

PRODUCT

Northstar - Helpdesk Hub

PRODUCT TYPE

Helpdesk Context Dashboard

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a Product Team or Stakeholder, I want an incident tracking dashboard that shows helpdesk incident rates and product availability trends, so I can quickly understand system health, identify recurring issues, and make informed decisions to improve reliability and user experience.

PLATFORM

Web-based Desktop & Tablet App

USER BASE

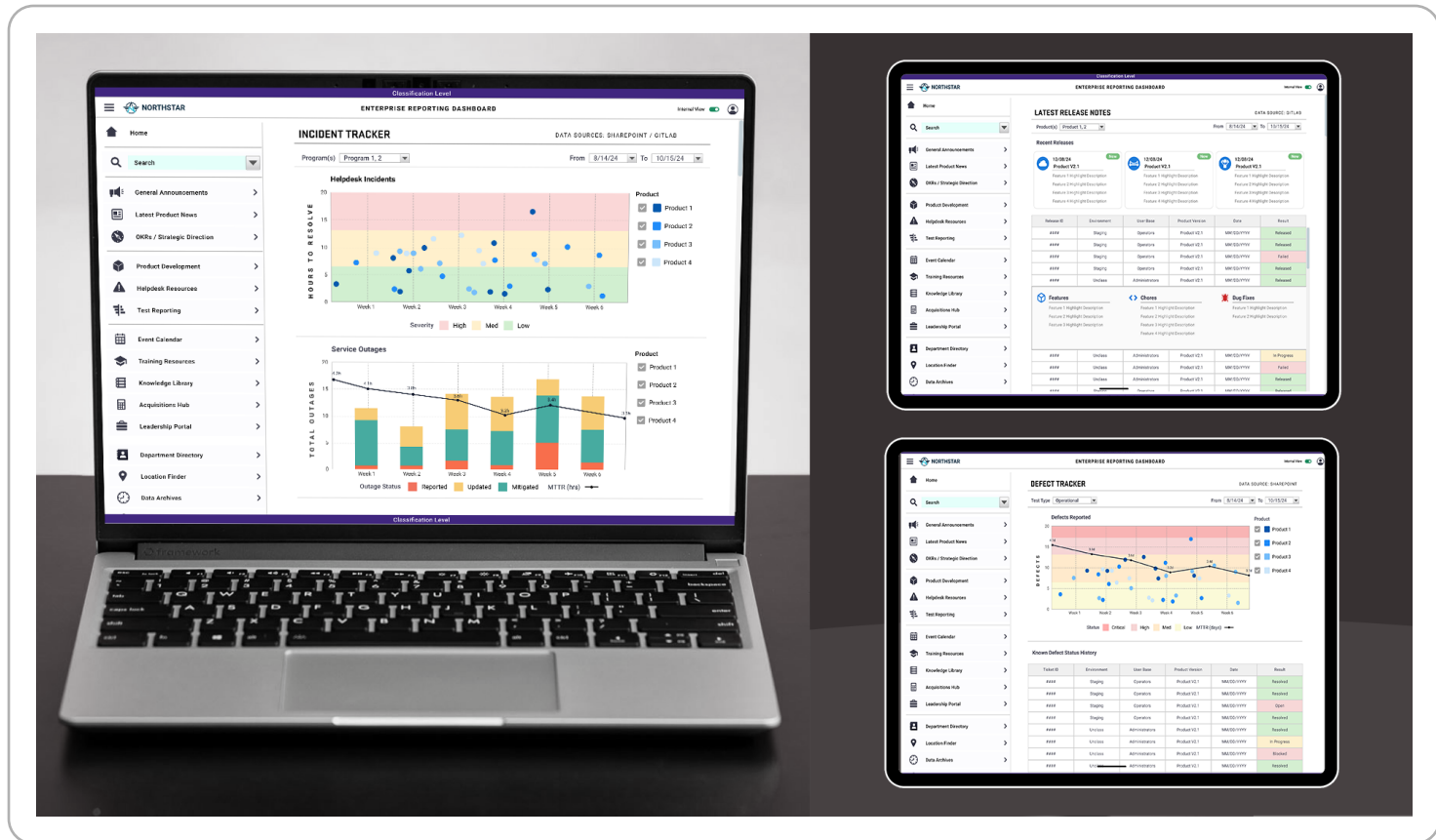
Enterprise Product Teams & Stakeholders

TIMELINE

July 2024 - Sep 2025

ABOUT

This incident tracking dashboard provides teams and stakeholders with a centralized view of helpdesk incident rates and product availability trends. It supports proactive monitoring, faster issue identification, and data-informed decisions to improve system reliability and user experience.



