



# Trends Shaping Service Management

Get ready ITSM. It's a fast, dynamic, digital world out there.

## 5 Trends on Our Radar

Today's market conditions are demanding. 24x7 always-on services. Work-from-anywhere culture. Rapidly changing needs on every front.

Service management is about transforming your business to meet those conditions—smoothing your digitization path and helping employees be more productive. So how must ITSM evolve? What trends are shaping it? You'll find our top five right here.

As you walk through this ebook, you'll also learn about SMAX—the service management automation solution from Micro Focus. We've sprinkled "Get to Know SMAX" tips and tricks along the way.



# 01 ESM Takes Center Stage

ESM is an evolution of ITSM, born from the idea that a service is a service whether it's for IT or not. Service management is expanding into non-IT functions that include HR, customer service and support, facilities, finance, and sales—even connecting external customers with internal users.

**How do you build ESM on ITSM?** According to Charlie Betz, principal analyst at Forrester, "It starts with formalizing your organization's catalog of requestable services and workflows (both IT and non-IT)." All these services—likely based on numerous and disparate technologies—can then be "replatformed" on a single service management solution.<sup>1</sup>

**Where should you start?** According to a recent Research In Action report, 24% of global enterprises selected "employee workflows (HR, legal, facilities . . .)" as their highest workflow automation priority within the next twelve months. Creating better employee experiences through improved collaboration and workflows is the goal.<sup>2</sup>

**What does an entirely connected service experience look like?** Imagine a typical loan application process. The entire process—from online application submission and case assignment to background checks, risk assessment, prequalification, and final approval—would be coordinated and automated through one ESM tool. In this scenario, RPA robots are called to action, AI-powered virtual agents resolve issues, and front-end systems talk easily with back-end systems.

"While ESM is not a new term, its relevance has changed in the last two years because business leaders are recognizing the need to improve and automate workflows within and across business functions. . . Digital initiatives across employee and customer interactions are forcing a change in scope and ownership. Ownership of ESM has expanded from just IT towards a joint ownership between IT and enterprise business teams."<sup>3</sup>

*Eveline Oehrlich  
Research Director, Research In Action*

<sup>1</sup> Charlie Betz, "Accelerate with Enterprise Service Management," *Forrester Blogs & Podcasts*, April 16, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Eveline Oehrlich, *Vendor Selection Matrix™ Enterprise Service Management, The Top Global Vendors 2022*, Research In Action, February 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Oehrlich, *Vendor Selection Matrix™ Enterprise Service Management*.



# Get to Know SMAX

## SMAX for HR

SMAX extends service management beyond IT operations. For HR, SMAX has 35 service offerings under 8 service definitions: privacy, inclusion and diversity, benefits, security, travel, leave and absence management, payroll, and employee lifecycle services.

The screenshot displays the SMAX service catalog interface, specifically the 'Offerings' section for 'Employee Lifecycle Service'. The interface is organized into three main columns: Category, Service Definition, and Offering.

- Category:** A list of categories including Phone and Mobile, Productivity and Collaboration, Network Connectivity and Security, OS, PC and Printer, Human Resources (selected), and Cloud and Storage.
- Service Definition:** A list of service definitions under the 'Human Resources' category, including Employee Lifecycle Service (selected), Security, Travel, Benefits, Inclusion and Diversity, Payroll Service, and Leave and Absence Management.
- Offering:** A list of offerings under the 'Employee Lifecycle Service' definition, including Employee office move, Employee onboarding, Change personal details, Employee checkout, Employee promotion (selected), Employee job position change, Employee department or team transfer, and Employee business card.

The interface includes a top navigation bar with tabs for SERVICE MANAGEMENT, SERVICE CATALOG MANAGEMENT, CATALOG (active), CATEGORIES, and OFFERINGS. A breadcrumb trail shows the path: Human Resources / Employee lifecycle service / Offerings. The 'Employee Lifecycle Service' offering is highlighted with a teal bar on the left side of the interface.

