IT Innovation Without Disruption

10 Proven Ways to Engage with
Employees to Drive Proactive Change

nexthink

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Introduction

Why is innovation in enterprise IT often synonymous with employee disruption?

It seems like you cannot update a collaboration tool, roll out new software, or move to the cloud without interrupting employees and taking time away from their workday. Rarely does IT engage with people in a way that mitigates their anxiety or confusion over new work tools or IT policies.

Instead of proactively engaging with employees to improve their experience, IT is all too often stuck playing catch up. As a result, many employees will often not even bother to report their technical issues. According to an independent survey, workers only report half of the technical issues they face, choosing instead to suffer in silence, than submit an IT ticket.

Unfortunately, IT's problems don't show any signs of stopping. We found that approximately 1 in 4 technology executives anticipate challenges with the following in 2021: application adoption and usage; new tech rollouts; problem identification; and work-from-anywhere (WFA) models.

And yet...

While the gap between what IT wants to deliver and can deliver seems wide, many organizations are figuring out ways to bridge the divide. Spurred by the pressure of the pandemic, digital transformation projects, executive initiatives and mergers and acquisitions, some IT teams have risen to the challenge and delivered positive digital experiences for their employees and clear business outcomes for their companies.

By leveraging Nexthink's unique employee and device capabilities, multiple IT teams were able to give employees the ability to fix their own digital problems and stay productive. We have compiled some of their success stories to show you how organizations like yours can use our smart automations and employee engagement features to see significant cost savings, improvements in employee sentiment, and better resource allocation.

PART 1: Proactive Employee Self-Help

One way that IT teams can innovate and prevent disruption is to offer light-touch, self-help fixes for their employees. When IT teams get employees involved in the remediation process, they can deliver faster and more comprehensive incident management by detecting and resolving hidden issues before employees to report them.

To do this, though, you need targeted, onscreen engagement features to connect IT and employees, and scalable backend automations to speed up software updates, disk cleaning, and a host of other actions.

Imagine you experience an IT issue. But before you consider whether or not to contact IT, a message pops up on your device letting you know they are aware of the problem. You are then prompted to resolve the issue with one simple click. What happens after that click, invisible to you the employee, is a remote action that deploys to fix your issue instantly.

Now imagine this same scenario performed at scale, across your entire enterprise.

The following success stories highlight how IT teams did just that. They leveraged real-time analytics, hyper-targeted communication channels, and widespread, automated remediations to help employees help themselves.

1) Root Out the Silent Killer: Low Disk Space

A few weeks after the pandemic hit, employees at this global financial company started experiencing disk space issues. Low system disk space is a silent killer of employee experience. When space is low, several performance issues can arise that impact employee file sharing and productivity. In addition, software compliance issues can pop up if system updates cannot be properly installed. Eventually, low disk space, spread out over several devices, can quickly escalate to an increased ticket count, complex troubleshooting and deteriorating device experience.

To combat this growing problem, this company monitored its employees' disk space across every single one of their devices. Once they had insight into which devices were running low on space, IT created a targeted campaign to automatically contact every employee with less than 10GB of free space left on their device.

The campaign asked each employee if it was okay to clean up their disk space. When they selected yes, the employee triggered a remote action that cleared their recycle bin and temporary files.

This self-help campaign cleared up hundreds of GB of disk space and dramatically reduced IT's ticket count in a matter of days. Previously, it took IT approximately 15 minutes per device to clean each disk, but now they could automatically resolve these issues and drive significant productivity increases across the organization without any manual intervention.

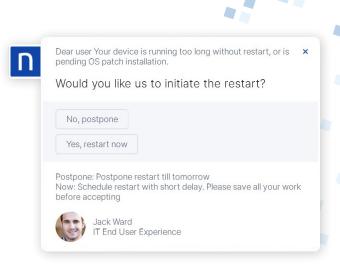| Devices System drive free space <=10GB	Disk Cleanup was executed to CleanUP Disk	Amount of Disk space Cleaned today
547	20	6.6 GB
▲ +38	▲ +4	▲ +5 GB

This self-help campaign cleared up hundreds of GB of disk space and dramatically reduced IT's ticket count in a matter of days.
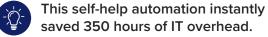
2) Remind User to Reboot

At a global mining company, over 7,000 devices were experiencing high memory usage and generating performance issues. Further analysis showed that 50% of those devices had not rebooted in more than seven days.

