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Top 5 Service Management Strategies for the Roaring 20s

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Top 5 Service Management Strategies for the Roaring 20s

The pandemic absolutely changed how we do business. In a matter of weeks, organizations were forced to rely on less than well-oiled technologies that were seemingly underfunded and underused. Much of the burden was shifted onto IT, who had to quickly recalibrate and assess the holes as the workforce went largely (or entirely) virtual in record time. Now that we're firmly planted in our new realities, companies have a clearer view of the frontier ahead, with a couple of mainstays like remote work and a greater reliance on self-service, automation and intelligent solutions.

There's also a growing undercurrent of concern from CIOs over the future of ITIL. Many are questioning its relevance in favor of DevOps and wondering what ITSM best practices look like in the new digital era. How can we reconfigure processes so that product and customers are at the helm of service management? The 2020s are already demanding a shift in priorities, strategy and how we measure success.

Digital Transformation Leading Investments

The last few years have been defined by companies moving to the cloud, but now organizations must optimize the cloud experience, primarily for off-site workers. Gartner predicts that over the next three years, "the change in the nature of work will increase the total available remote worker market to 60% of all employees."¹ Because of such an exponential increase in remote work, IT budgets are largely turning their resources towards digital transformation, overhauling IT processes to ensure networks are secure, agile and able to be maintained from afar.

In the age of the cloud, businesses are betting on platforms that are pliable and allow for collaboration. More specifically, they are seeking software that offers a human presence in an era when teams are located virtually everywhere without having to report to a physical office.

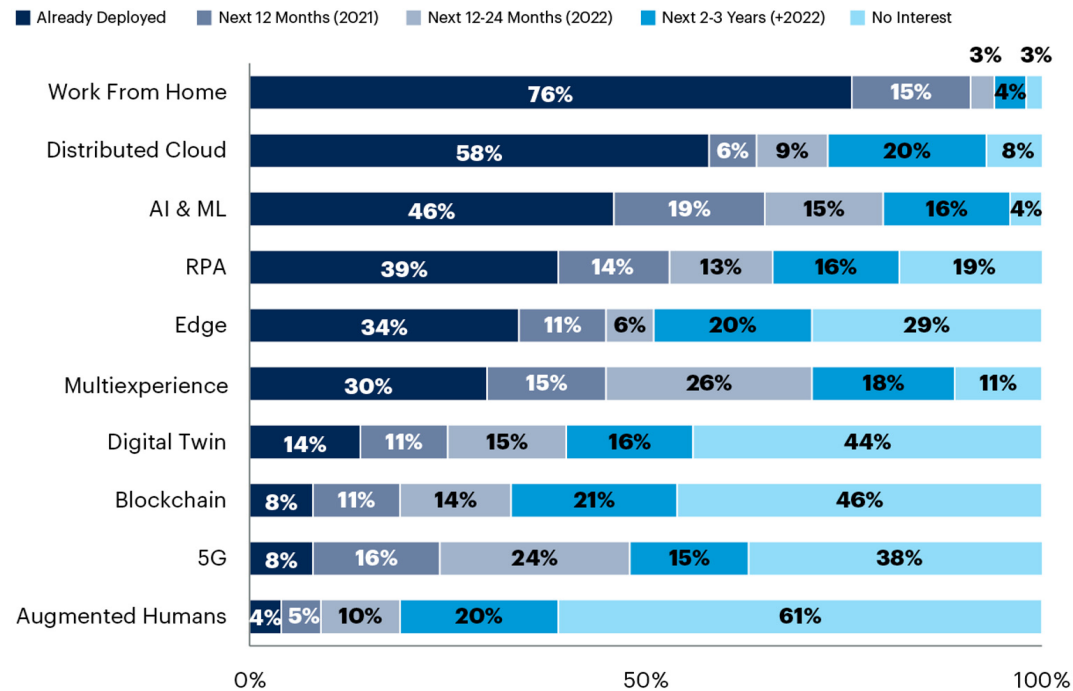
This phenomenon is causing some unique challenges as systems are having to become nearly omniscient. Companies need adequate in-depth analysis, monitoring and continuous engineering to ensure quality and service remain on the up. While relying heavily on cloud technologies, IT teams are already having to adopt practices that support heightened security measures and create a standard for governing all these new platforms.