## 02 Employee Experiences Rise to the Top

It's not surprising that employee experience is coming into the spotlight. Happy employees give way to happy customers, as numerous research studies have shown. Service management plays a big role here. A modern service desk for resolving requests with meaningful services, self-service options, and no-wait automation elevate employee experiences.

The pandemic has created a new digital office culture as employees shift to hybrid or work-from-anywhere work. Using workplace communication tools, employees are connecting, conversing, and collaborating in fun, fast, easy ways. Quick chats, group huddles, file sharing, and plenty of emojis are just some of them. 😊

Changing workplace habits are inspiring additional service delivery models. For example, ITSM solutions now integrate with tools like Slack and Microsoft Teams to deliver services in employees' own workspaces for experiences that feel more personal, accessible, and contextual.

ITSM teams are also shifting to experience metrics to guide their progress. According to Forrester's *Employee Experience Index*, "The most important factor for employee experience is being able to make progress every day toward the work that they believe is most important."<sup>4</sup>

That's why metrics for assessing ITSM success are starting to focus on outcomes and productivity. Service management is, after all, about creating value streams and effectively measuring them.

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### Lost Time Makes Employees Unhappy

When it comes to the employee experience, productivity matters. Research by HappySignals, an IT experience management consulting company, reveals that lost time relates directly to low happiness scores. For resolving incidents, the support channel that generated the highest happiness score was also associated with the least time lost.

*What 2022 Needs to Know About Employee Experience*  
[ITSM.tools >](#)

<sup>4</sup> David Johnson, "The Employee Experience Index," *Forrester Blogs & Podcasts*, February 27, 2019.

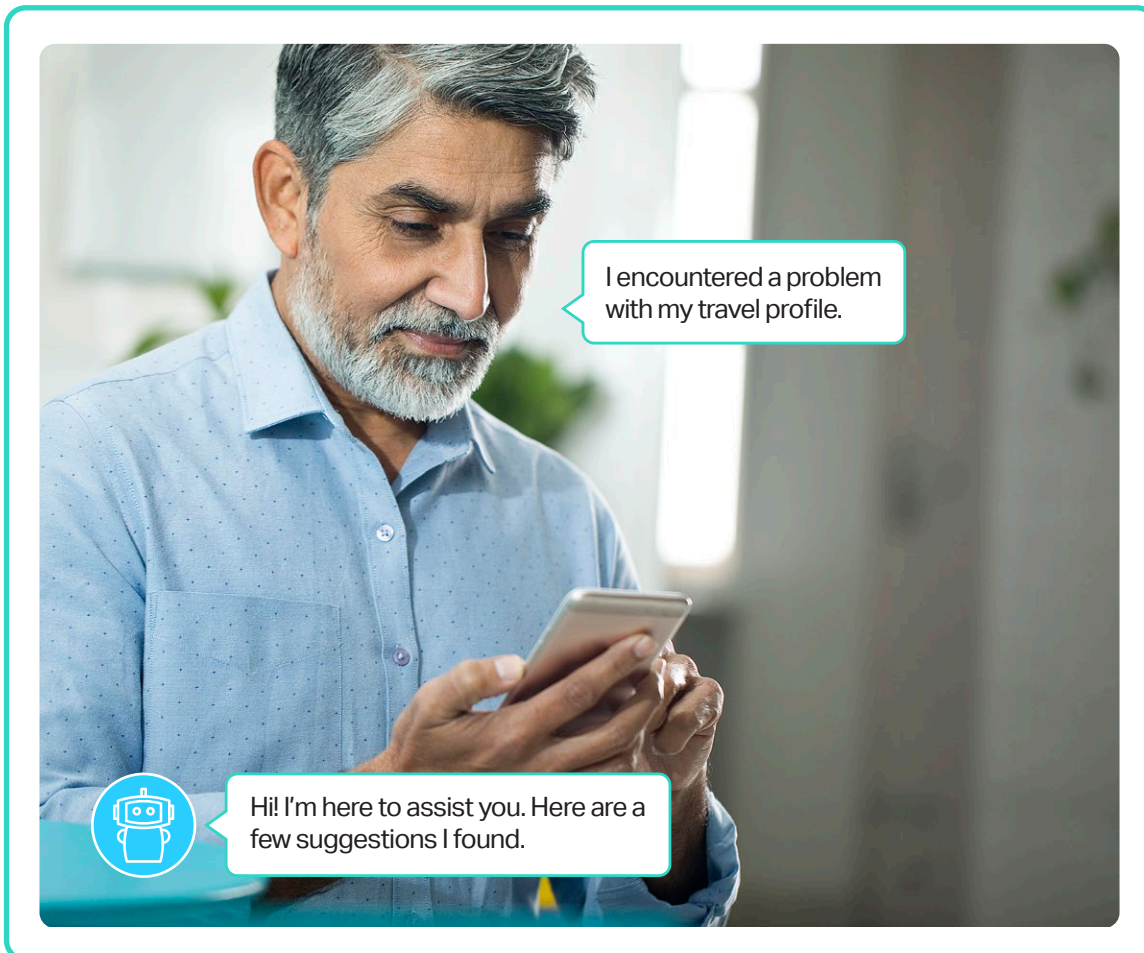
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## Get to Know SMAX

