



Love is in the Air as We Share Our Hidden ServiceNow Gems!



Everyone loves a sweet surprise, and there's no better time to do that than when thoughts are of romance. So although we won't give you a sparkly diamond or whisper sweet nothings into your year, **we will give you 5 gems that will save your organization more money than a dirty ol' diamond and rev up hot passion for that priority matrix!** Ohh, baby, I knew you couldn't resist!

Hidden Gems #1. *System Log*, “I’ll Stand by You”

I don’t know about you, but *syslog* has always been there for me when nothing else has, and because of that it’s my number 1 method for troubleshooting. And just like the Pretenders sing, you should stand by ***syslog*** as it will save you time, speed up the log-review process, and help implement preventive troubleshooting.



Now, don’t go confusing your run-of-the-mill system logs like Event log with *syslog*. The *Event log* (a subset of *syslog*) is like the one who didn’t want to do anything except sit and watch TV—BORING—as it only tracks events.

Crissy Hynde croons the *syslog* will never desert you, since it captures information from multiple *Event logs*, stores them in a centralized location, and shows records, warnings and errors for instance processes, and non-critical information events.

For more information on *syslog* and the *Event log*, check out these pieces on SeviceNow.com:

- [Technical Best Practices \(ServiceNow Developer\)](https://developer.servicenow.com/dev.do#!/guides/tokyo/now-platform/tpb-guide/logs_and_queues_best_practices)
(https://developer.servicenow.com/dev.do#!/guides/tokyo/now-platform/tpb-guide/logs_and_queues_best_practices)

- [System Log documentation \(ServiceNow Documentation\)](https://docs.servicenow.com/bundle/quebec-platform-administration/page/administer/time/reference/r_SystemLogs.html#r_SystemL)
(https://docs.servicenow.com/bundle/quebec-platform-administration/page/administer/time/reference/r_SystemLogs.html#r_SystemL)
- [Event Log documentation \(ServiceNow Documentation\)](https://docs.servicenow.com/bundle/quebec-platform-administration/page/administer/platform-events/reference/r_EventLogs.html#r_EventLogs)
(https://docs.servicenow.com/bundle/quebec-platform-administration/page/administer/platform-events/reference/r_EventLogs.html#r_EventLogs)

FYI: While the *Event log* can be useful, it's not used quite as often as other logs to troubleshoot, such as *Transaction log* (performance related troubleshooting) or *Application log* (specific to scoped applications). The *Application log*, like the *Event log*, is a subset of the *syslog*, and only shows logs related to scoped applications.

Hidden Gems #2. “The Best Part of Me” is Requested for Variable Type

Introduced in the city of love itself, the Paris release of *Requested for variable type* adds functionality to *Catalog Item* forms. When using a *Requested for* method of *Order*, you use a:

1. ***Requested for variable to bring forward its population*** prior to being submitted.
2. The *Requested for* method to *Submit* eliminates “special instruction” or “delivery note” popups while capturing the *Requested for* users.

And as that red-headed Ed Sheeran sings, not only can you use *Requested for* as a reference variable to look up the user table, but you can also use it to:

- Default to the current user without needing to set a default value
- Auto-populate with *Opened by* when viewed in Agent Workspace
- Order for multiple users

- Populate the *Requested by* field on *Requested Item*
- Respect *User Criteria*

Psst! There're two "gotchas"

Gotcha #1: Love is a battlefield, as they say, so be careful as you may run into trouble if you have a *User Criteria* item only allowing certain users to view a form—if the user doesn't meet the criteria, you won't be able to submit it. A workaround is to change *Access type* to *Delegated*.



Gotcha #2: Alas, you can't select *Requested for Variable type* in Catalog Builder.

Hidden Gems #3. "All of Me" Includes Me and My Impact/Urgency Priority Matrix

Though John Legend may have it all with his EGOT, when it comes to your service desk, incident prioritization doesn't always work. Service desk incident prioritization is traditionally done by assigning a ticket a **low, medium, or high**. **This may be misleading, though, since 90% of all incidents are considered "medium", and only outliers are considered "low" or "high"**.

Fix this by Implementing an Impact/Urgency Priority Matrix

ServiceNow provides an out-of-the-box solution with more granular prioritization, including the reasons for specific ticket prioritization. By offering an OotB solution, service desk agents provide more relevant information regarding prioritization without being required to make SLA decisions.

Hidden Gems #4. You “Can’t Stop the Feeling” with Incident Clustering & Category Prediction

“Electric wavy in your bones” is exactly what it feels like when you use Incident Clustering and Category Prediction. But Justin Timberlake wasn’t just freewheelin’ when singing about his body being “electric wavy,” he meant:

Free-form text fields that use unstructured data and phantom fields, so agents can provide specific information that doesn’t relate to standard categories or numerical spreadsheets.

To solve the problems with Phantom Fields, narrowly define your fields to ensure consistency and clarity. Dedicating a ServiceNow instance to your service desk processes allows the system to work for your agents and removes the need for phantom columns, thereby increasing efficiency.

Gotcha #3 The danger of Phantom Fields

You may find phantom fields add distracting data to incidents and necessary complexity. The free-form electric wavy nature may be unpredictable, involving unstable data quality when using fields to capture structured information for targeted text fields.

Hidden Gems #5. I'll Take You "Just the Way You Are" When Configuring ServiceNow to Match Your Processes



As you're well aware, service desks work with incident categories and sub-categories to group like incidents in consistently defined categories. And just because Billy Joel doesn't want you to change, change happens and differentiation between categories fades as they become more narrowly defined and granule.

The challenge is the balance between the necessity of granularity v. the "big picture". Both are important, and data analysis shows companies may suffer from either having:

- Categories that are barely used, or
- Clusters of very similar categories

At Covestic, we love you just the way you are and use incident clustering and category prediction that provides a wealth of service desk data available at your fingertips. In so doing, you take advantage of the opportunities to standardize incident assignment across departments.

This saves time and resources and also increases data quality and service consistency by including data in our Service Desk Data Diagnosis (SDD) incident similarity analysis that:

- Clusters tickets by similarity to facilitate problem identification and resolution
- Provides insights into categorization quality used to categorize incidents

Just like knowing you'll always be the same old someone, your data quality improvements set your service desk up for success to enjoy better ticket categorization from the SDD.

We hope you enjoyed the Hidden Gems I love to use! Check out more gems in ServiceNow Tips & Tricks Archives

[\(https://www.covestic.com/blog/category/servicenow-tips-and-tricks/\)](https://www.covestic.com/blog/category/servicenow-tips-and-tricks/).

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