EDTECH SUPPORT · PHILIPPINES

The learner-outcome standard: the executive economics of EdTech support outsourcing to the Philippines.

An analysis of why interactions handled is a volume vanity metric, how learner outcomes and resolution quality — never support throughput — decide the true cost of an EdTech operation once unresolved blockers, learner churn, escalations, and re-contacts are counted, and the vendor-selection discipline that actually unblocks the learner and keeps them enrolled.

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ABOUT THIS SERIES — VOLUME 74

Every EdTech-support proposal is priced per interaction handled, because volume is easy to count. This volume is about the only outcome an EdTech company's growth actually depends on: the learner whose blocker was genuinely resolved — taught through, not deflected — so they stay enrolled, keep progressing, and renew. The gap between handling an interaction and unblocking a learner is where churn and silent attrition 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 learner-support capacity for three decades, and learned that the fast team that closes every ticket and leaves the learner still stuck is the most expensive one an EdTech company can hire — because a deflected blocker is a learner who quietly stops logging in, and a churned learner is lifetime value gone with a refund attached. His standing question ignores the tickets-per-hour dashboard: of the interactions you handled, how many actually unblocked the learner and kept them progressing? Applied at PITON-Global, that question is what clients get on every EdTech-support sourcing decision — personally, with no account layer in between.

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Ralf has spent twenty-five years running Philippine support floors, and he judges a learner-support team by its true resolution rate and the retention of the learners it touches, not its interactions-per-hour: whether the blocker was actually cleared and the learner taught through it, or the ticket closed while the learner drifted away. The learner-support contract in Section 3 codifies what he learned rebuilding teams that cleared queues fast and let learners churn. He now reads EdTech providers the way he once ran them — from the re-contact log and the post-support retention curve backward.

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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 learner-support team's real resolution quality and retention record rather than its interactions-per-hour 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%	96%+	-64%	6.3×
Fully-loaded cost per resolved, retained learner vs. US onshore	True first-contact resolution on vetted teams, up from 68–80%	Reduction in support-driven learner churn on vetted teams	First-year ROI, reconstructed case (Section 6)

An EdTech-support engagement is bought on the price per interaction and paid for on the learners it fails to unblock. The vendor reports millions of tickets and chats handled at a fraction of the onshore cost; the EdTech company finds the blockers deflected with a canned reply, the learners who re-contacted three times for the same problem, the escalations dumped on the product team, and the silent churn as frustrated learners simply stop logging in and let the subscription lapse. The operation cleared its queue and the company inherited a retention problem, an escalation backlog, and refunds. The gap between handling an interaction and unblocking a learner is where the real cost of cheap EdTech support hides, because a deflected blocker is not throughput delivered — it is a learner halfway out the door.

The Philippines — English-fluent, warm and patient in tone, with a deep education-and-support talent pool — is where EdTech support is delivered with the most learner-outcome discipline, because that pool can run the genuine problem resolution, teach-through guidance, and retention care that outcomes demand. Five findings:

1. **Interactions handled is the industry's most flattering number.** Any floor can close tickets at speed. Vetted teams are measured on outcome: true first-contact resolution, re-contact rate, and post-support retention. Weak providers quote a low per-interaction price the company repays in churn, escalations, and refunds. Section 2 shows the gap.

2. **The unblocked, retained learner, not the closed ticket, is the product.** A learner who keeps progressing comes from resolving the actual blocker and teaching them through it — not from clearing a queue with a link. Teams that resolve for real keep learners enrolled; teams that deflect generate re-contacts and churn that cost far more than the interaction.

3. **Deflection cuts both ways — churn now and reputation later.** A learner left stuck lapses their subscription; a cohort left frustrated leaves the reviews and word-of-mouth that throttle new enrollment. Vetted teams hold true resolution above 96% precisely because both tails cost — the learner who leaves and the ones who never join.

4. **The churn and the re-contact, not the interaction, are what cost.** A blocker deflected costs the repeat contacts, the escalation, the refund, and the lifetime value of a learner who leaves — many times the per-interaction saving. Teams that resolve for real protect retention, and that protected lifetime value — not the offshore rate alone — is where the case study's return is built.

5. **Contract on the resolved learner, not the handled interaction.** The contracting failure of EdTech support is paying per interaction and hoping the learner was helped. Vetted deals price against true-resolution floors, re-contact ceilings, and post-support retention targets, making learner outcomes the team's problem, which is where it belongs.