Figure 1

CIO Planned Technology Investments for the Next Three Years

Percentage of Survey Respondents



n = 80 high tech industry only

Source: 2021 Gartner CIO Survey

Q. What are your enterprise's plans in terms of the following digital technologies and trends?

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IT is Trending Off-Premises

With IT infrastructure moving from on-premises to off-site, the tools and methods for managing these systems must change. This means having the right tooling is more critical than ever before. Thus, it's essential for companies to invest and re-envision their management methods with a focus on:

1. Data Integrity
2. Experiences
3. Security
4. Value Stream Management
5. Extending Service Management

As we forge ahead with adoption of remote work, companies must:

- Closely examine their business goals and product offerings to ensure practices and technologies are fully in sync
- Monitor mass migration to Infrastructure as a Service/Platform as a Service (IaaS/PaaS) cloud platforms and leverage APIs to increase transparency and improve anomaly detection
- Integrate AIOps tech into IT value streams to make it easier and more efficient to share data and identify performance problems before they snowball

Strategy 1

Get to one data set.

Data is more than just figures to assess. Data tells us a lot about the health of a system, its efficiency and how well we're serving our clients. With remote and cloud components impacting the ways in which we work, IT teams will constantly need to fine-tune their dependency-mapping approach in order to provide easily accessible, trustworthy data all in one place.

Focus on enhancing visibility

To get more value from your CMDB tooling, you must enhance visibility across every department. The goal is to create a single source of truth. By investing in technology that enhances visibility, your company can make more informed business decisions in the moment and tackle problems before they happen.

Reduce Mean Time to Know (MTTK)

Having an enterprise monitoring platform is now more important than ever. Distributed infrastructures and increasingly complex systems have amplified the need for further investment in service management software — resources that can oversee operations in their entirety and rapidly communicate issues before they happen.

Consider combining intelligence with collaborative solutions for a stronger incident management solution that closes the gap between departments. While artificial intelligence can aggregate and apply advanced analytics to a massive amount of data, collaborative platforms allow operations to coordinate with multiple teams cross-organizationally to resolve incidents and give context to data.

Center resilient delivery methods

Resilience and adaptability are key components in the new age. According to a recent Gartner study, organizations that adopt a composable approach will outpace the competition by 80 percent.² Your company's ability to easily reengineer and adapt to a business moment speaks to its malleability as well as its capacity to respond swiftly to changes in business.

Start by surveying your major pain points. Once you've pinned these down, you'll need to rethink the process for how decisions are made as well as who can make them. Often, there's flexibility here to allow for non-executive level associates to resolve an incident without having to ascend higher in the approval ranks. Giving your team increased permission to make a decision on their own can alleviate service bottlenecks and boost resiliency.

Also, consider the rate at which your business changes outpace your technology's ability to respond. Can you adapt quickly to new scenarios? This should expose the gaps in your tech and help you identify areas to modernize and adopt a more resilient approach.

As you improve your tech, you should be intuitively mirroring these changes with internal protocols that offer a higher adaptability and extend more autonomy to your team.

Figure 2

Look For Tools That Offer Distinct Mapping, Visualization, Measurement, And Governance Capabilities

Mapping	Visualization	Governance	Measurement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VS graphical editor • Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if • Risk • Process, people, and data • Lead time and process time • Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans • Metrics • Financials • Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value delivered • Predictive analysis • Flow • Role-based views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product portfolios • Products • Financials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs • Value • Tools management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of artifacts, work items, flow, and throughput • Release control and trigger • Integrity enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome capture and measurement • Feedback to systems of planning and record
Core			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interoperability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified data model for artifacts 	

Strategy 2

Deliver higher quality service experiences.

