

Microsoft Project End-of-Life:

What CIOs and PMOs Need to Do Next

How to navigate the 2026 deadline and modernize project delivery with ServiceNow SPM





Microsoft®
Project Online

Understanding Microsoft Project Online End of Life

Microsoft Project Online will reach end of life on September 30, 2026. After this date, the service will no longer be available.

This change impacts more than just one tool. For many organizations, Project Online is the system of record for project plans, timelines, dependencies, and reporting. When it is removed, that system of record disappears unless action is taken.

What is going away

- Project Online will be shut down completely
- There will be no read-only access after the shutdown
- There will be no built-in archive environment
- Any data not migrated will be permanently lost

Project Server deployments will continue to run, but they will no longer receive updates or security patches. Over time, this creates serious risk.

Why this matters

- Tracking project schedules and milestones
- Managing dependencies across teams
- Reporting progress to leadership
- Maintaining historical project data

Without a plan, teams may lose visibility into ongoing work and historical performance.

Common misconceptions

Some teams assume they can continue using desktop versions of Microsoft Project. While the desktop application may still open files, it will no longer provide:

- Shared access across teams
- Integration with other systems
- Centralized reporting

This leads to fragmented planning and manual coordination.



Risks of Staying on Microsoft Project Online

Delaying action increases risk across multiple areas of the business.



Data loss

Once Project Online is retired, all hosted data will be removed. This includes:

- Active project plans
- Historical project data
- Baselines and schedules
- Resource assignments

If this data is not migrated in advance, it cannot be recovered.



Integration breakdown

Project Online is often connected with tools like:

- Microsoft 365
- Power BI
- Teams
- Other enterprise systems

As the platform approaches end of life, these integrations may stop working or become unreliable.



Security and compliance risk

Unsupported systems create exposure. Without updates:

- Security vulnerabilities remain unpatched
- Systems become targets for cyber threats
- Compliance requirements may not be met

Organizations in regulated industries may face audit issues or penalties.



Operational disruption

Legacy systems become harder to manage over time.

- Fewer experts are available to support them
- Performance may degrade
- Unexpected downtime becomes more common

This impacts delivery timelines and team productivity.

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Why ServiceNow is the ideal alternative

Replacing Microsoft Project Online is not just about finding another planning tool. It is about choosing a platform that can support how work is managed across the enterprise.

Many organizations start by looking for tools that feel similar to what they already use. Over time, they realize that simply replacing scheduling functionality does not solve deeper challenges around visibility, prioritization, and execution.

This is where platforms like ServiceNow Strategic Portfolio Management come into focus.

Moving beyond isolated project planning

Traditional tools focus on creating and managing project schedules. While this is important, it is only one part of the picture.

