Backup and Recovery for ServiceNow

Own

Congratulations

By reading this, you already recognize that protecting your ServiceNow data is critical, and you're embracing your role in the shared responsibility model. Now, it's up to you to find a solution and gain buy-in from other stakeholders across your organization.

To help with that process, Own Company has developed this buyer's guide as you search for the best possible tool to fit the needs of your organization. The guide contains many factors to consider as you weigh your options.

Even if you don't end up choosing Own as your partner, we hope this guide better equips you to choose the solution that's right for you. Consider this your go-to playbook for choosing your backup and recovery solution.

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Backup

ServiceNow Dependency

Just like you wouldn't store your spare car keys in your glove compartment, accessing your data backups through the same platform where you store your live data is NOT a best practice. While ServiceNow is one of the most secure and reliable SaaS platforms, they (and anyone else) aren't immune to outages.

By storing your backups outside of ServiceNow, your important data will still be available in the event of an outage. However, backing the data up to a personal hard drive or AWS S3 server isn't the answer either, since providing access to those who might need the data poses a security risk.

Accessing your data backups through the same platform where you store your live data is NOT a best practice.

Questions to ask

- If ServiceNow goes down, how will I access my backup data?

- Will my data be in a format that I can swiftly use outside of ServiceNow?

- Can I export my backup if I want to import my data into a data lake or some other system?

Compliance and Retention

If you store customer data in ServiceNow, you can rest assured that ServiceNow is taking necessary measures to meet compliance regulations as it relates to their infrastructure. However, unless you take the appropriate steps, these measures often do not extend to any backups you maintain externally to the ServiceNow platform.

While some regulations such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, SEC 17a-4, HIPAA, and CFR Part 11 require that data be retained and accessible for extended periods of time, others like GDPR and CCPA require companies to do just the opposite.

While these requirements may not always be clear, one thing is: This fluid environment highlights the need for customized data retention policies within your backups.

Questions to ask

- What capabilities are available to streamline GDPR customer requests to remove or rectify data in backup files?

- Is your solution HIPAA compliant?

- What are the costs associated with retaining my backups for longer periods of time?

- Can I customize data retention policies?

Security

Whether your data is on a laptop, a local server, or in the cloud, the company that owns the data is responsible for ensuring its security.

When considering the security of your ServiceNow data, you should rely on a solution that is reputable, has passed ServiceNow security and audit reviews, and has built in platform security features that scale to meet enterprise needs.

Saving .CSV files of your ServiceNow data within the company hard drive or your laptop should NOT be considered a best practice.

Questions to ask

- What cloud storage service providers do you use?

- How do you monitor who has access to my data?

- Do you offer Role-Based Access Controls?

- Is data encrypted in transit and at rest?

- Can I use my own key management system?

- In which countries will my data be stored?

- Have your security and information management practices been certified as SOC2 Type 2 compliant?

Centralized Access to Backups

Does your company have multiple ServiceNow instances? If so, you'll want a solution that allows you to manage all your backups from a single dashboard. You'll also want a solution that will allow you to compare backups across instances, so that you can identify differences and changes between environments.

By centralizing access, you can easily manage and monitor backups for business units across the enterprise, as well as easily add backup services to new instances as needed.

Questions to ask

· Will I have a single "pane of glass" to view my backups across all instances?

· Can I compare backups across two different instances?

· Can I manage multiple instances with a single platform?

Backup Frequency

Ideally, to minimize your Recovery Point Objective (RPO), you should be backing up your ServiceNow data at least once a day.

The ability to back up on-demand is also extremely valuable when you're making large scale changes.

You can back up your data immediately before making changes and can easily revert your data in case anything goes wrong.

Questions to ask

· Can I back up data on demand?

· How frequently can I back up data?

· Can I initiate backups programmatically through an API?

Restore

Proactive Monitoring

A typical ServiceNow environment has integrations, batch updates, cleanups and code deployments that run regularly, making it difficult to spot unwanted data loss and corruption yourself.

And if it's malicious activity that's designed to be hard to detect, you may not be able to spot it at all. That's why having tools to proactively monitor for data loss or corruption is key.

This way, you can be notified when the volume of changes to your data are abnormally high, and ultimately restore the data faster.

Questions to ask

· Will the system alert me to any significant changes to my ServiceNow data and, if so, how?

· Can I set certain thresholds that will trigger an alert to be sent?

· Are thresholds absolute, or can I ask to be notified when activity levels are out of the normal ranges?

Analysis Tools

Knowing when things go wrong is important. But you also need to be able to know when the data was last correct, so you can pick the right backups to restore from and ensure the right data gets back into ServiceNow.

