

Your Guide to SLAs: The best support SLAs and why they matter.

Part 1: Software support, patching, and incident resolutions.

Part 2: Third-party support vs vendor support.

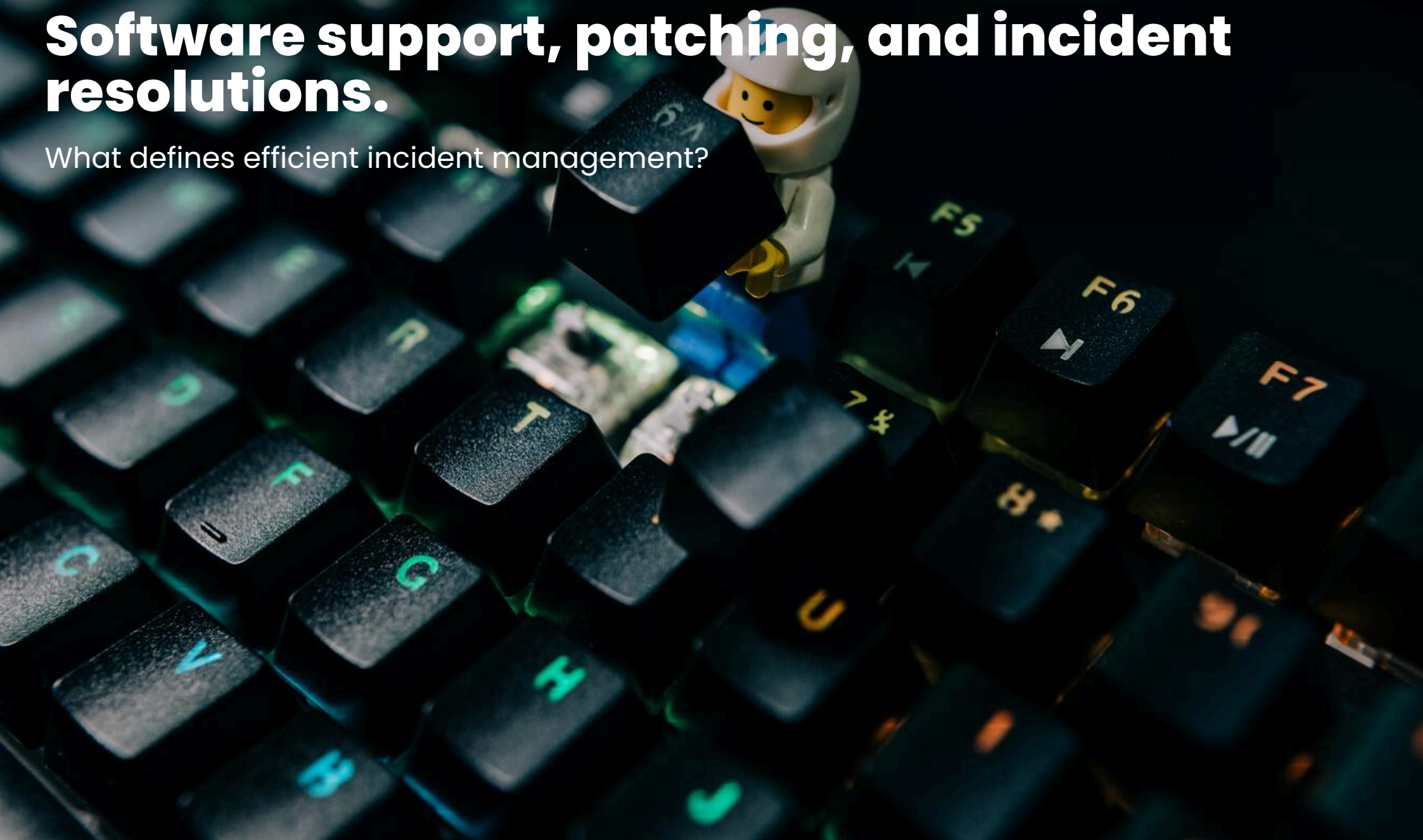
Part 3: Four simple steps to defined, refined support.

