

Service Automation Solves Process of Onboarding New Retailers

Replaces a Manual Paper- and Email-Based Unstructured Workflow

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Organization
Carhartt, Inc.

About Carhartt
Family-owned, U.S. clothing company specializing in premium work wear

Headquarters
Dearborn, Michigan

Geographies
Global

Business
Manufacturing – Apparel

Company Size
Approximately 4,000 Employees

Products
Incident, Problem, Change, Knowledge, IT Asset Management, Custom Apps

Situation

Getting products into retail stores is an essential part of the go-to-market strategy for Carhartt, Inc., America's premium work wear brand company since 1889. Adding a new retailer involves a review, negotiation, approval and on-boarding process requiring multiple people and departments. Routing paperwork and approvals was done manually through email and physically delivering documents from one person's desk to another's. It was clear that reliance on email and in-person communication was inefficient and would not effectively scale. Working proactively, IT knew they could speed up the process and add transparency and accountability to change the way work was done.

Problem

The overall process was not only time-consuming and laborious, but it also presented a number of challenges, including:

- No ability to validate current status or track the location of required documentation at any point in time
- Difficulty prioritizing or reprioritizing the incoming queue of retailer applications
- Measuring how long the process took or the size of the workload or queue
- Inability to identify where bottlenecks existed, who was responsible and why
- No ability to establish and enforce Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

Solution

First and foremost, the company wanted to create a fully automated process that was measurable and provided new levels of transparency. Accomplishing this would certainly speed the overall process, make it more scalable to support the company's continued growth, reduce costs and create happier customers (and employees). And while not stated as immediate goals, a fully automated process would also allow the company to establish a set of benchmarks to track things such as money and time saved, efficiencies gained and retailer satisfaction levels.

The Strategy

To transform the process of retailer onboarding, the Carhartt IT team decided to map the process steps involved sequentially and automate them one at a time. By doing this, the application development work using ServiceNow could proceed more quickly and make the assimilation for each department easier. They set up a model ensuring that success came early and would set them up for continued success. Changing from a manual human-centric communication model to an automated system-centric model was a big step. Introducing this in a way to "get people's feet wet" proved an effective strategy.

In this case, the first step was to automate the basic approval process to bring on a new retailer. Later additions would include the processes to establish value-added services and requests such as support for Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and providing store hardware and displays and other tools to drive sales and retail success. Eventually, Carhartt wants to make the entire process completely self-service, so that a sales person could even initiate it from the field.

Project Steps

- a. Study the current manual process – break it into steps and identify the "what-if's" and exceptions
- b. Document the process flows
- c. Develop forms and an automated workflow in ServiceNow; conduct User Acceptance Testing (UAT) at appropriate intervals
- d. Produce documentation as necessary
- e. Go live with implementation
- f. Conduct training
- g. Assess, modify/improve
- h. Move to next stage

The Journey

Carhartt first started using ServiceNow to replace legacy software tools that "didn't keep pace" with IT needs and business demands. "With our legacy tools, we had to invent other ways to get things done because the tools were too cumbersome, lacked necessary functionality and made implementation difficult," said Liz Konarske, Service Manager for Carhartt. Carhartt was focused on advancing IT service management capabilities. ServiceNow was chosen to support its IT transformation and to establish a single system of record within IT.

Initially, Carhartt went live using ServiceNow IT Service Automation Suite for incident, problem and change as well as knowledge base and some IT asset management. "We went with what we were most comfortable with and with the items that would result in the quickest improvements to our operations," explained Konarske.



“I knew ServiceNow was very powerful. Even from my first exposure during the ServiceNow admin class, I could immediately see that it could do so much more.”

Nanette Luoma
Service Management Supervisor
Carhartt

Implementation Details

Realizing the power of ServiceNow, lines of business outside of IT began requesting applications. Now, plans are in place to automate and streamline processes within legal, HR, and facilities.

Challenges

- Existing, human-centric systems were time-consuming and lacked visibility
- Inability to identify root cause, provide corrective action or accountability
- Unable to establish and enforce Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

Results

- Automated processes reduced costs and saved time, supporting the company's growth
- Measurable and transparent data
- Ability to track time efficiency and financial gains
- Greater retailer and employee satisfaction

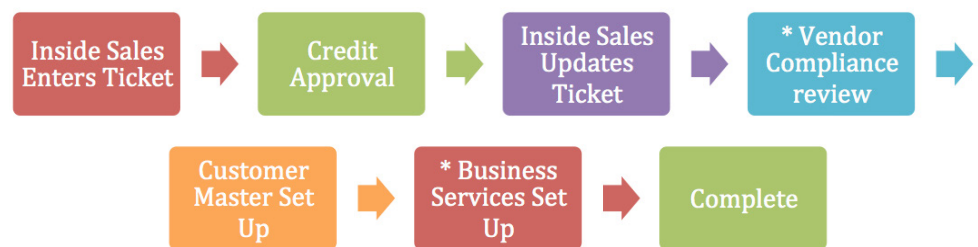
Based on the successful use of ServiceNow within IT, the team quickly realized the power of the workflow engine and applications as a platform to affect considerable change in business processes. “I knew ServiceNow was very powerful,” said Nanette Luoma, Service Management Supervisor. “Even from my first exposure during the ServiceNow admin class, I could immediately see that it could do so much more.”

At the same time Carhartt was evaluating replacing their IT tools with a single system of record, at the corporate level, the company had set one of its goals for the year to improve the process for onboarding retailers. The starting point was to simply understand and document the process. As Konarske and Luoma were evaluating ServiceNow for the work of IT, they knew it had the power to address this key corporate process.

