AC3

ALIGN YOUR IT TO YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGY

In this eBook, we discuss how aligning your IT to your business strategy can help you create better business outcomes by investing in customer and employee experiences.

ACHIEVE POSITIVE BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Over the course of the last decade, the alignment between business and IT has become increasingly critical to an organisation's success. This shift has given IT leaders a seat at the table as accepted partners of the business. At least, in some cases it has.

Too many business leaders still see IT as nothing more than an internal service provider; an important function, but replaceable or even outsourced if necessary. If IT leaders are going to change this perception, they must become essential to the business's success – and that starts with aligning your IT to your business strategy.

A different mindset

Traditionally, organisations succeed when they achieve measures directly associated with financial performance: increasing revenue, growing market share, lowering costs, etc. And while that's still true, modern business environments have expanded to include indirect measures. A focus on customer satisfaction through better experiences, products, or services translates into increased loyalty and decreased turnover, contributing to greater revenue and reduced costs of acquisition.

Successful IT departments are familiar with this expanded focus. After all, it has been one of the main drivers for the rapid adoption and expansion of agile software development. IT departments are also aware that the success of an agile approach has now expanded beyond IT into different departments and to more strategic levels of the organisation. And the reasons are the same—organisational agility to achieve better business outcomes.

Simultaneously, the speed of business continues to accelerate. Technological advancements continuously redefine what is possible, lowering the duration of customer satisfaction windows and driving more frequent delivery cycles. New technology enabled tools are reducing delivery times in multiple industries. The global economy, lower barriers to entry, and the blurring of the lines between traditional industry segments are redefining entire markets and industries.

The journey of streamlining the daily experience in the workplace has not been an easy one, despite the dramatic advanced in technology that have already simplified our lives.

One cost of that can be measured in time spent on mundane tasks and processes. Take the standard checklist for onboarding new employees. Just to start, new hires need to order laptops and other equipment, get security credentials, and choose benefit plans.

While software tools have made some of those steps easier, the workflows that stitch those parts together still tend to bog everything down. Routine tasks can chew up a large portion of an average employee's time.

At the same time, mass adoption of mobile and digital technologies is inching us in the right direction by allowing the digitisation of key workflows. Instead of endlessly replacing the processes and platforms we rely upon to conduct business, digital workflows create efficiencies by improving the way existing processes interact with each other.

To understand the benefits of this, we first need to understand the individual parts of a workflow.

What is a workflow?

A workflow comprises of the interdependent processes and people required to reach a result that no single participant can achieve alone.

Even the most orderly workplace supports a complex web of activities and people that come together to get things done. The fundamental units of work are tasks, processes, and workflows.

Task
A task is the basic building block of all work. All tasks are performed by individuals, but they can vary dramatically in complexity and time required for completion.

Process
When tasks are grouped together to achieve a desired result or objective, they form a process. When an employee needs help solving an IT issue, for example, they initiate a process made up of multiple tasks.

An example sequence of tasks might look something like this:

1. Identifying the problem

2. Filing a help ticket

3. Ascertaining if the deadlines are impacted

4. Devising a temporary workaround

5. Responding to questions from support staff

Workflows
Processes that become interdependent with other people or processes are called workflows.

Submitting a help-desk request to IT is one element of a larger workflow that ultimately resolves the issue. Processes contained in the IT department are set in motion by requests, leading to prioritisation, assignment, and fulfillment. The span of activities from problem to solution, and every person involved, comprises a workflow.

The help-desk ticket example, as employee's computer is not working and needs to be fixed, is a workflow.

The processes within that workflow break down as follows:

1. The employee with the broken equipment submits and tracks a help ticket

2. Help staff prioritises and investigates the help ticket

3. A technician visits the employee to see the problem in person

Digital workflows

Manual workflows can become digital workflows when companies use software, automation tools and other technologies to digitise and/or automate manual tasks, processes, and workflows.

With ServiceNow platform, AC3 can leverage digital workflows to automate a company's quarterly financial close, as opposed to accountants entering massive amounts of financial data into an ERP system. Digitising this workflow eliminated needless busywork. The time saved in doing so allows finance employees to concentrate on higher-level tasks like analysing key metrics that drive better outcomes for the business.

