

PeerPaper™ Report 2023

Know Before You Go: Top 7 Questions for a Successful CDW ServiceNow Implementation

Based on Real User Experiences
with CDW ServiceNow Solutions



Contents

Page 1. **Introduction**

Page 2. **How CDW ServiceNow Solutions Have Benefited Organizations**

Page 4. **Selected CDW ServiceNow Solutions Implementation Experiences**

Page 5. **The 7 Top Questions for a Successful ServiceNow Solutions Implementation**

#1 - What Are We Trying to Accomplish With ServiceNow?

#2 - What Is Our Scalability Plan and Overall Roadmap?

#3 - What Integrations Do We Need?

#4 - How Long Will It Take to Implement ServiceNow?

#5 - What Is the Potential Impact on Our Organization in Terms of Staffing and Work Processes?

#6 - What Will Be Our Ongoing Costs?

#7 - What Are Our Support Needs?

Page 13. **Implementation Advice from Kevin Griggs, Sr. Manager, CDW ServiceNow as a Service**

Page 15. **Conclusion**

Introduction

IT organizations implementing ServiceNow may find the process challenging for a variety of reasons. In some cases, their teams lack the necessary skill-sets for ServiceNow implementations. The solution's depth of features and integration—arguably a source of great benefit—can itself result in complexity that makes ServiceNow harder to deploy. CDW addresses these potential issues with its ServiceNow implementation and management service.

This paper, comprising reviews of CDW ServiceNow Solutions on PeerSpot, reveals seven key questions that ServiceNow system owners should ask at the implementation stage to ensure a positive experience that results in desired business outcomes. The questions include “What is our current state?”, “What integrations do we need?”, “What are our support needs?” and “What are our team's core strengths and skills?”

How CDW ServiceNow Solutions Have Benefited Organizations

ServiceNow customers have embraced the multi-faceted solution for a wide range of business reasons. Whether they're using ServiceNow for human resources service delivery (HRSD) or IT support, in most cases, the customer is interested in making an area of their business operations run more effectively or efficiently – or both.

This typically means reducing the need for human intervention, such as by automating IT support with self-help via a chatbot. The return on investment (ROI) in moving to ServiceNow usually comes from a reduction in the number of systems necessary to support the work, which in turn yields consolidation savings on not only systems, but also staffing reductions and related overhead. The ability to end dependence on multiple systems by replacing them with ServiceNow will yield the faster ROI.

Alternatively, ServiceNow might enable the systems that power a business to be more reliable, e.g., through ServiceNow infrastructure management solutions. The customer benefits by reducing outages and improving end user experiences.

According to PeerSpot members, CDW ServiceNow Solutions offers a range of benefits. For example, a Sr. Software Engineer at a healthcare company with over 1,000 employees shared that CDW ServiceNow Solutions [facilitate and enable project forecasts](#), demand forecasts, program forecasts, and resource management with his IT business management (ITBM) team.



Global Tech Executive
at a insurance company with
10,001+ employees



“The feature of their service that has been most valuable is their ability to code without many errors and to configure the product to meet our business requirements.”

[Read review »](#)

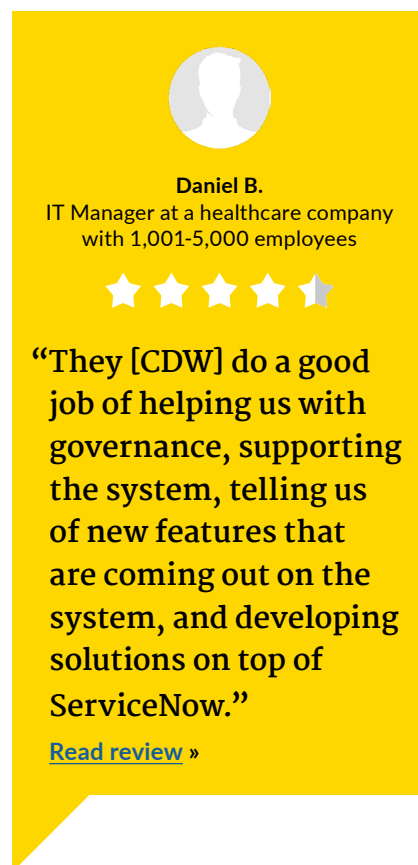
He said, “The most valuable features are their delivery of enhancers and guidance for their practices in general.” For his team, CDW applies agile principles and scrum, further helping by setting up the right priorities for the entire organization, to help, as he put it, “to understand the best practices on our requests to correctly accommodate certain enhancements and the delivery of work from our development team or their administrators.”


