



Customer Helpdesk

Administrator, Installation & User Manual

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A modern, self-hosted customer support product for Murdock DevWorks Module Manager — designed for clear customer communication, organized support workflows, and direct ownership of business data.

A Murdock DevWorks Product

MurdockDevWorks.com

Murdock DevWorks creates practical self-hosted software, website products, administrative tools, and documentation for businesses that value ownership and control.

Publication Information

This manual applies to **Customer Helpdesk version 1.0.0** for Murdock DevWorks Module Manager. It is written for website owners, administrators, installers, support personnel, and the person responsible for the hosting account.

Scope of this manual

- Installing, discovering, embedding, and removing the Helpdesk module.
- Completing the initial setup before accepting customer tickets.
- Understanding the complete customer ticket workflow.
- Managing the ticket queue, replies, private notes, statuses, priorities, and flags.
- Configuring categories, products or services, canned replies, email templates, appearance, and public wording.
- Understanding security, privacy, stored data, backups, upgrades, and troubleshooting.

Product boundaries

- Customer Helpdesk is a support-ticket and conversation system. It is not live chat, a call-center platform, an ecommerce order system, or a general customer-account portal.
- Version 1.0 uses the existing Module Manager administrator login. It does not provide separate support-agent accounts, assignments, or per-department permissions.
- Version 1.0 does not accept file attachments. Safe attachments require a validated private file and download service and must not be improvised with a public upload directory.
- Email notifications depend on a correctly configured PHP mail transport. Ticket data is stored before email is attempted.
- Module Manager and its database must be backed up using hosting or server tools. Removing the module folder does not remove its database records.

Documentation conventions

Administration paths are shown in bold, for example **Installed Modules → Customer Helpdesk → Settings & Wording**. Code and setting names are shown in a fixed-width style. Labels may wrap differently on smaller screens, but their function remains the same.

Important: Product version and manual revision are tracked separately. A documentation-only correction may change the manual revision without changing Customer Helpdesk itself. A feature or schema update changes the module version and should include a matching manual review.

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1. Product Overview

Customer Helpdesk provides a private, organized conversation between a customer and the business support team. A customer submits a request and receives a randomly generated ticket reference. The customer later verifies access using that reference and the same email address used at submission.

Administrators work tickets from the central Module Manager administration area. They can search and filter the queue, post public replies, add private internal notes, update status and priority, flag important work, manage categories, prepare canned responses, and review the real result of each email attempt.

1.1 Main capabilities

- Public ticket intake with name, email, category, optional product or service, optional order or account number, priority, subject, and message.
- Secure ticket retrieval using reference plus email verification.
- Threaded public customer and support replies.
- Private internal notes visible only to administrators.
- New, Open, On Hold, Resolved, and Closed statuses.
- Low, Normal, High, and Urgent priorities.
- Searchable and filterable administration queue.
- Ticket flags for follow-up.
- Configurable categories with optional category-specific notification routing.
- Optional product or service choices.
- Reusable canned replies that remain editable before posting.
- Editable public wording and email templates.
- Stored-first email notifications with per-ticket delivery history.
- Configurable per-IP new-ticket delay and a hidden anti-spam honeypot.
- Shared Module Manager appearance and branding controls.

1.2 Recommended uses

Customer Helpdesk is suitable for software support, website services, product questions, sales enquiries, maintenance requests, account assistance, and other businesses that need an organized customer-support workflow without a hosted subscription service.

1.3 How the module fits Module Manager

The module is one portable folder under `modulermanager/modules/helpdesk`. Module Manager discovers it through `module.json`, supplies the database, session, CSRF, mail, settings, authentication, appearance, and URL services, and protects administration through the central login.

The Helpdesk module does not maintain a second administrator system. It follows the same installation, appearance, wording, branding, and removal conventions as the other modern Module Manager modules.

2. Requirements and Preparation

Review the hosting environment and make a backup before installing or updating the module.

2.1 Software requirements

- A working Murdock DevWorks Module Manager installation.
- PHP 8.3 or a compatible supported PHP 8 release.
- MariaDB or MySQL with InnoDB and utf8mb4 support.
- PHP PDO MySQL and mbstring extensions.
- PHP sessions and secure cookies appropriate for the deployment.
- A PHP mail transport when notifications will be used.
- A PHP website template for embedded public output.

