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Powering Transformation

The IT Revolution is Now

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The IT department has traditionally been the central nervous system of a company—the brain that powers the entire organization. IT has always been in control of software and systems, and responsible for keeping those systems and associated processes consistent, steady and reliable. But times are changing for IT.

A new breed of employee has entered the workplace and even seasoned professionals are working in different ways. Today's business user is more tech-savvy, more independent and more social than ever before. These new workers have grown up enjoying the instant gratification of the Internet age, and if they suspect that established processes are slowing them down, they have no qualms about working around existing systems to get what they want.

Couple these new worker traits with new technologies, based in the cloud, and IT leaders are facing the inevitable—loss of control. Rather than waiting for IT to satisfy their need, these employees are going around the IT team, installing software and making buy decisions for departmental Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) without including IT. Perhaps Generation Z should be renamed "The Cloud Generation."

IT is still expected to provide leading-edge guidance for the rest of the enterprise. The irony is that while the cloud and social revolutions have been simmering for years around them, IT teams are usually the last group to get access to the types of tools and technologies they're being asked to manage. They're stuck using entrenched legacy software and systems that can't match the sophistication and capabilities of the new technologies introduced into their environments. In effect, this puts the leaders in danger of becoming the followers.

Through the years IT has fluctuated between a decentralized and centralized computing model. The cloud represents a seismic shift toward decentralization. A shift so dramatic that IT must begin to prepare for what the industry calls the "cloud boomerang." As business leaders begin to recognize that existing practices and tools are simply not agile enough to cope with today's business world, IT inevitably will be brought in to save the day—to integrate disparate systems, take over system administration, remove redundancy, and consolidate agreements to regain buying power.

Now is the time for IT to get ahead of the curve and embrace this shift. It's increasingly clear that you can't manage today's virtual and cloud-based systems using legacy tools. Now there are technologies that embrace the cloud and all it has to offer and can help IT manage this dramatically different IT ecosystem. In fact, many of the world's foremost businesses, universities and government agencies have already thrown aside the tyranny of entrenched and inadequate legacy IT systems in favor of systems built for the Cloud Generation (Generation Z). It's time for IT organizations throughout the world to rise up and demand the best for themselves and their businesses. The IT revolution is now.

The Time For Change Is Now

As technology continues to advance and the new reality is based on an infrastructure that includes physical, virtual and cloud resources, IT departments need to find new ways of managing and securing this vastly different technology ecosystem.

Social networks, an increasingly mobile workforce, virtualization, cloud computing and so much more are affecting every department in the enterprise, and IT is no exception. Departments no longer have the luxury of working in isolation, but instead must become more open, collaborative, and service-oriented, and everyone must understand how their position supports the greater goals of the company.

Economic realities are causing business leaders to take a closer look at every aspect of the business. Legacy IT service management (ITSM) solutions are expensive to install and expensive to maintain, particularly when you tally up added costs like implementation, customization fees, licensing and upgrades. Yet legacy solutions tend to stay in place because they are familiar and because they represent such huge, early investments— a reason that is no longer defensible.

CIOs know that things are changing and are eager to adapt, but this kind of change brings up questions. How will they manage this new virtual and fluid environment? Will the next generation of technologies be difficult to learn? Will it give them less control? Will next-gen IT be secure? The fact is, next-gen IT promises to be easier, more intuitive and just as reliable and secure as the old way.

Re-Tooling For The IT Revolution

The IT revolution also means next-gen IT service management (ITSM) tools. In the old way, using legacy solutions, ITSM was about formal communication and manual processes maintained and dispensed by a select few individuals. Next-generation ITSM represents a new, simple, intuitive, social, scalable way for IT to get back in front. Here's what to expect:

It's All Happening In The Cloud

The IT revolution proposes an entirely different way of managing IT—in the cloud. When services are delivered on demand, with a SaaS model, IT is suddenly more agile and responsive to business needs. You can expect economics to shift dramatically. Big upfront investments are eliminated, hidden charges no longer trip up budgets, maintenance fees and pricey consulting fees are dramatically reduced as companies can now pay for what they need, when they need it. The cloud platform makes integration easy, no matter what your infrastructure, and upgrades are delivered automatically, relieving IT of yet another burdensome and costly chore.

