



Cut complexity, unlock value:

**The ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus
migration playbook**



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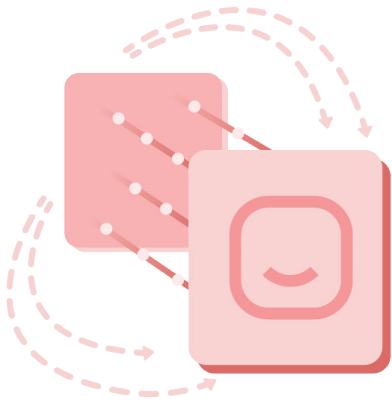
01

Executive summary: Why this playbook?

Migrating from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus is more than a platform change—it's a strategic move to a bloat-free solution with rapid time to value. For many enterprises, ServiceNow's rising complexity, spiraling costs, and rigid licensing outweigh its benefits, making ServiceDesk Plus a smarter, flexible and value-driven alternative.

This playbook provides a clear, structured framework for migration that's built on precision, continuity, and optimization. Our proven approach ensures a seamless transition while transforming your ITSM into a simpler, more agile, and future-ready operation.

Inside, you'll find the business case for moving away from ServiceNow, the advantages of ServiceDesk Plus, and the strengths of our migration methodology—from planning and execution to training and hypercare. Together, these elements turn migration from a challenge into an opportunity to cut complexity, reduce costs, and drive lasting adoption.



02

The case for migration from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus

Amid rising costs and mounting complexity, organizations are reassessing their ITSM investments. Let's explore the drivers behind the shift and why ServiceDesk Plus is emerging as the smarter, value-oriented choice.

From bloated features to right-sized value

With ServiceNow, enterprises often overpay for advanced modules that can remain unused, adding little business value. ServiceDesk Plus delivers all core ITSM and ESM capabilities in a streamlined package that's tailored to your organization's unique ITSM maturity, eliminating hidden costs.

From runaway costs to predictable budgeting

ServiceNow's à la carte pricing and add-on charges can spiral out of control as your business scales. ServiceDesk Plus offers transparent tiers and flexible licensing, enabling you to plan budgets with confidence and avoid last-minute surprises.

From administrative overheads to effortless management

ServiceNow's complexity demands steep learning curves and dedicated administrators. ServiceDesk Plus streamlines ITSM with visual workflows and low-code extensibility—simplifying management, speeding adoption, and freeing IT teams to focus on service delivery.

From delayed ROI to rapid time to value

Lengthy implementations and consultant-heavy customization make ServiceNow's ROI a distant target. With ServiceDesk Plus, organizations go live in weeks, not years, realizing tangible business benefits much faster.

From rigid deployment to flexible choice

ServiceNow's cloud-only model excludes industries that require on-premises deployments for compliance and security. ServiceDesk Plus supports both cloud and on-premises environments, letting you choose the model that best fits your needs.

From restrictive contracts to freedom of choice

ServiceNow's complicated contracts and lock-in clauses make exits costly and painful. With ServiceDesk Plus, renewals are straightforward with no hidden traps, meaning customers stay because of value, not compulsion.

From tool sprawl to unified simplicity

ServiceNow often reshuffles product bundles, forcing enterprises into multiple suites and separate contracts to extend ITSM beyond IT. ServiceDesk Plus keeps it simple: IT and enterprise service management are covered under one flexible contract, without added complexity.



03

Key strengths of our migration process

Our migration process is designed to minimize risks, maximize continuity, and deliver value. Backed by years of experience and industry best practices, we ensure every transition to ServiceDesk Plus is smooth, predictable, and built for sustained success.

Structured methodology and rich experience

With a proven framework refined through numerous enterprise migrations, we bring consistency, predictability, and assurance to every stage of the transition.

Collaboration and brainstorming with key stakeholders

Brainstorming sessions with IT leaders and technical experts from your organization ensure that the migration aligns with your business goals while addressing unique organizational needs.

