The service delivery excellence matrix for IT and business service delivery teams

ManageEngine
ServiceDesk Plus

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In pursuit of service delivery excellence for your IT and business: The context

With global economic headwinds looming around, businesses must navigate a maze of challenges to achieve their goals. On the one hand, they seek to fulfill multiple business priorities on the strategic front. On the other hand, economic winters are pressuring businesses to take a cautious approach. In this scenario, key business leaders like CIOs are on a quest to reshape service management to derive more value from their existing technology investments.

In this e-book, we will dive deep into two critical factors of service management: service delivery ideation plus tech adoption and implementation. These can help businesses like yours maneuver this global economic maze. With these factors, organizations can devise a clear vision and travel this path with the right technology to achieve excellence in service delivery.

Here's what lies in store for you ahead:

- Understanding the two essential factors, service delivery ideation plus tech adoption and implementation, that shape your service delivery excellence strategy
- Digging deep into the various maturity levels of IT and business service delivery in an enterprise
- Charting an apt path to ensure well-rounded growth in the quality of service delivery for your business

We'll begin by diving further into the components that constitute these two factors within the larger ITSM and business context and by discovering the relationships between them.

Service delivery ideation plus tech adoption and implementation:

The 2 key factors

When businesses aim to achieve excellent service delivery, they need to conceptualize the right approach. First, this involves service delivery ideation, which encompasses the design of ITSM practices and the appropriate KPIs to evaluate them. Additionally, service delivery ideation includes looping in the key stakeholders, like business and IT leaders, in endorsing decisions related to service delivery throughout the enterprise.

The second factor is tech adoption and implementation, which is indispensable to realizing the conceptualized service delivery model. It accounts for the implementation of your service delivery model via your ITSM solution, the technical proficiency of users across the enterprise, and the innovation readiness of your ITSM platform.

The two factors, being complementary to each other, are central for businesses in planning their service delivery roadmap (Fig. 1).

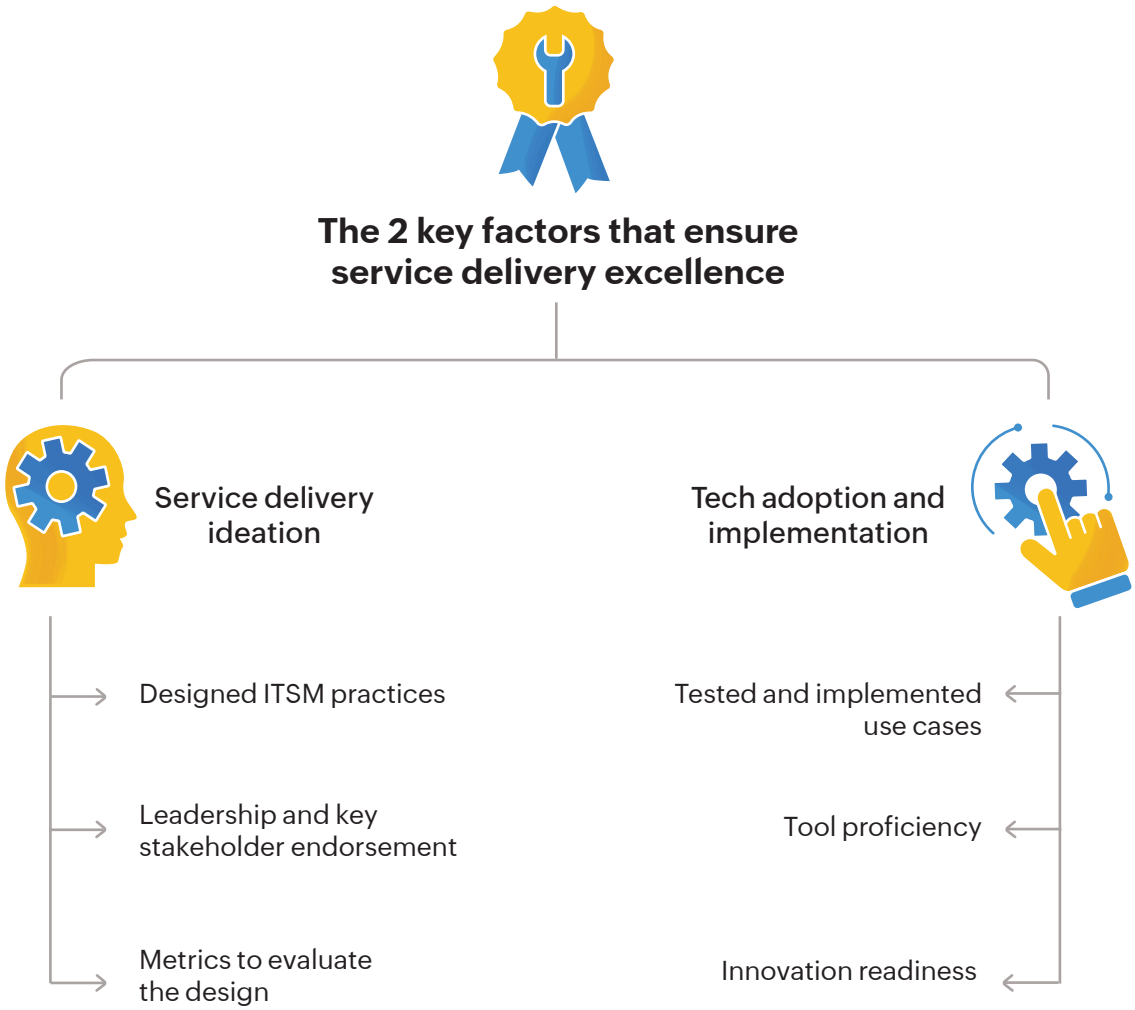


Figure 1. The two key factors of the service delivery excellence matrix.

The 3 critical parameters of service delivery ideation

The three crucial elements that determine the standard of service delivery ideation are:

1. Designed ITSM practices.
2. Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement.
3. Metrics to evaluate the design.

Furthermore, businesses can position their service delivery ideation anywhere across three levels: primitive, traditional, and unified. Blending the three tiers with the constituent parameters, Figure 2 shows how the gradations of the three critical parameters of service delivery ideation look.

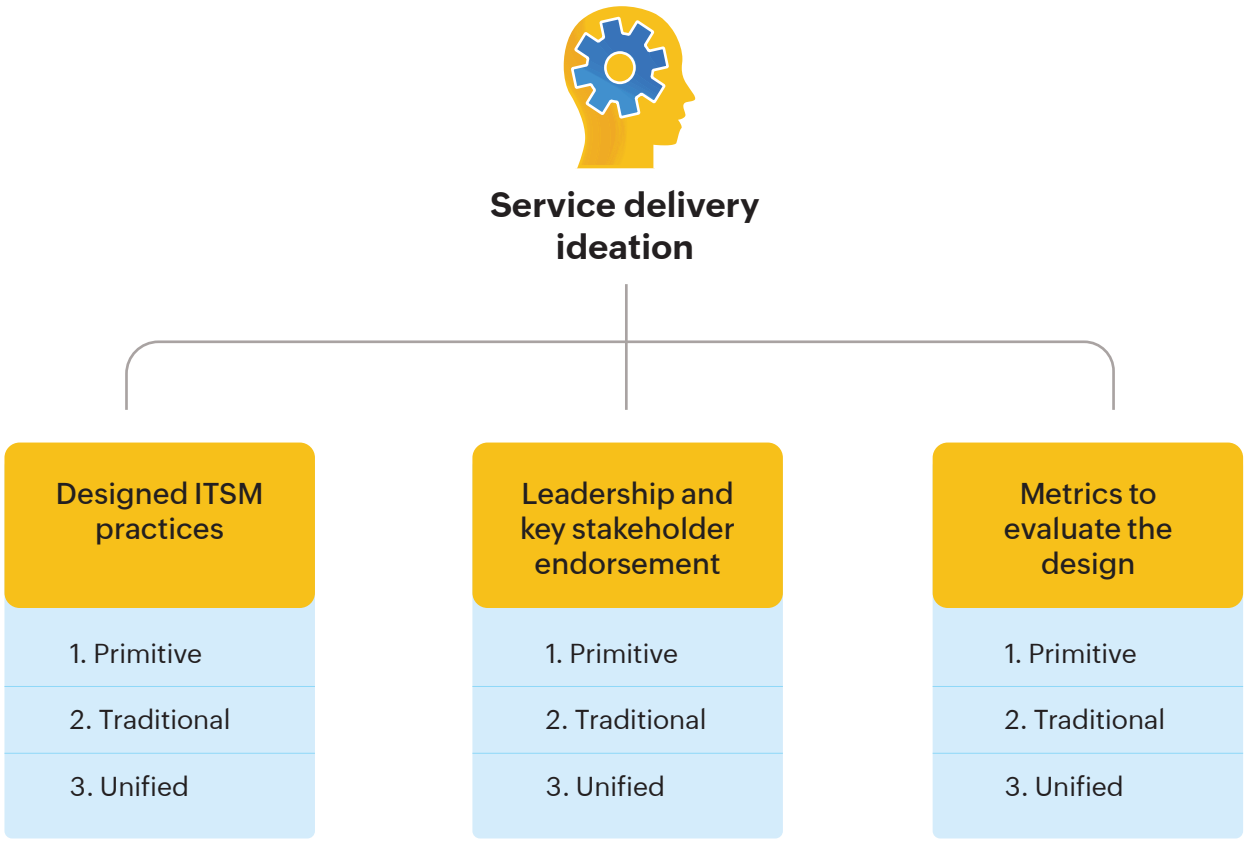


Figure 2. The components of service delivery ideation and their three levels.

01

Designed ITSM practices

Primitive level

At the primitive level, the scope of designed ITSM practices is limited to fundamental scenarios like resolving IT incidents and handling basic service requests, catering to a typical service desk.

Traditional level

Evolving to the traditional level, ITSM practices encompass core, broad areas like change enablement, IT asset management (ITAM), and configuration management.

Unified level

Advancing further to the unified level, enterprise-wide IT and business workflows streamline service delivery, thereby breaking functional silos. This facilitates cross-functional collaboration between IT and non-IT teams, like HR, facilities, legal, and finance (Fig. 3).

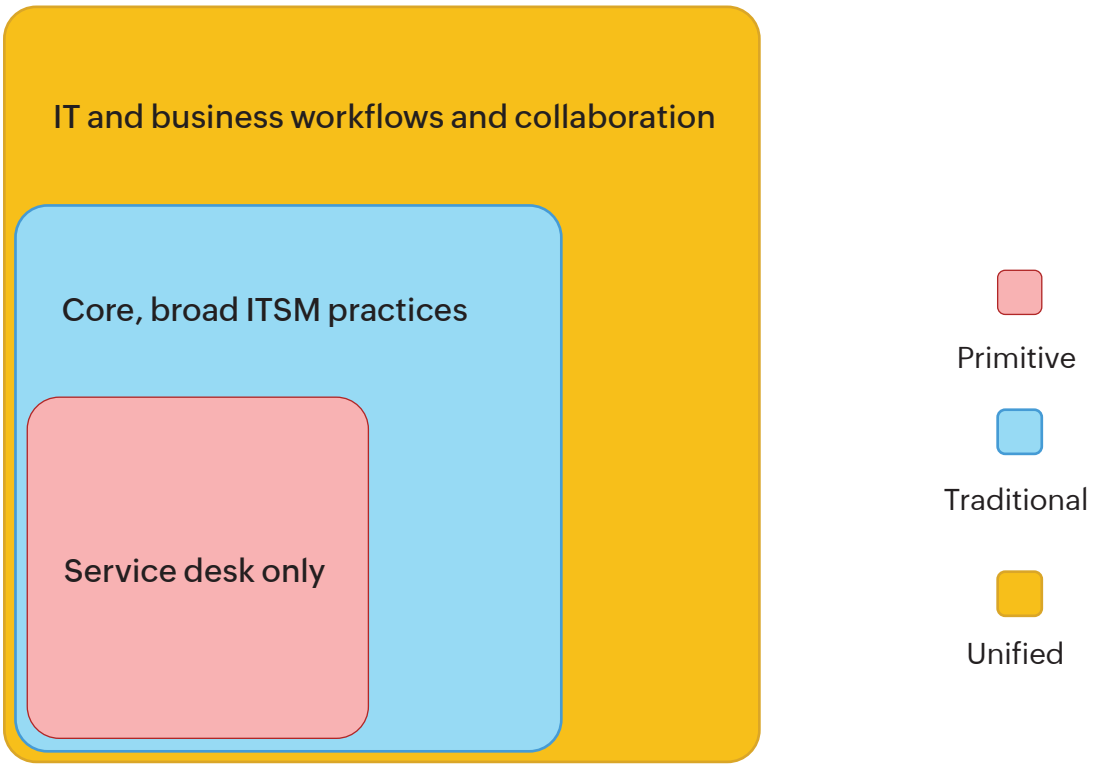


Figure 3. The levels of designed ITSM practices.

02

Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement

Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement captures the involvement of various stakeholders in the organizational decision-making process.