An IT Manager at a healthcare company with over 1,000 employees appreciated CDW’s ServiceNow expertise, which he described as “high.” He said, “They do a good job of helping us with governance, supporting the system, telling us of new features that are coming out on the system, and developing solutions on top of ServiceNow.” He found that CDW was proactive when it came to addressing problems that surfaced in the work of Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) process problem management.

For this client, CDW ServiceNow Solutions maintain monthly sprints, overseeing feature releases every month. CDW also maintains the backlog and reaches out to people proactively to get stories and solicit feedback. He added, “They have put in agile methodology for our sprints. We were probably one of the first teams at our company to do that. Now, I think everybody is doing that. They run quarterly governance meetings on the platform. They demo new features and functions, then make suggestions and guide us where to go with the platform.”

“CDW’s expertise, when it comes to ServiceNow and ServiceNow best practices, is strong,” said a Global Tech Executive at an insurance company with over 10,000 employees. He then commented, “The feature of their service that has been most valuable is [their ability to code without many errors](#) and to configure the product to meet our business requirements.”

This CDW customer offered further texture to his remarks, saying, “They seem to grasp the business concepts well. They don’t need a lot of translation and they tend to respond well when an error has been determined. They don’t debate and say, ‘It’s my way or the highway.’ They are responsive and work well with the business and our engineering leadership.”




Daniel B.
IT Manager at a healthcare company
with 1,001-5,000 employees

★★★★★

“They [CDW] do a good job of helping us with governance, supporting the system, telling us of new features that are coming out on the system, and developing solutions on top of ServiceNow.”

[Read review »](#)

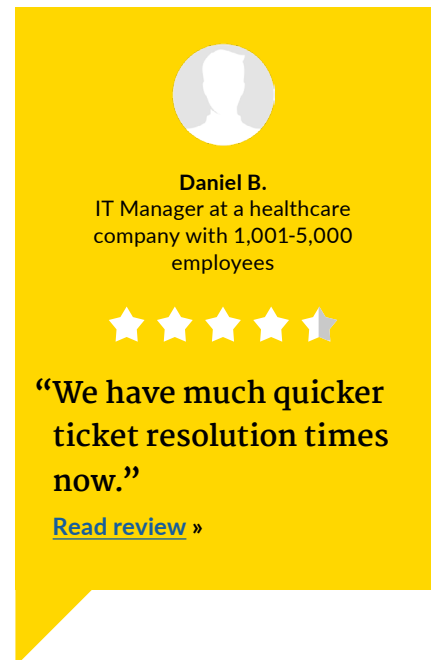
Selected CDW ServiceNow Solutions Implementation Experiences

Working with CDW ServiceNow Solutions has led to positive experiences implementing ServiceNow, as users like the healthcare Sr. Software Engineer can attest. He shared, “I would assess them as very high when it comes to [ServiceNow best practices](#). We had another prior vendor, and in comparison, I think CDW is top of the line. If I were to rate them on a scale of one to 10, I would give them a nine.”

In particular, this user explained that CDW provided a “better way going forward to enhance project implementation, including upgrades.” He elaborated, saying, “In terms of upgrade implementation, they have been very instrumental in the process and very successful. We needed to understand the processes, document them, and have them on all our sites. Thankfully, this was before COVID, where we could have an on-site interview and face-to-face conversations with the same folks. That took a while. In the end, we have about 20 modules with ServiceNow.”

“[We have much quicker ticket resolution times now](#),” said the healthcare company’s IT Manager. “The impact of CDW on our ServiceNow implementation has had a very positive impact on our business. We have happier customers who take the time to talk to each of the module owners.”

