



_ITSM simplified
Portfolio management

Portfolio management

Portfolio management is the act of understanding the projects, products, services, customers, and more to support your business goals. Here we will discuss service portfolio management as that is the most relevant to service configuration management. Customer portfolio management, for example, is best left to a customer relationship management tool.

Service portfolio management helps you ensure that you have the correct business services for your customers to help grow the business. It compliments service configuration management nicely to give you a complete understanding of your services.

What is service portfolio management?

Service portfolio management is the act of documenting internal and external business services and their customers, history, status, and more. This information is used to support decision making, justify current and new services, and analyse the risks and costs of changing services.

How can service configuration management assist portfolio management?

Service portfolio management usually has three main elements:

- Service pipeline – upcoming services in development and upgrades to current services.
- Service catalog – current, customer visible, services.
- Retired services catalog – documentation of essential information from older services.

A CMDB can be used to document this information. A mature configuration management system should detail all of your services as CIs anyway so it's relatively simple to give them extra attributes or link these to other CIs for the purpose of service portfolio management. This means that all information, whether it's high-level business focused or low-level operations focused, is available in one tool. If you need to understand or update both at the same time, you can do it all from the same place.

Also information from your portfolio management view is going to inform the business priority of your services. Which in turn, is useful information to know when, for example, an incident occurs. So documenting everything in the same place can be helpful for streamlining change, incident, and problem management practices.

Service	
Webshop 2.0	Pipeline
Google Cloud	Pipeline
Marketing service	In service
Azure	In service
Confluence	In service
Billing	In service
Jira Service Management	In service
Jira Software	In service
Salesforce	In service
Stripe	In service
HubSpot	In service
Webshop 1.0	Retired
Old billing service	Retired

Billing

Catalog status IN SERVICE

Status RUNNING

Importance ↑ 2 - High

Service category ⋮ External facing system ⋮ Commerce

Referenced Host/s 📄 Appserver-fulfilment-30493

There are many portfolio management activities that can be supported by service configuration management.

Portfolio management activity	How service configuration management can help
Ensuring each service in your catalog is performing as expected and identifying any required adjustments.	Because every incident, change, and problem for a service in your CMDB can be recorded, you are able to get valuable input for this activity. For example, seeing if a service is meeting its agreed uptime by looking at the duration of incidents it's had.
Understanding your service catalog and the lifecycle of your services.	Document your services and products including CI attributes such as catalog status, service category, number of uses etc. to give you the business overview you need.
Understanding which business goals or desired outcomes a particular service is supporting.	Document your high-level objectives in your CMDB as CIs and link these to your services. Now you get a high-level overview by clicking on a service CI or a "business objective" CI.
Evaluating change requests for existing services.	Looking at the particular service to understand both its importance to your business, but also its supporting applications and infrastructure to understand the impact of the proposed change.
Tracking your service investments to ensure you're getting a desirable return on your investment.	Use configuration management information to get details about your services, such as the number of users, cost of supporting software licenses, cost of supporting infrastructure etc. to help with this assessment.
Prioritizing requests for new services.	Using your service catalog to understand if new services and products fill gaps in your current offering.



Tips & advice

A good place to start is with the advice in the change and incident management sections as they share advice on getting a good overview of your services and their dependencies.

From that, you can expand into portfolio management. There's two main ways to do this. Either by adding the portfolio management details to the service CIs as new attributes. Or by creating a separate store of the portfolio information that is linked to the service CI.

Extra attributes that would be more useful for the portfolio side of things include information about the users, portfolio status ("Pipeline", "In service", "Retired"), user numbers, operational cost, type of service ("financial", "marketing", "internal", "external" etc), owner (from a business perspective), and much more to give you this high-level business overview.

It's up to you to decide how you want to structure this as it depends on your needs. In most cases the information will be viewed by different people so splitting the portfolio and configuration data (but keeping a link) is often best as it will keep everything more user friendly and not present users with information they don't care about.

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