2013 CHANGE MANAGEMENT REPORT
IT OPERATIONS ANALYTICS IS GAINING MOMENTUM

81%

of IT professionals surveyed at the recent Evolven webinar with Forrester Research (June 26, 2013), said that they believe analytics is the solution for the IT operations big data problem and that the current lot of change and configuration management tools have hit their limits.

As shown by this recent survey, IT Operations professionals are now facing overwhelming amounts of change and configuration data in terms of volume, velocity and variety, and see that existing tools lack insight and actionable information, making change and configuration problems a chronic pain.

At the recent webinar held in conjuction with **Forrester Research** featuring principal researcher Glenn O'Donnell, Evolven surveyed over 200 IT Operations professionals, asking about how effectively they manage their environments today.

Wanting to significantly improve their IT operations management, more than half of the IT executives surveyed said that *most of their incidents are caused by change*. **Nearly 80% said that the current lot of change and configuration management tools do not meet today's challenges**.

Today IT Ops is facing a high rate of change failure, and risk from undesired changes. So, it comes as no surprise this many IT professionals see IT Analytics as such a promising solution, poised to succeed in taking on the challenge where traditional tools have failed.

The Change Management Report offers valuable insights into the current challenges facing IT operations, and how IT analytics solutions can best address these issues.

SURVEY RESULTS

Our questions address IT Operations performance in the context of changes:

52% How many of your incidents are related to changes?

74% To what degree do you believe existing CCM tools have hit their limits?

81% To what extent do you believe Analytics is the solution for the IT ops big data problem?

"If you can't manage today's complexity, you stand no chance managing tomorrow's. With each passing day, the problem of complexity gets worse. More complex systems present more elements to manage and more data, so growing complexity exacerbates an already difficult problem. **Time is now the enemy because complexity is growing exponentially and inexorably**." (*Turn Big Data Inward With IT Analytics– Forrester Research: Dec 2012*)

How many of your incidents are related to changes?

52%

of IT professionals surveyed say that changes directly impact incidents.

Over 50% of the professionals surveyed said that incidents threatening availability are instigated by changes, either taking place outside of established processes or simple mistakes.

Organizations today face high priority incidents on a regular basis. This consumes much of IT operations' time with firefighting these incidents, rather than proactively managing environments and working on new projects, ultimagely wearing down productivity.

In this situation, one of the first questions usually asked is **"what changed?"**

For many in IT operations as we saw from our survey, the answer to this question is difficult to reach, requiring much detailed information.

Some of the reasons that make answering this question hard are:

- Overwhelming environment complexity
- Rapid pace of change
- Poor visibility into the content of environments
- Silo-based environment management
- Inability to distinguish harmful changes and desired changes
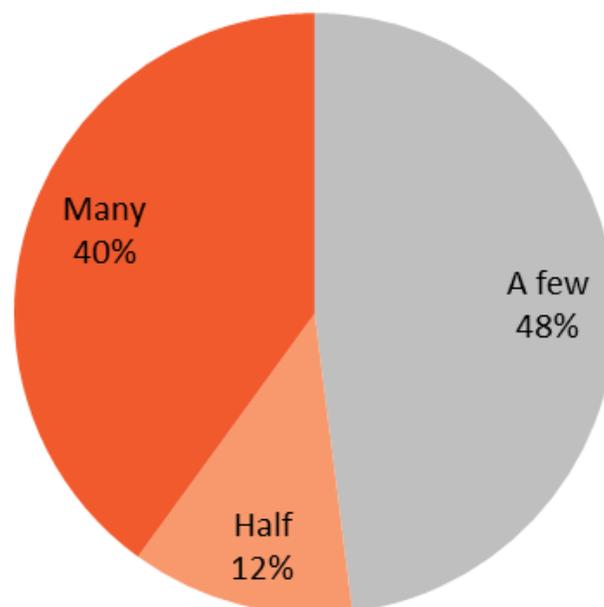
To tackle incidents, most IT organizations assemble a "war room" scenario, requiring many different specialists each focusing on various aspects of the operations, making this approach time consuming and costly. A new way is needed to quickly gather all the required information and really make sense out of it.

