

# SERVICetalk

The Journal of the *it* Service Management Forum



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Another Record-Breaking Conference & Exhibition Initial Reports Inside
- Most Recent Members Survey Reinforces Optimism in the Future

- Our 3 Regular Series on:
  - Ask the Experts
  - Infrastructure Technologies
  - IT Physician Heal Thyself
- Neil McBride Looks At: Actor Network Theory

- Our Popular Chairman Bids Farewell
- PLUS... all the usual features covering *itSMF* and *IoSM* events and information, industry news, and gossip

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# SERVICetalk

is the Journal of the IT Service Management Forum (itSMF)

## What is the itSMF?

The IT Service Management Forum Ltd. (itSMF) is the only internationally recognised and **independent** organisation dedicated to IT Service Management. It is a not-for-profit organisation, wholly owned and principally operated by its membership. The itSMF is a major influence on, and contributor to, Industry "Best Practice" and Standards worldwide, working in partnership with the OGC (the UK Government advisory body), the British Standards Institution (BSI), the Distributed Management Task Force (DMTF), the Information Systems Examination Board (ISEB) and the Examination Institute of the Netherlands (EXIN).

## The aims of the itSMF

- To develop and promote industry best practice in service management
- To engender professionalism within service management personnel
- To provide a vehicle for helping members improve service performance
- To provide members with a relevant forum in which to exchange information and share experiences with their peers on both sides of the industry

## What services do we offer?

Among the services we offer are:

- opportunity to participate in setting best practice;
- reduced entry to seminars/exhibitions;
- discounts on book sales;
- products/services catalogues;
- consultancy;
- regional discussion groups;
- reference sites.

# SERVICetalk

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## Chief Executive Officer's Remarks

**A**nd so another outstandingly successful UK conference is behind us. Record numbers of delegates and exhibitors combined with an entertaining and informative set of speakers to make it arguably the best ever. From the stimulating opening by Nigel Barlow through to the inspiring closure from Sahar Hashemi, speakers were consistently well received.

As always, much hard work went into making the event a success – both from the volunteers on the committee and the office staff in Webbs Court – and many delegates have written to offer their thanks in recognition of this. Even as the final tidying up is happening – collating the feedback, writing reviews, etc – work on next year's event has started. A debrief with the hotel was held before leaving Brighton and the first internal review was held the following day!

With other chapters holding equally successful events throughout the year, almost all enjoying significant growth, and the expansion of the international community, it is clear that not only is Service Management truly of global importance but also that itSMF fulfils a vital role in helping organisations implement sustainable solutions.

The continuing explosive growth puts a great deal of strain on both the UK and International organisations. It was therefore most heartening to receive a healthy batch of new volunteers to serve on the various UK committees and management board. The Council of Members meeting on 4 December will elect the new Management Board, who will then work closely with the professional staff in Reading to drive the organisation forward and provide increasing value to the membership.

Equally, a most productive International meeting decided upon a streamlined management structure and set many wheels in motion for the future direction of the global organisation.

Both locally and globally, itSMF is becoming recognised and acknowledged as a key player and we are forming strategic partnerships and alliances with many other organisations. These will enable us to offer new and improved services to the membership, while also giving us the chance to influence and contribute to ongoing best practice and standards development.

We can be rightly proud of all the achievements so far, but greater challenges and even greater rewards lie ahead. If you think that you would like to contribute somehow, it's not too late. Simply contact the office if you'd like to volunteer your services. As we say, ad nauseam, it's YOUR organisation.

*Aidan*



## Contents

Uncertainty Reinforces Optimism for Recovery .....	3
IT Physician Heal Thyself (5) .....	7
International News .....	11
Ask the Experts .....	12
Regional Round Up .....	18
2003 Conference, Exhibition & Awards Round Up .....	19
BS15000 Certification .....	27
New itSMF Members .....	30
Institute of IT Service Management Logo .....	30
IoSM Latest Members List .....	32
Is It Safe? (Seminar Report) .....	32
Getting Buy-In To ITIL: Ideas from Actor Network Theory .....	35
Shifting the Boundaries of Service Support .....	38
ITIL Business Benefits .....	40
Service Catalogue Launches .....	42
People on the Move .....	42
Press Releases .....	42
Diary .....	43
A Final Few Words .....	44

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# Uncertainty Reinforces Optimism for Recovery

## OR Optimism versus Terrorism: Who's Winning?

DAVID BARKER  
Qube Holdings Ltd

There's an old adage, often quoted, that states, "an optimist is someone who thinks that the future is uncertain". For *itSMF* members surveyed this year that statement certainly seems to hold a good deal of truth. If you've been following the series of updated reports published in **SERVICetalk** you'll recall that we conducted the first of four surveys amongst a random selection of **SERVICetalk** readers in February. This was followed by additional surveys in April, June and August. In each case we talked to 100 IT professionals embracing a cross-section of managers, technicians and support staff. In all 400 individuals took part representing some 374 companies and organisations.

The leading question in all four surveys focused on the situation in Iraq and the threat posed by national and international terrorism in a post September 11 world. How had their organisation responded, we asked? How had world events affected their plans for Service Management initiatives?

At the same time we were also keen to see what were the most common reasons for implementing Service Management changes. And, on a broader note, how would any changes affect their planned activity in the next 12 months.

### Terrorism Without The 'Terror'

In February the debate was still raging over whether we should or shouldn't invade Iraq in search of those illusive weapons of mass destruction, so we might have expected a certain amount of panic (or at least concern) amongst those that we interviewed. Let's face it, pre-war there was a lot of scare mongering going on, international opinion was divided on the need for a war, and the tabloids were looking for fully paid-up members of al-Qa'eda lurking around every corner.

So, when the results of our first two surveys showed that only 5% of respondents attributed new initiatives to the threat of terrorism or concerns over Iraq, were we surprised? Well, yes... and then again... no. There was, of course, the possibility of a low-level domestic terrorist attack, and at least one Sunday paper was warning that a war could lead to a century of unrest in the Middle East and a blood

bath unseen since the battle of the Somme. But most people didn't seem unduly concerned.

The contrast in the press was really quite interesting, front page alarm bells was being toned down on the inside pages by feature writers offering travel tips on how to ensure that our holiday plans weren't disrupted by the goings-on in Iraq. Some finance sections were even advising investors how to catch the bounce when it was all over.

What we concluded at the time, and I think quite correctly, is that change in the business environment is recognised as constant and inevitable. In many ways it doesn't matter whether that change comes from technology or from the pressure of world events it can be very, very hard to predict the impact it might have. In an ideal world the business community will always want the comfort of a stable economic and political environment in which to plan and invest. However, as recent experience suggests, the challenges that can, and do, appear are the 'real world' of the marketplace and must simply be accommodated as part of the greater plan for growth and development. The companies that see world events as speed bumps, obstacles capable of slowing but not halting progress, rather than roadblocks are the ones to watch.

### Is 'Customer Service' Just A Convenient 'Catch-All'?

If terrorism and Iraq weren't driving change, what was? According to **SERVICetalk** readers in the February and May surveys, 60 % of all new deployments were designed to increase customer service. Change Management, Service Desk, Incident Management, Problem Management, Disaster/Continuity, Service Level and Configuration Management took the top slots for new deployments.

There can be no argument that 'to increase customer service' is a noble and worthwhile objective. It's right up there with sharing, caring, recycling and helping little old ladies to cross the road. But it can also be a very handy 'catch-all' phrase and, as such, needs to be scrutinised carefully for any signs that it's not merely being trotted out as

a convenient piece of public relations. How is this 'improved customer service' being measured? Customers may well like what's being done in the name of 'service' but how is that being demonstrated in business terms?

So, when it came to our June survey, as well as continuing to monitor the reactions to Iraq and terrorism, we were particularly keen to see how the measurement of service improvement was being carried out.

By June, a total of 300 professionals from 281 companies had taken part in the survey. The profile of those surveyed in June was broadly representative of the survey as a whole with 46% IT Managers, 27% IT Technical personnel and 27% IT Service personnel.

There was certainly no question that important new investment was taking place across all disciplines. The combined total for the surveys conducted up to and including June showed 69% of companies reporting significant new deployments in the last 12 months. The main driver? To improve customer service. A total of 55% of respondents quoted this factor as their main reason for new investment. The top areas for new deployment were Change Management, Service Desk Management and Incident Management. However, Problem Management and Service Continuity/Disaster Recovery were also strongly represented.

The split between how funds were apportioned between exploiting (to improve performance) and protection (to minimise system failure) was also significant. In February's survey the exploiting/protection split for the last twelve months was estimated at 60%/40%, by May that had shifted to 56%/44%. By June only a couple of percentage points separated the two figures at 51%/49%.