He went on to say, “Even if they have to course correct, they do it quickly. That is all I can really ask for. I have been very happy with them. They exceeded my expectations. The amount of rigor that they have brought to our processes is one area. The technical talent that they have has been good, especially their tech leads, and their account managers who really oversee the overall day-to-day of the relationship.”



A yellow speech bubble-shaped card containing a user profile. At the top is a circular placeholder for a profile picture. Below it is the name "Daniel B." and his title "IT Manager at a healthcare company with 1,001-5,000 employees". Underneath is a five-star rating with four stars filled and one outlined. The main quote is "We have much quicker ticket resolution times now." followed by a "Read review »" link.

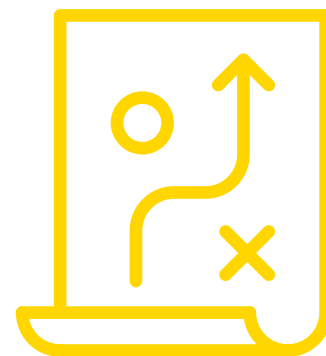
The 7 Top Questions for a Successful ServiceNow Solutions Implementation

The implementation of ServiceNow will inevitably become a change management project. Its deployment will change business processes, such as for IT support ticket generation and follow up. There will be new costs for licensing and support of the solution. It may be necessary to change staffing requirements, as well. Each IT organization will have to find its own distinct path to success. However, as customers of CDW ServiceNow Solutions have found, the best results come when the organization can answer seven basic questions about its business and technical needs from ServiceNow.

#1 – What Are We Trying to Accomplish With ServiceNow?

A successful ServiceNow implementation must begin with an assessment of the organization's goals for that implementation. The emphasis should be on the desired business outcomes, rather than recreating existing processes. The best practice is to configure ServiceNow to meet those relevant objectives. PeerSpot members spoke to this issue in their reviews of CDW ServiceNow Solutions. The insurance company Global Tech Executive said, "Before implementing anything, [CDW sat down with us](#) to learn about our current state and **desired business outcomes**. The results we achieved from our ServiceNow implementation are stronger than they would have been if CDW hadn't taken the time to understand our goals."

The healthcare Sr. Software Engineer's goal was to address his team's large backlog for requests, changes, and problems. With his team overwhelmed, they brought in CDW for ServiceNow implementation, coupled with scrum and agile methodologies.



Desired Business Outcomes

“[They worked and partnered with us](#) to figure out what we wanted to do in terms of prioritization, so we could ramp up work and have expertise in the tool,” he said. This including asking “[What was our current state?](#) What was our process? Who were our key players? How did we ingest work? How did we escalate issues? and, if we had too many issues operationally, what was the flow that we followed?” to help understand the outcome we were trying to accomplish.

He remarked, “The outcome was great. Overall, our key stakeholders were very pleased because there was no disruption in support. Support and throughput have been improving, so the implementation was successful.” His company now uses CDW ServiceNow Solutions for IT service management (ITSM), IT Business Management (ITBM) and Human Resource Service Delivery (HRSD). Figure 1 visualizes the planning process required for an effective implementation of multiple ServiceNow modules.

Fernando G.
Sr. Software Engineer at a healthcare company with 1,001-5,000 employees

★★★★★

“They worked and partnered with us to figure out what we wanted to do in terms of prioritization, so we could ramp up work and have expertise in the tool.”

[Read review »](#)