Primitive level

At the primitive level, the scope of designed ITSM practices is limited to fundamental scenarios like resolving IT incidents and handling basic service requests, catering to a typical service desk.

Traditional level

Because the traditional level includes the broader ITSM spectrum, leaders from other IT teams, like network monitoring, application management, infrastructure, and security, are also looped in.

Unified level

At the unified level, when business processes extend beyond IT to other departments, key business leaders, like CFOs, CHROs, CLOs, and CMOs, are also engaged during strategic decision-making (Fig. 4).

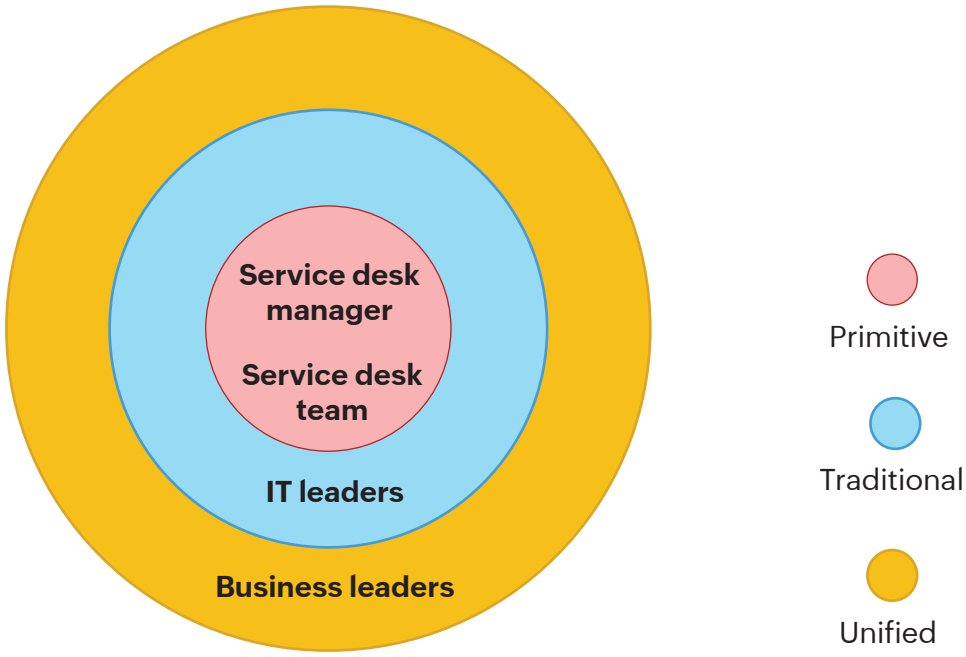


Figure 4. Endorsement from stakeholders across maturity levels.

Therefore, as an organization progresses through the maturity levels, stakeholder participation improves, making it easier to endorse decisions and enhance their adoption by various teams.

03

Metrics to evaluate the design

After designing ITSM practices, a business can gauge them by formulating the right KPIs. These KPIs can vary according to the organization's IT maturity level. By outlining the right KPIs, IT and business teams can track their performance and improve their service delivery processes to overcome their deficiencies.

Primitive level

IT teams at the primitive level track operational KPIs to assess their internal performance when resolving incidents and delivering services. For example, a typical service desk would keep tabs on the number of tickets created to resolve incidents, the number of tickets closed with a closure code, and so on.

Traditional level

Progressing to the traditional level, IT teams can gain a substantive view of their internal performance using real-time dashboards and tactical KPIs. For instance, IT teams can capture the percentage of incidents resolved on time, the percentage of incidents resolved by automations, and the percentage of tickets resolved with the aid of internal IT knowledge articles.

Furthermore, with real-time dashboards, IT teams can visualize the most up-to-date, relevant information across the broader ITSM spectrum, including incident management, service request fulfillment, change enablement, ITAM, and problem management.

Unified level

As service delivery evolves to the unified level, businesses gain a comprehensive outlook by leveraging advanced analytics and strategic KPIs. With advanced analytics, IT and business leaders can get in-depth insights to devise strategic action plans for IT and beyond, including HR, facilities, and finance. Furthermore, when teams use AI-powered analytics, they can sift through large volumes of data to discover actionable insights based on historic patterns and forecast future requirements across the enterprise.

Because operational and tactical KPIs are internally focused, they measure the internal productivity of IT teams. With the help of strategic KPIs, IT teams can factor in the larger business context to align their goals with enterprise objectives, thereby measuring their strategic contribution. Additionally, other enterprise teams, like HR, facilities, and finance, can assimilate this framework to fulfill their strategic roles.

To illustrate this, IT teams can observe the percentage of incidents resolved using AI-suggested solution articles and self-healing capabilities. Also, other enterprise teams, like finance, can monitor metrics relevant to critical incidents, like the percentage of corporate credit card failures resolved on time. To top it off, IT and business teams can discern the percentage of fulfilled enterprise experience-level agreements (XLAs) to deliver pleasant user experiences (Fig. 5).

Metrics to evaluate the design		
Primitive: Operational metrics	**Traditional:** Real-time dashboards and tactical KPIs	**Unified:** Advanced analytics and strategic KPIs
No. of tickets created to resolve incidents	Percentage of incidents resolved with automations	Percentage of incidents resolved using AI
No. of tickets closed with a closure code	Percentage of incidents resolved with the help of internal knowledge articles	Percentage of the target XLAs achieved across the enterprise

Figure 5. Variations in metrics across different levels.

The 3 critical parameters of tech adoption and implementation

After businesses envision their service delivery models, they seek to materialize them by adopting and implementing various ITSM solutions. The three critical parameters that indicate advancements in tech adoption and implementation are:

1. Tested and implemented use cases.
2. Tool proficiency.
3. Innovation readiness.

Following the gradation pattern for the three critical parameters of service delivery ideation, Figure 6 depicts the gradations of the three components of tech adoption and implementation.

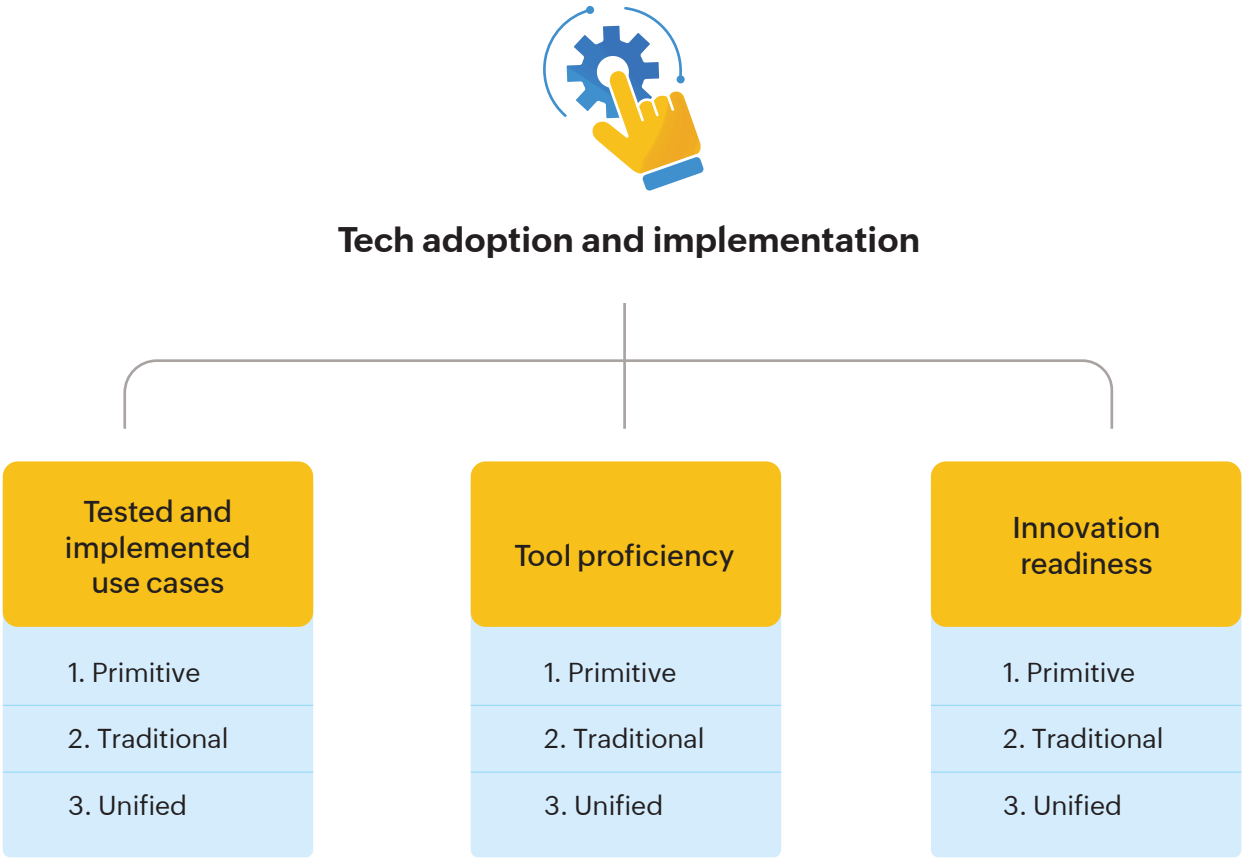


Figure 6. The components of tech adoption and implementation with their three levels.

01. Tested and implemented use cases

Businesses endeavor to translate their business processes into workflows with the help of ITSM solutions. The capabilities of the tools influence the extent to which this translation is achievable.

Primitive level

At the primitive level, service desk teams might employ simple capabilities like templates and forms. These templates might be generic, skeletal, and rigid, limiting the teams' ability to collect contextual information. Automations might not be employed in the process, making it largely manual. Furthermore, the lack of customizations might leave service desk teams with a one-size-fits-all model. For example, IT teams might use a single incident form to gather the details of various IT incidents, like website outages and application inaccessibility.

Traditional level

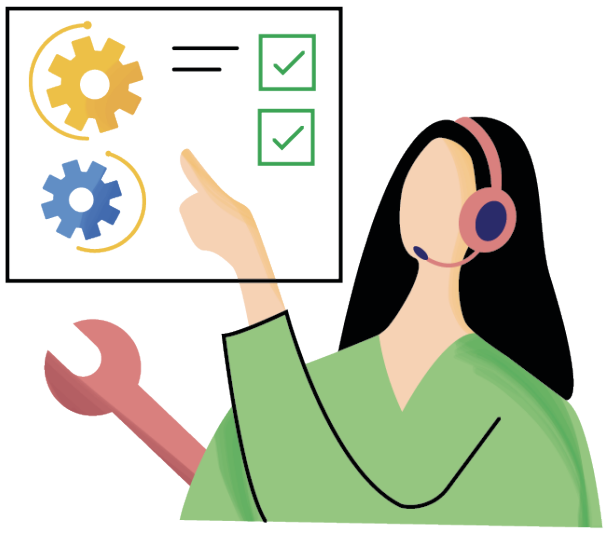
At the traditional level, the service management solution is equipped with capabilities that support various ITSM practices, like incident management, service request fulfillment, change enablement, problem management, and ITAM. In addition to templates and forms, relevant automations and customizations are assimilated into the business process workflows. For example, simple rule-based automations can categorize and prioritize incidents to ensure consistency when resolving them.

Unified level

At the unified level, the service management platform can furnish sophisticated workflows that automate even complex, cross-functional tasks beyond IT, involving other enterprise teams like HR, finance, and facilities. Businesses can infuse a multi-level approach into automating their business processes. When automating functions across different modules or across different IT and business applications (Fig. 7), they can ensure scalability and flexibility to suit their business needs.

Tested and implemented use cases	
Primitive	Limited to templates and forms
Traditional	ITSM practices with relevant automations and customizations
Unified	Automated enterprise IT and business service delivery workflows

Figure 7. Tested and implemented use cases across the three levels.



02. Tool proficiency

Businesses can transform various processes into the required workflows when users are skilled in their service management technologies. But there are variations in the level of their technical expertise.

Primitive level

At the primitive level, the service desk manager has the technical expertise to configure the tool. However, the other service desk technicians are equipped with minimal skills. This skill gap restricts the ability of the business to leverage the tool for advanced business requirements. Hence, the company is confined to prebuilt or default configurations to realize service delivery.

Traditional level

At the traditional level, the technical expertise to configure the tool spreads to the other IT teams besides the service desk. Therefore, they are armed with the right skills to configure the solution according to their business requirements. For instance, they can onboard employees based on various work modes, like remote, office, and hybrid. They can also harness the tool to resolve various IT incidents, like website outages, application crashes, and network outages, with custom configurations.

Unified level

At the unified level, tool proficiency is maximized as the technical know-how extends beyond IT teams to the adjacent non-IT teams, like HR, legal, and facilities (Fig. 8). They can configure and employ the capabilities of the platform to accommodate a wide spectrum of business requirements of varying complexities across the enterprise. For example, businesses can create virtual meeting rooms to induct remote employees and update their insurance policy preferences simultaneously.