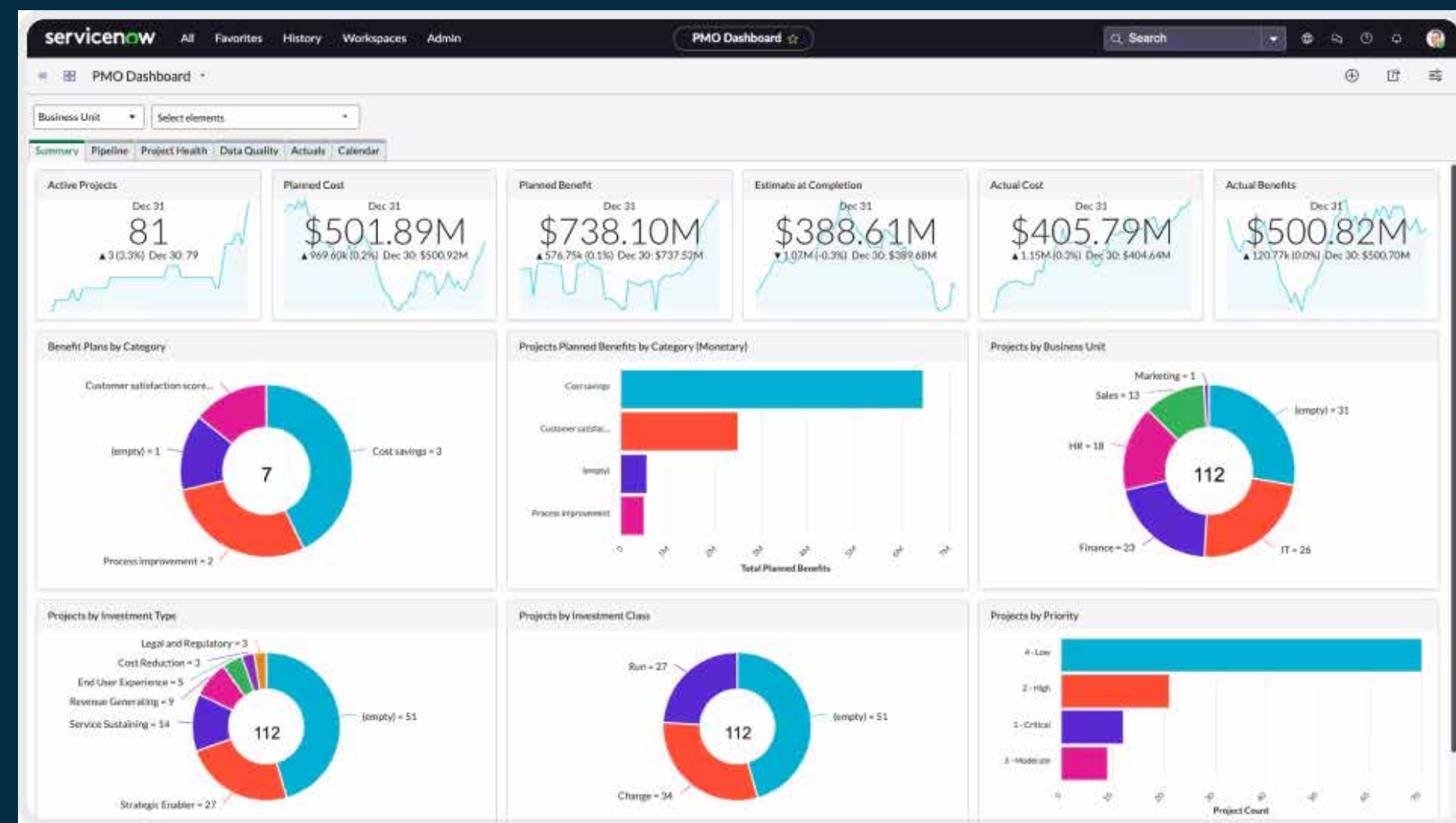
Modern organizations need to:

- Align projects with business strategy
- Manage demand from multiple departments
- Track resources across both project and operational work
- Connect financial data with delivery progress

ServiceNow enables this shift by bringing project management into a broader enterprise workflow platform.

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SPM



What improves
when you move to
ServiceNow SPM



1. Better alignment between strategy and execution

Projects are no longer tracked in isolation. Every initiative can be linked to business goals, making it easier to prioritize work that delivers real value.

Leadership teams gain visibility into:

- Which initiatives support strategic objectives
- Where investment is being made
- What should be accelerated or delayed



2. Real-time visibility across all work

Instead of relying on separate tools and manual updates, teams can see:

- Active projects
- Operational work such as tickets and support tasks
- Resource allocation across all activities

This helps teams make decisions based on actual workload, not assumptions.



3. Stronger resource planning

One of the biggest gaps in traditional tools is understanding capacity.

With ServiceNow SPM, organizations can:

- View resource availability in real time
- Identify over-allocation early
- Balance work across teams

This leads to more realistic planning and fewer delays.



4. Integrated financial tracking

Financial data is often managed outside project tools, which creates gaps.

ServiceNow connects:

- Project budgets
- Actual costs
- Forecasts

This gives a clearer picture of project performance and supports better financial decisions.

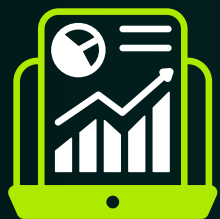


5. Standardized processes and governance

As organizations scale, consistency becomes critical. ServiceNow allows teams to:

- Define standardized workflows
- Implement approval processes
- Maintain audit trails

This improves control without slowing down execution.



6. Live reporting and decision-making

Instead of preparing reports manually, dashboards update automatically.

Leaders can access:

- Real-time project status
- Portfolio health
- Risk indicators

This reduces reporting effort and improves decision speed.



Migration Path from Microsoft Project to ServiceNow SPM

A structured, phased approach ensures migration is controlled, low-risk, and aligned with business continuity. While timelines vary based on complexity, most enterprise migrations follow a similar progression:



Phase 1: Establish Scope & Strategy (Weeks 1–3)



Current-State Assessment:

Analyze existing project structures, dependencies, custom fields, and any parallel systems (spreadsheets, offline trackers).



Gap Analysis:

Evaluate differences between Microsoft Project Online and ServiceNow SPM data models, workflows, and capabilities.



