The Value of ServiceNow Certification to the IT Organization

ServiceNow Professional Impact Survey, 2021: A Case for the IT Organization

RESEARCH BY:

Cushing Anderson
Program Vice President, IT Education and Certification, IDC

August 2021 | IDC Doc. #US47917121
Executive Summary

High-performing IT organizations need high-performing IT professionals. There is simply no replacement for people with the right skills.

The success of an organization increasingly relies on the information technology (IT) organization supporting business-critical or mission-critical requirements and often requires implementing new technologies or getting greater value out of existing systems. At the heart of every organization, every strategy, every workflow is a talented workforce who must implement, customize and administer the solutions and systems that make the organization successful.

CIOs must constantly leverage the talent to drive their digital transformation forward, and IT professionals must develop and leverage new skills as technologies evolve to include new features and to apply technologies to new problems. But how do CIOs and other technology leaders know what skills will make a difference in implementing and running a critical business solution? How do CIOs know whether their IT professionals have the skills to make a difference?

IDC research has consistently found that well-trained and certified IT professionals perform their jobs better than their undertrained or non-certified colleagues. But does that finding hold for complex and mission-critical workflow solutions like ServiceNow? Can certification accelerate application development and deployment, help ensure the solution delivers on its promise to get greater control over IT costs, scale support capabilities, and deliver superior experiences?

In a survey of 400 ServiceNow professionals, we found that certified IT professionals perform activities critical to their roles almost 40% more productively than their non-certified colleagues. Overall, training and certification help make ServiceNow professionals more productive, more influential, and more valuable to their organization, all because they are more capable than non-certified colleagues.

This InfoBrief describes the significant findings of our research on the performance benefits of certified ServiceNow professionals and the reasons why IDC believes IT organizations should leverage ServiceNow certification for the IT professionals who administer, develop, and implement ServiceNow solutions.
Performing Essential Activities

Essential activities differentiate well-performing professionals and cumulatively result in greater productivity.

When certified professionals are responsible for essential activities, the activities get completed more quickly, with fewer errors, and are more likely to conform with best practices. ServiceNow best practices are developed by incorporating lessons learned from hundreds of implementations. These techniques and approaches accelerate user adoption, remove typical barriers to implementation, and reduce the likelihood of project failure.

Examples of essential activities:
- Cloning sub-production instances
- Leveraging testing frameworks
- Automating common tasks
- Applying patches to ServiceNow
- Upgrading ServiceNow
- Developing essential ServiceNow applications
- Configuring versus customizing ServiceNow
- Leveraging advanced tools in ServiceNow
- Leveraging multiple ServiceNow instances

Certified ServiceNow professionals are about 38% more productive overall than non-certified professionals.

- **Certified Developers** more productive (80%)
- **Certified Implementers** more productive (32%)
- **Certified Administrators** more productive (24%)
Greater Contribution

Certified ServiceNow professionals are prepared to make the most of the platform and contribute to their organization’s success.

ServiceNow professionals perform the essential activities well and more often create greater efficiency, enabling the organization to spend more energy improving operations rather than maintaining systems.

**Certified Implementers** with more experience:

- Are 220% more likely to have worked on projects that include multiple languages
- Have worked on 80% more projects in their career

**Certified Implementers** leverage tools and best practices more consistently. They are:

- 660% more likely to use Now Create on all projects
- 80% more likely to include a knowledge transfer step before completing a project
Work Smarter

A certified ServiceNow professional can help organizations:

- Get greater control over IT costs
- Scale support more easily
- Deliver superior experiences

Certified Administrators leverage their skills reflected in the certification to work more efficiently. For instance, they are:

- 58% less likely to escalate ServiceNow incidents because of a lack of knowledge
- 8 days faster to execute a ServiceNow upgrade (29 days versus 37 days)
- 56% more likely to use an automated test framework to perform regression testing

Certified Developers with broader experience:

- Have developed twice as many third-party integrations
- Have developed 60% more applications in their career

Certified Developers leverage tools more consistently. They are:

- 40% more likely to use the Automated Test Framework
- 20% more likely to use Orchestration

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Performing essential activities well helps the enterprise get more done.

It also helps the IT professional complete their responsibilities as efficiently as possible.

“Because of certification, we get more and more challenging projects and clients.”
Shea Laughlin, INRY

“If you’re [not] operating within ServiceNow’s guidelines, recommendations, and best practices, you’ll stumble around and not be as productive as you could be.”
Carleen Carter, Acorio

“My productivity and performance have been significantly boosted because of what I learned during the Certified Master Architect [training].”
Carleen Carter, Acorio
Professional Influence

In addition to increased capability and improved performance, certification leads to another valuable contribution to the enterprise: professional influence.

Professional influence refers to the relative frequency that professionals perform selected high-value tasks in their organizations and thus maximize their influence on how the organization performs.

Certified ServiceNow professionals are 1.2 times more influential overall than non-certified professionals.

- **Certified Developers**: 30% more influential
- **Certified Implementers**: 20% more influential
- **Certified Administrators**: 20% more influential
Professional Influence (continued)

Greater professional influence means working on activities that may be adjacent to an IT professional’s role but often offer greater value to the enterprise.