Part 4: Incident aftercare; what comes next?



Part 1: Software support, patching, and incident resolutions.

What defines efficient incident management?



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s an Oracle/SAP customer, when you need to submit an incident report, are you filled with feelings of dread, acutely aware that it's going to take considerable time to get resolved – if it's resolved at all?

Incident management with Oracle/SAP

We are aware of their customers' frustrations over the time it takes to respond to and then resolve issues.

As we understand it, this is a typical scenario: you log in to My Oracle Support or SAP Support Portal and submit your incident report.

In return, you receive an automatic response acknowledging your submission, with no word of when this will be resolved.

As time passes, you might receive a few more notifications as the incident gets passed from person to person, or referral

links to Help Desk articles so you can resolve it yourself.

Eventually, your vendor tells you that you need to upgrade your software in order to receive a full solution.

Before you can even reply, the incident will likely be closed by a support representative.

This is the service many organisations have come to expect, despite paying millions in support costs.

Incident management with Support Revolution

If you contact us with an issue report, you will receive a call or an email from a genuine person.

We will provide a clear incident plan, establishing timelines on when you can expect a [response and a resolution](#).

We will fix the incident, rather than expecting you to, and where necessary, we will develop the patches you need to get your systems back to Business as Usual (BAU) status.

In the very unlikely scenario that we miss our targets for response and resolution, we will provide service credits as a means of recompense – something else that the vendors do not offer.

The vendors' approaches demonstrate what a support service should not be.

This guide explores how we provide patches, and how we ensure consistent high levels of support >>

A hand holding a white chess king piece over a black chess king piece on a checkered board.

Part 2: Third-party support vs vendor support.

We consider ourselves customer-oriented support partners rather than support vendors.



How does third-party support from Support Revolution compare to vendor support from the likes of Oracle and SAP?

We delve into what it means to be an Oracle/SAP customer and how you can demand more...

Oracle and SAP both provide a high standard of software, and though Gartner has reported keen development from the likes of Amazon, Google and Microsoft in the ERP software market, Oracle and SAP remain key players.

With that in mind, you might like to assume that their success is due to the quality of their service & support.

But the emergence of the third-party support industry clearly demonstrates that this just isn't the case, because their customers are (rightfully) demanding something else. Something better.

When it comes to Business as Usual (BAU) patching and SLAs, how does third-party support compare?

Customer commitment vs enforcement

As part of our philosophy, we consider ourselves customer-oriented support partners rather than support vendors.

We are committed to supporting our customers and providing what help we can to enable them to achieve their organisations' goals.

That can be implementing cost-reduction initiatives, sweating existing assets, or remaining supported during a migration to an alternative ERP provider.

We can support legacy versions of Oracle & SAP software indefinitely, enabling organisations to delay projects if needed, make savings, and focus on their IT roadmaps without pressure to upgrade.

Our support can adapt to fit individual needs and help realise objectives.