The intended reader is a head of learner experience, VP of support, or COO buying EdTech support per interaction and paying for it in churn, escalations, and refunds. Sections 2–4 separate the teams that unblock learners from the teams that clear queues; Sections 5–7, the method and the proof.

SECTION 02

The volume mirage: interactions handled versus learners unblocked

Figure 1 follows one month's learner interactions through the funnel from handled to genuinely resolved-and-retained. Each stage strips out the volume that a weak vendor still bills as success — the interactions marked closed that left the learner stuck, re-contacting, or drifting toward churn.

FIG. 1 — THE LEARNER-OUTCOME YIELD FUNNEL

One month of interactions, narrowing from billed volume to the outcome that actually protects revenue.

WEAK PROVIDER BILLS
the full 100% as "handled" — and reports first-contact resolution off the 88% that got an answer, not the 74% actually unblocked.

VETTED TEAM IS PAID ON
the 63% that stayed enrolled — and drives it toward 90%+ by resolving for real and teaching through the blocker.

Illustrative funnel from PITON-Global EdTech engagement instrumentation, 2025–26; retention measured as active-and-progressing at day 30 post-contact. Weak-provider figures from pre-engagement reporting reviewed in diligence.

The economics live in the drop from 100% to 63%. Every interaction is billed, but more than a third of the learners behind them are stuck, repeating themselves, or gone within the month — and the weak provider's headline resolution rate is computed high up the funnel, where "we replied" counts as "we solved." A low per-interaction price that leaks learners at the retention stage is not a saving; it is churn and refunds, deferred. The learner-outcome audit — true resolution, re-contact rate, post-support retention — is the cheapest due-diligence instrument in this paper.

SECTION 03

The learner-support contract: resolve the blocker, teach don't deflect, retain the learner

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

FIG. 2 — THE LEARNER-SUPPORT CONTRACT, AS OPERATED ON VETTED TEAMS

RESOLVE THE BLOCKER

Every interaction works the learner's actual problem — the login loop, the broken video, the confusing assignment — to a genuine fix, with the underlying cause noted so product and content can kill recurring blockers. The problem is solved at the source, not linked-away, so it does not come back as a re-contact.

TEACH, DON'T DEFLECT

Agents guide the learner through the step rather than pasting a help-article link, meeting them with the patience and encouragement that keep a frustrated learner engaged. A learner who is taught through the moment leaves it more confident, not more likely to quit.

RETAIN THE LEARNER

At-risk learners are flagged and followed up, sentiment is tracked, and the team is measured on whether the learners it touched stayed enrolled and progressing — with a retention report the company can read. Retention is the outcome the whole operation is judged on, which is the only number growth actually feels.

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THE RESOLVED, RETAINED LEARNER

96%+ TRUE RESOLUTION | LOW RE-CONTACT | RETAINED

Blockers are genuinely resolved, learners are taught through rather than deflected, and at-risk learners are kept enrolled — so re-contacts fall, escalations drop, and support becomes a retention engine instead of a churn source. The operation gets cheaper per resolved learner and grows lifetime value at the same time, which is the entire promise of outsourcing EdTech support to people who measure learner outcomes, not interactions handled.

Operating parameters from PITON-Global EdTech engagements, 2025–26.

In diligence, the contract is tested from the learner's side: pull a sample of "resolved" interactions and check whether the learner re-contacted or churned; read the escalation log for blockers dumped on product; and trace the post-support retention curve for the cohorts 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 learner outcomes, not interactions handled.

SECTION 04

Cost and performance: cost-per-resolved-learner economics and benchmarks

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

OPERATING MODEL	COST / RESOLVED	VS. US BASELINE
US onshore in-house learner support	$18.40	baseline
Low-cost offshore ticket mill (per-interaction)	$12.60	−32%
Vetted Manila team — resolved & retained	**$7.73**	**−58%**

Basis: PITON-Global engagement pricing 2025–26; cost per resolved, retained learner = fully-loaded operating cost divided by learners genuinely unblocked and still active at day 30 (deflected and churned excluded); the ticket mill looks cheap per interaction but re-contacts, escalations, refunds and lost lifetime value lift its true cost per resolved learner; US comparator fully-loaded in-house cost.

TABLE 2 — EDTECH-SUPPORT BENCHMARKS, VETTED VS. BASELINE (2025-26)			
METRIC	VETTED TOP TIER	BASELINE	EXECUTIVE READING
True first-contact resolution	**96%+**	68–80%	The only support number retention follows
Re-contact rate (same blocker)	**<6%**	20–34%	Solved once, or handled thrice
Support-driven churn vs. baseline	**–64%**	baseline	"Retain the learner" — held or not
Escalations to product/eng vs. baseline	**–57%**	baseline	Resolved at tier 1, or dumped upstream
Learner CSAT after contact	**4.7/5**	3.6/5	A reason to stay, or a reason to leave

Source: PITON-Global EdTech engagement data 2025–26; baseline = typical pre-engagement operations billed on interactions handled.

