

ServiceNow Application Extensions and Application Templates

Introduction

Organizations may have the need for more than one business unit or department to leverage the same ServiceNow application. This often leads to over configuration and customization of the out-of-the-box application to support everyone's requirements.

Practice

- Single instance environments
- Domain separation isn't a fit
- Process separation is desired
- Global organization, shared services, Center of Excellence (CoE)
- Subsequent update/release CM – how to manage impact from ServiceNow releases

New Implementation Practices

- Naming convention for applications
- Naming convention for sub-prod environments
- Establish governance process prior to initial go live
- Establish role of process/application owners for global process/application scope

ServiceNow supports “Extending” out-of-the-box applications, as well as “Application Templates”. Both methods allow for each business unit or department to operate in their own working application space. Security controls and configuration may be tailored to each group as appropriate, and inherit from the parent configuration when appropriate.

Why:

Prevent over configuring a shared application.

How:

Extend the out-of-the-box applications such as Incident, Change, Project, etc., or leverage the Service Management application templates.

Approach:

Set and configure company-wide standards at the parent “global” application module, and allow for business units and departments to have their own set of records, configurations, security controls, etc., within their own application space within ServiceNow. This allows the global applications to remain near out-of-the-box, so that only relevant shared configuration is adopted by all business units and departments.

Examples for Global Configuration:

Company-wide standards:

- Location data (shared reference data)
- Brand data (shared reference data)
- Company data (shared vendor, location and affiliate data)
- User and Department data (corporate standards for user and organizational information)

Potential Global Standards:

- Categories
- Classifications
- Priority specifications

Examples for BU/Department extensions:

- Custom Forms
- New Fields
- Process Deviation
- BU/Department specific UI actions and rules
- Record separation for reporting
- Segregate security control

This approach allows you to set global standards at the parent module (like Brand info, Location details, and other corporate standards), and allows for various business units or departments to have their own sets of records, configurations, security, etc. within their own application space. This helps with conflict management and still supports reporting from the parent when appropriate.

When to use:

- When a ServiceNow application will be used by more than one BU/Department
- To retain ServiceNow out-of-the-box application, and “scope” configuration changes to the platform
- When multi-tenancy is desired, but not operating as a MSP

Advantages:

- Leverage parent application business rules, forms, views, configuration
- Process deviation or process isolation
- Allows for department specific data, without over complicating another department’s experience
- Allow for data segregation (for reporting, viewing, security, etc.)
- Creates tailored configuration without impacting the out-of-the-box configuration
- Isolates configuration from out-of-the-box provided ServiceNow applications
- Allows for Application Scoping, which allows additional security controls for admins and users

Scope Applications

Each application has an application scope that determines which of its resources are available to other parts of the system. Application scoping ensures that one application does not impact another application. You can specify what parts of the application other applications can access by changing application access settings.

Private Scope

Applications in a private application scope restrict access to their application artifacts so that only application artifacts in the same scope have full access to create, modify, remove, or run application data. As the application developer, you set what parts of an application are accessible from other application scopes with application access settings.

Global Scope:

Applications in the global scope are similar to shared resources that any application developer can modify. Global scope applications do not have a unique namespace identifier included in their application artifact names, but they can have their own application access permissions. Typically, only applications provided by ServiceNow are in the global scope. However, all custom applications created before the application scope was implemented are also in the global scope.