nexthink

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

Evolving from Reactive to Proactive IT

Introduction

In their quest to deliver high-quality service, today's IT teams face more challenges than ever before. Digital transformation has accelerated rapidly, workplace technology has grown more sophisticated, and remote or hybrid work environments have become the norm rather than exceptions to the rule.

Despite their tireless efforts, IT professionals can't help but feel like they're fighting an uphill battle. Employees complain of poor experiences, and executives bemoan rising costs – but the endless influx of support tickets leaves IT teams with no breathing room to innovate.

It's time for a change. If the digital workplace is going to evolve at such a rapid pace, then support teams must evolve with it. And what's the number one issue holding IT teams back from offering better employee experience?

They're still operating with a reactive strategy. They only have the ability to solve issues after employees have reported them – after the damage has already been done. Given the complexity of today's workplace technology, this approach is no longer sustainable.

But there's another way. They can solve issues before they take effect and prevent them from reoccurring, rather than waiting for employees to suffer the consequences first. In other words, they can evolve from being reactive to proactive.

In this eBook, you'll find 5 of the most impactful benefits of a proactive IT strategy, and you'll learn how going proactive takes pressure off your service desk while delivering a better digital employee experience.

Read on to learn how your team can advance past an outdated reactive strategy and reap the rewards of proactive IT.

Table of Contents

01.
Gain Visibility into What's Happening from the Employee's Point-of-View

Reactive support teams often end up trapped in the same cycle of repeating steps:

1. An employee reports an incident, and the IT team rushes to investigate and solve it.
2. Meanwhile, other employees experience the same issue, and the support tickets pile up.
3. By the time the issue has been addressed for each impacted employee, a number of new incidents have occurred, and the IT team is back at step one.

The predominant cause of this cycle is that the IT team lacks any visibility beyond what incidents have already occurred. They can't see how many employees are affected by the same issue, and so they end up manually solving each issue, device by device, as frustration mounts among employees.

Not only is the IT team stuck in a reactive loop – they don't have a full understanding of the depth and scope of the problems they're reacting to.

That's why visibility is the first and most essential building block to proactive transformation. With deep, real-time insights into device activity and performance, a previously reactive IT team will be able to:

• Instantly determine how many devices are impacted by a reported issue.

• Look beyond incidents and visualize the performance of all core components (hardware, software, applications, networks, etc.) within employee devices.

• Establish baseline compliance standards for all components within the environment so that risks of incidents can be quickly identified.

In the short-term, this level of visibility enables the IT team to understand and thus troubleshoot incidents faster. But more importantly, it provides the foundation with which they'll build a truly proactive strategy.

SUCCESS STORY

Eye-Opening Things We Had Never Seen Before

One of the world's largest financial investment firms – with 2,500 digital workers spread across 24 global offices – struggled for years with frequent technology crashes and other issues their support teams couldn't get a handle on. According to a Senior Vice President at the firm: "It felt like it got to the point where employees actually expected the worst to happen."

With Nexthink, they were able to view multiple endpoints and employee data points they'd never been able to see before. They were suddenly able to understand existing and nascent issues, and proactively fix them using Nexthink's remediation scripts.

> "It felt like it got to the point where employees actually expected the worst to happen."

Senior Vice President
Financial Investment Firm

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02.
Solve Issues Before they Become Impactful Incidents

If gaining real-time visibility represents the first step towards becoming proactive, the next step is acting upon issues before employees even raise them.

This is where what we call a "Shift Left" philosophy comes into play. If you visualize an incident's progress as a straight line, reactive IT teams only deal with the end of the line – they focus solely on the volume of incidents that have already impacted employees. A proactive team has the ability to minimize employee-generated incidents by shifting left to analyze the earliest stages of a potential incident's lifecycle.

In monitoring the performance of critical agents within employee devices, IT workers can trace incidents back to their root causes while also detecting the appearance of potential issues in real-time. Think of these issues as ticking timebombs – they've made no impact on employee experience at this stage, but they will soon become incidents if left unaddressed.

Once a potential issue is identified, the IT team can perform advanced troubleshooting to identify a solution and then automate and scale that solution to prevent the issue from reoccurring.

