

COMPANY PROFILE

MONITOR 24-7 INC: PIONEERING IT MANAGEMENT

High value, high quality solutions at the right price

Monitor 24-7 Inc is the manufacturer of IncidentMonitor, which is an enterprise, ITIL-compatible service management solution. IncidentMonitor was first released in 1999 and since its release has been implemented by companies in all industry verticals with diverse service management requirements and in locations across the globe.

Monitor 24-7's approach to addressing companies' IT service management needs is very simple – provide a high value, quality solution, at a low cost. Monitor 24-7's approach is achieved by:

- Developing a scalable, robust platform
- Developing a platform on which processes can be easily automated to meet changing business requirements – in hours or days, not weeks or months
- Providing an open architecture that will allow integration to corporate and legacy systems; built on proven, industry standard technology. This avoids the additional cost of having end users re-trained on proprietary technologies
- Using patented internal design and release methodologies, allowing new features to be quickly implemented while ensuring a high level of quality is maintained in all IncidentMonitor releases
- Providing experienced staff to work with our customers and partners, such as an experienced support group which ensures that all customer questions are addressed quickly and accurately at first contact

Regular dialogue and valuable feedback

IncidentMonitor has evolved over the years through direct input from our customers. Monitor 24-7 has regular dialogue with their customers to understand what is important to their business. We do not use analyst industry reports and theories in developing the roadmap for IncidentMonitor. Our customers provide valuable feedback and input about what their business needs from IncidentMonitor. With this approach to product development, IncidentMonitor has become a feature rich, mature solution that is based on real-world requirements. IncidentMonitor has more out of the box functionality than most other vendors on the market today.

Monitor 24-7 Inc took a very simple approach to licensing. All functionality is provided out of the box at one low cost. The customer does not have to be bothered with purchasing software modules, then purchasing licenses for each module. With IncidentMonitor, all functionality is available – simply and at a low cost.

A new breed of software company

Monitor 24-7 prides itself in being different to other vendors. We truly believe in providing tremendous value to our customers, not just in words but everything we do. Have a look at IncidentMonitor; see what makes us a new breed of software company for a new business climate. □

Visit us on the web at www.monitor24-7.com, or sign up for a free webinar at www.monitor24-7.com/corp/scripts/Corporate_WebinarSeries.asp



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ITP poses question to Riaz Mohammed - Director of Sales and Marketing - Monitor 24-7 Inc, on the current state of IT service management



Riaz Mohammed Director of Sales and Marketing, Monitor 24-7 Inc

Riaz Mohammed is the Director of Sales and Marketing at Monitor 24-7 Inc. and has 15 years of experience in IT Service Management. Riaz has been involved in all aspects of managing and delivering large-scale ITSM projects for companies across North America. Prior to joining Monitor 24-7 Inc, Riaz held senior consulting and sales positions at companies such as EDS, GE and Network Associates.

ITP USA: IT Service Management (ITSM) is talked about frequently at present. Why do you think it is vital for organizations to have competent and successful ITSM solutions?

Riaz Mohammed: Cost savings and improved customer service. Companies need to become more profitable. To become more profitable, you need to increase revenue and/or decrease internal costs. Most companies are doing everything possible to increase revenue, however, most companies are not doing all they can to decrease cost. Companies also need to improve the level of service provided to internal customers.

Cost savings and improved customer service through better

management of IT can be achieved by having an understanding of ITSM processes that fit the business, and implementing a solution with robust out of the box functionality that can be easily adapted to meet the business' specific requirements. Selecting the right solution is paramount to reducing cost and improving customer service. Some areas that companies must look at to select the right solution include a mature solution with robust out of the box functionality; easily adapted in hours or days to meet business requirements; simple licensing model with all functionality provided out of the box; low ongoing vendor support and maintenance cost; and a vendor with a proven track record for exceptional support. IncidentMonitor from Monitor 24-7 Inc, meets all of these requirements and much more.

ITP USA: Why do you think ITIL is becoming so established worldwide?

Riaz Mohammed: ITIL provides a defined set of processes that companies can leverage to improve the level of service provided to their customers and reduce internal costs. IT Service Management processes are basically the same, regardless of the industry vertical or size of organization. With ITIL companies can leverage a pre-defined framework with best practises rather than reinventing the wheel. Companies can also leverage existing employee experience and knowledge from the general employee (internal and external) community. As a result of these factors, ITIL is becoming established worldwide.

The ITIL framework is a system that if adopted culturally, and implemented electronically, guarantees consistent, repeatable service metrics. Thereby guaranteeing a satisfied customer since both sides know what the metrics are and the process is.

