Channels for user support

The support process is initiated by users reporting issues or faults found in software systems or requests for software changes based on ongoing needs. It is therefore important for Government institutions to provide users with convenient channels for reporting issues and required changes. Below are some of the channels used for software support. Government institutions may provide a combination of one or more of these channels:

- Telephone. The software support team can provide a help desk telephone line where users can call to report issues. This requires a dedicated resource(s) to man the telephone to ensure user calls are responded to on a timely basis.
- Live Chat. Some organisations provide a live chat where users can chat with the software support time on a real time basis. This also requires dedicated resources who can respond to chat requests on a timely basis. Some organisations provide automated chatbots that can respond to common issues.
- Email. The software support team can provide an email address where users can call to report issues.
- Self-Service portal. Users can also report issues through a self service online ticketing system.

Whatever channels are adopted, it is important to have a ticketing system for recording and tracking issues to ensure no issues are lost or forgotten. A ticketing system is a help desk software program used to process, manage, and track user issues from submission to resolution. Ticketing systems automatically organise and prioritise support requests in a central dashboard. Issues can be categorised, prioritised and assigned on the tracking system.

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