The future of IT is now

Nine ways to accelerate your digital transformation
For technology leaders, the next few years will be feast or famine.

The rise of platforms as a service (PaaS) and software as a service (SaaS) has elevated IT from a supporting role to the primary driver of commercial and enterprise growth. IT isn’t merely part of the business; increasingly, it is the business.

The success of IT teams, however, will increasingly be measured by how well they bring digital transformation to the forefront of their organizations and make true change a reality. While 9 out of 10 CEOs say they want to drive digital transformation, fewer than half are actually prepared for it. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored that digital change is more than “nice to have.” It has been the single biggest differentiator between businesses that have thrived and those that have been left behind.

Cloud-based, AI-fueled service platforms are what make it possible for IT to unify their processes and drive profitable change throughout their companies. Soon, every competitive company will be in the digital space, with smart IT deployed across a sophisticated service platform.

The current crisis is a great time to experiment, overcome corporate inertia, and get rid of sacred cows.

—Chris Bedi, ServiceNow CIO

Those organizations that haven’t had a chance to hop on board should make digital transformation an enterprise-wide priority. In fact, a third of business and technology decision-makers say that accelerating digital transformation is the top mandate for their efficiency-improvement initiatives, according to a Forrester Digital Process Automation Survey.¹

Here are nine ways to begin—or accelerate—your digital transformation now.

Cloud-based enterprise solutions are a necessary ingredient for digital transformation. By bringing IT into the cloud, organizations can reap the benefits of connected data, shared experiences, and, most importantly, adaptability. With legacy systems, even small changes often require significant and time-consuming changes. Contrast this to cloud-based solutions, where firms can add, remove, customize, and update anything—at any time, and quickly. You’re also able to access the cloud anywhere, regardless of where you are in the world.

**1 Make change possible through the cloud**

Artificial Intelligence is perhaps the latest and most transformational piece in the digital revolution. The reason: It paves the way for innovation by automating routine tasks and giving back time to a live agent so they can focus on more meaningful and impactful work. Once the province of sci-fi movies, AI has moved mainstream and is being deployed across top companies to optimize everything from customer service to financial reporting. The benefits go beyond the direct return on investment; putting human talent to work on higher-value tasks encourages more innovation and improves the employee experience.

**2 Deploy AI across departments**

Experts say that 85% of customer interactions are currently done without a human on the customer support side.¹

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¹ Forrester Research, Inc, “Predictions”.

² Invoca, “New Invoca Research Conducted by The Harris Poll”.

³ Invoca, “New Invoca Research Conducted by The Harris Poll”.

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Advanced firms doubled their data strategy budget in recent months.²
Enhance customer experience with predictive technology

A big step forward for consumer experience is the marriage of SaaS and customer service. More than 80% of customer interactions are currently done without a human on the customer support side, according to a recent study for Invoca Research.

Like many other areas of business, technology has made operations more efficient and scalable, reducing customer service processing times and allowing people to focus on the crucial inflection points for human interaction. For customer service, SaaS apps can reduce time-killing workloads of common issues to instant automated replies, keep labor costs down, and allow your customer support team to focus on adding value by addressing the problems of outliers whose endorsement would reflect well on the company.

By 2024, most cloud service platforms will provide at least some services that execute at the point of need. 1

14% of organizations employ AI and nearly 50% intend to do so. 4

These are the four key components of a modern cloud-based single platform:

• Omni-channel customer and partner engagement; drive action with self-service
• Connect the back office to the front office; resolve complex issues end-to-end
• Connected devices and IoT; provide proactive service
• Use Enterprise Service Management principles

Break down silos

Behind the biggest gains in digital transformation is the ability to see, manage, and collaborate across departments and teams. Almost without exception, potentially insightful and useful company data gets stranded, or siloed, in the originating department or system. The architecture of sophisticated enterprise platforms breaks down data silos and allows IT to proactively identify problems, inconsistencies, and conflicts among different departments, and then move quickly to resolve the issue.

