

# Help! How do I keep my players happy?!

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Director of Customer Operations



- Describe how GREE improved our operations to keep players happy
- Review learnings of the last 2 years in three stages
- Review three areas of focus which impacted productivity
- Share successful concepts

## **I started with GREE in May of 2012**

- To build a high performing Customer Support organization to support:
  - A large rapidly growing player base
  - Several existing products
  - An aggressive product roadmap of features, live operations, and new products
- Challenges at that time
  - Merging support departments with different philosophies and processes
  - Everyone in customer operations was with the team only 1-6 months
  - A variety of methods to support multiple products in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> party studios
  - Minimal establish processes and tools

**Ultimate goal is to keep the player happy & playing**

**How do we do that?**

We empower Customer Operations

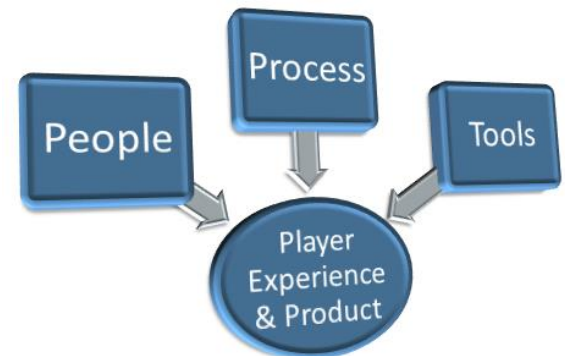
**How do we empower Customer Operations?**

We become a necessary contributor to our business operations

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To become a necessary contributor we focus in 3 areas of customer operations:

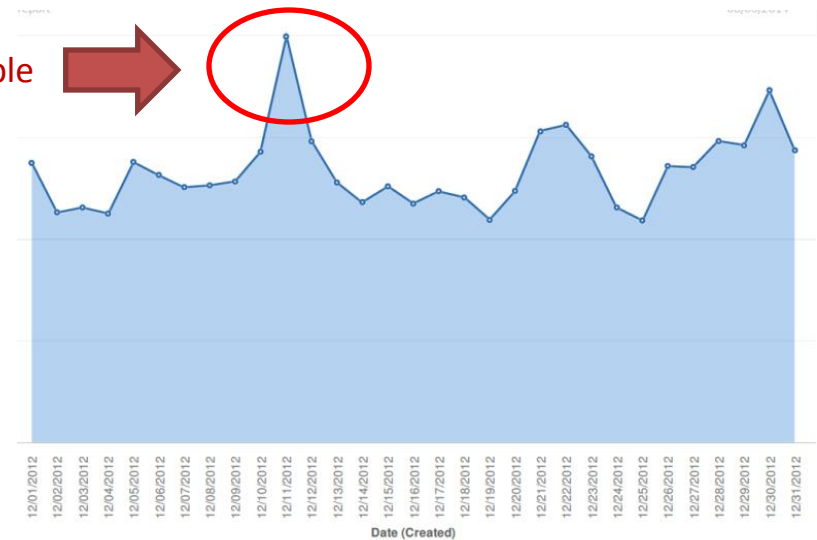
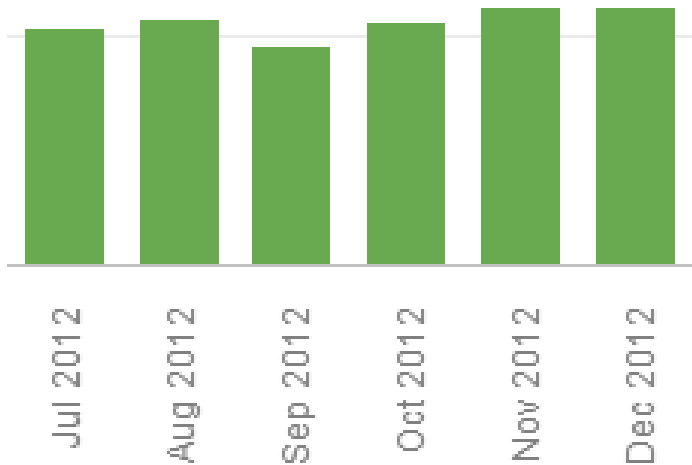
- **People** - Create a culture of truly valuing players is critical to success. Build a team of experts and ask them to own the player experience. Your goal should be to understand the player and advocate for them better than anyone else.
- **Process** - Develop reliable yet flexible processes that captures player experience, prioritizes it and is actionable by other departments. Focus on communication flow
- **Tools** - Improve productivity by designing and implementing tools that improve efficiency and also actively reduce workload



**In the beginning...**

# In the year 2012...

Spikes like this one were a big deal but were manageable



## People

- Our team members were assigned 1-2 titles each but were trained enough to support other titles when needed
- We took ownership of knowing the game but more importantly we were the experts on player issues/feedback.
  - For example, we took ownership of managing FAQs and the game help sections
- Team members advocated on behalf of the players
- As a manager your goal is to make sure they have all the support necessary to do their job well



## Process

- Embed your team in the development process. For example, our team was part of the daily stand ups
- Ask, ask, and then ask again to be part of planning and feature review meetings. Request to have product information shared regularly with your team
- Open the lines of communication. We created skype conversations dedicated to reporting, discussing, and resolving player issues
- Develop meaningful reports which capture player feedback. We have a daily report which summarizes player issues and feedback for the last 24 hours. It is distributed to key stakeholders.