2.2 Information to gather

Before enabling the Helpdesk, decide:

- 1 Which email address receives support notifications.
- 2 Which support categories customers should see.
- 3 Whether any category needs a different notification address.
- 4 Whether customers should select a product or service.
- 5 Which notification types should be enabled.
- 6 The public wording, support-team name, and expected response language.
- 7 The website page where the Helpdesk will be embedded.

2.3 Backup before installation or update

Back up the entire Module Manager folder and its database before installation or upgrade. At minimum, retain:

- modulemanager/modules
- modulemanager/config
- Any other deployment-specific Module Manager files
- The complete Module Manager database

Best practice: Test restoration, not only backup creation. A backup is useful only when its files and database can be restored together.

3. Installation and Module Discovery

The Helpdesk is installed by placing its complete folder in the Module Manager modules directory. No raw SQL import is required.

3.1 Install the module folder

The final structure must be:

```
modulemanager/  
└─ modules/  
    └─ helpdesk/  
        ├── admin.php  
        ├── Helpdesk.php  
        ├── helpdesk.css  
        ├── module.json  
        ├── website.php  
        └─ Documentation/
```

Copy the entire helpdesk folder. Do not rename it. The folder name must match the manifest identifier helpdesk.

3.2 Confirm discovery

- 1 Sign in to Module Manager.
- 2 Open **Installed Modules**.
- 3 Confirm **Customer Helpdesk** appears in the module list.
- 4 Open the module.
- 5 Confirm the **Module Administration** and **Appearance** tabs are available.

The first valid public or administration load runs an idempotent installation method. It creates missing mm_helpdesk_* tables and default settings without deleting existing records.

3.3 Default records

A new installation creates three active categories when no Helpdesk category exists:

- General Enquiry
- Sales Enquiry
- Product Support

It does not create sample tickets, products, canned replies, messages, or notification history.

3.4 If the module is not discovered

Check that:

- The path is exactly modulemanager/modules/helpdesk.
- module.json is present and valid JSON.
- The folder and PHP files are regular files, not symbolic links.
- The web-server user can read the files.
- The folder contains no prohibited deployment artifacts such as database dumps, private keys, local configuration, logs, or backups.
- The manifest still declares admin.php and website.php.

4. Adding Helpdesk to a Website

Installing a module makes it available to Module Manager but does not automatically place it on a website page.

4.1 Recommended embed code

Place the following code in the PHP website template where the customer portal should appear:

```
<?php
require_once __DIR__ . '/modulemanager/embed.php';
module_manager_embed('helpdesk');
?>
```

The template and its modulemanager folder are expected to share the same website root. If the folder relationship differs, adjust only the `require_once` path.

4.2 What the embed helper does

The helper creates a same-origin responsive frame that:

- Loads the guarded central public dispatcher.
- Keeps Helpdesk CSS isolated from the website template.
- Automatically follows changing content height.
- Uses Helpdesk-specific or inherited appearance settings.
- Allows ticket forms, redirects, sessions, and CSRF protection to function normally.

4.3 Public dispatcher address

For testing or a dedicated module page, the central public route is:

```
modulemanager/public/module.php?id=helpdesk
```

Use the embed helper in customer-facing templates rather than copying `website.php` or linking directly into the module folder. Direct module-folder access is intentionally blocked.

4.4 Production URL and email links

Customer emails include a link back to the Helpdesk lookup page. Configure Module Manager's application URL correctly for production so absolute email links use the public HTTPS host and installation path. Test the link from an actual delivered email before accepting live tickets.

4.5 Placement guidance

- Give the module enough horizontal space for its two-column desktop form.
- Avoid placing it inside a very narrow sidebar.
- Include a page heading or navigation label such as Support, Help Desk, or Customer Support.
- Test submission, lookup, and reply forms on desktop and mobile.

5. Initial Configuration Checklist

Complete these steps before announcing the Helpdesk to customers.

5.1 Open Helpdesk administration

Go to **Installed Modules** → **Customer Helpdesk** → **Module Administration**.

The internal navigation provides:

- Tickets
- Categories
- Products & Services
- Canned Replies
- Settings & Wording

5.2 Recommended setup order

- 1 Open **Categories** and replace or revise the three defaults.
- 2 Add category-specific notification addresses when required.
- 3 Open **Products & Services** and add choices only if customers need them.
- 4 Open **Canned Replies** and create common answers.
- 5 Open **Settings & Wording**.
- 6 Enter a real default administrator email address.
- 7 Review every notification switch and email template.
- 8 Review customer-facing wording and status names.
- 9 Open **Appearance** and confirm fonts, colors, contrast, and branding.
- 10 Embed the module on the intended website page.
- 11 Submit a real test ticket, retrieve it, reply from both sides, and confirm email delivery.
- 12 Delete the test ticket before launch.