In the 2020s, employees are in the driver's seat when it comes to infrastructure and tech investment. Their experience at work and their ability to access essential resources easily will influence many factors such as productivity, customer experience, innovation and incident management. But currently, organizations are missing the opportunity to deliver higher quality experiences to their team.

A Forrester study found that only 60 percent of workers report having the resources necessary to be productive, with only 17 percent of global workers saying it's a simple process to access the data they need when they need it.³

This restriction of information and essential tools impacts not only employee retention but also customer satisfaction. Any output from your team (or lack thereof) trickles down to their ability to deliver top-notch service to stakeholders, customers and beyond. So, it's a great idea to strategize around streamlining processes and extending technology beyond IT.

Adopt tools employees find productive

Often, teams are weighed down with outdated processes that slow productivity and add a ton of bureaucracy, which keeps them from making decisions as quickly as the business might demand. In addition, many of the tools available to them aren't the most intuitive, requiring more steps than necessary. This can leave team members feeling constantly behind and unproductive, and ultimately apathetic.

Show your team and stakeholders that their time is valued by investing in the tools they find most effective. This will involve some querying, since some apps may not align with company IT policy. Try to figure out what can work. Involve your team in the selection process, gather insights on their pain points, and see if you can find solutions that are effective for them and for the business as a whole.

Only 60 percent of workers report having the resources necessary to be productive.

Provide a total experience

Recovering from the pandemic is no easy feat. Companies must differentiate and providing a total experience (TX) can be what sets you apart. The TX philosophy stems from the idea of streamlining various user experiences into one. By combining consistent design, marketing content and strategy, customers, employees and stakeholders will gain an elevated and more unified level of engagement with your brand. An effective TX essentially breaks up silos, bringing various users together under one seamless experience.

According to Gartner, by 2024, organizations that provide a total experience will outperform competitors by 25 percent in satisfaction for Customer Service (CX) and Employee Experience (EX.)⁴ Information accessibility and standardized tools that meet the moment are key to establishing a quality user experience and positioning your company for success.

To provide a total experience, you'll need to examine how service management tools can be extended beyond IT cross-departmentally. The goal here is to remove harmful silos that restrict information to just one team.

There's high value in offering a total experience that helps to make information more visible and intuitive for users. Imagine sharing the technical intelligence of IT with areas like human resources, legal and marketing. Often overlooked in service management, these departments stand to benefit greatly from the ease and access of having more automated features and streamlined processes. Increased accessibility can boost self-service objectives and create a holistic UX.

The goal here is to remove harmful silos that restrict information to just one team.

A good route to securing a TX is by investing in an enterprise service management solution (see next section). Enterprise solutions integrate all your systems, allowing every arm of the business to come together through a common self-service portal. With the help of an enterprise solution, productivity is sure to jump exponentially, ultimately improving how employees feel about the work they do.

Emphasize faster, easier incident resolution

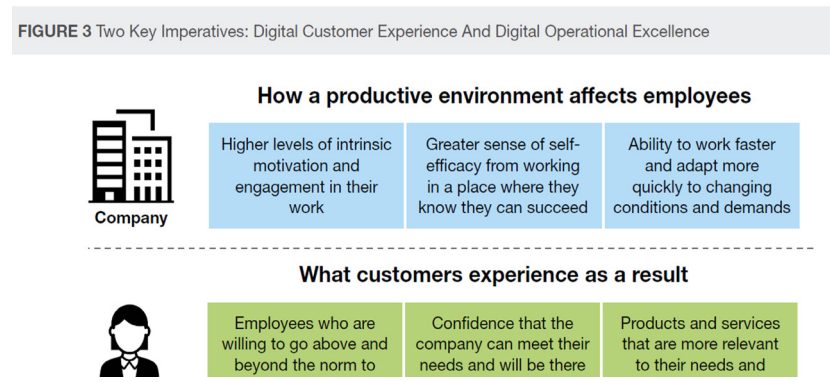
How quickly and easily you can resolve an incident is a key factor of success in the new frontier. When examining your strategy, you should strive for techniques that provide the nimblest resolution. According to Gartner, in the coming years infrastructure enhancements focused on endpoint analytics and automation remediation will comprise 30 percent of IT efforts. The best tools will focus on blending automation and intelligence, helping your team to resolve incidents proactively and more quickly.⁵