My Roles & Contributions

Product Manager

- Directed product vision
- Wrote & prioritized user stories
- Led & aligned cross-functional teams

UX Designer

- Designed & built user interfaces
- Optimized product data architecture
- Established key data sources

QA / Test Planner

- Contributed to QA strategy
- Planned test execution cycles
- Ensured overall product quality

Key Decision Factors

ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

Shared visibility into incident volume and availability trends to improve reliability, prioritize fixes, and reduce operational disruption.

USER CONSIDERATIONS

Users needed fast triage views, low cognitive load, and role-based access to incident details and sensitive customer reports.

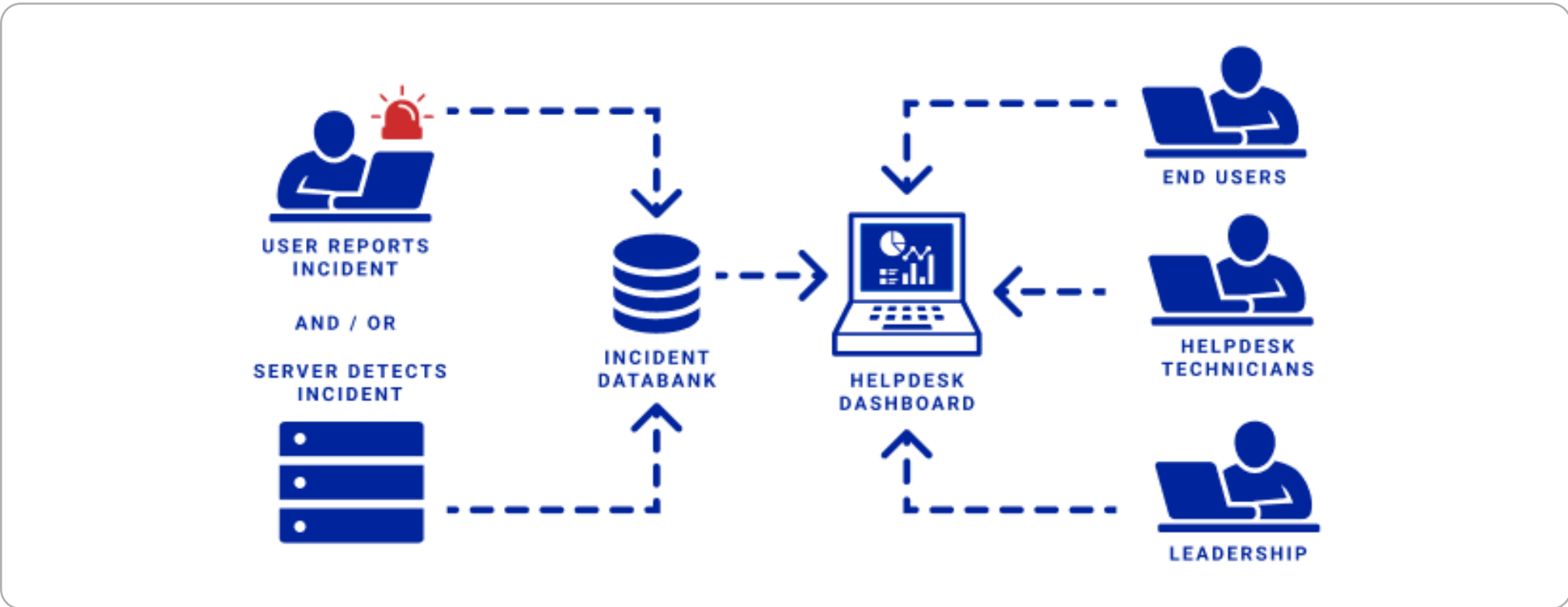
CONSTRAINTS & PARAMETERS

High-security environments, limited telemetry, and fragmented helpdesk tooling constrained data integration and real-time alerting.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Teams could detect incident spikes early, reduce MTTR, and communicate system health clearly to stakeholders.

PRODUCT CORE FEATURES OVERVIEW



∞ End-to-End Workflow

EVALUATE BUSINESS NEEDS

Aligned leadership and ops goals around reliability, uptime, and incident reduction targets.

DEFINE SCOPE & EXPECTATIONS

Defined incident taxonomy, severity levels, and availability calculation rules.

CONDUCT USER RESEARCH & PROBLEM DISCOVERY

Interviewed support, operations, and product teams to map incident intake and escalation pain points.

EVALUATE USER NEEDS & PAIN POINTS

Identified key questions: what's trending, what's recurring, and what's impacting availability.

