PITON Global

EXECUTIVE WHITE PAPER · WP-68

SaaS CUSTOMER OPERATIONS · PHILIPPINES

The retention-outcome standard: the executive economics of SaaS customer operations outsourcing to the Philippines.

An analysis of why tickets closed is a volume vanity metric, how issue-resolution accuracy and net revenue retention — never ticket throughput — decide the true cost of a SaaS support and success operation once wrong resolutions, missed renewals, churn, and escalations are counted, and the vendor-selection discipline that resolves the issue right and protects the recurring revenue behind it.

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ABOUT THIS SERIES — VOLUME 68

Every SaaS-support proposal is priced per ticket closed, because volume is easy to count. This volume is about the only outcome a SaaS company's recurring revenue actually depends on and a cheap contract quietly trades away: the issue resolved right the first time, the new customer onboarded to value, and the renewal protected. The gap between closing a ticket and retaining an account is where escalations, churn, and missed expansion live. The full series lives at piton-global.com.

THE PITON-GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

About the authors

John Maczynski

Chief Executive Officer

John has bought SaaS-support capacity for three decades, and learned that the fast desk that closes every ticket and resolves the issue wrong is the most expensive one a software company can hire — because a wrong resolution is an escalation, a botched onboarding is a customer who never reaches value, and a support failure at renewal time is churned recurring revenue no per-ticket saving can offset. His standing question ignores the tickets-per-hour report: of the issues you closed, how many were resolved right, and how much recurring revenue did they protect? Applied at PITON-Global, that question is what clients get on every SaaS-support sourcing decision — personally, with no account layer in between.

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Chief Strategy Officer

Ralf has spent twenty-five years running Philippine SaaS support-and-success floors, and he judges a team by its resolution accuracy and net revenue retention, not its tickets-per-day: whether the issue was resolved and the account kept, or closed and left to churn. The account contract in Section 3 codifies what he learned rebuilding teams that closed tickets fast and lost renewals. He now reads SaaS-support providers the way he once ran them — from the escalation log and the net-revenue-retention curve backward.

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PITON Global

ABOUT PITON-GLOBAL

PITON-Global is a buyer-side advisory practice, Manila-based since 2001, that has never operated a delivery floor or taken a placement commission. Its stock-in-trade is knowing the Philippine provider market at the operating level — 1,000+ mapped operations, re-verified continuously, including each SaaS team's real resolution accuracy and net-revenue-retention record rather than its tickets-per-day headline — and converting that knowledge into a shortlist of six to ten genuinely qualified partners per engagement. Buyers from Tripadvisor, Garmin, TSYS, HealthPartners, Yetipay, Workrise, and Norman Disney & Young have run their searches through the practice.

SECTION 01

Executive summary

-58%	94%+	+9pt	6.5×
Fully-loaded cost per resolved-and-retained account vs. US onshore	Issue-resolution accuracy on vetted teams, up from 76–86%	Net revenue retention lift on vetted, success-integrated teams	First-year ROI, reconstructed case (Section 6)

A SaaS-support engagement is bought on the price per ticket and paid for on the accounts it lets churn. The vendor reports millions of tickets closed at a fraction of the onshore cost; the software company finds the issues closed but not resolved, coming back as escalations; the new customers onboarded to a login instead of to value, stalling before they adopt; and the renewals that quietly lapse because support failed the account when it mattered — all while net revenue retention, the number the board actually watches, drifts below 100%. The operation cleared its queues and the company inherited an escalation problem, an adoption problem, and a churn problem it never priced. The gap between closing a ticket and retaining the account is where the real cost of cheap SaaS support hides, because a wrong resolution or a stalled onboarding is not throughput delivered; it is recurring revenue walking out the door.

The Philippines — English-fluent, technically fluent, with a deep SaaS support-and-success talent pool experienced on the major help-desk and CRM platforms — is where SaaS customer operations are delivered with the most resolution-and-retention discipline, because that pool, properly trained and success-integrated, can run the accurate resolution, value-based onboarding, and renewal protection that recurring revenue demands. Five findings:

1. **Tickets closed is the industry's most flattering number.** Any desk can close a ticket at speed. Vetted teams are measured on outcome: resolution accuracy, onboarding-to-value, and net revenue retention. Weak providers quote a low per-ticket price the company repays in escalations, stalled adoption, and churn. Section 2 shows the gap.

2. **The resolved-and-retained account, not the closed ticket, is the product.** An outcome that protects recurring revenue comes from resolving the issue to root cause, onboarding the customer to real value, and protecting the renewal — not from clearing a queue. Teams that resolve and retain grow net revenue; teams that close loosely generate escalations and churn that cost many times the ticket.