Tool proficiency	
Primitive	Deploy and use (IT)
Traditional	Deploy, configure and manage (IT)
Unified	Deploy, configure and manage (IT and non-IT) Access, search and resolve (business users)

Figure 8. The variations in tool proficiency across the three levels.

03. Innovation readiness

Businesses can stay ahead of the curve by implementing the latest advancements and innovations, like AI and ML, in their processes and technologies. For example, with the surge of large language models (LLMs) in technology platforms across the globe, voluminous data sets are required as inputs to harness their true potential. With these technologies, businesses can reimagine service management by personalizing the service experience for users. For this, methodical data collection becomes a prerequisite to unleashing the true potential of AI for service management. In this scenario, the innovation readiness of IT teams varies widely across different maturity levels.

Primitive level

At the primitive level, because IT teams collect limited information, mechanisms driven by LLMs could deliver irrelevant data outputs, making AI-enabled service delivery elusive.

Traditional level

At the traditional level, IT teams collect more data. With this, IT teams can leverage AI to predict ticket parameters and deliver transactional services. But with siloed data, AI-enabled service delivery might lack the larger business context.

Unified level

At the unified level, businesses that consume data from multiple touchpoints and maintain clean data policies can capitalize on enterprise-grade AI-powered service management (Fig. 9). Moreover, this helps align various business functions and service experiences with business goals.

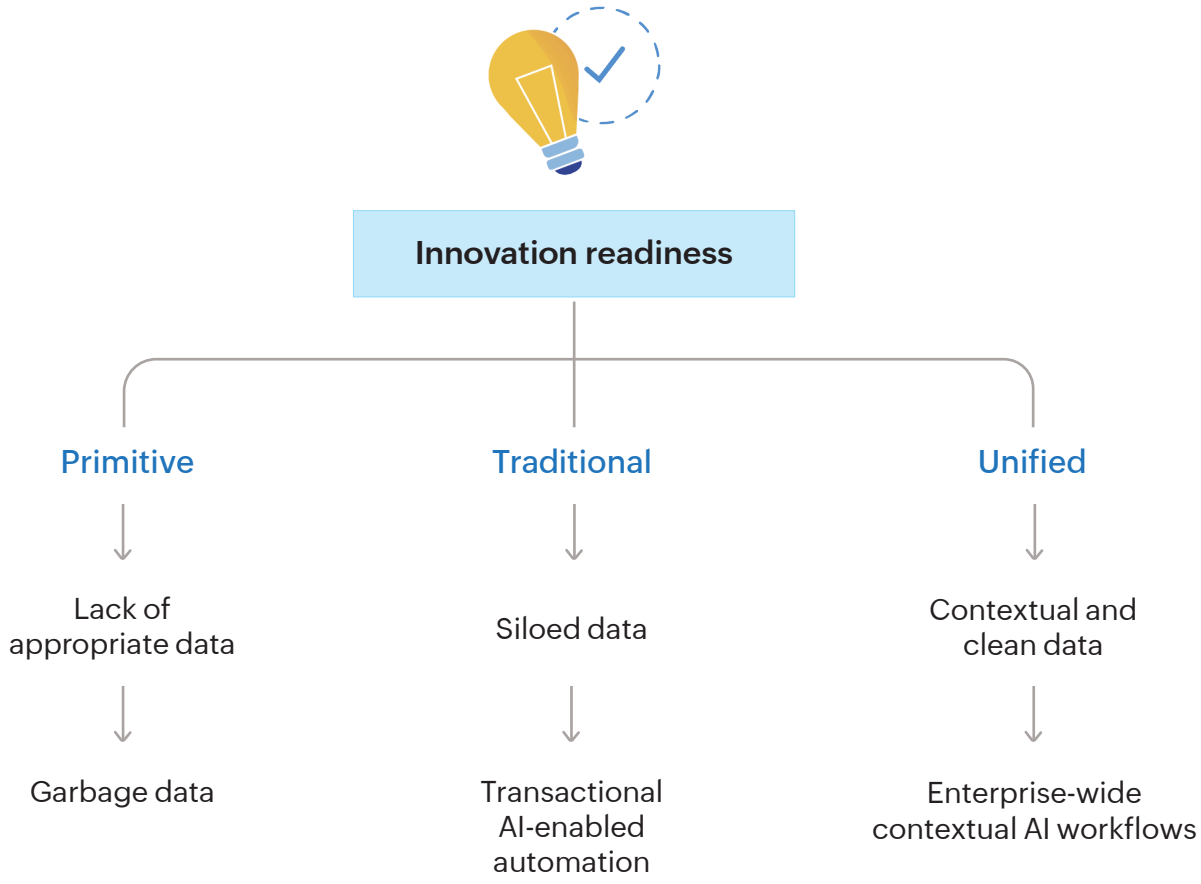


Figure 9. The innovation readiness of IT and business teams across the three levels.

Now that we've dwelled upon the two vital factors that aid service delivery excellence, it's time to construct a matrix to gauge how businesses like yours leverage the technologies at hand.

The service delivery excellence matrix for IT and business service delivery teams:

The 4 zones

By bringing the two factors, service delivery ideation plus tech adoption and implementation, together, IT and business teams can explore the terrains of service management. As a result, the matrix is divided into four sections as shown in Figure 10:

1. No-man's-land
2. Lagging in tech
3. Lagging in practice
4. The ideal zone

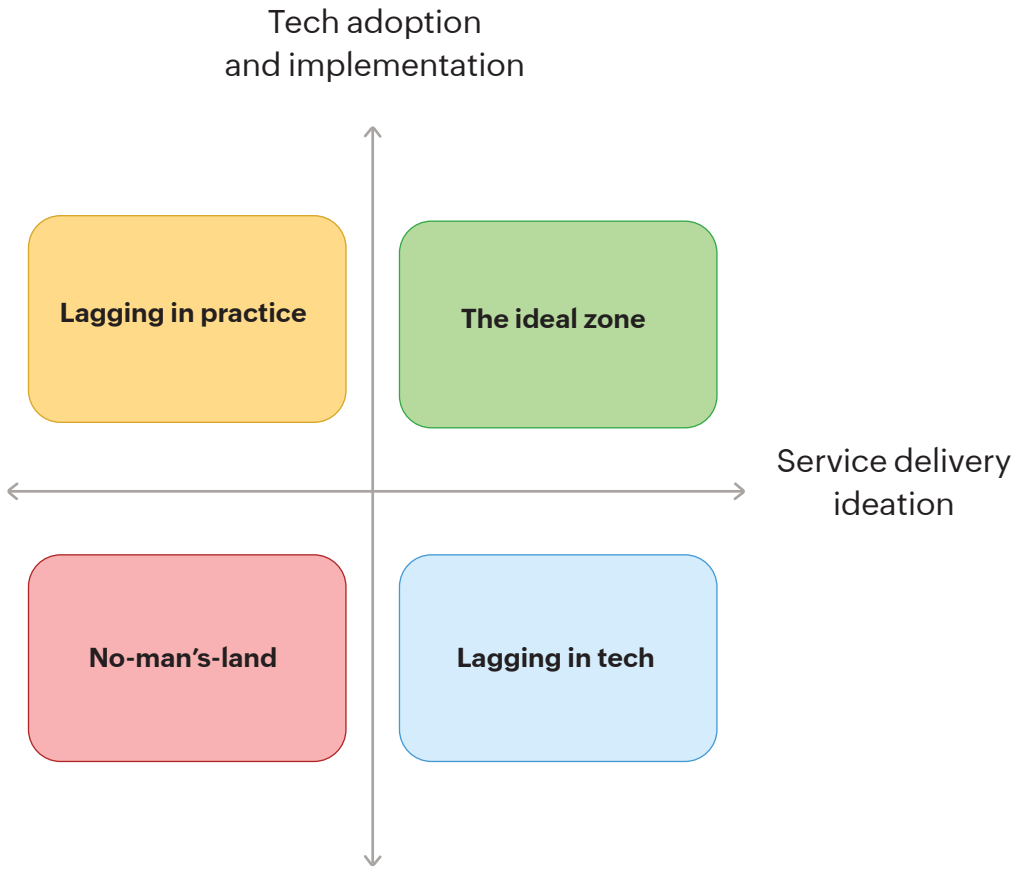
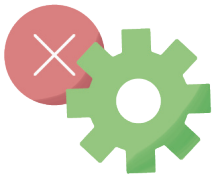
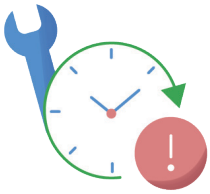


Figure 10. The four zones of the service delivery excellence matrix.



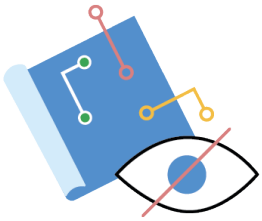
1. No-man's-land

In this zone, businesses have neither conceived of any service delivery model nor leveraged any technology in any form.



2. Lagging in tech

In this zone, businesses have envisioned their service management practices on paper. However, they are unable to put them in motion. This might be due to limited IT budgets, making it difficult to accommodate the required ITSM solution. Also, they might be constrained by the inadequate capabilities of their current ITSM solution.



3. Lagging in practice

In this zone, businesses might have the required ITSM solution in place. This solution might be adopted across different sites as mandated by their headquarters or as recommended by their previous managers. But the teams lack vision and thus the blueprint to leveraging the capabilities of their ITSM solution.

These first three zones constitute the minefields of service management. IT and business teams must steer clear of them and navigate to the ideal zone—the fertile land of service management.

4. The ideal zone

In the ideal zone, businesses have formulated a service delivery model. Also, they have employed an ITSM solution to bring this into action. But depending on their ITSM maturity, there might be variations in the extent to which they've designed and implemented this model. Despite these variations, as businesses check off both vital parameters, they can navigate this zone to scale up their service delivery model to achieve excellence.

Therefore, if your organization finds itself in the minefields of service management, it is time to devise a plan and position yourself in the ideal zone. Furthermore, your business can traverse the ideal service management zone across these three maturity levels (Fig. 11):

1. Basic
2. Intermediate
3. Advanced

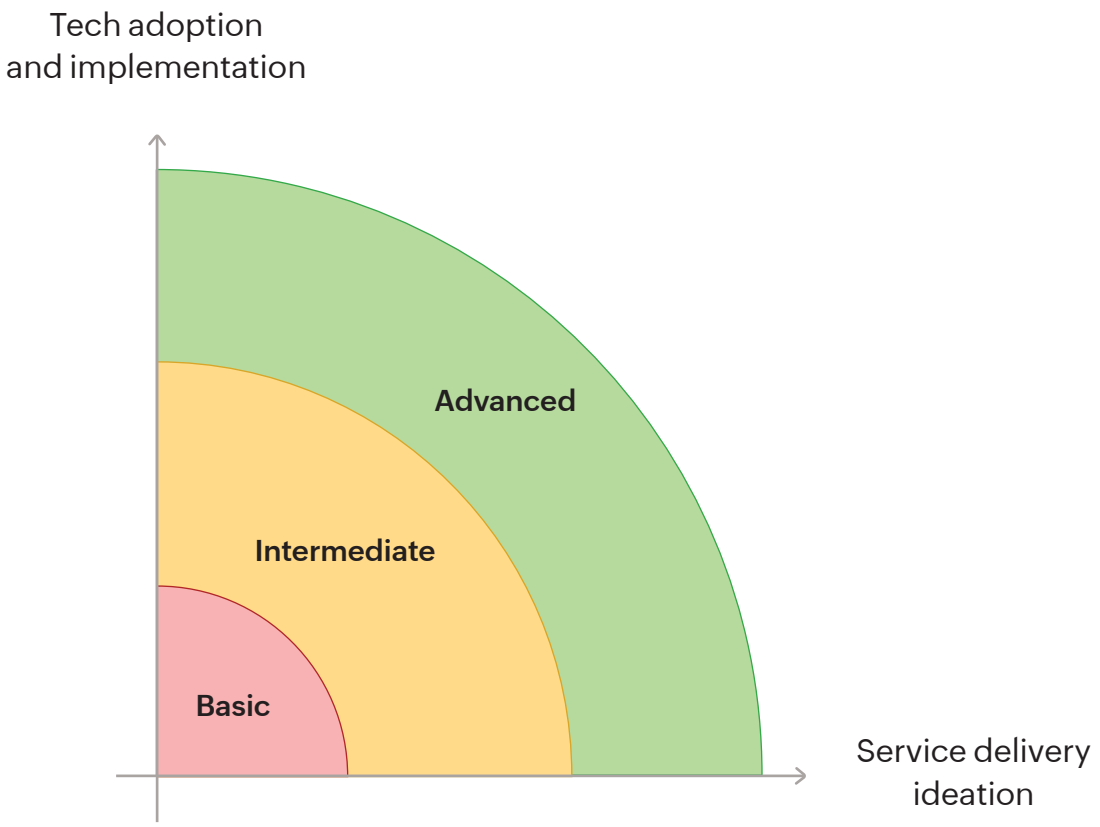


Figure 11. The three maturity levels in the ideal zone.