"… **if we can do better with changes, we will be proactive and we will prevent many of those incidents from happening**. If you have good change management we don't have as many incidents. *The incidents that result from change can drop dramatically and that's a great thing*." (*Glenn O'Donnell – Forrester Research: June 2013*)

To what degree do you believe existing CCM tools have hit their limits?

74%

of IT professionals surveyed see limited value in available change and configuration management tools.


74% of the participants surveyed agreed that while today's change and configuration management (CCM) tools collect a tremendous amount of raw data, they don't offer the necessary insight to make that data meaningful.

Available since the early 1990s, enterprises have relied on hundreds of IT management tools to monitor their infrastructure elements and applications. Yet as we see from this survey, the promise of monitoring still remains elusive. Many IT management tools will present raw data, but lack capabilities to capture the actual meaning buried in all that data.

The IT landscape has grown in complexity supporting a wider and growing range of technologies and platforms (Virtualization, Cloud, Open Source etc.).

"The tools present us with the raw data, and lots of it, but *sufficient insight into the actual meaning buried in all that data is still remarkably scarce*. For this very reason, **IT analytics tools hold the promise** of helping IT organizations better manage the technology that runs their business."
(Turn Big Data Inward With IT Analytics– Forrester Research: Dec 2012)
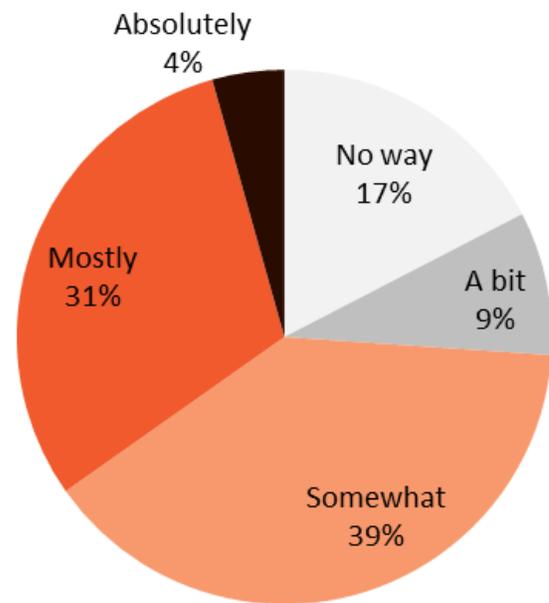
The CMDB (Configuratin Management Database), or other tools layed on top of CMDB, have been widely implemented over the years yet only provide a glimpse into actual activity. Just focusing on high level information, the CMDB doesn't go (or it's not practical to go) into granular and detailed configuration information.

Other CCM tools only focus on specific technologies running in the environment, ignoring the full scope of the IT environment. This results in the IT organization missing a major part of the configuration information required for effectively managing complex business systems.

While monitoring tools like APM or BSM solutions gather lots of information, coming from a variety of sources: logs, application performance availability data, change and configuration data, and transaction data, nevertheless IT operations cannot find the information that could provide valuable insights, showing how these tools just haven't approached the current state of IT as a Big Data problem.

Underscoring this, in recent industry research, IT professionals have expressed dissatisfaction with their CCM tools, saying that the tools lack support for ALL applications, can't track all application components, and simply don't actually help IT solve problems. Lacking proactivel problems detection capabilities, means that IT only finds out about critical problems when end users complain.

To what extent do you believe analytics is the solution for the IT Ops big data problem?

81%

of IT professionals surveyed agree that IT Analytics should be applied to to the big data problem facing IT ops.


As shown in this survey, the vast majority of the IT professionals surveyed consider IT analytics to be the best solution for addressing IT's big data challenges, enabling IT operations to successfully manage critical business technology services.

For IT operations, managing the configuration of multiple environments still feels like a nuisance. Between applications, environments, and individual instances, mistakes and unauthorized changes happen, demanding that IT ops spend time managing configuration values.

With change requests and changes coming at a blinding pace, IT operations has looked at automated approaches to keep up. While able to accelerate responses, as the respondents to this survey expressed, only when automation is integrated with analytics can automated tools effectively take on change issues. These new IT analytics tools take a new perspective on the abundant data and complexity confronting operations teams.

Analytics is a feedback mechanism that can drive environment activity, governing the behavior of the system.

