

Workplace Experience Measurement through Experience Level Agreements (XLAs)

Jim Kane, Director, ISG
Mrinal Rai, Principal Analyst, ISG

May 2021

*ISG Provider Lens™

ISG Provider Lens™ delivers leading-edge and actionable research studies, reports and consulting services focused on technology and service providers' strengths and weaknesses and how they are positioned relative to their peers in the market. These reports provide influential insights accessed by our large pool of advisors who are actively advising outsourcing deals as well as large numbers of ISG enterprise clients who are potential outsourcers.

For more information about ISG Provider Lens™ studies, please email ISGLens@isg-one.com, call +1.203.454.3900, or visit ISG Provider Lens™.

*ISG Research™

ISG Research™ provides subscription research, advisory consulting and executive event services focused on market trends and disruptive technologies driving change in business computing. ISG Research™ delivers guidance that helps businesses accelerate growth and create more value.

For more information about ISG Provider Lens™ studies, please email ISGLens@isg-one.com, call +1.203.454.3900, or visit ISG Provider Lens™.

*ISG Provider Lens™

© 2021 Information Services Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.





Contents

Introduction: Age of adages and user experience.	1
Measuring user experience with XLAs	3
Three levels of experience measurement	6
Wipro's XLA approach	8
Enterprise Guidance – Best practices for successful approach for XLA.	13

Introduction: Age of adages and user experience

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel”

- Maya Angelou (2014)

Measuring customer service quality has been happening for many decades. The adage “measure what matters” has its roots in determining and measuring service – and customer experience is what matters.

Traditional information technology (IT) service levels (objective, analytical, cautious, competitive, demanding and complex) measuring availability, speed to resolve and quality are all that goes into for a great customer experience. Within enterprise workplace, customer experience translates into end-user experience. Experience embodies characteristics such as pleasurable, intuitive, simple, expressive, caring and inspiring. User experience bridges the gap between what users expect and what they get with respect to workplace technology services. Most end users in their daily roles may not think about application availability; however, when they require services and raise a service request, it begins a path

that measures their experience with whoever they interact with. The traditional IT service levels are a means to an end, the end being the result of the customer experience. In many cases, especially in the arena of IT, the interface is the service desk. The service desk is the “front door” to IT, wherein the level of satisfaction of the experience achieved is assessed. Users should be clear of their requirements, and if not, the service desk personnel can assist in refining the request. The request is a series of interactions, either with an automated system (a BOT or virtual agent) or a person. These interactions are all evaluated by the requestor, which helps measure the level of experience.

Another adage is *“people do business with people they know, like and trust”*.

If the total experience at the service desk, along with all accompanying technologies such as automated call distributors, is positive, then customers will most likely return when they have the same or similar requests or incidents. This implies that the user has begun the journey of knowing, liking and trusting the services.

Why is this important? Today's digital world is super competitive, not only between companies but also within companies themselves. Company's need to invest in training so that agents interfacing with customers understand they are the front door, and this interaction is a "moment that matters" and critical. They can service, resolve and, most importantly, display empathy, which is defined as "it's your capacity to recognize the concerns other people have," toward the customer and their concerns.

"Start with the customer experience and work your way back towards the technology" - Steve Jobs

In ISG's experience, enterprises are coupling experience level indicators along with traditional service level measurements. These experience level or XL indicators measure several facets of the service — Did the service deliver the expected outcome, was the time to provide the service reasonable given the complexity (perceived), what was the resultant quality of the service, was the agent empathic and finally was the user "happy"?

With significant developments in digital technologies, service desk and the broader workplace support functions are now enabled to serve and measure the effectiveness of their services to end users. Enterprises are now interested in measuring the user experience instead of just the transactional service level performance, and workplace service providers are improving their approach toward experience level measurements. This paper explores the pointers to consider before embarking on a XLA journey and Wipro's approach for the same.