### Smart Tickets and AI-Powered Virtual Agents

SMAX's modern user interface delivers positive employee experiences. Employees can open smart tickets by attaching an image of their issue. Optical character recognition (OCR) translates the image into text and the ticket is automatically assigned to the right team. Or employees can speak with virtual agents that understand natural language to guide them through their support requests.



# 03

## Automation Fuels Digital Workflows

Automation is the foundation for all digital workflows. HR managers onboarding new employees without logging into multiple systems . . . Employees requesting travel approvals from an employee service portal . . . DevOps engineers provisioning cloud resources on the fly . . . Customers demanding immediate updates to their marketing communication preferences . . . All these actions are made possible by automation that integrates processes across teams, tools, and technologies.

New in the automation toolbox, there's AI, RPA, and low-code/no-code platforms:

- **AI** powers virtual agents, finds patterns in unstructured data, and provides contextual analytics for decision making.
- **RPA** (Robotic Process Automation) automates processes that couldn't be automated before. RPA robots mimic screen-based human actions to perform repetitive tasks and expand automation to interfaces with difficult or no APIs. RPA robots cut out any manual work along the workflow, making touchless service management possible.
- **Low-code/no-code platforms** play an important role in expanding service automation use cases, especially outside of IT. Without writing any code, process owners can configure their own automations.

What's the real value of AI, RPA, and low-code/no-code development? These capabilities are a means to an end—the end goal being more automation. Automation will never stop because it's how organizations will continue to deliver digital workflows for connected, meaningful services.

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 [Managing Orders with SMAX and RPA >](#)



## Get to Know SMAX

### Codeless Ease

SMAX is a low-code/no-code platform. ITIL-certified out-of-the-box (OOTB) processes—including problem, change, service, release, and knowledge management—are available to speed up your service automation. You can configure and extend them to meet your needs without writing any code.

The screenshot displays the SMAX configuration interface for an incident workflow. At the top, there are tabs for 'Fields', 'Forms', 'Processes and Rules \*', 'Notifications', 'Import data', and 'Custom actions'. Below these are 'Save' and 'Show rule descriptions' options. A breadcrumb trail shows 'Incident > Normal > Classification > Validation'. On the left, a tree view under 'Incident' shows a hierarchy: Normal > Classification > Classify > Validation, which is currently selected. The main area features a workflow diagram with a 'Start' node leading to 'Log', then 'Classify' (highlighted in blue), which branches to 'Validation' and 'Initial Support'. 'Validation' also leads to 'Initial Support'. The 'Initial Support' node is located in the 'Resolution' phase. A 'Workflow Map' sidebar on the right shows a list of rules with '+ Add' buttons: Leaving, Entering, Before change, After change, Rendering forms, After applying changes, and Per schedule. The interface is divided into 'Classification' and 'Resolution' background panels.