## Tools

- During this period we focused on Self Support – We've found that players are more satisfied when they have more control of their account and access to information. It also reduces the incoming workload so that the customer operations team can focus on higher priority feedback and concerns
- Evaluate your ticket content and attempt to find solutions which will allow players to help themselves.
  - 10-15% of our tickets were requests to change player names. Implemented a feature to allow players to do so on their own

During the last half of 2012 ticket volume was relatively flat. **However we were preparing for a major feature, World Domination**

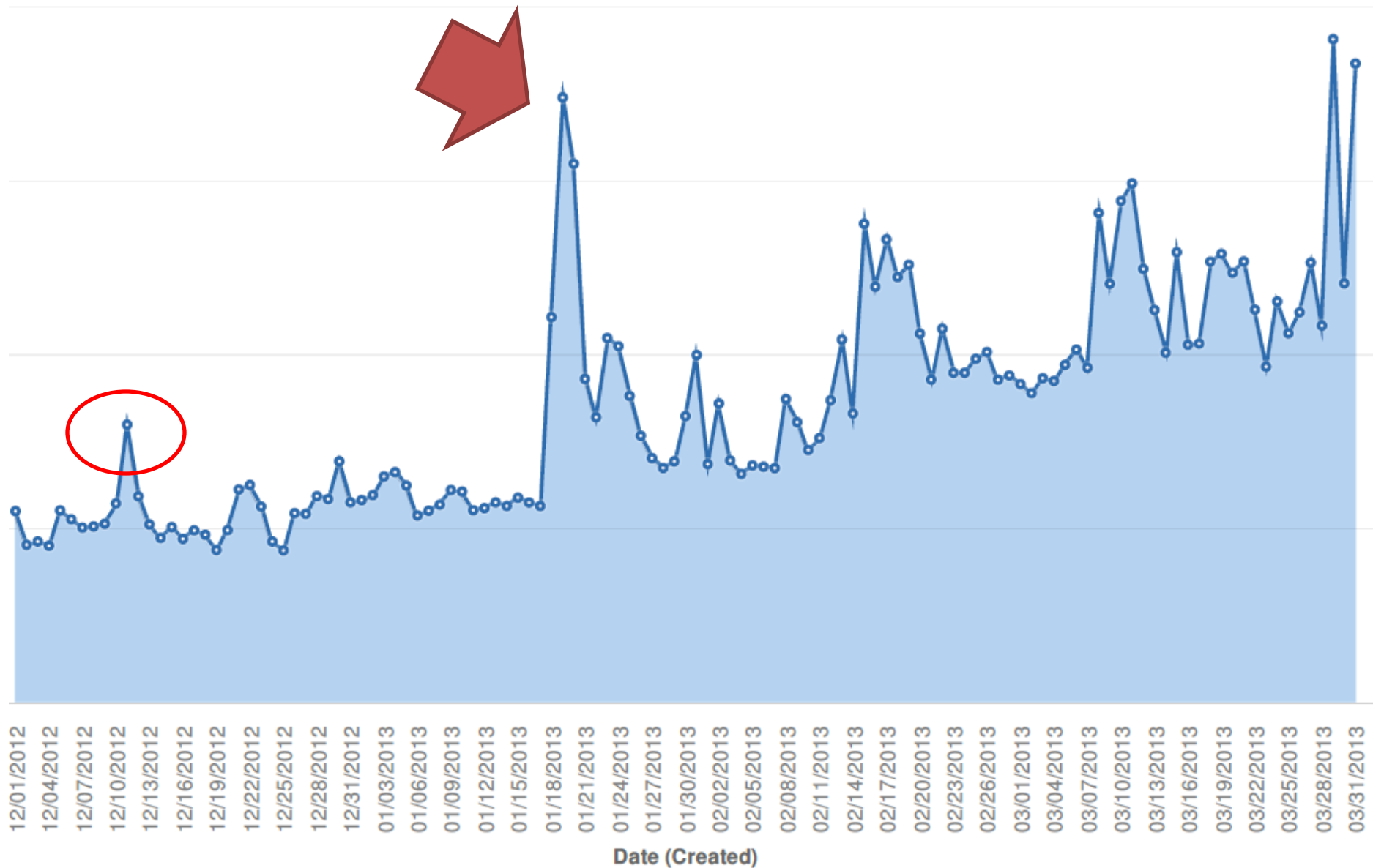
As part of the release process Product incorporated Customer Operations to prepare for the launch.

- **People** - Customer Operations was include to improve the release and launch of the feature
- **Processes** – Consumer Operations was included in play thru and feedback sessions. Design docs were reviewed
- **Tools** – Customer Operations owned the content, design and implementation of in app Self Support content for the feature



Luckily, we did that because...

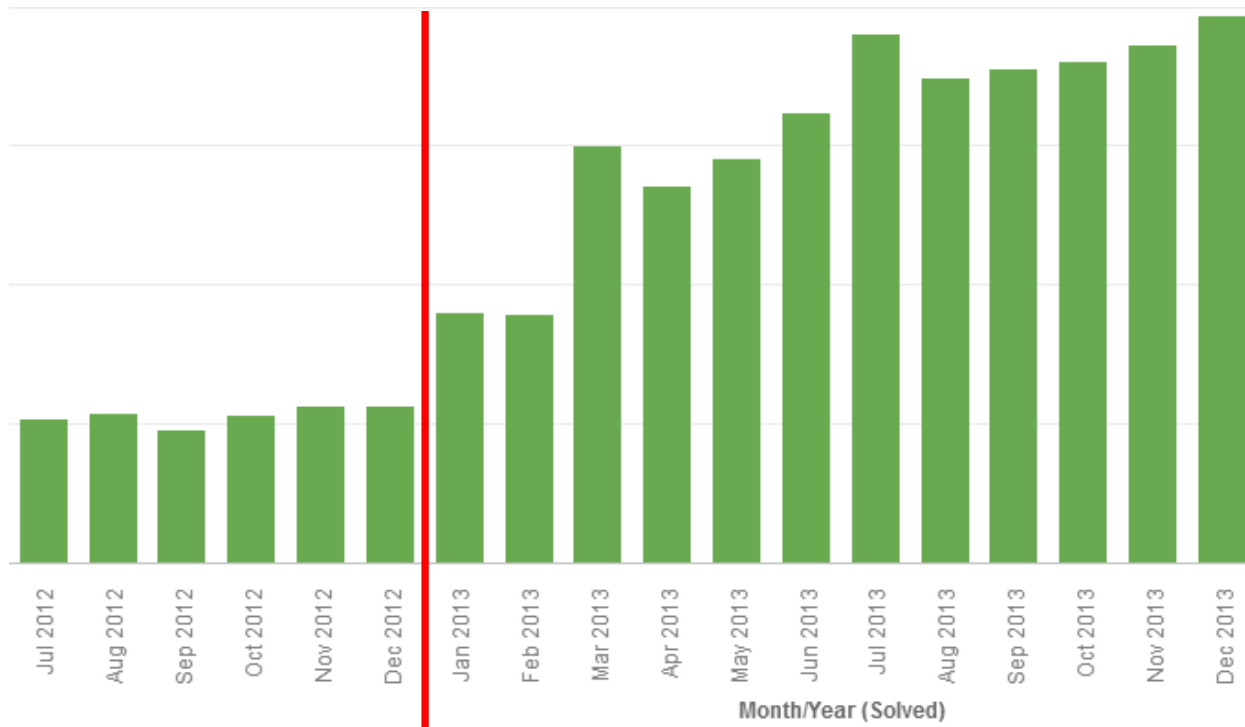
# "We exploded over night"