Accurate data mapping and validation

Rigorous mapping and validation processes safeguard data integrity, ensuring that information is transferred seamlessly without errors or loss.

Ensuring smooth transition and service continuity

By synchronizing systems with eBonding and restricting downtime to off-peak hours, our migration process ensures smooth transition while maintaining service continuity.

Implementing industry best practices and driving process optimization

Beyond migration, we help organizations better embed industry recommended best practices into their workflows and spot opportunities to enhance existing configurations, elevating service quality.

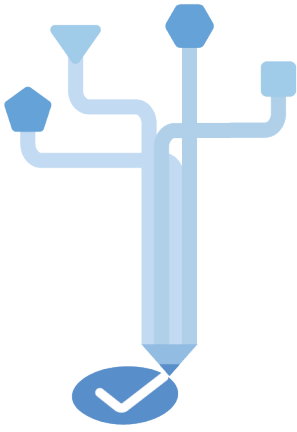
Improved adoption through training

Dedicated training and enablement sessions empower end-users and IT teams, ensuring rapid adoption and smoother post-migration operations.

Post-migration stabilization and hypercare

Our hypercare support, led by dedicated POCs, prioritizes customer needs and swiftly resolves post-migration challenges, ensuring effortless continuity moving forward.

These strengths transform migration from a challenging exercise into a growth opportunity, accelerating value realization, and building service resilience.



04

From complexity to simplicity: Our approach to migration

Successful migration starts with clarity, alignment, and structure. We simplify this complex task into a predictable, collaborative, outcome-oriented process across four phases—pre-migration, data extraction, migration execution, and post-migration. These phases are designed to minimize downtime, ensure stakeholder support, and maximize long-term value.

Migration to ServiceDesk Plus involves four phases

01

Pre-migration

Contributors: ManageEngine consultants and the customer teams

Activities: Scope of work, planning, assessment

02

Data extraction

Contributors: The customer teams

03

Migration execution

Contributors: ManageEngine consultants

04

Post-migration

Contributors: ManageEngine consultants and the customer teams

Activities: Transition to the platform and training, go live and stabilization

Figure 1. An outline of ManageEngine's approach to the migration process.

4.1 Pre-migration

The pre-migration phase lays the groundwork for success. It brings the right stakeholders together, maps the current service delivery landscape, and defines a clear roadmap for migration. This preparation reduces risks, eliminates uncertainties, and equips both teams and systems for a hassle-free transition.

4.1.1 Defining the scope of work and involving the key stakeholders

In this stage, the ServiceDesk Plus migration team defines the migration scope and bring all stakeholders into alignment on objectives, timelines, and outcomes.

We start with requirement gathering on your existing ServiceNow setup to determine what is expected to be migrated, optimized, or retired.

Validated requirements are organized into a scope covering ITSM modules, configurations, and technical dependencies. Throughout this stage, we emphasize collaboration: defining key roles, responsibilities, and expectations from various stakeholders.

Our senior consultants assess feasibility and provide best-practice recommendations, engage with process owners to understand existing ServiceNow workflows and work with IT managers to ensure alignment with strategic goals. This ensures a technically sound and business-aligned approach, minimizing potential risks.

4.1.2 Assessment

The assessment phase gives a clear lens into your existing ServiceNow environment, uncovering insights that can speed up migration at subsequent phases of migration. The assessment comprises two parts:

i. Discovery and analysis

We conduct a comprehensive analysis of your existing ServiceNow environment to gain a holistic understanding of your ITSM landscape and system architecture. Our analysis spans key modules—incident, service requests, problem, change, asset management, CMDB, knowledge management, and more—along with underlying configurations such as workflows, templates, custom tables, customizations, APIs, automations, authentication mechanisms, third-party integrations, and reporting structures.