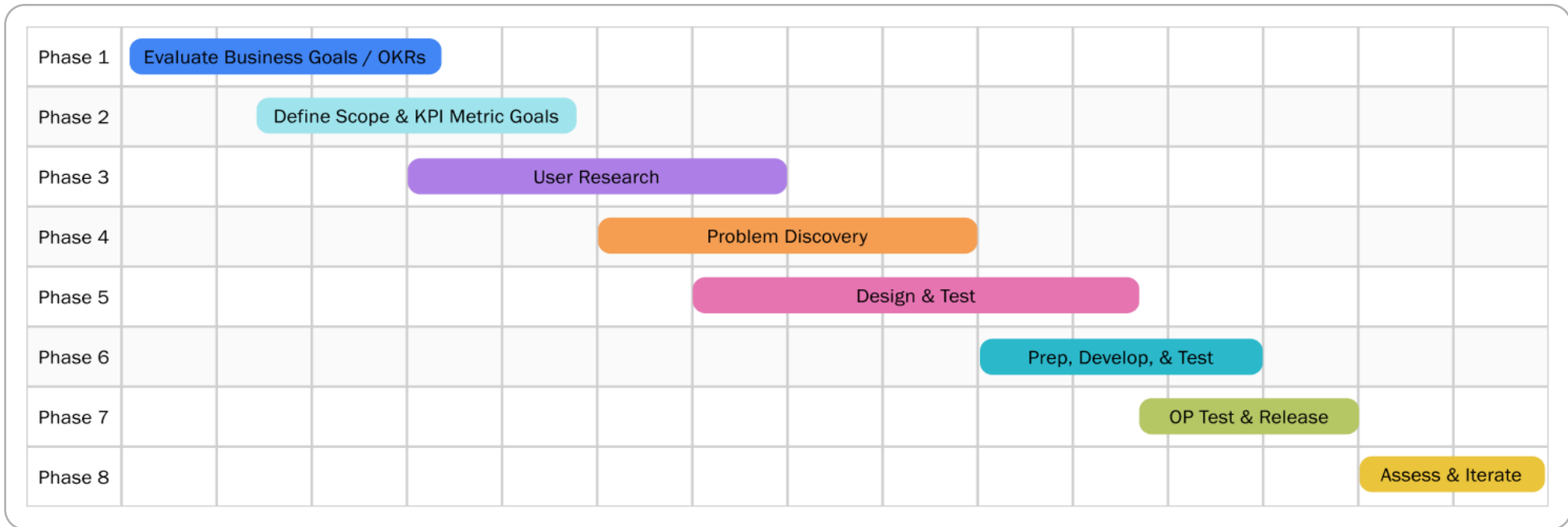
CONFIGURE CONTENT & DEVELOP SOLUTION APPROACHES

Designed trend dashboards with severity breakdowns, time filters, and annotation for releases/incidents.

MEASURE OUTCOMES & ITERATE

Measured MTTR and incident recurrence, iterating dashboards to improve triage efficiency.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKFLOW PHASES



Design Decision Highlights

KEY DESIGN CHOICES

Incident rate and availability trend charts, severity breakdowns, and time-range controls with clear annotations.

WHY I MADE THESE CHOICES

They enabled quick health assessment and focused teams on the highest-impact reliability work.

WHAT I INTENTIONALLY OMITTED



Low-value dashboards that duplicated ticketing tools without adding insight or context.

WHY THESE CHOICES MATTERED

Better visibility reduced downtime risk and improved stakeholder communication.

KEY DESIGN COMPONENTS


BRANDING


FONTS
STRATUM No2
 Roboto Regular
 Roboto Condensed

COLORS

PRIMARY




STATUS INDICATORS



GRAPHICS / COMPONENT EXAMPLES

Outage Status ■ Reported ■ Updated ■ Mitigated



	0 - 7	8 - 30	31 - 90	> 90
Critical	1	1	1	1
High	3	3	3	3
Med	10	10	10	10
Low	50	50	50	50