# “We exploded over night”



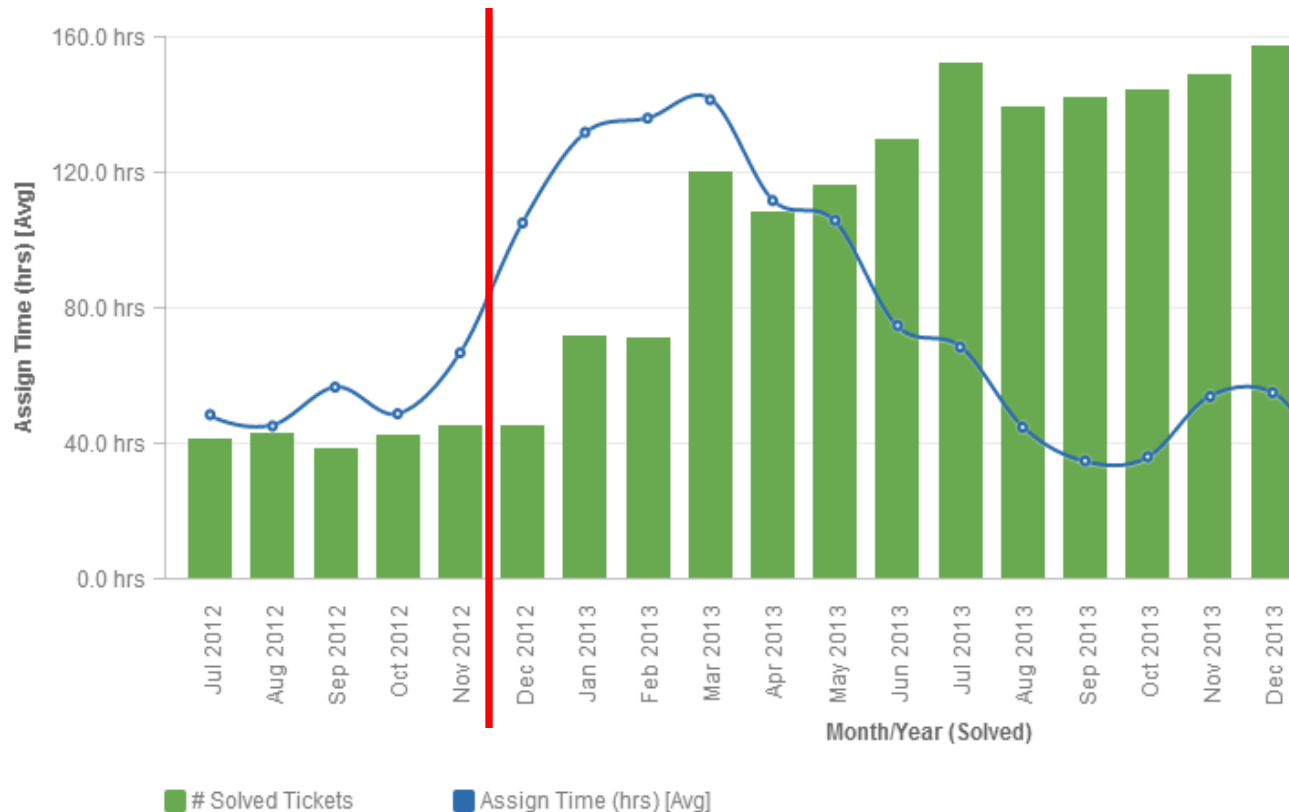
- Ticket volume compared to same month, doubled, then tripled, and even quadrupled
- Average response times reached > **140 hrs**
- Players were becoming frustrated with the support experience



# Key Performance Indicator



Originally our 1<sup>st</sup> response times suffered as a result of the growth. Through our focus on People, Process, and Tools we were able to improve our first response times by 75% from over 140 hours to less than 35.