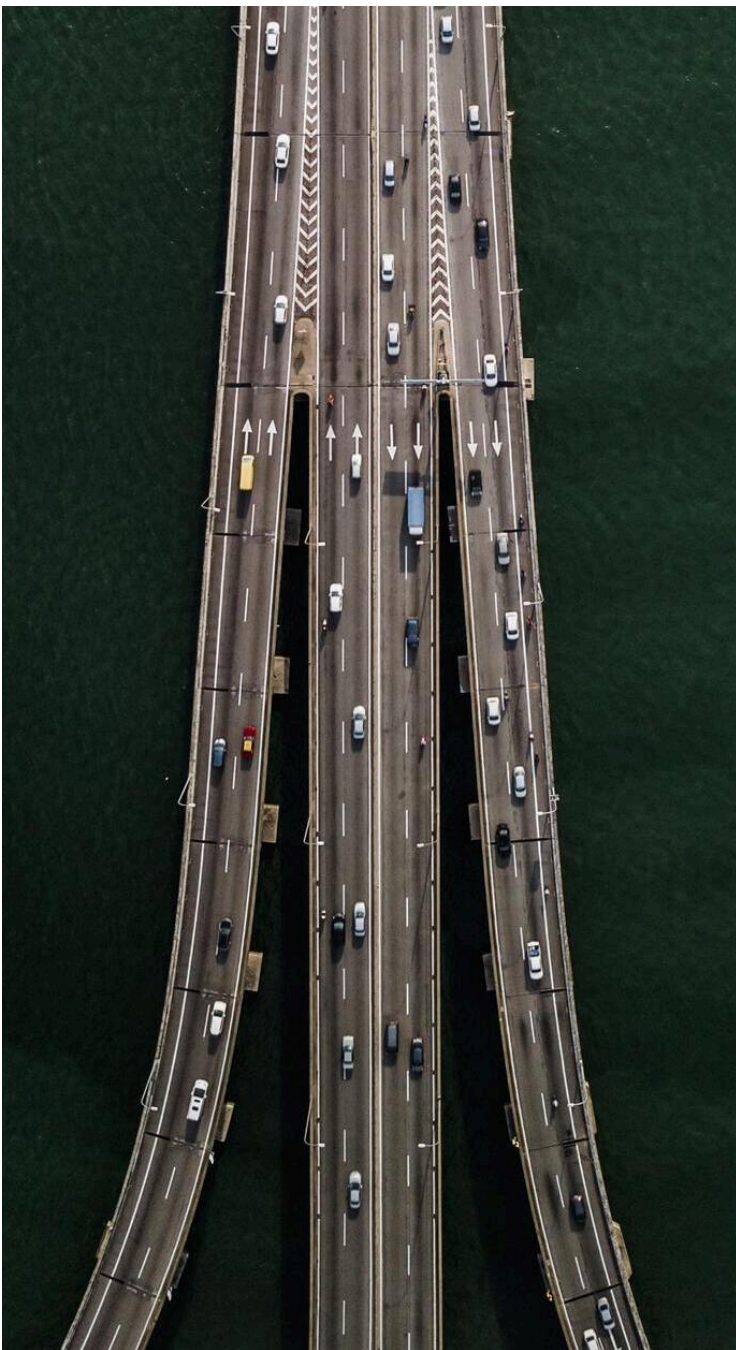
Oracle and SAP, on the other hand, both apply yearly increases to their support prices while de-supporting older software.

Both vendors use their increasingly expensive support and end-of-support deadlines to "encourage" customers towards upgrades.

To Oracle and SAP, support fees are more of a cash cow; a source of revenue which they can maintain for little effort.

In fact, 90% of their revenues are from customer support fees, and yet these revenue streams seems to be diverted away from improving support and into new products (what are you paying for?).

The differences between our support approach and theirs are most evident when comparing incident resolutions.



The 3 types of patches.

As a support provider, we supply 3 types of patches: **security**, **payroll** and **BAU**.

BAU patching enables current processes and functionality, patching damage caused by an upgrade or user error.

If you'd like to know more, read our other content [at the end of this guide](#).

'How can we help' vs 'do it yourself'

Raising an incident is fairly standard across the board.

My Oracle Support and SAP Support Portal aren't identical, but both provide the same function: they are both user platforms on

which you can submit incident reports.

Before you even submit the incident, however, the differences between our service and theirs become clear.

On both the Oracle and SAP support webpages, you'll see links to 'finding a solution' or 'searching a knowledge base' before 'submit a report.'

Depending on the severity of the issue, it's unlikely that you have time to trawl through webpages and forums looking for a resolution that is relevant to you and your systems.

A stark contrast to the 'do it yourself' approach, we offer our customers the opportunity to call or email us personally 24/7.

Next let's check out our four simple steps to defined, refined support >>

Part 3: **Four simple steps to defined, refined support.**

Find out how we guarantee a response and resolution, and discover how this compares with the likes of Oracle and SAP.



Our four-step incident and resolution process.

1

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA)

We believe in keeping things as simple as possible. You have an issue. We're here to solve it. First, we establish a priority level for your incident.

