ITSM IMPLEMENTATION TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

ITSM is meant to create a safe and effective way to run a technology-driven business. But today's digital transformation shows that antiquated IT governance models and service delivery aren't working. The internet, AI, and cloud computing are revolutionizing the ways IT services are delivered, and hardware and software policies that require lengthy approval process from IT departments are no longer acceptable by an agile workforce. Companies that fail to expedite rapid provisioning and deployment of the latest technology face the consequences of shadow IT, where employees and users bypass organizational protocols to deploy IT services on a subscription basis.

The challenge for ITSM today then is to align teams' various flavors of DevOps and agile practices with new, transformative business operations. In these circumstances, ITSM implementation can be tricky to maneuver.

Luckily, we're providing you with the best tips and best practices for ITSM implementation in your company, so you can implement new ITSM procedures while ensuring the flexibility your business requires.

Plan before purchasing

Not all ITSM tools and solutions are the same. Make a plan before purchasing: the choice of ITSM tooling should fit with the DevOps and agile frameworks your organization has adopted. Evaluate your existing ITSM activities and understand the impact of introducing the new technology. Steps to take during this phase include:

- **Consider dependencies and integration** with other tools in addition to the end-user experience.
- **Develop baseline expectations** regarding the requirements for new ITSM technology implementation and the resulting outcomes.
- **Evaluate the cost and expertise required** to deploy and operate the new technologies.
- **Understand how the investments map to improvements** in business and end-user experiences.

Prepare for cultural change

According to a recent McKinsey report, less than one-third of transformation and change management initiatives succeed—because organizations offer limited support and training to their workforce, among other reasons. We know that ITSM changes impact every individual at the organization, so managers and executives must communicate effectively and incorporate training programs to facilitate the transition.

Consider your ITSM implementation not as a tooling investment, but as a technology-driven strategy for how your IT and your workforce operate. In order to reduce the resistance to change, evaluate the organization's existing culture and consider ITSM implementation as an ongoing journey.

- **Evaluate user response** and monitor new changes users adopt in ITSM workflows. This information shows what is working—and what isn't, so you can iterate new improvements.
- **Follow ITSM** change management **and** change control practices to facilitate the digital transformation.
- **Ensure support from all internal and external stakeholders**, including senior members for the changes resulting from new ITSM framework and tooling implementation.

Automate

ITSM implementation goes beyond the planning and purchase of new technologies. Instead, ITSM administration should be a continuous process, where implementing new technologies can change how ITSM activities are managed. To streamline these changes, adopt solutions that automate the processes of delivering IT services to end users while maintaining organizational policies on security, cost, and compliance. Rapid provisioning of IT services will encourage users to follow standardized ITSM processes instead of adopting shadow IT practices.

Automation can have unprecedented applications within an ITSM strategy. For instance, using advanced AI capabilities can identify patterns of potential incidents and proactively implement a fix **before** the impact escalates to end users. Anticipating and addressing future scenarios for problem management is often a challenge with new ITSM implementations, as the human resources and business processes are not established prior to the implementation. Developing an automation solution to address a range of future scenarios can reduce the requirement for manual problem management activities, which may not be suitable for all likely future scenarios resulting from ITSM implementation.

Monitor for improvements

Successful ITSM implementation requires organizations to identify and monitor critical success

factors on an ongoing basis. As ITSM progresses, company culture and business processes evolve. Account for these evolving changes by monitoring and responding to the performance of ITSM implementation projects—a proactive approach will be more useful, making change easier to adopt.

- **Understand metrics and KPIs** that directly correlate with end-user experience. Base company decisions on the most impactful metrics sensitive to small changes in ITSM projects.
- **Seek and document continuous feedback** to drive iterative improvements at every stage of your ITSM journey. The feedback should be quantifiable and portray an accurate picture of customer experience, impact to business, cost, security, and other decision criteria.
- **Dedicate one or several employees** to ensure service improvement. Employees can also share the service improvement manager role for their own business functions or departments.

Apply DevOps as an ITSM best practice

DevOps aligns with a continuous improvement approach across the iterative changes in test, release, and deployment of development features. The same philosophy can be applied to ITSM implementation:

- **Outline your vision and goals** for an ITSM implementation project.
- **Identify and continuously measure** the critical success factors.
- **Use a feedback loop** to improve the implementation progress based on end-user experience and business circumstances.
- **Implement continuous practices** such as continuous integration, continuous delivery, and continuous deployment to realize service quality improvement while reducing waste processes.

Modern ITSM implementation procedures and DevOps follow overlapping routines, such as task automation, collaboration between siloed departments, cross-functional training, visibility and control into the progress cycle. The result is an efficient and more effective way to achieve ITSM goals throughout gradual steps of the ITSM implementation journey. Focus all your ITSM implementation decisions on business outcomes and the value delivered to end-users.

ITSM is a journey

Successful ITSM implementation may be measured against conflicting goals by different organizational departments and stakeholders. Ever-shifting business circumstances and technology landscapes may render the present ITSM implementations as less effective or as failed to have met future requirements. Digital transformation will continue to disrupt the way businesses operate and consume IT services. The larger goal for any ITSM implementation project should be to minimize disruptions while the organization takes advantage of latest technologies and IT services.

Additional resources

How to implement ITSM as a program in the real world from **Pink Elephant EMEA**