Proactive Incident and Problem Management
Increase responsiveness and drive innovation with intelligent analytics and automated control

As enterprise infrastructures have grown, IT’s approach to managing incidents and problems has evolved from help desk to tiered support to integrated management. The problem with all these approaches is that they are inherently reactive—all are variations on waiting for notification about incidents that have already occurred. Beyond the obvious issues related to their inefficiency and costliness, the cloud makes these reactive approaches untenable for additional reasons, including the larger number of objects that must be managed and the abstraction of the physical infrastructure.

To realize the full potential of the cloud, organizations need to replace their reactive approaches with proactive incident and problem management systems that are as agile and dynamic as the cloud itself. Proactive incident and problem management includes automated workflows to remediate incidents with little or no human input. Instead of waiting for problems to occur, cloud operations managers forecast key performance indicators (KPIs) and optimize and automate the IT processes related to those parameters. Unlike the reactive approach, proactive management prevents problems from occurring in the first place.

Business Impact
Proactive incident and problem management delivers numerous benefits that meet corporate mandates to improve efficiency, agility and reliability.

- **Efficiency—Shift IT staff time from break-fix to innovation and reduce operating expenses**
  Proactive incident and problem management reduces the time IT staff spends fixing problems—a major resource drain for any business. IT resources can be redeployed from problem-solving and routine, labor-intensive tasks such as provisioning to focus on long-range planning and other high-value initiatives. At the same time, organizations benefit from lower operating expenses thanks to substantial reductions in per-incident costs, the number of incidents related to infrastructure changes, the number of erroneous tickets and problem closure time.

- **Agility—Improve responsiveness to needs of business users**
  With proactive incident and problem management, IT staff has the resources they need to respond faster to new requirements—in other words, the organization becomes more agile. IT can work closely with business units to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, which helps them build a trusting and cooperative working relationship. As services are deployed faster, the organization gains a first-mover advantage and competitive differentiation in the marketplace.

- **Reliability—Reduce downtime and boost service-level agreement (SLA) compliance**
  With a proactive system, IT managers can anticipate problems before they occur, which increases business confidence. Downtime is greatly reduced, and when it occurs, the mean time to repair is shorter because of targeted troubleshooting. Through intelligent analytics and forecasting, many problems are averted entirely and IT managers can schedule responses in advance as maintenance activities. The net effect is that users can be more productive, fewer IT resources are diverted from strategic projects to break-fix activities, and IT is in a better position to deliver on its SLAs while still driving innovation.

**Needs**
- Anticipate problem situations instead of reacting to them
- Reduce downtime associated with component repair
- Minimize IT time spent on break-fix

**Solution**
Proactive incident and problem management featuring:
- Automated workflows for incident remediation
- KPI forecasting and proactive planning
- Emphasis on prevention, not reaction

**Business Impact**
- **Efficiency**: Lower IT expenses and free up resources for innovation
- **Agility**: Improve responsiveness to needs of business users
- **Reliability**: Reduce downtime and improve compliance to service-level agreements (SLAs)

**Key Success Factors**
- Executive sponsorship
- Pilot program
- Internal education
Key Success Factors

VMware has identified key factors in proactive incident and problem management that can help organizations capture the efficiency, agility and reliability benefits of cloud computing.

- **Executive sponsorship:** By agreeing on clear strategic objectives, executive sponsors can facilitate decision-making, prevent confusion and limit disputes.

- **Pilot program:** Rolling out a small-scale pilot implementation alongside the existing system enables IT managers to compare results, develop trust with the proactive system and eventually phase out the legacy system without impacting reliability.

- **Internal education:** In its emerging role as a service broker, IT must continually educate business leaders on new cloud capabilities and their benefits, including how the proactive system will increase SLA compliance, improve the user experience and reduce IT operating expenses.

VMware Cloud Operations Advisory Services

VMware Cloud Operations Advisory Services can provide the direction to get you on the right path forward and help you understand how to plan, operate, staff, and manage your cloud effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with your business goals, in order to realize all of the expected benefits of cloud computing. Collaborating with key customer stakeholders, VMware Accelerate™ Advisory Services subject matter experts provide informed insight, prioritized recommendations and financial guidance to help you achieve your objectives—transforming your IT operations from reactive to innovative.

Next Steps

Realize the benefits of cloud computing sooner with help from VMware Cloud Operations Advisory Services. Learn more by reading the VMware white paper, *Proactive Incident and Problem Management*, which is available at www.vmware.com/go/cloudoperations or contact the Accelerate team at accelerate@vmware.com. Now is the time to act—doing nothing is a risky strategy.

---

**ESSENTIAL CLOUD CAPABILITIES**

Based on real-world experience in dozens of engagements, VMware has identified five essential capabilities that enterprises need to transform their legacy platform into a cloud-enabled infrastructure:

- **On-demand services:** Automate the front end of service requests with a service catalog and self-service portal.

- **Automated provisioning and deployment:** Optimize back-end service governance and fulfillment with automation and policies.

- **Proactive incident and problem management:** Apply intelligent analytics to monitor and filter events facilitating automatic incident resolution and problem diagnosis.

- **Cloud security, compliance and risk management:** Embed policies into standard configurations to support policy-aware applications and automating security, audit and risk management processes.

- **IT financial management (ITFM) for cloud:** Base IT cost recovery on a granular cost attribution model and service consumption of services, enabled automated metering and showback/chargeback mechanisms.