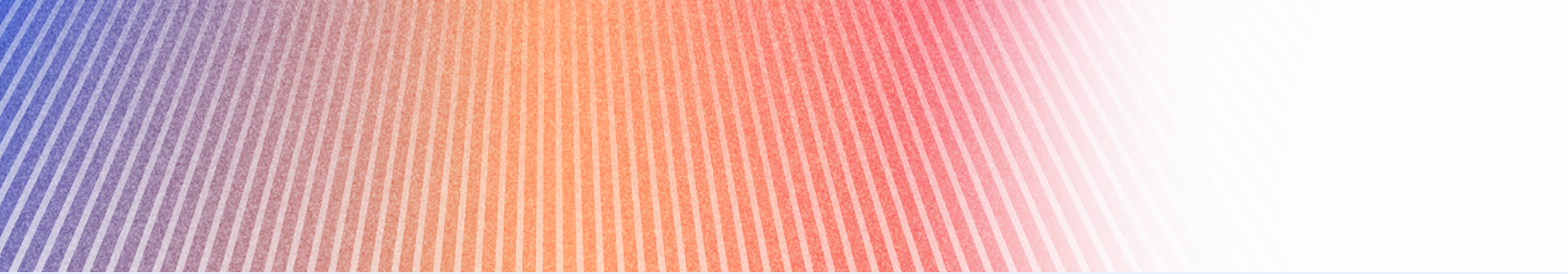




AHEAD

Reimagining IT Operations with Agentic AI



Executive Summary

IT operations is at an inflection point. For CFOs, that shows up as rising cost of downtime, margin pressure from talent spend, and a fragmented vendor landscape. For CHROs, it raises questions about how to modernize work without triggering workforce displacement. For business unit leaders, it means stalled time-to-market and lost employee productivity when services are brittle or slow.

AHEAD's position is that Agentic AI, implemented as Autonomous Service Operations on top of ServiceNow and your observability/control plane, is the operating model change that addresses all these together: improving service resilience and experience while structurally changing the cost and talent profile of IT operations.

Autonomous Service is an operating model where:

- Routine, well-understood work is handled end-to-end by automation and AI agents.
- Analysts are augmented with context, recommendations, and summarization instead of hunting across tools.
- The system learns from every interaction so that it gets better over time, not just busier.

It blends automation, augmentation, and learning loops on top of your existing service desk, with governance and human oversight built in.

We believe successful organizations will:

- Treat Agentic AI as an operating model transformation that changes how work and cost flow across IT and the business, not as a chatbot project.
- Design around end-to-end value streams that impact revenue, margin, and productivity (e.g., incident classes that cause material downtime, onboarding that affects time-to-productivity).
- Raise operational and AI maturity together, starting with assistive agents that tighten process discipline, observability, and data quality so that higher levels of autonomy are safe, auditable, and sustainable.
- Make Agentic AI a measurable operating lever for CFOs, CHROs, and business leaders with clear operational and financial metrics and a value model that holds up under scrutiny.

This paper outlines how AHEAD helps clients move from pilots to a durable Autonomous Service Operations model where agents, platforms, and processes are designed together to deliver sustained efficiency, resilience, and experience improvements.

From Automation to Autonomous Operations

What We Mean by Agentic AI

Agents are systems that use large language models (LLMs) and tools to independently accomplish tasks on your behalf, within guardrails.

Effective agents can:

- Understand context and choose tools dynamically
- Plan and execute workflows, adjusting as conditions change
- Operate within defined scopes and approvals
- Continuously evaluate, self-correct, and hand control back to humans when needed

In practice, agents sit within platforms like ServiceNow for service orchestration and your observability, security, and endpoint/platform management stack for seeing and changing the environment. Multiple types of agents – detection, operations, execution, knowledge – coordinate across these layers under shared governance, security, and measurement.

