

Value Stream Management[△]

It's time to stop throttling change

MOZΔIC

The future of the Operating Model

As a recognised leader in IT and Digital Operating model design and transformation, Mozaic has delivered wholesale change in over a hundred, large complex estates over the past 10 years – possibly more than any other single organisation during that period. Our team includes ex-CIOs and CTOs from across a broad range of industries, giving us a unique perspective on the past, and on the next phase of operating model change that will affect us all.

THE SERIES

This whitepaper is one of a series that looks at the future of the operating model, and details the specific areas of change that organisations will need to embark upon to transform to Enterprise Product and achieve excellence in technology delivery.

- ▶ The future of the technology operating model
- ▶ Focusing on value
- ▶ The importance of culture in transformation
- ▶ Measure the things that really matter
- ▶ Aligning sourcing models to support Enterprise Product
- ▶ Value stream management - it's time to stop throttling change
- ▶ Data driven operations
- ▶ Addressing legacy constraints

The full catalogue of papers can be found on the Mozaic website at <https://mozaic.net/insights/>.

Accompanying the series, Mozaic offers a range of complementary workshops, which look in more detail at the subject areas, and help teams to better understand the challenges and opportunities in their context.

If you would like to know more, please contact us at info@mozaic.net or call us on 0203 709 1625.

Powering Enterprise Product

Change governance is a necessary evil; ensuring compliance needs are met but often inadvertently throttling release cycle times, and frustrating delivery teams and customers alike. Traditional governance mechanisms rely heavily on manual processes with multiple change records in disparate systems, leading to hand-offs, bottlenecks and delays.

Product teams, by definition, are empowered to deliver value in the way that is best for them. To enable repeatability, control, auditability and guiderails need to be “invisible” to them. Patterns and templates should be obvious for them to use. Measurement and governance should happen with minimal effort from the Teams.

INTRODUCTION

Change governance is essential for the successful management of technology. Organisations need to be confident change is secure and will not cause failure; and if issues do arise, it must be possible to quickly understand the cause and impact and take immediate remedial action.

However, it is equally important that processes do not slow the pace of change unnecessarily. They should not be a hindrance or frustration to engineering teams; and in a fast-moving digital world, change cadence should be measured in minutes, hours, and days, not weeks.

Unfortunately, in many organisations the reality is far from the ideal. Ticket allocation, root cause analysis, and remediation are all manual; governance models are often 'one-size-fits-all' and not specific to the risk profile; high-touch service is the norm; siloed engineering teams encounter numerous frustrating bottlenecks; and DevOps and Operations teams collaborate manually.

The solution lies in the orchestration and automation of SDLC governance workflows, using existing Service Management tooling (e.g. ServiceNow) to integrate previously disparate functions, reduce manual interventions, and ensure the appropriate and consistent application of policy.

- ▶ **Automate orchestration, governance and compliance** - Orchestrate and automate the flow of change, integrating delivery teams' standard tooling with operations and governance, and applying policy-based compliance. Typically accelerate cycle times to between 5x and 10x faster. With complete recording of audit information.
- ▶ **Leverage Out of the box metrics** - Clear, real-time, consistent metrics revealing change velocity, capacity, types of work, and work in progress; enabling leaders to baseline performance, understand how they are executing against plan, allocate resource and improve.
- ▶ **Apply Deep analytics with “what if” scenarios** - Building on performance metrics, use “what if” analysis to test ideas and hypothesize – removing bottlenecks and increasing change throughput. Understand not only what has changed and is changing but also the wider impact across the enterprise.

Visibility, control, efficiency

STANDARDISATION AND ORCHESTRATION

The foundation of the approach is to utilise your existing Service Management platform to standardise change workflows through development, testing, approval, and release; removing bottlenecks and ensuring change information is always consistent and complete.

Basic integration with native development management tools (e.g. Jira) enables incident records to flow directly from the service desk to the product teams without need for re-entry of incident information, immediately reducing delays (and error) in the flow of information across, what were, previously disparate silos (Delivery and Operations).

In its simplest form, workflow orchestration will reap significant benefits, enabling “hand-off” free incident management, and clear visibility and recording within the change process, with minimal manual intervention.

Even without further integration (e.g. to automatically complete governance checklists), significant benefit will immediately be realised through the removal of bottlenecks, standardisation of approach, and increased visibility of change in the pipeline. And, of course, complete information is recorded and tracked within service desk tickets, meeting the most exacting of audit requirements.

INTEGRATION AND AUTOMATION

Building on workflow orchestration, the new workflows are integrated into delivery teams’ native tooling. Governance “checklists” are automatically completed, drawing results from Jira, Jenkins, GitHub, Selenium, Tricentis etc. removing the need for manual checks and approvals, and providing a consistent, secure path to live.

