

Plan Building with ServiceNow Business Continuity Management



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An Enterprise Platform Solution

Plan building with ServiceNow Business Continuity Management (BCM) has never been about simply entering data and printing it out. From our first design sessions, we wanted the software to support a major cultural shift. ServiceNow BCM is designed for the organizational change that true resilience requires. Building it on an existing platform is the key. Organizations cannot expect to support a cultural shift where employees adopt resilient practices into daily routines and then ask them to learn a new system that lives outside of the tools they use normally, just to document their recovery plans.

The Now Platform® provides organizations with the opportunity to break down silos and facilitate collaboration across the enterprise, in addition to operationalizing business continuity and disaster recovery. It consolidates all the data needed for planning and organizes the full catalog of enterprise data into a single system of record. This eliminates the need for planners to create data records for the purpose of plan creation – just select the necessary data. Plan creation then becomes the arrangement of existing information into the logical association of recovery data.

ServiceNow is a leader in the Integrated Risk Management (IRM) and Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) space, ServiceNow offers the opportunity to help close the gap between business continuity and disaster recovery. Blending IRM and ITSM with disaster recovery and business continuity enables you to make the shift to a culture of resilience.

Business Continuity adoption at any level of the organization does not just happen, you earn it. People need multiple reasons to access your Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery program on a weekly or even daily basis. This happens when your program provides value beyond the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery boundaries.

The Planning Experience

There was one unified call for the design of the planning experience. It was more than a call; it was a demand. It was a demand from an exasperated software user community that was tired of learning and re-learning tools that they use too infrequently to master and that are too heavy on functionality and light on usability. Plan building needed to be simplified.

User-Familiar

We call software like ServiceNow BCM 'User-Familiar'. User-familiar describes a system that goes a step beyond user-friendly. User-familiar has the feel of something that the user has already mastered. It is not just friendly or intuitive. ServiceNow BCM is like tools that users use all the time. The interaction is effortless. Users quickly adapt and become fluent within a few moments of logging into the tool.

Minimal Training Required

With ServiceNow BCM, training requirements are minimal. A five-minute orientation is more than enough for the typical plan builder. Many users require no training at all. The experience is similar to an online banking application or a social media site.

Reduced Support Requirements

The user-familiar plan interface means support requirements are reduced or eliminated. Business Continuity Program Managers are free to focus on improving organizational resilience, rather than responding to software support requests.

Added Value

A user-familiar planning experience means that the value proposition for plan builders is clear: The plan document and reporting intelligence available in ServiceNow BCM by far outweigh the minimal effort required to build and maintain a plan. Planners are more likely to utilize the system since they find the experience pleasant; thus raising the probability their plans will be timely and actionable and improving the likelihood that the organizational response to and recovery from a disruption will be effective.

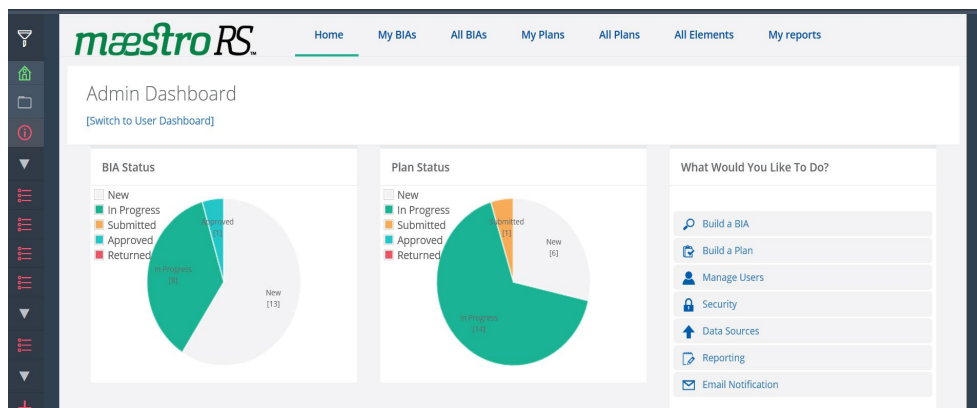


Figure 1: Administrative level dashboard tracks BIA and plan status



Key Planning Features

There are multiple system features that elevate ServiceNow BCM beyond other planning systems.

User Specific Dashboard

Each user has a custom dashboard viewable upon login that immediately presents the user with the current status of their plan-related activities. The dashboard is a gateway to open the plans available for access to the user through security.

A Single-Screen Interface for Plan Building and Maintenance

Building a plan in ServiceNow BCM means working within a single user screen with tools to easily expand the sections to be completed, collapse those that are not the current focus, re-sequence sections, and rapidly navigate to the exact area of interest. Plan navigation is as simple as scrolling up or down a webpage.

Consistent Design

The links and buttons for working within the plan are easy to locate. Planners quickly identify the design standards and are empowered to add, remove, or edit the elements in their plan without support.

Enhanced Dependency Mapping

There are simply more entities available to be included in dependency maps in ServiceNow BCM. That means more complete documentation and reporting on resilience across the organization. It also means quickly understanding the impact of a disruption exactly when speed matters most.

