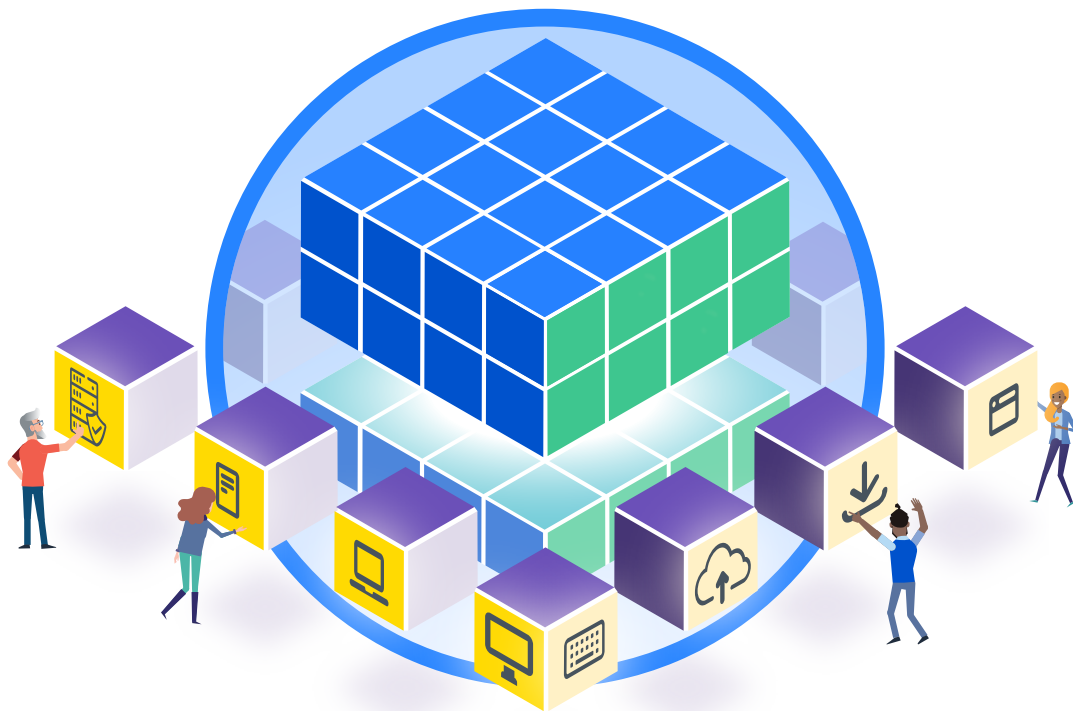


The Impact of  
**Digital Transformation** on  
**Asset** and **Configuration**  
**Management**

and How a Modern, Flexible,  
and Integrated ITSM Platform Can Help



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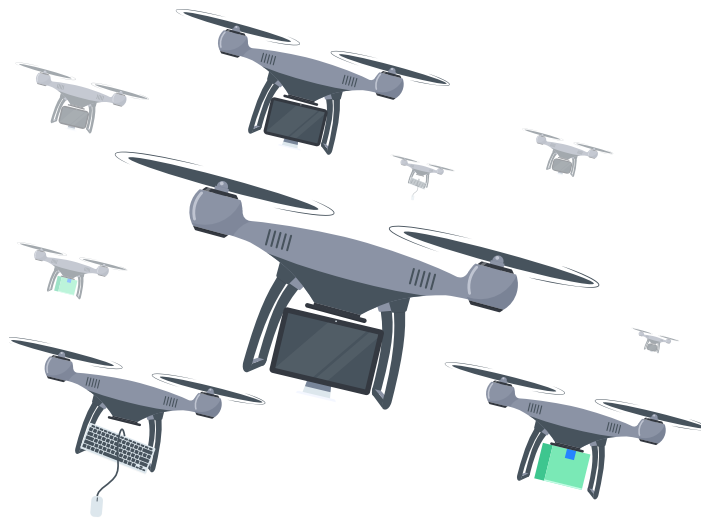
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ENTERPRISE

# The Impact of Digital Transformation on Asset and Configuration Management

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## Contents

- How Digital Transformation Is Driving Complexity in the ITAM and CM Ecosystem
  - The Solution: A Modern, Integrated, and Flexible ITAM and CM Solution
- Streamlining ITAM, CM, ITSM, and DevOps Practices with Atlassian Assets
- Maximizing Your Investment in Assets: Non-Traditional Assets and Use Cases



More organizations than ever are super-charging their digital transformation initiatives. In fact, in a [PWC Pulse survey](#) of C-suite executives from early 2022, 60% of respondents named digital transformation as their most significant growth driver for the year. Within the broader context of digital transformation, there are several trends that are having a significant and direct effect on the entire IT ecosystem, including practices around **IT Asset Management**, or **ITAM** for short, and **Configuration Management**, or **CM**.