12/08/24 New

Product V2.1

Feature 1 Highlight Description

Feature 2 Highlight Description

Feature 3 Highlight Description

Feature 4 Highlight Description

Resolved

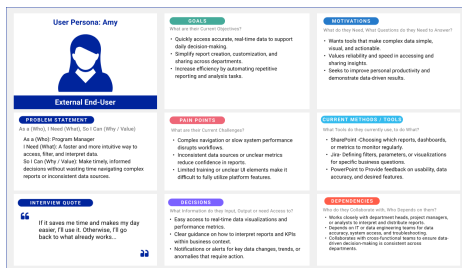
Open

In Progress

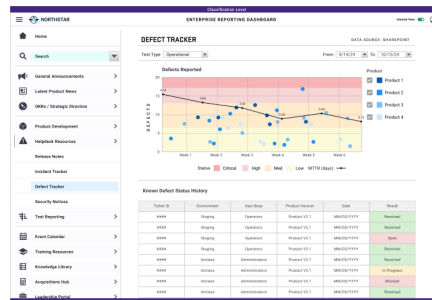
Blocked

Design Process Elements

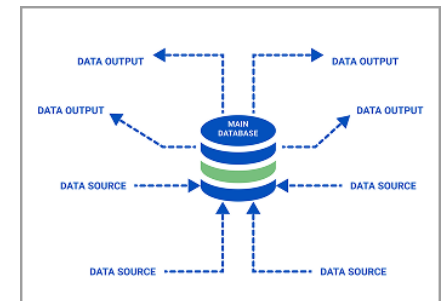
USER RESEARCH



PROTOTYPES



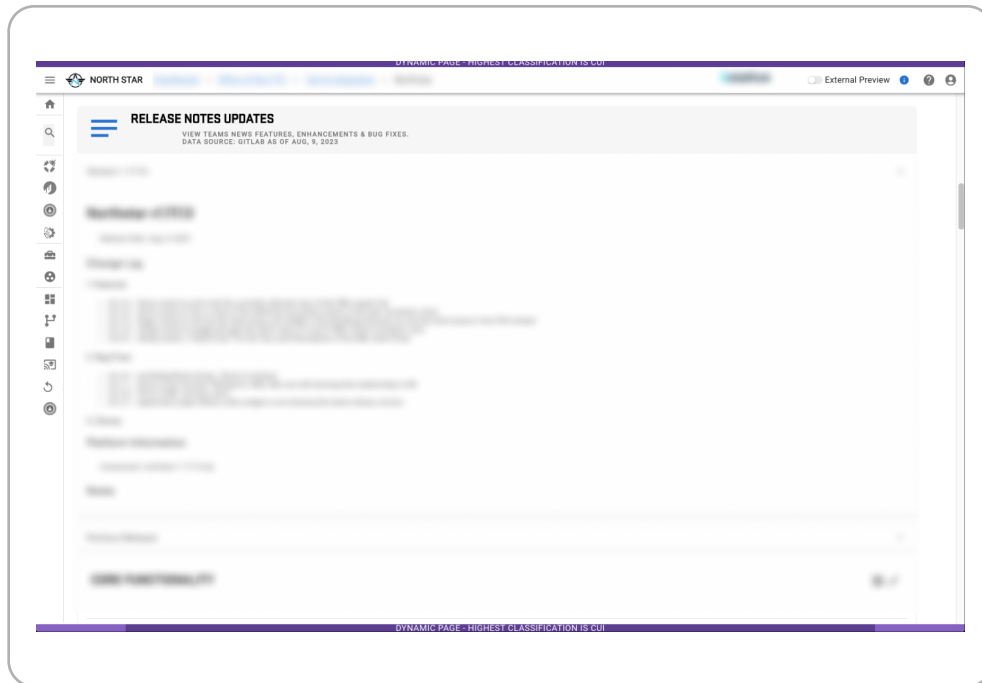
DATA ARCHITECTURE



Impact Snapshot

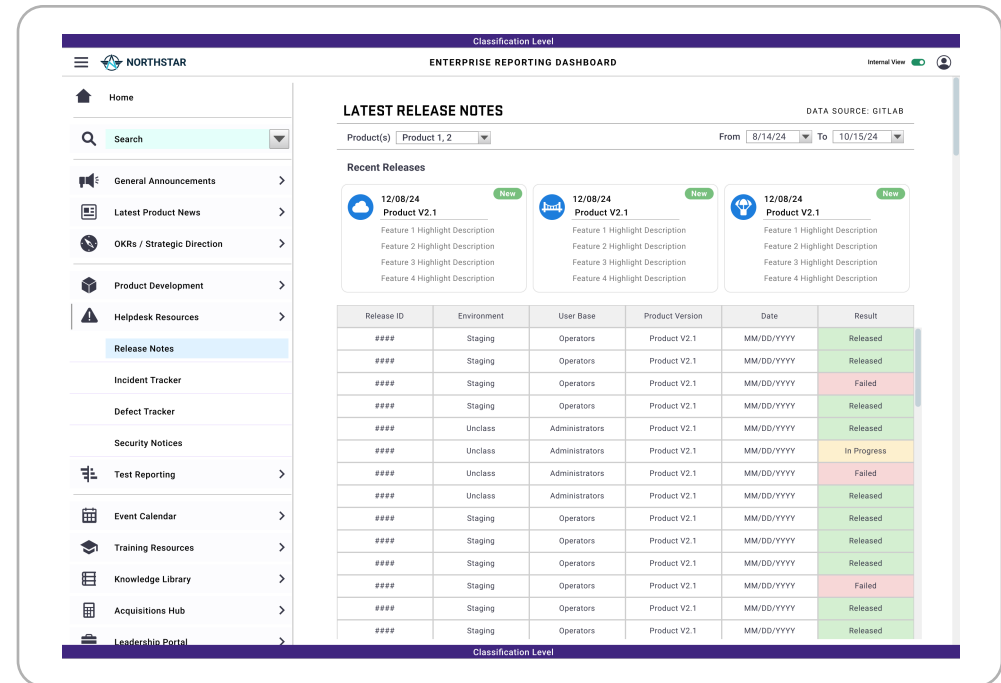
BEFORE REDESIGN

Incident data was scattered across tickets and emails, making trends hard to spot and respond to.



