

How ServiceNow aims to empower the mobile workforce

Publication Date: 04 Jun 2019 | Product code: ENS001-000058

Adam Holtby



Ovum view

Summary

The ServiceNow platform continues to introduce new capabilities that support different functions and people from across organizations, resulting in more effective work practices. Through delivering cross-functional workflows that are supported by a vast and compelling set of automation and integration tools, the Now Platform has become a digital glue of sorts that is capable of supporting enterprises looking to improve end-to-end services and employee experiences. At ServiceNow's annual and global customer and partner conference, Knowledge 2019, the company announced a range of new capabilities, but a key focus was mobility, and more specifically, how the Now Platform is evolving to better support the demands of the mobile worker.

Enabling the mobile workforce

At Knowledge 2019, ServiceNow CEO John Donahoe talked about how businesses are at an inflection point of where technology is set to fundamentally change the way we work, and likened this shift to how consumer technologies have drastically changed our lives at home over the past ten years or so. Mobile technology has been at the center of this evolution in our consumer lives, and ServiceNow is keen to help make this a reality in the world of work too, with mobility being central to its approach. It was evident from this year's conference that ServiceNow is beginning to execute a solid workplace mobility strategy.

For years, mobility has been a challenge for ServiceNow but, at Knowledge 2019, the company unveiled a variety of compelling low-code and mobile workflow capabilities that demonstrate real commitment to, and understanding of, the opportunities associated with the mobile workforce. There is a big opportunity for ServiceNow here, as enterprises are increasingly looking to modernize and mobilize legacy systems and applications. For example, recent Ovum data show that modernizing legacy systems is a top-three IT priority for 57% of organizations, more so even than that of needing to manage security, identity, and privacy, and is eclipsed only by the need to create digital capability (*ICT Enterprise Insights 2018/19 – Global: ICT Drivers and Technology Priorities*).

ServiceNow's acquisition of rapid application development (RAD) vendor SkyGiraffe in 2017, and its subsequent integration and further development, has certainly enhanced the ServiceNow platform, better positioning it to serve the needs of the mobile workforce. While ServiceNow may be a little late to the low-code party, the company is in a strong position to help enterprises realize value from these capabilities due to the strength of the underlying platform data that this functionality is built upon. Other vendors, including dedicated RAD suppliers and enterprise mobility management providers, are also active in this area, with low-code mobile development offerings of their own, but the breadth of platform data that ServiceNow's low-code solution can pull from certainly represents a compelling differentiator.

The new Mobile Studio is at the heart of the ServiceNow mobile development offering. Mobile Studio provides employees, even those with no coding skills, with the ability to create native mobile experiences for any app or workflow developed on ServiceNow, and includes a guided app creation tool that takes people through the process of creating these mobile experiences. Again, this is not groundbreaking, and has been available via other low-code solutions for some time; however, Mobile

Studio develops experiences with fully integrated capabilities to build native applications that aim to elevate enterprise apps to a consumer-grade experience. Additionally, in being offered via a well adopted enterprise platform such as ServiceNow, this type of service has the potential to reach more people, many of whom will have no prior knowledge or understanding as to what a low-code solution is and, given the large number of users that will be empowered via the Now Platform, it will be interesting to learn of the new use-cases and apps developed.

ServiceNow also offers a set of native mobile apps developed for both those consuming services, and those delivering and supporting them. A new dedicated onboarding mobile app was also announced at the event which aims to make the cross-functional process of getting employees ready for work much easier.

ServiceNow also recently announced the acquisition of in-app mobile analytics platform Appsee, further strengthening its mobility proposition. The Appsee platform delivers insights into how users interact with apps, including the time spent using them, crashes, and offline tracking. As with the SkyGiraffe acquisition, ServiceNow will take the time to integrate these new mobile capabilities into its platform before releasing them. The Appsee acquisition is interesting as ServiceNow could choose to leverage these capabilities beyond just the analytics use-case. Having this level of insight into the behaviors and habits people adopt when using mobile apps could also present some interesting new security possibilities. For example, Appsee's insights will help define a user profile in terms of how they commonly interact with apps, and thus deliver insights into when user behaviors, and the way they interact with apps, veer significantly from the norm. This level of user behavior data could prove to be valuable from a security perspective, especially when complemented by the additional context that is delivered by the Now Platform.