5.3 Minimum launch test

Do not rely only on `mail()` returning success. Confirm that:

- The customer confirmation arrives in the destination inbox.
- The administrator new-ticket notice arrives.
- The email links open the correct public and administration locations.
- Reference plus email retrieves the ticket.
- A support reply appears publicly and sends the customer notice.
- A private note is absent from the customer view.
- A status change produces the expected message.
- Delivery History records the outcome of each enabled or disabled event.

6. Customer Ticket Workflow

This section explains what customers see and how access is protected.

6.1 Submit a ticket

The public **Submit a Ticket** view contains:

- Name — required, up to 150 characters.
- Email address — required and validated.
- Support category — required and selected from active categories.
- Product or service — optional and shown only when active products or services exist.
- Order or account number — optional, up to 120 characters.
- Priority — Low, Normal, High, or Urgent.
- Subject — required, up to 255 characters.
- Message — required, up to 20,000 characters.

The ticket and first customer message are stored together in a database transaction. A unique reference is generated in this form:

HD-AB12-CD34-EF56

The success screen displays the reference and reminds the customer to retain the reference and email address.

6.2 Anti-spam behavior

The form includes a hidden honeypot field. Automated submissions that populate it are redirected without creating a ticket.

The module also limits new tickets from the same valid IP address for a configurable number of minutes. The default delay is five minutes. This is a basic abuse control, not a substitute for network-level protection on a heavily targeted public site.

6.3 Retrieve an existing ticket

The customer opens **View a Ticket** and enters:

- 1 The ticket reference.
- 2 The same email address used when the ticket was submitted.

Both must match one stored ticket. Email comparison is normalized for normal case differences. A reference by itself does not reveal ticket contents.

After successful verification, the current secure session retains access to that ticket. The customer does not create a separate Helpdesk password.

6.4 Read the conversation

The customer view shows:

- Reference and subject
- Public status
- Category

- Optional product or service
- Priority
- Created date
- Initial customer message
- Later customer replies
- Public support replies

Private internal notes are excluded by the database query and are never rendered to customers.

6.5 Post a customer reply

An authenticated ticket session can add a reply of up to 20,000 characters. The reply is stored before an administrator notification is attempted.

Customer replies affect status as follows:

- New remains New until staff publicly replies or an administrator changes it.
- Open remains Open.
- On Hold changes to Open.
- Resolved changes to Open.
- Closed rejects the reply and does not add a message.

6.6 Leave the ticket

The **Leave this ticket** action removes Helpdesk ticket access from the current session and returns to lookup. It does not delete the ticket or sign an administrator out of Module Manager.

7. Ticket Queue and Search

The **Tickets** view is the main support workspace.

7.1 Dashboard counts

Summary cards show:

- Active tickets
- New tickets
- Urgent tickets
- Flagged tickets

Active means a status other than Resolved or Closed.

7.2 Default queue order

Tickets are ordered to bring attention to important work:

- 1 Flagged tickets first.
- 2 Urgent, High, Normal, then Low priority.
- 3 Most recently updated tickets first.

7.3 Status filter

The queue can show:

- All statuses
- Active only
- New
- Open
- On Hold
- Resolved
- Closed

The default view is Active only.

7.4 Additional filters

- Priority filter for Low, Normal, High, or Urgent.
- Flagged tickets only.
- Page navigation using the configured tickets-per-page value.

7.5 Search fields

One search finds partial matches in:

- Ticket reference
- Customer name
- Customer email

- Subject
- Order or account number

Use the complete reference for the narrowest result. Use **Reset** to return to the default active queue.

8. Working a Ticket

Open a ticket from the queue to review customer data, manage state, and continue the conversation.

8.1 Ticket details

The ticket workspace shows:

- Reference and subject
- Customer name and email
- Category snapshot
- Product or service snapshot
- Order or account number
- Created and last-updated times
- Customer IP when recorded
- Current status, priority, and flag

Category and product names are copied into the ticket at submission. Existing tickets retain these names if a category or product is later renamed or deleted.