Future-State Blueprint:

Define standardized processes, governance frameworks, and workflow architecture aligned with enterprise needs.

Phase 2: Configure & Validate Foundations (Weeks 4–8)



Core Configuration:

Set up foundational structures including WBS, milestones, stage gates, and governance controls.



Data Migration (Initial):

Migrate selected active projects to validate structure, dependencies, and scheduling logic.



Integration Setup:

Establish connections with identity systems and key enterprise platforms.

Phase 3: Test & Confirm Readiness (Weeks 9–11)



Scenario-Based Testing:

Project teams execute day-to-day workflows within ServiceNow to ensure usability and accuracy.



Data Validation:

Confirm migrated data maintains integrity across timelines, dependencies, and reporting structures.

Phase 4: Enable & Transition to Live (Weeks 12–14)



Role-Based Training:

Equip users with targeted guidance based on their responsibilities (project managers, stakeholders, approvers).



Go-Live Execution:

Transition active projects into ServiceNow through a planned and controlled rollout.

Phase 5: Stabilize & Drive Adoption (Weeks 15–16)



Post-Go-Live Support:

Provide continuous support to resolve issues, answer queries, and reinforce best practices



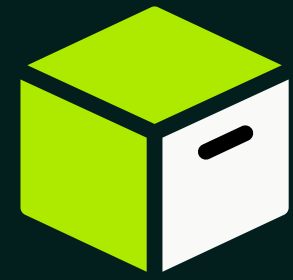
Adoption Optimization:

Refine workflows, configurations, and processes based on real usage patterns.



What Can Be Migrated to ServiceNow SPM

Not all data and processes should be migrated in the same way. A structured approach ensures each element is handled based on its business value and future relevance.



Retain as Is (Lift and Preserve)

- Custom data fields
- Active project metadata

Benefit:

Retains critical information exactly as it exists today, ensuring continuity and minimizing disruption to ongoing operations.



Transform & Standardize

- Resources
- Baselines
- Templates

Benefit:

Standardizes and optimizes legacy data to improve visibility, reporting accuracy, and resource planning in the new environment.



Rebuild & Modernize

- Dashboards
- Approvals
- Workflows

Benefit:

Leverages ServiceNow SPM to replace manual or fragmented processes with automated, scalable, and more strategic workflows.



Preparing Your PMO for the Shift

Successful migration depends on more than technology.

Governance

Define how projects are created, approved, and managed. Establish clear standards.

Roles and responsibilities

Ensure that:

- Ownership is defined
- Decision-making is clear
- Accountability is established

Change management

Communicate early and often. Help teams understand:

- Why the change is happening
- What will be different
- How it benefits them

Training

Provide role-based training so users can perform their tasks effectively.

Cultural readiness

Encourage teams to adopt new ways of working. Support them through the transition.



Project Online Migration Checklist for CIOs and PMOs

Strategy

- Define long-term project management goals
- Align with business priorities
- Secure leadership support

Execution

- Define timelines and milestones
- Assign responsibilities
- Monitor progress

Adoption

- Train users
- Track system usage
- Gather feedback and improve

Evaluation

- Assess alternatives based on enterprise needs
- Validate capabilities across projects, resources, and financials
- Review integration requirements

