

## StrataCom Whitepapers

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## StrataCom Expertise

HP Service Manager  
HP ServiceCenter  
HP Asset Manager  
HP AssetCenter  
uCMDB  
DDM  
Decision Center

## StrataCom Services

Implementations  
Upgrades  
Customizations  
Gap Analysis  
Business Process Consulting  
ITIL Process Consulting  
Reporting and Metrics  
Managed Services  
Project Management  
Remote Administration  
Database Conversion

## Contact Us

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# StrataCom Whitepaper

## *Notifications in Service Manager*

The Notification Engine is primarily responsible for sending messages that are generated by HP ServiceCenter and Service Manager events, such as opening or closing a change or task. Administrators can edit these messages, add new messages, change the conditions that trigger the messages, and select who will receive the messages.

The foundation for the Notification Engine is strong and robust, allowing many different types of notifications to be generated. The Notification file stores the definitions of the who, what, where, when and how of the notifications. This file works in conjunction with the message file to define headers for common system events. Arguments are passed to the pre-defined messages and substituted allowing for unique subject lines for each message.

Out of the box, ServiceCenter/Service Manager is configured to send notifications at all of the touch points of the record lifecycle. There are notifications for Open, Update and Close. Additionally Change notifications include many notifications for Approval workflow. These base notifications are called from the Object record for the file you are working on.

In addition to the base ServiceCenter notifications, notifications may be automatically generated from other triggers, such as the addition of an activity record or by custom methods or scripts and calling the notification engine directly. This allows for an endless number of notifications to be generated.

The notification engine is not without its limitations though. Because it is built on an older infrastructure, it has some built in limitations by today's standards. Many of these limitations are hard coded into the notification application. There are ways around these limitations and we will explore some of these here.

- The 'pager' option in ServiceCenter/Service Manager needs an old-style paging service and third party paging software to send pages.
- There is no pre-defined solution for changing the destination of a notification, based on some criteria in the recipients' records.
- ServiceCenter/ Service Manager is pre-defined to send messages to each member or approver in a group, but not to send to a "group" address stored on that same record.



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- Formatting and laying out data on an email message is difficult.
- Out of the box, text fields truncate at 60 characters for each line. While this can sometimes be tweaked, it's difficult to get exactly what you want.
- Long and complex expressions on the notification condition can make the where and when of notifications hard to exact.
- Expressions and optional message content based on criteria other than the data in the record may be difficult to provide.

Some old methods for producing complex notifications include avoidance of the OOB conditional criteria and utilizing a ServiceCenter script to decide when and where to send the notifications. These scripts then interface directly into the notification engine to send their notifications. This was used when Administrators could not accurately create their notifications within the limitations of the Notification file.

For text fields, setting the field to array and the line length to -9, this may expand the full text of the text field. This solution does not always work reliably and requires lots of tweaking sometimes to get what you want.

Sending notifications to a group email address can also be accomplished by creating a contact record for the group and storing the group email address on that record. If you do decide to use this as a method for using the group email address, it is a good idea to hide those group names from the standard links and lookups on the contacts file.

Since ServiceCenter 6+, the landscape of notifications has exploded. While the notification engine itself has not changed, users now have the ability to use jscall's to use Javascript in place of any of the subject, expression, notification, recipient fields to return exactly what you want.

Javascript allows for very complex expressions to be coded. Using Javascript to format your notification allows your email to look exactly as you want. You can code the Javascript to return the body and text of your notification to get what you want. You'll get all of the text in those long text fields and even be able to substitute information in the printed email based on other information stored in the record.

Javascript can also be called to handle those complex recipient conditions and swap email addresses, send to two addresses for an individual, send to a mobile device and/or escalate to a manager.

Service Manager offers many opportunities to clean up and customize the notification engine to produce crisp, clean notifications to your users and clients. Interfacing Javascript with the out of box notification engine allows for much more sophisticated email output.