Let's delve deeper into the three maturity levels of the ideal service management zone and explore how organizations carry out business functions like employee onboarding across these levels.

Understanding the service delivery excellence matrix:

The employee onboarding journey across the 3 maturity levels

Organizations weave people, processes, and technologies together to facilitate business operations. Although these are the common underlying factors, organizations' modi operandi vary widely across the three maturity levels. In this chapter, we'll examine how organizations capture the process and technology nuances of employee onboarding across the three maturity levels: basic, intermediate, and advanced.

Basic maturity employee onboarding

Here's an outline of the service delivery ideation and tech adoption and implementation factors for an onboarding journey of basic maturity.

Service delivery ideation

Designed ITSM practices

At the basic level, service delivery ideation is primitive. Businesses lack a defined process for employee onboarding. Instead, they employ a generic, one-size-fits-all approach to handle different service requests. A request is submitted, categorized, assigned, and resolved manually. Thus, it is a blanket model without specific processes for various business requirements.

Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement

The involvement of stakeholders is limited to just the service desk manager and the service desk team. Key stakeholders like the IT and business leaders are not involved in the decision-making process.

Metrics to evaluate the design

The service desk team tracks operational metrics like the number of tickets created, number of tickets open, number of tickets closed, and number of tickets pending per technician.

To summarize, businesses of basic maturity have a basic onboarding practice design with no endorsement from stakeholders and with a focus on operational metrics (Fig. 12).

Service delivery ideation at basic maturity			
Designed ITSM practices	**Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement**		**Metrics to evaluate the design**
Generic request fulfillment process	Stakeholders involved	Lack of participation	Number of tickets created
	Service desk manager	Other IT leaders	Number of tickets open
	Service desk team	Business leaders	Number of tickets closed

Figure 12. Service delivery ideation at a glance for businesses of basic maturity.

Tech adoption and implementation

Tested and implemented use cases

Here is an in-depth analysis of the capabilities that are utilized and those that remain unexplored at the basic maturity level.

Capabilities leveraged

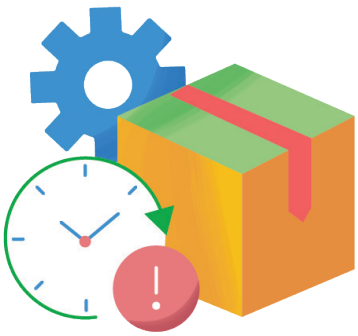
Forms

The service desk teams leverage limited capabilities of the ITSM tool because their tech adoption and implementation are primitive. For example, they might employ a single form to gather onboarding details, regardless of the different work modes that employees opt for.

Capabilities untapped

Service catalogs

In the absence of a service catalog, service desk teams lack clear visibility into the business services in their organization. To illustrate, when the ITSM tool is devoid of service categories for provisioning IT assets and access cards, the same form might be used to handle all requests.



SLAs and approvals

There might be unnecessary delays as the service desk teams are unable to track their targets and secure approvals from key stakeholders, like the hiring manager or HR manager.

ITAM association

The service desk teams might not discern the IT assets associated with employees, leading to improper IT asset allocation.

Automations

The lack of automations compounds manual efforts, making the process fallible. Service desk teams might not categorize and prioritize requests automatically, remaining oblivious to mission-critical onboarding requests. Moreover, the skills of technicians might not be considered when assigning such requests manually.

Workflows and ESM capabilities

Businesses might find it challenging to establish process governance with their ITSM tool. Due to the unavailability of workflows, onboarding might not be streamlined, leading to a chaotic experience. The tool might inhibit inter-team coordination as it lacks ESM capabilities. Furthermore, when businesses use disparate applications in isolation from their ITSM tool, process silos and data silos infiltrate their onboarding process.

Tool proficiency

At the basic maturity level, tool proficiency is minimal as the service desk team can only create and close tickets manually. Other business users, like the HR manager and the hiring manager, are unaware of the tool's existence and thus lack technical knowledge of it. Furthermore, the service desk teams are forced to raise onboarding requests on behalf of end users as the tool lacks an end-user self-service portal.

Innovation readiness

At the basic level, service desk teams employ skeletal forms, so the information collected is restricted to the fields present on the template (Fig. 13). Furthermore, their ITSM tool might lack a mechanism to ensure that the right details are collected at the right time. This might lead to erroneous data and data inadequacies when gathering employee information.

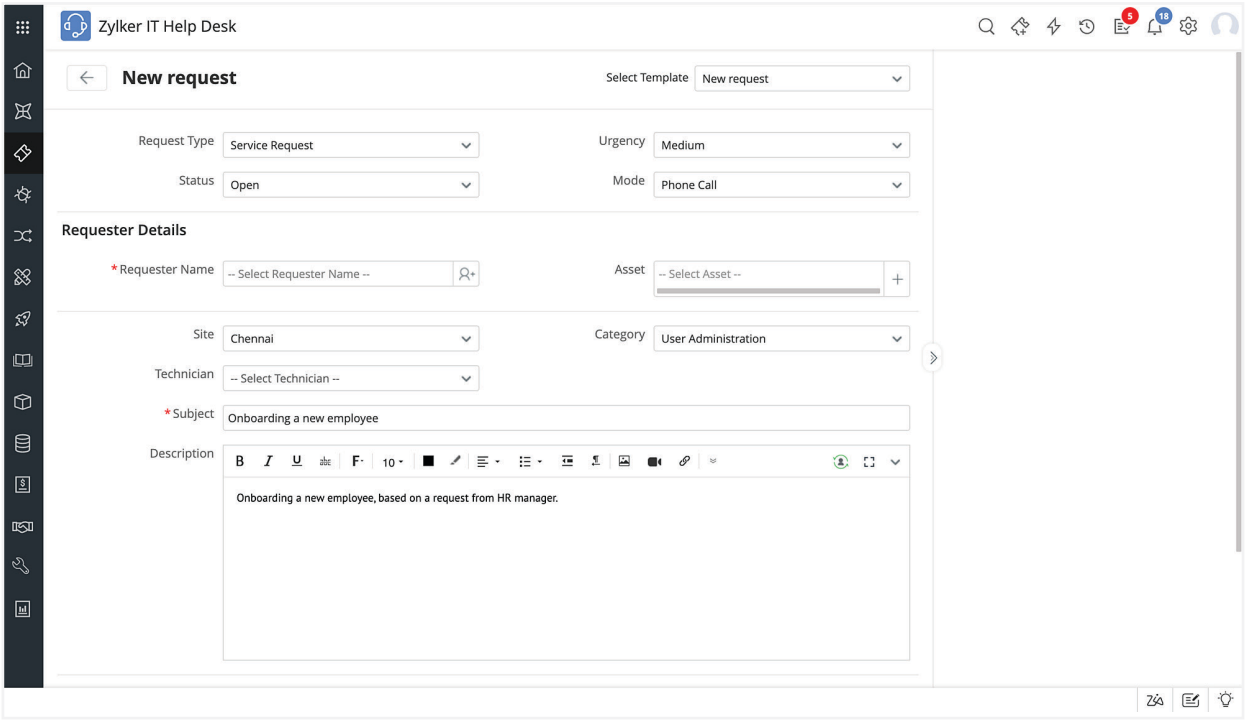


Figure 13. A new request template with limited fields.

With insufficient, incongruent data, LLM-powered AI capabilities are ineffective as they produce irrelevant outputs devoid of context. Therefore, far from being innovation-ready, service desk teams are prevented from incorporating advanced AI functionalities due to threadbare data sets. In short, tech implementation is limited to a single form that acts as a record system and requires zero end-user participation (Fig. 14).

Tech adoption and implementation at basic maturity			
Tested and implemented use cases		**Tool proficiency**	**Innovation readiness**
Capabilities leveraged	**Capabilities untapped**		
Forms	Service catalogs	Manual creation and closure of tickets by service desk teams	Limited collection of data
	SLAs		
	Approvals	Zero knowledge and visibility of the tool for end users	
	ITAM association		
	Automation		Garbage in, garbage out model
	Workflows	Absence of a self-service portal	
	ESM		
	Orchestration		

Figure 14. An overview of tech adoption and implementation for teams of basic maturity.

Businesses with nascent IT teams might employ a basic maturity onboarding model due to limited IT resources and experience on the whole. But as their operations scale with their requirements, businesses must equip their teams with better processes and solutions that enable them to achieve this.

Next, we'll analyze how the design of ITSM practices and technology adoption evolve as businesses progress to the intermediate maturity level.

Intermediate maturity employee onboarding

Here is how the employee onboarding process unfolds for businesses of intermediate maturity.

Service delivery ideation

Designed ITSM practices

Businesses of intermediate maturity have a defined process design to onboard employees. To begin, IT teams create an employee onboarding request and send it for approval to the hiring manager. After securing the necessary approval, they categorize it according to business needs. After the request is assigned to the right technician group, SLA targets are applied to onboard employees on time.

Following this, various tasks like the provisioning of assets and the creation of login credentials are delegated, and their progress is tracked. When the execution is complete, the onboarding request is closed. Therefore, instead of process ambiguity as in the basic maturity level, businesses experience process clarity. Also, they leverage simple automations to ensure prompt delivery of services by the right technician groups, minimizing the scope of errors.

Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement

An improved process design expands the participation of stakeholders in the business. Thus, in addition to the service desk manager and the team, essential stakeholders like IT leaders also provide their endorsement when making critical decisions. However, other business leaders are still not involved in the picture.

Metrics to evaluate the design

Moving up a level from operational KPIs, IT teams monitor real-time dashboards and tactical KPIs. For example, they gauge service delivery performance by tracking the number of onboarding requests closed on time, the time saved due to automations like automatic technician assignment, the total time to approve or reject onboarding requests, and more. Furthermore, they can analyze the extent of self-service adoption by tracking the number of requests created through a self-service portal. Such finer metrics help IT teams address process bottlenecks and improve the onboarding experience.

In short, businesses of intermediate maturity employ a traditional onboarding practice design with simple automations and dedicated sub-activities endorsed by IT leaders and with enough focus on tactical IT KPIs (Fig. 15).

Service delivery ideation at intermediate maturity			
Designed ITSM practices	**Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement**		**Metrics to evaluate the design**
	Stakeholders involved	Lack of participation	Tactical KPIs Real-time dashboards
Creation of onboarding requests	Service desk manager	Business leaders	Number of onboarding requests closed on time
Approvals			
Categorization			Time saved due to automations
Assignment	Service desk team		
Association of SLAs			Time taken to approve or reject onboarding requests
Execution of tasks			
Tracking their progress	IT leaders		Number of requests created from self-service portals
Closure of requests			

Figure 15. The state of service delivery ideation at the intermediate maturity level.

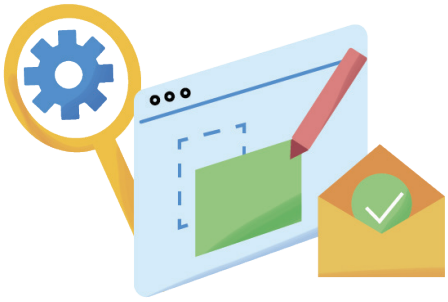
Tech adoption and implementation

Tested and implemented use cases

Here is an overview of the service management capabilities employed at the intermediate maturity level. Also, this section lists those that remain uncharted.

Capabilities leveraged

Self-service portals, service catalogs, and custom templates



Business users like hiring managers can access functional self-service portals, unlike at the basic maturity level, to create an onboarding request. On a self-service portal, they can access a service catalog showcasing various IT services, like IT asset requests and people management. Furthermore, custom templates and forms are exhibited under different service categories to fit business requirements. For example, custom templates can be designed for unique work models like hybrid, work-from-home, work-from-the-office, and work-from-anywhere (Fig. 16).

