



Western & Southern aligns IT investment with financial services business strategy



Improves project planning



Eliminated multiple legacy tools



Aligns IT investment with business needs

Western & Southern offers multiple financial services and contributes to the vitality of Cincinnati and the surrounding areas

Founded in 1888 in Cincinnati, Western & Southern Financial Group has six life insurance subsidiaries. The group is a member of the Fortune 500 and has \$75 billion in assets owned or under management. In addition to life insurance subsidiaries, Western & Southern has a range of other member companies offering realty, investment advice, brokerage, and other financial services. The company contributes heavily to the vitality of Cincinnati and surrounding area, including sponsoring the Western & Southern Open, a premier tennis event.

Western & Southern needed to align IT resources and investments with its business strategy

Western & Southern IT's partnership with the enterprise business units plays a crucial role in the company's success and underpins its critical business activities, including driving revenues, increasing operational efficiency, and ensuring regulatory compliance. That's why the company is continually maturing its IT business management processes—aligning IT resources and investments with the business's strategy and focusing on delivering outcomes.

According to Lisa White, IT Project Portfolio Analyst at Western & Southern, "IT needs to be a business enabler. That means working with the business to identify and prioritize strategic technology projects and then ensuring the resources are in place to execute. To do this, you need a strong portfolio management function with end-to-end visibility across demands, along with effective governance processes that reduce program risks and provide transparency."

Industry: Financial services

Location: Cincinnati, Ohio

Size: 2,000+ employees

Challenge

Replace a disparate IT business management platform to support a maturing portfolio process

Products

- The Now Platform®
- ServiceNow® IT Business Management

Solution

The Now Platform helps Western & Southern Financial Group prioritize demand, align resources, and reduce project risk



ServiceNow handles the full Project Portfolio lifecycle, from initial ideation to final delivery, which means we make better decisions and execute more effectively.

Lisa White, IT Project Portfolio Analyst,
Western & Southern Financial Group

ServiceNow handles the full IT program lifecycle, from initial ideation to final delivery, leading to better decisions and more effective execution

To support this maturing portfolio process, Western & Southern decided it needed a unified IT business management platform. Lisa says, “We wanted one place to capture, evaluate, prioritize, and execute IT demand, rather than working in silos across our business units. To reduce delivery risk, we had to manage our IT resources holistically across all of our projects and operational activities. And, we needed integrated visibility across our IT teams to ensure we were delivering value on time and within the approved budgets.”

Western & Southern chose ServiceNow IT Business Management. Lisa explains why, “You can’t manage your program lifecycle effectively with multiple disconnected tools. It’s too cumbersome, and you don’t get the visibility and control you need. ServiceNow handles the full program lifecycle, from initial ideation to final delivery, which means we make better decisions and execute more effectively. Together with our IT service management group—which also uses ServiceNow—we’ve been able to eliminate multiple disconnected point solutions.”

With centralized visibility through ServiceNow, Western & Southern understands business drivers and expectations of the more complex projects and makes better informed IT investment decisions

Now, business stakeholders and IT teams enter all their IT work requests, including strategic technology investments, into a central service portal powered by ServiceNow. According to Lisa, “Because we have centralized visibility, we can reach out to the business to first understand their drivers and expectations for their more complex projects and requests, ensuring they are strategically aligned. Then, as we transition these filtered ideas into demands, we’re able to capture the business value of each investment, along with resourcing estimates, and we can collect input from other groups, including finance, enterprise business analysts, and architects.”

“Here’s the bottom line. We work in partnership with business to make the right strategic investment decisions. By using ServiceNow, our portfolio governance committee and executives get the information they need to prioritize demands, maximizing the business value that IT delivers. And, our investment decisions are transparent—everyone knows what IT is working on, so when a strategic technology investment decision is made, people understand the business drivers behind the decisions and the potential impacts.”

Using ServiceNow Resource Management, Western & Southern reduces project risks by identifying when resources are overused or underutilized

Western & Southern is also benefiting from ServiceNow IT Business Management resource management capabilities. Ken Oleynik, who is responsible for IT capacity planning at Western & Southern, says, “Projects fail when you don’t commit the resources beforehand. Our goal is to assign the right people with the right skills at the right time. With ServiceNow Resource Management, we have a single view of all our resources and demands, so we’re able to allocate resources confidently before a project starts, identifying when resources are overused or underutilized. We’re setting our project teams up for success.”



Ken also stresses the value of instrumenting end-to-end IT business management processes. "With ServiceNow, we can get meaningful metrics that help us to strengthen our ability to meet delivery commitments. For example, because we're also using ServiceNow for time tracking, we can monitor how much planned and unplanned time is spent on projects. That helps us improve our project planning. And, we can proactively identify resource bottlenecks and address them before projects are initiated. That means that we reduce the risk of not delivering projects on time."

Western & Southern plans to expand its use of ServiceNow IT Business Management to automatically score demands and improve estimation by analyzing trends

Lisa sums it up: "ServiceNow IT Business Management has been a powerful solution for us. And, we've been impressed by how ServiceNow continues to enhance its IT business management capabilities. We plan to expand our usage of ServiceNow IT Business Management, for example, by using it to automatically score demands and to improve estimation by analyzing historical actuals and trends. We're also excited about leveraging ServiceNow's connection between IT business management and IT service management, which will allow us to balance resources across projects and keep-the-lights-on activities. That's the power of having a single platform."