Incidents will always be raised, but the key to proactivity is to get to them before users raise them. When you reduce the number of user-raised incidents, the service desk ultimately becomes much less busy.

By shifting left and proactively solving issues before they grow, the support team will dramatically increase Mean Time Between Failures (MTBF), cutting IT costs and reducing the impact of technology issues on employee productivity.

"Our only way to resolve incidents was to take control of endpoints remotely. Today, we can directly identify what is at the root of the problem."

Frédéric Gaborieau
Head of IT Infrastructure
at Système U

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03.
Enable Employees to Remediate Incidents with Easy Self-Service

For reactive IT teams, support tickets only represent the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the problems employees face. In fact, 45% of IT issues are never even reported by employees.

Many employees see IT as a last resort, especially when they're accustomed to slow response times or ineffective service. And so they waste time researching and trying to solve their own problems or choose to simply live with the issues impacting their digital experiences.

The burden of resolving issues shouldn't fall on the shoulders of employees in place of the IT team. With a proactive approach, organizations can alleviate employees of their silent problems while lessening the load on the service desk.

For ongoing proactive self-help, IT teams can deploy automated engagement campaigns directly to employees. Remote actions are able to trigger these campaigns, which help employees fix and avoid incidents by:
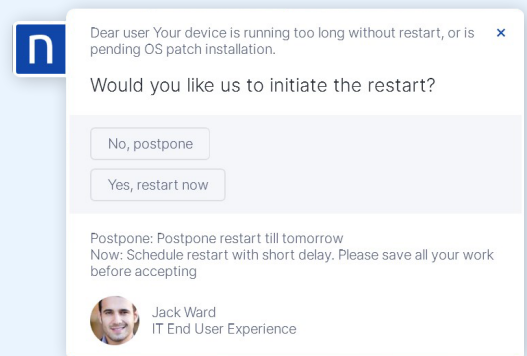
- Informing employees of an existing or potential issue.
- Proposing a series of steps to resolve the issue.
- Notifying employees once the issue has been resolved.

These unobtrusive campaigns can streamline solutions such as disk cleanups, device reboots, application upgrades, and other easy fixes to common employee problems.
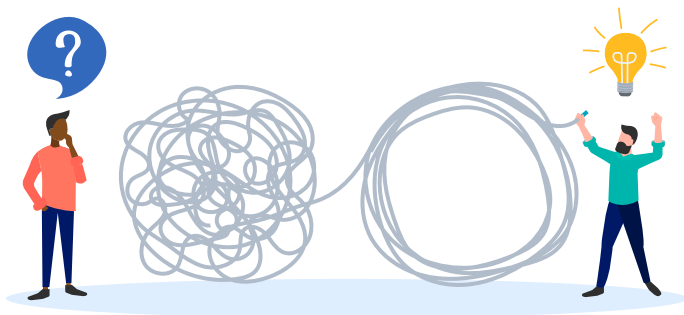
SUCCESS STORY

The IT team at a global mining company recently recognized that over 7,000 devices were experiencing high memory usage impacting employee experience. With a targeted self-help campaign, which enabled employees to restart their devices with an automated action, the team was able to solve the issue and save 350 hours of IT overhead.

Dear user Your device is running too long without restart, or is pending OS patch installation.

Would you like us to initiate the restart?

No, postpone

Yes, restart now

Postpone: Postpone restart till tomorrow
Now: Schedule restart with short delay. Please save all your work before accepting

Jack Ward
IT End User Experience

This self-help automation instantly saved 350 hours of IT overhead.

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04.
Optimize Employee Experience with Real-Time Scoring

The modern IT infrastructure is complex and always evolving, which means support teams often struggle to understand where their priorities should be. It can be difficult to know what problems are most urgent, which employees require which solutions, how a new technology rollout impacts employees differently, and so on.

When an IT team lacks the ability to prioritize, they risk employee experience becoming inconsistent throughout an organization. Users in one region might suffer more issues than their colleagues in another location, or a certain team or department doesn't receive the support they need to accomplish their specific tasks.