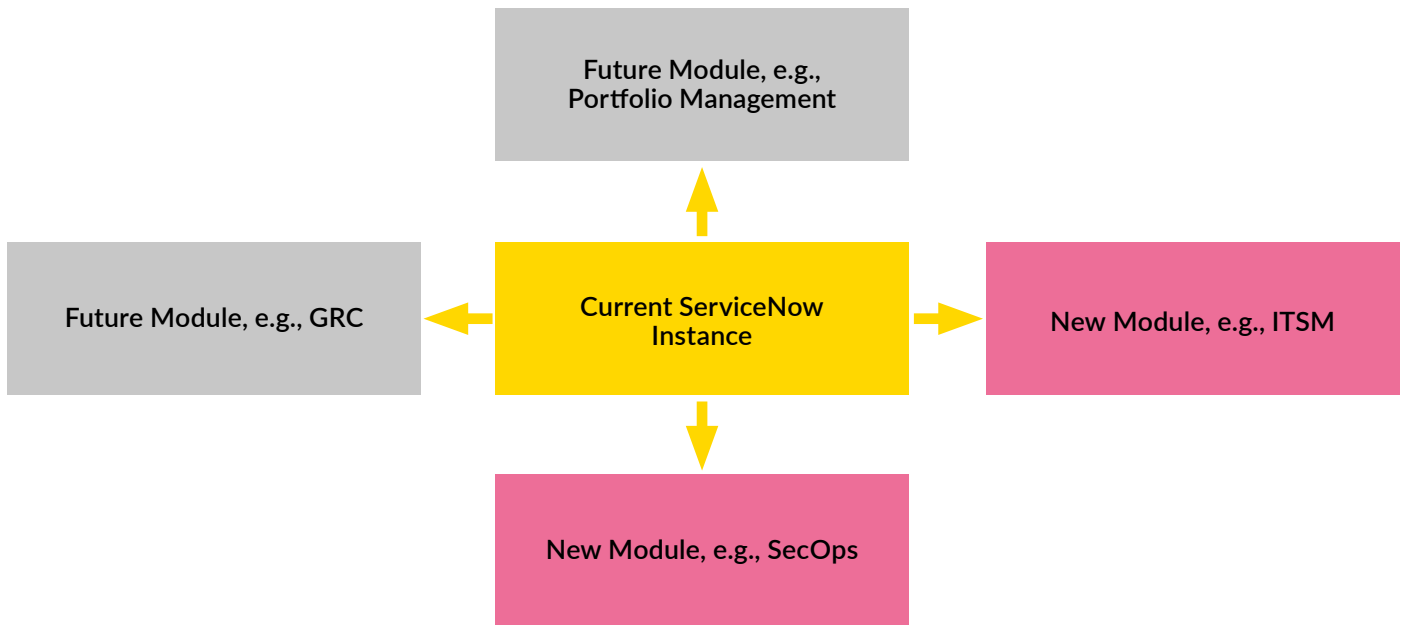
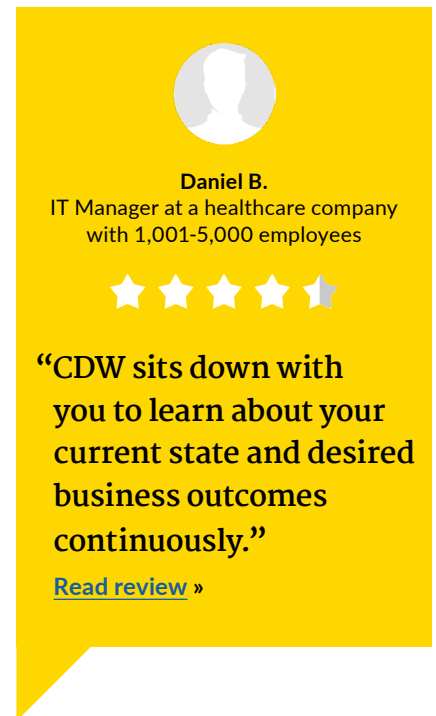


Figure 1 - The implementation process should have a firm grasp on current and future needs for ServiceNow modules.

“CDW sits down with you to [learn about your current state and desired business outcomes continuously](#),” said the healthcare company’s IT Manager. CDW implemented numerous ServiceNow modules on top of their existing ServiceNow deployment. These included the company’s Configuration Management Database (CMDB) and Project and Portfolio Management (PPM) work.

Overall, as this user noted, “They have done a good job with the requirements gathering as well as guiding us. CDW provided insights and hands-on experience of ServiceNow led us to be able to get the value more quickly, which is probably the biggest thing.”



A yellow speech bubble-shaped card containing a user profile. At the top is a circular placeholder for a profile picture. Below it is the name "Daniel B." and his title "IT Manager at a healthcare company with 1,001-5,000 employees". Underneath the title are five white stars, with the last one being a half star. Below the stars is a quote: "CDW sits down with you to learn about your current state and desired business outcomes continuously." At the bottom of the card is a link that says "Read review »".

