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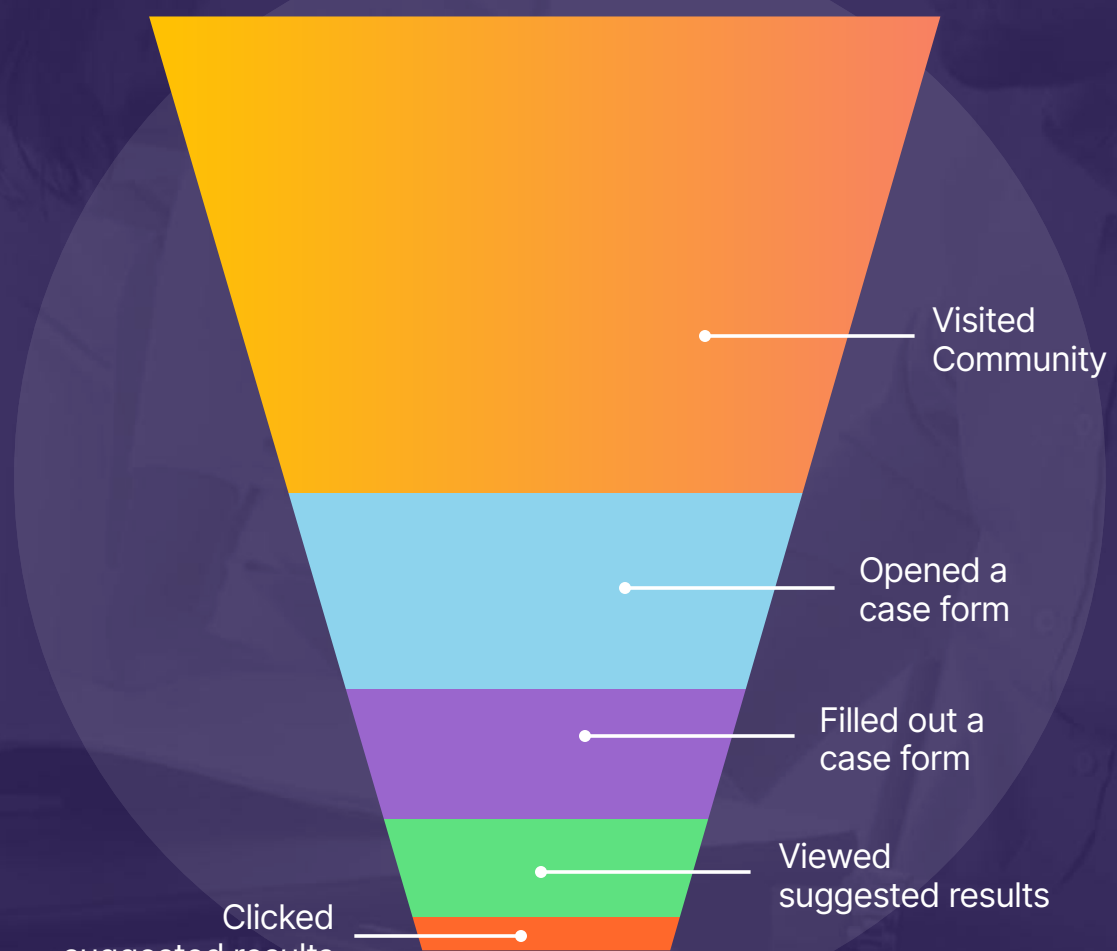
The ROI of Self-Service and Case Deflection

For a number of years, we are seeing a growing trend: customers **WANT** to self-serve. No matter how good the live support offering is, customers are showing an overwhelming preference for self-led resolution, with 81% of B2B technical content users reporting they would like to resolve technical issues by themselves.[1]

The potential for technical content to facilitate self-service is immense. Recent Technology & Services Industry Association (TSIA) research suggests that up to 60% of support tickets could have been resolved through documentation. Among these resolved tickets, 36% were successfully addressed with the help of how-tos, user guides, and knowledge-base articles.[2]

Furthermore, the Zoomin 2023 Industry Benchmarks reveal the effectiveness of integrating documentation within the support process. On average, organizations that incorporate documentation as part of their case resolution experience an impressive self-service rate as high as 82%. This indicates that customers are able to find the information they need and resolve their issues independently, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of support cases. In fact, the case deflection rate, which represents the percentage of support tickets that are successfully resolved through the Zoomin Case Deflection widget,[3] stands at an impressive 39%.



These statistics highlight the tangible impact that well-crafted technical content can have on improving customer satisfaction and reducing the workload on support teams. By enabling customers to self-serve and by deflecting support cases, businesses can achieve significant cost savings by minimizing the need for live support interactions.

[1] B2B self-service report 2022 by Zoomin and Frost & Sullivan

[2] Incident lifecycle management webinar by TSIA

[3] https://docs.zoominsoftware.io/bundle/zfs-user-guide/page/how_to_add_the_zoomin_case_deflection_component to your salesforce. experience site.html

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How to calculate the ROI of self-service?

In order to determine the cost savings achieved by case deflection and self-service initiatives, the equation needs to factor in metrics such as the average handling time, hourly salaries of support agents, and the number of tickets resolved with technical content.

Some support centers adopt the known, simple formula to estimate their average cost per ticket:

$$\frac{\text{Total Customer Support Spend}}{\text{Total Number of Tickets}} = \text{Cost per Support Ticket}$$

However, when looking at the complexity of variables involved in support costs, such as communication channels and resolution complexity, this formula may not capture the full picture. In addition, the cost of providing support can vary depending on factors such as the company's industry, size, location, and the experience level of the support agent.

