

A man with a backpack and headphones is standing on a train platform, looking at his phone. A red high-speed train is blurred in the background, suggesting speed. The scene is set in front of a modern building with many windows.

Improving IT velocity in a DevOps world

Maintain IT controls with rapid
delivery and intelligent response



Much has been written about DevOps versus IT operations or the ITSM processes for delivering and maintaining service quality. But it's not a case of one or the other. Instead, IT should accommodate DevOps principles to better meet the needs of the business for greater speed by automating change management and other ITSM processes.

Integrating DevOps, and change management

Challenges in integrating development and operations can arise partly because these two—in most cases, disparate—teams have different perspectives. Development teams create software with the agile methodology and are typically more accepting of the risk of code failure. IT operations teams generally embrace ITIL to standardize the operations process, have a low tolerance for risk, and are focused on preventing service outages.

In the midst of this is the operations change management team that values governance and control and manages risk with a change management process that helps prevent outages, but at the cost of slowing down development velocity.



As a result, ITIL and ITSM are viewed as an impediment for DevOps, with common challenges such as:

- Operations change management is seen as bureaucratic, lacking speed and agility, and a bottleneck.
- The change advisory board (CAB) can be overused and an unnecessary burden on flow.
- Toolsets are siloed, with different codebases and mixed deployment model causing issues with integrations and ultimately workflow.

Whether these are just perceptions or unfortunate truths, change is possible. By adopting new ways of working and advances in technology, ITSM and IT operations management (ITOM) can better meet the needs and expectations of DevOps personnel and the business as a whole.



Elevating ITSM and ITOM in a DevOps world

As development, operations, and service management teams move to a more agile and collaborative operating model, two key opportunities exist:

- 1. Driving rapid change delivery through automated change policy and change APIs**
- 2. Providing an intelligent response capability to issues plus automated remediation**

These teams need to exploit automation wherever possible to minimize the inefficiencies and delays associated with manual processes.



1. Automating change for rapid delivery

To accelerate code-change delivery, change approval policies can be configured and applied to normal and emergency change types (in addition to pre-approved standard changes). These policies consider risk factors such as the size of the change, change test pass/fail percentage, developer success and experience level, and more to determine the overall risk of a change.

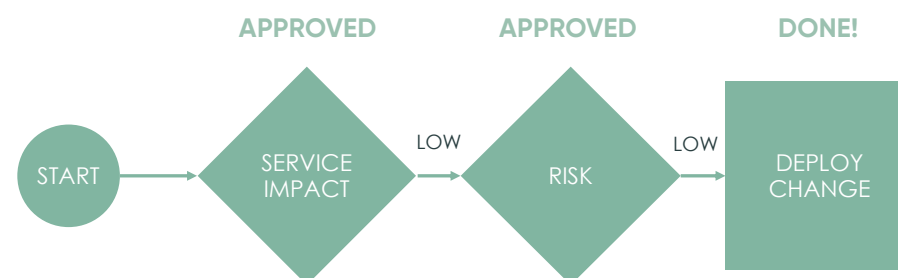
The goal of this is to reduce change-approval friction by trusting data and ensuring accountability and tracking while enabling speed (bypassing the CAB where appropriate).

Then, an automated workflow that includes approval definitions, decisions, and the change approval policy allows authorized personnel such as a DevOps group's product owner to automatically approve low-risk changes—for instance, when automated test coverage is >80% and the test results are 100%.

DevOps teams will likely have an existing continuous integration/continuous delivery (CI/CD) pipeline and associated DevOps tools, and they can integrate with ServiceNow's change management process through REST APIs. This is also the basis of out-of-the-box toolchain integrations that are a part of the ServiceNow DevOps product direction.



The ServiceNow Workflow and REST API architecture automates change approval policies



IT Service Management – Intelligent Change Management

Code changes can now be automated and capable of being audited with no manual oversight or after-the-fact change entry, potentially leading to a 130% increase in release frequency. In addition, change management records will be more accurate and complete, making troubleshooting for any incident caused by a code release far easier and more efficient.

The entire flow could be automated for low-risk changes. A CI/CD tool such as Jenkins can initiate the change request on behalf of the developer so that teams never have to leave their own development environment.

2. Speeding up issue identification and remediation

ITSM and ITOM teams need to work together, facilitated by two key opportunities:

1. **Intelligent working**—using artificial intelligence (AI) in the form of machine learning from assessment through remediation
2. **Automated workflows**—using ServiceNow to integrate processes and activities between people and systems

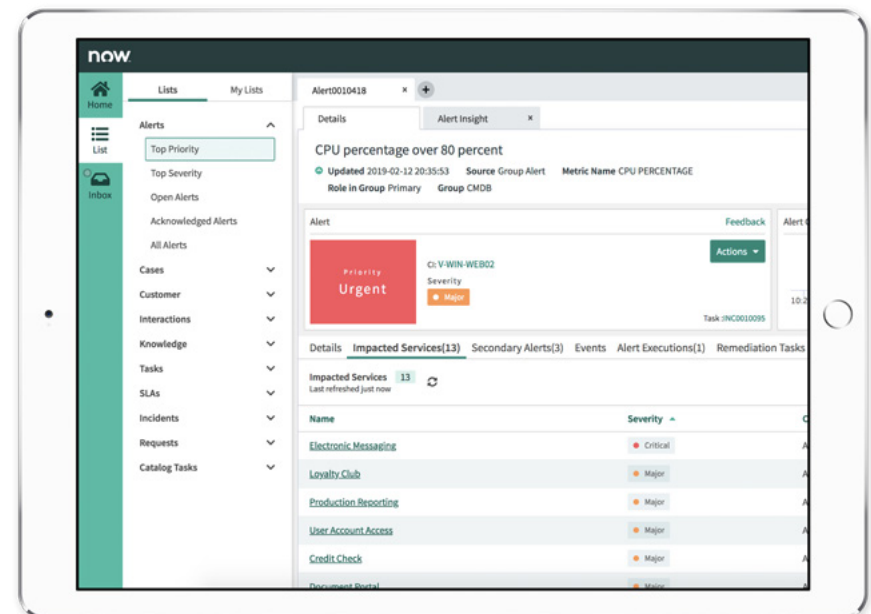
Thanks to ServiceNow's event management, AI-based insight, and orchestration, critical outages are recognized early and resolved far more swiftly than with traditionally siloed and manually intensive operations. Teams can avoid the delays caused by belated issue identification, manual triage activities, inefficient collaborative capabilities, and manually applied fixes.

A Forrester Total Economic Impact™ study found that the average ServiceNow customer can reduce event management noise by up to 99%—making events far more manageable and less costly.

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The use of machine learning to filter, group, and correlate events clarifies where to prioritize effort. For the average ServiceNow customer, the estimated savings is \$1 million a year. Another benefit is 25% fewer priority 1 outages.

Finally, the average ServiceNow customer sees a 20% efficiency gain for tier 1 service desk employees, which can be increased by using machine learning to augment service desk agent capabilities.



The takeaway

Corporate ITSM and ITOM practices must accommodate DevOps principles and capabilities. Achieving that goal can help meet business needs, in particular the requirement for greater speed and a reduction in the impact of IT failures.

The Now Platform® and application API's make it possible to deliver new products and services more quickly, better align IT investments and operations with business priorities, and offer modern AI-powered experiences that employees increasingly expect.

[LEARN MORE](#)

ServiceNow was founded on a very simple idea: that work should be easier.

ServiceNow is making the world of work, work better for people. Our cloud-based platform and solutions deliver digital experiences that help people do their best work. For more information, visit: www.servicenow.com.