FUJITSU | servicenow.

The Fujitsu guide to upgrading your ServiceNow platform

With the eagerly anticipated ServiceNow Vancouver release now upon us, organizations around the world are gearing up to upgrade their Now Platform®. But we understand that upgrading can be a daunting challenge for some organizations – especially those that are several upgrades behind or burdened with customization that makes upgrading a long and cumbersome process.

So, to help you prepare for your upgrade, we've answered a few of the burning questions you may have:

Do I need to upgrade the platform?

Each upgrade brings new functionalities and capabilities to the platform, adding value for customers. However, when determining whether or not to take on an upgrade, it's important for organizations to weigh those new benefits against the time and resources that will be required to perform it. So, while you don't necessarily need to upgrade every six months, we do advise that you stay within one release of the latest version, as this is what's supported by ServiceNow.

If you are several releases behind or if heavy customization is preventing you from being able to upgrade in a timely and cost-effective way, you may want to consider returning to a baseline proven practice approach. We helped Centrica do just that by moving closer to OOTB capabilities and leveraging configuration over customization, reducing the time it takes to upgrade their platform to days rather than months. This also reduces the risks involved in upgrading.

Which of the new features should I use?

To give you a head start while you navigate this upgrade cycle, we have shared our favourite updates from the new Vancouver release. Of course, there are also comprehensive release notes that you can immerse yourself in, but it's often challenging trying to work out what will be the most impactful for your organization. When we work with our customers or make assessments around upgrading our own Now Platform®, we use 'upgrade planning' workshops to determine which capabilities will be the most consequential and introduce the most value to the organization, to ensure we're always outcome-led and delivering tangible value to the business.

How do I prepare for my upgrade?

• Plan!

The first thing you will want to do is set out a project plan. [ServiceNow provides an Upgrade Planning Checklist](), but if you are already using ITBM, you can jump straight in with PPM to manage your project plan. Don't forget to make sure your users and key stakeholders are aware of the upgrade, such as any benefits they may gain from it or downtime they might experience. Some heavy platform users, such as service desk agents, may also benefit from additional training on new features so they can get up and running as quickly as possible. You'll also want to ensure you've thoroughly read the release notes - and if you're upgrading from several releases behind, the notes from every release between your current one and Vancouver – to make sure you're aware of any steps needed to keep your platform up and running.

• Clone!

The next thing to do is make sure you've got a back-up! To prevent any unwelcome surprises, we recommend using a Sub-Prod Instance to perform your upgrade. This will ensure you have a clone of your instance to perform your upgrade steps and check for any issues before moving it into your production environment. Pay extra attention to any customization – this won't be pulled through into your upgraded instance and will instead show up as 'Skipped Items'. So, for each customization, you'll have to manually decide whether to revert to OOTB standard or pull it through. This can be a time-consuming process and is what often holds our customers back from upgrading to the latest release. Once you have upgraded your Sub-Prod Instance, you can complete your testing to ensure everything is working as it should be, tracking issues as they arise so they can be addressed before you move to production. An additional step you may want to consider is including real end-users in that testing, to give everyone the confidence that everything is working as it should be.

• Go Live!

We always recommend upgrading your platform in a period of low usage, if possible, which for Fujitsu is usually over the weekend. This ensures there's minimal disruption for users while the upgrade is taking place. And congratulations – your upgrade is complete!

Ready to upgrade or need a helping hand?

We understand that an upgrade can be daunting, but we are here to help make it a smooth transition so you can get the most value out of your ServiceNow investment as quickly as possible. Whether that's by helping you to understand which new features or capabilities will have the most impact for your organization, providing technical services for your upgrade, or exploring how you could expand your platform into new areas of the business, you can always trust that our advice is grounded in the experience of doing this for our own organization.

Interested in learning more?

[Get in touch to find out how you can leverage ServiceNow Vancouver.]()