**IT Asset Management (ITAM)** is the practice of tracking IT **assets**, both software (like SaaS applications and websites) and hardware (like servers, laptops, keyboards, and monitors), and ensuring they are maintained, upgraded, and otherwise kept in good working order. Healthy ITAM practices help with inventory management, license management, and financial planning. They minimize issues, support security, and are often required for auditing and compliance purposes.

**Configuration Management (CM)** is more about understanding how assets are set up and deployed, and how they relate to one another. In the world of Configuration Management, assets are called **Configuration Items, or CIs**. It's critical that IT teams have a deep understanding of CM and CIs in order to minimize risk in general, but particularly around deployments, and should an issue occur, quickly understand its impact on connected services, hardware, and users.

Growth is first among the digital transformation-related trends that are having a direct impact on ITAM and CM. When organizations grow rapidly, either organically or through mergers and acquisitions, IT teams have more software, hardware, and users to manage than before. Consequently, both IT and business teams across the enterprise typically adopt an increasing number of third-party SaaS applications to streamline work, and IT teams must deploy and manage all these new services.

In this whitepaper, **we will explore how digital transformation and associated trends are driving complexity around IT Asset Management and Configuration Management.** Then, we will look at how modern and flexible asset and configuration management tools that integrate with ITSM and DevOps tools already in use within your organization can help you meet these challenges. Lastly, we will explore both traditional and non-traditional use cases for Atlassian Assets.

## How Digital Transformation Is Driving Complexity in the ITAM and CM Ecosystem

Every organization has a system for tracking assets, whether it's a spreadsheet with information entered manually, a point solution, or a set of tools. These may serve well for a while, but problems often emerge as companies scale, whether through organic growth or mergers and acquisitions. Growth tends to be messy and inconsistent—centralized systems and consistent processes are rarely put in place before growth happens—standard tooling and processes typically come after a growth spurt has caused friction or other disruption.



Friction occurs when there are more departments, with more assets, CIs, and users in the mix. Perhaps different departments or asset owners are tracking different assets in different ways. There is no high-level understanding of what is owned, whether it's being used and by whom, if it's the source of ongoing issues, if software has been updated, if licenses need to be renewed—the list goes on.

As organizations scale and undertake digital transformation initiatives, two key trends are contributing to increasing complexity and confusion. The first is the rapid adoption of SaaS applications by both IT and business teams across the enterprise, and the second is the expansion of DevOps practices, which is increasing the pace of software changes.

### ○ SaaS Application Adoption

According to [Statista](#), in 2021, the average organization was using 110 different SaaS applications. As both IT and business teams add SaaS platforms and point solutions to address their unique business needs, the burden is on IT teams to implement and manage them. They must closely manage licensing and renewals, access so that the right people have access to the right data, user seats so that they aren't paying for too few or too many, and updates and patches for functional and security reasons. Many of these systems are also subject to regular auditing for compliance reasons.

Another consideration—when one of these systems goes down or there is some other issue, it is important to have a good handle on who the application owners and users are, how it will impact their ability to accomplish critical work, and its overall relevance to the business and customers.

A healthy asset management practice, one with an underlying technology platform for managing these SaaS applications, can streamline the management of third-party SaaS applications and ease the burden on IT teams. In addition, with the right tool, many asset management practices can be automated, which saves IT teams valuable time, while limiting the opportunity for errors associated with manual processes. And automation allows team members and service desk agents to focus on higher-level, more skilled work where their efforts can have a greater impact.

## ○ DevOps Adoption

As IT practices like DevOps—which is intended to get software features and enhancements to market faster and with better quality—gain traction, the overall volume of software releases is increasing. Despite a strong DevOps focus on minimizing issues, significantly higher release volume often means an increase in issues, even if the overall percentage of issues relative to the releases goes down.

