Maximizing Your Investment In A Multi-Cloud Environment

Is Your Service Desk Ready for AI?
How Atlassian Builds Software Products, DevOps Style
5 Steps to Knowledge-Centered Support

# Table of Contents

Maximizing Your Investment in a Multi-Cloud Environment  
Eight Steps to Self-Service Success  
Jira Service Desk, What’s New  
Is Your Service Desk Ready for AI?  
Five Steps to Knowledge-Centered Support  
How Atlassian Builds Software Products, DevOps Style  
What’s Going On With BMC Remedy?  
ScanStar Barcode Scanning
By providing unprecedented visibility into the complex multi-cloud environment, BMC Discovery enables you to optimize costs, reduce risk, and maximize your investment.

Organizations adopting cloud can use multi-cloud environments — multiple public cloud services, often along with on-premises physical, virtual, and private cloud infrastructure — in different ways. This adds elasticity and scalability to your infrastructure, but also makes it more difficult to gain a clear, holistic view across your IT ecosystem. Whether you’re running a hybrid cloud, multi-cloud, or both, a diverse environment depends on sophisticated discovery to optimize its performance and maximize its potential.

The importance of Multi-Cloud Discovery
Discovery plays a critical role in managing all the moving pieces of your growing infrastructure. A well-executed discovery initiative enables you to:

- Provide accurate asset information to assist decision making and help resolve incidents and problems faster.
- Define and maintain the components of business services, their role and ownership, how they relate to one another, and how they evolve over time.
- Provide means and processes to guarantee data quality.

5 Key Requirements for Multi-Cloud Discovery
1. Know what’s out there: Understand what compute resources and software you have deployed in multi-cloud environments and identify redundancies and suboptimal architecture deployments.
2. Transform your IT strategy: Model the current state to better assess which applications and services are good candidates to move as part of a cloud strategy.
3. Secure your infrastructure: Identify unused or obsolete servers, version sprawl, and internet-exposed cloud resources and what upstream applications may be at risk.
4. Manage your multi-cloud deployment: Relate cloud services to incidents, problems, and changes, and understand how internal infrastructure depends on cloud services and vice versa in hybrid application deployments.
5. Monitor your multi-cloud environment: Provide application models to understand dependencies and impact when events occur, and support activities to ensure monitoring of the entire environment by identifying resources which may not yet be monitored.

Automate Asset Discovery and Application Dependency Mapping
BMC Discovery, a multi-cloud discovery and dependency mapping solution, delivers these key capabilities and more. It creates a dynamic, holistic view of data center and multi-cloud assets and the relationships between them. As a result, IT gains critical visibility into how infrastructure enables digital business — and how it can continue to provide and drive value.

BMC Discovery scales across the largest and most complex multi-cloud environments, including AWS and Azure, to deliver unparalleled insight into your diverse infrastructure.

With BMC Discovery, you can eliminate cloud asset sprawl, understand how vulnerabilities affect applications and infrastructure, and gain the deepest insight into your environment and assets. This means you spend less time worrying about what you have, and more time transforming your business.

This article was adapted from BMC’s whitepaper “Why Discovery Is Critical To Multi-Cloud Success.” For a copy of the whitepaper, email valerie.wilson@rightstar.com.
Eight Steps to Self-Service Success

*Introducing user self-service into ITSM is one of the most important tools at your disposal for simplifying the management of your service desk.*

1. **Identify your audience and their needs.**
   Understand the spectrum of diverse users who exist in your organization. Determine the needs of each segment by such things as demographics, products usage, skill-level with IT products and services, and users’ access preferences within the self-service function.

2. **Define and standardize services.**
   To be efficient, services should be standardized around use cases, such as the onboarding and provisioning of equipment for new employees. Once this has been automated, it becomes easier to make small adjustments that may be necessary for specific locations, for example, linking smartphone orders for new employees to a local telecom supplier.

3. **Choose the right ITSM/self-service solution.**
   This should ideally feature an app store-like interface that gives users a consumer-style experience when choosing and consuming corporate IT services. This solution should also automate every service-related process, from order to approval and delivery, right through to on-going maintenance and management. The solution should be available for both desktops and mobile devices.