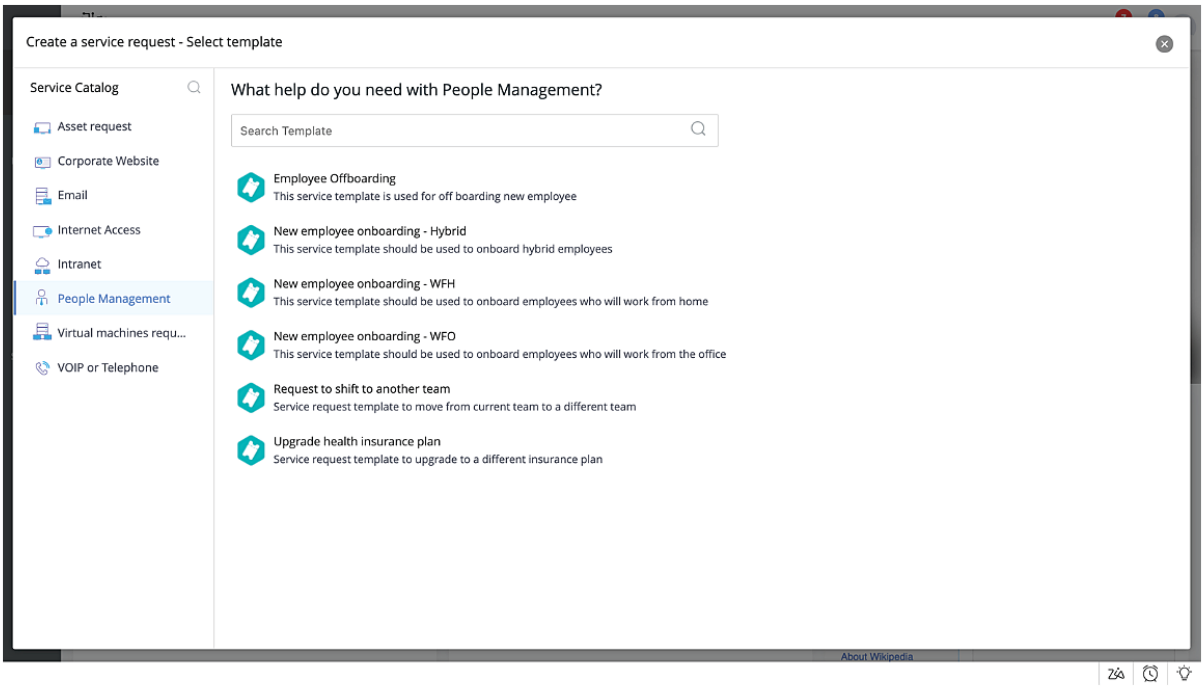


Figure 16. Custom templates based on the work mode of the employee.

Contrasted with the single, skeletal form at the basic maturity level, custom templates and forms are apt mechanisms for collecting relevant information when onboarding employees. Therefore, a hiring manager can utilize the hybrid work mode onboarding request template from the self-service portal to get the ball rolling. Besides that, the service and resource costs incurred to deliver the service are displayed on the form, giving better context to the stakeholders (Fig. 17).

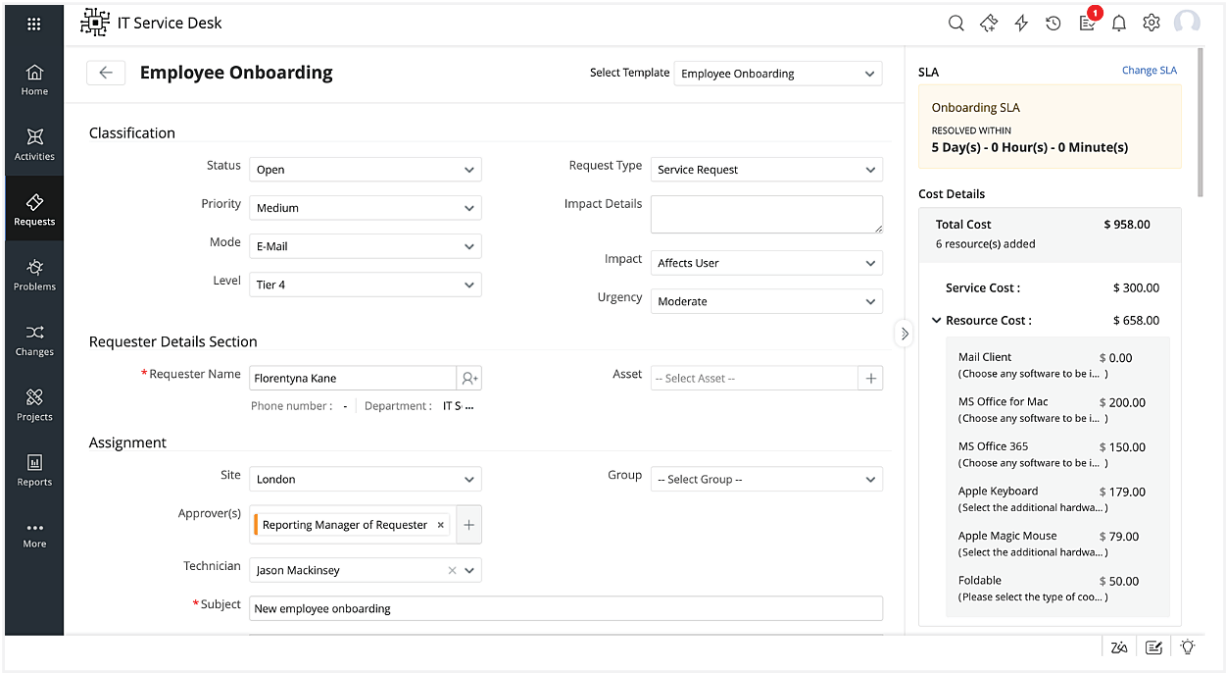


Figure 17. Templates display the service and resource costs incurred.

Approvals, SLAs, and automations

Simple automation drives the onboarding request forward, thereby saving time and effort for the IT team. The request is given the go-ahead through securing approvals from the right stakeholders. Instead of a single-stage, manual approval model, a multi-level approval process can be prebuilt into the template, thereby automating it (Fig. 18).

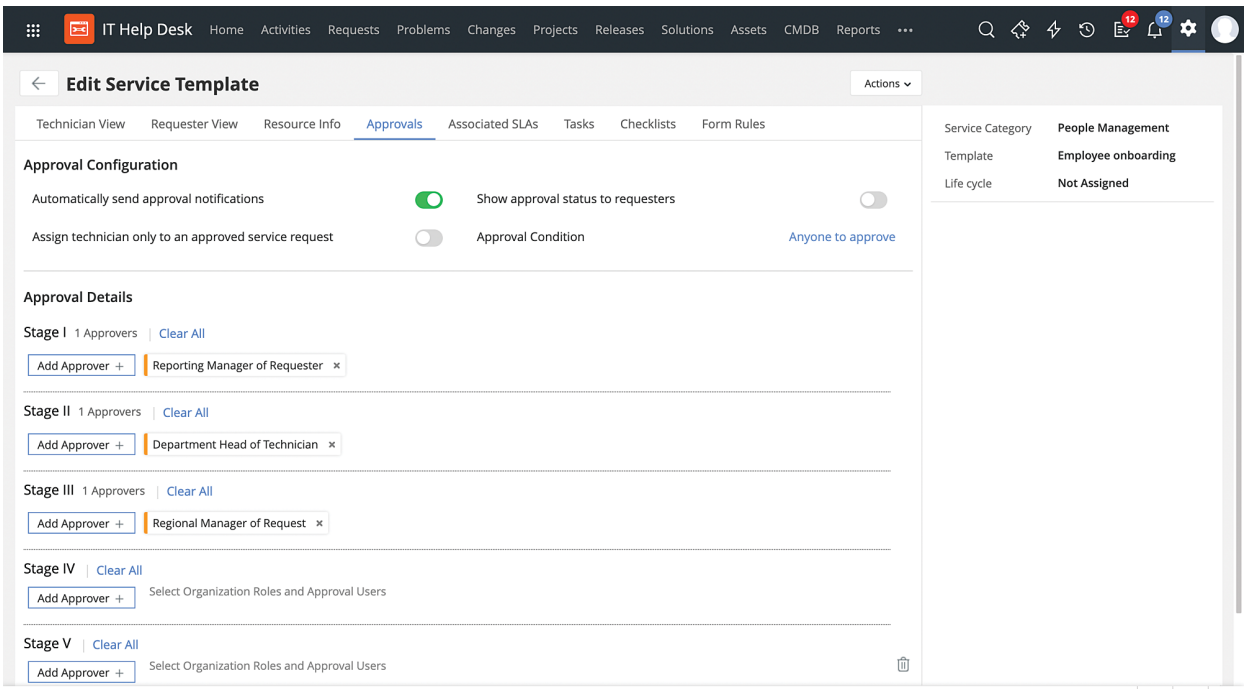


Figure 18. Automated, multi-tiered approvals.

Also, SLA targets can be set with simple automation to fast-track the onboarding process (Fig. 19). Such custom targets enable IT teams to differentiate between routine and pivotal requests. Plus, the right technician groups are looped in automatically based on their skill set or area of expertise (e.g., the hybrid work model group).

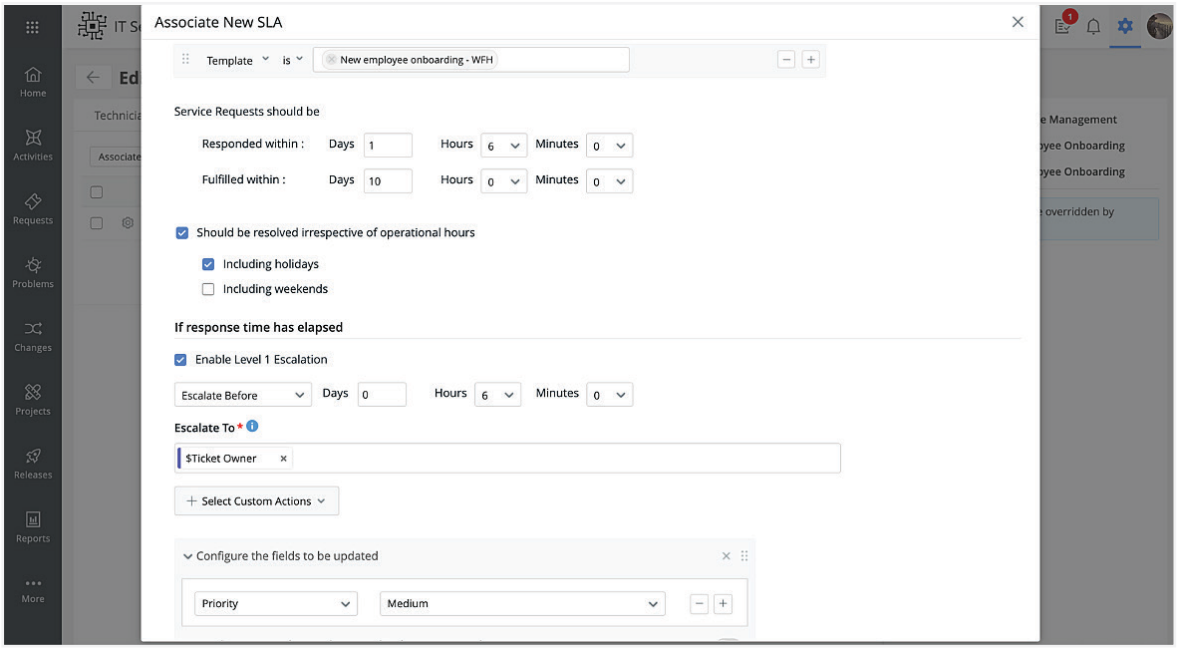


Figure 19. Time-based targets using SLAs.

Association with ITAM and CMDBs

Extending beyond the basics, broader ITSM practices like ITAM and CMDBs are also employed at the intermediate maturity level. For example, when IT assets like laptops are provisioned to employees, their associations are mapped and tracked in the service management solution. Also, organizations can temporarily loan IT assets to users until damaged assets are repaired or replaced.

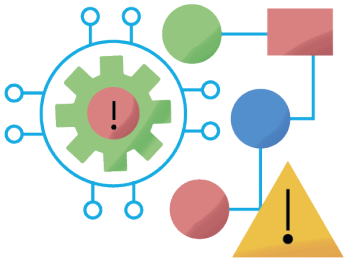
User feedback

To better the onboarding experience, end users can now share their feedback with the IT teams. But IT teams might struggle to garner extensive feedback due to the limited capabilities of their surveying tools. To illustrate, static survey forms might not gather holistic information from end users.

Capabilities untapped

Workflows

Although intermediate maturity onboarding is efficient, process inconsistencies are plausible due to a lack of workflows. Therefore, IT teams might face wrenches in the works, resulting in deviations.



ESM and orchestration

As the adjacent non-IT teams are not involved, a siloed service model without collaboration might hamper employee onboarding across the enterprise. In the absence of an ecosystem with multiple external applications, manual intervention is a constant to ensure data flows between various touchpoints. Thus, IT teams might not incorporate ESM and orchestration capabilities in their service management model.