**75%**  
**Improvement in**  
**response times!**

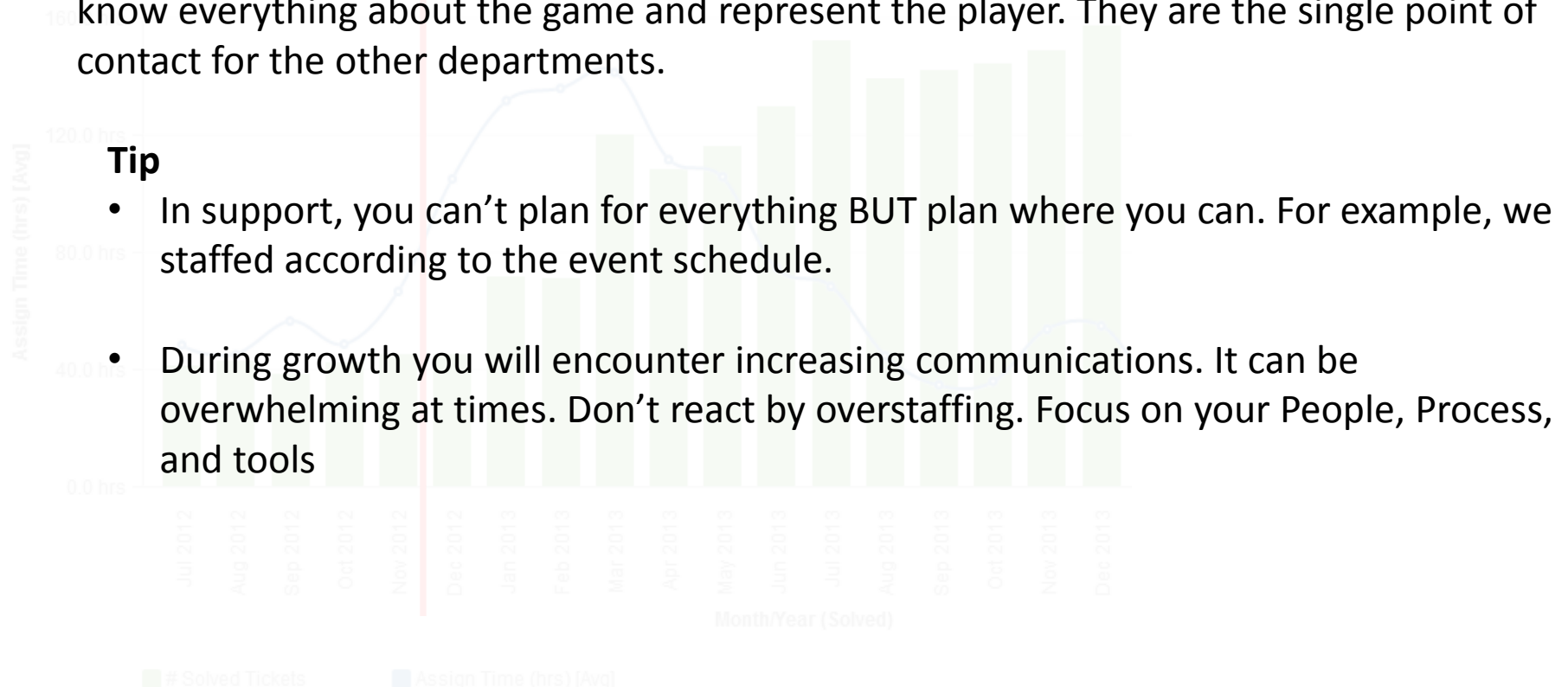
Studio KPIs were solid and ticket volume did not slow down throughout all of 2013. Much of our success came down to consistency in our people, processes, and tools.

## People

- Each product has a dedicated support specialist. They handle tickets but their job is to know everything about the game and represent the player. They are the single point of contact for the other departments.

### Tip

- In support, you can't plan for everything BUT plan where you can. For example, we staffed according to the event schedule.
- During growth you will encounter increasing communications. It can be overwhelming at times. Don't react by overstaffing. Focus on your People, Process, and tools

