

Tech Support 2000: Continuous Improvement

By Janet Sheldon



The BASIS Technical Support department is growing and changing. In addition to augmenting staff, we've made it easier for you to contact us and instituted more reliable methods of tracking your technical support questions. These changes include implementing a new call tracking system and adding a new Web-based method for entering a request, which we call e-support. These changes make our processes much more efficient, and we hope you notice the difference.

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We receive requests for support from various sources including voice mail, e-mail, fax transmissions, our new e-support on the Web and the unresolved questions we pick up on the BASIS newsgroups. E-support is our newest support request method and is accessed through the BASIS Web site at

www.basis.com/support/support.html

Keeping track of all requests was becoming more and more difficult as our volume increased. Some changes in our process and our new call tracking system remedy this. Because requests submitted by telephone are our top priority, we've dedicated one analyst to triaging those calls immediately and entering them into the new system. Along with e-support requests, all e-mail messages going to support@basis.com are now entered automatically into this call tracking system. For automated entries, a confirmation e-mail message containing a call identification number is automatically sent to you. Keep it. Referencing this number allows us to find the entry almost immediately and get back to you faster with the status of your request.

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We can now reply directly to you about your entries from within the call tracking system itself, without having to transfer the information manually (as we did with the old call log system) and then respond in a separate e-mail program. What does this mean to you? Faster response.

Another feature we've added is an escalation process that sends automatic e-mail messages to our analysts if none of us has responded to a support request within a designated time frame. The designated time for responding to a voice request is one hour from receipt of the request. The designated time for responding to a request submitted by e-mail, fax and e-support is four hours. Also, automatic e-mail reminders can be sent to the analyst assigned to the call. And if you've provided your e-mail address, the system will notify you when your request is resolved and the entry is formally closed. All this means that we process more requests with less chance that any will fall through the cracks.

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We can also search every field in the system, including the entire work diary, for a word or phrase. With this feature, we can look up past requests for information that may relate to a current issue or find the history of a request when we don't know the call identification number. We can now also look up BBx® error messages directly within the system, again helping us to respond faster and more efficiently.

These are just a few of the new capabilities and improvements we've made. Our new call tracking system is still a work in progress, and new features will be added as your, and our, needs change. We're continuing to look for ways to improve our service to BASIS developers and partners out in the field.