4. **Build a consumer-like service catalog.**
   Business users want a consumer-like experience with IT. Using ITSM, the IT department can provide a catalog of services from which business users can choose the IT services and solutions they need. A solution like BMC’s Digital Workplace allows organizations to create an approved list of apps and services that users can search through, and use to choose the right solution for their specific needs. Equally important is that users understand the value of the services they request. If no cost is attached to a service, users could use it unnecessarily.

5. **Create a living knowledgebase.**
   The most effective way to get a knowledgebase up and running is to use a method called knowledge-centered support (KCS). KCS provides businesses with the processes and best practices they need to capture, share, and update solutions to resolve IT issues. In addition, leverage the power of crowdsourcing. Make it possible for users to help each other. Online Q&A communities like Yahoo Answers and Stack Overflow allow people to share their knowledge. This also allows IT staff to see what users are talking about and target areas for improvement.

6. **Define a way to measure value.**
   Measure performance by such things as user satisfaction or the number of Level 1 calls resolved without assistance from the service desk. Keep in mind that a self-service initiative is never really finished. Listen to the voices of users. Input can come through various means — phone calls, emails, and texts.

7. **Do extensive marketing.**
   Simply offering self-service won’t automatically win over users. Although most users will eventually move to self-service, it needs to be easy to find and learn to wean them off assisted service.

8. **Make it accessible from any device, at any time, from anywhere.**
   Many of your users have multiple devices that they use in different places in different ways. They expect to be able to use self-service from whatever device they happen to be using.

**Jira Service Desk, what’s new!**

**Request help without having to create an account**
Now your team can provide great customer service to new customers: They no longer have to go through hoops in order to request help. With a login-free portal, customers can send requests and read help articles without having to create or remember another login. When customers send your team a request, all they need to provide is an email address so they can receive updates. After they send the request, they can follow its progress via email notifications, or finish setting up an account to follow along in the portal.

**Jira Service Desk is now in 8 languages**
We’re excited to announce language support within Jira Service Desk, where you can create and manage customer-facing translations both within the customer portal and email notifications. Customer service is all about empowering customers to resolve problems. And all of us, really, have the same goal: for customers to have the best experience. Language support is an obvious way to make the customer experience excellent. Use it within the customer portal and translate customer emails in up to 8 languages. Delight them with an experience in their language: English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Russian, Korean, and Japanese.

Jump on board and join hundreds who are already using a multilingual Jira Service Desk to give great support to their global customers.

**A customer service template to help you get started faster**
Over 60% of our customers use Jira Service Desk to deliver great customer service. Whether your team is small or large, we want to make sure you give your customers the best experience. That’s why we’re introducing two features to make service easier:

- A customer service template to help your team get started faster
- An login-free portal so your customers can get help without a login

With the customer service template, you’re just one click away from being ready to receive tickets from your customers. Designed from our own research and industry best practices, the template is based on how successful customer service teams set up their own Jira Service Desk projects.

The template includes:

- 7 request types to help your customers get technical support, report bugs, make suggestions, and more
- Workflows for requests, bug reports, and new features
- 8 reports to help you measure your team’s performance

This is an excerpt from an Atlassian blog article published on May 15, 2017. To read the article in full, go to [https://www.atlassian.com/blog/jira-service-desk/8-languages-customer-service-template-login-free-customer-portal](https://www.atlassian.com/blog/jira-service-desk/8-languages-customer-service-template-login-free-customer-portal)
I just finished a new non-fiction best seller, *Life 3.0, Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*, by Mark Tegmark, an MIT professor and expert in this space. It is an excellent, comprehensive book that covers, the past, present and future of AI, including topics such as machine learning, weapons, future scenarios, and consciousness. “Life 3.0,” by the way hasn’t arrived yet. It is the stage when AI will merge with humanity and allow us to evolve our “own software and hardware, without having to wait for it to gradually evolve over generations.” And Life 3.0 will arrive sooner than many think possible.

Customer support and service is clearly a good fit for the use of AI on a service desk.

As I mentioned in a previous post, another BMC partner is offering a Remedy AI solution from Next IT, an AI company focused on virtual agents, or chatbots. Next IT offers virtual agent technology to enable better communication between companies and their customers and prospective customers. And just yesterday at Exchange NY, BMC rolled out its AI offering or Cognitive Service Management (CSM) to its customers.