3. **Support is a retention lever, not a cost center.** In a subscription business, the support and success experience is a leading indicator of the renewal; a wrong resolution at the wrong moment is the reason a customer starts evaluating alternatives. Vetted teams hold resolution accuracy above 94% and are measured on NRR precisely because support quality and recurring revenue are the same curve.

4. **Churn and escalations, not the per-ticket rate, are what cost.** An issue resolved wrong costs the escalation, the engineering time, the credit, and — at renewal — the churned contract, many times the per-ticket saving. Teams that resolve accurately and onboard to value cut escalations and protect renewals, and that protected recurring revenue — not the offshore rate alone — is where the case study's return is built.

5. **Contract on the retained account, not the closed ticket.** The contracting failure of SaaS support is paying per ticket and hoping issues are resolved and renewals protected. Vetted deals price against resolution-accuracy floors, onboarding-to-value targets, and net-revenue-retention outcomes, making resolution and retention the team's problem, which is where they belong.

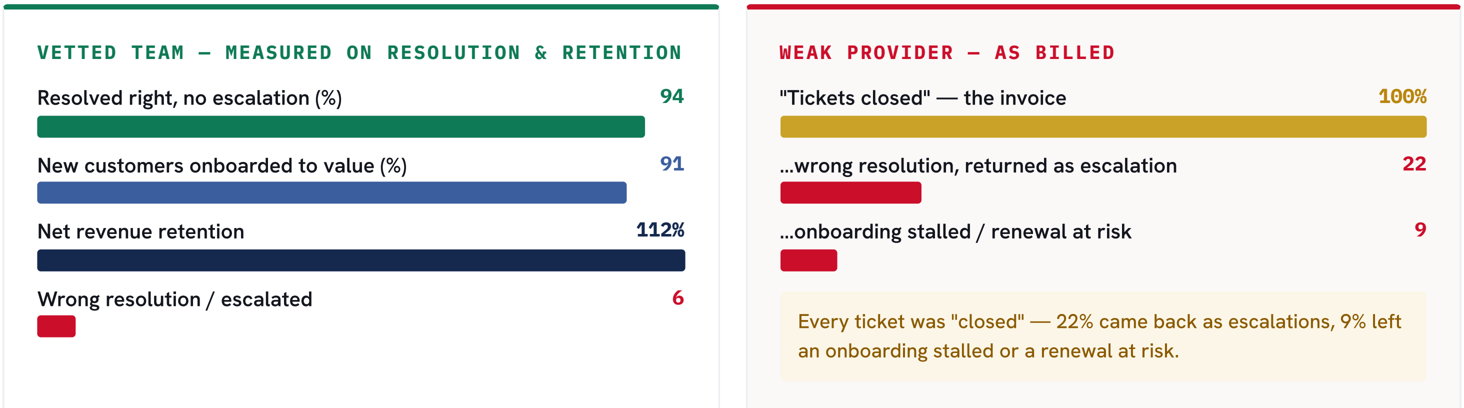
The intended reader is a VP of customer experience, chief customer officer, or COO at a SaaS company buying support per ticket and paying for it in escalations, stalled adoption, and churn. Sections 2–4 separate the teams that resolve issues and retain accounts from the teams that close tickets; Sections 5–7, the method and the proof.

SECTION 02

The volume mirage: tickets closed versus issues resolved and accounts retained

Figure 1 shows one month of a SaaS company's support queue two ways: as the tickets-closed report a weak vendor bills, and as the resolution-and-retention reality the escalation log, the adoption curve, and the renewal book experience. The tickets-closed number is engineered to look like output while escalations, stalled onboardings, and churn accumulate underneath.

FIG. 1 — ONE MONTH OF THE SUPPORT QUEUE: RESOLUTION-AND-RETENTION QUALITY VS. REPORTED VOLUME



Left: PITON-Global engagement instrumentation, 2025–26, resolution and retention audited. Right: composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence.

The economics follow the resolution and the retention, not the ticket count. On the left, ninety-four percent of issues are resolved right and net revenue retention sits at 112%, so accounts expand rather than churn; on the right, a cheap per-ticket price resolves twenty-two percent wrong and leaves nine stalling at onboarding or renewal, paying in escalations, engineering time, and churned recurring revenue at once. A low per-ticket price that lets accounts churn is not a saving; it is recurring revenue lost, compounding every renewal cycle. The resolution-and-retention audit — resolution accuracy, onboarding-to-value, net revenue retention — is the cheapest due-diligence instrument in this paper.