AFTER REDESIGN

Centralized trends improved triage, reduced response time, and supported reliability planning.



END-USER QUOTES

BEFORE REDESIGN

“We only realize there’s a pattern after it becomes a crisis.”
- Helpdesk Manager



AFTER REDESIGN

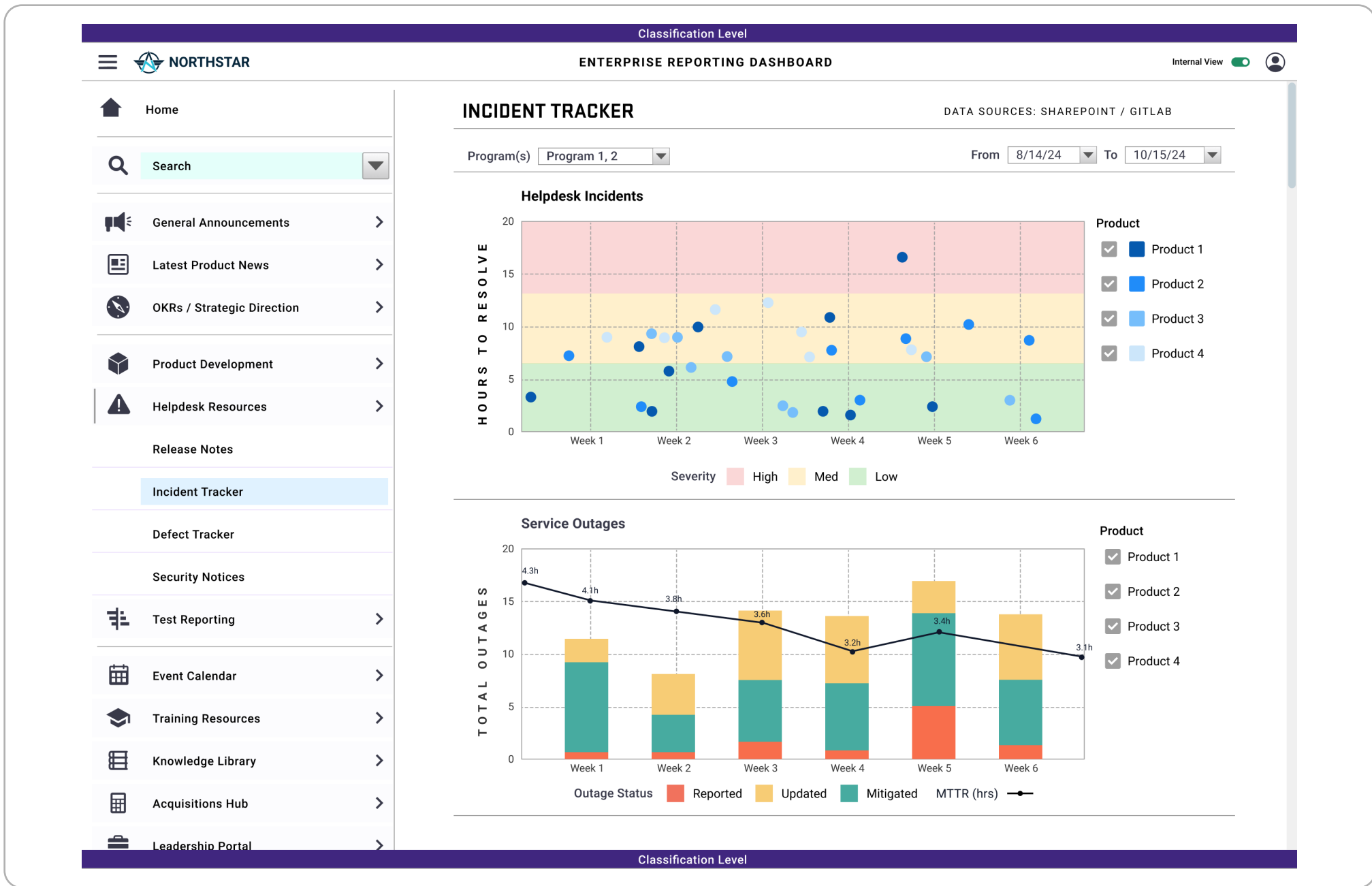
“Now the spike is obvious — we can act before it escalates.”
- Helpdesk Manager



AFTER REDESIGN

“Availability trends finally connect incidents to real impact.”
- Helpdesk Manager