Implementing Service Automation for Retail Onboarding

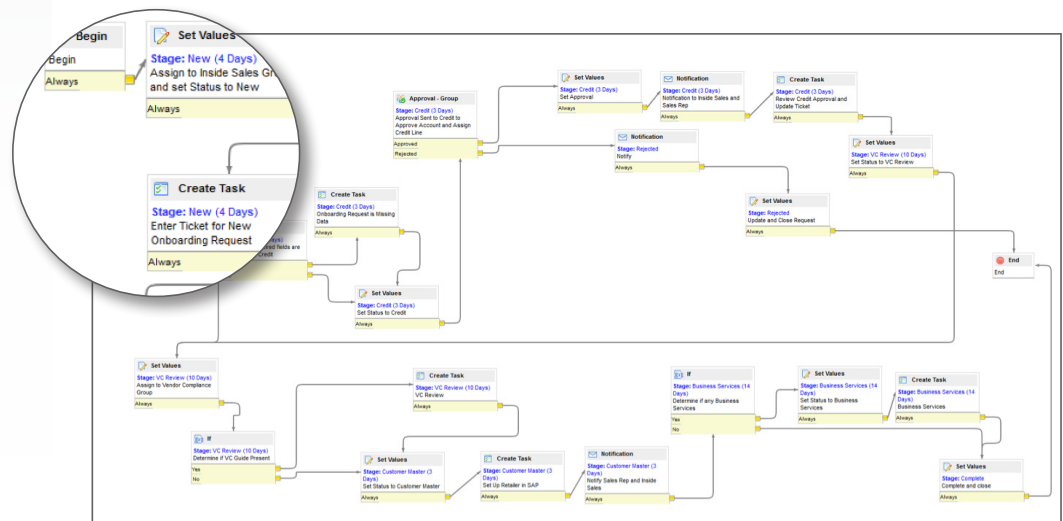
Carhartt used the ServiceNow Service Automation Platform to create a custom application for managing retail onboarding.

- First, Konarske and Luoma formed the two-person team to run the project. They created forms for initiators and reviewers/approvers to use in conducting the approval process for a new retailer. This involved selecting existing fields needed for capturing necessary details and defining additional fields.



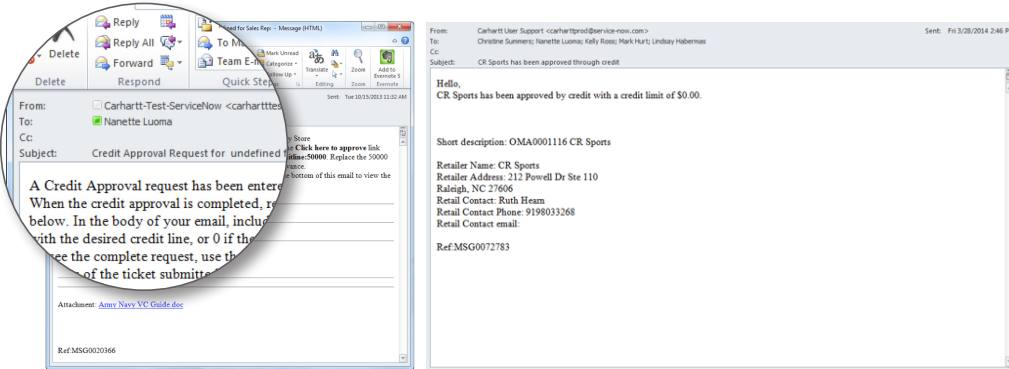
ServiceNow Service Automation Platform

- Using the platform's Graphical Workflow Designer, they set up the work/approval steps by creating and defining each activity and then dragging them onto the workflow canvas. They connected the activity boxes to create an automated workflow.



ServiceNow Graphical Workflow Designer

- The workflow included rules and parameters around how to treat the various steps of the process. For instance, the system creates alerts and notifications when an approver does not respond in a timely manner or when certain steps or conditions have been met.



Example of an approval request that is automatically sent to a next approver. The links provided through the email notification approve the request and send it to the next step or reject it and send it back to the requestor. The entire process is automated.

- Konarske and Luoma created a dashboard and reports to help monitor the process and provide actionable insight.

Looking Ahead

The successful rollout of phase one of the retail onboarding “generated a lot of ‘wow’ across the organization,” according to Konarske. “It resulted in requests for other applications to provide service automation to various parts of the business. We caught their imagination—people saying, ‘hey, this could work here for me.’”

Two areas identified for additional application development to support other lines of businesses include:

Legal – to manage all requests for new or existing contracts needing review, development or approval from the legal department. Currently, the process is managed through email, making it difficult to track, assess workload, prioritize and efficiently route work through the approval process.

Shipping Equipment Tracking – automate the process for checking-out and checking-in handheld scanners the company uses in its shipping facility. Currently, the scanners are managed by way of a clipboard, and it is difficult to know who is currently using the scanners.

In addition, Carhartt plans to extend the use of ServiceNow to HR for managing recruiting, applicants, new hires and employee requests. Carhartt also plans on applying the same streamlined self-service automation to facilities for managing all requests and fulfillments related to the physical plant.

While creating applications is generally easy and mostly involves manipulating graphical elements or defining steps, as are typically required with any manual process, Carhartt has been inspired by ServiceNow Share. Share is an online exchange where customers and partners can upload and download applications and development content. Share users can leverage ideas from others in the community and do not have to rebuild similar functionality from scratch. Application creation and service delivery can be accelerated to meet the needs of the business.

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