SECTION 03

The account contract: resolve it right, onboard to value, protect the renewal

Figure 2 lays out the three clauses of a working SaaS-support contract — the machinery a floor read verifies before any per-ticket price is believed.

FIG. 2 — THE ACCOUNT CONTRACT, AS OPERATED ON VETTED TEAMS

RESOLVE IT RIGHT

Every ticket is resolved to root cause on the correct answer, technical issues reproduced and escalated cleanly to engineering when needed, and a knowledge-base gap fed back rather than worked around. A resolved issue is one the customer does not have to reopen — the foundation everything else rests on.

ONBOARD TO VALUE

New customers are guided to first value and to the activation milestones that predict retention, not just to a working login — with proactive outreach where adoption stalls. An onboarding done to value is a customer who renews; one done to a checklist is a customer who churns quietly at month twelve.

PROTECT THE RENEWAL

At-risk signals are surfaced, health scores acted on, and expansion and renewal conversations handled to the playbook — so support becomes a retention engine, with a net-revenue-retention report the company can read. A protected renewal is the outcome the recurring-revenue line actually feels.

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THE RESOLVED-AND-RETAINED ACCOUNT

94%+ RESOLUTION ACCURACY | ONBOARDED TO VALUE | RENEWAL PROTECTED

Issues are resolved right, customers reach value, and renewals are protected — so escalations fall, adoption climbs, and net revenue retention rises above 100%. The operation gets cheaper per resolved-and-retained account and grows recurring revenue at the same time, which is the entire promise of outsourcing SaaS support to people who measure resolution and retention, not tickets closed.

Operating parameters from PITON-Global SaaS customer-operations engagements, 2025–26.

In diligence, the contract is tested from the customer's and the renewal book's side: pull closed tickets and check the reopen-and-escalation log for issues that came back; trace a cohort of onboardings to activation milestones; and read the net-revenue-retention curve for accounts the team touched. Perhaps one team in ten survives it cleanly. Steps 3 and 5 of the framework exist to find that one before the contract does — because everything in Table 3 of Section 6 depends on resolved-and-retained accounts, not tickets closed.

SECTION 04

Cost and performance: cost-per-resolved-and-retained-account economics and benchmarks

TABLE 1 — FULLY-LOADED COST PER RESOLVED-AND-RETAINED ACCOUNT: THREE OPERATING MODELS (2026)

OPERATING MODEL	COST / ACCOUNT-YR	VS. US BASELINE
US onshore in-house support & success	$44.00	baseline
Low-cost offshore ticket mill (per-ticket)	$30.00	–32%
Vetted Manila team — resolved & retained	**$18.50**	**–58%**

Basis: PITON-Global engagement pricing 2025–26; cost per resolved-and-retained account = fully-loaded operating cost divided by accounts whose issues are resolved and whose renewal is protected (escalated, stalled, and churned excluded); the ticket mill looks cheap per ticket but escalations, engineering time, and churned recurring revenue lift its true cost per retained account; US comparator fully-loaded in-house cost.

TABLE 2 — SaaS-SUPPORT BENCHMARKS, VETTED VS. BASELINE (2025-26)			
METRIC	VETTED TOP TIER	BASELINE	EXECUTIVE READING
Issue-resolution accuracy	**94%+**	76–86%	The only support number NRR follows
Onboarding-to-value rate	**91%+**	62–78%	Reaches value, or churns at month 12
Escalation rate vs. baseline	**–60%**	baseline	"Resolve it right" — held or not
Net revenue retention	**110%+**	92–101%	Expansion, or quiet churn
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	**92%+**	74–84%	Advocates, or detractors

Source: PITON-Global SaaS customer-operations engagement data 2025–26; baseline = typical pre-engagement operations billed on tickets closed.

The strategic read: the ticket mill's –32% per ticket is a false economy — escalations, engineering time, and churned recurring revenue lift its true cost per retained account far above the per-ticket gap, and a renewal lost to bad support is a cost no rate recovers. The vetted Manila team's –58% is real because it is measured where the value is: the issue resolved right, the customer at value, the renewal protected. Buy on tickets closed and you buy the right column of Figure 1; buy on cost-per-resolved-and-retained-account and you buy resolution and retention — the same discipline every volume in this series keeps arriving at from a different door.

SECTION 05

Sourcing discipline: the 7-Step Vendor Vetting Framework, applied to SaaS support

SaaS-support diligence adds one hard requirement to every step: a per-ticket price is real only when the resolution accuracy behind it survives a reopen-and-escalation audit and the retention behind it shows up in the net-revenue-retention curve. The funnel below is representative of a 50–120-seat SaaS support-and-success search.