#2 – What Is Our Scalability Plan and Overall Roadmap?

It is a good practice to think ahead and map out plans to scale ServiceNow, and consider when the organization may add to the ServiceNow deployment. Ask, “How do we scale ServiceNow and how does it fit in our overall IT strategy?” CDW ServiceNow Solutions provided the healthcare company’s IT Manager with multiple proposals in this regard. “With the CMDB, for instance, [it was a four-phase approach](#),” he said. “We have done two or three of those phases as of now. So, they kind of break it up into digestible chunks. We have the option to do the remaining phases. We haven’t decided whether we will or not, as we are wrapping up the second/third phases right now.”

His general advice was, “Keep it simple. The more vanilla, the better. Listen to the partnership. This type of partnership is not something that you can tell people, across the board, to use. Look at your business requirements, keep things simple, and don’t over-engineer your results.”

#3 – What Integrations Do We Need?

Depending on where ServiceNow fits in the overall strategy, the ServiceNow implementation may require integrations with other technologies. To have a successful result, it is worthwhile to figure out what those integration needs are before the implementation process begins. This may sound obvious, but some teams want to get ServiceNow up and running quickly, so they defer integration projects until later. Whether or not integrations are postponed, it's wise to think them through at the start due to process and licensing considerations.

Defining how ServiceNow fits within the overall IT strategy will reveal what integrations are necessary, e.g., Where does the ServiceNow platform fit? What supports these solutions today? Is it a workflow solution for customer facing workflows, employee facing workflows, and IT workflows? Is it something else, like a solution for application development, and so forth.

[“We have about 10 integrations,”](#) said the healthcare company's IT Manager. CDW maintains those integrations for his team. “They are familiar with all of those, and CDW ServiceNow Solution's expertise is high when it comes to this.”

The healthcare Sr. Software Engineer concurred, stating, “I would assess and value CDW Service Now as high in terms of their expertise when it comes to [our organization's full stack of technologies](#) and how they integrate with ServiceNow. CDW is well-versed in how things talk together. They understand how different ServiceNow stacks need to communicate with our organization.” He offered an example, which was integrating their HRSD solution with external systems. “CDW ServiceNow Solutions is very key and instrumental for our HRSD,” he said.

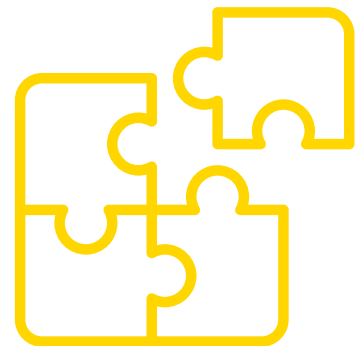


Fernando G.
Sr. Software Engineer at a
healthcare company with 1,001-
5,000 employees



“[They are] helping us to understand the best practices on our requests to correctly accommodate certain enhancements and the delivery of work from our development team or their administrators.”

[Read review »](#)



ServiceNow Integrations

#4 – How Long Will It Take to Implement ServiceNow?

What is our timeline is probably the wrong question to ask. It may be better to look at what the implementation journey looks like based on the roadmap. It is possible to stand up basic functionality in six to eight weeks. Depending on the desired outcome and roadmap, however, the timeframe can be longer.

A best practice is to be iterative, rolling out multiple smaller releases rather than a big bang approach. It's essential to determine one's timeline for ServiceNow implementation, especially with regard to stakeholders' expectations of the solution's availability. If device users expect to be able to initiate service tickets immediately, and the implementation is expected to take three months, that's a misalignment that must, at a minimum, be communicated to everyone affected.

Working with the implementation service partner, it is possible to estimate the delivery timeframe. For the healthcare company's IT Manager, [the turnaround was fast](#), with the system going online within 30 days of onboarding. The insurance company Global Tech Executive had an even faster experience. He said, "From the time we entered into an agreement to use their service, [we were able to start using it almost right away](#). They had a pretty good stable of people and I don't remember any major delays."

Setting the right expectations for rollout timelines is always important. However, thinking should shift to ongoing continuous improvement tied to a road map that aligns to the business maturity as well.