Classification Level

☰
NORTHSTAR

ENTERPRISE REPORTING DASHBOARD

Internal View
👤

🏠 Home

📢 General Announcements >

📰 Latest Product News >

📍 OKRs / Strategic Direction >

📦 Product Development >

⚠️ Helpdesk Resources >

Release Notes

Incident Tracker

Defect Tracker

Security Notices

⚙️ Test Reporting >

📅 Event Calendar >

🎓 Training Resources >

📖 Knowledge Library >

📊 Acquisitions Hub >

👤 Leadership Portal >

DEFECT TRACKER

DATA SOURCE: SHAREPOINT

Test Type
From
To

Defects Reported

Product

 Product 1
 Product 2
 Product 3
 Product 4

Status

■ Critical
■ High
■ Med
■ Low

MTTR (days) —●—

Known Defect Status History

Ticket ID	Environment	User Base	Product Version	Date	Result
####	Staging	Operators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Resolved
####	Staging	Operators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Resolved
####	Staging	Operators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Open
####	Staging	Operators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Resolved
####	Unclass	Administrators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Resolved
####	Unclass	Administrators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	In Progress
####	Unclass	Administrators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Blocked
####	Unclass	Administrators	Product V2.1	MM/DD/YYYY	Resolved

Classification Level

Usability Studies

STUDIES CONDUCTED



MODERATED

- Scripted Interviews
- Prototype Walkthroughs
- Heuristic Evaluations



A / B TESTS

- Product Variant Comparisons
- Time on Task Tracking
- Engagement Experiments



UNMODERATED

- Email Surveys
- Task-Based Testing via Prototype
- Field Studies

BEFORE USABILITY STUDIES

Users struggled to correlate incident spikes with releases and to compare severity over time.

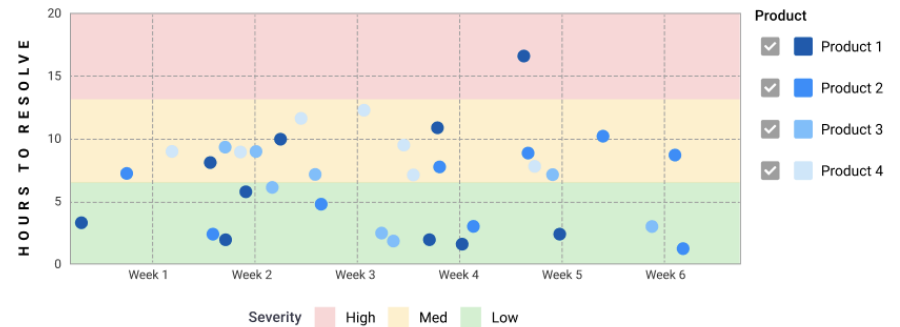
AFTER USABILITY STUDIES

Improved filters, added severity visuals, and introduced annotations for releases and major events.

