ServiceNow: A Secure Platform for Financial Services
Understanding the security, resilience, and compliance of the Now Platform®
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Introduction

ServiceNow has a proven track record of providing software solutions to many of the world's largest and most well-known financial institutions, underscored by a commitment to meet industry standards and regulatory compliance.

Streamlining costs and reducing complexity are essential for financial institutions to remain competitive. Central to this is minimizing administrative burdens on systems and infrastructure, while allowing swift and simplified development and deployment of new services, crucial for both attracting and retaining customers.

In this context, Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions emerge as appealing options for financial services organizations seeking efficiency, adaptability, and scalability.

This paper explores common concerns and challenges faced by financial services institutions and how ServiceNow mitigates these risks to safeguard sensitive customer data stored on Now Platform® instances. In addition, ServiceNow provides a wealth of information regarding how it serves financial services customers here.

This document is designed to be consumed alongside the Securing the Now Platform white paper which provides a holistic overview of the ServiceNow security program.
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ServiceNow: A trusted platform for financial services

ServiceNow has a strong history of serving financial services clients that benefit from the Now Platform’s flexibility, reliability, and scalability to deliver services to a large number of users across multiple regions and operating platforms.

ServiceNow invests heavily in ensuring that services operate meeting the high levels of security and availability that customers’ demand. The ServiceNow Security Office (SSO) has over 350 dedicated professionals globally and enforces a comprehensive security program overseen by the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO).

In addition, ServiceNow has a dedicated financial services division which exclusively focuses on industry-specific risk, security, and compliance strategies.

ServiceNow compliance

ServiceNow provides highly resilient and secure cloud-based services to customers all around the world. Ensuring that customer data is protected is critical for both ServiceNow and its customers to ensure successful business outcomes.

To demonstrate this commitment to customers, ServiceNow maintains many global and regional security and privacy certifications including the internationally recognized ISO 27001, ISO 27017, ISO 27018, and ISO 27701. A full list of security-related certifications are publicly available on the Compliance page of the ServiceNow Trust site.

In addition, ServiceNow provides transparency into its security program by providing prospects and customers access to certifications, attestations, standard operating procedures, and results of penetration tests and third-party audits through the CORE Compliance Portal.

Find out how to access the ServiceNow CORE Compliance Portal here.

Operational resilience using the Now Platform

Operational resilience and service availability are critical for any financial services organization.

As many high-profile cases in the UK and the US have demonstrated, the longer a service disruption continues, the greater the resulting financial impact and loss of trust. This means that service providers must demonstrate comprehensive and effective Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery capabilities.

The Now Platform provides customers with the processes and controls necessary to implement their operational resilience programs under the ServiceNow Shared Responsibility Model.

ServiceNow is uniquely able to offer multiple solutions by leveraging a single integrated platform, built around a high-quality business and technology service data model. See the Operational Resilience Solution Brief for more information.
Multi-instance Architecture
The ServiceNow multi-instance architecture means that services operate from shared physical infrastructure like routers and servers but with logically isolated software “instances” comprising an application node and database server.

Each customer’s instance is allocated for their exclusive use.

ServiceNow Advanced High Availability
ServiceNow data centers and cloud-based infrastructure are designed to be highly available with redundant components and multiple network paths to avoid single points of failure.

At the heart of this architecture, each customer application instance is supported by a multi-homed network configuration with multiple connections to the internet from different providers and with redundant power sources.

ServiceNow data centers are arranged in pairs, with all customer production data hosted in both data centers simultaneously and kept in sync using asynchronous database replication. Both data centers are always active in a main-main relationship with data replicated from the active (read-write) data center to the passive (read-only) data center.

Each single data center in a pair is implemented so it can support the combined production load of both locations.

Find out more about ServiceNow Advanced High Availability Architecture.

Business continuity planning
The ServiceNow business continuity and disaster recovery plans include both the internal corporate environment and the separate, isolated customer cloud service. A failure of the corporate network would not impact service provision of customer instances from the cloud data centers.

Plans are fully documented and tested annually, as required for compliance, and reports are available to customers through the ServiceNow CORE Compliance Portal. Find out how to access CORE here.

Transparency in performance and reliability
ServiceNow provides its customers with access to service availability metrics specific to their own instance(s) which clearly shows the percentage of time when an instance is free of Priority-1 (severe) issues.

In addition, ServiceNow offers industry-leading Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to provide technical support. This is outlined in the Customer Support Addendum which forms part of the customer’s contract with ServiceNow.

Secure mobile apps
ServiceNow mobile apps employ robust authentication (including MFA), and user authorization capabilities. Mobile users are subject to the same access controls as other users. All data in transit is protected with TLS, and no customer data is stored on the mobile device by default.

Customer flexibility
Customers retain ownership of any data stored on the Now Platform and can access and retrieve it at any time for archival or warehousing in secondary storage, as required.

Service Contracts are renewed annually, giving customers complete flexibility in their decision to use ServiceNow. ServiceNow customer retention rates, which exceed 99%, are unmatched in the industry.

Comprehensive information on these topics and more is available in the Advanced High Availability and Securing the Now Platform white papers.
Material outsourcing and concentration risk

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) definition of material outsourcing states:

“...outsourcing services of such importance that weakness, or failure, of the services would cast serious doubt upon the firm’s continuing satisfaction of the threshold conditions or compliance with the Principles.”