# 04

## DevOps and ITSM Embrace

"When you are in a fast-changing, volatile world, you need responsive development and product creation," said Charlie Betz, principal analyst at Forrester. "DevOps gives you the opportunity to identify opportunities and rapidly test them against the reality of the marketplace and consumer desire." <sup>5</sup>

In the new operating model, according to Forrester, everyone is continuously testing, learning, and improving. DevOps meets today's market needs by providing faster, continuous software deployment; ITSM makes sure those deployments are stable and risk-free.

Increasingly, organizations are seeking greater integration with DevOps tools and pipelines. A key ITSM process—change management—brings the right level of oversight and governance for DevOps deployments.

An ITSM tool with advanced change management capabilities assesses change risks, finds the best time for scheduling those changes, approves changes, and closes change requests when they're deployed in production.

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"A new world is being created. People are experimenting with different ways of putting together their organization and working relationships." <sup>6</sup>

*Charlie Betz*

*Principal Analyst, Forrester*

<sup>5</sup> Charlie Betz (Forrester), "Take a Product-Centric Approach to Success," Micro Focus Universe Track Keynote IT Operations Management, March 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Betz, Micro Focus Universe Track Keynote.



Once upon a time, DevOps and ITSM stood seemingly at odds with one another. Agile versus rigid. Teams versus silos. A mindset versus a framework. No more. ITSM is here to make DevOps successful for an organization that's collaborative and agile.