The strategic read: the ticket mill's –32% per interaction is a false economy — re-contacts, escalations, refunds, and lost lifetime value lift its true cost per resolved learner far above the per-interaction gap, and a churned learner is revenue no rate recovers. The vetted Manila team's –58% is real because it is measured where the value is: the learner genuinely unblocked, taught through, and still enrolled. Buy on interactions handled and you buy the top of Figure 1's funnel; buy on cost-per-resolved-learner and you buy learner outcomes — 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 EdTech support

EdTech-support diligence adds one hard requirement to every step: a per-interaction price is real only when the learner outcomes behind it survive an audit of true resolution, re-contact, and post-support retention. The funnel below is representative of a 40–90-seat learner-support search.

FIG. 3 — THE 7-STEP FRAMEWORK AS AN EDTECH-SUPPORT FUNNEL			
	STEP	WHAT IT ELIMINATES IN AN EDTECH-SUPPORT SEARCH	FIELD REMAINING
1	**Requirements definition**	Throughput-first scoping: fixes the true-resolution floor, the re-contact ceiling, the retention target, and the escalation and CSAT standard the operation must meet by learner segment	1,000+
2	**Market mapping**	Ticket mills: operations that bill interaction volume and treat churn and re-contacts as the client's problem, and generalist floors with no learner-support or education-tone depth	~46
3	**Capability screening**	Teams without the machinery: audited true-resolution history, a teach-through quality model, at-risk-learner follow-up, and coverage across your platforms, subjects, and learner ages	~13
4	**Compliance & security audit**	Weak governance: student-data protection (FERPA/COPPA where applicable), minor-safeguarding practice, access controls on the LMS and support stack, SOC 2 scope covering learner data	~8
5	**Operational diligence**	The outcome read: audit a sample of "resolved" interactions for re-contact and churn; trace the post-support retention curve; interview on how they teach a frustrated learner through a blocker	4–6
6	**Competitive RFP & negotiation**	Per-interaction pricing: finalists bid against true-resolution floors, re-contact ceilings, and retention targets — all carrying credits for learners who re-contact or churn after contact	2–3
7	**Transition & launch governance**	Cold start: the team calibrates against your platform, curriculum, and tone on a sample before it owns live learners, with the resolution and retention floor certified before steady state, PITON-Global embedded buyer-side	1

Field-remaining counts represent a 40–90-seat learner-support search, PITON-Global engagements 2024–26.

The standing guarantees hold: **vendor neutrality** — PITON-Global operates no support floors, handles no interactions, and takes no placement economics, so the shortlist reflects audited learner-outcome 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 learner outcomes: a 70-seat learner-support rebuild, reconstructed

Engagement ED-079 is a US EdTech company — a subscription learning platform handling roughly 3,100,000 learner interactions a year across chat, email, and in-app — that had offshored learner support to a per-interaction mill. The interaction price was excellent; the outcomes were not: true first-contact resolution sat near 74%, re-contacts were high, escalations flooded the product team, and support-attributable churn was eating into renewals. The head of learner experience wanted the cost curve without the churn. Identifying details are anonymized under NDA.

SELECTION (WEEKS 0–8, OUTCOME AUDITS)

Requirements fixed a 96% true-resolution floor, a re-contact ceiling, and a post-support retention target, with a teach-through quality model and at-risk follow-up. Mapping produced 46 claimants; the machinery screen — audited resolution history, teach-through QA, retention follow-up, platform coverage — left 13; the student-data and safeguarding audit left 8. Blind outcome audits of each finalist's "resolved" samples for re-contact and churn shortlisted 5. A Manila team won priced against true resolution and retention, with an outcome audit written into the reporting spec.

TRANSITION (MONTHS 2–7, CALIBRATED FIRST)

The team calibrated against the platform, curriculum, and brand tone on sample interactions before owning live learners; the resolution floor was certified in month 3, and at-risk follow-up stood up from day one. The outcome-and-QA loop fed agent coaching continuously. By month 7 true first-contact resolution reached 96.4%, re-contacts fell below 6%, escalations dropped 57%, and support-driven churn fell 64%. PITON-Global chaired the learner-outcome review board to steady state.

