

# Driving Consistent Service Improvement Through An Asset Management Health Check



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# INTRODUCTION

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The same principle applies to the organizations in case of the management of their IT assets. To survive in today's fast-evolving environment, organizations need to constantly measure their efficacy, costs, and service quality and plan on improving the same.

Gone are the days when the 'gut-feeling' of a few stakeholders was enough to take crucial business decisions. The IT Managers today need to have an accurate view of the current state to help them develop an improvement plan. With increasing economic and competitive pressures, IT Managers have the mandate to improve processes, acquire better capabilities at lower costs and get the most from existing spend while ensuring the required compliance.

IT Asset Management (ITAM) framework and processes allow organizations to strategically track and manage all the aspects of their IT assets including financial, physical, licensing and contractual. Through effective ITAM, IT managers can take more informed decisions, manage the costs effectively, and handle the risks in a more dependable way.

According to Gartner, organizations with a disciplined ITAM achieve 30% cost savings in the first year of their initiatives, and at least 5% cost savings in each of the subsequent five years.<sup>1</sup>

This paper takes the readers through the need for systematic IT asset management, the importance of health check of IT asset management, and the benefits of periodic health checks of their IT asset management solutions. It also presents a framework, specifically for ServiceNow Health Check.

## The Need for An Asset Management Health Check

Despite the well-acknowledged benefits of systematic IT asset management, 30% of the organizations don't know what they own, where the assets are located, and who is using them and 45% of the organizations track assets on a project-by-project basis! The fact though remains that over 30% of IT budgets can be saved through effective IT asset management.<sup>2</sup>

There are instances where enterprises have saved thousands of dollars in maintenance fees simply by dropping a product which was not used for a considerable period of time.

To better align the IT with business needs and integrate IT activities more tightly with the business activities, it is important that organizations carry out health checks which are nothing but periodic reviews of hardware and software spend, used and unused assets, and any required process improvements to optimize their IT operations.

Over a period of time, operating assets efficiently and profitably can get difficult because of ageing assets, more demanding regulatory requirements, shortage of skills, and intense cost pressures forcing the companies to get the most from existing assets. Organizations looking for an effective and easy of use change management and asset management solution are increasingly choosing ServiceNow. ServiceNow offers flexible and powerful workflows, it can easily integrate with any system, it is extremely easy to use with stellar user interface and contextual help, and it offers excellent reporting capabilities.

For the organizations which have already implemented the IT asset management solution, such as ServiceNow, asset management health checks are all the more important because these help in re-evaluating the existing functionalities vis-à-vis the changing business needs and leverage the implementations to the fullest extent.

## Benefits of Asset Management Health Check

Asset Management health checks help the organizations in ensuring that their asset management systems and plans are effective – both technically as well as economically. Health checks assist organizations in incremental improvements and also provide valuable insights for supporting transitions.

Through regular asset management health checks, organizations can

- ✦ Critically evaluate the relationship and linkage between the business objectives and asset management solution
- ✦ Evaluate the asset performance vis-à-vis costs and risks
- ✦ Identify structural, procedural and organizational gaps
- ✦ Maximize the potential of their IT Asset Management Solution implementation
- ✦ Assist strategic planning with budgetary estimates
- ✦ Finalizing the asset management roadmap for the next 2 years with short-term tactical improvements and bug fixes as well as long-term strategic initiatives

- ✦ Benchmark their solution implementation against similar implementations in similar industries
- ✦ Ensure that the short-term and long-term asset management plan(s) are aligned
- ✦ Identify the key performance indicators which support the Financial, Operations, Customer, and Innovation initiatives and identify any gaps
- ✦ Assess the effectiveness, efficacy, compliance and completeness of the processes
- ✦ Assess the sourcing strategy and identify areas of risks  
Accelerate the development of process maturity

## THE PROCESS OF CONDUCTING HEALTH CHECK ON EXISTING IMPLEMENTATION

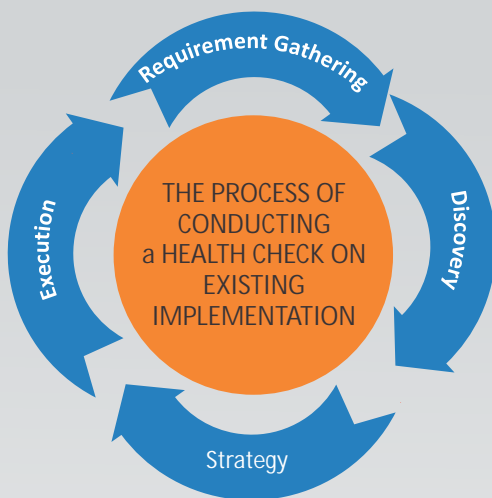
The Asset Management Health Check primarily checks for issues with the Asset Management System and Asset Management Plans. The aim of the Health Check is to offer a comprehensive review of the existing systems, approach, support, operational tasks, costs, business drivers, procedures, and processes. The Health Check team needs to have the understanding the asset management application, asset management principals, as well as the non-technical business aspects.

In this section, we will specifically have a look at Health Check for existing ServiceNow installations. It is recommended that organizations conduct a regular Health check of their ServiceNow implementation through qualified and certified experts to identify quick-win opportunities, identify enhancement areas based on current business requirements, maximize the potential of their ServiceNow implementation, and build a solid foundation which can meet the ongoing and increasing business demands.