Fernando G.
Sr. Software Engineer at a
healthcare company with
1,001-5,000 employees



“I would assess and value CDW Service Now as high in terms of their expertise when it comes to our organization’s full stack of technologies and how they integrate with ServiceNow.”

[Read review »](#)

#5 – What Is the Potential Impact on Our Organization in Terms of Staffing and Work Processes?

Not every IT Department has the skillsets, or the time, to implement ServiceNow to their requirements. Difficulties can arise if the department pushes forward with a ServiceNow implementation regardless of their ability or availability to handle the project. It is worthwhile to ask, “What skills do we need to implement and then run the service? What makes sense for us to handle internally versus assigning to an outside service provider? What are the potential staffing and work process impacts on our organization? How is this going to affect how we work?” Work gets done by people who follow processes, enabled by tools. It is best to look beyond the tool itself—to its effect on processes and people. Organizational change management efforts will be necessary to support ServiceNow.

The insurance company Global Tech Executive put it this way: “We are using them to [augment our engineering capacity](#). They are involved with our ServiceNow configuration engineering.” Figure 2 captures the balance that IT departments must achieve with in-house teams and their skills, availability, and priorities versus the vendor team.

He elaborated, commenting, “It’s hard to retain and find people with the right skill sets. CDW ServiceNow Solutions provided us with capacity quickly. They are generally of high caliber and have enabled us to quickly meet our goals.” For example, CDW helped them complete a re-baselining project that involved taking two legacy ServiceNow instances and combining them into a single, vanilla platform. He said, “With CDW’s capacity, we were able to achieve our goals.”

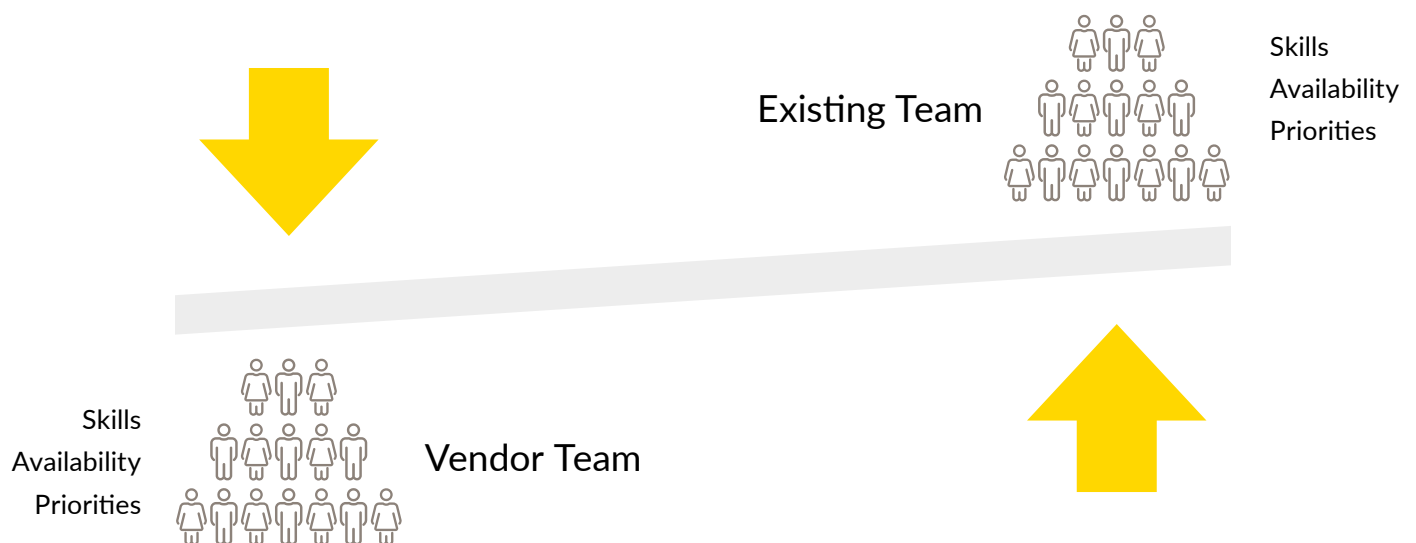


Figure 2 - Balancing the in-house team's skills, availability and priorities with those of the vendor implementation team.