Tool proficiency

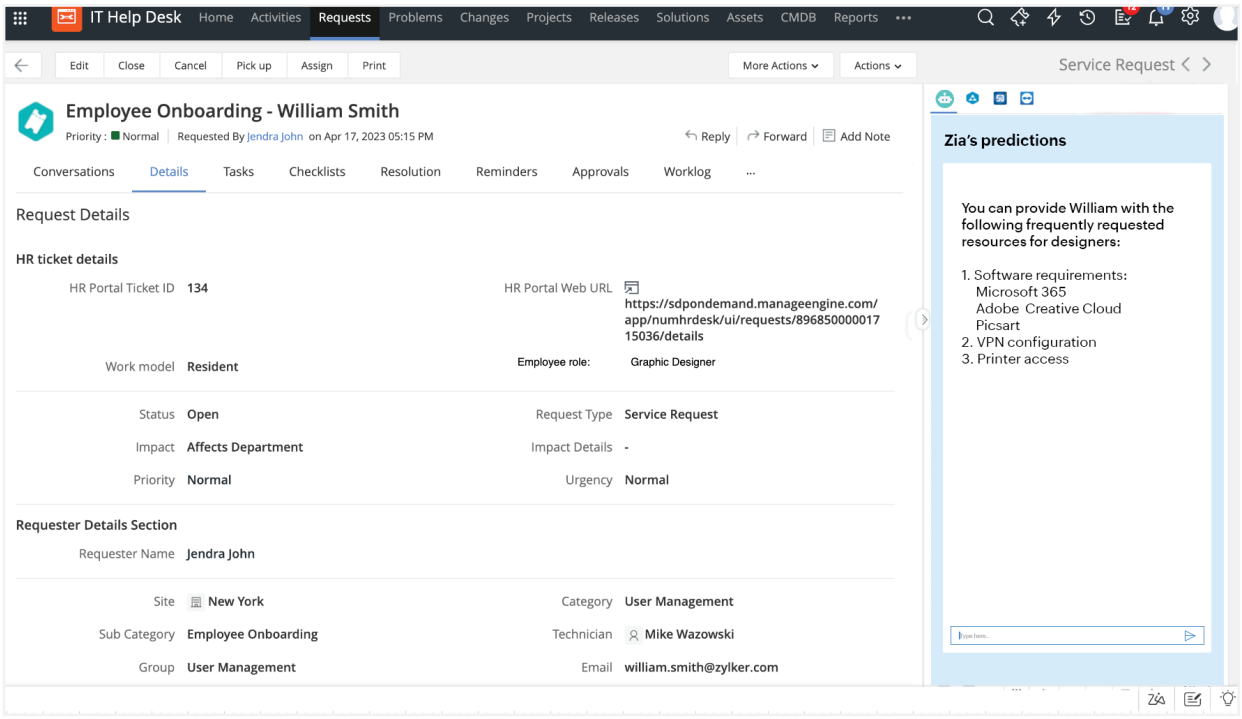
At this maturity level, tool proficiency extends beyond the basics. Now, the IT team can configure the tool to satisfy their business needs and manage it accordingly. For instance, the IT team can embed the fine print to onboard an employee who has opted to work from anywhere. In contrast with the basic maturity level, end users can now access their self-service portal to submit requests. But a portal with limited capabilities is imposed on users, impeding the adoption of self-service across the enterprise.

Without the participation of end users, IT teams alone determine the capabilities users can access via the self-service portal, resulting in unsatisfactory experiences. Though end users can access solutions, they are not updated periodically. Furthermore, the lack of an omni-channel approach, custom widgets, rudimentary AI, and more makes for an impersonal self-service experience for end users, resulting in poor adoption. In other words, a self-service portal without personalization and with limited capabilities is thrust onto end users.

Innovation readiness

Unlike those of basic maturity, IT teams of intermediate maturity collect detailed information, like the hardware and software requirements of employees, using custom templates and forms, enabling them to employ AI for transactional service desk operations. They can leverage AI capabilities to automate point actions, like creating tickets, updating their statuses, predicting simple ticket parameters like the category or priority, and suggesting resources.

For example, IT teams can harness AI to analyze past service requests raised by newly onboarded employees. By doing this, AI of intermediate maturity can predict the software and hardware requirements frequently requested by new employees. Therefore, by leveraging predictive AI, IT teams can fast-track access to the appropriate software, VPN, and printer based on an employee's role (Fig. 20).



* The AI capability shown in this image is for illustrative purposes only and is not available in the product.

Figure 20. IT teams leverage predictive AI powered by LLMs to expedite request fulfillment.

Going further, teams can also embrace LLM-enabled AI capabilities, encountering incremental improvements in AI-enabled automations. For instance, cutting through a long conversation thread, AI can summarize the entire trail. This facilitates quick understanding of the conversation, thereby enabling faster delivery of services.

Despite an extensive collection of information and structured data, the benefits of AI are confined to IT teams. This is due to siloed processes and a lack of information exchange across the enterprise. Simply put, other enterprise teams remain untouched. Therefore, data and process silos prevent a streamlined onboarding experience (Fig. 21).

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Tech adoption and implementation at intermediate maturity</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Tested and implemented use cases</th><th>Tool proficiency</th><th>Innovation readiness</th></tr>
<tr><td>Capabilities leveraged</td><td>Capabilities untapped</td><td rowspan="2">Configuration and management of the tool by service desk teams</td><td rowspan="3">Extensive, siloed data collection limited to IT</td></tr>
<tr><td>Self-service portals</td><td rowspan="3">Workflows</td></tr>
<tr><td>Service catalogs</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Service requests based on the work mode</td><td rowspan="3">ESM</td><td rowspan="3">Access to a self-service portal for end users to submit requests</td></tr>
<tr><td>SLAs</td><td rowspan="4">Predictive AI</td></tr>
<tr><td>Approvals</td></tr>
<tr><td>ITAM association</td><td rowspan="4">Orchestration</td><td rowspan="4">Self-service portal has limited capabilities and a restrictive knowledge base</td></tr>
<tr><td>Automations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Workflows</td></tr>
<tr><td>User feedback</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 21. A glance at tech adoption and implementation for teams of intermediate maturity.

When compared to those of basic maturity, businesses of intermediate maturity experience better efficiency. But given that complex work styles dot the global terrain, it is time for organizations to progress to the advanced maturity level.

Next, we'll get into the core of the advanced maturity onboarding process and explore its nuances in depth.

Advanced maturity employee onboarding

Here is the complete picture of the onboarding experience for businesses at the advanced maturity level.

Service delivery ideation

Designed ITSM practices

At the advanced maturity level, the service delivery model breaks the barriers of IT and stitches together other enterprise departments, like HR, payroll, facilities, and legal. This level is fueled by a unified employee onboarding workflow, facilitating cross-functional collaboration across the enterprise.

The onboarding request is created by the HR team, instead of the IT team. After this, the request is forwarded to the hiring manager to collect the required information and obtain the necessary approvals. For instance, the hiring manager furnishes details like the work mode, job title, date of joining, and resources required for the employee, then approves the request. Following this, cross-functional workflows are triggered, weaving together business teams to facilitate collaboration.

This approach blends autonomy with cooperation among business teams. This way, teams can carry out their functions independently and factor in the interdependencies across the enterprise, all from a central console. With this, the enterprise departments complete the delivery of their business functions, and the employee is onboarded successfully. Employees can also share their feedback on their onboarding experience, enabling business teams to plug the loopholes. Therefore, unlike at the intermediate maturity level, a synchronous enterprise service delivery model displaces a siloed mechanism.

Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement

As the onboarding workflow extends to the adjacent non-IT teams, like HR and facilities, the spectrum of stakeholder participation expands. Therefore, in addition to the service desk team and IT leaders, critical business leaders like the CFOs, CHROs, CLOs, and CMOs also engage in strategic decisions for the business. Furthermore, IT and business teams fine-tune their approach to track key metrics.

Metrics to evaluate the design

Evolving from operational and tactical metrics, organizations of advanced maturity leverage advanced analytics that presents enterprise teams with strategic KPIs. They can keep tabs on the costs saved when onboarding remote employees, the percentage of employees who have access to their required resources, and the percentage of in-office onboarding requests accommodated, to name a few.

In addition to IT teams, such metrics can help other enterprise teams stay on top of the service delivery model. For example, businesses can equip their facilities team with a dashboard exhibiting the state of their campus, providing accurate information about buildings, floors, and rooms. The facilities team can drill down to the seating capacity available across the campus to onboard employees working from the office.

Therefore, the advanced maturity level incorporates a unified onboarding workflow encompassing all departments, like HR, facilities, and payroll, and critical decisions are endorsed by business stakeholders and leaders, with a focus on strategic KPIs (Fig. 22).

Service delivery ideation at advanced maturity

Designed ITSM practices	Leadership and key stakeholder endorsement	Metrics to evaluate the design
A unified, enterprise-wide employee onboarding workflow	Stakeholders involved	Strategic KPIs Advanced analytics
Creation of requests by the HR manager	Service desk manager	Percentage of employees who have access to their required resources
Information collection and approval by the hiring manager		
Triggering and automation of work across teams like IT, HR, facilities	Service desk team	Percentage of in-office onboarding requests accommodated
Interdepartmental collaboration	IT leaders	
Completion of onboarding requests	Business leaders	Costs saved per remote employee onboarding
User feedback		

Figure 22. A bird's-eye view of service delivery ideation for businesses of advanced maturity.

Tech adoption and implementation

Tested and implemented use cases

Here is an elaborate analysis of the capabilities harnessed by teams of advanced maturity.

Capabilities leveraged

Dynamic request forms

Instead of having multiple templates for different work modes, businesses at the advanced maturity level employ a unified approach. IT and business teams leverage a dynamic onboarding request form that collects contextual information extensively, providing enterprise teams with flexibility. For example, the required resources, like hardware and software, are showcased based on the employee's role. Likewise, access to various spaces within a campus can be recorded at the template level itself.

Enterprise self-service portals

End users can request business services through an enterprise self-service portal, bringing multiple departments, like IT, HR, facilities, payroll, legal, and finance, onto a central platform (Fig. 23). Therefore, the HR manager can initiate the onboarding request from the HR desk and forward it to the hiring manager for further information and approval.

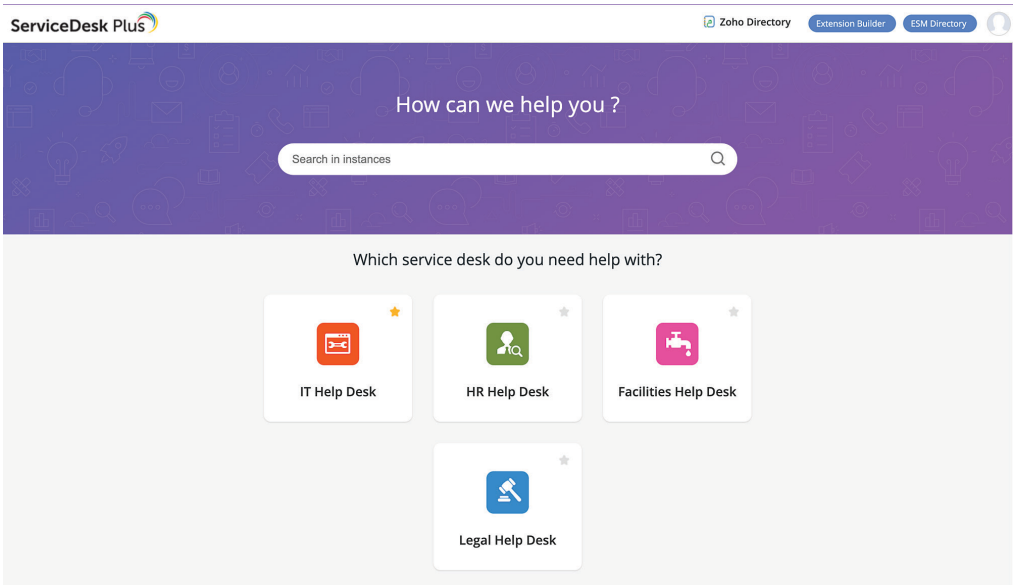


Figure 23. An enterprise self-service portal bringing multiple departments together.

Single-touch workflow automation engines

In complicated work models, different departments might leverage disparate tools across a hybrid IT infrastructure ecosystem, creating multiple disconnected touchpoints. Enterprise teams might experience process silos as various departments struggle with data islands. In this scenario, businesses at the advanced maturity level reach the zenith of automation with single-touch workflows. Unlike with simple rule-based automation, these workflows traverse multiple touchpoints, knitting different enterprise teams together. Such enterprise-wide workflows facilitate interdepartmental collaboration, process adherence, and consistent service experiences.

With workflow automation engines, businesses can execute even the most complex logic. From routine yet critical tasks like AD updates to complicated, cross-functional tasks like employee onboarding, these engines can kick-start processes with just a single touch. All it takes is approval from the hiring manager. Therefore, workflow automation engines can enable businesses to automate multiple actions across numerous external applications without any human intervention (Fig. 24).