8.2 Change status, priority, or flag

Select the required status and priority, optionally enable the follow-up flag, and choose **Save Ticket State**.

When status changes and customer status notifications are enabled, the new state is stored first and then the customer email is attempted. The result appears in Delivery History.

8.3 Public support reply

- 1 Choose **Public support reply**.
- 2 Optionally select a canned reply.
- 3 Review and edit the message.
- 4 Choose **Save Message**.

The public reply is stored first. If the ticket is New, it becomes Open. Customer notification is then attempted.

The author name uses the signed-in Module Manager administrator's display name. If unavailable, the configured default staff display name is used.

8.4 Private internal note

Choose **Private internal note** before saving. Internal notes:

- Appear only in Helpdesk administration.
- Are clearly labeled as internal notes.
- Never appear in the customer conversation.
- Never trigger customer email.
- Do not change ticket status.

Important: Always confirm the message type before saving sensitive internal information. A public support reply is visible to the customer.

8.5 Delete a ticket

The delete action permanently removes:

- Ticket record
- Public messages
- Internal notes
- Notification history

Deletion requires CSRF validation and a browser confirmation. It cannot be undone through Helpdesk. Back up the database when retention policy requires recoverability.

9. Status, Priority, and Flag Guidelines

Consistent state usage makes the queue useful to every administrator.

9.1 Recommended status meanings

New

A newly submitted request that has not received a public staff reply. Review New tickets promptly.

Open

Support is actively working the request or waiting for ordinary conversation. A public staff reply automatically changes New to Open. Customer replies reopen On Hold or Resolved tickets.

On Hold

Work is paused while waiting for an external event, scheduled date, supplier, development work, or other condition. A new customer reply returns it to Open.

Resolved

Support believes the issue is complete, but the customer may still respond. A customer reply returns it to Open.

Closed

The conversation is finalized. The customer cannot post another reply and is instructed to submit a new ticket for new help.

9.2 Recommended priorities

Low

General questions or work with no meaningful time pressure.

Normal

Standard support requests. This is the default.

High

Important problems that materially affect the customer but are not immediate emergencies.

Urgent

Critical problems requiring prompt review. Customers can select Urgent, so administrators should still evaluate whether the request truly has urgent impact.

9.3 Flags

Flags are independent of status and priority. Use a flag for tickets needing follow-up, management attention, promised action, or a future check. Flagged tickets sort ahead of unflagged tickets.

10. Categories and Email Routing

Categories organize customer requests and can route new-ticket and customer-reply notifications to different addresses.

10.1 Create or edit a category

Open **Categories** and provide:

- Name — public customer-facing category name.
- Notification email — optional category destination.
- Display order — lower values appear earlier.
- Status — Active or Inactive.

10.2 Notification routing

When a category has a valid notification email, administrator notices for tickets in that category go there. When blank, notices use the default administrator email in **Settings & Wording**.

Customer confirmation, support-reply, and status messages always go to the ticket customer's address.

10.3 Active and inactive categories

Only active categories appear on the public submission form. Inactive categories remain available in administration and do not alter old ticket snapshots.

10.4 Delete a category

Deleting a category sets its relational link on existing tickets to null, but each ticket retains the copied category name. Confirm that no new tickets require the category before deletion. Inactivation is preferable when historical administration value remains.

11. Products, Services, and Order References

Product and service choices add context without making Helpdesk an order system.

11.1 Public field visibility

The Product or Service selector is shown only when at least one active product or service exists. A new installation has no products, so the field is hidden by default.

11.2 Manage products or services

Open **Products & Services** and provide:

- Name
- Display order
- Active or Inactive status

Use this list for software products, service plans, departments, managed websites, or other supported offerings.

11.3 Order or account number

The public form also includes an optional free-text order or account number. Helpdesk stores and searches this value but does not validate it against an ecommerce database.

Do not describe the field as proof of purchase unless another verified integration is added.

11.4 Historical snapshots

Tickets retain the selected product name if the product is later renamed or deleted. The current relational product link may become null after deletion, but the historical label remains.

12. Canned Replies

Canned replies reduce repetitive typing while keeping each final response under administrator control.

12.1 Create a canned reply

Open **Canned Replies** and enter:

- Title — administration label used in the selector.
- Reply text — up to 20,000 characters.
- Display order.
- Active or Inactive status.

Only active canned replies appear in the ticket message composer.