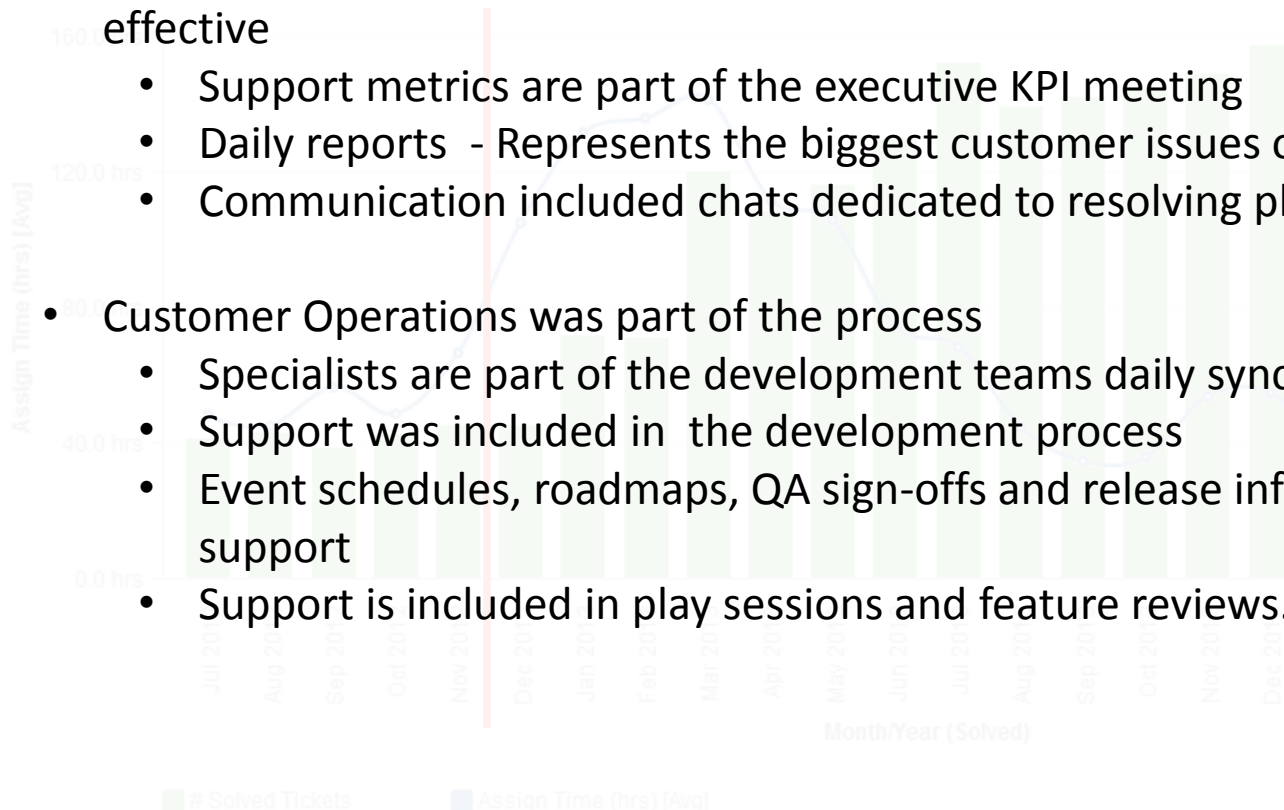




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## Processes & Tools

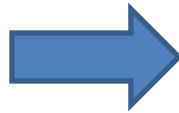
- Much of the success came from improving communications. These are simple yet effective
  - Support metrics are part of the executive KPI meeting
  - Daily reports - Represents the biggest customer issues over the last 24 hours.
  - Communication included chats dedicated to resolving player issues.
- Customer Operations was part of the process
  - Specialists are part of the development teams daily sync up
  - Support was included in the development process
  - Event schedules, roadmaps, QA sign-offs and release information are distributed to support
  - Support is included in play sessions and feature reviews.



# Paradigm shift

Customer Operations went from

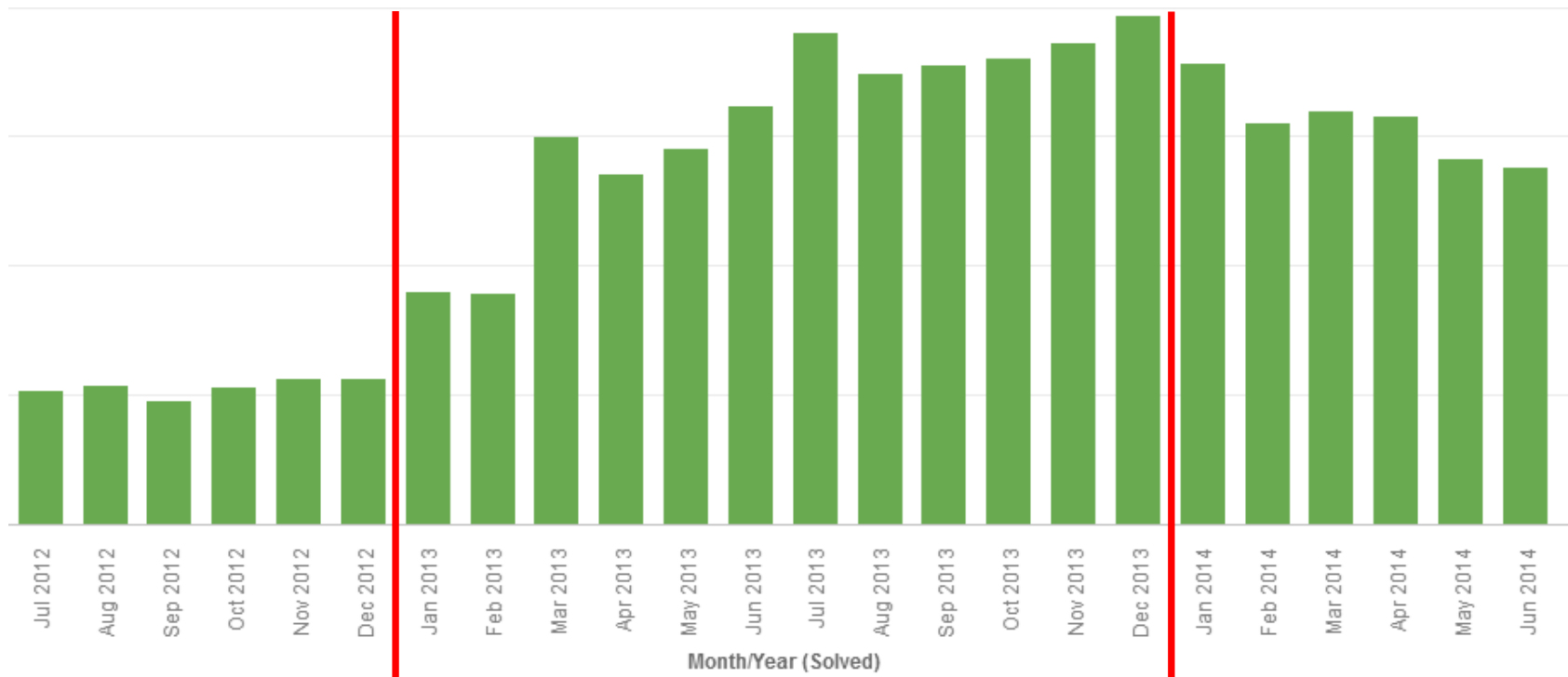
“We hope that there will be less issues”



“How fast can we work through a ticket spike”



“How do we reduce a spike?”