Be sure to choose a backup solution that allows you to see how a table changes over time, so you can pinpoint exactly the right backup to restore from.

Questions to ask

· Will the solution help me understand which tables have been subject to loss and corruption?

· Will the solution help me understand the scale of loss or corruption?

· Does the solution have capabilities to help me understand how data values in records and columns have changed?

Precision Repair Capabilities

By their very nature, SaaS platforms like ServiceNow are built to help companies capture and manage data changes in real time. While some solutions may allow you to restore selected data to a specific point in time, they may force you to restore all the records for that table, potentially undoing some desired changes. Or they may allow you to restore specific records, but force you to restore all the columns.

Be sure that your backup solution allows you to restore not just specific records, but specific columns with unwanted changes, so you don't overwrite good data when trying to fix bad data.

Questions to ask

· Can I easily specify the set of records that need to be restored, even if those impacted records number in the hundreds or more?

· How easily can I fix unwanted changes without affecting valid data?

· How easily can I restore just selected columns?

Leverage
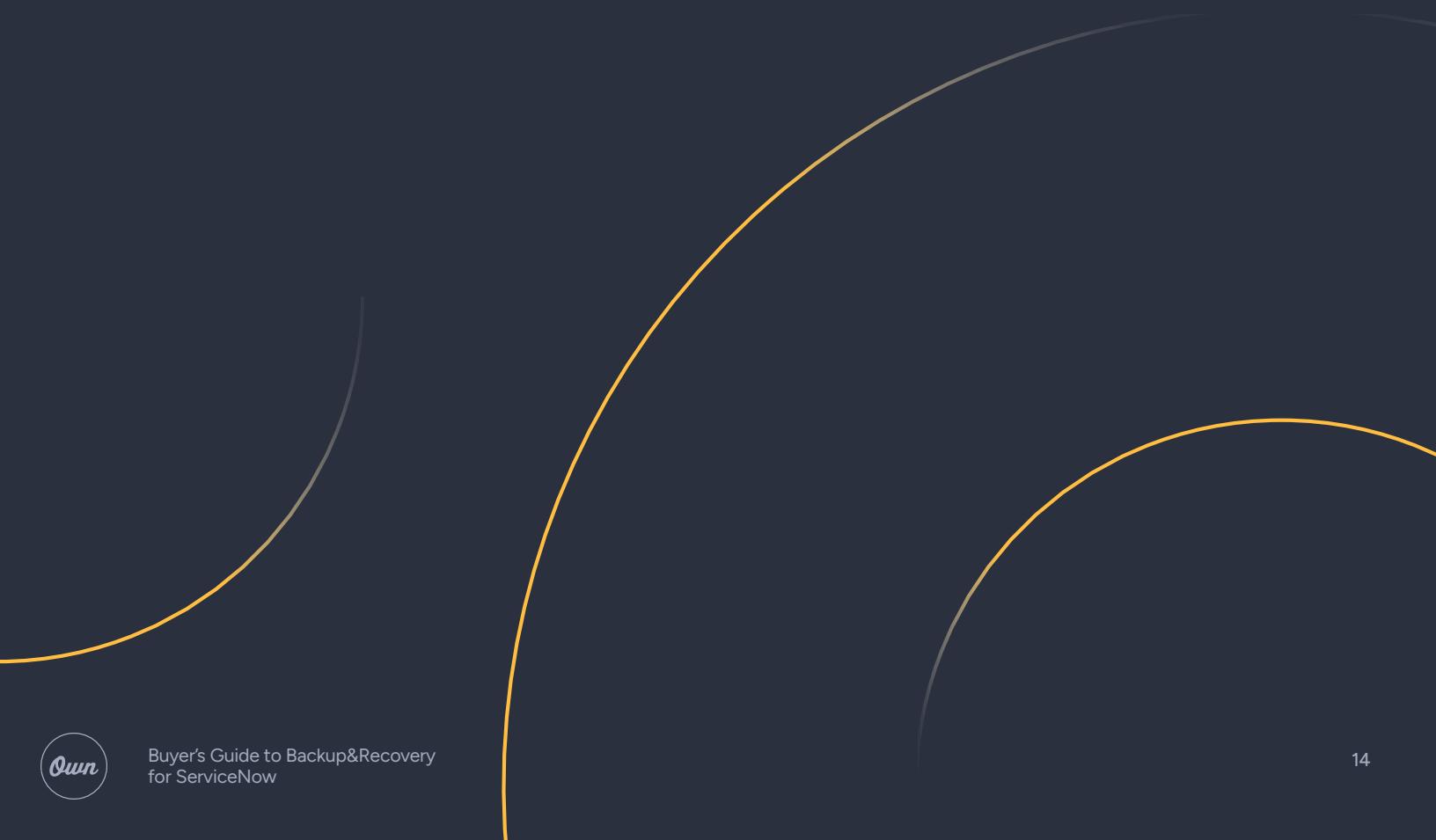
Search Capabilities

Since your backup files are copies of your mission-critical ServiceNow data at different points in time, they effectively capture the history of your business. Your backup solution should be able to help you tap into this data. By having your backups searchable, you can easily find any record and see how it looked at any point in time in the past. This can be particularly helpful when you need to identify specific data for an audit or other compliance needs.