Releases flow directly from the product teams without need for debates on acceptance criteria, delays in build and deployment activity, or manually re-keying of information.

Importantly, this enhances accurate data collection, ensuring full, real-time visibility of the process with up-to-date change records, proven and visible testing, and consistent application of security policies.

Realtime insights

AI INSIGHTS

Where possible, once workflows are automated, we aim to enable change to seamlessly pass through the governance process as Standard Change. If all requirements are proven to be met through integration with test tools, the need for additional oversight is diminished significantly. However, there are circumstances where systems have change windows and imposed change lead times, or where exceptions occur to the process. In this context there may exist a need to approve Special Change.

Within ServiceNow DevOps, for example, policies applied to non-standard change can be delivered using AI. Potential anomalies in testing, timing and release procedures can be automatically identified, and historic data can be used to provide codified, consistent, risk-based assessment.

These are all areas that are usually addressed by a change board (or empowered individuals outside of the formal board). In each case, AI will make better informed decisions, unencumbered by personal preference or relationship bias, and of course the rationale for the decision is automatically recorded.

In addition, ServiceNow DevOps provides deeper insight into pipelines, identification of patterns in change failure, and enablement of proactive avoidance of future failures. This in turn further supports the recoding of data in support of mandatory compliance requirements.

WHERE TO START

The reality in the majority of organisations is that teams work in silos with manual processes to share data and support change policies. It is common for service incidents to be raised and recorded in one platform (e.g. ServiceNow) but communicated to Product teams via email and manually entered into their preferred backlog management tool (e.g. Jira). Once in the change workflow, any interaction is manual, creating change bottlenecks and significant, frustrating delays.

As such, it is possible to quickly spot high-value opportunities for orchestration, typically through the standardisation of governance workflows and automation across your Service Management platform, Jira and DevOps. The first step on the journey is to identify common workflows that frustrate product teams. These are automated, quickly demonstrating the value of the approach – typically change cadence is five times faster, achieving buy-in for on-going integration.

As organisations look to mature their approach, we recommend teams are provided with “recipes” and playbooks enabling them to implement their own integrations. This ensures that change is not imposed, negative impact is minimised, and value is incrementally accrued. These workflow patterns can be delivered as requestable items in the service catalogue. In this way teams can quickly identify, select and implement the patterns they require for their tools of choice.

Compelling benefits

SIMPLIFIED CHANGE

Changes flow directly from the product teams without need for:

- ▶ Attending CABs
- ▶ Re-entry of change information
- ▶ Delays

Whilst the change record is:

- ▶ Maintained with full visibility
- ▶ Assessed against the risk and impact profile
- ▶ Approved at the appropriate level

HAND-OFF FREE MANAGEMENT

Incident records flow directly from the service desk to the product teams without need for:

- ▶ Re-entry of incident information
- ▶ Moving from the product teams native tools
- ▶ Delay in flow of information

Whilst the incident record is:

- ▶ Maintained with full visibility
- ▶ Managed against service levels
- ▶ Clearly communicated to the impacted users

CONSISTENT PATH TO LIVE

Releases flow directly from the product teams without need for:

- ▶ Debates on acceptance criteria
- ▶ Delays in build and deployment
- ▶ Re-keying of information

Whilst the service remains understood at all times:

- ▶ Change records up to date
- ▶ Testing and security policies applied
- ▶ Knowledge articles created
- ▶ CMDB updated
- ▶ And teams can view, manage and compare performance

SELF-SERVICE PROVISIONING

Product teams can create new environments without need for:

- ▶ Establishing their own commercial relationships
- ▶ Using their credit cards
- ▶ Designing their own governance
- ▶ Waiting for Operations teams

Whilst the infrastructure is:

- ▶ Maintained with full visibility
- ▶ Standardised where possible
- ▶ Managed to security and architectural policies
- ▶ Optimised for cost and usage

What are you waiting for?

As companies scale and become more complex, silos emerge that reduce flow and introduce waste. Although DevOps automation will reduce this challenge within individual, focused units, it can often lead to greater tension with enterprise-wide concerns, such as platform and operations.

According to leading industry analysts, time spent managing the flow of work across an IT enterprise, rather than delivering actual change, typically accounts for over 20% of the organisation's effort.

At Mozaic we advocate the relentless pursuit of automation to eliminate this waste. We work with our clients, applying standard tooling to integrate processes and create truly frictionless processes.

The impact of SDLC workflow automation is game-changing, and the outcomes consistent. **In our experience cycle times become 5x faster, and change records capture 50% more information.**

If you would like to learn more about this approach and the success stories from its implementation. Please contact either of the authors. We'd be delighted to chat with you.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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