INCIDENTS BY SEVERITY



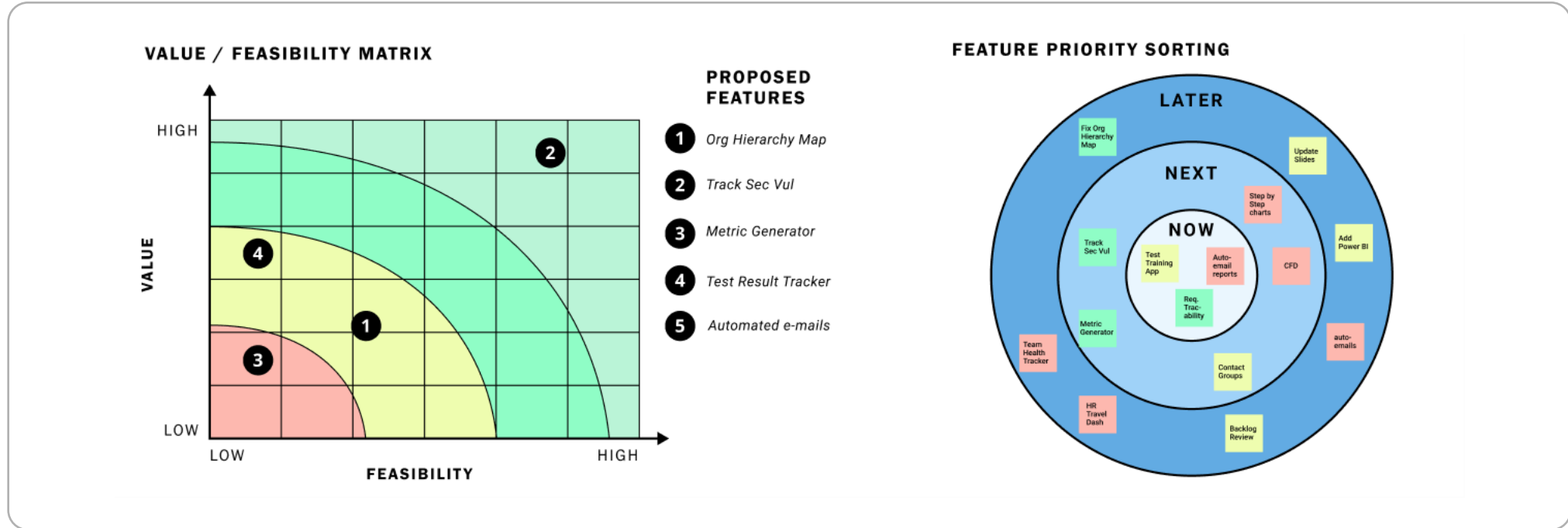
Helpdesk Incidents



★ Feature Prioritization

DETERMINING PRIORITY

User Research Primarily influenced priority status. Managers also prioritized by incident severity, recurrence, customer impact, and operational risk. Each feature was validated via user testing before promoting to backlog and eventual implementation.



▲ Navigating Challenges

USABILITY

Triage Visibility

Challenge: Enabling teams to spot incident spikes and availability dips quickly and connect them to root

Approach: Use incident-rate trends, severity breakdowns, and clear time-range controls with annotations.

COMMUNICATION

Escalation Paths

Challenge: Incident updates were fragmented across tools, slowing response and creating inconsistent

Approach: Implement a shared incident taxonomy, clear escalation rules, and a single status/summary view.

ACCESSIBILITY

Alert Clarity

Challenge: Critical incident states were not distinguishable enough for accessibility needs.

Approach: Use high-contrast severity badges, clear language, and redundant indicators beyond color.

Key Insights & Outcomes

USER INSIGHTS

Support needed quick categorization; stakeholders needed clear health and availability signals.

WORKFLOW INSIGHTS

Users scanned trends, then drilled into spikes to find recurring root causes.