Looking ahead to the next twelve months, the total projections reflected a 53% /47% split of funds between exploiting and protection. So, on the basis of that information, it appears that the need to protect systems from potential breakdown is commanding a healthy share of resources. But the urgency to measure 'improved customer service' seems less certain.



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Jan 6-8 (L), Jan 14-16 (R), Jan 19-21 (G), Jan 19-21 (Ru), Jan 26-28 (R), Feb 2-4 (L), Feb 9-11 (Lea),  
Feb 16-18 (R), Feb 16-18 (E), Mar 8-10 (R), Mar 15-17 (L), Mar 22-24 (Ru), Mar 29-31 (E)

### **ITIL® Managers Programme**

Part 1: IT Service Support Jan 19-23 (N), Jan 26-30 (Lea), Feb 2-6 (E), Feb 9-13 (Ru), Feb 23-27 (N)  
Part 2: IT Service Delivery Feb 16-20 (N), Feb 16-20 (Lea), Mar 1-5 (Ru), Mar 8-12 (N), Mar 15-19 (E)  
Part 3: IT Review Day Apr 13 (Ru), April 19 (Lea), April 19 (R), April 19 (E), Apr 20 (R)

(R)-Reading, (Ru)-Runcorn, (Lea)-Leamington Spa, (E)-Edinburgh, (N)-Newbury, (L)-London, (G)-Glasgow

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**Information is everything**

## Measuring Success: Is There A Credibility Gap?

Of those companies who volunteered information on the measurement criteria for their proposed changes, 44% reported that they did not have clearly defined and agreed measures in place. This, in itself, is perhaps not surprising, considering that many changes are being rolled out according to a strategy that seeks to maximise the cost/reward ratio: the more immediate the payback the greater the enthusiasm for change. But the question remains, how are the results and benefits being evaluated?

Overall, 82% of companies reported having some measurement criteria in place, with 63% claiming that these measures were clearly defined and agreed. That said, 32% reported that their measures were 'general and unspecific'.

There is, of course, perhaps a feeling that a 'one thing at a time' approach is a reasonable position to adopt when funding is either tight or undetermined. However, it's hard to escape the fact that measurements that are 'general and unspecific' are always going to be reactive rather than proactive in addressing the myriad of issues surrounding the quest for 'improved customer service'.

For more enlightened companies it does seem, however, that the ITIL model and the standards and ideals of ITIL/Best Practice are increasingly setting the agenda for change. In particular, companies are looking to the ITIL model and comparing it with the standards and specifications they are currently using. In other words, ITIL is fast becoming the benchmark (if it isn't already) for evaluating performance and expectations.

Education is also playing a valuable role in influencing change. Those who have attended ITIL/Best Practice seminars and training courses have been quick to appreciate the advantages of robust and widely recognised criteria for measuring standards and service across the multi-disciplined IT industry. Their 'enthusiasm' and ready acceptance of ITIL/Best Practice does, however, seem to be routed in the culture of the companies and organisations for which they work.

In some organisations change is a stimulating challenge, in others, particularly those in non-commercial areas, change is far more of a struggle. It might well be that for some organisations the degree to which they fall short of their customers' expected service levels is the measurement that drives them rather than the quest to establish new levels that exceed their customers' expectations.

## Who's Planning For An Economic Upturn?

By the time of our August survey, it was not only the summer temperatures that were high but house prices, according to the Halifax house prices were also way up. In fact, during August it was reported that house prices were running at almost double their historic 20-year average.

The sun also shone on the FTSE 100 index which closed around 4,200 for the first time since August last year. The index has now risen 7.6% since the start of the year. Yet despite the optimism that these figures would indicate for the UK economy, could we really say that everything was on the up? The IMF for one had taken a more cautious view and slashed its forecast of UK growth from 2% to 1.8% this year, and from 2.5% to 2.3% for 2004.

In the August survey, new deployments because of fears over terrorism and breaches of security dropped to zero in all areas except Capacity Management (2.8%) and Release Management (2.4%). It appears that any initial fears over terrorism have been satisfactorily dealt with leaving resources free to focus on other areas of business development. If we compare the August results with the total (of all four surveys) what's immediately apparent is that there has been an increase in new deployments in every area, and that increase is significantly above the average. For example, new Service Desk activities were reported by 63% of respondents in August against an average of 41.8%. Incident Management also showed a marked increase at 59% against a reported average of 33.3%.

And so the pattern continues: Change Management 58% in August against an average of 41%; Configuration Management 44% in August against an average of 29.3%; Service Level Management 48% in August compared with 27.7% for the total. When respondents were asked what their reasons were for the increased activities the overwhelming response was.... you've guessed it – 'improved customer service' and to 'motivate, retain, and increase the productivity of staff'.

The logic of both these reasons is easy to appreciate, if the economic climate is on the up then the competition for new business will certainly be lively and companies who are better positioned to offer superior customer service, and retain and motivate the support staff to deliver it, are clearly going to be in pole position.

To test that theory we only need to

look ahead and examine the new deployments in the next twelve months: where is future investment focused? Given that 89% of those surveyed in August said that they would initiate new deployments or continue to invest in current projects over the next twelve months it's a fair assumption that confidence and optimism are being financially supported. Where's the money going? Service Level, Configuration Management and Change Management are the top three activities with 73% of respondents in August giving this as their primary reason for new activity in the year to come.

It's not entirely clear from the survey where funds for new investment are coming from, 70% of respondents claimed not to be sure about the source. However, it seems reasonable that if we'd asked Financial Directors they'd have been quick to point out that with interest rates at an historic low, funds for new investment are readily to hand. Indeed, the latest financial reports in the press seem to point strongly to a surge in business investment, particularly for equipment and software, which rose to 8.2% in late August, its fastest rise in three years.

## Optimism: The Best Investment for Growth

What our four surveys show is that the attitudes of IT Service Management companies have moved from a position of some initial nervousness about Iraq and the threat of terrorism to one of accepting that there is only so much they can do. After checking the robustness of their systems and infrastructure, their focus must be on business development. Doing nothing is not an option.

New investment is strong and growing, and what's driving that change is the quest for 'improved customer services'. Measuring the quality of that improvement is mixed, but influencing the model of change is ITIL and that's certainly something that the *ITSMF* can take a lot of credit for promoting.

In the August press one business journalist was quoted as saying, "The recovery is everywhere but in the statistics." But we'd all agree, I think, that even though the graph of the FTSE index has more ups and downs than a saw blade the general trend is still ever upward and the teeth are sharp.

While it may be prudent to be cautious about a false dawn for economic recovery we should, on balance, be very optimistic in the short and medium term. ■



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**itSMF**



# IT Physician Heal Thyself (5)

JOHN GIBERT  
Southcourt

## 'Building Bridges and Breaking Boundaries'

This is the fifth in a series of seven articles that support the theme of this year's UK itSMF conference on building bridges and breaking boundaries.

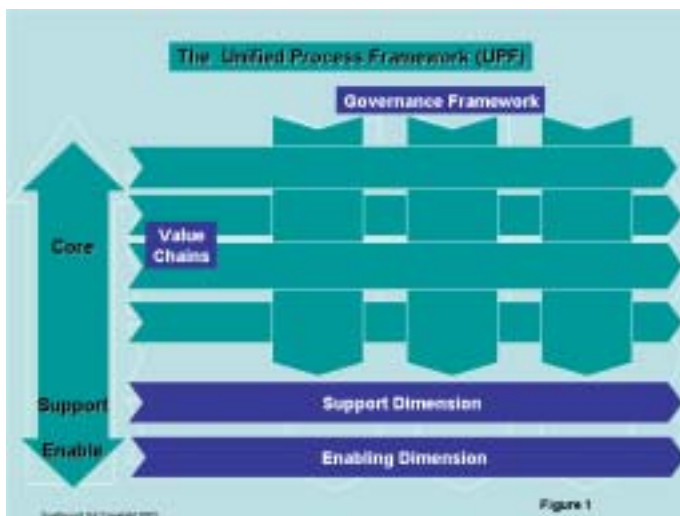
### The UPF Support Dimension

#### Summary of the Previous Articles

Previous articles have introduced the idea of a Unifying Process Framework that aligns the domains and frameworks across IT and into the business, joining the best practices from the individual frameworks so that processes are truly 'end to end' with the business.

They explained that UPF is made up of four dimensions. Previous articles have explained the two dimensions of the core UPF processes that interact with one another: the 'Governance Framework and Domains' and the 'Value Chain Framework and Domains'.

Figure 1 provides an overall picture of the UPF.



#### The Purpose of this Article

The purpose of this, the fifth article, is to explain the Support Dimension of the Unified Process Framework.

The Support Dimension simplifies the Core Governance and Value Chain dimensions, by removing common activities and putting them in one place, in the Support Dimension.