Why Agentic AI versus Workflows & Classic Automation

We still use workflows and deterministic automation where steps are clear and repeatable. Agentic AI becomes valuable when:

- Inputs are messy (unstructured tickets, logs, emails, chat, etc.)
- Flows branch based on context and policy
- Work spans multiple systems and teams
- We want the system to choose and sequence the right tools to reach a goal

In well-designed implementations, agents interpret, decide, and orchestrate; workflows and scripts execute concrete changes.

Is this just rebranded automation and AIOps?

No. Classic automation executes fixed steps and AIOps improves detection and correlation; Agentic AI adds goal-driven behavior, multi-agent coordination across the lifecycle, and learning loops that continually improve routing, remediation, and knowledge.



Defining Autonomous Service Operations

When we describe Autonomous Service Operations (ASO), we are not proposing a human-less help desk. We mean an operating model where:

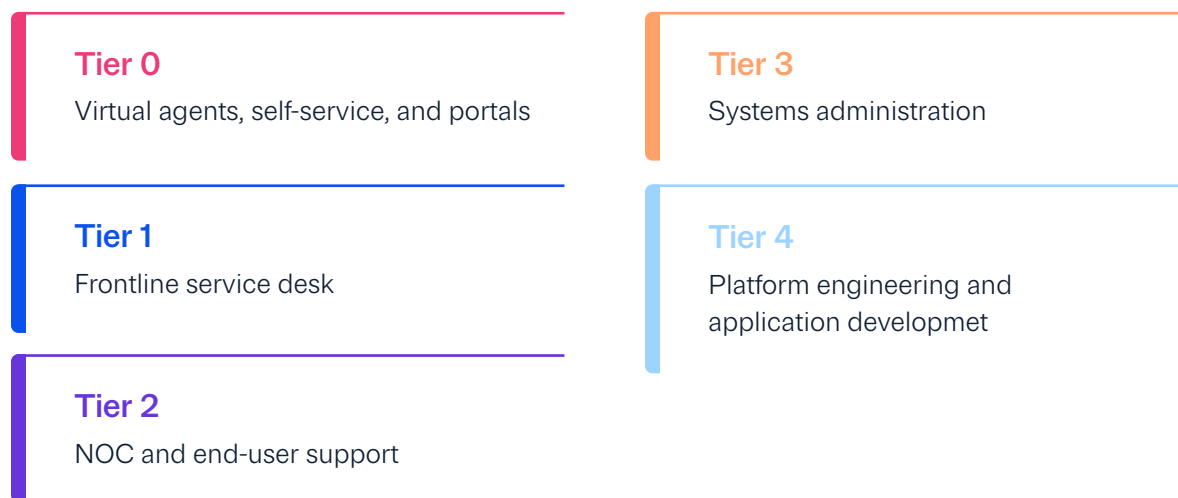
- Routine, well understood work (enrichment, initial triage, standard changes, common requests) is handled end-to-end by automation and AI agents.
- Analysts and engineers are augmented, with context, recommendations, and summarization embedded into their workspaces instead of hunting across tools.
- The system learns from every interaction, so routing, knowledge, and automation triggers improve over time rather than remaining static.

For business leaders, this operating model shows up as fewer customer-impacting incidents, faster recovery when issues do occur, and more predictable delivery commitments; for CFOs, as lower cost of failure and a more efficient talent and vendor model.

This model lives on top of your existing platforms. ServiceNow remains the system of record and orchestration engine. Observability, security, and endpoint/platform management systems provide the signals and control plane. Agents are the connective tissue that see across these layers, decide, and act under governance.

Multi-Tier, Multi-Process Scope

Service operations span:



Across these tiers, the familiar ITSM processes remain: incident, request, change, problem, knowledge, and asset/lifecycle.

Agentic AI is not a Tier 1 chatbot story. The goal is to move appropriate work down to Tier 0–2 (self-service, virtual agents, service desk, and NOC) so higher tiers focus on design, resilience, and complex engineering. It is about changing how work flows across all tiers and processes:

- From detection and enrichment through resolution and knowledge capture in Incident
- From-free form intake to structured, policy-compliant execution in Request
- From manual documentation and approvals to guided, partially-automated lifecycles in Change, Problem, and Knowledge
- From static records to continuously maintained, action-ready data in CMDB, asset, and infrastructure management

Our maturity model and use case selection focus on how much of a given journey can be safely shifted into Tier 0–2, because that's where cost, speed, and experience gains compound.