FIG. 3 — THE 7-STEP FRAMEWORK AS A SaaS-SUPPORT FUNNEL

	STEP	WHAT IT ELIMINATES IN A SaaS-SUPPORT SEARCH	FIELD REMAINING
1	**Requirements definition**	Throughput-first scoping: fixes the resolution-accuracy floor, the onboarding-to-value target, the escalation ceiling, and the net-revenue-retention outcome the operation must move by product tier	1,000+
2	**Market mapping**	Ticket mills: operations that bill closed volume and treat escalations and churn as the client's problem, and generalist floors with no SaaS, product-support, or customer-success depth	~48
3	**Capability screening**	Teams without the machinery: audited resolution-accuracy history, help-desk/CRM proficiency, an onboarding-and-success motion, and coverage across your product surface and customer tiers	~13
4	**Compliance & security audit**	Weak governance: customer-data protection, SOC 2 and GDPR alignment, access controls on production and CRM systems, secure remote-support tooling, business continuity for release surges	~8
5	**Operational diligence**	The resolution-and-retention read: audit reopen/escalation logs for wrong resolutions; trace an onboarding cohort to activation; read the NRR curve; interview on a complex technical issue and an at-risk renewal	4–6
6	**Competitive RFP & negotiation**	Per-ticket pricing: finalists bid against resolution-accuracy floors, onboarding-to-value targets, and net-revenue-retention outcomes — all carrying credits for escalations and churned accounts	2–3
7	**Transition & launch governance**	Cold cutover: the team calibrates against your product, help center, and success playbook on a sample before it owns the live queue, with the resolution floor and NRR baseline certified before steady state, PITON-Global embedded buyer-side	1

Field-remaining counts represent a 50–120-seat SaaS support-and-success search, PITON-Global engagements 2024–26.

The standing guarantees hold: **vendor neutrality** — PITON-Global operates no support floors, closes no tickets, and takes no placement economics, so the shortlist reflects audited resolution and retention performance, not inventory; **right-sizing** — teams for whom your operation is a flagship account. Six to ten genuinely qualified providers, delivered within 48–72 hours, free to the buyer, competing through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP.

SECTION 06 · ANONYMIZED CASE STUDY

Re-basing the operation on retention outcomes: an 80-seat SaaS support-and-success rebuild, reconstructed

Engagement SA-092 is a US B2B SaaS company — handling roughly 6,400,000 support interactions a year across a large subscriber base — that had offshored customer operations to a per-ticket mill. The ticket price was excellent; the resolution and retention were not: resolution accuracy sat near 81%, escalations were high, onboardings stalled below activation, and net revenue retention had slipped to 97% — the number the board was asking about. The chief customer officer wanted the arbitrage without the escalations and the churn. Identifying details are anonymized under NDA.

SELECTION (WEEKS 0–8, RESOLUTION + NRR READS)

Requirements fixed a 94% resolution-accuracy floor, a 91% onboarding-to-value target, an escalation ceiling, and a net-revenue-retention outcome. Mapping produced 48 claimants; the machinery screen — audited resolution accuracy, help-desk/CRM proficiency, an onboarding-and-success motion, product coverage — left 13; the security-and-continuity audit left 8. Reopen/escalation audits, onboarding-cohort traces, and NRR-curve reads shortlisted 5. A Manila team won priced against resolution and retention, with both written into the reporting spec.

TRANSITION (MONTHS 2–7, CALIBRATED FIRST)

The team calibrated against the product, help center, and success playbook on a sample before owning the live queue; the resolution floor and NRR baseline were certified in month 3, and the onboarding-to-value motion stood up from day one. The resolution-and-QA loop fed agent coaching continuously. By month 7 resolution accuracy reached 94.3%, escalations fell 60%, onboarding-to-value hit 91%, and net revenue retention climbed from 97% to 112%. PITON-Global chaired the resolution-and-retention review board to steady state.

TABLE 3 — SA-092 FIRST-YEAR VALUE BUILD-UP (US$)

VALUE COMPONENT	YEAR 1	BASIS
Labor arbitrage on the 80-seat operation	$2.04M	150.0k productive hrs × ($23.10 – $9.50)
Churned recurring revenue retained (NRR lift)	$1.06M	Renewals protected by higher resolution & success
Escalation & engineering cost removed	$0.42M	Tier-2/engineering load cut by accurate resolution
Expansion & advocacy value	$0.24M	Upsell and referral from onboarded-to-value cohort
Gross value created	**$3.76M**	
Less: engagement & transition costs	($0.58M)	Calibration, success-motion build, CRM integration; advisory fee $0 (provider-paid model)
Net value ÷ cost = first-year ROI	6.5×	$3.76M ÷ $0.58M

Figures rounded; resolution, onboarding, and NRR effects audit-verified. Method in Methodology & notes.

