

6 Critical Features of a Value Stream Management Solution

Choose the right value stream management (VSM) solution so you can optimize your organizational value streams, improve product quality, accelerate delivery, reduce costs, and increase revenue.

A tool-agnostic VSM solution must have six critical features.

IT and Business Alignment

A VSM solution should enable full alignment of your business with IT initiatives to drive positive outcomes for your organization with:

- Real-time value stream and lean metrics
- The ability to capture and visualize critical success factors across your product value streams to improve speed and quality
- End-to-end visibility of key metrics and outcomes across portfolios



Actionable and Relevant Data

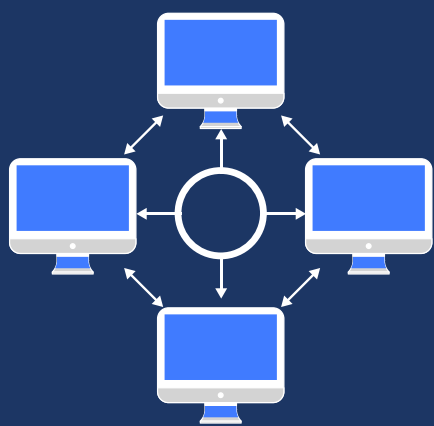
A VSM solution should measure the activities and outcomes of your product value streams to drive continuous improvement efforts by:

- Ensuring real-time flow of data across the tools and processes supporting your value streams
- Identifying bottlenecks impacting the efficient flow of software delivery through product value streams (e.g., orphaned tests, ambiguous requirements, overtesting)
- Highlighting artifacts that are risks and could potentially materialize into bottlenecks
- Providing a 'What-If' visualization of the expected outcome to removing bottlenecks
- Incorporating Agile and DevOps tactics to accelerate software delivery speed

Data-Driven, Outcome-Focused Analytics

A VSM solution should provide real-time (all generated data available on demand), data-driven (raw metadata transformed into actionable intelligence) and outcome-focused analytics to an organization by:

- Automatically calculating metrics and KPIs for delivery speed and quality
- Uncovering product issues and risks, such as: missed release dates, substandard NPS scores, untapped capacity, and inadequate test coverage
- Aiding decision makers with cost reduction, competitive positioning, and product fit in the marketplace
- Calculating value stream and lean metrics, such as: process time, cycle time, lead time, flow time, wait time, value added time, MTTR, escaped defect ratio, WIP, blocker data, queues, throughput and production impact



Dynamic Value Stream Visualization

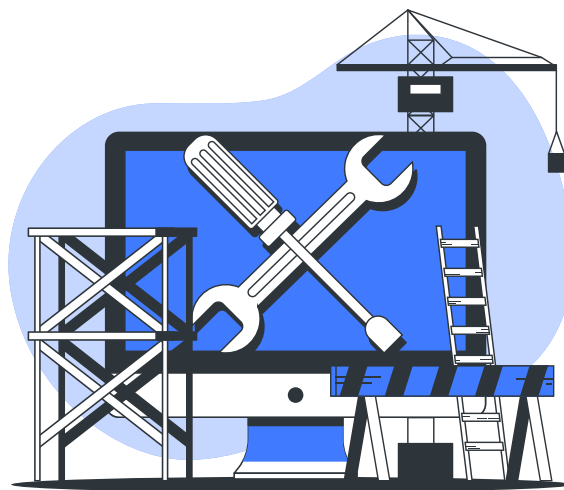
A VSM solution should provide organizations with the ability to visualize each product value stream and how they interact with one another with:

- End-to-end visibility of every work item, how they evolve, and their relationships with other work items in and across product value streams
- Dynamic visualization of work items evolving through your value streams, how they evolved, and the speed and quality of their evolution to your customers
- Real-time visualization of how your current value stream evolved over time

Workflow Orchestration

A VSM solution should help organizations orchestrate and coordinate automatic triggers like builds, automated tests, and deployments, and help with:

- Centralized control of builds, CI/CD tests, and releases/deployments
- Improvements in cross-functional collaboration between Development, Quality, and Operations teams
- Metric dashboards that provide insights of how process changes impact release outcomes



IT Governance

A VSM solution should aid in the process of governing IT capabilities by supporting frameworks like ITIL, CMMI, or TQM, and help with:

- Centralized governance over the flow of work across an entire product value stream
- Organization-wide commitment to quality initiatives with better visibility
- Tool selection efforts, staffing, and goal-setting activities
- Management of information security work streams and incidents (by combining frameworks like COBIT and COSO, and ISO 27001)

