20 tips for a successful ITSM implementation — using Jira Service Management

Information technology service management (ITSM) is the practice of managing the service delivery of IT services to end users. Previously, service management was a reactive process where an issue was fixed when it happened. ITSM does the opposite — it helps you implement set processes that facilitate prompt service delivery.

ITSM has simplified how IT teams and service delivery were perceived. Now, the focus is mainly on how IT can integrate different services to align and facilitate critical business needs. The shift in thinking has resulted in a massive industry focused on improving business operations.

The role of Jira Service Management in ITSM

ITSM is critical for any organization looking to incorporate an agile approach, as it helps with coordinating and collaborating more efficiently. It also promotes customer-centricity, which is a key component in the success of any business.

To establish an effective ITSM strategy, Atlassian offers several tools, including Jira Service Management (JSM). JSM equips enterprises with a service desk for five main functions:

- Request management
- Incident management
- Problem management
- Change management
- Configuration management

Each of these aspects contributes to establishing and maintaining effective service management across teams. When teams are siloed across an organization, it’s challenging to make all resources and processes consistent across teams. This disjointedness causes service management to become a long, drawn-out process, resulting in poor service delivery.

While ITSM is an effective way to prevent this siloing, implementing a streamlined ITSM approach is challenging. The most significant problem organizations face when implementing ITSM is coordinating how incidents and bottlenecks are handled.

With JSM, that changes.

Using Jira Service Management, companies can consolidate all their information on one system, allowing teams to link issues and incidents across different departments. Additionally, because JSM encourages cross-team collaboration, it enables organizations to offer improved solutions in a shorter period. This is why JSM has become a preferred tool by ITSM experts.

20 tips for ITSM implementation using JSM

ITSM implementation is complex. So, we've detailed 20 tips to help you successfully implement ITSM in your organization.

1. Preparation is key

When introducing a new process or change, organizations need to plan ahead. Creating an implementation roadmap is key. Include details such as what workflows and communication processes need to be introduced, modified, or built upon, and determine when (and how) your organization will take steps to achieve this.

As you prepare to implement ITSM across your organization, communication is paramount. All teams should know what processes are changing, when, and how. You can use JSM, which is accessible and approachable for non-developers, to create an open line of communication across your organization.

2. Identify your needs and improve processes

It's important to build on the processes you already have in place instead of starting from scratch. When you start from scratch, you tend to spend time, money, and resources building the same foundations you already have in place.

Instead, identify your core needs and check whether these needs are being serviced well. Introduce, modify, or discard processes as required — and don't do them all at once.

To do this, you need the right tools. Tools like JSM help you focus on what needs to be done while facilitating the integration of these processes within your organization.

3. Training your workforce is crucial

Understanding the importance of ITSM and its approach is a significant challenge. Initial adoption struggles coupled with a challenging transition period can make it hard to implement an ITSM strategy.

We recommend training your workforce on the importance of ITSM and its technicalities to encourage a smoother transition. Because your workforce will experience procedural and

workflow changes, it's important to ensure teams know *why* they're making changes in addition to knowing what those changes are.

4. Always keep the end user in mind

ITSM's reach goes outside your internal team. It also impacts your users. Before designing or implementing a specific strategy or workflow for your users, think about whether or not they need it in the first place.

Understanding users' pain points and their current workflows can assist in identifying what gaps need to be filled. If they can't engage with a particular workflow, it's critical to determine what's not working and iterate based on user feedback. From a technical standpoint, it makes the workflow as lean as possible. From a business standpoint, it makes service delivery as economical as possible.

5. Schedule check-ins with your team

The ITSM integration process can take months to fully integrate. And in some cases, there can be a steep learning curve.. For this reason, we recommend scheduling regular meetings with your teams to determine whether the processes are working and regularly ask for their feedback.

A leaner way to approach this step is to use JSM to log any service queries or issues users encounter. This way, you can understand and tackle common issues and use those details to guide your team meetings.

6. Measure the right metrics

Metrics are key to understanding how effectively you're meeting your business goals. Without measuring the right metrics, it's hard to understand what's working and what isn't. We recommend establishing some core metrics and KPIs to focus on initially — like failover rate or deployment frequency — and to change them as you progress through the implementation phases.

For this purpose, you can use JSM to receive out-of-the-box reports that give you insights about your changes, incidents, services, and code. You can create custom dashboards and share them with relevant team members for feedback.

7. Maintain your own knowledge base

For team clarity and efficiency, maintain a knowledge base for your organization. This consolidated resource can act as a hub for developers to troubleshoot, and can be used to inform stakeholders about anything they need to know.

Record all changes that are made, even when updates are installed. Doing so creates a sense of relief and ensures that everybody — whether a developer or someone on a customer care team — is on the same page about changes in functionality or causes of potential performance issues. Atlassian and Eficode have a knowledge base to help you out.

8. Automate when you can

When new tickets are created, IT teams face massive backlogs. Each request can stem from multiple projects, making it hard to track and leading to mismanagement over time. To circumvent this, you can automate tickets and prioritize the ones that need your attention first.

If you identify repetitive processes that require little to no supervision, you can automate those too. JSM's queues and automation tools can help your technical and business teams prioritize what's important based on the business risk and flag them. Several other automation templates are also available to use.

9. Know when not to automate

There are processes that you should automate and processes that you shouldn't. If a process needs active supervision and a hands-on approach, it's best to avoid automation. For example, while you can automate the onboarding or offboarding processes, automating the end-to-end ticket resolution process might not be the best approach.

In addition to that, it's best to understand what works for your business and what doesn't, whether you're automating IT, human resources, or development tasks. There's no need to automate just because you can. JSM gives you complete control over what processes can be automated — so choose wisely.