It's About Managing Heterogeneous Environments

The demands of a modern business on technology are immense, and IT struggles to keep pace. CIOs are looking to the cloud to drive down expenses, increase efficiency and streamline operations. This means you need ITSM that can manage an infrastructure that includes physical, virtual and cloud resources. Do you want to manage such an IT ecosystem with legacy tools, built on decades-old technology? ITSM in the cloud is revolutionary, not only because it's a new way to manage IT, but also because it can act as the foundation of a long-term cloud strategy.

It's More Efficient

These days, business leaders want to see staff at all levels spending less time on administration and more time doing work that actually matters. To accomplish this, software must be intuitive and easy to manage. Next-generation IT will follow a consumer-friendly, web-based model that promotes usability, familiarity and simplicity. Next-gen IT was designed for the cloud and requires little to no IT or end-user training. If you've worked in social media or fooled around on the web— and who hasn't these days—you'll find it intuitive and natural to use. This doesn't mean that there's no need for the IT team, but it does mean that the team will spend less time hand-holding and providing basic instruction to non-tech staff.

It's Flexible And Adaptive

Next-gen IT solutions are intuitive, and since upgrades and improvements can be made regularly and often, there's no need to figure out work-arounds if a solution isn't doing everything you need. By the same token, next-gen IT is modular—you can purchase just the amount of technology you need right now, and can always expand usage when your situation grows and changes. By it's nature, next-gen IT is adaptable and open to improvement as customers expect more of it.

The cloud platform makes integration easy, no matter what your infrastructure, and upgrades are delivered automatically, relieving IT of yet another burdensome and costly chore.

With cloud-driven technology, your IT team can reclaim their stature and rightful role in orchestrating technology to solve business problems—the central nervous system of the organization.

It Expands What The IT Team Brings To The Table

IT people are expected to do and be more than ever before. Social networking, an increasingly mobile workforce, virtualization technology, cloud computing and more have affected every department in the enterprise, including IT. Departments no longer work in a vacuum; every individual in every department, including IT, must become more open, collaborative, and service-oriented, and everyone must do their part so support the greater goal of the company.