To improve their employees' device experience, the IT team deployed a highly targeted automated self-help campaign. Instead of messaging all employees, or even all employees with high memory usage, they opted for more precision. Instead, IT targeted only employees who had not recently rebooted and experienced high memory usage. The campaign allowed each employee to restart their device through an automated action.

As a result, IT observed that device performance and employee sentiment increased rapidly. This self-help automation instantly saved 350 hours of IT overhead because IT did not have to reach out and spend 30 minutes per device like they used to in the past!

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.

3) Rescue Employees from MS Teams Instability

Following the transition to remote work, a global manufacturing company noticed an MS Teams stability issue. A recent update caused MS Teams to crash repeatedly on employees.

Once IT identified the issue, they targeted 324 affected devices with an automated self-help campaign. In one click, employees were able to turn off MS Teams' GPU hardware acceleration on their devices. Since this required an application restart, IT provided a 10-minute delay for the employee to prepare for the reboot and close any open documents.

The result?

IT witnessed a 78% reduction in MS Teams crashes across targeted devices, which quickly enabled employees to collaborate once again on their work projects.

78%
Reduction

A 78% reduction in MS Teams crashes across targeted devices.

Summary

While each company is different, their stories show how IT can be proactive and effective at its job. Rather than responding to one issue after another, these IT teams identified all affected users and launched targeted campaigns that enabled employees to solve their own issues with just the click of a button.

PART 2: Keeping Devices Current

The question, *"when did you last update your device?"* haunts IT and employees alike. An outdated or non-compliant device opens a flood gate of potential IT issues—poor device performance, application instability, and security vulnerabilities, to name a few.

Even worse, IT notoriously struggles to detect and resolve these issues at scale. *Version dispersion*—when multiple network, application or device versions exist—can make solving issues tricky for IT, especially across a large device landscape. In most cases, support teams will only notice outdated devices and applications when an employee submits a ticket. This forces them to manually resolve these issues on a case-by-case basis, which can take away hours, if not weeks, of IT's time.

In the previous section we showed how IT can empower employees to resolve issues themselves through targeted outreach and smart automations. But what if you could prevent those issues from happening in the first place?

The following success stories highlight how IT teams did just that by keeping a constant eye on critical services versioning, deploying remote updates when necessary and keeping employees involved in the process.

4) Deployment Drag? Update Old Devices

This UK mining company prevented potentially devastating performance issues and security risks with their Windows 10 deployment. Using Nexthink's dashboards, IT identified 6,000 devices that required updates, and a majority that had not rebooted in more than 30 days!

To remediate this issue, the IT team quickly identified affected devices and sent an automated self-help campaign to employees that described the problem and offered to restart their devices. If a user accepted, a remote action would trigger a forced restart within two minutes.

77% Reduction in outdated devices

96% Campaign response rate

Within a week, IT noticed a 77% reduction in outdated devices due to their efforts. The campaign resulted in employees rebooting, which prevented potential performance or security incidents from ever occurring again. And since employees were directly involved and informed about the reason for this restart, IT's campaign received a response rate of 96%, their highest ever!
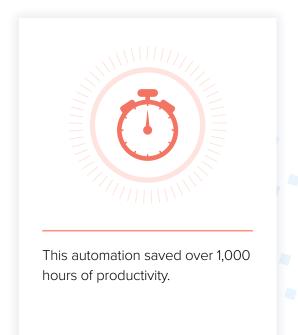
Manually reaching out to convince an employee to restart their device used to take the support team about 10 minutes per user. This automation saved over 1,000 hours of productivity.
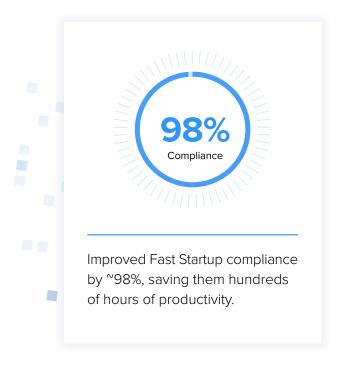
5) Fix Fast Startup Issues

Windows 10's Fast Startup feature has benefits for individual users, but this Northern European manufacturing company discovered it was the main culprit behind several device issues. If more employees began to use the Fast Startup feature, and encountered similar issues, it could be devastating for the company's productivity. IT also discovered that the Fast Startup feature prevented them from correctly reporting their devices' last reboot date and time.