What are the benefits of digital workflows?

Digitised workflows enables repeatable requests to be structured in a way that drives consistent engagement. Compared to an email sent to a shared mailbox, where there could be 10 different questions for 10 different people (often leading to a trail of emails, with replies to all, including unnecessary information for some of those CC'd and almost inevitable confusion), the digitised workflow enables the requester to see the information flow in a structured and seamless way. It minimises the amount of contact needed between the requester and the fulfilment team and the members of the latter are able to work solely with the information they require, enabling them to action that work quickly and efficiently.

Instead of reinventing the wheel every time repeatable processes are triggered, the results are superior engagement and reliable consistency every time.

The other great advantage of digital workflows is the ability it gives to track and manage performance. With a detailed record of requests and how and when they were actioned, a manager can obtain clear insights into what type of requests their team members are handling and how much time they are spending on those requests.

For businesses, the benefits are plentiful as the customer experience of utilising a digital workflow platform is simplified and streamlined. They are provided with one centralised mechanism to engage a service portal – it is clean, it is structured and it's consistent. This approach offers the level of data required to really inform decision-making. That insight into demand and delivery shows a manager whether they have enough capacity in their team to service the level of requests being received. The end user now is able to see every step of the process tracked along the way.

Layers of administration are removed as work does not need to be reassigned manually between teams, the workflow does all the heavy lifting.

Digital workflows can help businesses deliver modern, resilient services aligned to customer-centric priorities and business outcomes.

Improved employee and customer experiences are essential for successful digital transformation. However, using siloed IT tools for your digital transformation creates information silos. With disparate data, processes and excessive amounts of time and money spent on firefighting, you're left with limited resources to create delightful employee experiences.

IT Service Management (ITSM) is a modern, cloud-based, silo-busting service management solution. With ITSM tooling, you can consolidate on-premises legacy tools to a single cloud platform and stop wasting money and harness shared data and analytics with automated workflows. ITSM lets you:

- Empower employees to self-solve issues 24/7, raise questions, and get relevant, accurate, and consistent information to improve employee satisfaction.

- Make smarter decisions, automate 20% of services and continually improve your services in role-based workspaces.

- Triage, collaborate, and enable agents to resolve incidents, find answers, and stay connected from anywhere to resolve high-impact incidents and improve agent efficiency.

Advantages of ITSM across the enterprise

Deliver resilient IT services on a single ITSM cloud platform

Stop wasting money with legacy on-premises IT tools and consolidate to a single system of engagement.

- **Incident Management**
  Automatically assign incidents to the correct resolution group with Incident Management's machine learning. Bring together stakeholders to investigate issues and restore services swiftly with the Major Incident portal.

- **Problem Management**
  Restore services quickly and often prevent issues from happening in the first place with Problem Management. Structured workflows diagnose root causes and fix problems to eliminate recurring incidents and minimise the impact of unexpected disruption.

- **Change Management**
  Improve velocity of work while minimising risks and costs of unplanned changes. Automate standard changes with DevOps capabilities and for complex changes, automate change advisory board meetings to accelerate change management.

- **Configuration Management (CMDB)**
  Consolidate IT data silos into a single system of record to let IT see the functioning of all assets and related services. See the relationships of configuration items (Cis) and services to proactively manage the change impacts.

Serve employees anywhere with always-on IT services

- Request Management
Give employees a modern, omni-channel way to interact 24/7 with IT and other shared services groups using any device to enable self-help, collaboration, request items or services, and get automated status updates to ensure expectations are met.

- Knowledge Management
Share, manage, and use knowledge from across the organisation and make it readily available for shared or private use by IT and employees. Increase employee self-service and boost agent productivity with contextual knowledge, driven by machine learning.

Make smarter decisions and continually optimise your services and workforce

- Process Optimisation
Gain greater visibility on processes that impact business. Gather insights on bottlenecks through representing process flows visually.

- Workforce Optimisation
Maximise your most valuable resource – your teams. Manage effectively with visibility into performance and maximise output using 360-view of agent work, schedule, skills and training.

Benefits of ITSM

Harness shared data
Using built-in best practices to rapidly consolidate disparate tools, harness your shared data and analytics on a cloud-based platform.