Measuring user experience with XLAs

While dealing with the pandemic and the resulting changes in the workplace and ways of working, enterprise IT organizations are exploring and learning at a faster pace than ever before. Multiple technologies and approaches, which were being deployed in pockets or at smaller scales in previous years such as desktop-as-a-service, robotic process automation (RPA), collaboration and productivity, are now being implemented at scale. Although workplace technologies were always capable of enabling remote working at scale, there had been no need to test this aspect for entire enterprise workforce. The emergence of remote work at scale has highlighted and brought to the forefront the challenges that had often been a less important priority for enterprise IT organizations. This includes challenges associated with user productivity, uninterrupted technology, ubiquitous connectivity and cyber security. Enterprise IT leaders have a seemingly insurmountable task of tackling these challenges, while ensuring high user experience.

In general terms, user experience in workplace is defined as the experience end users or employees have with their workplace technology. However, it should not be limiting to only providing an uninterrupted IT services delivery, although it forms an important part.

While the technology performance focuses on the “is it working?” aspect of workplace, experience focuses on the “how well is it working?” aspect. User experience measurement covers the “well” part by defining what constitutes a favorable user experience. In simple terms, it allows to measure if the workplace technology is empowering and enabling the end users to perform flawlessly, better, securely, and in an enhanced uninterrupted way. To enable a workplace technology service delivery to fare “well” in all above-mentioned parameters, enterprise IT organizations must deal with multiple aspects, and many of them go beyond the traditional end-user computing scope.

ISG’s experience with enterprises has shown that clients are always interested in quantifying their user experience with workplace technologies. This includes whether their computing device boots up flawlessly to the extent that the technology can assist, suggest improving and automate most of the manual tasks, which hinder users’ focus on their jobs. Enterprise IT organizations often show interest toward automating most of the workplace support activities such as service desk operations. Intelligent and automated workplace support

tech implementations can identify activities that can be performed without human intervention and provide users with an experience of personal digital assistant. Activities such as automated password reset is now a commonplace example for such automation, although enterprise IT organizations are exploring and implementing much complex use cases. Key benefit from automating tasks and transforming workplace through the latest technologies is the ability to measure the resulting experience. For example, measuring several support tickets that can be reduced by leveraging automation is an indication of user experience, as it can prevent a possible unpleasant event for end users.


Increasing focus on user experience measurement is also transforming how enterprises assess the performance of their service provider partners managing their workplace environment. For many years, these providers have been signing service contracts based on predefined service levels. These service levels are transactional in nature and often measure the performance of the workplace technology. These service level agreements (SLAs) have limited scope for user experience measurement. For the last few years, there has been an increasing

interest toward signing XLAs with service providers, as enterprise IT organizations aim for managing more than transactional managed services.

However, ISG has observed that enterprises struggle to figure out relevant parameters that can be part of these XLAs. Although it is easier to assign parameters to measure technology performance, many other performance indicators that need to be part of XLAs lie beyond the realm of direct technology performance measurement. It is important for enterprises to explore different facets of workplace technologies and related aspects to define XLAs.

Figure 1 summarizes the gradual types of service and experience level measurement, along with attributes and key features. The old world would consider the traditional reactive SLAs with regular service levels, as elements and factors of user experience that affect these are included. However, these get translated to modern XLA indicators that are more proactive in representing the workplace technology of the future.

Figure 1: SLAs to XLAs – attributes, key features, and measurement

	Type	Focus	Attributes	Key Features	Likely measurement
	Future XLA	Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures employee sentiments through non-help desk systems Measures real-time platform health and makes live fixes Addresses employee sentiment in UCC tooling Prevents problems from happening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentiment analytics Device analytics and experience Predictive analytics UCC analytics AI/Cognitive inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentiment analysis showing changes pre/post change Cost benefit of making change vs not making change
	Hybrid XLA – experience focused	Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures how effective IT is at fixing problems on a persona basis Adds in measurement of service availability and customer experience of the service/application being used Likely includes rapid self report and automated tickets/solutions May include sentiment analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPA usage Automated ticket resolution Automation triggered processes Percentage of tickets resolved through self-help 	
	Hybrid XLA – Simple	Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures how effective IT is at fixing problems and the experience received Adds in components of Customer experience of reporting incident Looks at how happy employees are with the solution provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net Promoter Score Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help desk reporting dashboard Service management reports NPS of surveyed employees
	Traditional SLA	Reactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures how effective IT is at fixing problems Analyzes efficiency and effectiveness of fixes to reported problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First call resolution rate Call abandonment rate User experience score Adoption rate Knowledge management feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help desk reporting dashboard Service management reports Simple numbers on volumes

Source: ISG

Three levels of experience measurement

Three levels of experience measurement can be relevant for enterprises based on their maturity and willingness to increase scope.