10. Incident management is crucial

Incident management is a critical aspect of any service management process. It's imperative to be prepared and adopt a proactive approach to resolving potential problems. Employing an incident management strategy to ensure that tickets for each incident are raised with the appropriate personnel, and helps incidents get resolved sooner.

JSM has an integrated functionality with OpsGenie that enables you to identify incidents, escalate them, and report on their resolution.

11. Define and implement workflows

Workflows are processes which allow you to set standardized systems in place. Workflows are entirely customizable, which is why it's always best to understand what your objectives are. Based on the end goal, you can create a customized workflow for that process.

JSM has multiple features for customization and configuration that enable you to automate and streamline operations. For example, you can automate the ticketing process barring the resolution. This ensures that every single ticket gets resolved without any hassle.

12. Employ Agile methodologies

Agile methodologies allow cross-functional teams to collaborate and give feedback while the implementation process is ongoing, ast they focus on speed through continuous iteration. Additionally, Agile involves constantly testing, identifying problems, iterating, and testing again.

By following this approach, you can streamline the entire process and shorten the time it takes to integrate ITSM into your organization successfully.

JSM was built with Agile teams in mind. This is evident from its features such as deployment tracking, change requests, risk assessment, and more.

13. Foster collaboration between teams

Team collaboration is key when you're implementing ITSM. Whether you're looking to have teams work together on a feature, to update your customer support teams on upcoming releases, or you're planning your incident response, you need a central line of communication that runs across the company.

Using JSM's Knowledge Management feature, users can create links and widgets to act as a reference point for specific topics. It enables collaboration across the organization and ensures that users can refer to the resource and troubleshoot when they run into an issue.

14. Prioritize configuration management

Configuration management is critical because your entire technology stack's infrastructure is dependent on it. If you prioritize and implement a solid configuration management system, you'll be able to identify which aspect of your infrastructure is dependent on each other, assess potential risk, and identify the root causes of these issues when they arise.

JSM has its own configuration management system to monitor your IT infrastructure. For example, you can use the Insight tool to identify dependencies before making critical changes. Also, if an asset experiences a problem, users can view its history and investigate the problem.

15. Integrate proper asset management practices

As an organization grows, its technology stack grows along with it. You need to ensure your assets are accounted for, deployed, maintained, upgraded, and disposed of when required. So, we recommend either developing an open data structure for your company, or using a tool that

has one. Proper asset management allows individuals from different business units like marketing, human resources, and legal to access, track, and manage IT assets and resources.

JSM has an asset management feature that tracks all the assets on your network and deposits them in an asset inventory or configuration management database (CMDB). You can track and manage all these assets using JSM, migrate asset information or import files, and integrate with third-party tools, benefiting from identifying bottlenecks and rectifying them.

16. Incorporate updated practices and iterate as needed

ITSM practices are dynamic and frequently change, requiring you to stay on top of current practices. Fortunately, Atlassian advocates for agility, so they continually update their products to ensure they live up to current market demands.

JSM automatically sends you notifications for relevant updates and alerts you if automatic updates are available to be installed.

17. Integrate with a DevOps approach

DevOps primarily focuses on increasing an organization's capabilities of delivering services at a high velocity. A recent report by Deloitte found that 56% of CIOs are looking to implement an Agile or DevOps approach to increase IT responsiveness. Adopting a DevOps approach enables technical teams to increase updates and deployments at pace. Service desks are excellent at capturing feedback when changes are being made.

Since technical teams are already using tools like Jira Software, JSM is easily integratable and simple for developers to adopt.

18. Adopt ITIL practices

Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is an established set of practices that allows companies to align their IT services with business needs. This is one of the most common approaches to ITSM, with current guidelines (ITIL 4) designed with the fast-paced development lifecycle in mind.

ITIL practices help you create consistent and repeatable processes that streamline your workflows. The most important aspect is that it relies on constant user feedback, which encourages improvement in IT services.

JSM already offers core ITSM features like automation, reports, and a service catalog. Every service project comes with these features so you can standardize your workflows and improve your service delivery through constant iteration.

19. Set up a self-service portal

ITSM focuses on including self-service options so users can raise tickets and troubleshoot on their own when required. Self-service portals also empower them to find answers independently from an on-demand library without contacting a team member.

JSM also has a self-service portal where your employees can directly access relevant articles and guides on ITSM and JSM-related aspects. With these, you can implement a shift-left testing approach — users can handle their issues independently, and you can iterate based on the feedback.

20. Consult ITSM experts when you need it

Implementing ITSM is a complicated and time-consuming process. It requires a profound mindset shift and training of employees to ensure smooth transitioning. When you need advice regarding a specific problem, reach out to ITSM experts.

JSM offers tons of support and knowledge to make sure your ITSM implementation goes smoothly. Additionally, you can turn to Atlassian partners like Eficode for help establishing efficient ITSM practices.

Conclusion

ITSM is a crucial undertaking in today's competitive market. It helps you streamline internal and external processes, establish the roles and responsibilities of IT professionals, and prioritize the right IT resources for each project.

The actual integration process is complex since it requires consolidating multiple resources and identifying which workflow processes need to be refined. Based on that, an initial strategy is drawn up — which will need constant iteration depending on how things are working out at the ground level.

Given these challenges, Jira Service Management is an invaluable tool as it helps organizations set up their service desks and focus on offering an excellent service. The tool allows for active collaboration and gathering critical insights on any issue across the board.

If you're looking to adopt ITSM practices and offload your entire software organization, check out Eficode's Jira Service Management solution.