Before releasing new features and enhancements, DevOps teams, and particularly change approvers, must be able to accurately assess the risk involved, and a big part of that is understanding the services and users that might be impacted. A healthy configuration management practice, especially one that uses an underlying technology platform that makes this information transparent and readily accessible to change approvers, is essential to managing risk, and maintaining customer trust and satisfaction.

When an issue occurs, the relevant IT teams must be able to quickly assess the scope of each issue, including affected services, hardware, and users, and begin addressing it. Then, they must be able to collaborate with both Development and Operations to resolve the issue. Here again, an underlying technology platform that makes the necessary information accessible and transparent is helpful—especially so if it is the same platform the Development, Operations, and other IT teams are already working in.

## The Solution: A Modern, Integrated, and Flexible ITAM and CM Solution

To get a handle on this increasingly complex, challenging, and time-consuming growth, organizations are turning to flexible, integrated technology solutions that allow them to manage all of their assets and configuration items in one place, rather than in disparate point solutions spread out across the enterprise. In doing so, they gain a more holistic view of their overall inventory, and can better manage the asset lifecycle, including planning and procurement, maintenance, and decommissioning.

If the solution of choice is built on the same technology stack that the company uses for ITSM, ESM, and DevOps practices—or readily integrates with them—it can be even more advantageous. Connecting more broadly to other applications within the IT ecosystem provides context to operations outside of asset and configuration management, streamlines additional processes, and helps teams collaborate better. We'll explore this in more detail in the next section.

## Streamlining ITAM, CM, ITSM, and DevOps Practices with Atlassian Assets

In 2020, Atlassian purchased Mindville, makers of the leading asset and configuration management software, Insight. Since then, Atlassian has continued to augment the software and integrate it closely with its ITSM solution, Jira Service Management. Today, this powerful **asset and configuration management functionality is known as Assets and is available natively in Jira Service Management Cloud Premium and Enterprise.**

When most people think of ITAM and CM, they think of hardware and software, and that is certainly the most frequent and fundamental use case for any asset management solution. With Assets, teams can closely manage assets, configuration items, and other resources, see relationships between applications, services, and their underlying infrastructure, and come away with a better understanding of dependencies between them.

However, since Assets is deeply integrated with Jira Service Management, it also has some unique features that set it apart from other asset and configuration tools, and that means it has broader applications within ITSM and DevOps. It can also be used to bring additional information and useful context to change management, incident management, and problem management practices.

In this section, we'll cover some of the ways Assets can streamline ITAM, CM, ITSM, and DevOps practices.



## ○ Asset and Configuration Management

With Assets, IT teams can track virtually any type of asset for inventory management, financial planning, auditing, and compliance-related purposes, as well as see dependencies between assets and CIs. They can get additional context around each asset with custom statuses: for example, you could potentially see if an asset is assigned, unassigned, inactive, or being repaired. Assets supports automation of alerts (for things like license renewals), discovery of new assets linked to your network, and queries for auditing, cost management, and issue resolution purposes.

## ○ Service Management

With Assets, software and hardware can be linked to people, so when someone submits a request, the service desk agent can see everything connected to that person, and either link the asset in question to the issue, or automatically tie the asset to the issue. That way, the people working to resolve the issue have quick access to all the information about the asset in question, and about the person that submitted the request. Types of assets and/or issues can also be linked to business teams, and automation can be used to route requests for approvals or information about a service issue to the right people or teams.

## ○ Change Management

With Assets, development and operations teams can link relevant CIs to their change requests, so as the requests go through the approval process, change approvers can better understand what dependencies there are and what might be impacted if there's an issue. That way, they can better understand the risk involved before making a decision to deploy a change.

## ○ Incident and Problem Management

With Assets, services and their related components can be linked to the service desk, so when an issue or outage is reported, the ITSM team can quickly identify the affected service, and anything related to it, that might be impacted. That way, the team can let the service owners, as well as affected users and customers know, and most importantly, set the wheels in motion for resolving the issue faster. Assets also has reporting, so teams can get insight into assets and CIs that have issues, figure out what went wrong, and minimize future issues.

# Maximizing Your Investment in Assets: Non-Traditional Assets and Use Cases

One of the things that makes Assets so powerful is that **virtually any type of data can be imported and recognized as an asset**. This means that any type of information that would bring greater context to a JSM service request, incident, or change management practice can be brought into the system and made visible. It also greatly expands the number and types of use cases that Assets adds value to.