The first level is the **technology performance**, which includes measuring experience associated with workplace technology performance.

This includes measuring the level of technology accessibility for the end users by considering the uptime and speed of connectivity.

Measures associated with automation in workplace support leveraging technologies such as RPA and conversational artificial intelligence (AI) are also considered at this level. Parameters that measure technology performance for ensuring workplace security, such as identity access management, endpoint protection and application security, are also included in this level. User experience measured at this level indicates the resiliency and strength of workplace technologies that contribute to user productivity.

However, even a well-performing secured technology with high uptime and automated systems may not guarantee a high-performing end user. For users to have exceptional experience, they may require processes

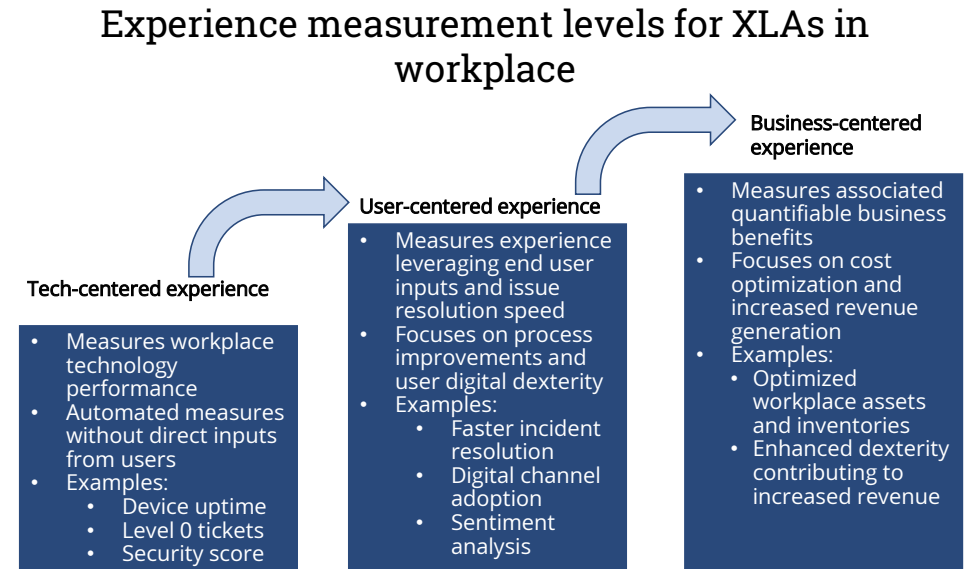
to be carried out at a faster pace, the ability to perform better and be more digitally dexterous, all of which may not be ensured with high-performing uninterrupted technology alone. Therefore, second level of **user experience** focuses on improving the performance. At this level, KPIs ensure that user is not interrupted in case of issues that cannot be resolved automatically, or incident tickets that cannot be auto resolved. Measures associated with user's engagement with digital channels and their own feedback for workplace performance are considered at this level.

The third level of user experience measurement covers **tangible business benefits** in terms of cost savings. Well-performing workplace tech and empowered productive users should contribute to explicit business benefits. As modernizing workplace technologies provide visible benefits such as cost optimization, enterprises need to measure KPIs that can quantify these results.

The three levels described above are shown in figure 2 below.

While many enterprises start at the first technology-centric level, and many had already started exploring them before the pandemic, ISG has observed that clients are increasingly adopting second and third levels for user- and business-centric experience. It has also been observed that to allow clients successfully transition from one level to other requires significant investment in organization culture changes, technology adoption and change management. In cases where clients are open to explore and work with their managed service providers and where providers have access to and understand the line of business, in addition to the enterprise IT organization, the XLA approach is most successful. Mostly, enterprises are transitioning from a traditional SLA approach, which now increasingly covers the first tech-level experience. To increase scope and drive maximum value out of transforming workplace digitally, clients need to be more participative with service providers. In addition, the client and provider would need a framework or guidance to follow for successfully deciding on XLA parameters and formulating required change management approaches.