For the enterprise, having employees take on greater responsibility increases the value of both those employees and IT overall and enables the enterprise to do more with the available staff.

Certified Implementers are:

- 70% more likely to have brokered communication between executive stakeholders
- 25% more likely to have designed a technical solution
- 20% more likely to have facilitated a requirements-gathering workshop
- 10% more likely to have acted as the subject matter expert for domain/industry knowledge
Professional Influence (continued)

Certified Administrators are:

- 40% more likely to have brokered communication between executive stakeholders
- 40% more likely to have owned the upgrade process
- 30% more likely to have managed ServiceNow APIs
- 10% more likely to have designed a technical solution

Certified Developers are:

- 50% more likely to have managed a project
- 30% more likely to have designed a technical solution
- 25% more likely to have led the release process
- 20% more likely to have architected a solution

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Professional Influence (continued)

It isn’t just the knowledge that matters; the certification matters, too.

Interestingly, this increase in influence appears to be related to both the skills of the IT professional and the validation and recognition that comes from the certification. The validation of the proficiency provided an additional boost to the influence of ServiceNow-certified IT professionals.

“The CMA title with ServiceNow gives you instant validation and instant credibility.”
Shea Laughlin, INRY

“By creating a clear Architect designation, it’s easier for an organization to say, ‘Every big project needs a CMA’s review.’”
David Goodwin, KPMG

“I take my ServiceNow career seriously. That is why current ServiceNow certifications are so important. Certifications show the achievements of my continuing education for my chosen career path to my company, and they open the door for potential new opportunities.”
Laurie Marlowe, Evergy

“Within our presales organization we really only want to have certified professionals speaking to our customers so that our customers can have confidence in our ability to deliver.”
Carleen Carter, Acorio
Tenure

In an era of IT professionals moving quickly among employers, it seems that the role, recognition, and responsibilities of ServiceNow professionals keep them more satisfied.

Greater employee retention is great news for the enterprise. Not only does the organization avoid the need to replace well-trained, experienced employees, but the organization can leverage the expertise of the ServiceNow-certified professional to expand ServiceNow into other areas.

ServiceNow-certified professionals typically stay in their role 25% longer than non-certified peers.

- **Certified Developers** stay almost a year longer
- **Certified Administrators** stay 6 months longer
- **Certified Implementers** stay 7 months longer
Essential Guidance

The benefits of leveraging ServiceNow certifications as developmental milestones are clear: greater performance, increased IT contribution to the enterprise, and longer tenure of ServiceNow-certified professionals.

In these rapidly changing times, technology is critical to business success. Greater overall team skills will lead to leveraging more capability from your ServiceNow solutions, resulting in more rapid response to changing conditions and greater value realization for technology investments. Certified ServiceNow professionals are particularly valuable to their organizations because of their greater adaptability and deep understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the Now Platform.

ServiceNow certifications improve organizational IT performance, simplify IT hiring, and increase quality hires. Enterprises should consider integrating ServiceNow certifications to develop their professionals and as a new hire selection criteria.

IT certifications improve on-the-job performance, career success, and advancement of IT professionals. IT supervisors who provide career advice to individuals in IT should guide their employees to identify and actively consider certifications to support their ServiceNow career aspirations.

Identifying consulting partners with appropriate certifications helps ensure more successful projects and increases the quality of installed solutions.
To leverage IT certifications either for development or for identification and selection of new employees, it is essential that the certification program be a good fit for your organization.

Consider the following questions for selecting an appropriate IT certification program:

- Is the certification program from a solution provider significant to your organization’s current operations or future growth?
- Is the certification program aligned to roles that are relevant to your organization’s current and future requirements?
- Does the certification program reflect the knowledge and skills that make certified professionals noticeably better at their role?
- Does the certification program provide process and best practices knowledge in addition to technical competence?
- Is the certification program sufficiently robust to grow with your staff?
- Does the certification program use performance-based exams?

With increased individual performance and improved contribution of the IT organization to the enterprise, the benefits of leveraging ServiceNow certifications will be clear.
About the Analyst

Cushing Anderson
Program Vice President, IT Education and Certification, IDC

Cushing Anderson is responsible for managing the research agenda, field research, and custom research projects for IDC’s IT Education and Certification research program. Cushing’s research ranges from the value certification provides to IT professionals to the selection criteria used when selecting transformation training for the IT organization. He conducts regular research on the views and experiences of IT professionals and IT education buyers. He frequently evaluates the impact of various types of training and certification on IT organizational performance.

More about Cushing Anderson
Message from the Sponsor

ServiceNow Training and Certification provides best-in-class content and instruction to help organizations empower their workforce to meet business objectives. Through a variety of learning methods, our courses provide the proficiency needed to administer, implement, manage, and grow the platform. Organizations who invest in their teams through ServiceNow certification experience improved operations and better utilization of ServiceNow services.

To learn how ServiceNow certifications provide the skills and validation that drive corporate performance, please visit:

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