He added further context to his experience, saying, “I’m not aware that CDW needed to push back or get us to think bigger as we actually have an industry-leading engineering leadership. CDW has been more of an engineering shop for us, as we have very strong technology capabilities in our organization. It has been more of a partnership versus a consulting/best practices relationship.”

Even with the most masterfully crafted plan, flexibility is essential. In the transition from the plan to implementation and then a go live scenario, be prepared to pivot as needed, whether that means leveraging the service partner a bit more than anticipated or using temporary staffing to get through a portion of the implementation journey.

#6 – What Will Be Our Ongoing Costs?

It is important to keep an eye to the future when forecasting costs. While it is necessary to maintain what you have built, future enablement of desired outcomes should also be considered. A solution as extensive and multi-faceted as ServiceNow demands attention to detail concerning support costs, staffing, implementation of additional functionality, and licensing. CDW ServiceNow Solutions helps with this process. As the healthcare company’s IT Manager advised, “Make sure you have the modules in the contracts you want supported, then put something in there for whatever enhancement hours you want.”

He elaborated, saying, “We have tickets that come in every month. We also have 250 enhancement hours a month that we spend, and we can always use more. However, that is more of a budgeting decision than we don’t want to use it more. We just might not necessarily have the budget to pay for more. They are used pretty extensively.”

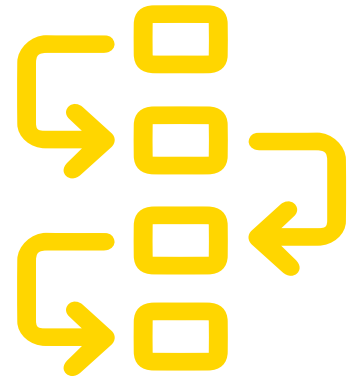
Costs are dependent upon the vision and strategy as embodied in the roadmap. Again, where does ServiceNow fit? If it’s simply keep the lights on and maintain, it’s likely users will still need to be added and bi-annual platform upgrades will need to be performed. The largest part of costs is not around maintenance and simply keeping ServiceNow running, but on additional functionality in support of driving additional outcomes. The more ServiceNow does, the more cost-effective it will be. Performance metrics should be monitored in order to quantify the value against the overhead and costs to demonstrate the ROI.



Reduction of Ongoing Costs

#7 – What Are Our Support Needs?

A ServiceNow deployment is too important to an IT organization to be left without adequate support. After all, people who provide support also need support. For this reason, a question that needs to be asked prior to implementation is, “What are our support needs?” When one thinks about what is needed in terms of support, it isn’t just support of the ServiceNow tool itself. You must also support the IT work flows, the employee workflows and customer workflows that the tool supports. Figuring out support means determining what roles will be necessary in new process flows, among other factors.



Supporting IT Workflows

CDW ServiceNow Solutions offer a variety of support plans. The insurance company Global Tech Executive described his approach, saying, “They don’t do technical support for us, [but they respond](#) if we have issues with their configuration.”

For the healthcare Sr. Software Engineer, support means having CDW [manage their support based on his team’s needs](#), focusing on specific modules within the platform. He said, “This makes it quite flexible for us. They are able to pull out specific resources, if needed, in order to deliver work to us.”

This user further liked that CDW support works in a similar time zone in the United States. He explained, “We don’t have issues like we have had with suppliers or vendors where part of their staff is overseas, e.g., India has an 11-to-11.5-hour time difference that delays work. Because of this, CDW’s delivery and throughput are much better than we had before.”

Keep in mind that in adopting ServiceNow, the way people work will change and the affected individuals will need to be guided through that journey. Organizational change training and enablement will be needed to ensure that people using the tool understand the new processes and utilize ServiceNow to maximum benefit.