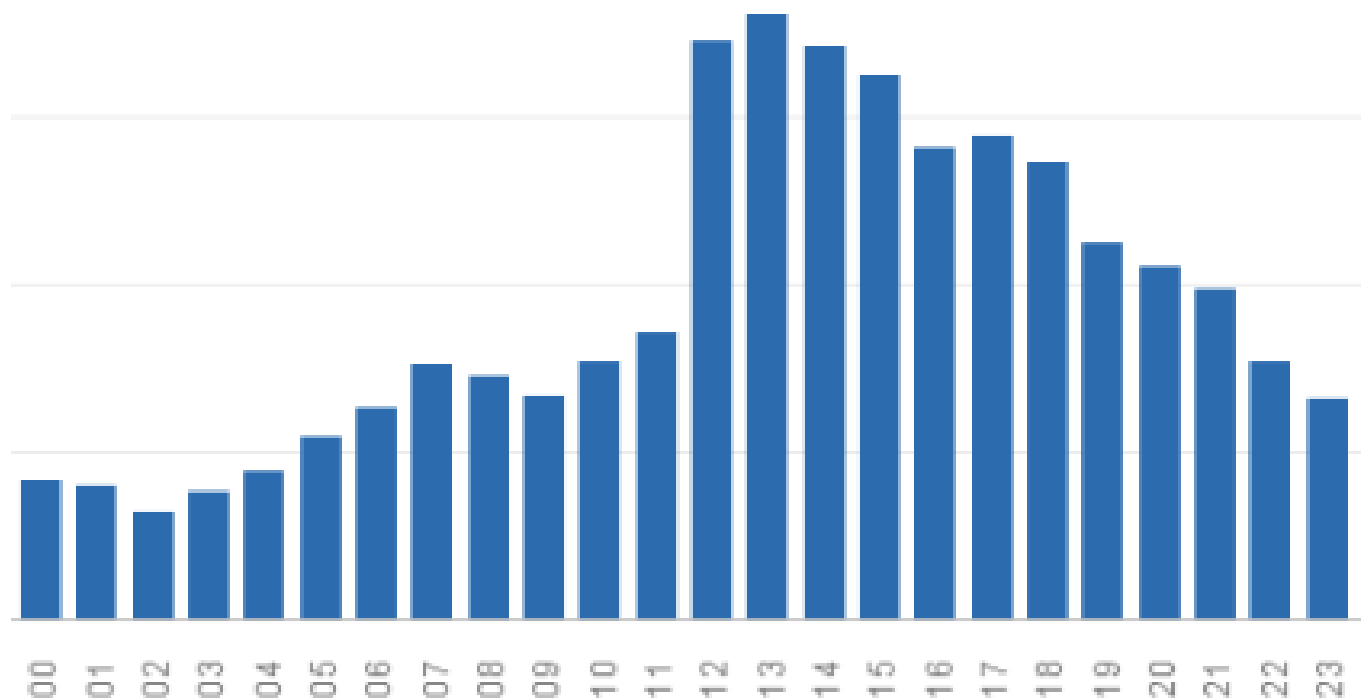


Focusing on people, process, and tools improved the ticket volume.

I am going to share one of our secret ingredients...