CSM encompasses predicative intelligence, virtual agents, and a digital workplace chatbot. Built on top of the Remedy Innovation Suite, a customer can connect with either a live or virtual agent using any type of messaging such as chat or voice. The beauty of the Innovation Suite is that it allows developers or customers to incorporate cognitive services into complex custom processes and workflows. IBM’s Watson is the “brains” behind the scenes. The objective: provide a rapid and excellent response, with an impressive ROI, by removing the human interaction. It’s not clear when CSM will start shipping from BMC, but early next year is likely.

Where’s ServiceNow? My guess is that BMC is well ahead of ServiceNow, thanks to its head start in its Digital Workplace technology (MyIT and Smart IT) and its Innovation Suite platform. Although ServiceNow bought Qlue, a virtual agent technology startup, BMC should easily retain its innovation advantage with its Cognitive Service Management offerings.

Visit Dick Stark’s blog at [http://dick1stark.com](http://dick1stark.com)
Knowledge lies at the heart of every service desk. It’s how agents respond to problems and learn about the systems they administer. But, there are bottlenecks to creating a knowledge center: too many review cycles, not enough time, and content that’s divorced from the customer context. Knowledge-Centered Support, or KCS®, addresses these pitfalls to enable better internal and external knowledge sharing. Having a knowledge-centered service desk allows teams to respond to issues quicker, resolve complex issues faster, provide consistent answers, build better resources for learning, and enables self-service.

What is KCS?
Knowledge-centered support is a methodology that focuses on knowledge as a key asset of the organization. KCS is not something to do in addition to solving issues, KCS becomes the way in which you resolve issues. KCS does not replace the knowledge and experience of your support agents—rather, it complements them. Organizations that have implemented KCS report dramatic improvements in operating costs, incident/request resolution, customer satisfaction, job satisfaction, and significant reduction in training times.

How does it work?
Knowledge-centered support follows a continuous loop of capturing, structuring, and reusing content.

Step 1: Capture Knowledge
Knowledge starts with the customer. When requests come in, articles are created as a by-product of the problem-solving process. This means that your team writes articles in the customer context, making information inherently relevant and easily searchable.

Step 2: Structure Knowledge
The best way to write an article from the customer’s perspective is to work from a template or form. This keeps things simple for service desk agents and promotes consistency in the knowledge base.

Step 3: Reuse Knowledge
When working on customer issues, agents should search through the knowledge base. They can then link incidents to relevant articles, making sure the team works from their collective knowledge.

Step 4: Improve Knowledge
The next step is improving content. When agents reuse articles in their problem-solving process, they’re reviewing them at the same time. Frequently used articles are constantly being seen and therefore remain current. This keeps your knowledge up-to-date and shares ownership across the entire team. Once an article is ready, it can be pushed to customers.

Step 5: Content Health
One way of improving the quality of your content is knowledge monitoring. Measure how effective each article is at solving problems and only put resources toward high-demand, cost-reducing knowledge.

This article was originally published in the Atlassian Blog. [https://www.atlassian.com/it-unplugged/knowledge-management/get-started-with-knowledge-centered-support](https://www.atlassian.com/it-unplugged/knowledge-management/get-started-with-knowledge-centered-support)
Here are six best practices for building software products, DevOps style:

1. **Gather feedback and use it to shape and build features**
   The easiest way to make your product better is to listen to the people that use it. You can collect feedback from just about every source imaginable.
   - Ask for in-product feedback.
   - Collect user feedback from online surveys.
   - Monitor social media channels like Twitter and Facebook.
   - Use Apdex scores to monitor whether your users are satisfied with your service’s response times.
   Be sure to listen to your customer feedback, discuss it with your team, and take action when possible.

2. **Plan together in sprints**
   Bring your development teams together to meet on a weekly basis. Use the time to:
   - Demo everything that was built in the previous week to keep the team informed and connected.
   - Review the objectives and sprint goals established the previous week and agree on whether they were achieved.
   - Define your objectives for your next sprints. A sprint is usually a unit of work that you have to be able to demo to the team or ship to production at the end of the sprint.

3. **Spike early and often**
   You’re probably familiar with the term “spike” in agile development. A spike is a short effort to gather information, validate ideas, identify early obstacles, and guesstimate the size of initiatives. Instead of building a shippable product, focus on end-to-end prototyping, to arm you with the knowledge you need to get the job done right. Rotate regularly between normal sprints and spikes, and hold regular “innovation weeks” that result in prototypes and insights around project scope and approach.