Designing Agentic Operations Around Processes

From Point Skills to Process-Level Impact

Most AI and automation roadmaps start with small skills use cases:

- Reset one password
- Summarize one ticket
- Draft one email

Small AI skills are building blocks; re-architected processes are where KPIs move.

AHEAD's position is to prioritize processes, for example:

- End-to-end incident lifecycle for a defined class of issues (e.g., VPN connectivity, endpoint performance)
- Onboarding and offboarding from request through access, device readiness, and communications
- Change and release bands, from request through approval, execution, verification, and CI/knowledge updates

By designing agents and workflows around these multi-step, multi-role bands, we can target metrics like deflection, MTTR, CSAT, and FTE hours freed – not just seconds saved per click.

How can I measure success with AI?

We target metrics like:

- MTTR
- FCR and deflection rates
- Cost per ticket / FTE hours freed
- Experience scores / XLAs

Example: Incident Remediation

TODAY'S PATTERN

- An event becomes an incident.
- An analyst manually enriches the ticket, hunts for device/user context, picks a service and assignment group, checks for related incidents or problems, and guesses at next steps.

AGENTIC TARGET STATE

A Service Operations agent:

- Enriches incidents with device, user, CMDB, and telemetry context
- Classifies and routes by suggesting or auto selecting the right service and assignment group
- Relates to existing parent incidents or problems and proposes resolution actions based on prior tickets and knowledge
- Generates concise activity summaries and next best action recommendations for analysts

RESULTS

More accurate routing, fewer transfers, and shorter MTTR for those patterns – with analysts spending more time on complex work and less on repetitive enrichment and lookup, and with fewer customer-facing outages for business units that rely on these services.

Example: Request Fulfillment

In many environments, request intake is a mix of structured catalog items and unstructured emails/chats that require manual triage and data entry.

AGENTS:

- Interpret user intent from email, portal, or chat
- Convert that into the appropriate structured request type (e.g., onboarding, application access) and validate against policy
- Orchestrate downstream tasks (identity, endpoints, collaboration tools, approvals) and keep the user informed in natural language

RESULTS

A higher percentage of fully automated requests, more predictable cycle times, and better end-user experience.

Multi-Agent Patterns Across IT Operations

Across the service management lifecycle, this model uses coordinated agents such as:

Detection & Deflection Agents

Monitor endpoints and applications, remediate issues proactively, and prevent behaviors that cause incidents; patch where possible without user impact.

Triage & Resolution Agents

Suggest knowledge content, propose the right support team, relate new incidents to active parents, summarize activity, suggest next steps, and trigger self-healing actions.

Request Agents

Automate fulfillment for common requests: software access, on- and off-boarding, group membership, device requests, password resets, identity operations.

Change Agents

Generate and document standard changes, assess risk and conflicts, recommend approvals or revisions, execute approved changes, verify success, and update CI and knowledge.

Problem & Knowledge Agents

Recommend problem candidates, research and suggest root causes, document known errors and workarounds, create and maintain knowledge articles.

Asset, CI & Infrastructure Agents

Allocate and reclaim licenses and access, maintain CMDB relationships and ownership, manage patching and quarantining, and optimize resource utilization.

These agents operate across Tier 0–4 and share context so that work moves smoothly from deflection to detection, triage, resolution, and continuous improvement.

Agentic AI vs. Classic Automation

- Use traditional workflows / classic automation when inputs and steps are deterministic and tightly regulated: patching, standard updates, reconciliations.
- Use predictive intelligence / simple machine learning (ML) when you need classification or pattern finding, but not orchestration.
- Use Generative skills when you need content creation or summarization inside a fixed flow.
- Use Agentic AI when inputs are messy, flows branch based on context, and work spans multiple systems and loops until a goal is met.

In practice, the same process often uses a combination of capabilities: agents orchestrate and decide; your existing scripts, workflows, and tools execute.