Self-service portals are a perfect solution to faster results. Since they allow users to seamlessly reach for the resources they need to resolve their own issues, specialists can remain focused on problems that require expert-level attention. Also, users don't have to wait in a queue or delay getting the correct answer — everything they need is at their fingertips.

Another essential piece that will increase agility is investing in SaaS-based tools that leverage AI and machine learning. AI allows for intelligent analysis while machine learning ensures the machine can learn from acquired data and make more accurate decisions in the future. By deploying AI/ML insights to match identified issues, you can better detect errors, crashes and performance issues that degrade the user experience and disrupt work.

Intelligent routing will also help you realize quick results. With the combination of machine learning and artificial intelligence, your system can process and analyze customer queries and other issues without relying on your team to route it. From creating intuitive solutions to predictive routing, intelligent routing fast tracks requests to the best available agent, streamlining the resolution process and boosting CX.

Figure 3



Strategy 3 Extend service management into the enterprise.

As mentioned earlier, there are endless benefits to consolidating the service management experience and pulling all of that data into one purview. When you extend service management tools into the enterprise, you create a standardized experience that spans departments, allowing you to see issues before they bubble up. Access to a tremendous scope of data and analytics minus the often-hindering silos truly enables top-notch service to stakeholders, customers and your team. Resolution becomes easier and more intuitive when you can see around all the corners.

It's quite commonplace to see within a single company several different service management solutions, each department with its own way of doing things. Obviously, this makes it challenging to get a comprehensive view of the business, from processes and product pipelines to the general management of knowledge and pertinent information.

Having various solutions also creates an inconsistent user experience, making it harder to get to one data set.

True enterprise solutions are equalizers. They break down silos between departments and provide a collaborative space that supports data sharing and analytics. Enterprise solutions are also purposeful in pulling information into one purview. With unified branding and a consistent user experience, you can navigate around the platform easily without the need for integrations.

It's quite commonplace to see within a single company several different service management solutions.

Meanwhile, most organizations are still struggling to alleviate one of their largest internal threats — shadow IT. Without high visibility and ease to resolve issues, employees will certainly take it upon themselves to create the tools they need. In a recent Gartner survey, it was reported that 40 percent of employees have created their own tech workarounds even though they don't directly work in IT.⁶

The shadow IT problem grows when companies fail to have a clear understanding of how their team carries out tasks and what issues they face that hinder productivity. It's up to you to anticipate these tech gaps within each department and provide solutions for your team that are not only company-approved, but also efficient and effective.



Value tools that make processes clear and effective

One of the main reasons shadow IT is a threat is the burden of unclear or ineffective processes.

Employees will adopt unapproved tech or apps as quick fixes to get the work done, leading to unsecure data and siloed information.

Ensuring a streamlined experience for your team is the first step to maximizing workplace productivity. It also makes the most sense when it comes to the employee experience. They want to be productive at work, too. So, give them the tools that help them thrive.

Focus on consolidating data and, when possible, eliminate the middleman. Empowering employees to make decisions that directly impact them can go a long way in building trust and encouraging innovation. If there's an app or platform they've adapted because the one they've been given hobbles them or is archaic in some way, open up a dialog to vet out the tools they like and find common ground. The more useful and clear the path is, the more your team can be set up for success.