It's For The People

Using social technologies allows business people to communicate with each other and with IT in a medium that is most familiar. IT can become more social and interact more with the business. IT systems can also become social allowing business users to follow IT systems to get updates on performance, changes and or enhancements.
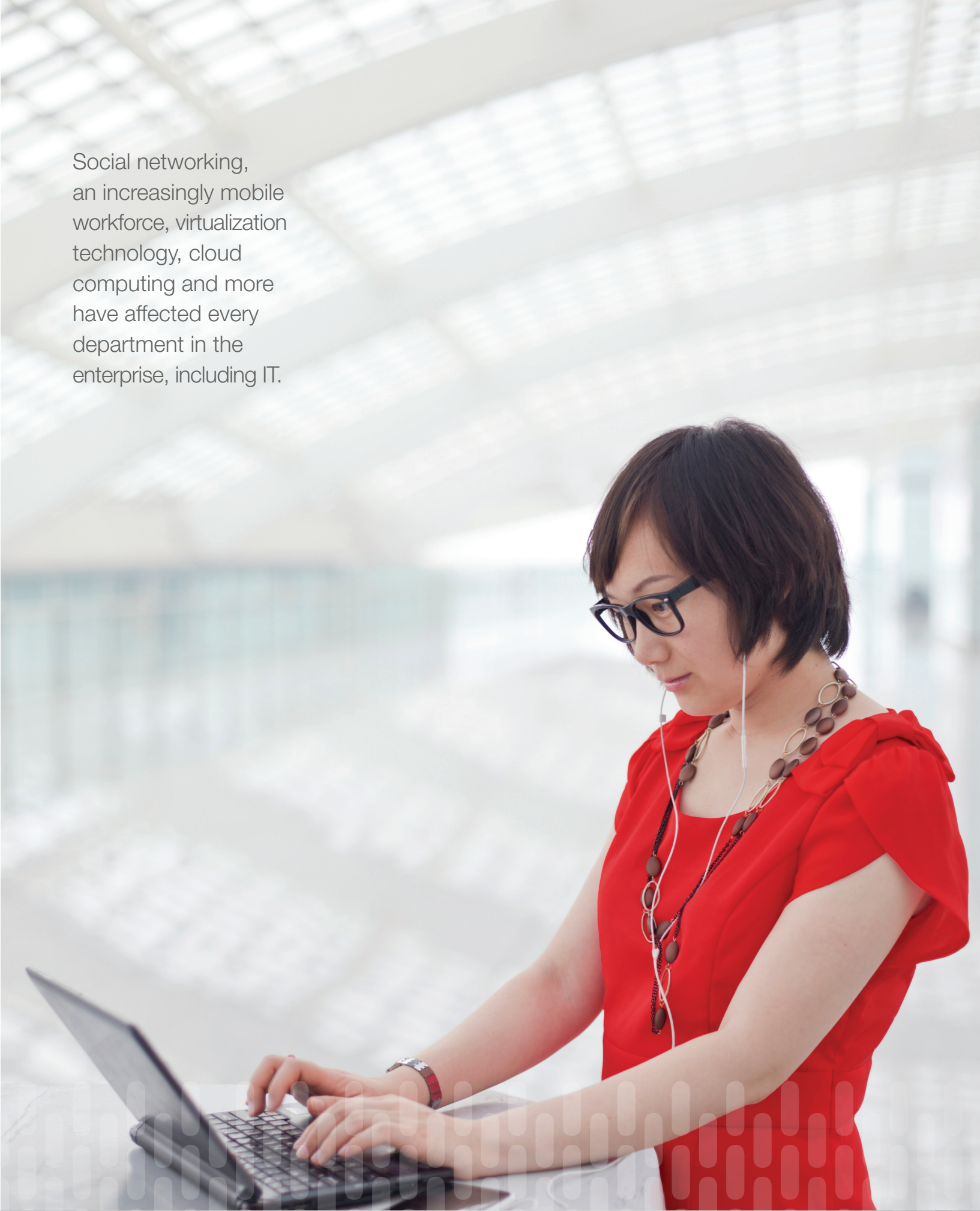
It Gives The CIO Real-Time Visibility

CIOs are realizing that to adapt to changes quickly, they need more visibility into what's happening on every level in the IT department. They are being held more and more accountable, and weekly roundup reports that are dated as soon as they arrive in the inbox are no longer adequate. Next-gen IT gives real-time visibility into what is happening as it's happening. No matter where they are—and whether they get the information via a smartphone, laptop or the web—CIOs can now have up-to-the-minute awareness and visibility into costs of services, IT performance, resource productivity and IT demand.

Embrace The Cloud To Manage IT Services Today

Cloud-driven technology lowers expenses, increases efficiency and streamlines operations. It gives your IT team the tools to understand what customers really want and need. It keeps virtual and fluid systems manageable. It gives CIOs unprecedented visibility and, therefore, greater control. Best of all, your IT team can reclaim their stature and rightful role in orchestrating technology to solve business problems—the central nervous system of the organization.

ServiceNow is the enterprise IT cloud company. We focus on transforming enterprise IT by automating and standardizing business processes and consolidating IT across the global enterprise. Organizations deploy our service to create a single system of record for enterprise IT, lower operational costs and enhance efficiency. Additionally, our customers use our extensible platform to build custom applications for automating activities unique to their business requirements. For more information, visit www.servicenow.com.

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