The CMDB is of renewed importance

As many ServiceNow capabilities are so reliant on the integrity of accurate and extensive underlying platform data, heightened interest and attention is being focused on how businesses can establish and maintain the accuracy of this data. Commonly, and within the realms of IT Service Management (ITSM), this data is contained within a configuration management database (CMDB) – something ServiceNow and other vendors have offered for some time. However, historically many enterprises have struggled to develop and maintain an accurate CMDB; indeed, the very concept of a CMDB may be alien to many businesses. As ServiceNow continues to be embraced beyond just the IT department by functions that have no knowledge of a CMDB, or anything else ITIL-related for that matter, it will be important that the vendor supports them help to establish and maintain this important data repository. In time, we may even see the CMDB get rebranded in-line with modern needs around digital, into something more digestible for non-technical audiences. Tools such as ServiceNow Discovery certainly help, but budget issues and cost concerns may restrict many customers from being able to license these types of capabilities. This is an important function, however, so it is important that businesses get it right.

Improving employee and customer experiences by integrating siloed systems and applications

ServiceNow is a platform that enables enterprises to integrate a variety of different systems of record, enabling businesses to orchestrate workflows across different business functions and the different applications and systems used by employees. Integrating the many different types of apps that

enterprises now use and enabling businesses to develop workflows across these systems is key to ServiceNow's wider value to the enterprise. But this needs to be something empowering, not only to IT, but to the wider business. Integration has historically been quite a technical endeavor, but is one that ServiceNow aims to make simpler via its IntegrationHub technology functionality that helps enterprises integrate different apps, even proprietary ones, into the Now Platform. The IntegrationHub works with any service that exposes the data map via an API.

A verticalized ServiceNow offering to support telcos in improving customer service will soon be available

A good example as to how developing this rich level of integration can help improve user experiences and the services delivered to both employees and customers comes from Vodafone Business. At the event, the service provider talked about how ServiceNow has been a vital platform supporting the company's digital transformation efforts, improving the way it delivers and supports B2B services. Vodafone Business partnered with ServiceNow to improve its customer care. Prior to working with ServiceNow, Vodafone Business were reliant on a collection of siloed systems and platforms. Vodafone Business wanted to work with a platform that could help them streamline processes and deliver a 360-degree view of the customer, while also supporting efforts to improve collaboration between those in IT and those delivering customer service. ServiceNow has helped Vodafone Business adopt a more proactive and personal approach to customer service. Via the platform, Vodafone Business' network operation staff, customers care reps, and IT personnel can collaborate in the context of an issue and in a more proactive fashion.

Vodafone Business has also empowered customers with self-service capabilities via the Now Platform, enabling them to resolve issues quickly. Vodafone Business says that employee productivity and customer satisfaction have improved since adopting the ServiceNow Platform. ServiceNow announced that it plans to offer productized platform offerings specific to certain verticals, with telecoms and financial services the first two verticals. The Vodafone Business use case above provides an example of the value that the ServiceNow platform can offer communication service providers, and by delivering a verticalized solution, ServiceNow hopes to appeal to more telcos by demonstrating the value the platform can deliver, not only in evolving customer service, but also by being a key element in managing networks and helping telcos gain more visibility into their vast technology ecosystems. ServiceNow is building a team specific to this telco effort, and is also partnering with AT&T regarding designing the solution, set to be released later in 2019.

Appendix

Author

Adam Holtby, Senior Analyst, Workspace Services

adam.holtby@ovum.com

Ovum Consulting

We hope that this analysis will help you make informed and imaginative business decisions. If you have further requirements, Ovum's consulting team may be able to help you. For more information about Ovum's consulting capabilities, please contact us directly at consulting@ovum.com.

Copyright notice and disclaimer

The contents of this product are protected by international copyright laws, database rights and other intellectual property rights. The owner of these rights is Informa Telecoms and Media Limited, our affiliates or other third party licensors. All product and company names and logos contained within or appearing on this product are the trademarks, service marks or trading names of their respective owners, including Informa Telecoms and Media Limited. This product may not be copied, reproduced, distributed or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission of Informa Telecoms and Media Limited.

Whilst reasonable efforts have been made to ensure that the information and content of this product was correct as at the date of first publication, neither Informa Telecoms and Media Limited nor any person engaged or employed by Informa Telecoms and Media Limited accepts any liability for any errors, omissions or other inaccuracies. Readers should independently verify any facts and figures as no liability can be accepted in this regard – readers assume full responsibility and risk accordingly for their use of such information and content.

Any views and/or opinions expressed in this product by individual authors or contributors are their personal views and/or opinions and do not necessarily reflect the views and/or opinions of Informa Telecoms and Media Limited.

CONTACT US

ovum.informa.com

askananalyst@ovum.com

INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

Beijing

Boston

Chicago

Dubai

Hong Kong

Hyderabad

Johannesburg

London

Melbourne

New York

Paris

San Francisco

Sao Paulo

Shanghai

Singapore

Sydney

Tokyo

