How to Govern Citizen Development in ServiceNow®

Automated Document Creation for Apps

Citizen development in ServiceNow solves a big problem for businesses, accelerating the speed at which ServiceNow can be used to solve business problems.

However, we hear that ServiceNow customers and partners have 3 main concerns:

1. Citizen Development without any form of governance, could result in a tangled mess of unsupportable, poorly tested, and documented apps.

2. Documentation helps reduce this risk, but it takes too long to create manually, denuding the benefit of quick app development.

3. Organisations are seeking to implement a Citizen Developer Centre of Excellence (COE), which seeks to put governance around Citizen Developed Apps. But the COE need Apps to be documented to provide that governance.

This will especially be the case in highly regulated organisations with strict compliance regulations such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, banking, insurance, government etc.

Essentially this is a Speed vs Quality dilemma.

- Citizen Development with no governance provides very high-speed business solutions, but the quality (in terms of not creating an 'application mess') may be poor.

- On the other end of the continuum, centralised IT development, provides very high quality and maintainable business solutions, but at the expense of speed.

The development of the app may take just a few hours, but creating the documentation can take anywhere up to 5 days to create a short 20 page user guide for example.

Manual Effort

"Creating documentation for apps is a largely manual process requiring the Citizen Developer to create design documentation, test plans, results, user guides, process documents etc.", ServiceNow Advisory Solution Consultant

The Solution

There is an app available on the ServiceNow App Store to solve this problem. The App is called AutomatePro and seeks to remove the manual documentation problem by automatically creating these types of documents, as a by-product of the automated testing process (US Patent Granted).

Users of the app save many hundreds or even thousands of man hours by creating documents in seconds rather than days.

The AutoDoc module automatically creates Knowledge Base articles for requirements and design, test plans and test execution reports, user guides and training guides. ServiceNow Guided Tours can also be automatically created, helping to speed up new user adoption and reduce training needs for Citizen Developed apps.

By automating the creation of documentation, Citizen Developed Apps are documented tested and supportable. The COE gets the required documentation to provide 'right touch' Citizen Development governance, but this is not done at the expense of speed of development.

AutomatePro, providing Quality *AT* Speed.