Figure 2: Three levels of experience management in XLAs

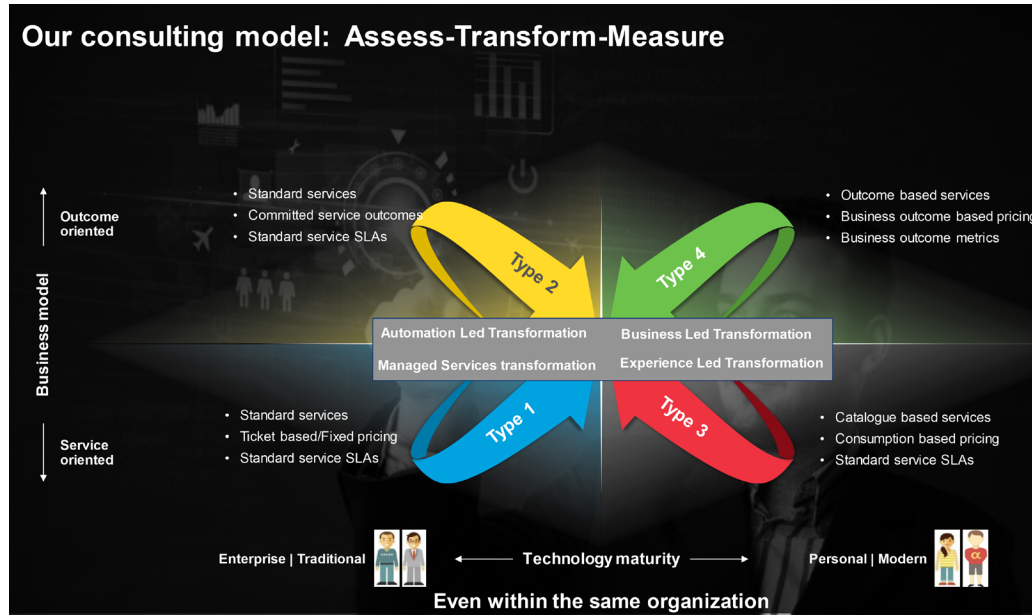


Source: ISG

Wipro's XLA approach

Wipro offers a consulting approach to position its clients based on its technology maturity and focus on business outcomes. Its consulting model is called Asses-Transform-Measure. Based on clients' maturity in technology and business model, this model positions its clients in a 4X4 quadrant structure and categorizes them in one of the four categories as explained below in figure 3.

Figure 3: Wipro's consulting model: Assess-Measure-Transform



Source: ISG

- **Type 1 client – Managed Services Transformation:** These clients are looking for standard workplace managed services, primarily priced based on tickets and fixed price. Traditional service desk and end-user computing SLAs define engagements with these clients.
- **Type 2 client – Automation-led Transformation:** These clients are experimenting with automation technologies where Wipro can commit to service outcomes based on automation technologies, although its performance is still measured through standard SLAs.
- **Type 3 client – Experience-led Transformation:** These clients focus on providing personalized contextual workplace services and a catalog-based pricing for the end users. Wipro charges these clients based on service consumption, although performance is measured through standard SLAs measuring user-centric experience.
- **Type 4 client – Business-led Transformation:** These clients consider user experience closely tied with business outcomes. Wipro charges these clients based on business outcomes, and performance is measured through business outcome metrics forming the XLAs.