#### Health Warning

An advanced warning to all ITIL proponents: the following may appear to propose that the core of ITIL IT Service Management be removed from IT Service Management and made generally applicable to the business, as UPF Support Processes.

This is indeed the case because IT Service Management does not own the Support Processes. They are needed by the business for use across the business as well as in IT.

ITIL has applied these processes to aspects of IT activity but they are equally applicable to (and may already be in practice for business processes that span the Governance Framework and the business and IT Value Chains.

All parts of the business have to manage:

- Risks
- Issues
- Change
- Objectives
- Performance
- Demand, Capacity and Availability
- Business Configuration Management

UPF encourages a common way of managing these activities across the Governance Framework and across all Value Chains and puts them into the 'Support Dimension'.

#### Common Problem and Issue Management

Let's explore the support dimension by starting with two questions:

- Who has problems?
- Where is best practice for dealing with problems applied in a business /IT process framework?

**The answer to the first question** is that problems are experienced and dealt with in many places in the Governance Framework:

- Strategic problems are dealt with in the process of developing business and IT strategy in the **Directional** part of Governance.
- Tactical problems are experienced and dealt with in programmes and projects in the **Development** part of Governance.
- And of course, there are operational problems dealt with in the **Delivery** part of Governance.

And then if we consider which Value Chains are impacted by problems, we experience:

- Customer problems, Market Competition problems, Product problems, Service problems, Technology problems, People problems, Process problems, Supplier problems, and the bottom line – Financial problems.

One problem tends to have an effect higher up the value chain and also affects the bottom line.

So the answer to who has problems is – everybody in all aspects and at all levels of work and management. and everybody needs a process for resolving them.

**So now the second question:** Where is best practice for dealing with problems?

Clearly we could develop problem management processes 'everywhere' and that is one of the challenges of a unified approach to management.

The many frameworks used by different business and IT professionals, tend to have their own approaches to problem management. The result is that everybody has different ways of handling problems.

These different ways involve different terms for the same thing and the same terms with different meanings. The meaning of 'Problem' in ITIL does not translate into a single corresponding term in PRINCE2.

So when people come together from different governance or value chain disciplines they have a problem dealing with problems!

Many companies train people in the skill of handling problems. Problem handling is part of most quality initiatives, including Six Sigma. People trained in both ITIL and Six Sigma do not know which way to turn when it comes to managing problems!

So wouldn't it be nice to have one generic method; one process with one set of terms used by everybody in the business and IT to manage problems?

And the challenge of process terminology diversity does not ►

## The UPF – Risk Management - Actions

Risk Actions	Action Explanation	Action Example – Disc Capacity of a Server
1. Elimination	Organise so that the risk can never materialise	Have capacity 'on demand'
2. Prevention	Have policy and processes to prevent any situation	Manage capacity automatically to allocate capacity against demand across platforms
3. Avoidance	Avoid a situation	Monitor and alert when capacity is running short
4. Transfer	Transfer the Risk to a partner	Get partner to manage the risk with the same 12 options
5. Plan Contingency	Plan Contingency Actions	Have spare disc able to install
6. Plan Continuity	Plan Continuity Workaround Actions	Plan how to operate without extra capacity
7. Plan Recovery	Plan Contingency and Recovery Options	Plan how to acquire & upgrade capacity and catch up
8. Plan Mitigation	Organise Financial Fallback	Obtain business interruption insurance
9. Organise Detection	Organise Methods to detect an Occurrence	Have somebody or some technology looking at failure reports or alerts
10. Monitor Risk	Monitor the Impact/ Likelihood to see if it worsens	Check the growth in usage and the business dependence on the server
11. Recognition	Identify when there is an occurrence	Recognise when capacity is inadequate
12. Response	Be generally prepared to handle an occurrence	Be able to diagnose and handle capacity shortfall when it happens

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Figure 2

just lie with Problems but with Opportunities, Risks, Issues, Errors, Incidents, Features, Off Specifications and Faults. In UPF we group them all together under the title 'Issue Management'.

So let's step back and look at this broad area of process. Is there any reason why we should have different approaches, processes, practices and terminology for doing the same kind of thing in different aspects of the business?

The answer is clearly no!

Accordingly, UPF has simplified the governance and value chain domains by extracting these common processes and put them into the Support Dimension, so that they support the Core processes in a unified manner.

With UPF the intention is to have a complete and unified set of Issue Management processes, based upon the best practices from all the business and IT frameworks with a common consistent language across IT and into the business.

### Common Risk Management

So in the same way, once an enterprise has decided that corporate risk, market risk, project risk and operational risk are all looking for a best practical approach to managing risk, then a common risk management approach can be taken and elaborated upon.

The diagram at the top of this page reflects a comprehensive list of risk management actions that can be taken to manage the most complex to the simplest risk. There is no space to explain the diagram, so please ponder it for a couple of minutes.

Looking at the diagram on the next page (figure 3), once there is a common approach to risk management, then

management and ownership of the risks can be transferred left and right across the governance framework and up and down the value chain to the optimum area for management consideration and action.

There is not enough space in these articles to explore the detail of the individual processes that make up the support domain – but the concept is hopefully clear – that is of providing a common management approach and a language adopted by all, across business and IT when doing the same thing.

**Objectives and Performance Management** deals with management objectives and targets including SLAs, providing a common approach across the Governance framework from Strategic Objectives to Development and Operational Objectives and the feedback performance loops.

Related objectives are set at all levels within the enterprise and with an effective Governance Framework the objectives are aligned.

The 'Development Objectives' are driven from the 'Directional Objectives' as are the 'Delivery Objectives'.

The best practice is to have a common approach to Objectives and Performance Management – be it based upon the 'Balanced Score Card' or simply on 'Management By Objectives'.

At an operational level, 'Delivery Objectives' are typically transformed into SLAs for the service value chains and OLAs for the capability value chains.

**Demand and Supply Management** involves the use of common processes for *capacity and availability* that link the Value Chain Domains.

From the diagram overleaf (figure 4):





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***“THANK YOU”***  
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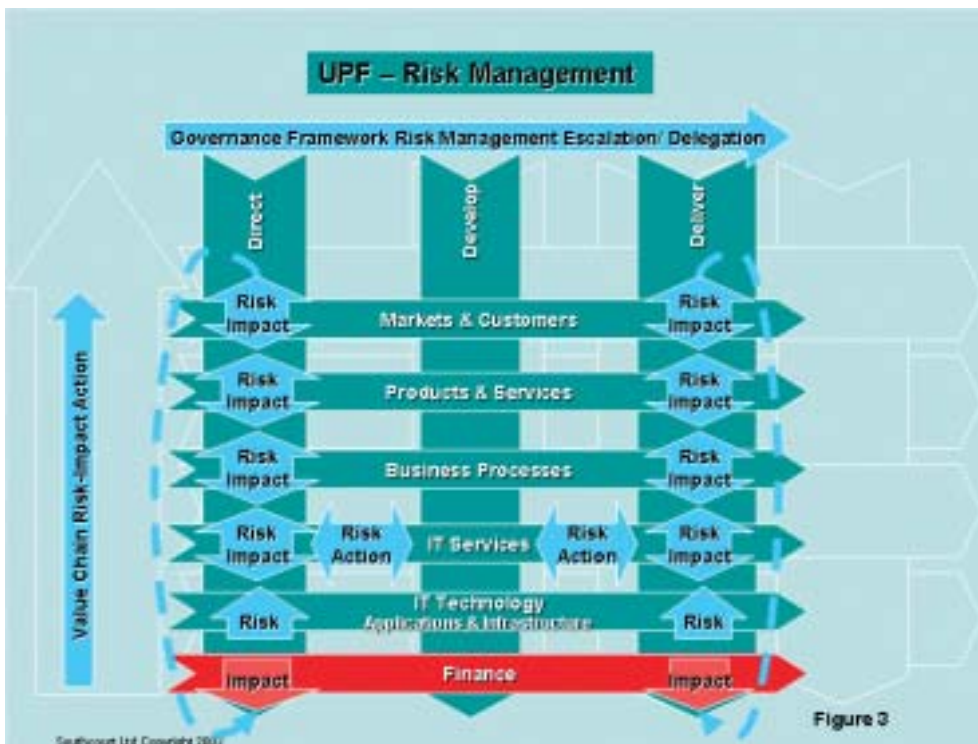


Figure 3

1. Demand for capacity and availability is defined top down and Supplied bottom up the Value Chain .
2. With Demand and Supply Management, capacity is managed via a common planning and control process across the Governance framework so that Delivery is given the Plan and Forecasts from Direction and the Actuals are fed back from Delivery to Direction.