Each incident raised is allocated an Impact (High, Medium, or Low) and an Urgency (High, Medium, or Low).

For example, if a productive system goes down and your business processes are severely affected, it's going to rate highly in terms of Impact and Urgency.

Other problems - ones that may have little to no effect on your organisation - would rank lower down the scale.

The crucial part is that the level of priority is agreed with the customer raising the issue with the service desk team.

It is not up to us to decide how the incident has affected you; it is up to us to resolve it.

Once we've established the level of priority, then we assign a time frame for when you can expect a response to your incident report, and when you can expect it to be resolved.

Turn the page to see our response times that we guarantee with an SLA.

IMPACT	URGENCY	PRIORITY
HIGH	HIGH	1
HIGH	MEDIUM	2
MEDIUM	HIGH	2
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	3
MEDIUM	LOW	4
LOW	MEDIUM	4
LOW	LOW	5



We are always upfront and honest about our SLAs; they are the most important promises we make to our customers.

You have an expectation, and we will work hard to meet it.

We care so much about providing an exceptional service that the Support Revolution board has set a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of hitting over 98% of our SLA targets.

This is how we measure the quality and success of the service we deliver.

Between September 2019 and August 2020, we achieved an average SLA success rate of 99.55%.

Remember that **not only do the vendors not publish their SLA success rates**, but they **also don't offer SLAs for resolution times at all**; you have no guarantee as to when the issue will be fixed or if it will even be fixed at all.

PRIORITY	TARGET RESPONSE TIME	TARGET RESOLUTION TIME
1	15 minutes	2 hours
2	1 hour	4 hours
3	4 hour	3 days
4	8 hour	5 days
5	3 days	10 days

2

RIGHT-FIRST-TIME FIXES

We work to understand what the issue is and identify the root cause of an incident before we even begin the resolution process, because it is as much our priority as yours that after the fix, the issue doesn't happen to your systems again. Once we understand the issue, we refer to the patch archive.

Doing this first helps us realise whether the patch already exists in the archive, and if it is appropriate to resolve the issue, or whether we need to develop our own solution.

Once the solution is ready, we test the patch ourselves in our patch environment.

Once we have access, we will test the patch again in the customer test environment.

This all forms part of our procedure to fully understand the nature of the incident, and the steps we need to take that are required to resolve it.

Accessing the customer environment also allows us to maintain any customisations that may be in place and reduce our testing cycle and QA process – helping us meet our strict Service Level Agreement deadlines.

3

DEVELOPMENT AND DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS

As mentioned previously, we have designed our internal processes to follow the practices of ITIL and our ISO 9001 and ISO 27001 certifications.

Using these measurements of quality and compliance within our organisation has been the catalyst in designing our SLAs.

By having these as our 'base level' of quality means we are able to far exceed

Oracle and SAP's support guidelines.

However, even though we can exceed their level of support service, we always ensure that our technology and delivery teams follow Oracle and SAP's development standards.

We can provide patches or workaround solutions that do not disrupt the core code of your Oracle/SAP software, which means that if your organisation ever wanted to return to the vendor for support, it can do so without disruption.

4

24/7 COVERAGE AND DEDICATED EXPERTS

We have built focused teams of technical experts across the globe who will work closely with each customer.

Every organisation we work with gets to know their support manager while we better understand their systems and specific requirements.

We work in partnership with our customers, making it our goal to provide a truly bespoke and worthwhile service.

We have offices in the UK, India, Russia, and the Middle East.

Our global coverage means we can provide our exceptional service worldwide and 24/7.

An issue can arise at anytime and anywhere, so we are always available to help no matter the circumstances.