Considering these factors,[4] we recommend assessing the average cost of a support ticket by considering the hourly salary of support agents, which typically falls between $14.50 and $24.00. Additionally, it is important to factor in the average time required to resolve a ticket, which is approximately 6.2 hours.[5] Based on these figures, the estimated cost range to handle a ticket ranges between $89.90 and $148.80. This estimate encompasses the support agent's hourly salary and the time invested in resolving the issue.

This alternative nuanced formula is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Entry Level Hourly Salary} \times \text{Time to Resolve} \times \text{Number of Tickets}$$
$$+ \text{Advanced Support Hourly Salary} \times \text{Time to Resolve} \times \text{Number of Tickets}$$
$$+ \text{Product / R\&D Hourly Salary} \times \text{Time to Resolve} \times \text{Number of Tickets}$$
$$= \textbf{Total Case Resolution Cost}$$

[4] https://www.indeed.com/cmp/Six-Flags,-Inc./salaries/Customer-Service-Team-Lead

[5] https://abdalslam.com/copy-statistics

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Some companies have reported even higher estimates for the cost per ticket resolved. In certain cases, the cost per ticket can reach as high as $280 or even $500.[6] These higher estimates may account for additional factors such as specialized expertise, advanced support requirements, or more complex issues.

The actual cost savings will vary depending on the specific circumstances and volume of B2B tickets for each organization. However, we have found that the potential for cost reduction through self-service and case deflection typically ranges from $100,000 up to $5,000,000 monthly, making it a valuable strategy for businesses looking to optimize their support operations and improve their bottom line.

Zoomin's Case Deflection Measurement

Zoomin offers customers the ability to continuously monitor their case deflection cases and to calculate the money saved by their users' self-service.

Based on the industry benchmarks mentioned above, and statistics from Zoomin's customers' database, we estimate the **average cost per deflected ticket at $100.**

With support tickets that require additional handling time by SMEs such as Product and R&D teams, **we estimate the average cost per deflected ticket at $250.**

Estimated cost savings (case ID base)

$

$4,586,800

Calculated by $100 per case

[6] According to certain Zoomin customers' internal data

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How to calculate your real case deflection

Step 1: Questions you need to answer:

- How many support tickets do your customers open in a year?
- How many of these tickets could have been solved by the customers having access to technical content? (These will now become the baseline as these are the only tickets that could have been deflected or resolved with documentation.)
- How many of the total tickets were resolved by entry-level support? (none or %)
- How many of the total tickets were resolved with advanced support? (none or %)
- How many of the total tickets were resolved by Product or R&D? (none or %)

Step 2: Build your metric:

	Hourly Salary *(industry benchmark)*	Average handling time *(industry benchmark)*	Number of tickets *(your data)*	Cost per ticket *(your data)*	ROI
Entry Level Support	$14	1 hour	?	?	?
Advanced support	$20	4 hours	?	?	?
Product/ R&D	$80	13 hours	?	?	?

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Let’s Simulate

Storm is a SaaS B2B company, located in the US.

Their support team handles 100,000 support tickets yearly.

This means these tickets could have been deflected through self-service. Based on this information we can calculate the ROI or the total savings incurred when customers serve themselves.

Using their internal support tagging they were able to show 30,000 tickets were tagged as “resolved by customer knowledge”.

	Hourly Salary *(industry benchmark)*	Average handling time *(industry benchmark)*	Number of tickets *(your data)*	Cost per ticket *(your data)*	ROI
Entry Level Support	$14	1 hour	25,000	$14	$350,000
Advanced support	$20	4 hours	14,000	$80	$1,120,000
Product/ R&D	$80	13 hours	1,000	$800	$800,000
Total ROI					**$2,270 000**

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Resources

In preparing this B2B whitepaper, we have gathered valuable insights from various reputable sources. We would like to acknowledge the following resources for providing the information referenced in this document:

1. Archbee Blog "Technical Documentation Impact on Finances" Available at:
https://www.archbee.com/blog/technical-documentation-impact-on-finances

2. HDI Library "Metric of the Month: Desktop Support Cost per Ticket" Available at:
https://www.thinkhdi.com/library/supportworld/2017/metric-of-month-desktop-support-cost-per-ticket.aspx

3. TSIA Report "The State of Self-Service report" Available at:
https://www.tsia.com/App/UI/Viewfile.aspx?id=21694

4. CX Trends "CX Trends 2020 Full Report (PDF)" Available at:
https://d1eipm3vz40hy0.cloudfront.net/pdf/cxtrends/cx-trends-2020-full-report.pdf

5. TrustRadius "Help Desk Statistics" Available at:
https://www.trustradius.com/buyer-blog/help-desk-statistics

6. Abdalslam Blog • "Copy Statistics" Available at:
https://abdalslam.com/copy-statistics

7. TSIA Webinars "Create an Exceptional Self-Service Customer Experience with Knowledge Management" Available at:
https://www.tsia.com/webinars/create-an-exceptional-self-service-customer-experience-with-knowledge-management

8. Indeed "Customer Service Salaries" Available at:
https://www.indeed.com/cmp/Six-Flags,-Inc./salaries/Customer-Service-Team-Lead

BUILD YOUR CONTENT ROI WITH ZOOMIN

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