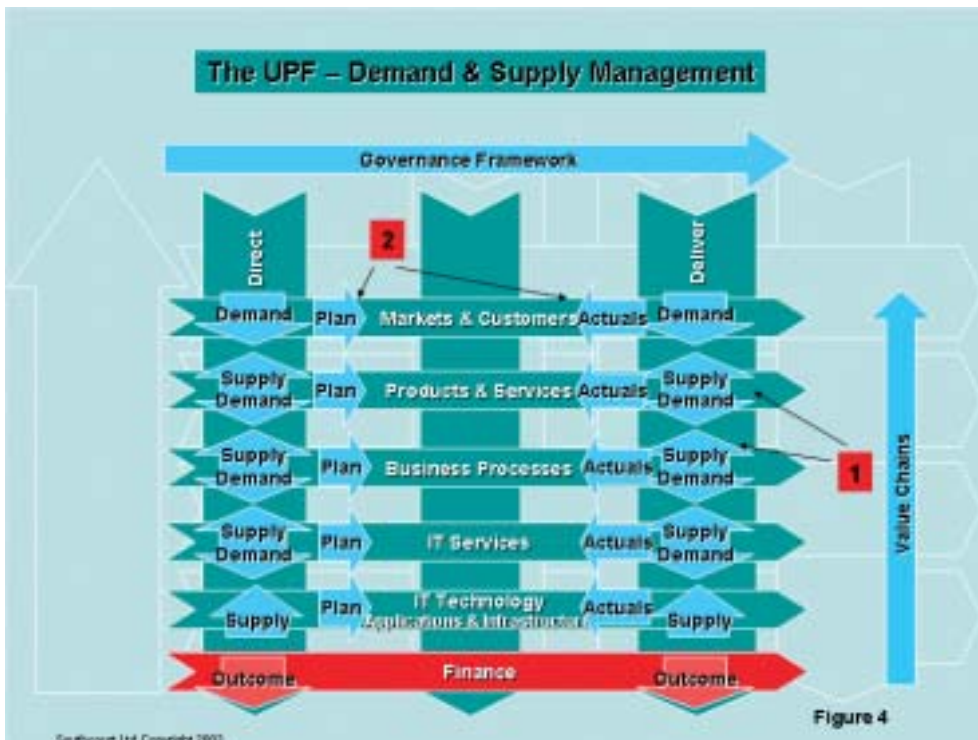


Figure 4

From an IT viewpoint this ensures that Information Technology has the power and resilience to provide the capacity and availability of IT services to support the required business processing volumes up the value chain.

**Change and Configuration Management** is the final support area that we will be looking at.

We all need to manage change. Change affects all aspects of the governance framework, change in business direction, changes in what is being developed in projects, changes in delivery. They all need managing and benefit from a common approach.

Change affects all the value chains and impacts other value chains. A change in process needs similar attention to a change in technology: What's the risk? What is impacted in the same and dependent value chains? What's the justification? When is it best to do it? How do you test it?, and so on.

So Change Management is not an IT domain but a business domain and typically IT change needs to be aligned with business change – change in business process being enabled by change in technology together.

Finally **Business Configuration Management**, when we change something, what is that thing that we change?

In IT we use the term Configuration Item for the things we change that are subject to IT Change Management.

If we look at Configuration Management in business technology functions like manufacturing, warehousing, distribution and buildings, then we find that configuration management is a common discipline used for managing the components in those capabilities that like IT components are also used to deliver service.

Business Configuration Management is not just about managing technology components but it is also about

managing all the business components that make up all the value chains. It is also about managing the relationships between them across the value chains.

Business Configuration Management is used to manage and link: Markets to Customers; to Business Products to Business Services; to Business Processes involved in delivery; to IT Services and to IT Applications and IT Infrastructure.

Configuration Management then is about ensuring that we manage our value chain records of business components in a common manner.

**So in summary**, the UPF Support Processes are business wide, they support the Governance Framework and Value Chains and they should reflect the overall best practice taken from frameworks like ITIL, PRINCE and Six Sigma.

## The Way Forward

The sixth article will cover the final UPF dimension, the 'Enabling Dimension', explaining how the basic processes for Work Management, Resource Management and Knowledge Management enable the Core and Support processes to be performed in a common manner.

The final article will show how IT can move forward from being individual domain/ framework driven and how IT can improve, in a very pragmatic manner, the interfaces between its existing frameworks like ITIL and PRINCE2, to integrate them practically into one Business-IT aligned 'Unified Process Framework'. ■

For more information on UPF, contact [J.Gibert@btopenworld.com](mailto:J.Gibert@btopenworld.com)

# International News

There has been much activity on the International front over recent months.

## Conferences

The **USA conference** in St Louis saw a significant increase in numbers from the previous year (see photograph below). As always, user presentations demonstrating real life deployments saw the highest attendances and best appraisals. One of the liveliest sessions was the certificate panel session, where many views were aired.



The **Danish Chapter** held their first annual conference in Copenhagen on 27/28 October. Over 80 delegates attended to hear a range of presentations from local and overseas speakers.

The **7<sup>th</sup> Netherlands Congress** was held in Maastricht. Approximately 500 delegates joined a full-house of exhibitors for a very successful event. As most sessions were naturally delivered in Dutch, **SERVICTalk's** intrepid reporter was unable to garner much detail on the content. But conversation with delegates indicated a generally favourable reception for what seems to have been a tightly focused event.

The **12<sup>th</sup> UK Conference** is covered in detail on pages 19 to 26.

Some 250 delegates attended the **Canadian Conference** in Montreal. A strong international representation was present, guaranteed by the holding of the International Board Meeting immediately prior to the event. The event was kicked off by a lively if muted (due to laryngitis) motivational session from **Rick Butts** and rounded off with a rousing and amusing knowledge management session from **Nick Bontis**. In between, the typical conference mix of real-life stories and future-gazing, provided much food for thought for the delegates. In addition, the hosts took advantage of the

international guests' presence to stage a "birds of a feather" session exploring all the various initiatives around the world.

Next on the circuit is the **German Conference** in Munich on 9 & 10 December.

## New Chapters

3 November saw the latest addition to the growing community with the launch event of the **Romanian Chapter**.

Despite a truck drivers' strike causing traffic chaos and preventing some

delegates from reaching the venue, over 80 attendees were present to hear sessions from **Aidan Lawes, CEO**, plus other local and overseas speakers. Coverage from local TV stations and press ensured that the chapter launched with a suitable fanfare.

By the time this goes to press, the **Portuguese**

**Chapter** will have launched on 27 November. Several UK speakers are joining the local hosts for a seminar and press interviews in Lisbon.

Meanwhile interest continues to grow, with significant activities (and the strong expectation that all will have chapters up and running in the next 6 months or so) happening in the following countries: **Brazil, China, Hong Kong, Hungary, Italy, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain and Venezuela**. In addition, inquiries have come in from **Argentina, Croatia, Greece, the Gulf States, the Lebanon, Luxembourg, Russia and Slovenia**.

## International Board Meeting

An intense but successful meeting in Montreal on 14-15 November saw significant progress in the formalising of key documents, processes and policies. Not least among these was the move to a more streamlined mode of operation at an international level, with the formation of an executive board that will meet more frequently than the full board and drive many of the strategic initiatives forward.

The **new International chairman** (and thus chairman of the executive board) is **Denis Doyle** from Canada. The other executive board members are:



**Jutta Blessin** (Germany), **David Cannon** (US), **Brian Jennings** (Australia), **Ian Lawson** (South Africa) and **Ivor Macfarlane** (UK). The executive board will be supported by **CEO, Aidan Lawes** and **COO, Johan Scheepstra** (CEO, Netherlands).

Among the first tasks the board will tackle is reviewing the current business plan and particularly the ongoing funding model for the organisation.

Further progress has been made on establishing committees with a global perspective including marketing, qualifications and publications.



*The international board in relaxed mode*

## International Publications

The first real formal meeting of the International publications sub-committee was held during the UK conference, with representation from many chapters. The meeting agreed their terms of reference and many of the working practices that they will follow.

The hard work that has gone into getting this committee up and running should bear considerable fruit for all chapters, with a consistent and coherent set of publications bearing the *itSMF* International branding, while still leaving room for locally branded publications that add to the understanding and implementation of generic best practice in that market.

The committee will take on responsibility for several projects currently being run independently by different chapters and will become the focal point for all future developments.