Compare our support services to those of Oracle and SAP >>

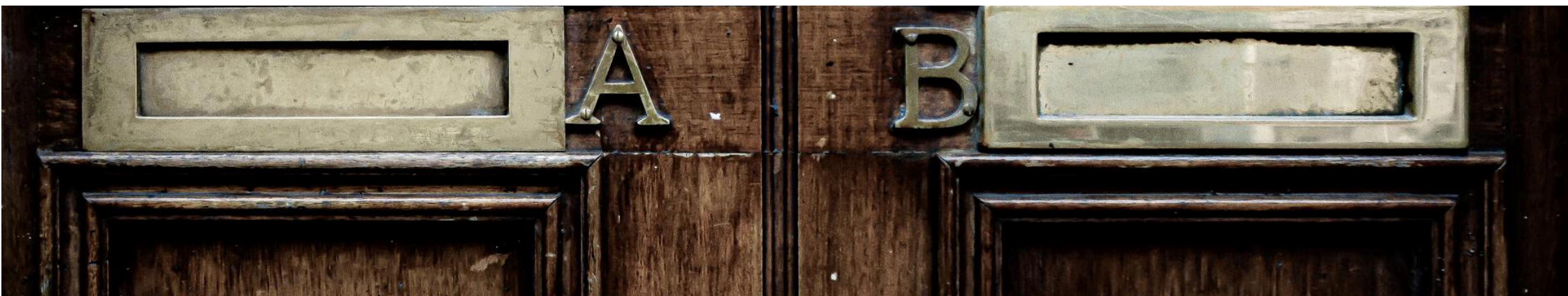
Support quality matters...

... Organisations shouldn't put up with sub-par support that only covers what the vendor feels like covering.

Support should be guided *by* the customer, *for* the customer.

Service	SAP	Oracle	Support Revolution
Service requests	Yes	Yes	Yes
24/7 support via phone, email and portal	No – support portal only	No – support portal only	Yes
Cloud services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Functionality patches	Recent products only	Recent products only	All products
Legal & regulatory patches	Recent products only	Recent products only	All products
Security patches	Monthly	Quarterly	Within 48-hours
SLAs: Response	Limited	Limited	Yes
SLAs: Resolution	Limited	No	Yes

Service	SAP	Oracle	Support Revolution
Support for customisations	No	No	Yes
Support for performance issues	No	No	Yes
Interface support	No	No	Yes
Real-time management reporting	No	No	Yes
Account management meetings	No	No	Yes
Assigned primary contact	No	No	Yes



Part 4:

Incident aftercare; what comes next?

We believe in transparent, automatic reporting on our services. We automatically assess our performance in real-time to constantly improve our processes for the benefit of the customer.



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o reinforce our processes, we also believe in transparent, automatic reporting on our services.

We don't cherry pick our best results; our SLAs are embedded within our Remedyforce Service Desk system which can be used to automatically assess our performance in real-time.

The Remedyforce system includes a service management dashboard that customers can access at any time to get a clear understanding of our performance on any incident.

We provide more than just self-service reporting as part of our aftercare service. Our customers also receive:

- Monthly or quarterly meetings with a dedicated account manager to discuss the overall satisfaction and health of the account, and any actions needed to maintain or improve it.

- Monthly or quarterly meetings with a service delivery manager to discuss the previous period's incidents, what has been resolved, any outstanding issues, identify and manage any service improvements, and any next steps.
- Weekly support call with the support team to go through open tickets and next steps.

What if there's a problem?

Real service level management is about more than what you promise.

It's also about what you do if the established expectations aren't met.

While Oracle and SAP provide little to no recompense for missing their SLAs (it's difficult to declare where they missed targets if there were no targets to begin with), we stand by the targets we make, and our promise to you to fulfil them.

As an additional part of our support process, we provide service credits if we fail to hit our stringent support targets: a credit of up to 16% of the monthly support and maintenance cost.

The difference between the service offered by third-party support and Oracle/SAP is stark, especially when you consider that the vendors' support only applies to their most recent products.

Their blanket approach to giving you the support you need is to keep upgrading your software.

Meanwhile, third-party support can provide more services, plus an enhanced, dedicated level of service, for at least 50% of the cost of your previous bill, without having to upgrade your software at all.

Third-party support is an effective way of getting something more for less. There is no catch.

Want to learn more?

Payroll Patching

Many think that payroll and legislative patching must come from their software vendor to be legitimate, but this simply isn't true...