Invest in low-code/no-code platforms

As reported by Gartner, by 2023, over 50% of medium to large enterprises will have adopted a low-code application platform (LCAP) as one of their strategic application platforms. Low-code/no-code platforms provide a great solution that's customizable and easy to adapt with the needs of your business.

They also create a smooth user experience with a visual dashboard that matches the branding and UI of the rest of your service management software.⁷

The beauty of low-code/no-code platforms is that they don't require a developer. You can place the solution in the hands of the person who knows the problem best and save on expensive development resources. These platforms are typically easy enough to navigate that your in-house team can shape and construct the software as needed without having to hire a consultant.

Because of how straightforward low-code platforms are, they're also an effective tool to deter shadow IT. Employees can freely build the tools on demand with seamless interfaces that integrate well with other approved software.

Increase team training on platform use

Consistency in information is a key takeaway here, and the best way to disseminate that information is through accessible and frequent training. It may seem obvious that proper training is important, but too often it is overlooked due to budget or time constraints. Prioritizing the demo and explanation of new platforms will reduce the use of outside tech tremendously and ensure your team is adopting approved resources.





Strategy 4 Ensure security across multiple sources to increase visibility.

As more companies migrate to cloud platforms, it's become increasingly difficult to monitor and control the flow of information. Ensuring transparency across systems and devices is essential to meeting the demands of your business. Enhancing visibility goes hand in hand with reinforcing a secure environment, especially with the reality of cloud-located applications and distributed data.

Obtaining the needed visibility may come in various forms, from collaboration tools to self-healing technology, but the goal is the same: to enhance communication, resolve incidents before they occur and prevent security breaches.

Implement the Zero Trust model

The trillions of dollars lost to cybercrime worldwide annually make the case that organizations should implement a more stringent security protocol — too often companies have been sorry rather than safe. As cyberattacks become more sophisticated, adopting the zero trust architecture is a necessary move.

Moving into an entirely zero trust landscape will take time.

The zero trust standard means that nothing is to be trusted, whether it's internal or external to your environment. This is distinct from the old model, which assumed everything already inside the corporate firewall didn't pose a threat. The zero trust philosophy is the way many organizations are taking back control with an environment that assumes there's already a breach.

Moving into an entirely zero trust landscape will take time, particularly if your organization is relying on legacy systems that aren't as agreeable to this transition.

Gartner predicts that the most successful organizations of tomorrow are already employing various forms of cybersecurity mesh services.

Every access request will require authentication, authorization and encryption, and your organization will need to completely overhaul how it thinks about security. Don't try to retrofit the zero trust model on a preexisting system. You'll definitely want to include this as part of a total digital transformation with a careful consideration of new technology that meets this goal.

Centralize data with distributed cloud

IT teams are increasingly challenged to find solutions that manage the influx in data-driven technologies securely and reliably. While companies are enacting hybrid cloud practices, trends are moving us towards a distributed cloud — one that can monitor multiple cloud applications and ensure security and compliance from numerous locations. In fact, Gartner predicts that by 2025, more than half of organizations will use a distributed cloud option.⁸

Anticipate security as a service

With CIOs and consumers alike having more confidence in the security of cloud-based services, now is the time to harness a flexible security philosophy. Your ability to protect data while it's being used and provide location-independent cybersecurity has the potential to set your organization apart with a simpler and more scalable framework. Higher privacy and compliance risks along with the need to ensure secure access outside of traditional walls have made organizations reexamine plasticity in their networking approach.

Gartner predicts that the most successful organizations of tomorrow are already employing various forms of cybersecurity mesh services, making it more practical to integrate enterprise solutions. Largely driven by the evolution of anywhere operations, security as a service is expected to be used by 80 percent of organizations by 2023, with the cybersecurity mesh supporting over half of digital access control requests by 2025.⁹



Strategy 5

Invest in value stream management.