Having operated so far with a temporary chairman, one of the first actions will be to hold formal elections for the chairmanship of the committee. This will be done electronically to allow all chapters to vote. Results will be published as soon as they are counted. ■



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## Ask the Experts



*Leading industry figures respond to questions received in the itSMF office*

### **Question 1** **Which ITIL discipline do you think best covers Database Management and Administration?**

#### **Answer 1-1**

**Tony Price**

**PinkRocade Ltd**

Database Management and Administration are functions / roles within IT. ITIL disciplines are predominantly process oriented. Hence potentially all of the ITIL processes could come into play for this function. For example but by no means complete:

**Service Level Management** The activities within the function could play a part in the delivery of an SLA or OLA

**Financial Management** As the function is part of the cost of providing the IT service, then this process is relevant

**Capacity Management** Many of the administration / house keeping activities

performed plus ensuring the appropriate level of service is provided in line with the SLA's are covered by Capacity Management

**Availability Management** Ensuring that the database is available when required, as defined in SLAs, is clearly part of the Availability process

**IT Service Continuity** Ensuring that databases can be recovered in the event of a disaster

**Incident Management** Responding to incidents related to databases

**Problem Management** Resolving problems associated with the database

**Change Management** Making changes to databases

**Release Management** Ensuring the database software is control, licence, at the appropriate release level

**Configuration Management** Control of configuration items for example the physical databases

You may notice that I have not

specified the Service Desk. The reason being that this is a function in its own right. Hence information could be provided to the service desk with regard to the databases, so one could imply that there is coverage here, however I have deliberately tried to emphasis my answer from a process perspective.

I think questions like this arise because there is still much confusion about process / roles / functions and a lack of awareness that ITIL can and does apply across the majority of functions/ roles within IT. I also think it would be incorrect to say that one ITIL process is more relevant than the other, as an answer to this question, as everyone adopts and adapts ITIL differently to fit their own personal environments.

#### **Answer 1-2**

**Ivor Evans**

**DIYmonde Solutions**

It seems to me that this is a little like

saying 'which ITIL discipline best covers 'operations' or 'application development' and of course the answer is that they all do. Database Management is a function within IT and, as such, is a contributor to and a recipient of the activities of every IT Service Management process. It contributes to resolving service failures and permanently removing root causes; it considers other people's changes to the live environment and proposes changes of its own; it may be party to discussions on service level quality and availability and will have an input into capacity calculations. There is no function within IT Service Management that is not touched by the IT Service Management processes and Database Management and Administration is no exception.

**Answer 1-3**  
**Richard Stone**  
*Fox IT*

If you consider the management and administration of databases as a function that is carried out within IT, then all the ITIL processes apply, don't they? For example managing and administering a database requires capacity management expertise at the resource and service level, and information will be required from those administering the database that feeds into the overall capacity plan.

There will be availability considerations: is the database available when it is required; are the confidentiality, integrity and availability requirements of the information within the database been considered? Again, this should be carried out in accordance with, and feed information into, the Availability Plan.

Database management and administration may have to be carried out according to an operational level agreement, as the database itself may be part of one or more services offered to customers, themselves subject to an SLA.

Changes to the database should be carried out according to the organisation's Change Management process, and any problems identified with use of the database and its own infrastructure should be recorded according to Problem Management.

And so on and so forth.

To sum up, Database Administration is an infrastructure focussed IT function that, like all the other infrastructure functions, has a role to play in all IT Service Management processes.

**Question 2**  
**PSA (projected schedule availability) is referred to in**

**Change Management. What, if any, is the link between PSA and Availability Management and how should PSA be described with respect to ITIL?**

**Answer 2-1**  
**Richard Griffiths**  
*Fox IT*

Production of a Projected Service Availability (PSA) is the responsibility of Change Management with input from Service Level Management (SLM) and Availability Management. A PSA should be readily accessible and can range in sophistication from an excel spreadsheet to a graphic display via an internet or intranet server.

There is a close link with the Forward Schedule of Change (FSC) – a PSA will map the predicted service impact of future planned changes against each service.

For example, four hours of planned mainframe maintenance between 02-00 and 06-00 on Sunday in three weeks time will appear on the FSC, the PSA will indicate the impact on each service in Service Level Agreement (SLA) terms, ie Service A has a four hour outage, Service B is not impacted as it is not available at this time or Service C can work offline for the period. SLM will be able to assess potential disruption through analysis of the likely number of users impacted, negotiate as appropriate and with the Service Desk communicate to the customer / user community.

Availability Management will use PSA information as an important input and should be involved in agreeing the future periods of unavailability. The skills, toolsets and methodologies of Availability Management will be utilised to maximise future availability and minimise service impact. For example, Availability Management will work closely with SLM and third party suppliers to match unavoidable unavailability with periods of low user activity and with Change Management to ensure outages are minimised and efficiently used, ie changes bundled and concurrent (subject to risk assessment).

The PSA will highlight future periods and areas for Availability Management to focus on. It is the role of Availability Management to balance the need for planned maintenance (to prevent future unscheduled unavailability) against loss of service. Mirroring, for example, could allow for continuous service, but in its absence, the proactive management of maintenance is key if high levels of

availability are to be sustained.

**Answer 2-2**  
**Ivor Evans**  
*DIYmonde Solutions*

The best description of 'Projected Service Availability' (not 'projected schedule availability') can be found in the Dictionary of IT Service Management Terms, Acronyms and Abbreviations, which is available from the *ITSMF* bookstore. It is 'A document used in Change Management to outline the effect of Changes on the levels of availability defined in the Service Level Agreements (SLAs). This document is linked to the Forward Schedule of Change (FSC)'. In its turn, the Forward Schedule of Change is described as 'A schedule that contains details of all the Changes approved for implementation and their proposed implementation dates. It should be agreed with Customers, Service Level Management, the Service Desk and Availability Management. Once agreed, the Service Desk would communicate to the Users any planned or additional downtime arising from implementing the Changes (cf. Projected Service Availability)'. Projected Service Availability will be affected, among other events, by any changes which impact on previously scheduled service (or service component) maintenance activities and there is therefore a strong link between PSA, Availability Management, Change Management and Service Level Management.

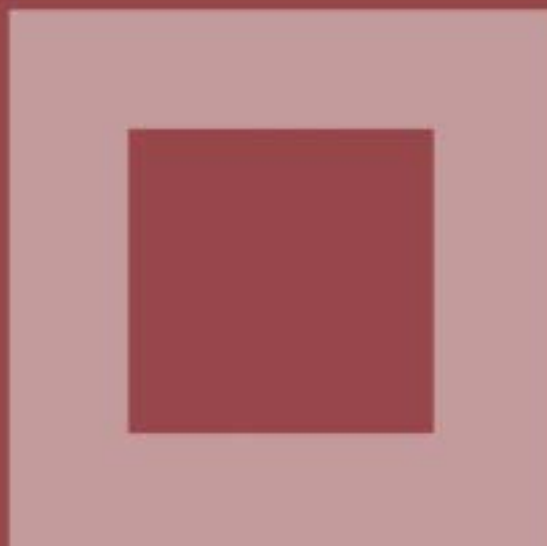
**Answer 2-3**  
**Colin Rudd**  
*itEMS Ltd*

I am assuming that the PSA you are referring to is the Projected Service Availability as detailed within the new ITIL Service Support book. Within the Service Support book the PSA is stated as containing: "details of Changes to agreed SLAs and service availability because of the currently planned FSC."

A better definition would be: "a diary of the projected service downtime required to support the implementation of authorised changes, currently contained within the agreed FSC."

The PSA was introduced in the rewrite to increase the "proactiveness" of the Change Management process and to increase the integration with both the business and other Service Management processes, as illustrated in the diagram overleaf.

The workflow surrounding the PSA as illustrated above, shows the CAB takes as inputs the list of Requests for Change (RFCs) for consideration, the current Forward Schedule of Change (FSC) and



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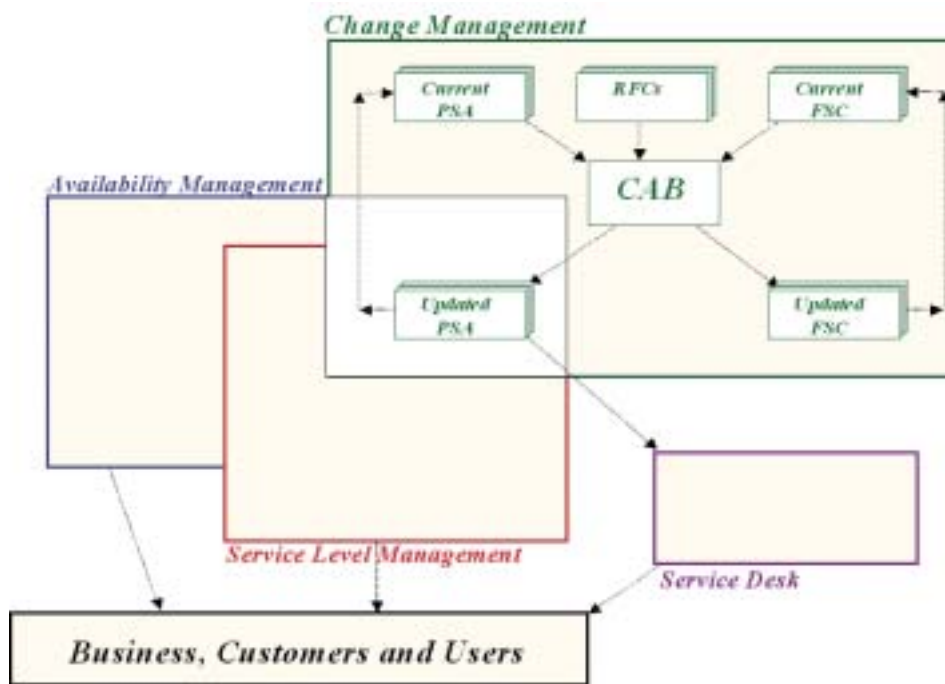
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the current PSA. The CAB will conduct their business and assess the urgency, impact, risk and resources required for each of the RFCs on its list. Once this review has been completed for each RFC, each will be authorised, deferred or rejected. All authorised RFCs will be added in turn to the FSC and an updated FSC will be produced and circulated. Once the FSC has been finally revised and agreed, the PSA can be produced by examining all RFCs within the FSC that need service downtime, as part of their implementation. This is why it is so essential that anybody impacted by downtime is included within the CAB when the impact of the RFCs is assessed and they are scheduled for implementation. This would principally involve Customers and Users, together with representatives from Availability Management, Service Level Management (SLM) and the Service Desk. The FSC will be updated iteratively as each RFC on the list is authorised. The updated version of the FSC will then contain an implementation schedule and date for every authorised RFC.