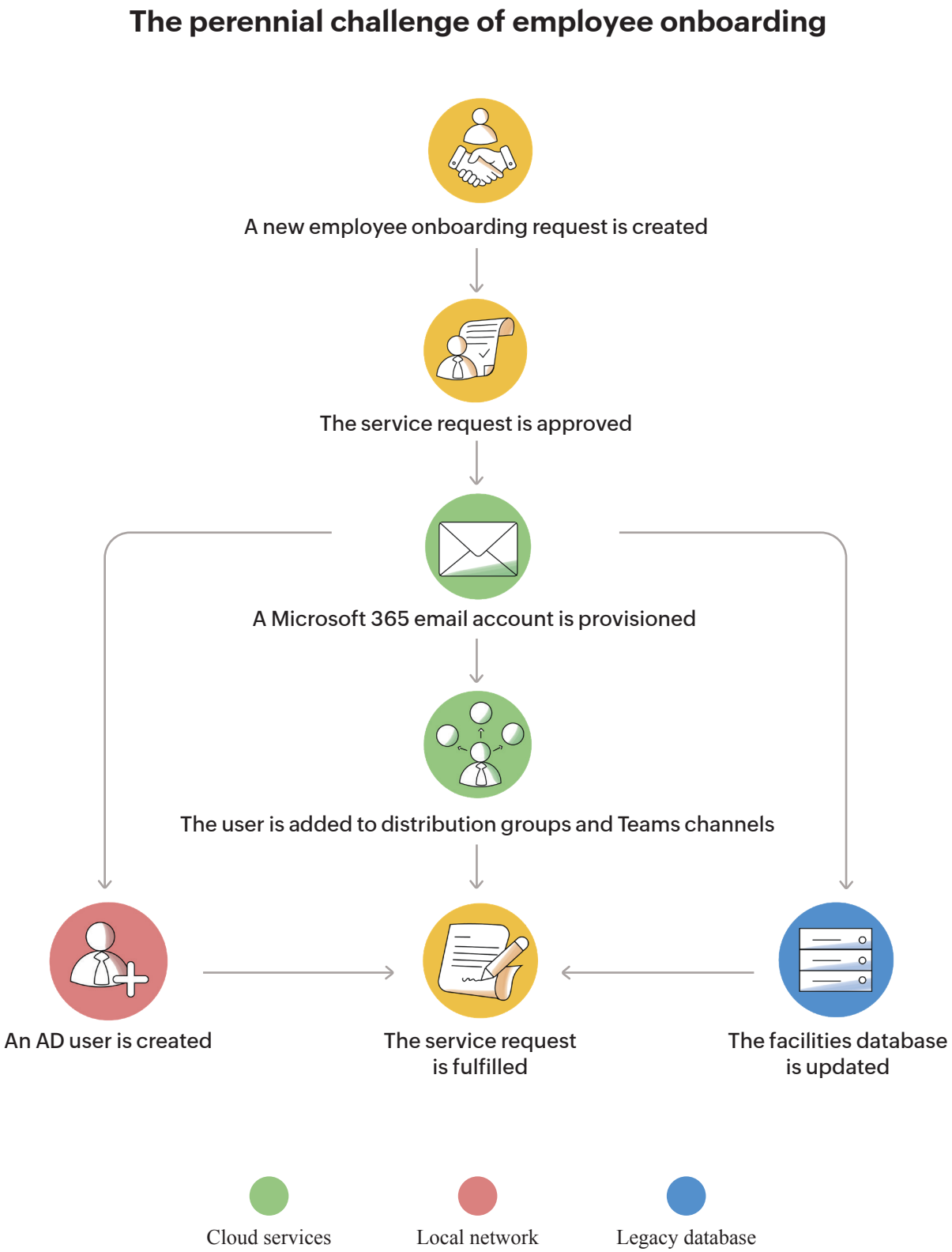


Figure 24. An employee onboarding workflow spanning across a hybrid IT infrastructure.

By delving into the IT workflows while onboarding, IT teams can update employee details in AD in the local network. A Microsoft 365 account can be created, and the employee can be included in Teams channels; thus, the workflow helps IT teams automate actions in a cloud environment. A legacy database that hosts the facilities team's domain can be updated to provision workspaces for employees working from the office. Furthermore, teams can track the progress of these tasks visually (Fig. 25). Therefore, these tasks are completely automated without any manual intervention.

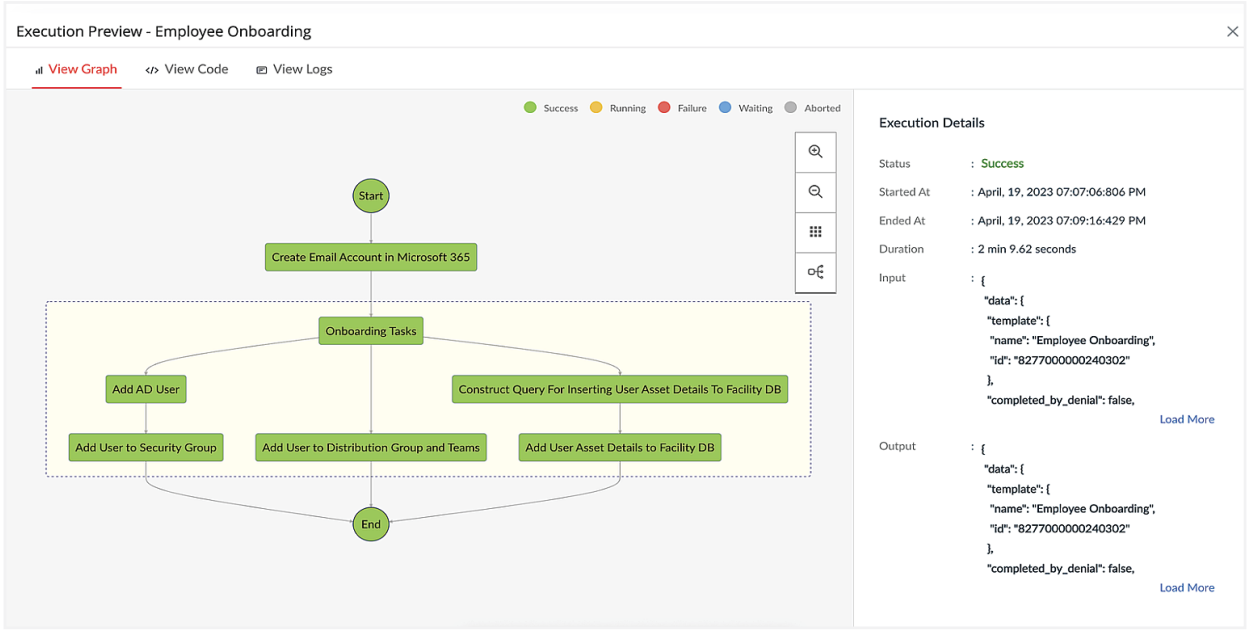


Figure 25. Crafting an employee onboarding workflow with a single touch.

Last mile customizations

Transcending prebuilt capabilities, teams of advanced maturity experience versatile service management with last mile customizations (Fig. 26). Nimble service management platforms enable the assimilation of blueprints unique to enterprise teams. Such teams harness no-code and low-code mechanisms to accomplish their requirements.

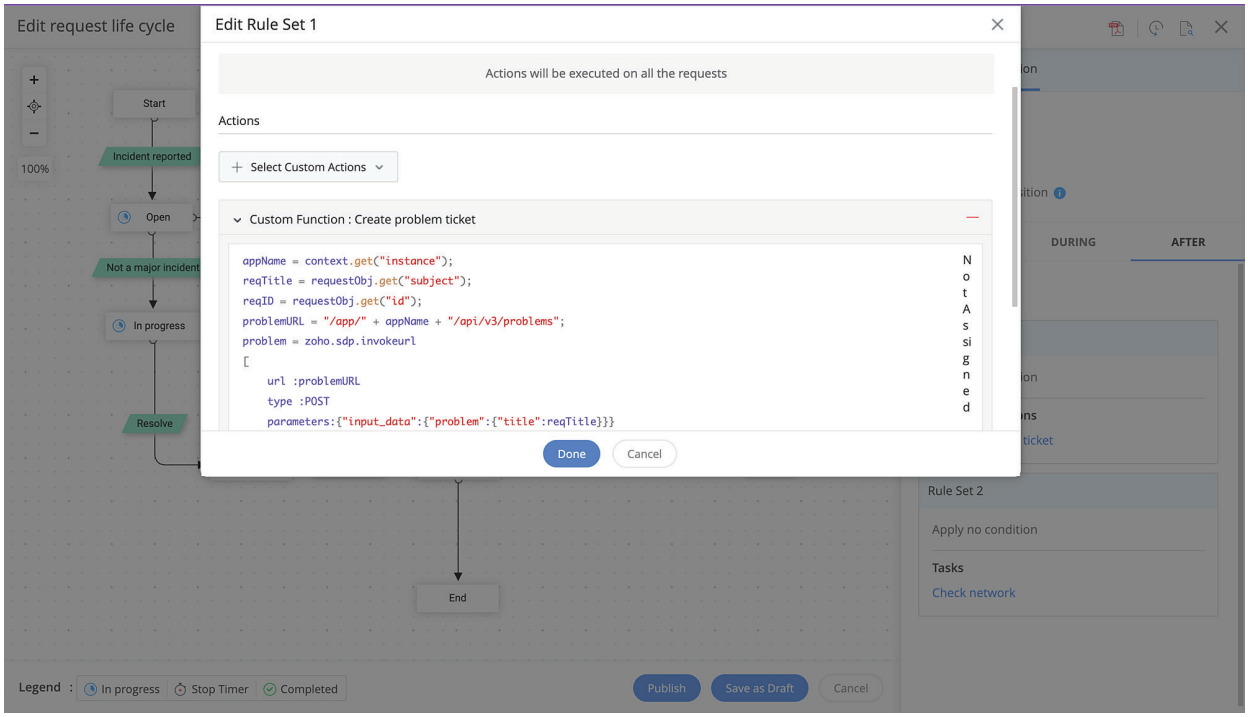


Figure 26. Last mile customizations tailored to suit business requirements.

Conversational agents

Businesses can revitalize service experiences with AI-powered conversational agents. These agents can automate repetitive service management functions, thereby empowering users to focus on mission-critical tasks.

Tool proficiency

Tool proficiency reaches its peak for teams at the advanced maturity level. They are digitally adept at crafting IT and business workflows that go beyond the boundaries of IT. They surpass manual workflows with single-touch workflow automation engines for the digital enterprise, cutting across numerous touchpoints.

Also, tech-savvy end users can now request various business services to which they are entitled. For example, they can request business cards from the HR team, report corporate credit card incidents to the finance team, and do much more from a central enterprise self-service portal.

Furthermore, end users can self-serve and self-resolve issues with intuitive, updated knowledge bases and virtual conversational agents. These conversational agents can help end users contextually with specific requirements, like requesting software and configuring printers and VPNs on endpoints. These can be achieved without any human intervention, thereby offloading a deluge of tickets from IT teams.

Compared to that of the intermediate maturity level, the advanced self-service portal is much more functional and user-friendly. A bottom-up design imbues self-service portals with user-centrality and elevates the adoption rate. With an omni-channel approach, end users can access the service desk right from where they work. Plus, contextual information is available right at their fingertips. For instance, end users can access the most popular templates to request services, keep tabs on corporate news, and do even more.

Additionally, a powerful, intuitive knowledge base arms users with the latest information to help them troubleshoot issues. Categorized into different segments, relevant information is within easy reach. Apt solutions are suggested automatically when users initiate tickets. In-depth approval mechanisms and feedback from users can make the suggested solutions more relevant, enhancing the reliability of the knowledge base. Also, AI-powered knowledge management can refine self-service.

Innovation readiness

Conversational agents

Cutting-edge AI capabilities can power conversational chatbots. For example, LLM-powered generative AI can create personalized, immersive user experiences. End users can interact with these chatbots in their own language, leading to pleasant conversations driven by natural language processing.

Transforming mundane interactions into clear, contextual conversations with AI helps end users with what they need, offering a broad spectrum of personalized self-service capabilities. For example, they can browse through solutions, calculate costs, upgrade their VM plans, interact with multiple external applications, and do even more.

Organizations can decentralize the knowledge base by generating contextual solutions based on the user's requirements. To illustrate, conversational AI can equip new employees with the relevant training courses, empowering them with the right skills. In another example, employees can explore the standard procedure to file insurance claims in their organization (Fig. 27).

Therefore, the self-service portal is utilized to the maximum. What's more, such conversational agents can analyze the sentiments of end users, enabling technicians to take the pulse of the user experience.

Expedited cross-functional processes

Businesses of advanced maturity can build a comprehensive repository of information to propel service delivery. To illustrate, when onboarding employees, IT and business teams can gather accurate, contextual, in-depth information with dynamic templates. With this information, enterprise teams can orchestrate cross-functional processes spanning multiple external applications without manual intervention.

Furthermore, such extensive, contextual, clean, organized data allows IT and non-IT teams to equip cutting-edge AI functionalities. For instance, service management platforms harness generative AI to draft personalized email responses, thereby fast-tracking service delivery. AI can also observe process gaps impeding smooth onboarding and suggest measures to ensure coherence across business teams.

Figure 27. Decentralized knowledge management and self-service with a virtual agent.

AI-powered workflow automation

In addition to creating conversational experiences, teams of advanced maturity can interweave AI capabilities with workflow automation. For example, employees working from anywhere might access critical resources using a VPN. Therefore, such employees can communicate with AI chatbots to request VPN configuration. AI-powered workflows verify the trust scores of the employees by analyzing their behavior using log data, their location, their OS version, and firewall configurations. After this, VPN configuration workflows are triggered automatically, simplifying the entire process without human intervention.

