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Avanti West Coast makes permit to work safer with ServiceNow AI



Working with UP3, Avanti West Coast has made its permit to work process safer and simpler for everyone involved. ServiceNow AI now checks contractors' safety paperwork as it's submitted, asks for anything that's missing and shows Avanti's safety experts where the biggest risks are. That means fewer forms sent back, less waiting for approval at depots and trackside, and more of the experts' time spent on keeping people safe instead of checking documents. It also gives Avanti a strong foundation for using AI in more parts of the business.

- Industry: **Transport**
- Company size: **3,000+**
- Location: **UK**
- UP3 services: **ServiceNow Managed Service**
- ServiceNow products: **App Engine, ServiceNow Now Assist**

Outcomes:

- ✔ **Stronger safety assurance** – ServiceNow AI flags mismatches between planned work and risk controls before approval
- ✔ **Consistent RAMS from the start** – ServiceNow AI flags inconsistencies and contractors are prompted for missing documents
- ✔ **Fewer resubmissions, less time waiting for approvals** – Gaps are caught at submission, so work isn't held up at depots and trackside
- ✔ **Expert time spent on judgement, not admin** – AI points reviewers to the highest risks first
- ✔ **A foundation for more AI** – Avanti's ServiceNow platform is ready for further AI use cases

Overview:

Avanti West Coast is one of the UK's largest train operators, providing the West Coast Mainline which links together towns and major cities as a vital economic artery for the UK.

We've been proud to work with Avanti for many years, managing its instance of ServiceNow and building ServiceNow applications to automate processes in other areas of the business.

The challenge:

Every contractor working at an Avanti station needs a permit to work, making it a business-critical process. Avanti had digitalised the process, moving it from a lengthy Word document into ServiceNow, where permits are now submitted, tracked and managed. However, the quality and format of contractor RAMS (risk assessments and method statements) varied widely. Every submission was reviewed by hand, so Avanti's safety experts spent much of their time checking paperwork and formatting. Forms often had to be resubmitted, slowing approvals and holding up work at depots and trackside.

Digitalising the process hadn't removed the manual effort. Confirming each piece of work was safe still depended on people checking documents line by line.



The solution:

UP3 recommended ServiceNow AI to reduce manual effort and friction and improve safety. The team used AI to build a RAMS validation engine. The AI prompts contractors for missing documents as they submit, and checks the RAMS match the format that rail safety governance rules require.

AI flags gaps, picks up mismatches between the planned work and its risk controls, and points Avanti's approvers to the highest risks for review. Avanti's safety experts still sign off every permit, and each AI recommendation is explained, so reviewers can focus on safety decisions instead of time-consuming reviews and paperwork.

UP3 and Avanti tested the approach with a pilot group of key contractors and used their feedback to refine the workflows before the final rollout.

> **"UP3 understood from day one that this wasn't about processing permits faster. They used ServiceNow AI to help our experts make better decisions and improve safety."**
>
> Paul Mills, Senior IT Project Manager

The outcome:

The new approach is now live across Avanti's permit to work process. Contractors are prompted for anything missing as they submit, so every set of RAMS arrives complete and in the right format from the start. Gaps are caught straight away instead of weeks later, which means fewer forms sent back and less time waiting for approval. Work at depots and trackside isn't held up by paperwork.

ServiceNow AI checks that the planned work matches the risk controls in place and flags anything that doesn't line up before a permit is approved. Avanti's safety experts still sign off every permit, but now they start with the highest risks instead of reading every document line by line.

For leaders, that means stronger safety assurance, work that starts on time, and expert time spent on judgement instead of admin.



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Companies across all sectors are realising the benefits of partnering with our award-winning team of ServiceNow experts. Get in touch to find out more about our services and how we can help.