Operational Maturity as the Foundation

Many enterprises are advancing AI maturity faster than their operational maturity. They have cloud platforms, AI pilots, and isolated “smart” assistants, but limited process discipline, inconsistent governance, and fragmented data.

AHEAD’s point of view:

- **Process and governance maturity enable sustainable AI.**
Without repeatable processes, clear ownership, and auditable controls, agentic initiatives become fragile and risky.
- **AI maturity does not automatically imply operational maturity.**
An AI-native startup can still have ad hoc processes; a disciplined IT organization can be strong operationally yet stuck in AI “pilot land.”

Without a solid operational foundation, agentic initiatives suffer from:

- **Unscalable success** – a few pilots depend on heroes rather than institutional lifecycle management
- **Inconsistent risk posture** – agent actions are not consistently governed, audited, or explainable
- **Inability to prove value** – token costs, human time, and business outcomes are not measured in a way that holds up under scrutiny

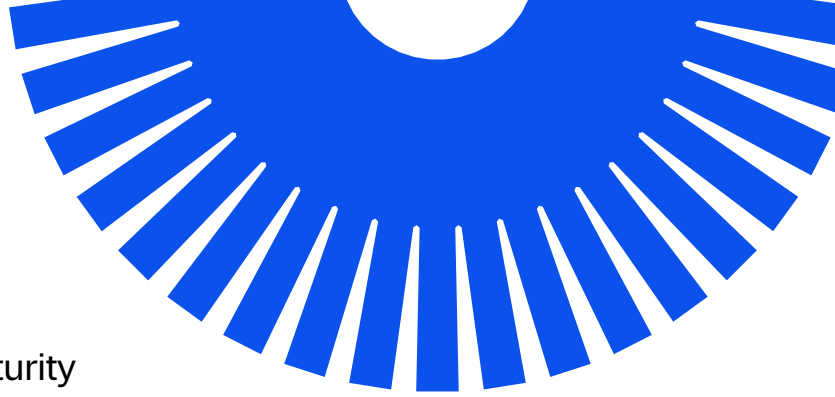
Transforming IT operations with Agentic AI therefore starts with clarifying and correcting the operating model – roles, processes, controls, and measures – before embedding agents deeply into it.

We start with early, assistive agents (e.g., enrichment, routing suggestions, summaries) to pull process maturity up and only increase autonomy as controls mature.

Our process maturity is low. Are we even ready for this?

You don’t need a perfect CMMI score, but you do need process owners, a central system of record, and basic approvals/observability. We start with assistive agents (enrichment, routing, summaries) that help pull process maturity up before we increase autonomy.





Autonomous Service Operations Maturity

As clients adopt AI, they move through an AI-specific maturity curve.

Level 1

Reactive & Tool-Centric

- Most work in Tiers 2–4
- Isolated AI skills (summaries, KB suggestions)
- Minutes saved; KPIs mostly unchanged

Level 3

Orchestrated & Process-Driven

- Selected journeys run primarily in Tiers 0–2
- Agents detect, triage, and propose actions
- Process-level KPIs move (MTTR, FCR/deflection, cost)
- Integrated signals and control plane

Level 2

Assisted, Tier-Aware

- Growing use of Tier 0–1
- Assistive AI embedded in workflows
- Per-use case value tracking

Level 4

Autonomous & Journey-Centric

- Most volume automated in Tier 0–1 for defined journeys
- Multi-agent closed loops (detect–decide–act–learn)
- Value dashboards link ops to financials and XLAs
- Mature agent governance and standards

Our **Assess → Design → Prove → Scale** journey is how we move specific processes from Level 1-2 experiments toward Level 3-4 autonomous journeys.