12.2 Use a canned reply

On a ticket:

- 1 Select the public reply or private note message type.
- 2 Select a canned reply.
- 3 The canned body fills the message only when the message box is empty.
- 4 Edit the response for the specific customer.
- 5 Save the message.

Selecting a canned reply does not post it automatically. This protects against sending an unreviewed generic answer.

12.3 Writing effective canned replies

- Keep the tone consistent with the business.
- Avoid promises that may not apply to every ticket.
- Include placeholders as plain reminders only; canned replies do not automatically replace email-template tokens.
- Review canned replies after policy, pricing, product, or contact information changes.

13. Email Notifications and Templates

Helpdesk uses Module Manager's shared plain-text Mailer and the server's PHP mail transport.

13.1 Notification events

Five independent switches control:

- 1 Customer new-ticket confirmation.
- 2 Administrator new-ticket notice.
- 3 Administrator customer-reply notice.
- 4 Customer support-reply notice.
- 5 Customer status-change notice.

Disabled events are recorded as Skipped rather than silently disappearing.

13.2 Stored-first guarantee

Ticket creation, customer replies, support replies, and status changes are saved before mail is attempted. Email delivery failure does not roll back valid support data.

This means the administration queue is the source of truth. Email is a convenience notice, not the ticket database.

13.3 Delivery History

Each ticket records notification attempts with:

- Date and time
- Event type
- Recipient
- Sent, Failed, or Skipped status
- Available error details

Sent means the configured local transport accepted the message. Final inbox placement still depends on the relay and recipient provider.

13.4 Template placeholders

Email subjects and bodies can use:

```
[[reference]]
[[name]]
[[email]]
[[category]]
[[product]]
[[order_number]]
[[subject]]
[[priority]]
[[status]]
[[message]]
[[ticket_url]]
[[admin_url]]
```

Unknown placeholders remain as typed. Review test messages after changing templates.

13.5 Sender configuration

The email sender name and address come from Module Manager's application configuration. They are separate from the Helpdesk default administrator recipient.

A production deployment must use a real sender authorized by its transport or SMTP relay. Placeholder addresses such as `example.test` should never be used for live delivery.

13.6 Recommended mail test

- 1 Verify Module Manager reports an available mail transport.
- 2 Submit a ticket using an inbox you can check.
- 3 Confirm both customer and administrator messages arrive.
- 4 Open the included links.
- 5 Post a staff reply and confirm the customer notice.
- 6 Change status and confirm the status notice.
- 7 Review Delivery History for each event.
- 8 Check spam folders and the server mail log when delivery is missing.

14. Settings, Wording, and Appearance

Customer Helpdesk separates behavior, wording, and visual appearance so a site owner can adapt the product without editing PHP.

14.1 Queue and behavior settings

Settings & Wording includes:

- Default administrator email.
- Default staff display name.
- Tickets per queue page, from 10 through 100.
- New-ticket delay per IP, from 1 through 1,440 minutes.
- Five notification enable/disable switches.

14.2 Public wording

Every fixed visitor-facing phrase is editable, including:

- Page heading and introduction
- Navigation labels
- Form headings and instructions
- Field labels and select options
- Priority and status names
- Buttons and links
- Customer and staff author labels
- Success, closed-ticket, validation, lookup, and throttling messages
- Date/time format
- Accessibility labels

Required wording cannot be saved blank and each field has a maximum length.

14.3 Date/time format

The public date format uses PHP date formatting syntax. The default is:

```
F j, Y \a\t g:i A
```

Test the customer conversation after changing it. Invalid-looking format text may still be accepted as literal PHP date-format characters.

14.4 Appearance tab

The centrally provided **Appearance** tab controls whether Helpdesk:

- Inherits Website Settings, or
- Uses module-specific custom values.

Available appearance controls include body font, heading font, base size, text color, background behavior, link color, accent color, and branding text.

Helpdesk automatically chooses readable dark or white text against its accent-colored buttons and active navigation. Test custom colors for overall contrast, not only button contrast.

14.5 Branding footer

The public module ends with the centrally configured Module Manager branding text. The website template—not the module—owns the website copyright footer.

15. Security, Privacy, and Data Retention

Customer support records contain personal and potentially sensitive information. Treat the Helpdesk database as private business data.

15.1 Access controls

- Administration is available only through the authenticated central Module Manager dispatcher.
- Public ticket contents require matching reference and email.
- Successful verification is retained only in the current session.
- Direct access to module PHP files is guarded and the modules directory is protected.
- Public and administration state-changing forms use CSRF tokens.