As part of your backup solution's search functionality, it's especially helpful to have keyword searching capabilities. Otherwise, it would be too time consuming to find the data among so many records.

Questions to ask

- Are backups searchable?
- Can I search my backups by keyword?
- Can multiple backups be searched with one query?
- Can keyword searches be restricted to specific tables?

Export Capabilities

Being able to export your backup data is valuable in several ways. First, exports make a great delivery mechanism for up-to-date data to warehouses and lakes that many organizations use for data analysis. Exports also can also give you additional peace of mind that you have a full, independent copy of your backed up data available to you no matter what happens to your relationship with a particular vendor.

Finally, exports can be a way to access your important data and ensure continuity when ServiceNow is down.

Questions to ask

· Can I securely export data to file-based storage like AWS S3 or Azure?

· Can I export to data stores like Snowflake and MySQL?

· Are there file size restrictions with Exports?

· Can exports be automated and scheduled?

Customer Experience & Support
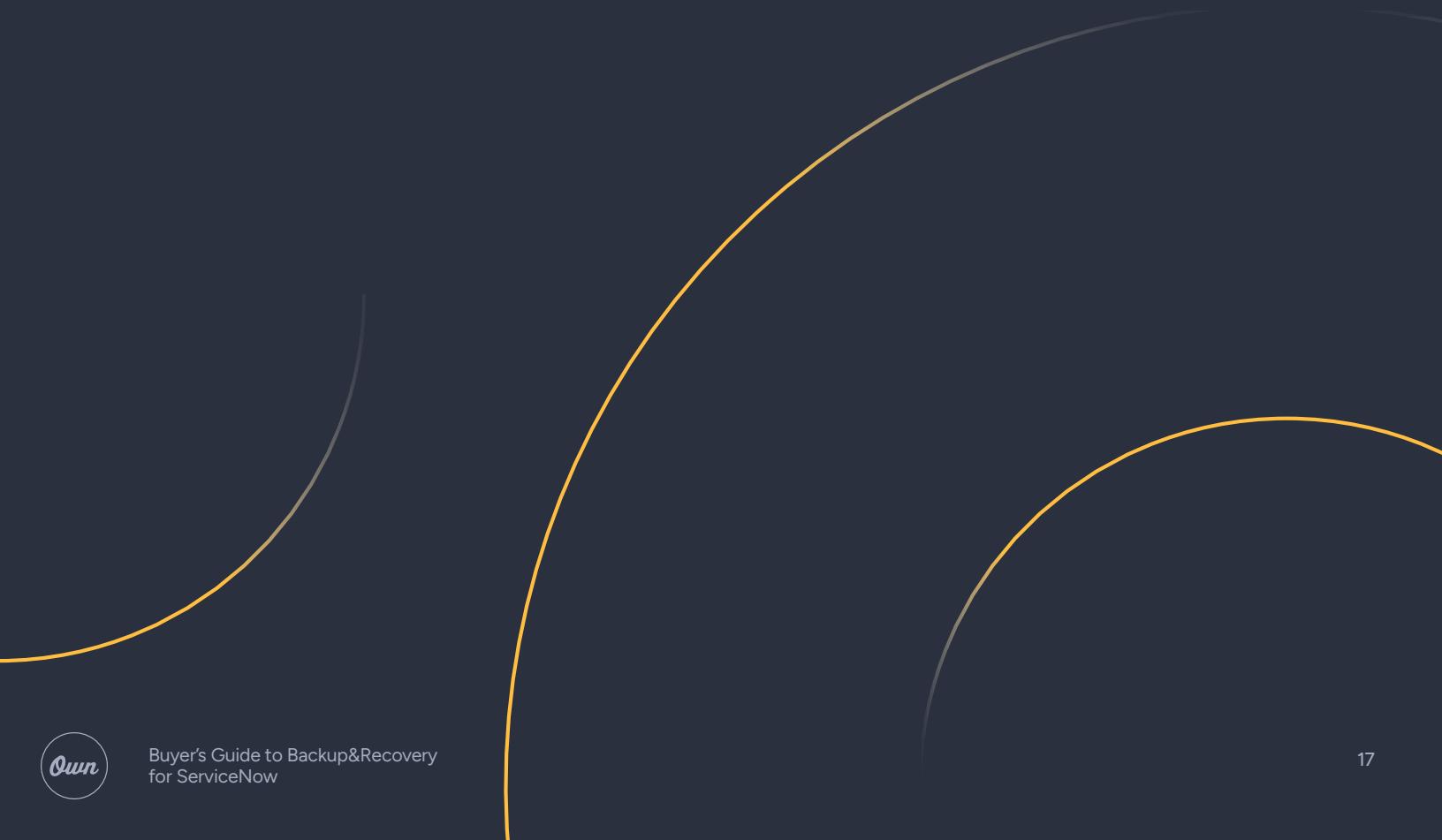
Proof of Concept