Fifty-four percent arbitrage, forty-six percent from retained recurring revenue, removed escalations, and expansion — a typical split for the series, earned because the operation was re-based on resolution and retention rather than ticket volume. Every line traces to a diligence step: the resolution floor and NRR outcome to Step 1, the retention-based pricing to Step 6, the onboarding-and-success motion to Step 3's contract. The chief customer officer's line at the year-one review: "The ticket price barely moved. What moved is NRR — from 97 to 112 — and the board stopped asking about churn."

SECTION 07

The executive playbook: governance for the first 180 days

A SaaS-support transition succeeds when the team is measured and paid on resolution accuracy and net revenue retention — client in command throughout.

DAYS 0–30

Define resolution & retention, contract on them

Set the resolution-accuracy floor, the onboarding-to-value target, the escalation ceiling, and the net-revenue-retention outcome with customer-experience leadership before launch, and document the success playbook by product tier. Contract against resolution and retention — never per ticket alone — with floors and outcomes carrying credits. Stand up the reopen/escalation audit and the NRR curve as the program's arbiters of truth.

DAYS 30–90

Calibrate, stand up the success motion

Calibrate the team against your product, help center, and success playbook on a sample before it owns the live queue; certify the resolution floor and the NRR baseline. Switch on the resolution-and-QA loop and the onboarding-to-value motion from day one. Publish the operations dashboard: resolution accuracy, onboarding-to-value, escalation rate, net revenue retention, CSAT.

DAYS 90–180

Own the queue, certify steady state

Hand the live queue to the team only after it holds the resolution floor and moves NRR. Review the board monthly with the escalation log and the net-revenue-retention curve on the table. Certify steady state on two months at floor including a major release and a renewal cohort; hand over on documented criteria; keep the reopen audit and NRR review standing.

THE FIVE FAILURE MODES WE ARE HIRED TO PREVENT

Paying per ticket while accounts churn · closing tickets instead of resolving issues · onboarding to a login instead of to value · treating support as a cost center instead of a retention lever · owning the queue before resolution and retention are proven. All five are settled at selection and contract.

The SaaS-support argument, in one sentence: a closed ticket is activity and a resolved-and-retained account is recurring revenue defended and expanded, and a vetted Philippine team delivers –58% cost per retained account with 94%+ resolution accuracy, escalations cut by 60%, and net revenue retention lifted above 110% — for buyers who audit resolution and read the NRR curve instead of counting tickets closed, and compete the finalists through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP. Anyone can close a ticket. We make sure you buy the team that resolves the issue and keeps the account.

METHODOLOGY & NOTES

How the numbers were built

Resolution and retention figures (Fig. 1, Table 2) derive from engagement instrumentation in PITON-Global SaaS customer-operations engagements, 2025–26. Resolution accuracy is measured against the reopen/escalation log; onboarding-to-value against activation milestones; net revenue retention against the client's renewal book; escalation rate and CSAT against the pre-engagement baseline. The weak-provider column is a composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence, shown for contrast.

Cost-per-resolved-and-retained-account figures (Table 1) are fully loaded — wages, benefits and statutory charges, facilities, technology and help-desk/CRM tooling, management and QA overhead including success motion and enablement, and attrition-driven recruiting — divided by accounts whose issues are resolved and whose renewal is protected, with escalated, stalled, or churned accounts excluded from the denominator; US comparators reflect fully-loaded in-house cost on the same basis. A resolved-and-retained account is resolved right, onboarded to value, and renewed.

The case study (SA-092) is anonymized under NDA; volumes and dates are generalized, figures rounded. Resolution, onboarding, and NRR effects are audit-verified; the retained-revenue line reflects renewals protected by higher resolution and success, and the expansion line is a conservative estimate. ROI = net first-year value ÷ all engagement-related client costs. PITON-Global's advisory fee is provider-paid and appears at $0 in the client cost base; neutrality safeguards are documented at piton-global.com.

Market context draws on IBPAP reporting and PITON-Global's proprietary provider mapping (1,000+ operations; resolution accuracy and net-revenue-retention performance re-verified May 2026). Net revenue retention is treated here as the outcome that recurring-revenue businesses actually manage to. Estimates and projections are PITON-Global analysis and should be cited as such. The full series is available at piton-global.com.

Would your provider's ticket price survive a resolution-and-NRR audit?

Thirty minutes with John will tell you. Free to buyers, strictly vendor-neutral — a resolution-and-retention-verified shortlist within two to three business days.

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