By performing a deep dive into these configurations and dependencies, we capture our findings in detailed deliverables, providing a complete snapshot of your environment to guide further planning.

ii. Gap analysis and process optimization

With a complete view of your existing ServiceNow setup, we conduct a detailed gap analysis, factoring in ServiceDesk Plus' capabilities, rich integrations, and last-mile customizations. We recommend best-fit adaptation plans that match your existing operational effectiveness or surpass it. Ensuring your IT service operational efficiency is maximized while aligning to industry best practices.

4.1.3 Planning

Based on the assessment, we begin planning for the most suitable migration approach—whether a lift-and-shift to replicate the existing setup quickly or a transformative migration to optimize processes and align with long-term ITSM objectives.

Next, we prioritize ITSM modules based on business impact, dependencies, and operational requirements, ensuring that critical services are transitioned first without disrupting day-to-day operations.

For rollout, we assess strategies such as big bang, phased, or parallel run. In parallel migrations, we incorporate eBonding to enable bidirectional integration between ServiceNow and ServiceDesk Plus, ensuring service continuity and stability across units or departments.

We develop a comprehensive project plan with timelines, milestones, deliverables, responsibilities, and resource allocation through to go-live and hypercare. This plan also identifies risks, outlines mitigation strategies, and provides a transparent roadmap for tracking progress and conducting review meetings.

4.1.4 Rebuilding process workflows in ServiceDesk Plus

In this phase, existing templates, workflows, automations, and administrative configurations from ServiceNow are carefully rebuilt in ServiceDesk Plus. Rather than a one-to-one replication, this is treated as an opportunity to simplify complexity, incorporate industry best practices, and optimize for efficiency. By leveraging ServiceDesk Plus' intuitive, easy-to-use configurations and powerful automation capabilities, ITSM workflows are reimaged to be leaner, smarter, and strategically aligned with business objectives. This preserves operational integrity and elevates ITSM processes into a true enabler of lasting business value.

4.2 Data extraction

The data extraction phase focuses on exporting the required data from ServiceNow in the data formats we support: CSV, XLS, XLSX, and XML. This typically includes records from ITSM modules such as incidents, service requests, problems, and changes, and record details such as conversations, notes, attachments, and more. Despite the exports being handled by your IT team, our migration team is there to guide you through the process—and if complexities arise, our migration consultants step in at any stage, ensuring no critical information is lost.

Let's dive into the steps, stakeholder roles, and supported ITSM modules and data types for import into ServiceDesk Plus so you have a clear view of what gets migrated and who handles what.

An outline of the steps involved and stakeholders' responsibilities

Steps involved	Responsibilities of stakeholders
Data extraction from ServiceNow in the required format	Performed by the customer
Field mapping	Performed by the ManageEngine team and approved by the customer

Table 1. Data export: Steps and stakeholders' responsibilities

A deep dive into the data and modules that can be migrated from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus

Supported data formats for migration: • CSV • XLS • XLSX • XML	
Records migrated across modules	
Core modules	Record details
Incidents	• Base data • Work notes • Email conversations • Attachments
Service requests (RITM)	• Base data • Work notes • Email conversations • RITM tasks • Attachments
Problems	• Base data • Work notes • Email conversations • Problem tasks • Attachments
Changes	• Base data • Work notes • Email conversations • Change tasks • Attachments
Other modules	• Knowledge base • Contract requests
Note: 1. Base data contains information such as short description, caller, created on, service, service offering, issue category, and more. 2. Inline images and conversations can be migrated as attachments. However, the maximum supported attachable file size per ticket is 48MB. Files that exceed the size limit will not be migrated. 3. For importing tasks and conversations across modules, Parent ID must be provided in a XLS or CSV sheet.	

Table 2. Migrating record details across modules

By combining clear stakeholder responsibilities with expert-led support, this phase not only transfers data but also lays the foundation for accuracy, continuity, and sustained ITSM success.