To achieve maturity in your organization, you must get a handle on managing and optimizing development while improving how metrics are captured. Right now, many are struggling to make sense of the data and are missing out on key performance indicators. There's also an argument that traditional ITSM and DevOps are at odds, which is leading to even more confusion about which approach will lead us into the new era.

But the truth is, both ITSM and DevOps are essential to developing a mature ecosystem — one that can handle development and innovation while managing the delivery and support of services. Automation is at the heart of this combined solution, with value stream management (VSM) tools at the helm to measure business value and performance.

Provide value beyond traditional tooling

Service expectations are much greater now than ever and traditional tooling just isn't as effective at meeting the demand, particularly when it comes to cloud deployments. This is your opportunity to switch gears.

Although many organizations are already modernizing their application delivery with Agile and DevOps, they are struggling to measure overall value to stakeholders. Approach CMDB tooling as one integrated system and focus on service performance.

Identify waste using an integrated approach

Lack of visibility is a real hindrance in optimizing development, delivery and governance. It's become increasingly difficult to see how new initiatives are impacting the business or to spot where product offerings are in the lifecycle process. Through value stream management, you can improve transparency and provide clearer metrics for your team, helping them make the shift to a product-centric mindset.

VSM tools also support the visualization and management of the product pipeline. Since VSM tools actively capture metadata throughout each process and use insights to govern flow, your team will be able to identify waste and receive intel on how to improve continuously. Your project managers, QA teams and development will also be able to connect easily with stakeholders and see what's coming down the pipeline and communicate shifts in business priorities.

From capturing historical baseline metrics to providing real-time reporting, value stream management tools can help you make a case for organizational improvements and bolster collaboration.

Build strategy around employee needs

Employee success is a serious indicator of business success — particularly in the era of remote work. Your team must be able to work without interruption with all the resources they need at their fingertips. The greatest challenge here is remapping the company culture by moving away from archaic processes that slow decision making. Leaders are called to embrace a more flexible way of thinking that requires understanding the work-style preferences of their team.

Unfortunately, most organizations still have a distance to go when it comes to leveraging digital sensibilities into how they do work. To get to an employee-centric model, you'll need to expand self-service and develop personas that bring into focus the science behind what makes people truly productive. It's a journey that won't be completed overnight, but remote work is here to stay. Therefore, the goal is to place the right technology in the hands of your workforce, making productivity as pain-free, personalized and predictive as possible.

Change How You Measure Performance

The future of service management calls for a change in how we measure and view performance. As we dive deeper into the “roaring 20s,” what we’re really seeing is a shift in culture. Traditionally, service desk models — though high on accountability and process — tend to restrict and prolong decisions, sometimes delivering poor service outcomes. To truly revolutionize your operating model in order to achieve the levels of creativity, productivity and agility you desire, you must begin to measure success differently.

Moving towards a holistic IT service model that values speed, predictability and personalization can prepare you for a more comprehensive service mindset to help you change the way your team works. A common theme is the pairing of employee-centricity and rapid prototyping with processes that elevate the needs of both the customers and the staff. Try restructuring your team to a more autonomous cluster model.

With smaller, cross-functional teams, you’ll be able to serve a single customer journey with a holistic approach that’s agile and effective. The more you embrace collaboration and a product-centric/employee-centric model, the better prepared you’ll be to usher in service management strategies that meet the needs of today’s robust remote landscape.



About Ivanti

Ivanti makes the Everywhere Workplace possible. In the Everywhere Workplace, employees use myriad devices to access IT networks, applications, and data to stay productive as they work from anywhere. The Ivanti automation platform connects the company's industry-leading unified endpoint management, zero trust security, and enterprise service management solutions, providing a single pane of glass for enterprises to self-heal and self-secure devices, and self-service end users. More than 40,000 customers, including 78 of the Fortune 100, have chosen Ivanti to discover, manage, secure and service their IT assets from cloud to edge, and deliver excellent end user experiences for employees, wherever and however they work. For more information, visit [ivanti.com](https://www.ivanti.com)

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