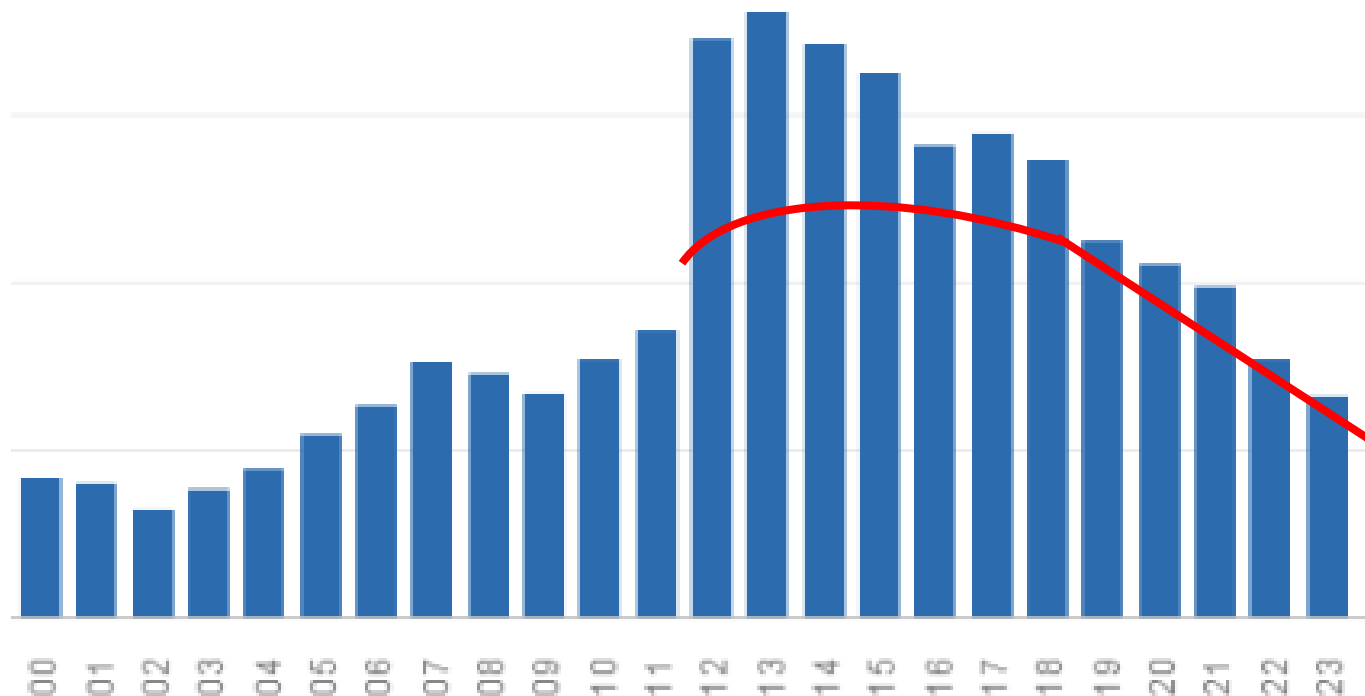
a tool

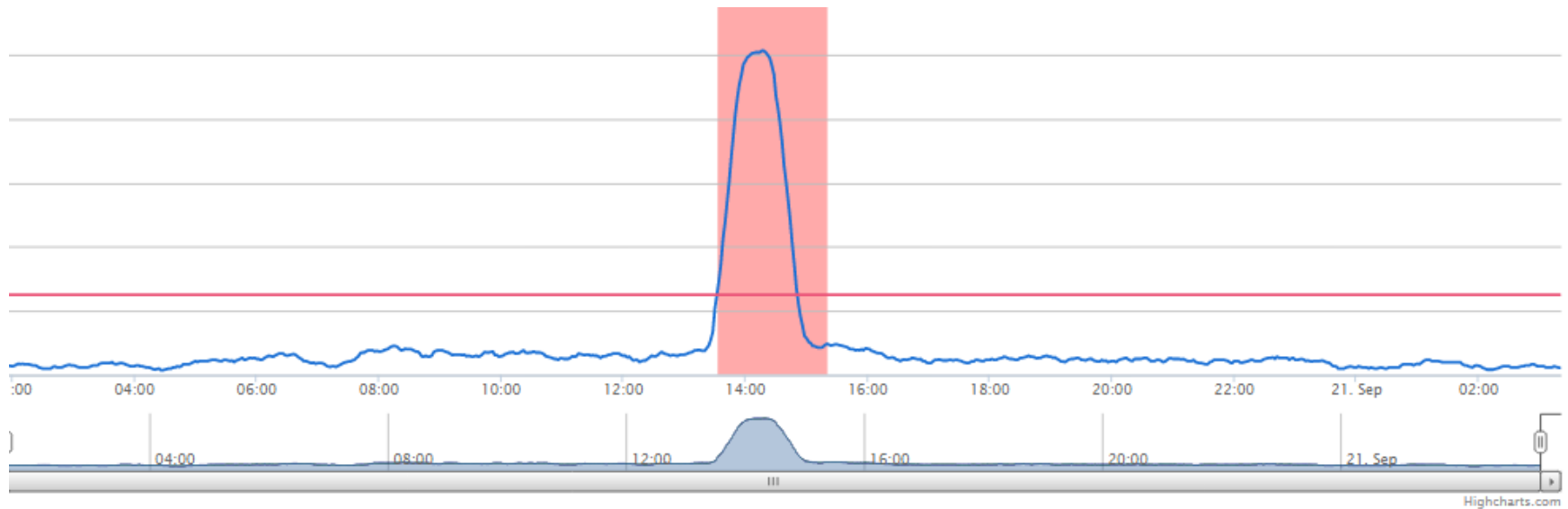
- **Identifying a major issue/bug was a manual process**
  - It would sometimes take hours before it was recognized by support
  - Support would then need to collect data to explain the issue
  - Support would then need to collect data to demonstrate that it was a valid issue
  - Engineer/product resolution could take minutes to hours



- **The desired tool would automatically:**
  - Recognize a growing ticket spike
  - Characterize the issue
  - Communicate it to the key stakeholders

**The goal was to reduce the spike and length of time that it existed**





- Alert is distributed to key stakeholders via email and text: Support, Community, Product, and Engineering
- Information that characterizes the issue is included in the email
  - Platform
  - Client info
  - Word Cloud
  - Example emails
  - Link to more information

Platform: Apple iOS (88), Android (12)

Client Version: 4.4 (75), 4.4.1 (9), 4.3.1 (8), 4.4.0 (1) Game Data Version: mw\_20140919\_3969 (91), mw\_20140828\_3834 (2)

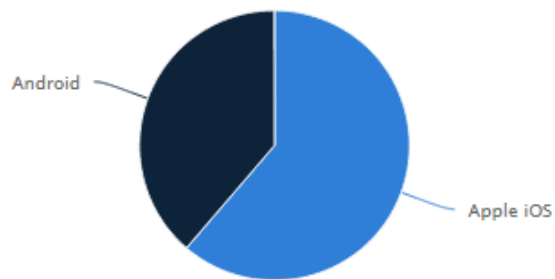
Word Cloud: frontline (43), icon (34), event (16), faction (14), gold (13), from (12), disappeared (11), help (11)

Samples:

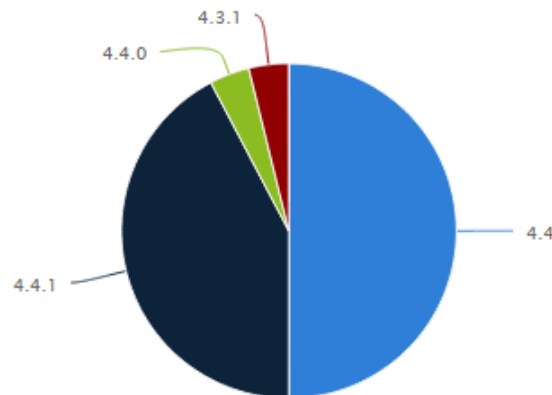
The frontline icon has disappeared from my screen a