TABLE 3 — ED-079 FIRST-YEAR VALUE BUILD-UP (US$)

VALUE COMPONENT	YEAR 1	BASIS
Labor arbitrage on the 70-seat operation	$1.78M	131.3k productive hrs × ($22.10 – $8.55)
Retained revenue (support-driven churn cut)	$1.24M	Renewals preserved by −64% support churn
Re-contact & escalation load removed	$0.34M	Repeat contacts and product escalations avoided
Refund & reputation value	$0.16M	Refunds avoided and review/NPS lift
Gross value created	**$3.52M**	
Less: engagement & transition costs	($0.56M)	Calibration, teach-through training, LMS integration; advisory fee $0 (provider-paid model)
Net value ÷ cost = first-year ROI	6.3×	$3.52M ÷ $0.56M

Figures rounded; resolution, re-contact, and churn effects audit-verified. Method in Methodology & notes.

Fifty-one percent arbitrage, forty-nine percent from retained revenue, removed re-contact and escalation load, and avoided refunds — a typical split for the series, earned because the operation was re-based on learner outcomes rather than interaction volume. Every line traces to a diligence step: the resolution floor to Step 1, the retention-based pricing to Step 6, the teach-through model to Step 3's contract. The head of learner experience's line at the year-one review: "The interaction price barely moved. What moved is that learners get unstuck and stay — support turned from our leakiest funnel into a reason people renew."

SECTION 07

The executive playbook: governance for the first 180 days

An EdTech-support transition succeeds when the team is measured and paid on learner outcomes and retention — client in command throughout.

DAYS 0–30

Define outcomes, contract on them

Set the true-resolution floor, the re-contact ceiling, and the retention and CSAT thresholds with learner-experience leadership before launch, and document the teach-through model and at-risk follow-up by segment. Contract against learner outcomes and retention — never per interaction alone — with floors and targets carrying credits. Stand up the outcome audit as the program's arbiter of truth.

DAYS 30–90

Calibrate, stand up retention follow-up

Calibrate the team against your platform, curriculum, and tone on sample interactions before it owns live learners; certify the resolution floor and the teach-through quality loop. Switch on at-risk-learner follow-up from day one. Publish the learner dashboard: true resolution, re-contact, retention, escalations, CSAT.

DAYS 90–180

Own live learners, certify steady state

Hand live learners to the team only after it holds the resolution floor and retention target. Review the outcome board monthly with the re-contact and post-support retention curves on the table. Certify steady state on two months at floor including a peak-enrollment surge; hand over on documented criteria; keep the quarterly outcome audit standing.

THE FIVE FAILURE MODES WE ARE HIRED TO PREVENT

Paying per interaction while learners churn · closing tickets instead of resolving blockers · deflecting with a link instead of teaching through · letting at-risk learners drift away unflagged · owning live learners before resolution and retention are proven. All five are settled at selection and contract.

The EdTech-support argument, in one sentence: a handled interaction is activity and a resolved, retained learner is renewal revenue and a reputation that recruits, and a vetted Philippine team delivers −58% cost per resolved learner with 96%+ true resolution and support-driven churn cut by nearly two-thirds — for buyers who audit the learner outcomes instead of counting interactions handled, 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 unblocks the learner and keeps them enrolled.

METHODOLOGY & NOTES

How the numbers were built

Outcome and retention figures (Fig. 1, Table 2) derive from engagement instrumentation in PITON-Global EdTech engagements, 2025–26. True first-contact resolution is measured by whether the learner re-contacted on the same blocker; re-contact, escalation, churn, and CSAT are measured against the client's pre-engagement baseline, and retention as active-and-progressing at day 30 post-contact. The weak-provider column is a composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence, shown for contrast.

Cost-per-resolved-learner figures (Table 1) are fully loaded — wages, benefits and statutory charges, facilities, technology and tooling, management and QA overhead including quality analysts and retention specialists, attrition-driven recruiting — divided by learners genuinely unblocked and still active at day 30, with deflected or churned interactions excluded from the denominator; US comparators reflect fully-loaded in-house cost on the same basis. A resolved, retained learner is genuinely unblocked, taught through, and still enrolled.

The case study (ED-079) is anonymized under NDA; volumes and dates are generalized, figures rounded. Resolution, re-contact, and churn effects are audit-verified; the retained-revenue line reflects renewals preserved, and the refund/reputation 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; learner-outcome and retention performance re-verified May 2026). Student-data handling follows applicable privacy and safeguarding standards. 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 interaction price survive a learner-outcome audit?

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

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