

The many flavors of self-service measurement



Ask and you shall receive. Based on your first-choice priority, we showed you the self-service metrics that are most important to your business right now. But companies have different priorities at different phases of their business. This complete guide walks you through the spectrum of self-service metrics and the business priorities they address.

You might have noticed that most of these metrics fall under more than one business priority bucket. We've highlighted any overlap so you can see how those metrics may be useful for your business in later stages.



Building community and relationships

Engagement with your self-service content, such as upvotes, downvotes, and comments within your community platforms, are pulse points on your customer base. Levels of self-service engagement tell you whether your knowledge base content is useful—or if it could use some work.



Ticket deflection

Ticket deflection is tricky. How do you measure something that hasn't happened? To measure it, divide the total number of unique users that interacted with help content on a topic by the total number of unique users who opened tickets on that same topic. If you have a popular help center page and notice a lower number of tickets on that same subject, congratulations: You're likely deflecting tickets!

Also applies to: Improving customer experience and streamlining internal operations



Bounce rate

A bounce means that the customer left your knowledge base after viewing the first page that they landed on. A high bounce rate may indicate that your content didn't answer their question, which means customers may have sought answers elsewhere or switched channels.

Also applies to: Improving customer experience



Unique Users

Unique users refers to the number of people who clicked on your self-service articles. If your number of unique visitors is low or flat, it could mean you aren't doing enough to drive traffic to your knowledge base. It's also possible that you aren't providing the right content. Encourage advocates to proactively share knowledge base content as they manage tickets, so that customers know they can reference this resource going forward.



Pageviews

This is the number of views of each page in your help center. Aim to keep this number high and your bounce rate low, which indicates people are finding and spending time with your content.

Also applies to: Streamlining internal operations



Tickets created from comments

These are tickets created from comments made on your help center articles. Customers add comments when they need more information or clarification. A high number of tickets submitted this way may indicate that the article isn't sufficient, but it's actually a great heads up to enrich your knowledge base with more detail and unexpected use cases.

Also applies to: Improving customer experience and streamlining internal operations

Improving customer experience

For a growing company, one-to-one support simply doesn't scale. Self-service support helps keep costs down by maintaining headcount, allowing customers to self-assist on simple questions, and freeing agents for more complex issues.



Channel switching

Though channel switching isn't necessarily a bad thing when you've built a truly omnichannel experience, it could be noteworthy from a self-service perspective. If customers are finding but leaving your help center and seeking 1:1 assistance, something could be amiss in your self-service channel.

Also applies to: Building community and relationships



Searches with no clicks or results

"Searches with no results" refers to searches for which no relevant help content was provided. "Searches with no clicks" refers to the searches that didn't result in any clicks within the help center, indicating the content provided wasn't useful to the customer. Both of these metrics indicate that your help content needs to be revised, either with more relevant article titles or with new articles that leverage search terms customers are using.

Also applies to: Building community and relationships



Attempted tickets

These are tickets that customers either didn't finish or didn't submit to an agent. This should generally be a low number; a higher one could indicate a poor user experience, where the customer finds it difficult to either describe their problem or submit a ticket.

Also applies to: Building community and relationships



Abandoned shopping carts

This is one of the more painful metrics. An abandoned shopping cart means a customer browsed your site, placed items in the shopping cart, but exited without completing the purchase. Often times, customers do this because they can't find what they need, such as information about shipping or returns—which should be made available via self-service.

Also applies to: Building community and relationships



Tickets created after search

This metric helps you track what customers search for and what actions they take after conducting those searches. A large number of tickets created after search suggests that the content provided wasn't enough to help the customer solve the problem on their own. This could also indicate a product issue, as customers might be having difficulty even with sufficient self-service content.

Also applies to: Building community and relationships and streamlining internal operations

Streamlining internal operations

A knowledge base can make agents more efficient, providing at-their-fingertips information as they assist your growing customer base. Furthermore, this info can be used by everyone on your support team, as well as by multiple functions across your business.



Ticket escalation rate

Not all tickets can be resolved by the first agent who answered the call or opened the support request. Tickets requiring deep knowledge are often escalated to agents with more specialization (which is fine; that's what they're there for), but too many escalations can indicate an ongoing, larger issue. For example, perhaps front-line agents aren't being properly trained, or maybe they don't have adequate (or any) help center content to reference.



One-touch tickets

One-touch tickets are the number of tickets solved via a single interaction. While a high number of one-touch tickets could be an indicator of efficient support agents, it might also mean that too many customers are submitting tickets that could easily have been resolved without direct help from an agent—or with easy access to a help center article. Keep track of one-touch tickets, specifically tracking the kinds of issues they revolve around, then create knowledge base articles that directly address those topics.

Also applies to: Improving customer experience



Inbound ticket volume

This is the number of tickets created by customers. For many, inbound ticket volume is the gold standard for determining self-service health. A high volume of inbound tickets can lead to strained support staff and long wait times for customers, which means nobody wins. Find out which simple issues can be solved with self-service, then make it easy for customers to find that information. Inbound ticket volume should get smaller as a result.



Handle time

Handle time is the time that an agent spends working on a single support interaction. Digging into the details about the amount of effort that went into a resolution is a whole other level of data, a step beyond measuring the amount of time it took.



Resolution time

This is the amount of time it takes for agents to resolve issues. Often times, the better your knowledge base, the faster your agents can resolve tickets, because existing content allows them to more quickly and efficiently answer frequently asked questions. Resolution time can be broken down into “time to resolution,” which measures the time it takes for a support issue to be solved, and “first-contact resolution” (FCR), which measures the percentage of support issues that were resolved in a single interaction.