

# WHAT IS MTTA? MEAN TIME TO ACKNOWLEDGE EXPLAINED



We live in a digital age where people expect immediate results and instantaneous change. Technology continues its steady advance and, along with it, the customer's expectation bar rises. Every business inevitably receives customer complaints and issues. Regardless of whether the business is capable of solving the issue at hand, organizations must always strive to respond to the issue as quickly as possible. This allows customers to feel like their time is valued and that their trust in the organization is warranted.

Failing to quickly respond to incidents as they occur will result in plummeting customer satisfaction. Making a habit of slowly acknowledging complaints and incidents will lead to customers leaving you for your competitor's service instead. Due to the impact of rapid response times, it's imperative that companies constantly seek to improve on rapid responses.

Tracking response times is the only way to measure the success of these efforts, and the primary method used for measuring response time in [DevOps](#) is called MTTA.

## What is MTTA?

Mean time to acknowledge (MTTA) measures how long it takes an organization to respond to complaints, outages, or incidents across all departments on average. MTTA is calculated by dividing the total time taken to acknowledge all incidents by the number of those incidents over a set period of time. This metric tracks what is arguably the most important step to addressing issues - acknowledging the fact that something went wrong and ensuring the customer that the problem is

being addressed.

This acknowledgment lets customers know their complaint is valid and that the company is looking into ways of improving upon or fixing the issue. This metric is important because it shows how responsive the organization is to issues as they develop. Furthermore, being conscious of response time will create a "fix it" mindset, encouraging rapid responses to developing issues. Customers are much more willing to forgive companies that admit their faults and prove they are working towards fixing them.

MTTA isn't just about tracking customer complaints. It is used to track any incident that occurs, such as service outages and downtime. Failing to respond to incidents might not always result in customer complications. Slow responses can also cost organizations by reducing the productivity of employees when internal systems face obstacles. However you look at it, tracking and reducing mean time to acknowledge allows companies to optimize their processes while increasing customer satisfaction and boosting profits. This leads to the next question:

## **How Do I Reduce MTTA?**

As was touched on above, the first step to reducing MTTA is tracking it. Without proper measurement, you can't know for sure if your efforts to reduce MTTA have been successful. While the formula mentioned earlier is the base method for calculating MTTA, various enterprise software solutions provide robust tracking of MTTA and other metrics involved in the resolution of incidents.

Many of these software solutions also have built-in ticketing and messaging capabilities, allowing them to act as your primary means for both tracking and addressing issues as they occur as well as throughout the organization's life. The reduction of MTTA is an ongoing process that involves the entire incident management lifecycle.

## **What is Incident Management?**

Incident management is the process of identifying, analyzing, and correcting problems as they occur. Successful incident management often begins with pre-emptive efforts, addressing potential problems before they can impact operations.

Incident management solutions should be employed during the preemptive steps of the lifecycle, as they provide organizations with ways to track issues and collaborate on their resolutions. Regardless of the efforts made to prevent incidents from occurring, it's inevitable that something will go wrong. When this happens, incidents are logged as they occur, with this first step of acknowledgment involving the assessment of the issue and assigning the proper person or team with the responsibility of addressing it.

Some incidents require the attention of the accounting department, while others might involve IT or simply be a matter for customer service to address. This first step of assessing the incident, analyzing its impact and severity, and assigning the best person or team to the task is essential for setting up the incident management lifecycle for success. Powerful incident management tools will allow for easy access to vital information, including who is on call at that moment and who is the best person for the job.

As with all DevOps practices, communication and collaboration are key tenets of incident management. This is why software solutions with robust logging and communication tools are

essential. Keeping detailed notes will help every person that touches the incident during the resolution process while also providing invaluable insights on fixing future issues or avoiding them altogether.

Incident management is as much a technology system as it is a human process. Establishing best practices and training everyone involved in the process will help grease the wheel and ensure the smooth flow of information throughout. Help desk teams will have the information at their fingertips they need to assign issues to the best person for the task, while those who are tasked with the job will be provided the insight required to understand the details of the issue.

Once an incident has been properly acknowledged and assigned, communication occurs with the person who submitted the help ticket, and the process moves to the resolution step of the incident management lifecycle. Incident management software will then make a note of how much time passed between the ticket's submission and its acknowledgment. This data is then passed into a report which tracks all other acknowledgment times while calculating the organization's total MTTA. These reports can be customized to whatever specifications the organization requires, making the most of their data.

Finding the solution that's best for your organization will provide you with a huge leg-up over the competition in terms of incident management and response. Obviously, no piece of software or even entire stack of solutions will do you any good without proper practices, solid training, and a strong team. This fact is why DevOps functions as an organization-wide mentality of combining the strength of human ingenuity with the power of technology.