

## TECHIQ QUICK CHAT



## Leverage Managed Services In Your Business and Increase Billable Hours By 15 Percent or More

Savvy VARs are leveraging **Autotask Corp.** to “manage their managed services,” improve their staff utilization rates by 15 percent or more and automate their internal operations. **Bob Vogel, chief marketing officer at Autotask**, describes how VARs can improve their business processes, customer retention, cash flow and profits through managed services.

**Managed services are heavily hyped. Can you give us a reality check?** Managed services represent an opportunity for solution providers to change the nature of their customer relationships, from “vendor” to “valued service provider.” The result is longer-term engagements that yield predictable recurring revenue. But getting into managed services is a tough nut to crack. It’s a longer sales cycle, can involve onerous service level agreements, and is a challenge to administer profitability. That’s where Autotask enters the picture.

**How so?** Our software is a professional services automation tool designed specifically for the IT services industry. It integrates all business management functions that touch the customer, including service tickets, dispatching, project management, CRM, as well as time and billing. It also integrates directly into remote monitoring and management tools that MSPs use. This lets MSPs automate many managed services functions, track time applied against each contract, schedule recurring services work, and get real-time profitability reports.

**How can Autotask automate a VAR’s business?** Autotask is a hosted service that automatically handles many time-consuming tasks for solutions providers. For example, service tickets can be automatically generated from incoming e-mails, from a branded client service portal, or directly from remote monitoring systems. Autotask can be configured to automatically assign the ticket to the right queue—based on the properties of the service ticket—and then notify the appropriate tech support expert. It can also be set up to monitor service level agreements (SLAs), and automatically escalate tickets in a timely manner.

**Can Autotask help solutions providers to improve their cash flow?** Absolutely. Autotask dramatically speeds up the billing process, since all time on all projects, tickets and tasks, plus expenses, is entered into the system in real time. And there are literally dozens of other workflows that are built into the software to streamline a solution provider’s operations.

**How does Autotask impact a VAR’s bottom line?** It’s all about the profits. That is our mantra. Our software is designed to squeeze wasted time out of a solution provider’s day, by eliminating redundant data entry, automating many functions, providing quicker and better access to key business information to drive better business decisions—and importantly, to capture more billable time that otherwise falls through the cracks.

**How much of a return on investment can VARs expect from Autotask?** We have customers realizing \$500,000 a year in increased profits without adding people. I should also mention the nearly instant return-on-investment associated with our software. We are a hosted solution, so the start-up costs are minimal, with no huge licensing fees or pre-paid maintenance costs. Autotask involves a low monthly fee per user that is priced lower than what a typical tech is billed out for just one hour in a month.

**Are you integrating Autotask with third-party managed services applications?** Yes, we certainly are. Our goal is to become a complete business management platform for the solution provider. In other words, we want to be the primary software application they use to run their business. But we don't want to do it all ourselves. For instance, we have no plans to become a managed services application vendor ourselves—there are already many excellent tools available. Our plan is to tightly integrate with these third-party tools, so that we can help solution providers to effectively track their time for the work done associated with these tools, service their customer better, bill more accurately and get meaningful profitability reports.

**Which MSP platforms integrate with Autotask?** Today, we can accept monitoring alerts from virtually every managed services application out there, including Kaseya, Silverback, N-able, Level Platforms, HyBlue and dozens of others. And, we have recently released even deeper integrations with N-able and Level Platforms. As a result, you can move discovered assets from their applications into Autotask, launch remote service sessions with their software directly from inside Autotask, and handle round-trip ticket processing between their applications and ours. We expect to have similar integrations with other leading managed services applications later this year.

**Is Autotask an established or emerging platform?** Our software is very mature and stable at this point, because over the past five years we've been listening to our customers and continually innovating. We just recently released a companion to our software that runs on any mobile device connected to the Internet, as well as new drag-and-drop technology that dramatically speeds up the dispatching process.

**What are Autotask's top priorities?** We'll continue streamlining the workflow, and making our software even easier to use. We'll build more and deeper integrations with other software tools used by solution providers, including more MSP tools, more accounting packages, more service hubs and the like. And we'll give our customers the ability to collaborate with others more easily, including adding subcontractors on to their systems, sharing the workload with their customers, and exchanging assignments through peer networks.

**What can a solutions provider implement Autotask?** Obviously, the first thing they need to do is to contact us and get a demonstration of the software to be sure it fits with where they want to take their business. After that, it's pretty simple. We create a unique database on our server that is secure, redundant and backed up. We load the database up with their legacy customer and company data, and configure each user's access, based on their role in the company, and the permissions that management wants everyone to have. We then walk everyone through a comprehensive training program, some of which is instructor led over the web, and some of which is self-help through recorded classes. The whole process usually takes less than 30 days to get up and running.

**How quickly can VARs generate a return on their investment?** It's quite rapid. Our software costs about what a solution provider charges for a single hour of billable work per month. The software is paid for with the first hour it saves—through improved efficiency or through the first billable hour captured each month. Our average customer captures a 15% increase in billable hours by using our software.

#### AT A GLANCE

**Company:** Autotask Corp.

**Specialty:** The leading provider of an innovative, web-based platform allowing IT solution providers to run their businesses more easily and more profitably.

**Flagship solution:** Autotask all-in-one web-based professional services automation (PSA) software.

**More info:** [www.autotask.com](http://www.autotask.com) or 518-720-3500