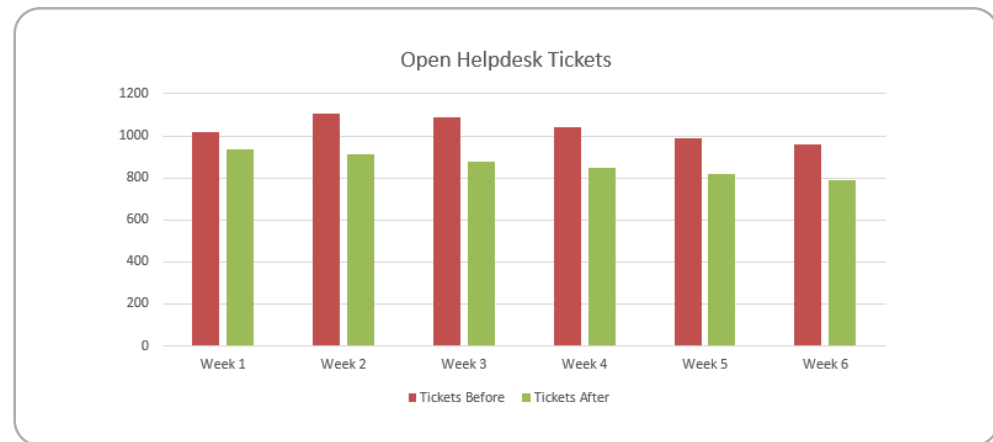
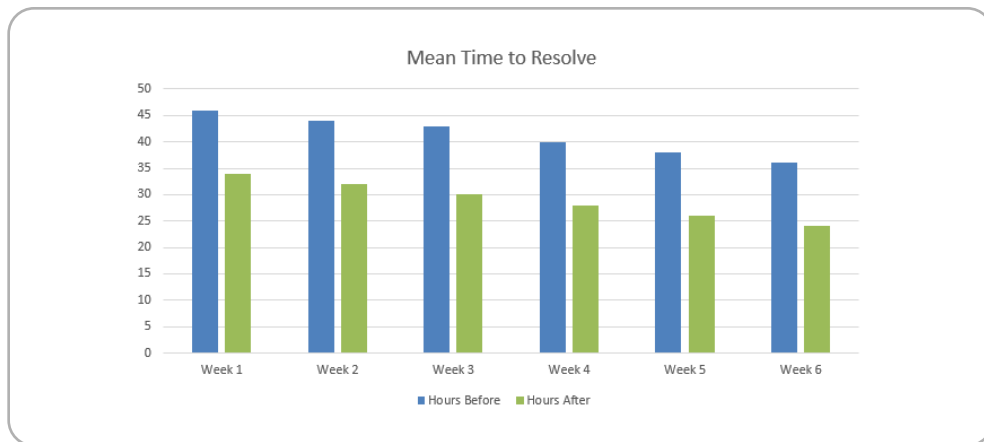
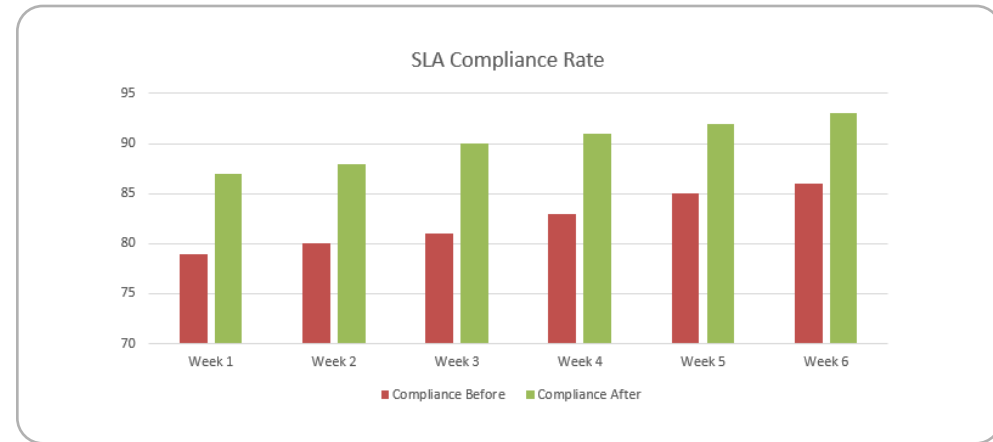
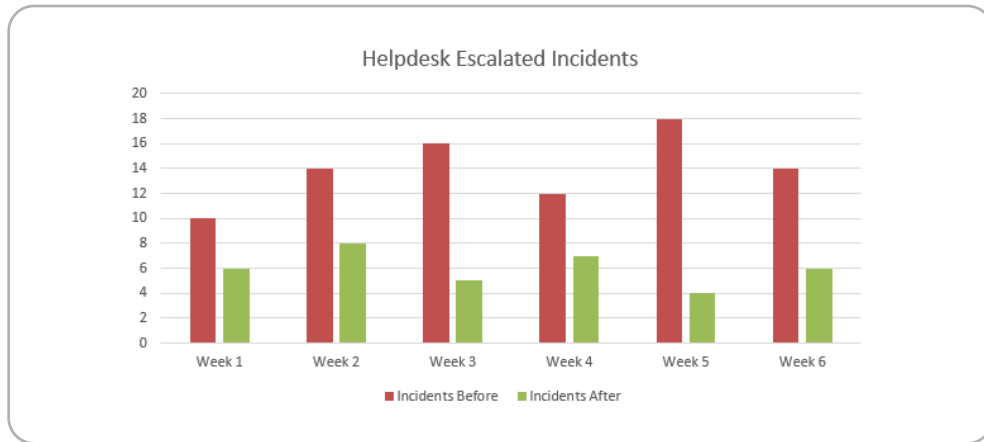
FEATURE INSIGHTS

Severity segmentation, release annotations, and availability trend overlays were highest value.

PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

Near-real-time refresh and faster filtering improved day-to-day triage usefulness.

METRICS TRACKED



 **Takeaways**

HOW DID FEEDBACK INFLUENCE DECISIONS?

Feedback emphasized faster paths to recurring issues and clearer severity context. Iterations focused on drill-down, consistent taxonomy, and trend clarity.

HOW DID THESE CHOICES INCREASE VALUE?

Faster triage and better prioritization reduced operational disruption and improved reliability outcomes.

HOW DID THE OUTCOMES ALIGN WITH BUSINESS GOALS

Outcomes aligned with goals by reducing downtime risk and improving incident response effectiveness.

WHAT ELSE WOULD I CHANGE?

When telemetry improves, new products are added, or incident taxonomy changes.

WHAT NEEDS FURTHER EXPLORATION?

Automated anomaly detection, SLA dashboards, and tighter integration with incident response playbooks.

WHAT I LEARNED

Consistent incident taxonomy was foundational for comparing trends and driving action.

 **Next Steps**



FOR THE BUSINESS

Strengthen reliability governance

Define reliability targets and review cadence so incident trends drive roadmap and funding decisions.



FOR THE TEAM

Improve response automation


Integrate alerts, runbooks, and postmortems with the dashboard to reduce manual coordination.



FOR THE USERS

Increase transparency

Provide role-appropriate summaries and status updates so teams understand current health and expected resolution.

 Let's Connect!



Thanks for Reading!

If you'd like to further discuss my work, talk about product strategy, UX design, or building productivity tools, I'd love to connect. Hope to hear from you!

-Hill

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RESUME

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