4. **Keep even the biggest changes small**
   Instead of shipping big things infrequently, ship small changes very often. It makes it easy to roll back a particular change if you need to, or fix and roll forward. For really big changes, like highly anticipated new features, for example, continue to take the “start small” approach, setting step-by-step goals and running frequent A/B tests and experiments to see what your users like best.

5. **Git + Bitbucket + Bamboo**
   Atlassian uses Git and Bitbucket, using feature branches to make continuous integration far more effective. Any feature, however small, translates into a feature branch, which is automatically tested via Bamboo builds. After testing a feature branch, Atlassian selects a minimum of two reviewers from the team to review and verify code. Once they have a green build and 2 approvals, they’re good to go.

6. **Encourage Accountability**
   Atlassian follows the DevOps principle, “you build it, you ship it, you run it,” meaning the team that is responsible for writing a feature becomes to team responsible for deploying it and providing ongoing maintenance once it’s live.

To request a copy of the eBook, email valerie.wilson@rightstar.com.
So what’s going on with Remedy? Here are 7 exciting features of Remedy that are worth noting:

1. **Digital Workplace, Basic and Advanced**
   MyIT has become Digital Workplace, because it’s doing so much more than just end user ticket entry. When you use the advanced version – which includes Service Broker Edition – you now have a single Service Catalog that can link to multiple back end systems. What does this mean? Someone who is reporting a bug on an application – their ticket can go straight to your Jira Software system. Another person can come in, request a class, and that request can go to the solution that you use to handle your education registration. And by the way, there are some hybrid deployment options available: your Digital Workplace install can be in BMC’s cloud data center, while your Remedy ITSM solution is on premise.

2. **Smart IT**
   Smart IT is up to version 1.6. In 1.6, support for Release Management was added. You can also now update tickets in bulk from the console; have an “assign to me” button on a ticket; and apply task phases to the tasks on Change records. And in case you missed the 1.5.0/1.5.1 list of enhancements – they added support for task sequencing; support to print tickets and assets from the Universal Client; and you can link to cloud storage documents. Also, you can now view “Decision Tree” knowledgebase articles and can set some pre-sets in the console.

3. **Smart IT and BMC’s Client Management (BCM) integration**
   You can now integrate BCM with Smart IT. That means from a Smart IT ticket, you can see Asset Details, do Audit Now, Check the Connection (ping the device), Reboot, Shut Down, or Wake Up a device. If you’ve been hesitating about implementing BCM – this is yet another reason to do it!

4. **Data Loss Prevention (DLP)**
   I’m not sure this ever got enough attention; have you heard about Data Loss Prevention and Remedy ITSM? As I understand it, if you register Remedy ITSM with Office 365, then you can subscribe to DLP events from Office 365. Copying from the BMC Docs site, “You can subscribe to the following events: Microsoft SharePoint - To track document violations in SharePoint O365 that match one or more DLP rule conditions; Microsoft Exchange - To track email violations in Exchange O365 with content that matches one or more DLP rule conditions.” What does this all mean? You can help ensure that end users do not send sensitive information outside of the company network by creating tickets when it happens. And there are reports included to track items such as how many times a certain document was shared outside the organization and how many times the sharing of sensitive information was blocked (among others).

5. **And in the boring but so happy to see it category**
   With Remedy ITSM 9.1, we have the company field back in the onboarding spreadsheets! It has been added back to the PeopleOrg, Location, Support_Group, People, and Financials spreadsheets.

6. **Knowledge Centered Support (KCS) is here**
   For those of you following the KCS standards, Remedy ITSM supports you now! You can have coaches, teams, and Article Quality Index (AQI) questions. This is exposed in Smart IT, so if you haven’t moved to Smart IT yet – this might be a good reason to make the move!

7. **And in case you haven’t run across this**
   With ITSM 9.0, you can now import in People information from your LDAP directory using the Data Management Tool – and keep it synchronized over time. That’s a nice addition! More information here - [https://docs.bmc.com/docs/display/public/itsm90/Onboarding+Foundation+and+Assignment+data#OnboardingFoundationandAssignmentdata-ldapimport](https://docs.bmc.com/docs/display/public/itsm90/Onboarding+Foundation+and+Assignment+data#OnboardingFoundationandAssignmentdata-ldapimport)
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For a demo, please email sales@rightstar.com