ServiceNow is transparent with customers regarding service availability (including related processes and mechanisms) and regulatory compliance.

The ServiceNow in-house service-delivery does not rely on subcontractors. Confidence in proven ServiceNow resilience and availability allows customers to entrust their most critical operations to our platform and services.

For Europe, ServiceNow created recommendations for the EBA guidelines (requires access to the CORE Compliance portal, find out how to access CORE here) to support regulated customers by illustrating how the Now application, processes, and internal controls relate to the EBA’s recommendations. In addition, ServiceNow is carefully monitoring the technical measures which relate to the EU Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) to ensure customers can continue to use ServiceNow services with confidence.

To provide additional clarity, ServiceNow provides a Financial Services Addendum to the standard contractual agreements.

Securing client and financially sensitive data

ServiceNow account teams work closely with their customers to determine how sensitive data points should be secured. Data flows, integrations, reporting, user experience, business logic and data classification requirements are all considered to recommend the best combination of security controls for the customer.

ServiceNows multi-instance architecture gives customers flexibility over how security controls are implemented to best meet their individual needs including:

- **Field Transformation** — The Now Platform can detect a particular type/classification of data and transform its value before it is stored. This could for example truncate a credit card number to the last 4 digits, or mask a transaction ID. This can prevent sensitive data being stored in inappropriate fields.

- **Encryption-at-rest** — To meet the specific needs of customers, the Now Platform offers both complementary and additional cost solutions for encryption at rest and in use.

  See the Data Encryption white paper for more details.

- **Remote Tables** — The Now Platform can connect to third-party sources, or to another instance, to retrieve external data and optionally cache it in memory. Customers can view external data in lists or forms and process it with standard Glide scripts. Customers can also group, sort, aggregate, and filter the data just like they would for standard internal tables or data stored in the ServiceNow database.

- **Data Privacy** — The Now Platform uses Data Privacy (license required) to classify sensitive data and to remove personally identifiable information (PII) from user data in a production instance and anonymize data in non-production instances. Once anonymized, the user data is no longer considered regulated private information.

ServiceNow also provides a Security Best Practices Guide to help customers implement an optimal security configuration under the ServiceNow Shared Responsibility Model.
Workflows with embedded compliance

Many processes within financial institutions are subject to global regulatory control and regular audit — such as complaints, disputes, trade failures, and payments.

ServiceNow has applied first-principles thinking to how organizations can maintain compliance, embed automation into each process, and deliver exceptional frictionless customer outcomes in a highly regulated market.

The Now Platform provides five key control capabilities that can ensure the timely, compliant, and auditable processing of any customer workflow:

- **Data Control** — The platform Data Policy Management ensures that the completeness and quality of the data captured adheres to strict requirements, which is also mandated through system-to-system integration.

- **Service Level Agreement (SLA) Control** — ServiceNow utilizes a powerful service level engine on the platform to intelligently monitor the health and timely delivery of customer cases, and where necessary take corrective action to ensure that regulatory obligations for resolution times are met.

- **Workflow Control** — ServiceNow workflows are data-driven and “tuned in” to the context of the record in real-time. Steps within the workflow may be subject to regulatory control, such as credit risk assessment. The workflow ensures that these steps are completed in the correct sequence and time frame, and to the required standard to progress. The workflow provides the compliance guidelines for the process.

- **Governance, Risk and Compliance Control** — Uniquely, ServiceNow has an Integrated Risk Management suite on the same platform that drives the processes, and this enables true continuous controls monitoring. On the Now Platform, an organization’s policies and controls for risk-mitigation and compliance inform performance targets for customer workflows. These can detect and correct issues in real time, avoiding reliance on other lines of defense.

- **Auditing and Monitoring Controls** — All browser activity for an instance along with updates to the Now Platform instance is recorded through immutable logs with alerting for anomalies. Administrators can walk through the history of any customer journey.

ServiceNow Financial Services Operations product

The ServiceNow Financial Services Operations product is built on the well-established Customer Service platform and enables customers to efficiently route work across their enterprise, boosting visibility and enabling compliance.

Financial Services Operations removes the legacy system fragmentation that commonly creates friction in customer experiences, reducing the complexity and cost of delivering quality differentiated services.
Conclusion

In today’s interconnected digital landscape, financial services institutions face increasing pressure from regulators and customers alike to provide secure, accessible, and scalable services. Achieving these objectives cost-effectively is essential to sustain a competitive advantage.

Customers rightfully demand the utmost levels of reliability and transparency from their essential service providers, so much so that it is evolving into a regulatory expectation.

The Now Platform is meticulously engineered and operated with security and resilience as paramount concerns, supported by comprehensive policies, controls, and processes.

ServiceNow upholds many global certifications and attestations qualifying us to deliver customized services to the financial services sector. The steadfast loyalty of our existing financial services clientele serves as a testament to our role as a trusted partner in facilitating services and safeguarding data.

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Resources

- Securing the Now Platform white paper
- ServiceNow financial services customer stories
- Why ServiceNow for Financial Services infographic
- ServiceNow Financial Services website
- ServiceNow Cloud Security Customer Resources
- ServiceNow CORE Compliance Portal (find out how to access CORE here)

The Now Platform is designed and operated with security and resilience as the highest priority, with appropriate policies, controls, and processes in place.