Data preparation

- Identify critical data
- Clean and standardize data
- Plan migration phases



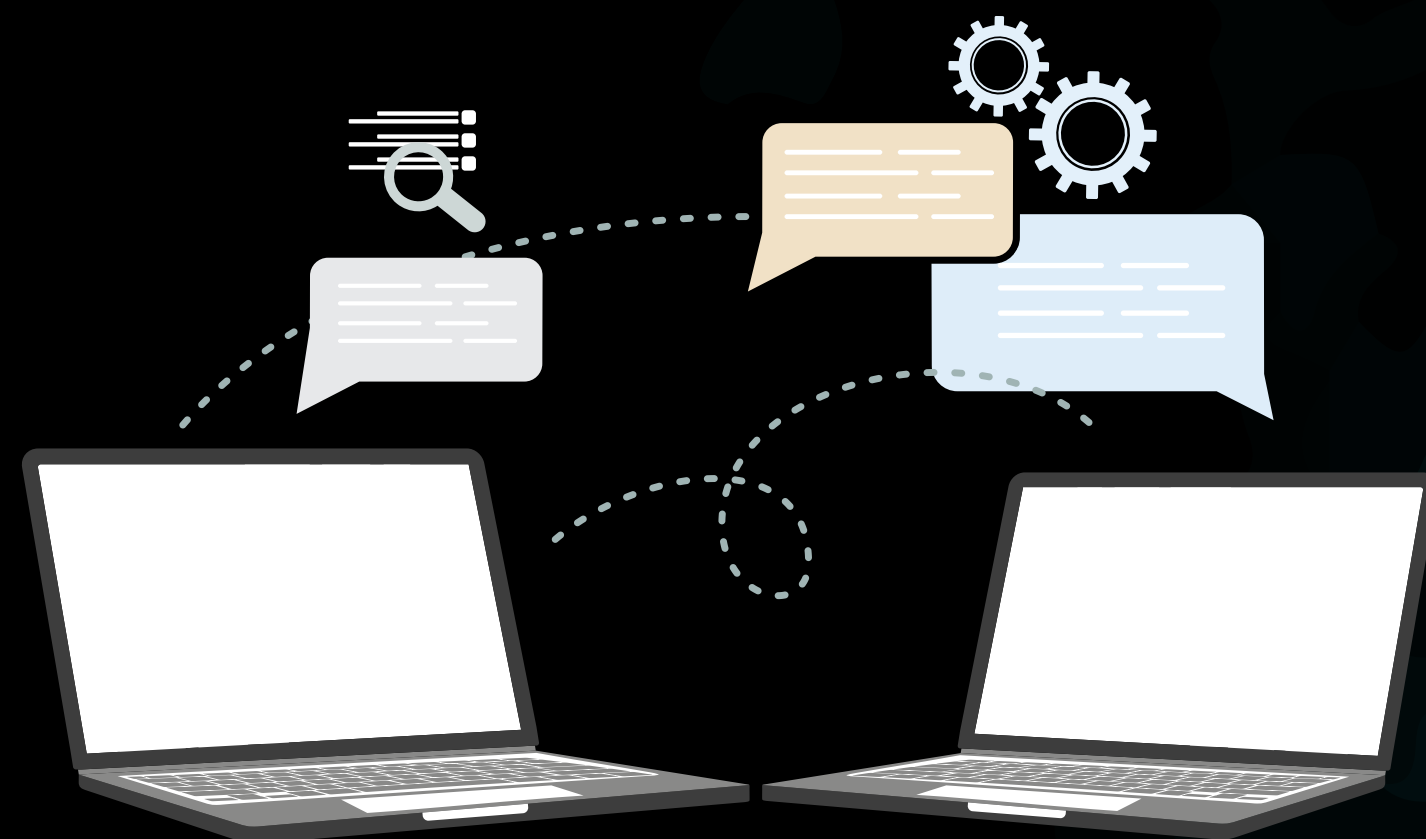
Partnering with Aelum for a Smooth Transition

Whether you are just starting to explore the end of Microsoft Project Online or are already evaluating alternatives, you do not have to manage this transition alone.

Aelum works with organizations to simplify this shift and turn it into a structured transformation, not just a tool replacement.

How Aelum supports your transition

1. Move your project data, schedules, and structures into a modern platform without losing critical information. Ensure continuity while improving visibility and control.
2. Go beyond project tracking. Implement capabilities across demand, project, resource, financials, Agile, and roadmapping to create a connected PMO.
3. Identify what matters, remove redundancies, and standardize your data before migration. Integrate seamlessly with systems like Microsoft 365, Jira, Azure DevOps, SAP, and Oracle.
4. Enable your teams with clear communication, role-based training, and structured onboarding so the transition is adopted, not resisted.
5. Use Aelum accelerators and proven frameworks to reduce implementation time and deliver measurable outcomes faster.



The Aelum approach

Aelum focuses on building a strong foundation for long-term success.

- Start with a clear assessment of your current PMO maturity
- Define a future state aligned with business goals
- Standardize processes before scaling
- Implement in phases to reduce risk
- Continuously optimize based on real usage

This ensures that your new system is not just functional, but effective.

Aelum can help you evaluate your options, define a roadmap, and execute your transition with confidence. Build your ServiceNow SPM strategy with Aelum and move from disconnected project tracking to enterprise-wide visibility and control.



Plan your move from Microsoft Project with Aelum

We are an **AI and data-first consulting partner** helping manufacturing leaders turn operations into a competitive advantage. From shop floor to supply chain, we enable real-time intelligence through Industrial Edge, unlocking predictive maintenance, connected assets, and faster decision-making. Powered by ServiceNow and backed by enterprise-scale AI, transformation, security, and digital experience capabilities, we help organizations drive resilience, efficiency, and measurable ROI..



Talk to our experts

