

Impact

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Network Associates' Magic Solutions Makes *Total Service Desk* Suite Viable for Hosting Environments

e-Businesses are increasingly looking to Application Service Providers (ASPs) and Managed Service Providers (MSPs) to automate and ease the process of many of their support and management activities. Additionally, as organizations seek to win more online business, they require service and support solutions that extend beyond basic help desk functionality. In response, Magic Solutions has evolved its Magic Total Service Desk (TSD) to meet the growing demand for a customizable browser-based solution that can integrate with additional applications.

Evolving Models in IT Delivery and Management

The 1990s were the age of the desktop PC, perpetual licenses, and the client-server model. Today the concept of the Internet and ASP — or “rent-an-app” — remains at the forefront of many Information Technology (IT) managers' minds. As development in networking and telecommunications technology — particularly the Internet — enables new approaches for delivering and managing IT applications and services, interest in pay-as-you-go application and service delivery models continues to gain momentum.

Growing Tendency to Outsource

With the growing presence of application outsourcers, ASPs, and e-Business companies, the role of help desk suppliers can now reach beyond the traditional domain of an internal application to support *external* customers. As outsourcing IT activities

increasingly become accepted as a reliable alternative to building in-house systems, leading technology suppliers are staking claims in these lucrative markets. Advantages to hosting options for the user include the following:

- Faster implementation and a shortened time-to-market phase;
- Minimal up-front hardware and software investments;
- Reduced training and technical support costs, which enables a refocus on core business competencies; and
- Access to high-end applications and new functionality.

Of course, some disadvantages exist for organizations in an ASP environment, such as less flexibility for specific business processes and decreased internal IT management control.

Magic Makes Its Applications Web-Friendly for Hosted Environments

Magic Solutions, a Network Associates (NAI) business unit known in the industry for its enterprise support and service applications, is aggressively tackling the application outsourcing market with a focus on help desks. Backed by NAI, the eighth largest independent software company and a leader in e-Business security technologies, Magic now offers a 100% browser-based service desk solution with drag-and-drop technologies to customize the database and user interface — making it suitable to be supported as a hosted application.

Magic Total Service Desk (TSD): Magic's Model for the Future

Magic is delivering its next-generation help desk application — a service desk that serves as a single point of contact to support process-oriented, proactive IT management throughout the enterprise. The solution, based on Microsoft Windows Distributed InterNet Applications (DNA) architecture, has a Windows look-and-feel and integrates sophisticated problem management applications with e-Business support tools. Some core components of Magic's TSD suite include:

- Automated Problem Management;
- Crisis Management;
- Advanced Call Management;
- Advanced Knowledge Management;
- Management Reporting; and
- End-User Self Service.

Mobilizing e-Business and Managed Service Industries

Some industries are ideally disposed to take advantage of next-generation service desk applications, such as those hoping to leverage the Internet to speed and expand methods of delivering services and customer support. For service providers looking to expand their offerings into the e-Business support arena, Magic's solution provides both internal and external support to any client via the Internet. Its drag-and-drop customization features also allow service providers to tailor their offerings according to their customers' specific business needs. Companies currently providing Magic's TSD as a hosted solution include Stratasys Corporation, Exenet and Network Associates' own myCIO.com.

Aberdeen Conclusions

As new technologies are deployed to leverage the Internet, the concept of service and support is changing. With proper execution, next-generation service and support applications can transform help desks from call tracking/problem resolution "trauma centers" to platforms for e-Business support management services. Magic's efforts to embrace a more complete e-Business support and service solution demonstrate the company's commitment to evolving its applications to meet new requirements created by today's Internet economy. As it moves into the ASP market, Magic is beginning to capture the attention of service providers seeking a viable platform to support complex, high-value customers.

— Karen E. Smith