The updated PSA can then be produced by looking at each RFC incurring downtime and produce a diary of "scheduled downtime" for all services. Once the PSA has been produced and agreed, then proactive communication can take place from the Service Desk to each Customer and User group impacted by service downtime. The PSA can then be used as input to the next CAB meeting to also ensure that RFCs are scheduled in such a way as to synchronise their implementation, in order to minimise service downtime, avoiding the "hole in the road" syndrome.

The responsibility for producing the PSA should be clearly agreed within the organisation. In practice it doesn't matter who produces it as long as someone is given ownership and includes all areas. The PSA should be made readily available for anyone to access it and display its content. I have seen it produced in different organisations, by Change Management, Availability Management or SLM.

The ideal location for the FSC and PSA is on an Intranet site accessible by everyone. However, what is important is that changes (RFCs) requiring service downtime should be scheduled for implementation outside of agreed service hours, wherever possible. This can only be done where the person responsible has access to the contents of all SLAs. If this cannot be achieved for any reason, then RFCs should be scheduled for implementation during agreed "change slots" or "maintenance slots". Failing this they should be scheduled during times of minimal business impact, often during unsociable hours.

### Question 3

**We are in the process of optimising our Incident, Problem and Change processes and want to conduct a customer survey on the service culture regarding these processes. What questions should I be asking and how can I map the answers back to the processes?**

### Answer 3-1 Dave Ward IBM

For me, there are three phases to this, all really driven by Service Levels,

- Questions about the steady state service:
  - How good are we...?
  - How well does the service meet your needs?
- Questions about failing service and our ability to recover after an incident or problem
  - How well do we recover?
  - Do we keep you informed of progress?
  - How often have you been impacted...?
  - For how long were you impacted?
  - What was the cost to you of the outage?
- Questions about the ability to change i.e. introduce new requests or services through Change Management
  - How well do we introduce your new services?
  - Do we deliver new services when we say we will?
  - Have we ever disrupted your service subsequent to introducing a change?

### Answer 3-2 Dave Edwards Solutions

I'm probably not the right person to be answering this as I need a lot of convincing as to the value and validity of such surveys but as usual I can't resist!

One area to ask questions on would be 'How was it for you'. In other words how did the process users find the use of the process:

- Is it better than what they used before?
- Do they find the processes bureaucratic?
- Are the processes helpful?

A process should be like a child's slide: for a small amount of effort (climbing the steps or filling out an RFC), everything then happens automatically.

If this isn't the case and people are bypassing the process then you need to find out why the process isn't working for them.

On the principle that it is always best to involve people then ask them what ideas they have for improving the process.

As to mapping them back to the process then why not have a section in the survey for each process.

### Answer 3-3

#### Shirley Lacy

#### ConnectSphere

When planning a customer survey it is important to consider:

- Who will you survey?
- How will you survey – hardcopy, electronic, telephone based (this will affect the number/type of questions you ask)
- What questions to ask and how to achieve a balance of questions?
- How will you analyse the results and take action?

Many customers will base their assessment of the Incident, Problem and Change Management processes on their subjective perception, often based on recent experiences and job function. At the start of any survey, it is important to establish basic information about the respondent and ask what services the person uses. Depending on how the sample was selected, you may find that the respondent has never used one or more of these processes. Any survey should be logical from the customer's perspective – it can be confusing and frustrating otherwise. It is a good idea to do a pilot on a number of customers.

It is useful in any survey to establish whether the aspect has improved, stayed the same or worse. This question can be asked for any of the questions and is a good indicator over time of the rate of improvement for a subjective response.

The results of customer surveys should be discussed with the customer, an action plan agreed and input to the service improvement programme. If no action or

improvement is possible for a particular aspect it is usually better not to ask the question.

#### Terminology

Terminology is an issue when asking for customer feedback. Often this will depend on other terms used within the organisation. Typical issues are:

- The ITIL distinction between the Incident and Problem management processes and terms may not be understood by many users and customers.
- Users may not distinguish between service requests and change requests. They often think of these as 'big' or 'little' changes.
- When asking about 'handling of changes' users may have difficulty distinguishing between project changes and service/infrastructure/operational changes. Some users may even think of contract changes if they are in the purchasing department.

#### Asking questions as part of an overall customer satisfaction survey

General questions for Incident, Problem and Change Management in telephone based customer satisfaction surveys that we have successfully used are:

- Call/incident handling (use call as well as incident as many people do not understand incident – or use the common term in your organisation)
- Attitude of staff
- Speed of problem solving
- Quality of problem solving
- Handling of changes

This often gives a general indication of improvements in the incident, problem

and change management processes.

#### Specific customer survey for feedback on optimisation of Incident, Problem and Change Management

A customer survey on the service culture for the Incident, Problem and Change Management processes should cover various aspects. Achieving a balance of questions is important e.g. ask questions on time/speed, quality, cost. There are also softer aspects such as the service provider's understanding of the customer/business need, ability to listen, attitude of staff, communication and feedback.

The questions should measure aspects that are expected to improve from the customer's perspective. Including additional control questions will help to ensure there is no deterioration in other aspects of the process. For example if the time to resolve problems is quicker then the quality of problem solving may be worse, resulting in an overall satisfaction that is worse. Mapping the customer's response back to the specific processes is difficult as we are dealing with perceptions. It very much depends on the respondent's understanding of a phrase or term that will depend on the local circumstances, recent experience of the respondent and their involvement in the process.

The mapping shown in the table below provides some insight into the mapping and difficulties. ■

*If you want to either to add your views to the above or to join our panel of Experts, then contact: John McDermott at the Reading office.*

Process/question	Mapping back to the process (or not as the case may be)
<b>Service Desk/Incident Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Speed of logging a call</li> <li>● Speed of response</li> <li>● Ability to 'fix first time'</li> <li>● Feedback on progress</li> <li>● Attitude of staff</li> <li>● Overall satisfaction</li> </ul>	Time to complete incident logging Time to respond to the user If incidents are fixed at the first contact point the user will normally be happier. Frequency and quality of feedback for incidents that are not 'fixed first time' May have improved if staff have been trained e.g. in customer service This will usually provide feedback on the service desk and incident management
<b>Problem Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Speed of problem solving</li> <li>● Quality of problem solving</li> <li>● Overall satisfaction with the process</li> </ul>	Usually perceived to be the time from logging to having a full resolution (of the incident and/or problem) Were there many attempts or visits to resolve the problem, When the problem was resolved were other problems created? This will usually provide feedback on the overall perception of incident and problem management, especially where users do not see a separation.
<b>Change Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understanding of the business need for change</li> <li>● Feedback on change</li> <li>● Speed of making changes</li> <li>● Quality of changes made</li> <li>● Cost of change</li> <li>● Overall satisfaction with the process</li> </ul>	If the requirements are not understood then the service provider may provide the wrong solution – related to quality of change. Customers are often frustrated by a lack of understanding and this may be a good control question. Does the process inform the originator at the right time with the right information e.g. on receipt or approval/rejection of the change. Perception of the time from logging to completion of the change. Is it what the customer wanted in the first place? If not, the service provider will have wasted time, effort and money doing the wrong thing. Often an emotional subject that may be worth monitoring – it may affect perception of the other aspects. This may provide feedback on the overall perception of any change management process in IT e.g. project changes and service changes.



