Challenges — **and Best Practices** — in End-User Support Automation

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AUTOMATION is critical in today's world — it helps companies boost productivity at a time of increased business disruptions and rising customer demands. Yet IT decision-makers, who are already strapped for time, have all too often been rushed into adopting products that aren't adequate for the job. For many organizations, robotic process automation (RPA), monitoring tools, and chatbots are not sufficiently helping or significantly reducing the often-high number of IT end-user support issues that must be efficiently resolved to ensure business continuity. To keep up in the current competitive business environment, organizations need a better solution.

The challenges of end-user support automation

Over the last several years, more companies have adopted automated user support as they strive to maximize productivity and efficiency. But end-user support automation is often extremely challenging.

For IT leaders, the technological tools that help with automation can seem endless and overwhelming. Many busy IT decision-makers have limited time to conceptualize and drive an automation program. They find current marketplace end-user support automation tools to be clunky and inefficient.

What's more, the myriad of current, disjointed automated user support solutions many organizations have in place typically don't result in fewer end-user support issues. **McKinsey's automation survey** shows that only 55% of companies believe their automation program has achieved its expected results.

Of the multiple solutions, chatbots suffer from low adoption and near-zero resolution rates to IT help desk issues. Chatbots deflect — they don't resolve issues. According to Gartner, **a mere 9% of support journeys resolve solely within the self-service channel.** As a result, most users — even if they start with a self-service solution like a chatbot — end up with a live support team anyway.

Meanwhile, RPA fails to automate technical or application usage issues and is a significant investment that's not ideal for everyone. Whether or not RPA is suited to a company depends on the type and volume

of automation required. In many instances, RPA is not worth the investment for low-volume IT workflows.

Furthermore, endpoint monitoring churns out thousands of metrics that require skilled professionals to correlate, often requiring cleaning disk space to improve system performance. Windows scripting doesn't address user issues and is limited to preventive routines.

With automation, a one-time deployment of a scripting or monitoring tool doesn't reduce wait time or the burden on IT because end-user support is an ongoing process. In reality, 40% of users' issues on systems and applications are self-serviceable — but only with the right technology.

Tapping into AI and machine learning

Today's companies need a single platform to handle system and user issues via self-heal and self-help methods. The best practice is to use artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to automate as much as possible.

Organizations can lower human error and improve recovery processes by automating endpoint analytics with cobots. A cobot, or collaborative robot, is a self-service tool that interacts with humans and enhances productivity in the workspace.

With these types of solutions, organizations can realize multiple benefits. Companies that have adopted cobots found they can improve the employee user experience, reduce system downtime, and enhance IT desk efficiency. Salesforce's State of Service research report shows that 77% of agents say that automating routine tasks lets them focus on more complex work.

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> — **Kishore Kumar Ranjan,** vice president and head of technology and operations at Birlasoft

Organizations need a platform that can be operated by IT without requiring a data analyst or programmers. This will increase user productivity and remediate issues at endpoints and servers. And while there are multiple AI/ML automated solutions on the market, most of them don't offer remediation. Remediation facilitates innovative solutions and Anakage is one provider that focuses on it.

Anakage Cobots increase operational efficiency

Anakage Cobots offer self-heal, auto noncompliance remediation, and interactive guidance to end users in live applications. Additionally, they enable automated technical fixes where applications self-heal themselves.

[Cobots reduce up to 80% of manual **remediation]**

The solutions can be added to existing systems faster, with less training. Large automations and workload reductions can be achieved without IT personnel noticing a significant difference in their daily routines.

The no-code, low-code platform can configure cobots to monitor actionable system parameters and proactively resolve issues before end users notice. Meanwhile, reporting and analytics – easily accessed from the web portal, chat apps, and offline desktop apps – help IT help desk engineers proactively respond to issues that can't be automatically resolved by cobots. Cobots:

- reduce up to 50% of end-user tickets

- improve endpoint compliance

- reduce up to 75% of on-boarding time

- help end users digitally adopt applications

- reduce up to 80% of manual remediation

One automation program manager at a large German appliance and automotive parts manufacturer needed a fast, simple, user-friendly

bot to help employees as they processed millions of invoices annually. Anakage Cobots freed workers from repetitive tasks so they could focus on more difficult work. The company cut training time from two months to two weeks — a 75% reduction.

"Anakage Cobots provide just-in-time knowledge when working on a particular task, and they can be deployed on top of any application," the client's automation program manager says. "We've seen productivity and quality improvement."

Kunal Bhatt, associate director of automation at CMS IT Services, and his team have deployed Anakage Cobots across multiple clients, driving strong outcomes. Existing endpoint monitoring tools didn't come with effective remediation capabilities, especially given many clients' PowerShell restrictions, Bhatt found.

It's not uncommon for enterprises to not allow PowerShell. What's more, depending on scripting alone for end-user automation has its limitations. For example, scripts must be created and updated on an ongoing basis for newer issue resolutions, resulting in increased costs.

In 2015, CMS IT Services started with a deployment at one of the largest telecom companies in India. "The solution was extremely well-received by the client and helped us reduce manual efforts by up to 50%, besides improving overall user experience with self-help solutions," Bhatt says.

With a major oil and gas public-sector client of CMS IT Services, Anakage Cobots collected in-time IT surveys on ticket closure after proactively solving issues in an environment where PowerShell was restricted, and other tools failed. A major media software client was able to reduce requests and wait time by automating 71% of software install requests with Anakage Cobots.

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For Kishore Kumar Ranjan, vice president and head of technology and operations at Birlasoft, many service requests that could have been automated were ending up as tickets, resulting in overhead and productivity leakage. Traditional chatbots and monitoring tools weren't increasing operational efficiency because they missed most user-related technical issues.

Anakage's self-heal module helped users self-resolve pre-approved S/W installations, saving hours of work time. Ranjan has been impressed with proactive remediations on end-user machines alongside proactive noncompliance detection and auto-remediation.

"In less than three months after deployment, proactive and self-help solutions eliminated manual resolutions, reducing the time and efforts of service desk engineers on around 1,000 incidents per month," Ranjan says. The end result has been increased operational efficiency and over 400,000 proactive resolutions per month.

In today's competitive business world, companies need automation so they can boost productivity. IT leaders need an automation solution that produces real results. Through self-service automation, Anakage Cobots can help transform organizations.

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