## Environment

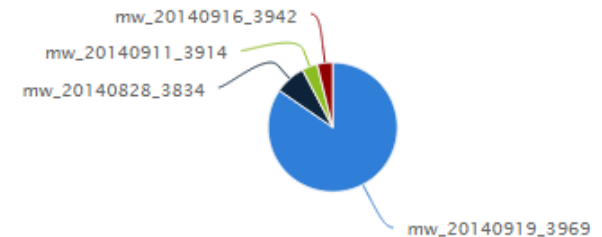
Platform



Client Version

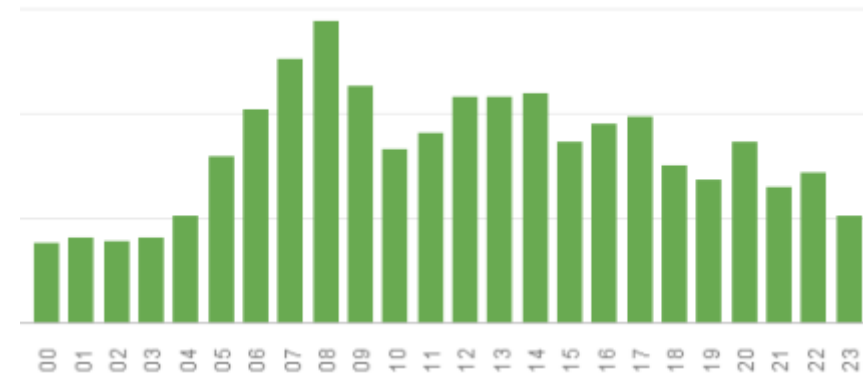
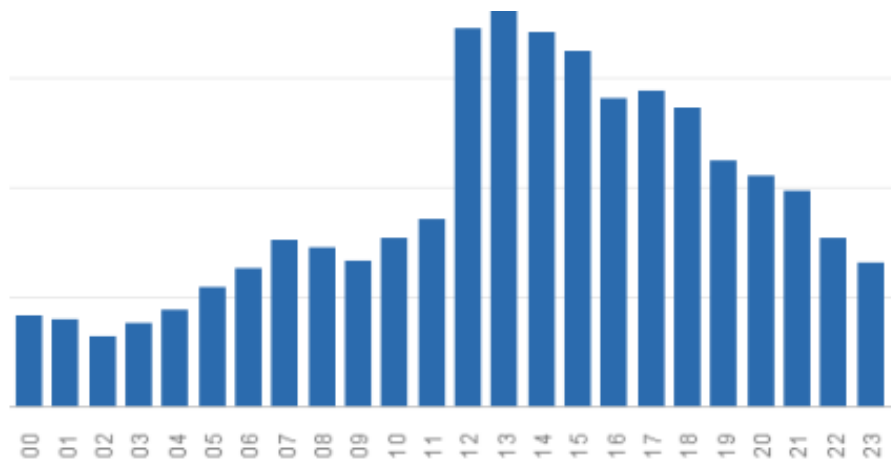


Game Data Version



## Alert tool

- System recognizes signs of a trending spike within minutes
- An alert is sent to all stakeholders via email and text
- Information that characterizes the issue is included in the email
  - For example a word cloud and graph of the trend
- Engineers immediately have the necessary information to resolve the issue





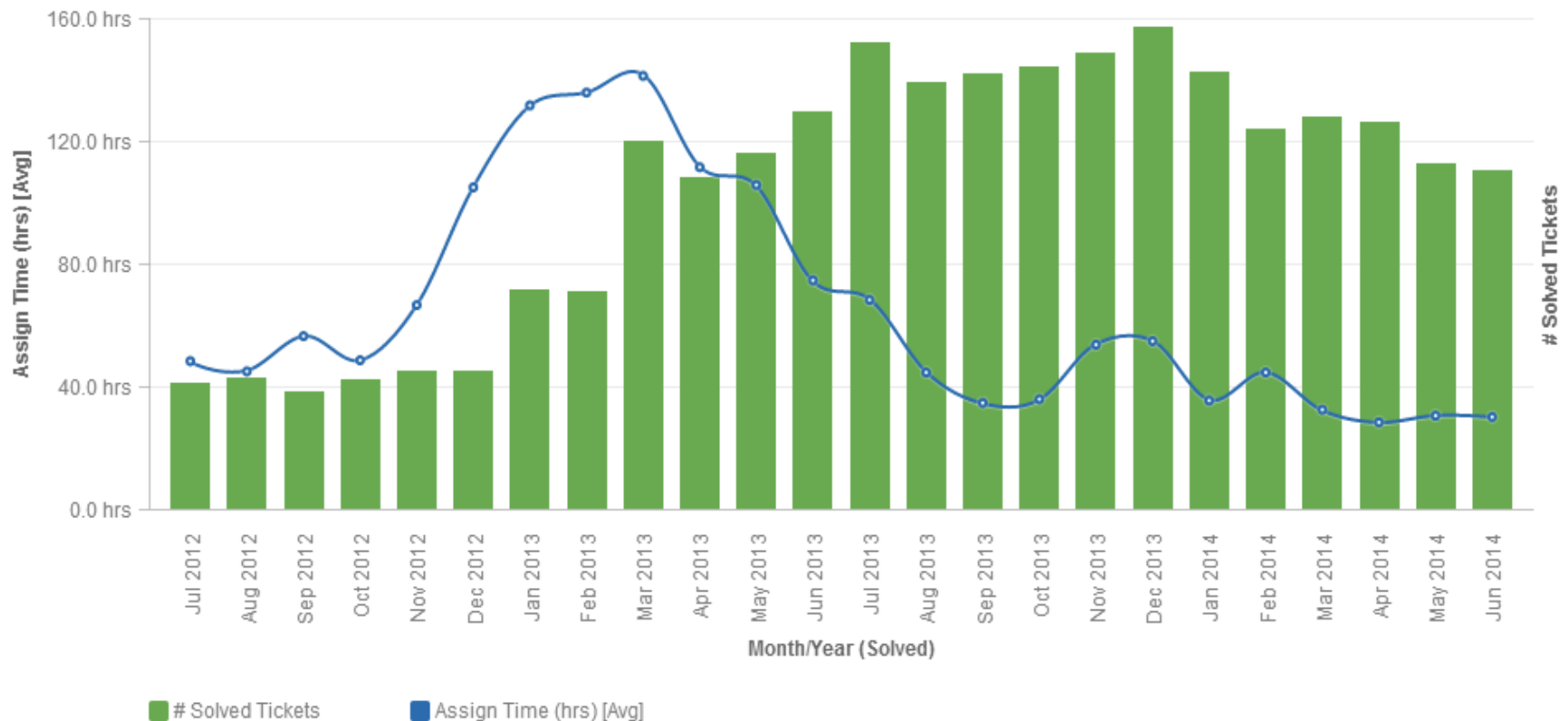
**Through a high-level overview of the last 2 years of GREE customer operations. We observed the following:**

- The customer operations team needs to know the player experience best and that knowledge should be incorporated into development
- Setup consistent and reliable processes that inform business operations & product development.
- Improving internal communications improves the company's ability to receive and action on large volumes of player communication
- Use tools that improve efficiency but also actively reduce work

By focusing on People, Process, and Tools customer operations can become a necessary contributor to the entire business operations.

In doing that we are improving the player experience, keeping them playing, and keeping them happy

- We've been able to reduce the volume of incoming ticket
- Continue to maintain 1-2 day first response times
- Allot more time to proactive customer satisfaction initiatives



Thank you