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# Regional Round Up



## London & South East Report by John Byles, Service Manager, Xansa

I had received a number of emails in the past informing me of *itSMF* events but the idea of attending an event had either been scuppered by work commitments or hadn't really appealed to me. It had, which I now know was a total misconception, conjured up a picture of what can be best described as, a group of process orientated train spotters sitting in a room eschewing over flow diagrams. When in reality it was a broad selection of IT professionals similar to me, no corduroy trousers or anoraks in sight, all there to openly discuss and share their organisations ITIL experiences.

MC for the day was **Ken Goff**, newly appointed chair for the London and South East Region with the first presentation by **Geoff Evans, Partners in IT** and **Bob Lawley from Steria**. Geoff walked us through an ITIL implementation delivered with a packaged solution in a matter of months from a supplier's perspective. Bob then took the stage and walked us through the process from a customer's perspective, little did he know that when he sat down he would be the envy of most of the audience – full ITIL in what was it 3 months!!!, but as he fully admitted it was a greenfield site.

Caffeine levels replenished it was time for the next item on the agenda "*User Forum Debate – How do we do Configuration Management*". The debate began, people shifted uneasily in their seats, the atmosphere was tense, you could have cut it with a spreadsheet... OK, Ken introduced "*Configuration Management*". A large number of hands shot up at the chance to ask the first question... "*To what level do you define configurable items?*" the remaining hands were lowered, were they going to ask the same question! This was immediately followed by "*Why does the business see this as just an asset register?*" Ken composed the baying crowd and opened up the floor for audience responses. The overwhelming consensus was that there must be agreement between the business and IT on exactly what a configuration management database (CMDB) was going to provide.

The key message, taking all responses into account, could be summed up by

saying "*Configuration Management needs to be scoped, planned and agreed between all parties, Business, IT and where appropriate Suppliers, this includes the level to which CI's are defined*" and "*Sponsorship for the implementation of Configuration Management must also receive backing from by senior management.*"

The theme of business awareness of IT followed us to the next discussion topic, "*Availability Management.*" **John Efford** of newly branded **Abbey** walked us through their implementation of AM, in some ways this showed us a reversal of the experiences previously discussed regarding Configuration Management. IT also needs to take into account business needs, and when dealing with a public company this means the customer. Abbey's case study was very informative and as a result the implementation of AM increased customer services.

It was quite apt at this point, having succumbed to a cold, that I said my good byes before the last presentation "*Are we protected from Virus attacks*" and feeling somewhat guilty about leaving volunteered to write this article. I will definitely attend further events and would encourage others to do so, but leave your anorak at home.

## Midlands & East Anglia Report by Lynn Jackson, IJ Training Ltd

**Jim Davies**, Midlands & East Anglia *itSMF* Regional Chairman welcomed members to the National Blood Service offices in Birmingham. **John McDermott** gave us an *itSMF* update mentioning the new complementary books in the ITIL stable and the addition of pocket guides translations in Korean, Spanish, French and Portuguese. Continuing Professional Development with its relevance to the Institute of Service Management was also touched upon.

The first half of the day was a progress report for problem management implementation from the previous April's meeting. **Sati Bhogal of Coors Brewers** reviewed the goals of problem management for his company and how far away they still were from those goals. He revealed that they are still on target to revise all support teams fault codes by the end of year. On the question "does it work?" Sati concluded "yes", however some more work is required to underpin

the whole process from identification to resolution.

**Linda Buckland of the Inland Revenue** gave us a recap on the organisational structure within IT and where problem management sits in relation. Linda also pointed out that although ITIL is not a perfect fit with the IR, they have realised that ITIL is flexible, and can help the IR to improve their processes. Changes that have been made so far include having one PM group managing multiple systems as well as having standard impact levels and contractual measure across systems.

**Mike Jay from Hewlett-Packard** presented "*Winning Hands – The management of change*". Mike introduced us to a startling statistic discovered by his company that 3 out of 4 large change projects do not produce the desired results. The reasons for this were varied but pointed to one thing – the 'People' part of the equation had not been fully considered. People had not been involved in the change process ('done to' not 'with'); they didn't know why the change was happening and feared the impact of new processes and technologies to their current job.

Finally **Steve Boronski of Stoke-on-Trent City Council** explained that change needed to be enabled or progress stops. He walked through the Seven Steps of Stagnation ("*we've never done it that way before*"...) and the top 8 errors of change ("*declaring Victory too soon*"...), before showing us the consequences of such actions. Steve presented an eight-stage process to enable change in a proactive manner with such suggestions as "create a sense of urgency", "develop and communicate the vision" and "consolidate and create MORE change".

With the presentations over, John McDermott of *itSMF* spoke about the conference in November and how to create and present white papers for inclusion on the *itSMF* website.

Jim concluded the meeting with a request for presentations for the next Regional Meeting entitled "*Implementing Best Practice*" and thanked the National Blood Service for hosting today's event. (Following an appeal, several delegates did donate the odd pint or two!).

The next Regional meeting will be held at the Norwich Union offices in Norwich on 21 January, 2004. ■



# Breaking Boundaries Building Bridges



## A Critique

**Neil Reynolds**

**National Blood Service**

Recurring themes of many of this year's conference presentations were "expectations" and "perceptions", so here are some of mine. The opinions are purely personal, though I did of course get a flavour of other people's views during chats between sessions, over lunch, dinner and in the bar. This was my fourth itSMF conference, so while I'm not quite at the veteran stage, I do have experience of three previous events to compare with.

The Hilton influence is now more obvious at the Metropole. I've previously felt that it was a Hilton in name only, but the hotel now seems firmly integrated into the group and standards have risen. Staff are more attentive and courteous and some renovation has taken place since last year. With such a big, old building that must be a never-ending task and there's plenty still to do, but it's certainly moving in the right direction.

Initial impressions of the itSMF registration procedure were good too. Well organised, quick and what a magnificent bag – the best ever, and full of goodies as well. On to the formal opening and a superb keynote address by Nigel Barlow – so good that I bought the book! Not too sure about the overall conference theme though – it was as if the organising committee couldn't decide between two proposals, "*Breaking Boundaries, Building Bridges*" and "*Stability in a Changing World*" and decided to keep them both. Or maybe three, since the backdrop was a picture of the world held in a pair of cupped hands. This looks great on the cover of the ring-binder and the CD. On the stage, however, the thumbs had to be moved back to make room for the screen, with the result that it looked very unnatural – the hands wouldn't have been able to hold anything in that position. Drop The World I Want to Get Off perhaps? The World Is Slipping Away maybe? And who has thumbnails that square? The twinkling stars though were wonderful, and enhanced the professionalism of the event.

As is usual, session speakers ranged from enthusiastic "amateurs" making

their public debut to polished professionals, though all (or at least all the ones I saw) had something worthwhile to say and provided a few nuggets to take away. One such person exposing himself to such a large audience for the first time was a colleague of mine from the National Blood Service, Alan Daly, and "the boy done good" as they say. His message about customer satisfaction was clear and so is the subtext: if he can do it, so can you. You don't have to be a professional speaker to make a presentation, and there's a slot waiting for you on next year's conference programme. With five streams to select from this year there was certainly plenty of choice; something for everyone in fact, perhaps too much for some. I made it somewhat easier for myself by deciding to stick to hearing about the experiences of fellow practitioners, so I gave the "Vendor Views" stream a miss.

I did though visit virtually all of the exhibition stands, which were well laid out and a lot of thought, planning and expense had gone into them. Some were particularly eye catching and of course I couldn't resist having a go in the Formula 1 race simulation. I can only say that never having sat in such a car before, it was my failure to lie sufficiently flat and ensure my feet touched the pedals properly that accounted for my abysmal showing – so bad in fact that I felt compelled to apologise to the guy running the simulation!

Whoever came up with the idea to provide a selection of packed sandwiches, cakes and fruit for lunch should be heartily congratulated – it was a masterstroke. Last year there were huge queues for lunch, with despite being taken in the exhibition area, left little time to visit the stands. Eating "on the hoof" was a vast improvement, allowing time to be maximised. Extending the exhibition to the third morning was good from the delegates' point of view too. I'd particularly like to thank A1e for the provision of the Internet Café which I



found most useful and it saved me a lot of time – by checking my emails during breaks, there were a lot less to come back to.

Not all the new initiatives were quite as successful. The floor direction symbols were a great idea but got very tatty quickly as people trampled over them; perhaps they could be attached to the walls next year?

As we've come to expect, the food and entertainment were very good indeed and Fox IT deserve a special mention for the quiz, which was great fun. "We Wuz Robbed" of course, and something peculiar must have happened to the marking! My wife enjoyed the Partner Programme too, though I do wonder what more is left in the Brighton area that hasn't been covered in previous events.

The conference ended as it had begun, with an excellent keynote speech, this time by Sahar Hashemi who founded Coffee Republic. I drink very little coffee myself but the talk certainly was stimulating.