Value Realization Progression

We use a three-phase progression to introduce Autonomous Service Operations:

- **Foundational:** Define governance and quality criteria, tackle quick wins, validate the adoption model
- **Integration:** Integrate agents into live operations, replacing human effort with periodic quality checks
- **Optimization:** Continuously tune agents, notify on anomalies, and extend multi-agent patterns for compounding value

Principles for Human-Centric, Governed Agentic Operations

Not all automation is good automation. For Agentic AI in IT operations, we commit to principles that we do not compromise on:

1. **AI as Amplifier**

- AI augments people; it does not replace the need for empathy and judgment, especially in escalations and edge cases.
- Initial focus is on eliminating low value, repetitive work so skilled people can work on complex issues and higher-value engineering.

2. **Human-Centric Automation**

- Experiences should feel faster and more personal, not opaque or robotic.
- Users should know when they are interacting with automation and have clear paths to a human when nuance or trust is needed.

3. **Learning at Scale**

- Every ticket, chat, and request is an opportunity to make the system smarter via better routing, better knowledge, and better automation triggers.
- This requires explicit patterns for capturing feedback, measuring performance, and updating agents safely.

4. **Contextual and Explainable**

- Agents must act with awareness of user, system, and business context, and they must be traceable.
- We design for explainability so that operations teams can see who (or what) did what, when, and why, and can roll back or adjust as needed.

Managing Risk, Change & Adoption

The biggest blockers to agentic IT operations are rarely technical. They are about people, safety, and trust.

People & Roles

This transformation is not about swapping people for bots; it is about upgrading roles. For CHROs, this is a workforce evolution problem, not a displacement problem: redefining roles, upskilling L1/L2 talent, and protecting institutional knowledge while repetitive work is automated.

- **L1 analysts and service desk agents** shift from repetitive triage to complex investigation, relationship management, and “coaching the agents.”
- **Leads and process owners** focus on designing, governing, and improving automated workflows rather than firefighting individual tickets.
- **Organizational change management** explicitly addresses morale, retention, and the value of institutional knowledge as work patterns evolve.

Cost and capacity are always part of the conversation, but we design around work elimination first: removing low-value tasks and failure demand. Some clients redeploy freed capacity; others plan for net reduction over time via attrition or rebalancing. We recommend declaring a primary objective (cost, capacity, quality, experience) up front so design decisions are transparent.

Safety, Security & Control

Agents are designed to operate inside existing control structures:

- Each agent has an explicit scope designating what it is allowed to do, what tools it can call, and under what conditions it may act autonomously.
- High-risk actions are gated by confidence thresholds and human-in-the-loop approvals, and everything runs through existing security, approvals, and audit capabilities (e.g., in ServiceNow).
- Governance frameworks and guardrails, such as AI confidence/accuracy tolerances, security controls, compliance alignment, RACI, KPIs, and continual improvement cycles are part of the initial design, not an afterthought.

Quality & Reliability

Trust is earned incrementally:

- We start with assistive patterns like triage suggestions, summaries, and recommended next steps, observing behavior and impact before granting more autonomy.
- We log every action, design safe rollback paths, and build observability around agent performance and error patterns.
- Over time, as performance is proven and teams are comfortable, we increase autonomy in clearly bounded scenarios.

Change Management & Adoption

Automation programs often stall at adoption. To avoid that:

- Each use case has an owner, with clear KPIs tied to named process owners and leaders.
- We are explicit about “what’s in it for me” for frontline teams.
- Rollout is paired with training, playbooks, and feedback loops so that analysts can influence how agents behave rather than having automation imposed on them.

How do you avoid another “automation graveyard”?

We treat each agent as a product, not a project—with an owner, KPIs, roadmap, and feedback loops—and we don’t build use cases without clear ownership, outcomes, and readiness – no matter how interesting the demo looks.



