A COMPARATIVE REPORT:

The CMDB and Social Knowledge Management

A Comparative Report of Traditional CMDBs (and CMSs) and
ITinvolve's Approach Based on Social Knowledge Management

ITinvolve
People Powered IT ™

Stop the Insanity!

In a recent study conducted jointly by Forrester Research and ITSM, only 25% of ITSM professionals surveyed that have deployed CMDBs are enjoying success with the implementation. When speaking to IT professionals, the praises for their organization's CMDB, or the slightly evolved CMS approach, are few and far between; and, even when it is acknowledged as something positive, the positive reviews come with significant caveats.

If you know that having a good understanding of the IT environment is absolutely necessary to manage your environment. And, you believe:

- Understanding the IT environment is not just about infrastructure and application connections. i.e. understanding those connections are necessary but not sufficient

- What is needed is a simple and effective tool to understand and visualize dependencies between people, infrastructure, policies, services and more

Then, this white paper is for you.

Why So Many CMDB Initiatives Fail

Ask any 10 IT professionals why CMDB initiatives fail and you will likely get at least that many answers. However there are common reoccurring themes associated with CMDBs:

- Data in the CMDB cannot be trusted
- Projects consume vast amounts of time and resources
- Too difficult to use for little or no value to end users
- No ability for users to create custom visualization of information to meet their needs
- Forced, stringent centralization of knowledge

Fundamentally it comes down to users not trusting the information provided through the CMDB as an accurate data source. CMDB's rely on auto discovery as their primary information source and then use a relatively few individuals to cleanse the data. The problem with this approach is that it ignores the knowledge of the many IT professionals tasked with managing the environment. Harnessing the knowledge of those individuals is key to assuring an up-to-date and accurate view of the IT environment

There Is A Better Way

ITinvolve is a revolutionary new way to understand and manage your IT environment. We agree with the fundamental need to understand relationships and dependencies. *But, in contrast to CMDBs whose primary source of information comes from auto-discovered content managed by dedicated teams, we believe a complex IT environment can only be effectively understood by capturing the collective knowledge of your IT professionals.*

ITinvolve recognizes that a comprehensive understanding of the IT environment requires each user to take ownership of the objects and knowledge in which they have expertise. We leverage multiple data sources to create an accurate view of the IT environment including the use of traditional CMDB auto-discovered information. However, we go far beyond the limitations of CMDB's and include information from wiki's, spreadsheets, and perhaps most importantly, information IT professionals have historically maintained only in their heads. Our secret is making sure the benefit of the knowledge provided by ITinvolve to the individual user, and the team, outweighs any input effort required, even in isolated use cases.

The CMDB and Social Knowledge Management

Value	ITinvolve	Traditional CMDB
Collect all types of data, but only collect data that matters	ITinvolve seamlessly and easily provides data about policies, people, key settings, and unstructured knowledge surrounding a particular IT object. Thus, all relevant data is accessible from one place.	Tries to collect all information for a C.I., regardless of value, while failing to adequately relate unstructured knowledge to C.I.; for example policies or people or tribal knowledge.
Use social collaboration effectively	Provides subscription based social collaboration that filters conversations to specific items relevant to the user. Any important information from the collaboration can be promoted in context of the discussion to ensure information is not lost in a difficult to search database.	No CMDB on the market provides this capability.
Organize and visualize information around anything	To ITinvolve, an object can be anything- a person, physical or virtual device, application, policy, or business service. Relevant information is presented around that object with easy visualization and drill down capabilities.	No CMDB on the market provides this capability. Visualization is generic and users are left to provide context that often requires users to navigate irrelevant paths to get to required knowledge.
Keep knowledge anywhere	Keep knowledge in Wikis, SharePoint sites, File shares, or add them as attachments. Knowledge can be kept where it is best managed and linked to objects in ITinvolve for Social Knowledge Management for quick easy access.	CMDB's attempt to centralize and capture all knowledge resulting in a difficult to manage repository that is often out of date. Thus, users do not trust the data. And, users are left to hunt for information across multiple data sources which is both inefficient and often incomplete
Comprehensive out-of-box Auto Discovery	No out-of-the-box auto discovery. Easily integrate auto discovery products via data loader, existing CMDB's or CMS's or product's comprehensive APIs. Designed for IT Professionals to also want to maintain and use because of value they receive.	Perceived strength of many traditional CMDB's, however, results are typically not trusted by IT Professionals.
Source of IT knowledge	Huge amounts of critical information reside in the heads of IT professionals. We simplify the capturing of knowledge and make it a natural extension of our approach. Whether information is entered into ITinvolve by a person, or through automation, IT professionals collaborate on its accuracy and relevance.	No CMDB on the market makes IT Professionals one of the primary sources of information. Nor, are collaborations between IT Professionals captured for future use.
Portably designed for IT Professionals to use whenever and wherever they choose	Works when and where IT professionals are and need information. 100% Web based, no cumbersome UIs. Easy navigation. Faster to use than Excel and more available than Sticky notes.	For Most CMDB's, web interface is afterthought. UI's are cumbersome and often times slow. Proven slower to update and use than Excel, and seldom more available than Sticky notes.
Ability to easily associate policy and compliance knowledge	Includes Security and Compliance teams as stakeholders, and enables both more efficient and effective communication of policies and their relationships and impacts on objects	No CMDB on the market provides this capability.

See how ITinvolve can help you manage IT knowledge in a way that has been unheard of until now by reviewing the comparison table provided here and by visiting our web site at www.itinvolve.com.

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