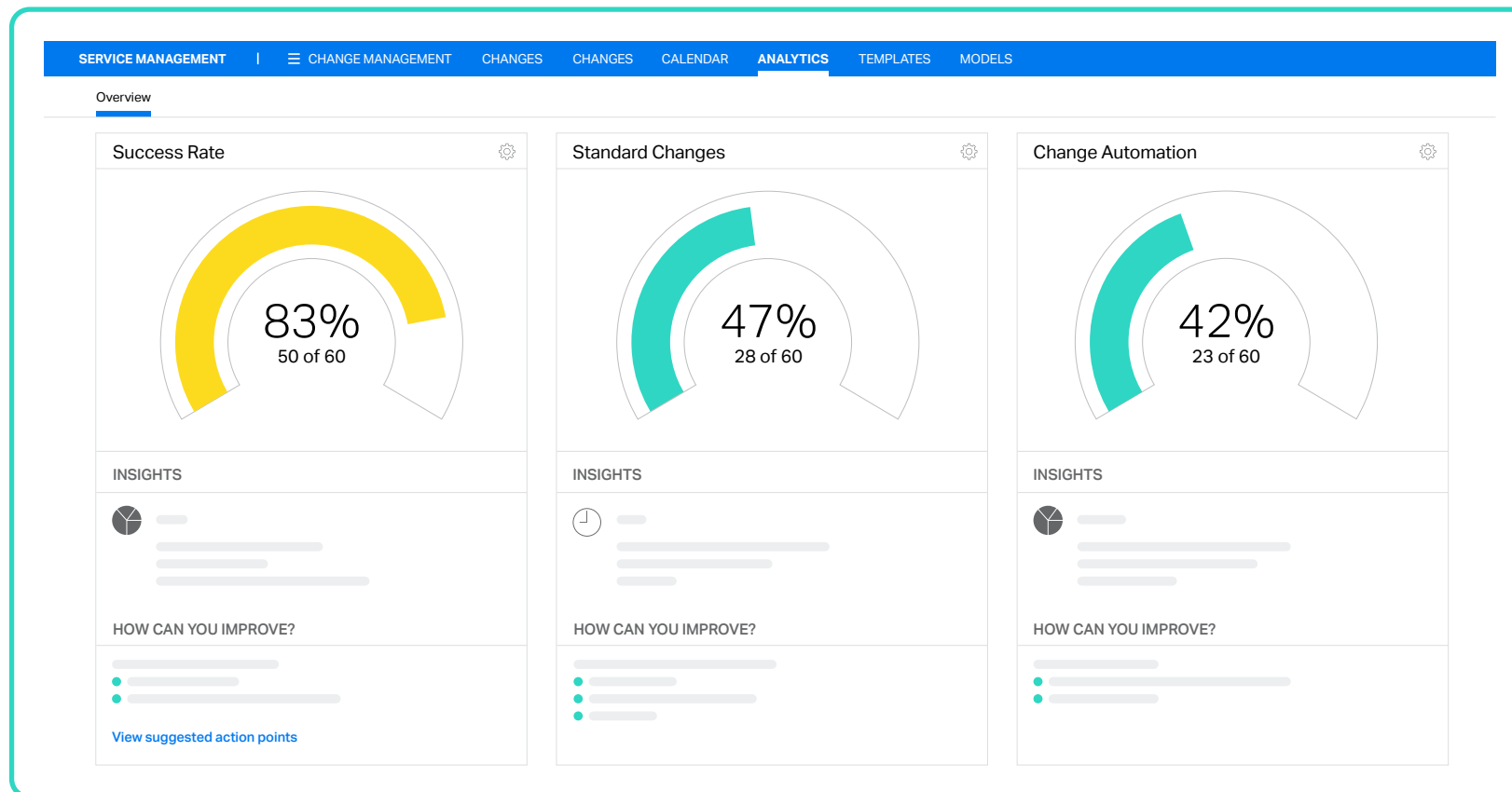
## Get to Know SMAX

### SMAX and DevOps

SMAX integrates with DevOps tools and pipelines to minimize change risks and speed up deployments:

- Change analytics offers suggestions for increasing the probability of successful changes.
- Automated change collision detection and change calendar (maintenance and blackout periods) prevent conflicting changes from being scheduled.
- Automated change approvals (for example, for lower risk changes) trigger DevOps pipelines to deploy changes in production faster.

 [SMAX Integration with DevOps >](#)



## 06 Service Management Gets SaaS-y

Organizations are increasingly comfortable moving their service automation to modern Software as a Service (SaaS) platforms. Even highly regulated industries and government entities are adjusting to the new world and working through their data security and sovereignty requirements.

Financially, SaaS makes sense.

Getting out of the business of managing their service management platforms, organizations can leave lengthy installations and ongoing maintenance behind—and start enjoying lower total cost of ownership (TCO).

Migration to SaaS also makes organizations re-evaluate their customization strategy—with codeless, out-of-the-box processes, organizations can plan for quick, hassle-free upgrades.

Finally, the flexibility of SaaS licensing makes it easier for organizations to meet their evolving needs by adding new users or adopting add-on capabilities.

As organizations grow their appreciation for SaaS, they'll seek versionless, consumer-style SaaS experiences. That means effortless upgrades and ongoing access to the latest features. The accepted notion of enterprise-versioned SaaS will be upended by real SaaS solutions that are always up to date.



## Get to Know SMAX

### SMAX on SaaS

SMAX SaaS has multiple license options that come with add-on capabilities. (Note: SMAX is also available on prem or in cloud.)

Here's what SMAX SaaS offers:

- Service portal and native mobile app.
- Studio for creating your own workflows.
- Native CMBD.
- ITIL-certified out-of-the-box workflows for key ITSM processes.
- IT asset management.
- Add-on capabilities for discovery, orchestration, and software asset management.



[Getting Started with SMAX SaaS >](#)



# Service Management from Now to Next

We hope this guide has given you insights about the trends shaping service management and a peak into how SMAX can help move your service management into the future.

With SMAX, delivering easy, smart, advanced, and surprisingly affordable service experiences is just a step away.

Visit [www.microfocus.com/smax](http://www.microfocus.com/smax) or [contact our team](#) to learn more about SMAX.