4.3 Migration execution

With the extracted data in hand, this phase focuses on securely transferring it into the ServiceDesk Plus environment. Our team formats and aligns the data to the respective fields and attributes while importing them to ServiceDesk Plus, ensuring every record lands exactly where it belongs.

To safeguard data integrity, we first perform a trial migration. This dry run validates data accuracy, mappings, and dependencies before the full-scale production migration begins. Once the migration is complete, a thorough validation follows: our team tests configured workflows, system behavior, and key functionalities, performing end-to-end checks to identify any gaps, while your team reviews the migrated records to confirm completeness and accuracy. Depending on the migration approach, either unit testing or single acceptance testing is employed to ensure full reliability.

A breakdown of the key steps and the roles accountable for each

Steps involved	Responsibilities of stakeholders
Data import and migration to ServiceDesk Plus Cloud	Performed by the ManageEngine team
Data validation	Performed by the ManageEngine team, and approved by the customer

Table 3. Migration execution: Steps and stakeholders' responsibilities

Together, these steps make migration not just a transfer but a controlled, transparent process that preserves integrity, builds reliability, and readies the platform for a smooth go-live.

4.4 Post-migration

The post-migration phase shifts focus from transition to transformation. With the migration complete, the priority is embedding ServiceDesk Plus into everyday operations, driving adoption, and building momentum for continuing ITSM maturity. This phase ensures the platform delivers sustained value well beyond go-live.

4.4.1 Transition and training

A successful migration doesn't end with data transfer—it extends into how effectively teams adapt to and embrace the new platform. Post-migration, our focus shifts to enabling a smooth transition and equipping users with the skills to maximize ServiceDesk Plus.

i. Transitioning to the new platform

Our post-migration support ensures that the transition to ServiceDesk Plus goes beyond just moving data. We work closely with teams to smooth out any complications that may arise, address questions, and fine-tune workflows to match business needs. This hands-on approach helps employees adapt faster and enables organizations to realize the full value of the platform sooner.

ii. Training

Complete functional, technical, and role-based training agenda, delivered both onsite and online by our consultants, equips end users, IT administrators, process owners, and technicians to confidently embrace ServiceDesk Plus. This approach accelerates adoption, builds proficiency, and ensures teams can fully leverage the platform's ITSM capabilities.

4.4.2 Go-live and stabilization

The go-live and stabilization phase ensures the migration to ServiceDesk Plus moves from project completion to operational readiness effectively, maintaining system reliability and enabling teams to operate confidently from day one.

i. Announcement and adoption

The launch of ServiceDesk Plus is formally communicated across the organization through customized welcome kits including communication flyers, FAQs, customized user and admin guides, driving awareness and fostering adoption among all users.

ii. Hypercare support and documentation

Our consultants actively monitor the production environment to maintain stability and address any potential issues. Dedicated hypercare support ensures immediate attention to functional and technical queries through a designated POC. Comprehensive documentation of workflows, processes, and procedures equip clients to operate independently while reinforcing a smooth, stable transition.

iii. Sign-off and feedback

Upon successful stabilization, our consultants complete formal sign-off, capturing feedback, recommendations, and lessons learned. These insights are used to refine future migrations and processes, delivering sustained value and operational excellence.



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Real-world success stories of our migration process

5.1 Function-to-function replacement with precision

A leading global supplier of top-tier engineered components to the automotive industry in the United States relied on idea, demand, and portfolio management workflows in addition to the standard ITSM workflows in ServiceNow. During the migration from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus, we replicated idea, demand, and portfolio management workflows with custom modules and custom functions, establishing a true function-to-function replacement. This ensured the platform aligned perfectly with its unique processes, delivering a streamlined, fully optimized ITSM system ready for immediate adoption.

Migration highlights

Prior platform: ServiceNow

Records and components migrated:

250,000 incidents with attachments and notes as conversations

125,000 service requests with attachments, request variables and tasks

17,500 changes with attachments and tasks
450 solutions with attachments and inline images

200 problems

650 contracts

IT service desk size: 200 technicians

Duration of migration: Implementation and migration completed in 45 days

Note: The migration timeline varies based on factors like ticket and data volume, attachments, inline images, conversations, and other entities. Depending on the case, it can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks.