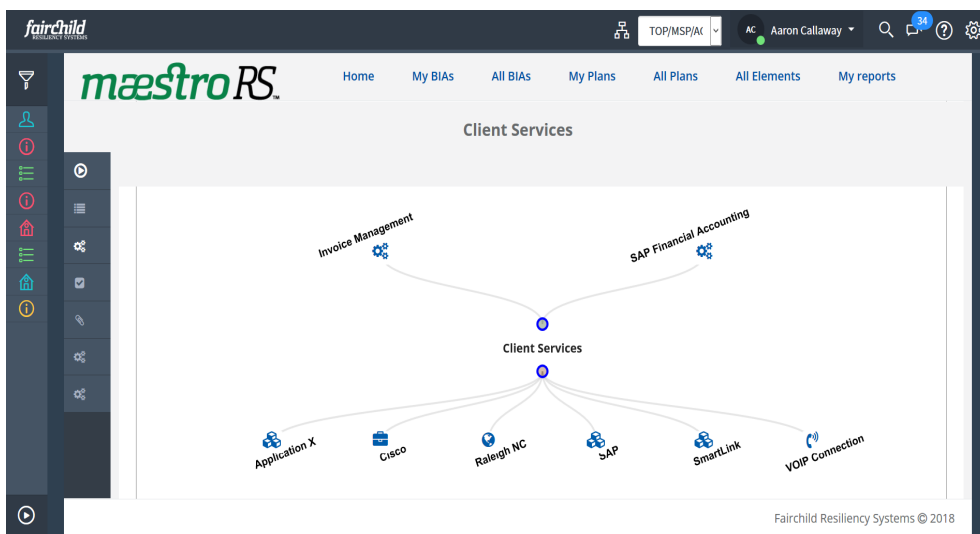
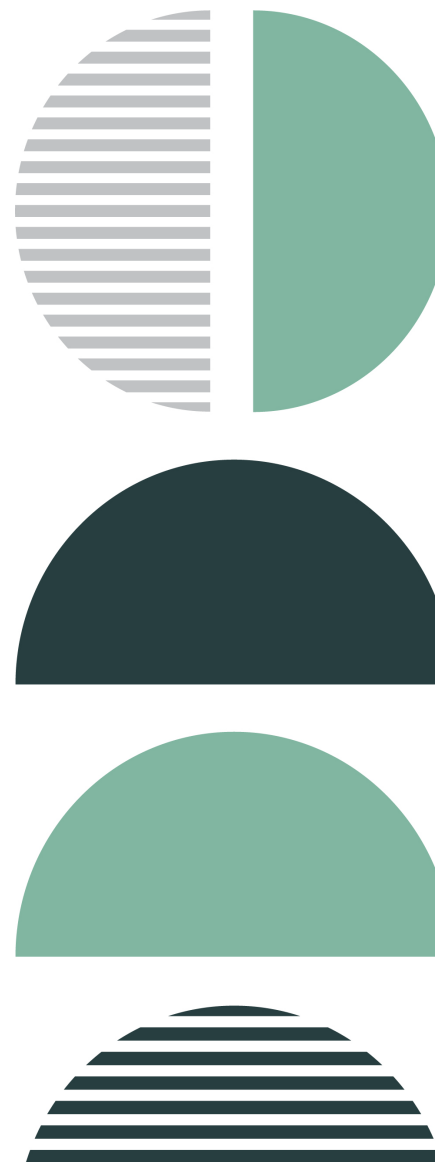


Figure 2: View upstream and downstream dependencies pulled directly from the ServiceNow CMDB



Gap Identification

ServiceNow BCM auto-calculates recovery gaps between primary elements. The comparison between Recovery Time Objectives(RTO) and/or Recovery Time Achievable (RTA) is automatically performed by the system when a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) is completed or a dependency is mapped. Color coding in the dependency map allows users to quickly identify gaps and start the process of remediation. If the organization determines that the risk identified will be tolerated, the acceptance of the gap can be documented and displayed as such in the dependency map.

Record-specific Attachments

Planners can upload files and attach them to any record assigned to the plan. This is in addition to the ability to upload attachments and assign them to the plan in general.

Plan Approval Workflow

ServiceNow BCM includes a customizable plan approval workflow. The system will track the frequency at which the plan requires review and approval, and it will send notifications to designated personnel as action is required. The settings for the approval calendar as well as the messages that are sent from the system are all editable.

Recovery & Exercise Management (REM)

ServiceNow BCM includes a Recovery & Exercise Management (REM) module that allows you to centrally manage exercises or events virtually. Selecting the plans to activate or exercise and thus the procedures required for recovery in a visual manner simplifies response and recovery, and it allows crisis teams to direct resources, adapt to changing conditions, and implement strategies more effectively. Identifying the right people to virtually assemble in order to react and respond to exercised and rehearsed tasks can be the difference between a minor and major disruption. Communication is simplified through mobile device capabilities and by using the ServiceNow "Connect" feature. Incident Commanders, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff, and Crisis Management Teams can view available personnel in order to involve the necessary skill sets at the click of a button. Time keeping features and status tracking for the event can all be conveyed to key stake holders via simple dashboard interface.

Time-consuming post-event activities such as managing lessons learned and remediation, as well as After Action Reporting are streamlined as a core functionality of REM. All the event data in REM is captured for future consideration and implementation.

The ServiceNow BCM Difference

User familiarity and the key planning elements are the difference in being successful in planning and program management. The operationalization of planning –bringing business continuity planning and disaster recovery into the same solution and leveraging the single source of truth –is a key distinction that must not be undervalued. Simple and Powerful. User-Familiarity. "Work where they work". These are the building block concepts that allow ServiceNow BCM be distinct in a sea of sameness.