Measuring Value: From Science Project to Operating Lever

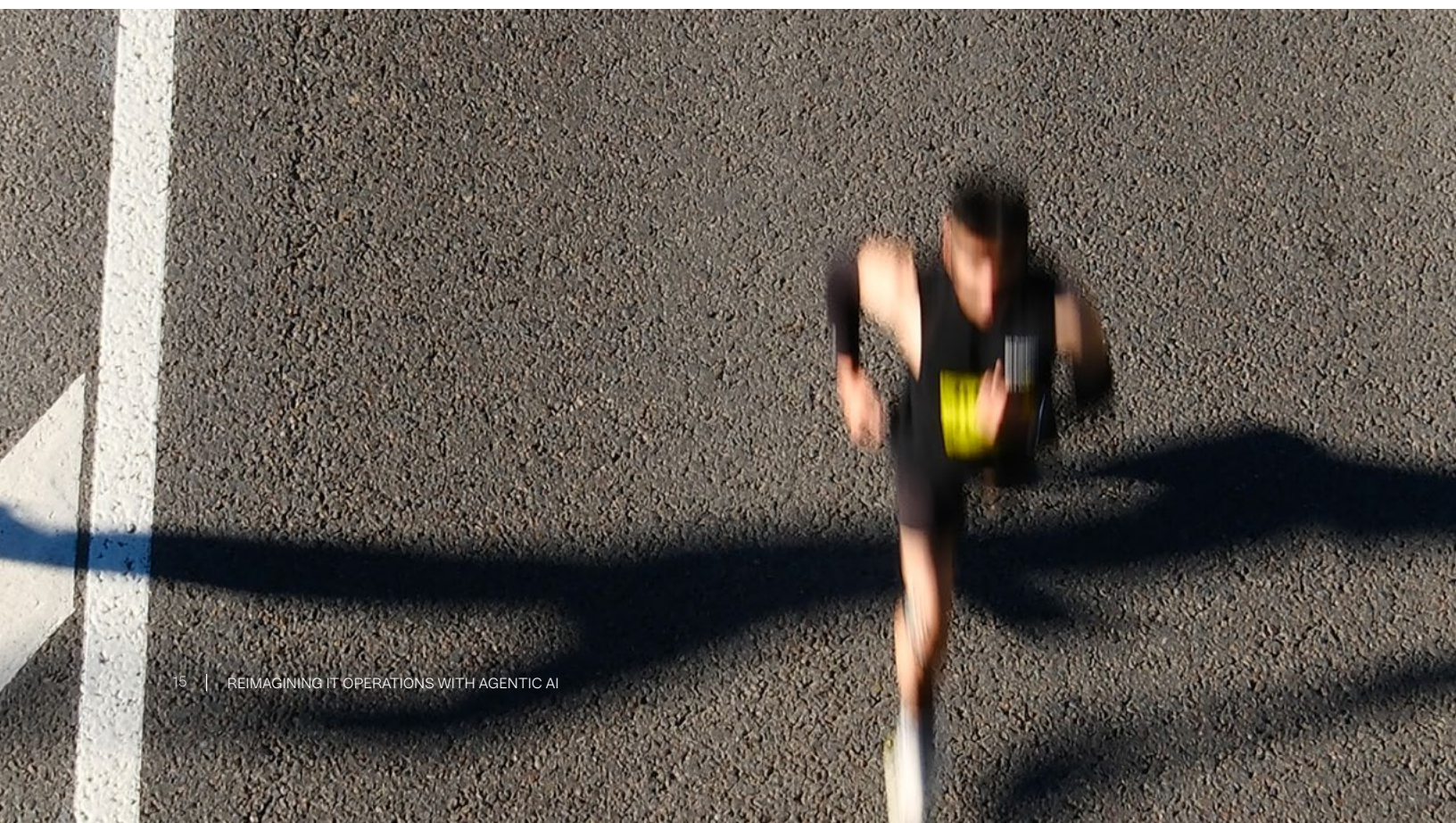
Goals of Autonomous Service Operations

AHEAD helps clients achieve four key goals for Autonomous Service Operations. We translate these goals into measures.

