Committed to automating tasks that don’t need human decision-making, I believe ServiceNow is one of the few platforms that can achieve this.

Tetsuya Kiyokawa, Systems Engineering Manager, Mercari, Inc.

Accelerating decision-making and operations
Mercari operates Japan’s largest online C2C marketplace app, where individuals can easily buy and sell pre-loved goods. Established in 2013, the company has grown rapidly in less than ten years, with sales now exceeding JPY100 billion.

The Mercari marketplace app launched in the US in 2014 and has enjoyed steady growth, with the community-powered marketplace model gaining global recognition.
To further expand its business portfolio, Mercari has established several new subsidiaries, such as Souzoh to develop and manage new business, Merlogi to build a new logistics network using Mercari’s data, Merpay to develop financial services, and Mercoin to establish crypto business.

This rapid growth is supported by close communication among employees. “Proposals, discussions, and correspondence are carried out not through email but through a dedicated communication tool,” said Tetsuya Kiyokawa, Systems Engineering Manager at Mercari. The tool means new business and service ideas can be conceived and developed in quick succession, enabled by the fast-paced and in-depth conversations among department leaders.

“"We plan to introduce the Governance, Risk, and Compliance information management solution to automate our risk information management process."

Tetsuya Kiyokawa, Systems Engineering Manager, Mercari, Inc.

Mercari wondered whether its communication tool could also be used in the decision-making process. “We thought we could create a system where matters concurred and decided on the communication tool could be submitted and approved there and then,” said Kiyokawa. “If we could make that happen, it would significantly cut lead time between decision and execution.”

**Seamless integration of processes and systems**

Mercari’s various request and approval systems were developed and operated separately from the communication tool. Different systems were used depending on the request type, and accessing the systems and entering the necessary information were laborious and time-consuming. To resolve this, Mercari linked each department’s systems seamlessly, and constructed a system that automated the workflow, from request to approval, on the communication tool.

This system was initially constructed on a separate cloud platform. However, as Takehiro Komatsu from Corporate Systems Engineering explained, “It was a cloud platform specialized in building business apps, so we were able to develop individual apps easily and efficiently. The drawback was that it took time to link the apps and systems with each other.”
“We needed to re-evaluate the platform from scratch in order to construct the ideal system, so we switched to ServiceNow,” recalled Kiyokawa. “We chose the Now Platform not only because of its strong compatibility with our communication tool, but also because it was very flexible to integrate with external systems, as well as being highly scalable.”

**Multilingual support for global expansion**

The internationally available ServiceNow platform also offers multilingual support, making it perfect for Mercari’s global strategy. “In the future we aim to expand our service to regions beyond the US, so the fact that ServiceNow is a global platform is a huge benefit,” said Kiyokawa. “In addition, about half of our engineers in the Tokyo office are non-native Japanese, which makes multilingual support essential.”

Mercari rolled out both ServiceNow App Engine and ServiceNow IT Service Management. ServiceNow App Engine allows the swift and efficient business apps development in a similar way to Mercari’s previous cloud service, but has a significant advantage in that it enables smooth integration of the developed apps to external systems.

Existing systems that had difficulties linking up in the cloud, such as those for credit management and electronic signatures, were connected through ServiceNow App Engine, and Mercari is completing the development of the workflow from request to approval.

While ServiceNow is developed in the US, its great flexibility means it can expand its functions to meet Japan’s business practices and requirements.

Takehiro Komatsu, Corporate Systems Engineering, Mercari, Inc.
Automating routine tasks for better efficiency

If requests can be made through the communication tool and are approved quickly, the company foresees a significant increase in employee requests.

“If you use the tool to request a new PC, for example, you’ll receive an approval notification instantly, which made a lot of employees happy. Both work efficiency and employee satisfaction have improved,” said Komatsu.

Mercari is now also using ServiceNow to transform its customer-facing and internal services by building an enterprise information portal, Merportal, with improved and refined UI and UX. The portal’s homepage now has a simple, polished look and feel.

Kiyokawa commented, “We hope to automate IT asset management, and all IT services using ServiceNow IT Service Management. We also plan to introduce the Governance, Risk, and Compliance information management solution to automate our risk information management process.

“Our Systems Engineering Department is committed to automating all tasks that don’t need human decision-making. I firmly believe ServiceNow is one of the few platforms that can achieve this.”