In this section, we'll cover five real-life examples demonstrating how both IT and business teams can use Assets outside of traditional asset management use cases.

## ○ People: Integrate with Active Directory and access relevant employee data

Assets can be integrated with your Active Directory software to pull in information at a regularly scheduled cadence. When people are configured as assets, they can have data points associated with them—phone number, email address, department, location, etc. The advantage of this is that when someone submits a ticket, the service desk agent handling the request has all this additional data beyond the person's name included in the ticket. It's also possible to build a structure linking employees, managers and supervisors, so when requests for hardware and/or software are submitted, the approval process is dynamically driven based on that organizational structure.

## ○ Clients: Provide a unique service portal experience

For organizations that have an externally facing JSM portal for their clients, usually all clients will have the same portal experience. When one organization wanted each of its clients to have a different experience, Isos created a unique, dynamic, and customized JSM portal experience for each of them by configuring the clients as assets. Like in the "people as assets" example above, the advantage of this is the ability to associate data points—in this case products used—with each of those clients.



Now, when one of those clients comes to the portal, they not only see their company's name, but the fields they see are auto-populated with values associated with their company, like what products that particular client uses. Those tickets are then routed to the service desk agent and/or account manager assigned to them.

### ○ **Products: Create a matrix of features and apps**

The client experience can be further customized by treating the products, features, and apps they use as assets. Then, when a customer submits a ticket about a problem with a specific product or related app, instead of the ticket auto-populating with every product associated with that customer's company, it instead populates with a brief list of only the products that particular individual uses.

On the backend, the organization can see how many clients are using specific products and their associated apps, and even build a visual matrix that links them together to make it easier to understand how they are all connected.

### ○ **Departments: Support compliance, change management, and incident management**

According to [Statista](#), in 2021, the average organization was using 110 different SaaS applications—and it follows that the onus is on IT teams to support them. By configuring departments (think accounting, human resources, legal, marketing, etc.) as assets within JSM, IT teams can better audit and manage the software and services associated with them, as well as incidents related to that software. From an audit perspective, tickets can be opened for every application that needs to be audited at any given cadence, so the organization can maintain compliance with regulations that affect its industry and/or a given department's focus.

From a change management perspective, by linking people to departments and software, the IT team can notify the right owners if changes need to be made to a certain application, and request approval. And in terms of incident management, if an incident occurs related to an application, the IT team can quickly see which departments are impacted and keep them updated—and the organization can get better insight into the overall business impact.

### ○ **Databases: Turn any data you have into assets**

At the start of this section, we said that **virtually any type of data can be imported into Assets and recognized as an asset**. This has far-reaching implications for the entire enterprise, not just for IT. As more organizations recognize the ITSM team's expertise in service delivery, and as they look to maximize their investment in software they already own, we're seeing a rapid increase in the adoption of JSM by business teams of all types—Accounting, Facilities, Human Resources, Legal, Marketing, and more. Each of these teams has assets and information they manage that is related to tickets, requests, and issues, or independent of them.

All of these teams can benefit from Assets, whether it is providing more context around a ticket, or managing information more efficiently and accurately. A straightforward example of data being imported into Assets might be a finance team bringing in a list of charge numbers formerly kept in an Excel spreadsheet. On the more complex end of the spectrum, Isos Technology imported large quantities of important historical data from old SQL databases into Assets for a large marketing team, so that information is now available to them in Jira.

## About Isos Technology

Isos Technology accelerates the innovation curve for companies that are changing the world. As a premier Atlassian Platinum and Enterprise Solution Partner with ITSM, Cloud, and Agile at Scale specializations, we make organizations' Atlassian tools work more efficiently and effectively, with the least amount of disruption, so that they can focus on their business priorities. Since 2005, our Atlassian-certified team has tackled some of the toughest problems companies face across ITSM, Agile, DevOps, and Cloud, and helped hundreds of organizations in both the private and public sectors get the most value out of their technology investment. Headquartered in Tempe, Arizona, and with offices across the U.S., Isos Technology has been recognized as an Atlassian Partner of the Year in both the ITSM and Enterprise categories, an Inc. 5000 Fastest-Growing Private Company, and a ClOReview Most Promising Agile Consulting Company. For more information, visit [isostech.com](https://isostech.com).





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