Data scientists say that 80% of the work involved is acquiring and preparing data. 3

27% of organizations employ AI and nearly 50% intend to do so. 6

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Democratize app development

Within four years, nearly three-quarters of large enterprises are expected to be using at least four low-code development tools for IT application development and citizen development initiatives, according to a recent Gartner study.7

40%

In 2022, application integrations delivered with robotic process automation (RPA) will grow by 40% year over year.9

Measure projects with velocity-to-value

Rather than focusing on the sheer number of projects, their value to the enterprise is a smarter measure. velocity-to-value is a better way to track real progress.

Under this metric, projects are ranked by the sum of values of their complexity and the number of months of effort it took to develop to earn its velocity value. That number is weighed against the velocity of the past year’s portfolio to give it a velocity-to-value ranking. This new measure helps divine which apps have the best return on investment (ROI) and becomes a guide for more valuable development in the pipeline—not merely hitting quantity goals.

5

Within two years, nearly three-quarters of large enterprises are expected to be using at least four low-code development tools for IT application development and citizen development initiatives, according to a recent Gartner study.7

24%+

More developers will work outside of central IT organizations as companies continue to make deploying software a crucial part of their business model. About 25% of developers working on internal software tech recently said they report to a business unit outside of CIO or IT departments.8

75%

In 2022, application integrations delivered with robotic process automation (RPA) will grow by 40% year over year.9

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Gartner, “Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Low-Code Application Platforms”.

8 Forrester, “Predictions: More Changes For Software Development”.

9 Gartner, “Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends”.

The Future of IT
Productivity gains under a smart service platform:

- **30%** increase in IT productivity
- **15%** of customer service can be repurposed for greater ROI work
- **50%** faster enterprise app-to-market time
- **33%** faster incident resolution
- **45%** faster security incident response

**Look at productivity from many different angles**

One of the chief benefits reaped by companies that have made a digital transformation is the accompanying boost in productivity. Productivity gains come from AI, transparency, ease of app building, and other areas. A report on the total business value of ServiceNow IT apps identified five major ways technology supports productivity gains.

Still, organizations should look at productivity from many different angles, including the indirect benefits. Digital transformation often goes hand in hand with better employee satisfaction and experience, collaboration, and work/life balance—key factors in productivity.

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**“Total business value of ServiceNow IT apps”**
84% of respondents rated employee experience as important.11

28% identified employee experience as one of the three most urgent issues facing their organizations.11

84%

28%

Companies that are digitally trustworthy are expected to generate 20% more online profit than those that aren’t.12

20%

IT staff repurposed for higher-value work.13

15%

Automate workflow for better employee experience

The Future of IT

Create profitable synergies by ditching legacy systems

Benefits begin when companies let go. The use of different business practices, inefficient workflows, customer and employee service disparities, and legacy software had long been a challenge at mid-size and large companies. Reconciling these differences spanned inefficient meetings and required the legal and IT departments at a minimum.

Embracing the benefits of a unified cloud-based platform, however, brings processes together, automates many, creates unparalleled oversight, and provides a launchpad for easy app development in a new world, free of legacy systems, where these synergies transform companies into more profitable versions of themselves.

9

Deloitte, “From employee experience to human experience: Putting meaning back into work.”

Gartner, “Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends.”

Total business value of ServiceNow IT apps.

The Future of IT

The launch of sophisticated enterprise platforms focuses on automating complex workflows that once required long manual processes, time-sucking approvals, and menial labor. The new black is being able to build custom automated workflows that greatly improve productivity—and the overall employee experience. Customer service and human resources are two departments that stand to benefit the most from automated workflows.

The Future of IT
Conclusion

Now more than ever, the success or failure of most organizations hinges on making digital transformation a reality. This shift has turned the relationship between business and IT on its head: IT doesn’t merely support commercial and enterprise growth—it drives it. In fact, the most significant IT trends are those that drive digital transformation or are accelerating because of it.

The common denominator—across all industries—is the cloud and the central role it plays in connecting data, experiences, and teams while allowing for maximum flexibility to be ready for whatever comes next.

Protect your organization and prosper, even during times of disruption, by building a smarter workflow process.

Learn more about how IT is leading business transformation and how ServiceNow can help you ramp up and deliver exceptional experiences in the “next normal.”

Learn how to re-imagine IT service delivery and operations in unimagined times from the pros in our new ebook.

Learn about chatbots, predictive intelligence, performance analytics, and more innovative features in ITSM Professional.