Improve IT productivity
Boost agent efficiency with AI-assisted recommendations and automatically assign incidents to the correct resolution team.

Create resilient service experiences
Shape service experiences for employees anywhere, with always-on IT services. Automate support for common requests with virtual agents that understand simple, human language

Achieve new insights
Proactively deliver high-quality service at scale. Gain full visibility into any process or service with built-in dashboards and real-time analytics.

Use cases

Break down IT team barriers
IT services and operations teams have multiple tools and systems of record resulting in high costs and poor experiences.

Revamp services team and processes from a single source
Difficult to maximise team workload, schedule and performance or to assess how to enhance processes

Complex and difficult to manage IT environment
A complex and difficult to manage IT environment creating barries to achieving objectives in business transformation, customer service goals, cost savings and compliance requirements. ITSM provides the flexibility and speed to deliver incremental changes with contained risk.

Ignite services team productivity
Services team looking to deliver better and faster services with more efficiency and productivity.

IT insights for services and operations teams
Service and operations teams cannot easily show performance metrics to make data-driven decisions.

With AC3 and our ServiceNow ITSM capabilities, you can deliver resilient IT services on a single cloud platform, boost IT productivity with fast platform-native AI resolutions, and service employees anywhere with always-on IT services.

IT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

With IT Business Management (ITBM), you can create greater value from your initiatives and enable change faster across your organisation. You will be able to plan, prioritise, and track work aligned to business objectives.

What is IT Business Management?

ITBM helps IT demonstrate value to the organisation and rationalise investments to help you focus more on innovation. You can also transform the delivery of new products and services through lean execution methodologies.

ITBM makes it easy to anticipate critical business requirements, allocate resources, and evaluate the value of your portfolio. It also enables you to prioritise new requests and deliver products efficiently. Assess related top-level investments and adapt to make adjustments on an ongoing basis. Manage strategic and operational work in one place and reduce bottlenecks to get to market faster.

Implementing ITBM can help you align your IT investment to your business strategy and work with the organisation's goals for better business outcomes and allow you to respond more rapidly to change.

ITBM provides a solid foundation for adopting modern project management strategies and ensuring that every IT project supports an organisational objective.

What are the benefits of ITBM?

Manage outcomes to create value
Gain visibility into portfolio investments and business strategies for better outcomes. Track progress in real time to see exactly how funds are spent and the value of the work being delivered.

Adapt planning for uncertainty
Connect your investment plan to your work plan of action for greater agility. Gain visibility into project outcomes, assess related top-level investments, and adapt to make adjustments on an ongoing basis.

Scale work to deliver faster
Manage strategic and operational work in one place and reduce bottlenecks to get to market faster. Increase agility by optimising and reallocating resources as priorities shift.

Use cases

Align business & IT investments
Help customers grow revenue by enabling them to align their technology and business investments to business objectives and ensure their initiatives, like cloud migrations or DevOps, are on-track and delivering value to their organisation by giving them full visibility into resources, funds and plans in one solution.

Support any project delivery method
ServiceNow is the only solution to provide hybrid project delivery that combines components of Agile and Waterfall methodologies and allows businesses to select the most appropriate elements of each for the project at hand. This gives teams more flexibility in their project delivery approach and the result is improved outcomes on all levels.

Adapt planning to embrace uncertainty
Help teams run what-if scenarios to evaluate and reevaluate investments. Portfolio managers can simulate multiple investment scenarios, each with a different set of projects and budgets. By comparing them side-by-side against key objectives, teams can identify and approve the best scenario. From there, they can track progress as it is executed.

Manage every demand and idea
Get visibility into priorities, dependencies and risk across every business and IT demand. Whether it's a strategic change, a small enhancement request or a large customer project, ITBM centralises all strategic and operational demands in one solution so teams can execute projects aligned to business strategy.

Implementing ITBM into your organisation, can help you to deliver business outcomes with speed and agility. You will also be able to align work to business priorities, redirect spend to critical apps, and speed time to value. ITBM helps you deliver what the business needs when they need it.

How can we help you?

If you would like to streamline your processes and create better business outcomes, we'd love the opportunity to talk. Get in touch today at info@ac3.com.au or call +612 9199 0888.