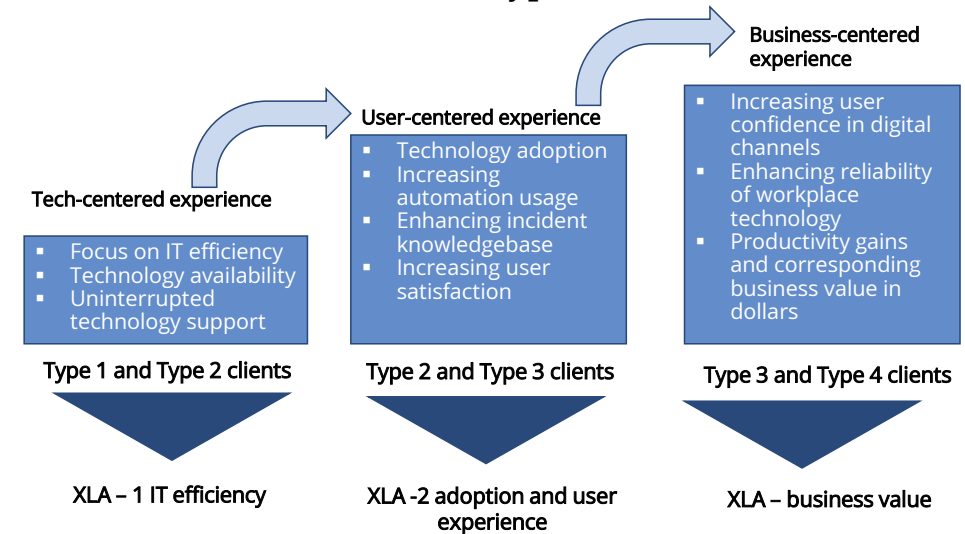
Throughout its engagement with clients, Wipro implements capabilities and foster required cultural change management to transition clients from Type 1 to Type 4. A key component in this journey is identifying user journeys based on their roles and responsibilities. Wipro helps clients identify such user personas and identify key operational, XLA parameters of user-centric experience and business-centric experience. For example, for an HR professional involved in recruiting, simple operational service parameter can reduce the response time for Workday to be less than 4 millisecond. User-centric experience for this professional can be having a single enterprise hub to monitor the entire hiring process enhancing his/her productivity. An example of business-centric experience would be to have a cognitive bot that can schedule interview time with candidates — a cognitive technology implementation that would not only enhance user experience but also help improve efficiency of the process by saving the time for the HR professional.

Wipro focuses on three areas to cover three XLAs: IT efficiency, technology adoption for user experience and realizing business value. This is demonstrated in the figure below.

XLA-1 for IT efficiency is the first set of KPIs that Wipro targets to achieve, as they easily translate from traditional SLAs. These parameters focus on providing an “Available IT” to ensure user productivity. These parameters measure the time lost due to the unavailability of workplace technology through user downtime. Wipro also analyzes the digital performance score to measure the performance of devices and applications, while ensuring security is maintained for users and data. Under ‘Available IT,’ Wipro also measures real-time network communication performance. This first level of XLAs also measures the speed of IT, which includes measurement of performance of workplace support operations and technology performance. For example, it measures the speed of logon, service resolutions that required two or more levels of escalations, time taken for user onboarding, and speed of ticket resolution. XLA indicators at this level measure direct cost benefits in terms of device stock levels and hardware portfolio rationalization.

Figure 4: Wipro's approach as per three levels of experience management

Wipro's approach for measuring experience levels per client types



Source: ISG

XLA-2 for user adoption and user experience ensures that digital channels are being adopted for workplace support services. At this level, Wipro extensively uses machine learning (ML) technologies for automated resolution of incidents and measures effectiveness of chat-based workplace support, enhancing user experience with self-help. Wipro workplace service teams also deploy zero-touch workflow automation for service resolution by automating process based on workflow rules for incident resolution, thereby reducing ticket handling time. XLA-2 also measures customer satisfaction through parameters such as CSAT and NPS for self-services and measures percentage of reassigned tickets.

XLA-3 for business value enhances user engagements with digital channels that act as an indicator for increasing digital dexterity. Workplace security also comes under this category of XL measurement. At this level, Wipro teams can measure performance based on comprehensive data and provide actionable insights.