Bringing analytics into critical processes that need automating, and applying analytics to the application level allows IT operations to really see everything that matters in the environment.
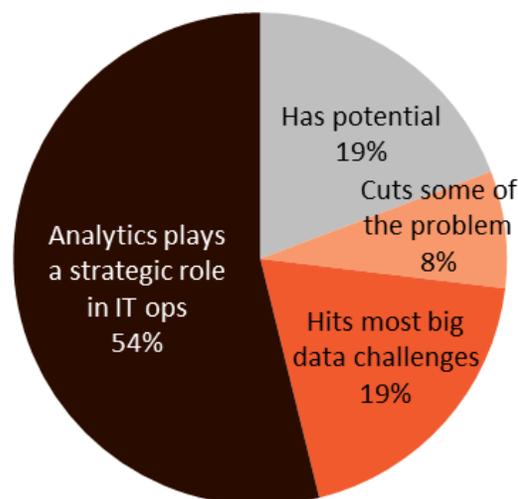
"*IT analytics lets you manage this complexity* **by turning big data inward**. All of this processing may seem a lot like the "big data" movement that is currently so hot. There is good reason to recognize this relationship. *It is indeed a big data issue*."
(Gartner Identifies the Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends for 2013)

IT Operations Analytics can be effectively applied to many common use cases in IT operations, such as:

- **Change management.** Perform sanity checks to determine the probability of success before any change is executed.

- **Configuration management.** Detect discrepancies from desired configuration (drift) and reduce risk to environment stability.

- **Incident management.** Reduce incident response time and help eliminate incidents from occurring, transforming the investigation process by automatically analyzing all changes that occurred since the system worked fine, applying pattern and statistics based algorithms to identify an incident's root-cause.

- **Problem management.** Reach root cause, or a probable cause, identification faster.

With so much at stake, IT operations analytics can end the chronic change and configuration challenges facing IT operations today.

Evolven Helps

With performance at risk from any disruptions to stability, you need to know exactly what has changed in an environment.

Managing IT environments with intelligent automated analytics will drive more sophisticated proactive processes like comparing environment states, validating releases, and verifying consistency of changes, helping to prevent or identify critical issues. So rather than continue to feed bloated system tools, IT Operations should strive to simplify and implement configuration management based on IT Operations Analytics, and turn the situation around from what can't be managed to being what can be done about performance and availability.

- Dynamically captures all change configuration information automatically across IT environments, Evolven IT Operations Analytics analyzes and displays change information in a single point of view on **what changed** across end-to-end environments, prioritizing and helping to pinpoint risky changes.

- Ensuring that changes and releases are accurately deployed, Evolven's **release validation** capabilities allows IT Operations to verify accurate transition of key release configurations, validating that individual changes, patches and releases are applied accurately and consistently to avoid performance and availability issues and unnecessary stabilization time.

- Evolven advances **environment incident investigation,** quickly identifying configuration changes and differences that are the incident's root-cause. Incident management teams can execute comparisons of the problematic environment to identify granular changes or discrepancies that might have triggered an incident.

- Evolven automatically **verifies the consistency of environments**, comparing pre-prod, production and disaster recovery environments using Consistency Analysis to detect inconsistencies.

The 2013 IT Analytics Report

Engaging more than 200 IT professionals at both the **Evolven Make Change Work webinar** (June 26, 2013), Evolven gathered insights and valuable real-life IT experiences for this study. Titles of those surveyed included Manager IT Operations, IT Director, Senior Manager IT Infrastructure, Data Center Manager, and Senior VP of Information Technology.

About Evolven

Evolven's IT Operations Analytics provides intelligent answers to key IT operations challenges: how to accelerate incident resolution, how to avoid harmful and risky changes, and how to assess and optimize IT operations performance.

Evolven's new analytics approach to the chronic change & configuration challenges dramatically minimizes the risk of downtime and slashes incident investigation time.

Leading industry analyst, Gartner selected Evolven as a 2013 Cool Vendor in IT Operations Management recognizing Evolven as "the only vendor to marry IT Operations Analytics to configuration and change management." In 2013, Evolven was selected as a winner of the Red Herring Top 100 North America award, a prestigious honor that recognizes the year's most promising private technology companies across North America. Adding to this recognition, other industry analysts have recognized Evolven for "transforming change and configuration management" and as the "Industry's most adaptive change management analytics."

SEE IT OPERATIONS ANALYTICS!

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