5.2 Connected systems, confidently migrated

A leading US audio media company specializing in radio, podcasts, digital, and live events, relied on a sophisticated ServiceNow setup integrated with 15 external applications across categories like IT operations, DevOps, GRC, cloud platforms, CRM, analytics, communications, and asset management. As part of the company's migration to ServiceDesk Plus, our consultants rebuilt these integrations from the ground up using low-code, custom functions—preserving the full integration ecosystem while without disrupting ITSM workflows—covering incident, service request, and change management. This established a more agile, maintainable ITSM environment that aligned seamlessly with its existing workflows.

Migration highlights

Historical data: 3 months of data for changes and KB articles created in the last 3 years

Prior platform: ServiceNow

Records: 216 changes, 500 solutions

Modules and components: Changes, solutions, attachments, and inline images

IT service desk size: 650 technicians

Duration of migration: 1 week for change and 1 week for solutions; completion of Phase 1 of implementation within 6 months

Note: The migration timeline varies based on factors like ticket and data volume, attachments, inline images, conversations, and other entities. Depending on the case, it can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks.

5.3 High-speed, high-volume migration with seamless integration

A global leader in glass bottle and aluminum can manufacturing in Australia faced the challenge of migrating five years of data holding 75,000 records within a tight timeframe from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus. These records spanned across incidents, service requests, and changes. Leveraging our streamlined migration methodology, our consultants completed the transfer in under a week, ensuring accuracy, continuity, and minimal downtime.

Simultaneously, we integrated the company's HCM solution SuccessFactor into the manufacturer's environment, connecting seamlessly with ServiceDesk Plus to support HR and operational workflows. The outcome was a rapid, efficient, and precise migration that showcases our ability to execute complex ITSM transitions with speed and reliability.

Migration highlights

Historical data: 5 years

Prior platform: ServiceNow

Records: 75,000 records

Modules and components: Incidents, service requests, notes, attachments, and change requests

IT service desk size: 50 technicians

Duration of migration: Transfer of records within 1 week; completion of implementation within 3 weeks

Note: The migration timeline varies based on factors like ticket and data volume, attachments, inline images, conversations, and other entities. Depending on the case, it can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks.

5.4 From constraints to confidence

A globally-recognized AI provider needed to migrate incident records from ServiceNow to ServiceDesk Plus without instance access.

After our team successfully imported the ticket data from the offline dump into ServiceDesk Plus, the customer requested an additional requirement—migrating attachments and accurately linking them to the corresponding records. Through in-depth analysis of the offline files, our team successfully extracted the attachments and ensured precise mapping to their respective records. This project highlights our capability to overcome significant migration challenges and deliver robust ITSM transitions with precision.

Migration highlights

Records migrated: 5,000 incident records

Modules: Incidents

Number of attachments: 60,000–70,000

Note: The migration timeline varies based on factors like ticket and data volume, attachments, inline images, conversations, and other entities. Depending on the case, it can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks.

ServiceDesk Plus for timeless service excellence

The migration to ServiceDesk Plus, our AI-driven unified service management platform, is more than a platform shift—it's a strategic leap that transforms ITSM into a simpler, smarter, and faster way your work flows. Where ServiceNow often burdens organizations with spiraling costs, feature bloat, and rigid deployments, ServiceDesk Plus delivers a right-sized, flexible solution that streamlines workflows, embeds industry best practices, and accelerates value realization.

By combining expert-led migration, function-to-function workflow replication, and training for smoother transition, organizations can benefit from quicker product adoption, enhanced visibility, and a platform designed to evolve with their business. This transition ensures that your ITSM platform remains not just a tool, but a driver of efficiency, scalability, and sustained growth.