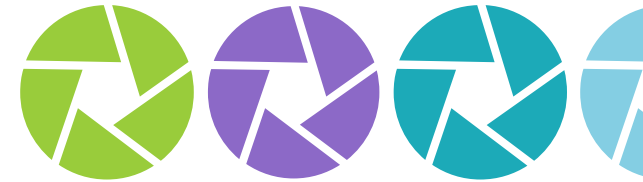
The sequence of measuring the above XLAs and readiness of Wipro's teams is depicted in the figure below:

Figure 5: Wipro's service level outcomes and XLAs

Service Outcome	User Productivity	User experience	Commercial Adjacency
	Ensures an available IT	Measures Ease and Speed	Measures cost savings as a result of the core services
XLA – 1	Available IT	Speed of IT	Direct Cost
XLA Indicators	1. User downtime 2. Digital performance score (Device+Apps+Sec) 3. Network Real-time Communication Performance	8. Speed to logon 9. Two click SR 10. User onboarding - 4 hrs. 11. Speed of resolution – 24 hrs.	Device stock levels Application entitlement HW Portfolio rationalization VPN Licenses
XLA –2	Machine First	CSAT	
XLA Indicators	4. Automated resolution 5. Chat AI effectiveness 6. Zero Touch (SR)– Workflow Automation	12. CSAT 13. % of reassignment >2 14. NPS – self service	
XLA –3	Secure Workplace	Digital Engagement	
XLA Indicators	7. Security score	15. M365 Dashboard 16. Yammer social support <24 hrs.	

Source: Wipro

The XLAs can be classified under measurement of user productivity, user experience and commercial adjacency. The sequence in the figure denotes the ability of Wipro to effectively measure the respective XL parameter. Although some parameters may fall under the higher category of user experience, Wipro teams may be able to measure them only after a certain level of maturity in basic technology-centric experience parameters has been achieved. For example, 'user onboarding' XL is part of technology-centric experience; however, Wipro is only able to measure its efficiency after certain automation capabilities are already incorporated that are part of Machine-First XLA-2 indicator.



Enterprise Guidance – Best practices for successful approach for XLA

ISG has been interacting with clients to help them shape up and implement the XLAs in their workplace service engagements with service providers. We understand that clients are at different stages of maturity with respect to workplace technologies. While many still have the traditional SLA setup, some are evaluating a hybrid approach for XLA along with SLAs as explained earlier in figure-1. A successful enterprise approach for XLAs would involve in-depth analysis of user work requirement, designing the XLA per user persona and then implementing and supporting the rollout strategy. Enterprises would require a five-step strategy to implement the experience level measurement mechanism in their workplace setups:

- 1. Understanding of requirements:** Enterprises must decide on what really constitute 'experience' for the end users. Working with an un-interrupted, always-on and available workplace may count as user experience for some, while ability to create or use intelligent bots that simplify their day-to-day jobs can enhance 'experience' for others. In addition, the definition of experience will keep on changing, as end users become more digitally dexterous and workplace technology transforms from being traditional to modern or contextually personal.
- 2. Proper analytics and building strong knowledgebase:** Dedicated efforts must be put on building proper and strong knowledgebase. User self-service will be effective if it is backed by comprehensive knowledgebase. It is important for clients to maintain and periodically upgrade the incident knowledgebase to cover the most common and frequently raised issues. Implementing an intelligent virtual agent or building a commonly used FAQs for enabling self-help takes lesser time if such information is well maintained.
- 3. User journey design for experience enablers:** It is important that the clients and service provider together develop user journey and persona to determine KPIs that define their technology-centric and enhanced experience. These should be further developed to associate enhanced user experience with business outcomes. For example, for a marketing executive, whose objective is to collaborate better with creative agencies, tech-centric experience could be to have the enterprise file sync and share available anytime, anywhere and in any device. User experience-centric measure could be to access and track updates and notification on the go. A business outcome associated experience measure would

be an AI-enabled solution that could transcribe minutes of conference meetings with agencies. It reduces efforts of the executive and make the process smoother, thereby increasing user productivity.

- 4. Phased implementation and tackling easiest tasks first:** A comprehensive change at a large scale in workplace environment should not be immediately done at scale. Even transitioning from traditional SLAs and XLAs is a huge shift for many organizations, and it should be implemented in phases instead of at a large scale. It should be implemented in organization units where processes are well defined, incidents are well documented and end users are receptive of changes. Enterprises should also consider transferring the low impact and easily automatable but repetitive tasks first for any such transformation exercise. Bots can undertake the commodity work, leaving higher skilled service desk agents to focus on value additions to enhance the user experience.
- 5. Proper technology adoption and change management:** Perhaps the most important step in transitioning from SLAs to XLAs is ensuring proper change management, while implementing transformative

technology. Enterprises can implement various methods to ensure that the change management trickles down to its intended userbase. Many successful implementations have examples of gamification and reward-based adoption to encourage users and leverage more digital channels for raising and resolving issues.