15.2 Application security

- Database input uses parameterized queries.
- Output is escaped before HTML rendering.
- References use cryptographically secure random bytes.
- Status, priority, identifiers, email addresses, and field lengths are validated.
- Internal notes are excluded from public message queries.
- The public form includes a honeypot and per-IP submission delay.
- There is no customer-provided HTML or file upload in version 1.0.

15.3 Data stored

Depending on ticket content, Helpdesk stores:

- Customer name and email
- Category and optional product snapshots
- Optional order or account number
- Subject, priority, status, flag, and timestamps
- Customer and support conversation
- Private internal notes
- Customer IP address when valid
- Notification recipients, outcomes, and errors

Avoid requesting secrets, passwords, payment-card data, health information, or other unnecessary sensitive data in public wording.

15.4 Retention and deletion

Version 1.0 does not automatically expire tickets. The business must choose a retention policy appropriate for its services and legal obligations.

Deleting a ticket cascades to its messages and notification history. Removing the module folder does not delete tables or records. Database-level deletion or anonymization outside the module should be performed only by a qualified administrator with a verified backup.

15.5 Administrator model

Every current Module Manager administrator can access every Helpdesk ticket. Do not create a Module Manager administrator account for someone who should not see support records.

Separate agent assignments, departments, and least-privilege permissions require future shared Module Manager role infrastructure.

16. Database, Backup, Transfer, and Removal

The module owns a namespaced schema designed not to collide with the legacy One Admin Helpdesk.

16.1 Database tables

- `mm_helpdesk_category` — support categories and optional notification routing.
- `mm_helpdesk_product` — optional products or services.
- `mm_helpdesk_ticket` — customer, classification, state, and ticket metadata.
- `mm_helpdesk_message` — customer replies, staff replies, and internal notes.
- `mm_helpdesk_canned_reply` — reusable administration responses.
- `mm_helpdesk_notification` — delivery event history.

Tables use InnoDB, utf8mb4, indexes, foreign keys, and cascading or nullifying deletion rules appropriate to each relationship.

16.2 Backup

Back up both:

- 1 The complete `modulermanager/modules/helpdesk` folder.
- 2 The Module Manager database, including all `mm_helpdesk_*` tables and Helpdesk settings in `sys_variable`.

A folder-only backup does not contain tickets. A database-only backup does not contain the module program or manual.

16.3 Transfer to another installation

- 1 Confirm the destination Module Manager version is compatible.
- 2 Back up source and destination.
- 3 Copy the complete Helpdesk folder.
- 4 Transfer the six `mm_helpdesk_*` tables when historical tickets are required.
- 5 Transfer Helpdesk `sys_variable` settings carefully, without overwriting unrelated settings.
- 6 Review sender, recipient, application URL, and public embed path for the destination.
- 7 Run complete public, administration, and email tests.

16.4 Remove or disable the module

Removing the `helpdesk` folder immediately removes it from module discovery and prevents normal public/admin dispatch. Its database records are intentionally retained for reversible reinstall.

Before permanent removal:

- Remove the website embed code.
- Export or retain required support records.
- Back up the database.
- Remove the folder.
- Delete `mm_helpdesk_*` tables and settings only when permanent data destruction is intended and authorized.

17. Troubleshooting

Use the symptom and checks below before changing source code.

17.1 Helpdesk is missing from Installed Modules

- Confirm the exact folder name helpdesk.
- Confirm module.json is present and readable.
- Confirm entry files are present and not symlinks.
- Review Module Manager registry errors.
- Run PHP syntax checks on the module files.

17.2 Public page returns Not Found

- Use the central dispatcher or embed helper, not a direct module-folder URL.
- Confirm the website's modulemanager folder or link points to the intended installation.
- Confirm the embed uses module ID helpdesk.
- Confirm the web server routes the website path to PHP.

17.3 Form reports an expired session

- Refresh the page before resubmitting.
- Confirm PHP sessions are writable and cookies are accepted.
- Confirm the public page and frame remain same-origin.
- Check HTTPS and secure-cookie settings.
- Avoid serving stale cached copies of forms containing CSRF tokens.

17.4 Customer cannot find a ticket

- Confirm the full reference, including HD- and dashes.
- Confirm the same customer email is used.
- Search administration by reference or email.
- Confirm the ticket was not deleted.
- Remember that the reference alone is intentionally insufficient.

