the process customers decide to abandon support. According to Business2Community, this helps show you what part of the process may need work. If it takes customers a long time or several steps before they can send a message or talk with a support rep, then you may want to revise the process so it's more streamlined and customer-friendly. Utilizing **help desk software** can help reduce the amount of time it takes for customers to get the answers they need, thus decreasing your abandonment rate.



Learn More

Want to learn more about how TeamSupport customer support software can help reduce costs and increase ROI? Sign up for a live demo today!

[WATCH A DEMO](#)