Typically, following are the key activities and deliverables in ServiceNow Health Check projects -

### Requirement Gathering

- ✦ Understand the current technical implementation and gather all the information about process implementation
- ✦ Identify the key stakeholders involved at every level of interaction and implementation
- ✦ Collect information about the set goals and objectives



- 🔑 Deliverables - Once all the information is gathered, the deliverables involve identification of success metrics and clear documentation of goals and objectives

#### Discovery

- 🔑 Identify gaps through interviews with current users and various stakeholders
- 🔑 Understand improvement opportunities through interactions with top management
- 🔑 Deliverables – The deliverables include gap analysis of goals and objectives

#### Strategy

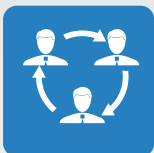
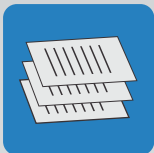
- 🔑 Based on the gap analysis, define the solutions to minimize the gap
- 🔑 Collaborate with various stakeholders to finalize the action plan
- 🔑 Deliverables – The deliverables include documentation on recommended solutions along with the phase-wise execution plan and estimates

#### Execution

- 🔑 Implementation of the identified solutions
- 🔑 Conduct the required training and knowledge transfer
- 🔑 Deliverables – The deliverables include complete documentation on solution implementation and also the roadmap for next phase.

## SERVICENOW HEALTH CHECK CONFIGURATION REVIEW

To get the most from the ServiceNow implementation, it is recommended that customers run a regular Health Check Configuration Review. These Health checks help in identification of configuration issues that can negatively impact performance and upgradeability and also help in assessing and aligning the current processes with ServiceNow best practices.



Some of the best practices to ensure that your ServiceNow instance is running in a good health, include the following –

**Existing accounts** – Take a review of who is accessing which account. Ensure that the only the authenticated users have the required permissions. If required, remove unnecessary admin access or remove the privileges of those accounts which have not been accessed since more than a certain number of days. It is also recommended that you review the access rights of Service Accounts.

**Unused applications** – Deactivate unused applications and unused modules. It is also recommended that you deactivate the UI actions, related lists or functionality that should not be used.

**Errors and Issues** – Ensure that the request stages are properly set and closed at the end of the request. The work queues should show accurate and relevant tasks. Incidents should be closed properly. Check the script logs for errors, and warnings. It is a good practice to check for memory or performance issues by checking stats do.

**Infrastructure** – Ensure that the mid servers are working properly. Make sure that the ServiceNow version is updated and up-to-date. You can ensure the good health of tables by checking table row counts (especially for large tables), accurate table rotations, duplicate records in tables. Regularly check the load times of reports and dashboards. Keep the overall experience clean with regular update of expired KB Articles or blank pages

**Coding** – Coding review involves checking of the code for code migration procedures, default update set, the description in update sets, and naming convention of update sets.

## ALCOR'S EXPERTISE IN SERVICENOW IMPLEMENTATIONS

Alcor leverages its integrated business process design and technology implementation capability to take a strategic ITSM implementation approach and focuses on solving the business problems of their clients. Alcor's ITSM solutions with ServiceNow leverage a business view of IT services. The objective is to enable the IT support organization to:

- ▶ Resolve or escalate issues and problems in a timely manner
- ▶ Improve root cause isolation, and
- ▶ Provide higher levels of business user satisfaction.

Alcor brings substantial process expertise, ServiceNow experience, and depth of organizational governance modeling. This vast experience helps them to build solutions that are effective and provide complete life cycle support for Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management and Configuration Management. This includes the real-world experience of having worked with enterprises in the banking and financial services and retail sector where we have helped orchestrate transaction volumes running into the 100's of thousands.

### Alcor's ServiceNow experience includes -

- 1 Automating ServiceNow with external applications like emails, active directories, Adobe, assets, and Amazon Cloud Provision (LABS).
- 1 ServiceNow IT Operations Management across the three levels, Orchestration, Release Management and Service Analytics. Through effective Orchestration, Alcor helps clients launch the right automated process consistently and to codify best practices into the process workflows to save time and money.
- 1 Better Release Management which allows optimal usage of the IT assets, hardware and software, available to the client to ensure effective, timely, uninterrupted and on-demand service delivery.
- 1 Service Analytics solutions that give the clients the capability to keep track of each and every infrastructure component that impacts overall service delivery.

Alcor achieves this by leveraging their integrated business process design and technology implementation capability. Their professionals are the top talents in the business with deep personal understanding of the business verticals they service. This allows them to deliver flexible solutions that work in the real world. Their strength lies in delivering solutions that are customized to the specific requirements of their customers including complex integrations with the other systems in the ecosystem like Financial and Procurement Management systems.

## CONCLUSION

IT asset management is a complex activity and needs continuous improvement and enhancement for it to align with the changing business goals and objectives. IT asset management health checks help organizations in running periodic reviews of their technology and processes and identify the gaps. Through regular health checks, organizations can get the most from their asset management solution implementation and drive maximum business value during the entire life cycle of the solution implementation.



## ABOUT ALCOR SOLUTIONS

Alcor is a global cloud advisory and implementation services company serving Fortune 500, Government agencies and other leading organizations in multiple industry verticals across the Americas, Canada and India. Alcor is a ServiceNow Silver partner and also partners to Mulesoft, Salesforce, FireEye, Dell Boomi, Dell, Microsoft, BigPanda and Bomgar. They advise leading businesses on cloud platforms, architecture, enterprise service management and integrating IT service delivery. They also provide business process consulting to capture, re-engineer and improve processes that can easily be automated to deliver real value. The Alcor consulting team is derived from a combination of experts in Business strategy, Cloud Technology and Organizational Change Management.

For more information, connect with them at [information@alcortech.com](mailto:information@alcortech.com).

## REFERENCES

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Alcor is a technology implementation company focusing on Enterprise and Government technology needs in ITSM, systems integration, web development and mobility space. We provide a strategic ITSM implementation approach to our clients and focus on solving business problems by leveraging an integrated business process design and technology implementation capability.

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