GOAL	MEASUREMENT
Do More with Less: Instead of specifically starting with a reduced headcount target, start with volume and quality of work.	FTE hours freed: Analyst hours freed and how that capacity is redeployed License & infrastructure optimization: License reclamation and infrastructure efficiency where lifecycle, asset, and resource agents are active Time-to-productivity: Reduction in time for new hires and re-assigned staff to become fully productive after onboarding or role change
Enhance User Experience: Whether an internal user or an external customer, AI can deliver an improved experience that feels more consistent and predictable.	Routing quality: Reduction in misassigned work and re-opens CSAT / experience: Changes in end user satisfaction and XLA adherence
Respond and Resolve Faster: When services are affected, AI helps clients detect, identify, and resolve them faster and with less impact.	Deflection: % of tickets and requests handled without human intervention MTTR: Changes in mean time to resolve for targeted incident classes

GOAL	MEASUREMENT
Continuously Improve: This is not a one-time automation project; we align processes and guides so that when the environment changes, the automations and agents change with it.	Business throughput: Impact on release frequency, customer-facing incident minutes, or order-processing capacity in affected business units Margin uplift: Impact on margin using revenue and cost per FTE hour as the lens Tokenomics: Cost of AI (tokens, model usage, infrastructure) as part of the value calculation to ensure net economic benefit

For each use case, we build a simple value model using your data: volumes, current MTTR or cycle time, effort per ticket, error/re-open rates, and cost per hour. We then track realized improvements against that baseline and are explicit about what portion of uplift comes from process clean-up versus agentic orchestration.



How AHEAD Approaches Agentic Transformation

AHEAD's Agentic AI solution for IT operations follows a structured journey underpinned by our experience in service operations and Intelligent Operations: **Assess → Design → Prove → Scale.**

ASSESS

Where Are You, and What Matters Most?

- Visioning and design workshops anchored in AHEAD's Agentic AI Maturity Framework and Service Operations maps
- Clarify primary objectives (cost reduction, quality improvement, capacity expansion, differentiation)
- Define future-state operating models rather than one-off pilots
- Establish baselines and success targets for priority use cases

DESIGN

What Should Agents and Processes Look Like?

- Process engineering/re-engineering across service operations to take advantage of multi-agent patterns
- Architectural consultation to select appropriate agents and agentic platforms (e.g., ServiceNow AI agents, observability and automation tools) based on concrete use cases
- Detailed agent design including scope, guardrails, RACI, KPIs, and non-functional requirements

PROVE

Can We Demonstrate Value Safely in Your Environment?

- Implement one or more end-to-end processes in a governed, observable way
- Support client prototyping to refine agents and assure deployment readiness
- Validate adoption, performance, risk posture, and value realization against the baseline

SCALE

How Do We Turn This into a Durable Operating Model?