To remediate the issue proactively, the IT team scripted and deployed two custom remote actions. The first retrieved and reported that, out of 3,100 Windows devices, about 500 had Fast Startup enabled. The second remote action disabled Fast Startup on each of those devices.

In a single troubleshooting session, the company improved Fast Startup compliance by ~98%, saving them hundreds of hours of productivity. And that is before considering future incidents that will not need to be resolved – they will simply never occur!

This automation saved over 1,000 hours of productivity.

98%
Compliance

Improved Fast Startup compliance by ~98%, saving them hundreds of hours of productivity.

6) Prevent VPN Traffic Bottlenecks

This French multinational transport company needed to transition employees effectively and securely to a 100% remote work setup. After switching to remote work, every employee connected to the VPN, unaware that most of their critical work applications were accessible outside the network. As a result, the company's VPN system collapsed entirely, preventing thousands of users from accessing critical internal applications.

The IT team quickly deployed a targeted awareness campaign to educate employees about unnecessary VPN usage for corporate resources. By delivering a tailored onscreen campaign (written in seven different languages) only to employees that connected to the VPN, IT was able to successfully redirect their network traffic.

Thanks to the campaign's contextual and timely aspects, positive outcomes were clear in just a few hours. Over 23,500 employees received the campaign, and 90% responded to the message. The VPN network usage dropped by 75%, and overall VPN connectivity and performance increased. Employees could access their critical services once again, saving thousands of hours of both IT and employee productivity, as well as avoiding any related operational costs.

Over 23,500 employees received the campaign with a **90% response rate**.

Summary

These success stories showcase how IT teams can avoid future catastrophe by keeping every device in their landscape current and compliant.

PART 3. Detect and Address Collaboration Issues

When file transfers, instant messaging, email, or Wi-Fi used to fail in the office, an employee could stand up and walk over to deliver the message in person. It certainly didn't grind their workday to a halt.
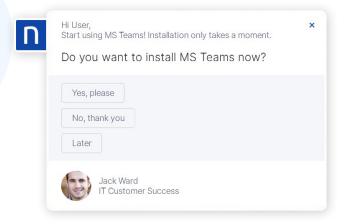
But in the world of remote work, people depend heavily on collaboration tools like Zoom or MS Teams. When those applications fail, delivering a message in person is no longer a viable option—employees are left stranded.

Ensuring your digital collaboration tools work is only half the battle. Employees also need to use them.

The success stories in this last section highlight how IT teams can proactively detect issues using a comprehensive scoring system and detailed drill-down capabilities. Each team rooted out problems before they spread to the rest of the company's devices and users.

7) Resolve Botched SCCM Deployments

The IT team at a Northern European manufacturing company wanted to retire Skype for Business and deploy MS Teams by using Microsoft SCCM. Soon after rolling out MS Teams, IT identified that over 2,000 devices still did not have the application installed. SCCM failed to update the device population, leaving IT with few options that would save them any time. At the time, every employee was working remotely, so the company relied heavily on Skype (and now MS Teams) to collaborate.

Rather than applying a manual fix in SCCM, IT's Head of End-User Computing decided to take a different approach. This person sent out an immediate campaign to every user without MS Teams installed, offering clear instructions on how to install it themselves.

The results were immediate. In 48 hours, they received an 80% response rate with over 1,200 devices successfully installing MS Teams using the instructions provided. This allowed IT to avoid hundreds of installation tickets, which can take upwards of 15 minutes per device to resolve manually. It saved them thousands of potential support-hours and ensured that every employee could collaborate effectively, with minimal downtime, on the same platform.

They received an **80% response rate** with over 1,200 devices successfully installing MS Teams.

8) Detect Missing Plugins

This US financial company received a ticket about an employee missing the Skype-for-Business plug-in for Outlook. A quick search showed that this user was not alone—hundreds of other devices were also missing the plug-in, but employees never raised the issue with IT.