ITP USA: Does an organization need to get all of it's staff ITIL qualified?

Riaz Mohammed: Companies need to define the approach to adopting ITIL. One approach may be to use external consultants experienced with ITIL implementations, another

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approach may be to use internal resources in defining and implementing ITIL processes. With any approach taken, it is very important to train internal resources on ITIL processes. For a successful ITIL implementation, it is also very important to have lead resources that are experienced with ITIL implementations. ITIL is not a silver bullet; ITIL cannot be implemented 'out of the box'. ITIL is a framework that must be adapted to support the way the organization works. Organizations need to train all staff on ITIL, at some level and have key resources fully qualified.

ITIL is a cultural shift and requires buy-in from all business units involved to guarantee successful implementations – regardless of the tool selected.

ITP USA: Where should and organization start with ITSM?

Riaz Mohammed: As with any project, start small with an area that has the greatest possibility of success. Most organizations have a help desk in place. Customers and support staff are familiar with the help desk process. For example, start by re-engineering and improving the help desk process. Train all users and support staff on the new processes and the benefit that these will provide to their day-to-day activities. Roll out the new processes using a staged approach where both customers and support staff can be comfortable and benefit from the process. Taking a staged approach where small successes and acceptance can be easily achieved, will increase the chances of a successful ITSM implementation.

It is also critical to select the right solution to support all processes, staged implementation approach and is easy to use. For example, from an end user perspective, having multiple ways to log calls and receive feedback about their enquiries and corporate IT issues, will be an immediate benefit to the end user. With IncidentMonitor, customers can log calls via a customer Web portal or by simply sending an e-Mail with the issue in the body of the e-Mail. By using the customer portal within IncidentMonitor, the customer can

submit a request using a single click and will receive an e-Mail confirmation with the request number and ongoing updates as defined by the corporate policies. Via e-Mail, the customer's request will be auto categorized, placed within the appropriate Service Level Agreement (SLA) and all communications are based on corporate policies.

ITP USA: What is the most difficult part of implementing ITSM?

Riaz Mohammed: Internal and external User acceptance. User acceptance is typically based on the level of involvement and buy-in the user has in the process. No successful process can be defined in a vacuum and no process can be cast in stone. Once the process is defined, it must be easily modified to become more efficient and address the needs of the user and the business. Having ITSM software in place that can be easily and quickly modified, without incurring tremendous cost to address the needs of the user and business will greatly reduce any issues in implementing ITSM.

ITP USA: How can an organization tell whether its solution is a quality solution?

Riaz Mohammed: It comes down to the customer perception. Let's face it, that's what the whole framework focuses on and that needs to be the target – to ensure the customer is satisfied. The best way to measure this is to provide random customer surveys and evaluate the feedback to verify that your implementation of the processes is successfully meeting the customer's expectations. If not, the solution must be easy to adapt and address the shortcomings of any current implementation in a timely fashion.

- Can the solution be easily modified to support the requirements of the business?
- Is the solution flexible?
- Can any process be easily automated within the solution in a short period of time?
- Can changes be done by internal resources without having to be

trained on proprietary technology?

- Can the organization increase the level of support provided to the end user through the implementation of a service catalog and other methods that will support very simple end user interaction?
- Does the vendor provide a high level of support in terms of response times and advice/direction on any user-specific software changes?
- Is all functionality available out of the box, without having to purchase additional modules and licenses?
- Is there an open and documented API set that can extend the functionality of the solution and allow integration with corporate, legacy and external systems?

If you answer 'yes' to all the above questions, then you have a quality solution implemented.

ITP USA: Will the organization receive real value from ITSM?

Riaz Mohammed: Yes. However, the organization must have the right solution in place, ensure that processes are streamlined and resources trained and knowledgeable on the solution and processes.

It is a cultural shift. Once this fact is realized many benefits, both tangible and intangible will become readily apparent.

ITP USA: Many organisations outsource all or part of their IT. Does ITSM have any relevance to them?

Riaz Mohammed: I believe that ITSM is relevant to organizations that have outsourced their IT. Organizations still need to constantly improve the service provided to customers and reduce cost. ITSM will help organizations achieve this goal, despite outsourcing part, or all of their IT.

Remember, the whole reason for implementing ITSM/ITIL is to ensure, in the end, a satisfied customer – so yes, it does still have significant relevance. As a bi-product, organizations who have outsourced and demand ITSM/ITIL will have all the details in relation to financials to support and in the end may prove to have immediate costs savings. □