- 6. Consider proper commercial models:** While service providers tend to charge premium for enabling experience that results in business value, enterprises must be careful in choosing commercial models for XLA-driven engagements. These payment mechanisms must emphasize on the most important factor that defines 'user experience' for enterprises. If the experience is about having positive technology experience, then paying the service provider on achieving desired service levels should suffice. For enterprises that consider user-centric transformation as key part of user experience, they can pay service providers on achieving desired service levels, user satisfaction score and visible continuous improvements. For XLAs closely associated with business outcomes, enterprises can choose to pay service providers based on quantifiable productivity

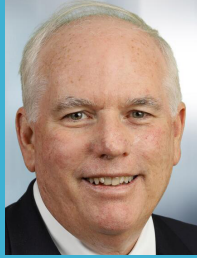
enhancements; for example, the number of tickets that were never raised because of automation and proactive fix or cost of downtime saved through proactive fix.

In XLA engagements, a lot depends on continuous and periodic alignment of enterprise clients and managed service providers. As a best practice, enterprise stakeholders must contribute and have periodic reviews of the XLAs, commercial models, required training and change adoption strategies for choosing the right technologies.

Experience level measurement and associated services engagement agreements are the future of the workplace services. Service providers such as Wipro are building and strengthening models to transform the technology setup for their clients from a traditional to more contextually personalized one. By leveraging the latest technologies of automation, AI and analytics, there is a huge scope of delivering workplace technologies that could act as personal digital secretary for all and can measure, enhance and suggest improvements for user experience.



Author



Jim Kane, Author

Director

Jim has in-depth experience in assessing and managing complex IT Infrastructure engagements focused on helping corporations achieve their business objectives. He offers expertise in strategy assessment and development, statement of work, service level agreements, business-driven RfP development, transactions, contract negotiations and transition planning across IT Infrastructure areas and expertise in IT service management integration. Jim has worked with global enterprises in the automotive manufacturing, banking and financial services, healthcare, utilities, aerospace and retail industries, focusing on collaborative techniques with clients and service providers to achieve the desired business outcomes. He recently led the negotiation of a large infrastructure contract with a utilities company and a cloud computing transition. Included in this successful project was the development and execution of the sourcing strategy, assessment and transaction process and project management, negotiation strategy development and financial proposals and executive leadership communication. Jim is ITIL V3 Foundation certified and a thought leader on the topic of the digital workplace.



Mrinal Rai, Author

Principal Analyst

Mrinal Rai is the principal analyst for Digital Workplace and Conversational AI. His area of expertise is digital workplace services, enterprise social collaboration and conversational AI both from a technology and business point of view. He covers key areas around the Workplace, End User computing domain and conversational AI viz., modernizing workplace, Enterprise mobility, BYOD, VDI, managed workplace services, service desk, enterprise social software, content/ team collaboration, chatbots and intelligent virtual agent platforms. He has been with ISG for last 8+ years and has more than 13 years of industry experience. Mrinal works with ISG advisors and clients in engagements related to chatbots, virtual assistants, workplace modernization, social intranet, collaborative workplace, cloud-based VDI, end user computing and service desk.

ISG Provider Lens™ | May 2021

© 2021 Information Services Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



ISG (Information Services Group) (Nasdaq: III) is a leading global technology research and advisory firm. A trusted business partner to more than 700 clients, including more than 75 of world's top 100 enterprises, ISG is committed to helping corporations, public sector organizations, and service and technology providers achieve operational excellence and faster growth. The firm specializes in digital transformation services, including automation, cloud and data analytics; sourcing advisory; managed governance and risk services; network carrier services; strategy and operations design; change management; market intelligence and technology research and analysis. Founded in 2006, and based in Stamford, Conn., ISG employs more than 1,300 digital-ready professionals operating in more than 20 countries—a global team known for its innovative thinking, market influence, deep industry and technology expertise, and world-class research and analytical capabilities based on the industry's most comprehensive marketplace data. For more information, visit www.isg-one.com.