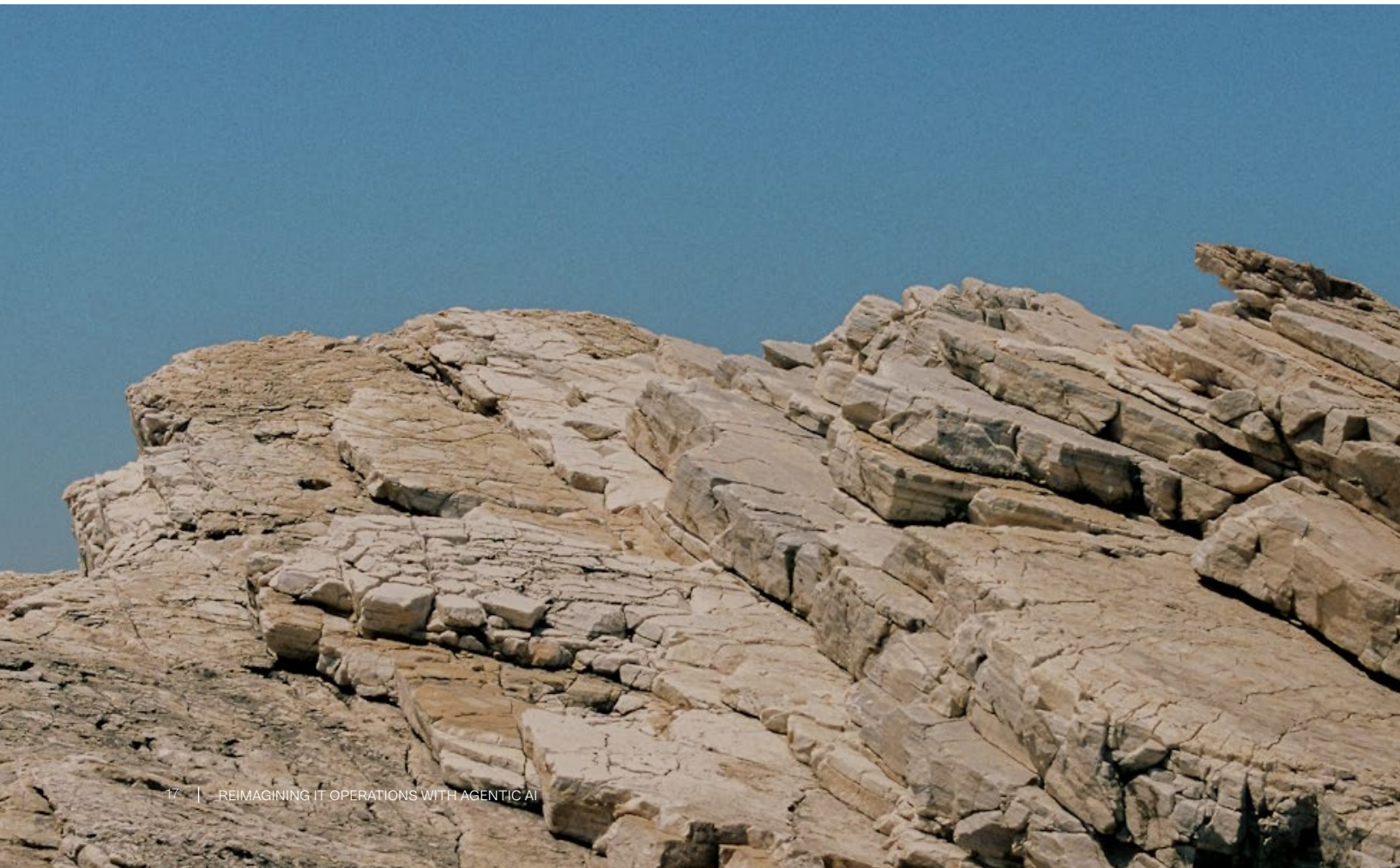
- Harden architecture, security, and governance
- Ensure agents are fit-for-purpose, including resilience, observability, and support models
- Extend proven patterns across additional processes, tiers, and domains
- Embed Agentic AI into continuous improvement, operations reviews, and portfolio planning

Why AHEAD versus OEMs and their built-in AI/agents?

OEMs give you powerful capabilities inside their products. AHEAD:

- Connects those capabilities across ServiceNow, cloud, observability, security, and endpoint platforms
- Redesigns end-to-end processes and operating models so you can scale beyond isolated pilots
- Brings practical experience from building and running these patterns in AHEAD Managed Services and across clients

We are not competing with OEMs; we are the layer that turns their roadmaps into a coherent, governed operating model in your environment.



Final Thoughts

Agentic AI is changing what is possible in IT operations – but technology alone is not enough.

The real opportunity is to:

- Start from the way work flows across service desk, NOC, engineering, and business stakeholders
- Design multi-agent, human-centered automation around those flows
- Raise operational maturity and AI maturity in lockstep, under clear governance

That is how Agentic AI moves from pilot to platform – and how IT operations becomes a strategic engine for experience, resilience, and efficiency for CIOs, CFOs, CHROs, and business unit leaders, rather than a ticket factory fighting rising demand with flat resources.

AHEAD's Autonomous Service Operations approach is built to help you take that journey intentionally – from a few well chosen use cases to a durable, governed operating model that scales across your enterprise.

Why move now instead of waiting for the market to mature?

You don't need Level 5 maturity to start; beginning now with one or two well-chosen use cases lets you build the governance, data, and change muscles you'll need—and avoids a future of shadow AI, fragmented pilots, and a steep catch-up curve later.





Combining cloud-native capabilities in software and data engineering with an unparalleled track record of modernizing infrastructure, we're uniquely positioned to help accelerate the promise of digital transformation.

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