AI-powered business insights

By assimilating enterprise-wide data from multiple touchpoints, AI helps IT and business leaders make strategic decisions. To begin with, AI can observe patterns like project delays to gauge workplace productivity. Following this, it can pinpoint the cause of the dips by analyzing metrics contextually. AI can prescribe the appropriate corrective actions to deliver a frictionless work experience.

Frequent incidents like sluggish application performance are examined. In parallel, data like the response time, latency, and software version is monitored across different touchpoints. With this context, AI can drill down to the cause of declining productivity by comparing telemetry data for teams at various sites. This equips IT and business leaders with the actionable insights needed to make critical business decisions (Fig. 28).

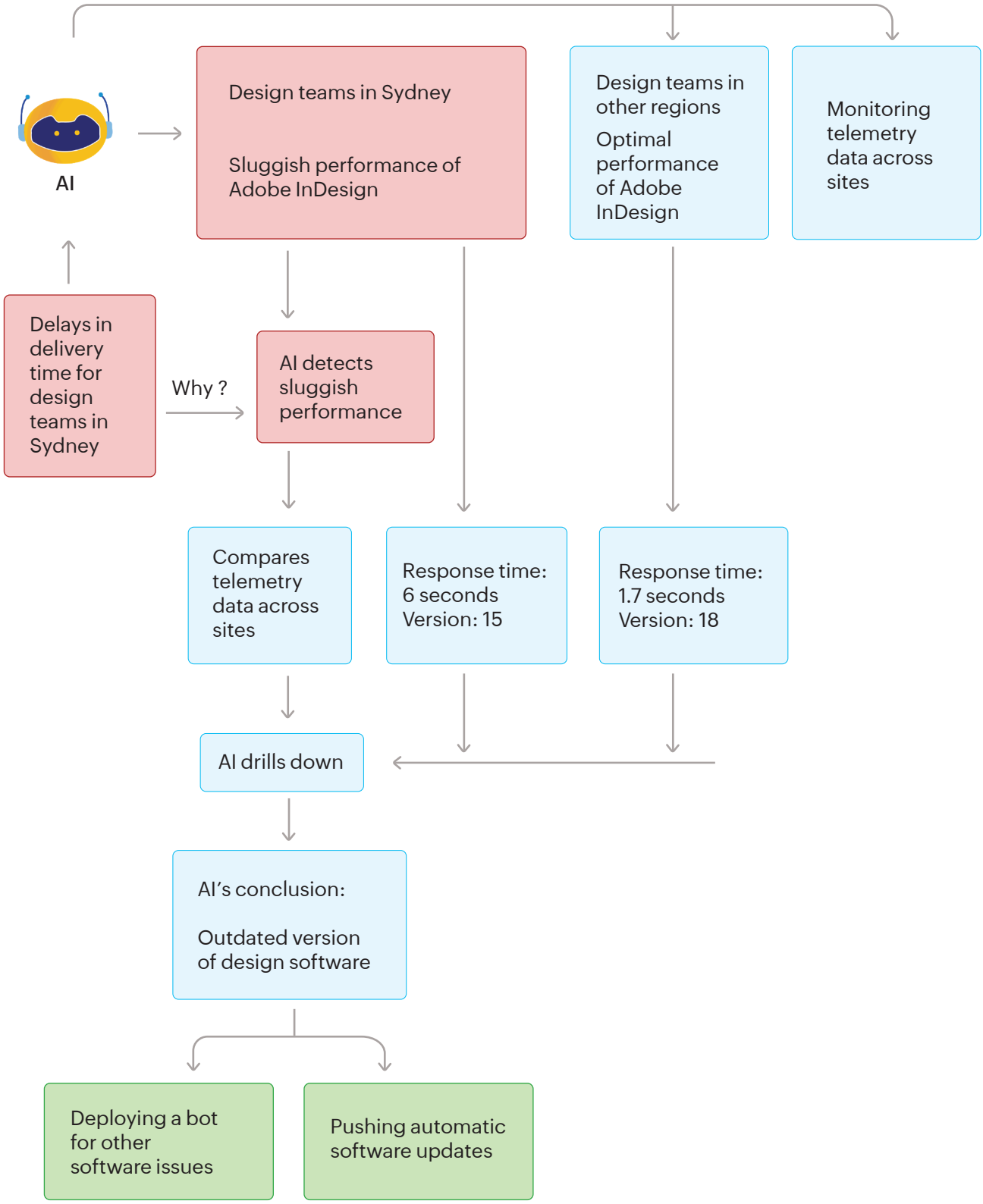


Figure 28. AI analyzes data from multiple touchpoints across the enterprise.

After determining the exact cause, AI can recommend suitable actions (like upgrading outdated software), deploy bots, generate solutions, and do even more to resolve these issues without any manual intervention. Based on the insights, IT teams can perform the most appropriate actions, delivering value to the business. Figure 29 provides a glimpse of how enterprise-grade AI can facilitate strategic decision-making for IT and business leaders.

Figure 29. AI offers business leaders strategic insights and prescribes corrective actions on a conversational interface.

Therefore, teams of advanced maturity leverage a unified enterprise self-service portal equipped with dynamic service request templates, department-agnostic workflows with orchestration capabilities, conversational chatbots, and an immersive knowledge base (Fig. 30).

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Tech adoption and implementation at advanced maturity</th></tr>
<tr><th>Tested and implemented use cases</th><th>Tool proficiency</th><th>Innovation readiness</th></tr>
<tr><td>Capabilities leveraged</td><td rowspan="3">Implementation of IT and business workflows by service desk teams</td><td rowspan="4">Contextual, organized, structured data</td></tr>
<tr><td>Dynamic service request forms</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enterprise self-service portal</td></tr>
<tr><td>Automation of enterprise-wide workflows</td><td rowspan="3">Access to all the required services and updated knowledge articles for end users</td></tr>
<tr><td>Conversational chatbots</td><td rowspan="5">Prescriptive AI</td></tr>
<tr><td>Interdepartmental collaboration</td></tr>
<tr><td>Last mile customizations</td><td rowspan="3">Fully functional self-service portal with an intuitive knowledge base and conversational agents</td></tr>
<tr><td>Orchestration capabilities</td></tr>
<tr><td>AI-powered intelligent workflows</td></tr>
</table>

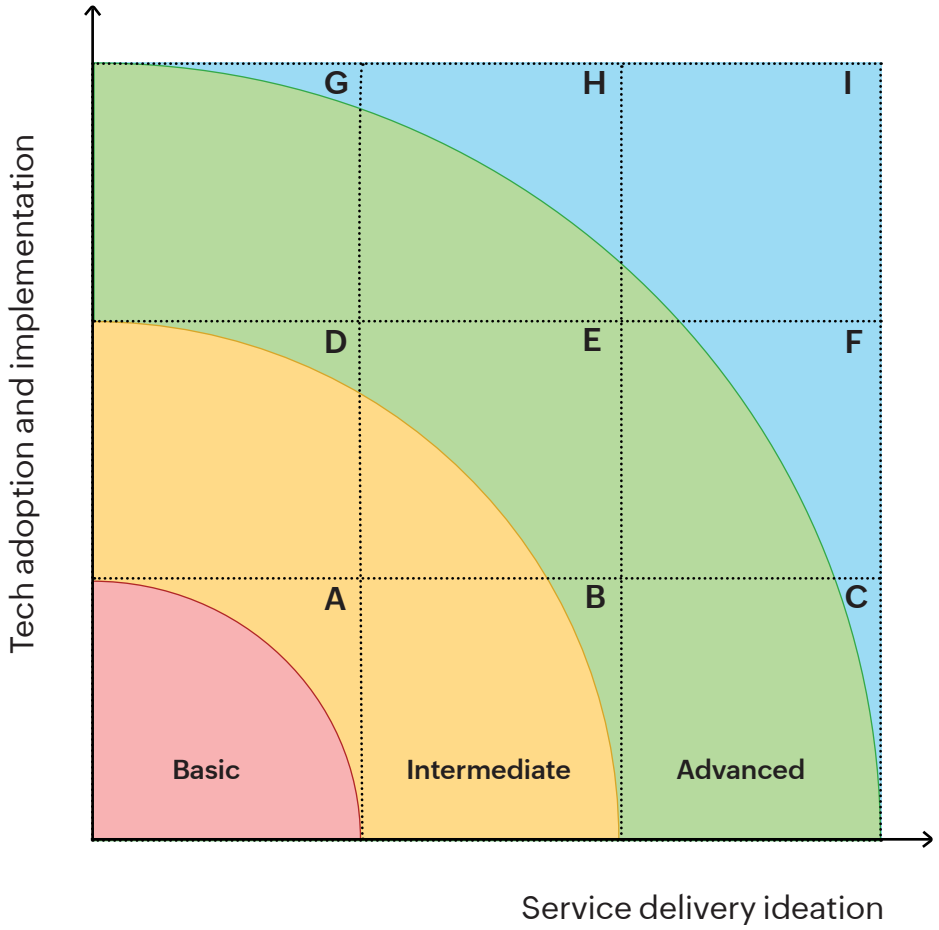
Figure 30. An overview of tech adoption and implementation for teams of advanced maturity.

Now that we have traversed the onboarding journey across different maturity levels, it's time to trace a trajectory for businesses to move up the value chain to achieve service delivery excellence.

Progressing through the ideal zone:

Moving from basic to advanced maturity

As businesses seek to craft a coherent service experience, they can perform a detailed self-assessment of their maturity level for the two key factors: service delivery ideation plus tech adoption and implementation. Following this, businesses can map the right journey to transform service delivery (Fig. 31).



The balanced zones
A and E

The transition zones
B, D,F and H

The inconsistent zones
G and C

The dream zone
I

Figure 31. Navigating the ideal zone through various maturity levels.

The balanced zones

A and E are balanced zones as the two factors complement each other.

The transition zones

B, D, F, and H are the transition zones. Though the factors might not match each other, teams can travel through these zones to reach the maximum efficiency of their ITSM tool.

The inconsistent zones

G and C are inconsistent zones where service delivery ideation and tech adoption and implementation are incongruent with each other.

Zone C

In zone C, businesses have devised elaborate ITSM practices but employ a tool with minimal capabilities to implement them. As a result, the tool does not accommodate the practices designed. Businesses can ensure synergy between the two factors by availing themselves of the help of ITSM vendors and consultants to either upgrade or transition to a suitable service management solution.

Zone G

In zone G, businesses employ the most sophisticated solutions in their environment but do not have well-defined ITSM practices. Due to this, they are inept at utilizing the capabilities extensively, leading to a mismatch. Thus, businesses should secure the services of ITSM vendors and consultants to create appropriate blueprints and leverage the capabilities of the solution according to their business needs.

The dream zone

Zone I is the dreamland of service management where both factors complement each other and are maximized. Therefore, businesses must strive to reach the dream zone I by navigating through the transition zones.

Key takeaways to transform service delivery for IT and business teams

To help businesses like yours achieve this mission of service delivery excellence, here is an outline of how to transform service delivery.

01

Create a service delivery strategy by assessing the long-term needs of the business and the end users. Also, obtain the approval of leadership to ensure a successful transition.

02

Before purchasing an ITSM platform, take it for a test drive to ensure alignment with business requirements.

03

Equip IT teams with the technical expertise needed to ensure smooth adoption across the enterprise.

04

Set right your data collection methods to tailor your service management to the latest innovations.

05

Conform your processes to industry-recommended practices to get the most from your tool.

06

Take advantage of professional services from ITSM consultants and vendors to design and implement ITSM practices according to your business needs.

07

Establish consistent workflows across departments to ensure sustainable ITSM practices throughout the organization.

Having unraveled the path that businesses like yours can tread, it's time to evaluate your current position and chart the right course to actualize service delivery excellence for your IT and business teams.

About ManageEngine

As the enterprise IT management division of Zoho Corporation, ManageEngine crafts IT solutions that cater to the diverse IT requirements of businesses of all sizes. Our wide-ranging IT solutions, spanning from network monitoring and endpoint management to unified service management, foster an integrated approach to tightly align your IT and business needs.

About ServiceDesk Plus

ServiceDesk Plus is the unified service management platform from ManageEngine, the enterprise IT management division of Zoho Corporation. Built on industry-recommended ITSM best practices, ServiceDesk Plus comes packed with contextual IT and business integrations that help service desk teams better align with their organization's business objectives. With native enterprise service management capabilities and unrestricted extensibility offered through low-code scripting, ServiceDesk Plus helps organizations design, deliver and support their business and IT services. It comes in three editions and is available in 37 different languages. To learn more about ServiceDesk Plus and its features, please visit manageengine.com/service-desk.

About the author

Nisha Ravi is an ITSM enthusiast who is keen on learning service management best practices and the latest tech advancements. As a ManageEngine ServiceDesk Plus product expert, Nisha works on developing articles and blogs that help IT service delivery teams address specific IT and IT service management challenges. A regular presenter at the ServiceDesk Plus Masterclass series, she delivers intense, hands-on product training sessions to ManageEngine customers. She also presents at the ManageEngine ITCON seminars, promoting ITSM best practices for IT practitioners across the globe.