Using self-help outreach and automation, the IT team was able to resolve the issue quickly. IT sent a targeted campaign to every device missing the plug-in and asked users if they'd like to enable it. By clicking OK, a remote action would execute the add-in installation on the device.

In a single week, 95% of devices had Skype for Business plug-in enabled. A month later, the IT team noticed a 28% reduction in Skype for Business related tickets and a 12% reduction in Outlook related tickets. This not only saved precious productivity hours for the support team, but also undoubtedly improved the overall collaboration experience.

9) Save Employees from Suffering in Outlook Silence

Last year, this Dutch financial company discovered that several outdated Outlook binaries led to performance issues and application crashes. While some employees had raised tickets, the IT team quickly discovered that hundreds more were experiencing the same frustration but remained silent about it.
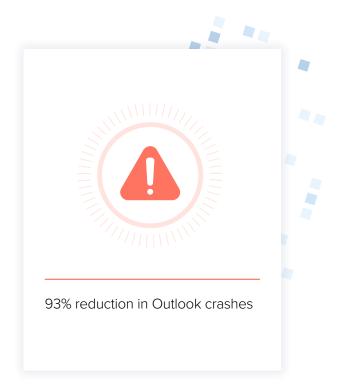
To combat this growing issue, the IT team quickly deployed an automated remote action to update every device that had outdated binaries.

After a couple of days, they noticed a 93% reduction in Outlook crashes. Since then, the support team has used this remote action to fix similar Outlook crashes.

95% In a single week, 95% of devices had Skype for Business plug-in enabled in a single week.

28% A month later, the IT team noticed a 28% reduction in Skype for Business related tickets the following month.

12% A month later the IT team noticed a 12% reduction in Outlook related tickets the following month.
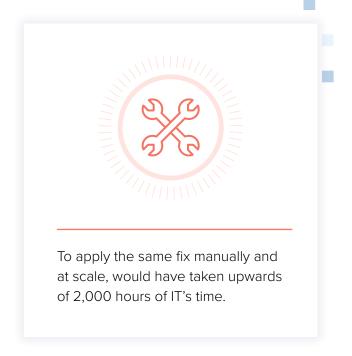
93% reduction in Outlook crashes

10) How Long? Instantly Automate SCCM Agent Repairs

The IT team at this Dutch food distributor noticed that a high percentage of SCCM agent software was out of date across their network. This worried them as SCCM agent compliance was critical to their software distribution and patching.

To further investigate, the IT team scripted and deployed a remote action that retrieved every device where SCCM services had stopped. Their next move was to deploy a second automated remote action over a one-month period that restarted and restored each devices' SCCM services.

By leveraging these simple remote actions, IT improved their compliance across 14,000 devices by restarting SCCM services, delivering required patch updates, and avoiding future tickets and calls to the help desk. To apply the same fix manually, and at that scale, would have taken upwards of 2,000 hours of IT time!

To apply the same fix manually and at scale, would have taken upwards of 2,000 hours of IT's time.

Summary

These stories show how IT can diagnose technical issues and leverage smart automations to help employees successfully adopt and use their new work tools and services.

Conclusion

These stories above demonstrate how modern-day organizations can innovate without disrupting employees and their work experience. These IT teams solved their problems at scale by using unique end-user analytics, powerful automations, and timely onscreen campaigns. As a result, their teams saved hundreds of hours in ticket handling and manual intervention.

And these customer stories are just the beginning. For instance, there is a Danish cargo company that updated Bit-locker to corporate standards across 98.5% of devices with a single remote action, a healthcare organization that enabled a Chrome auto-update across 7,2500 devices to prevent over 500 tickets, or a European security agency that encrypted 15,000 devices in just three days.

With Nexthink, organizations like yours can use our smart automations and employee engagement features to see significant cost savings, improvements in employee sentiment, and better resource allocation. Only Nexthink gives employees the ability to fix their own digital problems and stay productive.

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Contact us today to see what Nexthink Act
and Engage can do for you.

NEXTHINK ACT

Combine powerful custom data
retrieval and remediation capabilities
to proactively solve employee issues
in a reliable and automated manner.

NEXTHINK ENGAGE

Leverage a hyper-targeted IT-to-employee
engagement channel to gather sentiment
data, communicate key IT information and
enable employee self-help.

Want to find out more?