So how can support teams take a proactive approach to prioritization? By seeing IT from the employee's perspective.

With access to real-time digital experience scoring capabilities, IT teams gain a quantifiable, holistic view of employee experience based on both technical data and employee sentiment. They are then able to leverage these experience scores to measure, track, and quickly identify shifts in employee experience across departments, regions, working styles, and other unique characteristics.

Analyzing trends in experience scores enables support teams to make more informed decisions and optimize experience – not just for individual employees who suffer issues, but for the entire organization.

SUCCESS STORY

Disrupting the Way Support is Delivered

Slater and Gordon, a leading UK-based legal firm, has embraced proactive IT for years, even reshaping the culture of their service teams to better facilitate proactive efforts. With Nexthink's Experience Optimization dashboard – and its guided process for detection and resolution –they're now able to prioritize the specific order with which they address IT issues.

"

The magic with Nexthink Experience is that it doesn't just give us insights, but recommends actual engineering suggestions. This is an incredible advance...For my team, it allows us to free up more time and resources to help the business innovate."

Jon Grainger
CIO, Slater and Gordon

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05.
# Drive Company-Wide Improvement with Automated Self-Healing

We've already covered the benefits of proactive self-help campaigns – but in some cases, it's best to apply fixes without employees needing to be aware of them at all.

Proactive self-healing solutions have the ability to detect issues and trigger a wide range of remediations based on previous best practices. Support teams can set up remote actions so that this process happens automatically, preventing employees from having to do their own troubleshooting or request help.

For example: let's say an application continually crashes because of a corrupted file. If employees were to fix this issue on their own, they'd have to delete the file before restarting the application – a frustrating process that can also confuse less technically proficient users.

With proactive self-healing, a support team would be able to create a remote action to automatically detect the application crash, delete the corrupted file, and restart the application. In this example, employees never have to even know about the issue until after it's already been solved.

These kinds of self-healing practices help to maintain a consistently healthy digital workplace and are particularly useful for wide-scale solutions, such as updating a specific patch across the entire enterprise.
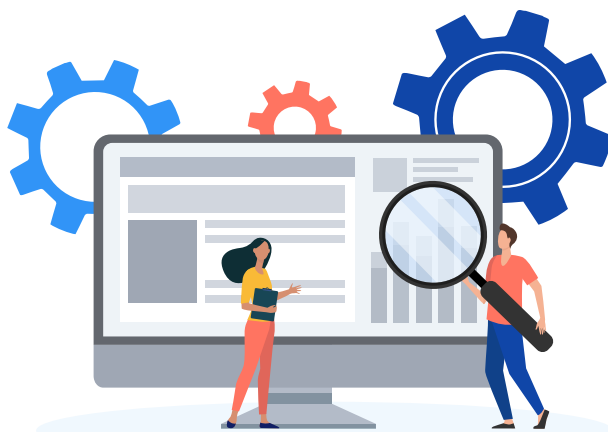
> "Different functional support teams have gained huge value from Nexthink's in-depth information, we've seen benefits from growing employee spirits and confidence, and IT's standing has never been better."

Steve Amos
IT Customer Experience & Operations Manager, Vitality

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Conclusion

The success of each and every employee's journey rests on the shoulders of support teams. In an increasingly digital workplace, becoming proactive means much more than reducing tickets and lowering costs; it means freeing employees from problems they don't need to experience, providing service that consistently delights them, and building a happier and more productive workforce.

Here at Nexthink, we aim to help support teams put employees at the center of their IT efforts. Whether you're just embarking on your journey to becoming proactive or you're looking for innovative methods for continuous improvement, we're here to help you build a better digital workplace and provide employees with the delightful experiences they deserve.

ABOUT NEXTHINK

Nexthink is the global leader in Digital Employee Experience management. The company's products allow enterprises to create highly productive digital workplaces for their employees by delivering optimal end-user experiences. Through a unique combination of real-time analytics, automation and employee feedback across all endpoints, Nexthink helps IT teams meet the needs of the modern digital workplace.

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Want to learn more about how
Nexthink can help you improve
employee experience?