IT Operations Management Could be the Difference Between "All Systems Go" and "We're Down"

Pressure on Federal IT systems has never been greater than over the past year, as the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a rapid shift to mass telework, increased cyber threats, and challenged Federal teams to rethink traditional processes. Many agencies had strong IT transformation strategies in place –2020 provided the impetus and opportunity to shift those efforts into overdrive.

The tremendous value – and potential peril – in government IT systems is evident when considering the impact of COVID-related demands. Interruptions and IT outages had tremendous negative impacts on employees and citizens.

In one example, antiquated unemployment insurance (UI) systems were particularly hard hit, with many paralyzed by unprecedented public demand. At least 12 states still use the decades-old COBOL programming language in their UI systems, and many didn't have enough staff trained to make updates to handle the load. An April 2020 survey of 24,607 U.S. adults by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) estimated that an additional 7.8 million to 12.2 million people could have filed for benefits had the process been easier. The systems could not handle the volume of applications, and as a result, laid-off or furloughed workers could not access unemployment benefits.

Similarly, Americans experienced a range of difficulties associated with stimulus payments. Numerous glitches — affecting filers who used tax preparers, parents of dependent children, and people with 2019 tax returns still to be processed — delayed payments and caused confusion.

Modernization, Visibility Is Imperative

These challenges and others put into sharp focus the need for modern IT systems that enable leaders to understand the environment in real-time – to know the answers to questions such as, are we going to run out of storage space on a server?

Too often, IT teams are forced to react when end-users notify them of problems. The goal is to anticipate and prevent problems, for example, spikes in demand, as well as manage novel requirements, such as stimulus payments. Ultimately the goal is to enable the best possible experiences for government employees and citizens.

ServiceNow brings together disconnected systems and processes, eliminates brittle integrations with a single data model, automates workflows to support digital transformation objectives and helps agency CIOs predict and prevent issues that lead to service outages.

From Reactive to Responsive

Improved, full-enterprise visibility for all Federal IT resources is needed to reduce risk and service interruptions. ITOM tools manage the provisioning, capacity, performance, and availability of computing, networking, and application resources, as well as the overall quality, efficiency, and experience of their delivery.

The ServiceNow ITOM AIOps capabilities' cornerstone provides full visibility into IT systems and associated data, so IT teams can effectively predict, prevent, and automate across the entire infrastructure. ServiceNow ITOM Visibility offers a complete view of the application stack, discovering physical and logical configuration items, such as servers, switches, routers, virtual machines, storage elements, databases, cloud resources, containers, and applications.

Its service-mapping capability discovers all the components that make up a business service using an automated approach and then creates an end-to-end map. ServiceNow ITOM Visibility populates the configuration management database, which serves as a single system of record through automation in near real-time. All legacy and modern infrastructure/platform technologies, whether on-premises, in public clouds or hybrid cloud environments.

The more dispersed and disparate the technologies, the greater the number of data constructs, making visibility across the systems difficult. ServiceNow is a platform of platforms and can normalize data from many systems of record; bring appropriate data into the workflow applications using an API – we aggregate data that is contextually relevant into a workflow at the right time to support decision making and deliver visibility and control.

ServiceNow ITOM helps agencies deliver by:
Interpreting data across the entirety of the IT estate, assisting teams in understanding the effects of changes and eliminating overlapping tools or consolidate data collection engines
Reducing false positives up to 99 percent with event management and machine learning so that teams can focus on the most critical issues
Identifying anomalies with less guesswork to predict 35 percent more incidents before users are affected
Auto-correlating key elements such as changes and incidents in a single platform, to identify the root cause with half the time and effort
Collaborating across teams on a single platform, reducing time and effort to mitigate issues by two-thirds
Automatically triggering actions to cut outages by as much as 90 percent

By leveraging ITOM to predict and prevent IT service delivery issues, agencies can provide a stable, flexible, and reliable IT infrastructure for citizens and employees.

For more information, visit:
https://your.servicenow.com/itomfederal/home

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