Implementation Advice from Kevin Griggs, Sr. Manager, CDW ServiceNow as a Service

When we talk to new customers about ServiceNow, one of the largest challenges is establishing a team to focus on driving value out of the platform. Training a new ServiceNow Administrator is just not enough horsepower to drive value out of the platform, even if you are just engaging with ServiceNow for IT workflows. It takes a variety of roles to truly get the value out of the ServiceNow platform. Ensure you either have the capability to do it right with internal resources or find a service partner who can provide a turnkey, managed instance solution that includes all the roles and software licensing needed to not just “run,” but also “remote admin” or administer the system for you.



**Select an
Implementation
Partner Focused on
Achieving Your Goals**

Ask yourself:

- Who will ensure that you have a strategic plan for the platform that aligns to your goals?
- Who will advise you on how to get the most out of the system?
- Who will ensure that you get good requirements for workflows and enhancements?
- Who will ensure that you are aligning architecturally to ServiceNow best practices?
- Who will do my day-to-day administrative tasks?
- Who will enhance the systems capabilities for us?

Consider partner offerings where you may be able to get the benefits of ServiceNow without building out a dedicated team to fulfill all these functions. You might realize this goal by moving to a true “As-a-Service” model where your partner provides you with an end-to-end solution. For very small environments willing to be highly constrained, a “Domain Separated” solution may be a way to experiment with ServiceNow. However, given the restrictive nature of that approach, it may not deliver the business value you are looking for out of ServiceNow.

Managed Instances, where you are on your own ServiceNow instance, can provide an attractive solution for even larger organizations looking to decrease the total cost of ServiceNow ownership and improve outcomes. ServiceNow partners can provide a variety of services in support of customers wanting to get more value out of their ServiceNow implementation from total turn-key implementation and operations solutions to hybrid solutions that split duties across internal teams and partner teams. We strongly suggest you try to understand your total cost of implementation and ongoing operations as you commit to your organization to your ServiceNow journey and examine alternative approaches to meeting your company’s needs.



Fernando G.
Sr. Software Engineer at a
healthcare company with 1,001-
5,000 employees



“[They are] helping us to understand the best practices on our requests to correctly accommodate certain enhancements and the delivery of work from our development team or their administrators.”

[Read review »](#)

Conclusion

ServiceNow implementation does not have to be a stressful or resource-intensive process. PeerSpot members who use CDW ServiceNow Solutions have found that asking the right people the right questions up front lets them “know before they go” and move directly to an effective ServiceNow deployment. The seven questions highlighted in this paper enable IT organizations to understand their current state, as well as their future needs for ServiceNow scalability and integration. They clarify cost and potential savings, along with their needs for support. The questions cover issues like existing skillsets and resource bandwidth for getting a ServiceNow implementation done. As the answers come together, CDW ServiceNow Solutions customers gain the ability to achieve their technical and business objectives for ServiceNow with relative ease.

About PeerSpot

PeerSpot is the authority on enterprise technology buying intelligence. As the world's fastest growing review platform designed exclusively for enterprise technology, with over 3.5 million enterprise technology visitors, PeerSpot enables 97 of the Fortune 100 companies in making technology buying decisions. Technology vendors understand the importance of peer reviews and encourage their customers to be part of our community. PeerSpot helps vendors capture and leverage the authentic product feedback in the most comprehensive way, to help buyers when conducting research or making purchase decisions, as well as helping vendors use their voice of customer insights in other educational ways throughout their business.

www.peerspot.com

PeerSpot does not endorse or recommend any products or services. The views and opinions of reviewers quoted in this document, PeerSpot websites, and PeerSpot materials do not reflect the opinions of PeerSpot.

About CDW ServiceNow Solutions

[CDW ServiceNow Solutions](https://www.cdw.com/content/cdw/en/about/overview.html) is an Elite ServiceNow partner with more than 10 years of experience in helping organizations implement and expand ServiceNow. CDW is recognized in the 2022 Gartner Market Guide for ServiceNow Consulting and was given the Global Elite Partner of the Year Award by ServiceNow in 2021. In addition to optimizing the value of the platform and adjacent technologies, CDW creates ServiceNow solutions that focus on the “People” and “Process” side of streamlining operations and accelerating digital transformation. For information about CDW, please visit <https://www.cdw.com/content/cdw/en/about/overview.html>.