17.5 Customer cannot reply

- Confirm the ticket was successfully retrieved in the current session.
- Confirm it is not Closed.
- Confirm the reply is not blank or over 20,000 characters.
- Refresh if the CSRF session expired.

17.6 Administrator email is missing

- Check Delivery History on the ticket.
- Confirm the relevant notification switch is enabled.

- Check category-specific routing before the default administrator address.
- Confirm sender and recipient are real email addresses.
- Verify PHP mail transport and the authenticated relay.
- Review server mail logs, recipient spam, and provider rejections.

17.7 Email link opens the wrong address

- Configure the production Module Manager application URL.
- Use the public HTTPS hostname and correct installation path.
- Regenerate a test email after configuration changes.
- Do not judge an old email using newly changed settings.

17.8 Products field is not visible

The field is hidden when there are no active products or services. Add and activate at least one item under **Products & Services**.

17.9 Category does not appear publicly

Confirm the category is Active. Display order controls position but does not override inactive status.

17.10 Queue search behaves unexpectedly

- Search uses partial matches.
- Existing status, priority, and flag filters also apply.
- Choose **Reset** before testing a broad search.
- Search supports reference, name, email, subject, and order/account number.

17.11 Appearance does not match the website

- Open the module's **Appearance** tab.
- Confirm whether it inherits Website Settings or uses custom values.
- Review the shared background setting and the website behind the embedded frame.
- Test text, accent, links, inputs, and buttons at desktop and mobile widths.

18. Maintenance, Updates, and Versioning

Helpdesk is versioned independently from Module Manager and every other module.

18.1 Version records

The installed product version appears in `module.json`. This manual applies to version 1.0.0 and has its own documentation revision 1.0.

Maintain a versioned manual with every module release. Updating Helpdesk should not require rebuilding Blogger, Appointment Booking, Gallery, or another module's manual.

18.2 Before a Helpdesk update

- 1 Read the release notes and matching manual revision.
- 2 Confirm Module Manager and PHP compatibility.
- 3 Back up the module folder and database.
- 4 Preserve local configuration outside the distributed module.
- 5 Test the update on a non-production copy when possible.

18.3 After an update

Verify:

- Registry discovery and reported version
- Administration queue and ticket detail
- Public submit, lookup, and reply workflow
- Status transitions and internal-note privacy
- Categories, products, and canned replies
- Appearance and wording
- Email links and Delivery History
- Existing ticket and message counts

18.4 Planned enhancement boundaries

Potential future enhancements include support-agent assignments and roles, a shared mail queue with retry processing, a shared audit trail, expanded rate limiting, and validated private attachments.

These are not promised features of 1.0.0. Do not document or sell them as present until the matching module release implements and validates them.

19. Quick Reference

19.1 Public workflow

Submit Ticket → Save Ticket and First Message → Attempt Notifications
↓
Customer Keeps Reference + Email
↓
View Ticket → Verify Reference + Email → Read / Reply

19.2 Administration workflow

Tickets → Filter or Search → Open Ticket
→ Public Reply or Internal Note
→ Update Status / Priority / Flag
→ Review Delivery History

19.3 Status transitions

New + public staff reply	→ Open
On Hold + customer reply	→ Open
Resolved + customer reply	→ Open
Closed + customer reply	→ Rejected
Internal note	→ No status change

19.4 Key locations

Module folder:	modulemanager/modules/helpdesk
Public dispatcher:	modulemanager/public/module.php?id=helpdesk
Administration:	Installed Modules → Customer Helpdesk
Appearance:	Customer Helpdesk → Appearance
Manual:	modules/helpdesk/Documentation

19.5 Support information to collect

When reporting a problem, include:

- Customer Helpdesk version
- Module Manager version or package date
- PHP and MariaDB/MySQL versions
- Exact error message
- Public or administration action being attempted
- Ticket reference when appropriate, without posting private message contents publicly
- Relevant Delivery History result
- Relevant server or PHP log entry with credentials removed

20. Revision History

Manual Revision	Product Version	Date	Summary
1.0	1.0.0	August 2026	Initial Customer Helpdesk installation, administration, customer workflow, email, security, data, and troubleshooting manual.

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Murdock DevWorks creates practical self-hosted software, website products, administrative tools, and documentation for businesses that want direct ownership and control of their systems.

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