Conducting a Proof of Concept (POC) where you test the solution with YOUR data is a critical step of the SaaS buying process.

Some vendors endeavor to not let prospective customers undertake full hands-on trials of their solutions using the customer's own data and may leverage a significant discount or incentive to win your business.

The use of a data set supplied by a vendor masks the reality of using the solution, and any unwillingness to provide a POC at all typically speaks volumes about the user experience or reliability of the solution.

Questions to ask

· Can I conduct a POC using my own data?

· How long does it take to implement your solution with our data in ServiceNow?

· Will I be hands-on with the solution myself?

· What kind of data loss or corruption scenarios should I use to test the robustness of your solution?

· Will you provide what kind of tests we should perform during the POC?

· Do you offer a POC at no-cost to us during our evaluation process?

Support

There are no weekends, holidays or time zones when it comes to data incidents. When the pressure is on, you must have complete trust in the ability of your vendor to help you promptly return to business as usual.

Look into solutions that offer 24/7 customer support with a reasonable response time. Other types of support can include a self service knowledge base, professional services, or even a dedicated technical account manager.

Evaluate which support elements are necessities for your organization, and you will be one step closer to choosing a winning solution.

Questions to ask

· What kind of support is available should I need to restore data?

· What support options and SLAs do you offer?

· How much real-world experience do your support reps have in helping customers recover from incidents?

· Is your support team certified by ServiceNow? What credentials do they have?

· Where are your support agents based? Can they support a global organization with employees all across the world or in a specific country/region?

Innovation and Vision

As your organization grows, so will the volume and complexity of data you'll need to manage. Is the company continually innovating and developing their solutions to support evolving best practices? Or are their solutions stagnant?

Another aspect of innovation involves responding to customer feedback. Instead of making customers adapt to a rigid solution, innovative backup and recovery providers will continue to evolve their product based on their customers' pain points.

Questions to ask

· How often do you release new functionality?

· How do you stay up-to-date with all the innovations and changes that ServiceNow makes to their platform?

· Do you outsource or hire contractors that perform any work on your product platform?

· How do you maintain engineering excellence in your organization?

Track Record and Reputation

Of all of the factors to consider when choosing a backup and recovery solution, this might be the most important. Most software vendors position themselves as the best in the market, the most tailored, the most experienced, etc. But who can you really trust?

Separating fact from hyperbole is not easy but is important. Failling to do so, you run the risk of having to replace your new solution as soon as the contract ends - or sooner!

Questions to ask

· Where are you positioned on the G2 SaaS Backup grid?

· Can you provide a customer reference that I can talk to about your solution?

Own Recover for ServiceNow

Own Recover for ServiceNow is for organizations using the ServiceNow platform who need to protect important data from loss or corruption. The highly secure, always-available backup and recovery solution ensures data resilience and simplifies compliance. Unlike backup capabilities native to ServiceNow, Own Recover provides more control over backup timing and retention, proactive monitoring for data loss or corruption and the ability to restore only the impacted data in self-service fashion.

Request a Demo $\longrightarrow$

Backup and recovery evaluation checklist

Please feel free to download and print our backup and recovery scorecard to help you evaluate strengths and weaknesses across multiple vendors during your buyer's journey.

Download Scorecard $\longrightarrow$

OWN YOUR OWN DATA

About Own

Own is the leading data platform trusted by thousands of organizations to protect and activate SaaS data to transform their businesses. Own empowers customers to ensure the availability, security and compliance of mission-critical data, while unlocking new ways to gain deeper insights faster. By partnering with some of the world's largest SaaS ecosystems such as Salesforce, ServiceNow and Microsoft Dynamics 365, Own enables customers around the world to truly own the data that powers their business.

It's their platform. It's your data. Own it.

Learn more at owndata.com.