All in all, a very enjoyable conference that provided both business and pleasure in just the right mix. I understand the attendance was a new high, both at the conference and even more so at the itSMF AGM on the Monday evening. I'm sure that the vast majority of delegates gained from it and will be back next year. I am equally certain that their expectations will have risen as a result, and to help ensure they are met I have some ideas for yet further improvement which I'll pass on to the committee, who I feel sure will give them serious consideration. My thanks and congratulations to everyone involved in the organisation, not least the itSMF secretariat at Reading, and here's to an even better one next year.





## Feedback from Conference attendees...

**Ken Goff, Prudential:**

*What a great event... well done to everyone.*

**Barclay Rae, e2e Customer Services:**

*Just to say thanks to all from e2e for an enjoyable and useful conference as ever.*



**Heather Stebbings, i-Core:**

*Just a quick thank you to you, the team, everyone really, who helped make my first conference a memorable occasion!*

**Nigel Mear, Cable & Wireless:**

*This was my first time at the conference and I thought it was a thoroughly enjoyable three days and an excellent conference.*

**Nick Needham, Aseriti:**

*I thought I should convey my thanks and congratulations to you and the rest of the team for the excellent coordination and planning of this year's conference.*



**Paulette McKillop, IBM Software Group Speakers Bureau:**

*I just want to take a minute to thank you for inviting Sandy Carter to speak at your itSMF Brighton event. Sandy was very pleased with the event and the opportunity.*

**Ian Scholes, Energis:**

*May I pass on my thanks to you all for what I think has been the most successful Annual Conference ever. My colleagues and I were extremely impressed with the organisation, the array of events and presentations, and even extra special touches such as the Royal Marine band on the first day. I am sure you are looking back yourselves thinking what a good job you've done, and you deserve to pat yourselves on the back. Excellent event, extremely productive and informative, and I'll definitely be back next year.*



**Phil Montanaro, EDS:**

*Another fantastic conference: well done to you all. I was yet again pleasantly surprised with the quality and variety of the presentations.*

**Carl Helling, Digitalfuel:**

*I wanted to send a quick note to thank you all for a very enjoyable and memorable 2003 conference.*

**Steve Boronski, Stoke Council:**

*Could you please pass my appreciation on to everyone involved in the Conference, your whole team must have performed at their peak to achieve such a successful event. Many thanks for a great three days.*

**Alan Daly, National Blood Service:**

*Thanks for a great conference.*



**Tina Madden, IBM, Student of the Year:**

*The itSMF Conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet new like-minded people in the area of Service Management; and also*



*to get to know much better some people whose names you might know already. There was a great community spirit – everyone was friendly and approachable across the whole scope of delegates, organisers, speakers, exhibitors and head honchos. The motivational speakers were truly... motivating! Sessions covered a wealth of topics and were invaluable for highlighting the key features of new advances, vendor offerings and the fundamental building blocks of IT Service Management. Definitely a must for future years' diaries.*

## Tina Madden Service Management Candidate of the Year Elspeth Wales, BCS

For service management professional Tina Madden being awarded the accolade of itSMF Student of the Year in this summer's ISEB Service Management examinations was a tremendously rewarding achievement reflecting the hard work she put into the process.

Her success culminated on 11 November when she was presented with her award and £200 prize during the

Gala Dinner at the itSMF 12th Annual Conference and Exhibition at the Metropole Hotel, Brighton (see photograph on the centre pages – 22-23). This award is given each year to the candidate who obtains the overall highest mark, for a single sitting, in the ISEB Service Management qualification.

Tina's road to success began at the start of this year, when she decided to study for the Service Management qualification because, having worked in the field of processes and IT service management for several years, the last

five for IBM, she felt it was time to achieve a professional qualification as evidence of the knowledge and experience she has acquired. IBM encouraged her endeavour since the company is in the throes of an initiative to certify the skills of its key personnel, providing them with support and funding to do so.

Tina is a **Process Implementation Manager** at IBM which involves implementing and improving processes which span the scope of service delivery to clients in the Strategic Outsourcing



business of IBM Global Services.

Through training provider **PinkRocade**, selected by IBM, Tina enrolled on the Service Management qualification in early 2003 and went on to take the Service Support course in March followed by the Service Delivery course in May, the two papers that make up the certification. The exams took place in July.

*"The courses were very intensive. Each day was a mixture of factual learning, interactive group exercises and learning in the evening ready for mock questions the following morning and after the courses I kept up revision on a regular basis until the exams"* said Tina.

Prior to taking the Service Management qualification Tina had gained the prerequisite ISEB Foundation course in 2001. The structured training and revision aids provided by Pink Rocade proved invaluable to Tina and following the Service Support course in March she felt it would be in her best interests to keep up the momentum of revision so that she did not forget what she had already learned.

*"Between March and May I started revising for a couple of hours once a week. After the second course in May obviously the amount of material doubled so I increased revision to at least twice a week. I felt like I was back at school or university. There is a lot to learn, plus thinking about how this relates to your experience, or thinking laterally about how you would present it from a manager's view takes time so I'm glad I kept it up but it took a lot of willpower,"* said Tina.

Such was her commitment that she even revised while holidaying in Spain, putting her time on a sun lounger to good use! *"I was glad I did it because I think there is so much information to try and learn in just a short amount of time,"* she added.

All too soon came the examinations. She recalled that the exams were hard but she expected them to be. The questions weren't nasty but did stretch her ability to think beyond the obvious, from a manager's viewpoint and required candidates to pull together many different facts from a range of disciplines and combine them into an answer from a managerial perspective, she said.

Exams over, Tina then had to endure an eight week wait for her results. The results are usually released after six weeks but Tina had to wait an extra two until she had returned from holiday. *"The wait was agonising. While on holiday, I tried to forget about it but all the way home during an eight hour overnight flight I was imagining the worst."*

Her worries were unfounded. *"I was amazed with the marks themselves I'd spent all those weeks praying I'd at least passed and here I was with a distinction. When I was called to say I'd won the Student of the Year award I was very, very pleased. Then when I was told it was possibly the highest mark ever I was speechless. I was amazed and was so pleased because I had put so much effort into it and it was a great reflection on my skills, it's brilliant."*

At a practical level this qualification helps in her job "enormously" giving a benchmark of skills to colleagues and clients. It has also given her a thorough foundation of best practices with which to optimise delivery to clients in addition to learning a number of management level skills such as writing a good management report which she found to be extremely valuable.



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**itSMF**  
Member

The 2003 itSMF awards saw the biggest entry yet for the various categor



## INNOVATION

**Exel plc** for their Olympus programme – an innovative and integrated approach linking experiential learning with a massive culture change programme reaching to the very top of the company and embedded as part of the company ethos.

The award was presented by Ivor Evans, Honorary President of itSMF.



## STUDENT C

Awarded to the candid marks in the ISEB Ser the winner was **Dr Tim** with one of the highest award was presented b of the ISEB Service

## SERVICE MANAGER OF THE YEAR

**Jane Seeley of Exel plc.** For her leadership of the Olympus programme (see Innovation Award). This is the first time 2 awards have gone to the same company in one year. This award was also sponsored by the Marval Group so Don Page again had the privilege of presenting it.





# ony – Winners

*it*SMF

ries, providing the judges with a challenging task in selecting the winners.



## OF THE YEAR

date gaining the highest  
ervice Manager's exam,  
**na Madden** from IBM,  
st totals on record. The  
y Maggie Kneller, chair  
Management Board.



## PROJECT OF THE YEAR

**Oxford University Press.** A comprehensive service improvement programme with a novel and professional entry including a diary from the project manager's viewpoint. This award was sponsored by the Marval Group and presented by Don Page.

## THE PAUL RAPPAPORT AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO SERVICE MANAGEMENT



Paul's widow, Joan, presented this award to **Colin Meaden** of South Staffs Health Authority. Colin was cited for his contributions to the *it*SMF itself, the leading effort he made in establishing the Institute of Service Management as well as his championing of Service Management in his own organisation and the wider NHS.



## Conference 2003 Workshop Results / Conclusions

Peter Wheatcroft, Partners-in-IT



This article feeds back the results from an energetic workshop of the same name held on 11 November at the annual *iSMF* conference in Brighton as well as deriving some conclusions. This workshop was different in a couple of ways, one it covered a double presentation session and secondly it was split in to 3-areas all relating to the title theme. As the workshop leader I was asked to comment, so here it is...

The workshop was entitled **"Building real business cases for Service Management"**. It has long been an issue in the IT industry that Systems Development is seen as the function which adds value to the business, whereas Service Delivery is the poor relation. In many cases, Service Delivery is not only ignored but is actively referred to as a 'necessary evil' and then outsourced. But why have we allowed this to occur and what can be done to redress the situation?

### Background

There were 75 delegates at the conference workshop that addressed the theme of building business cases to justify expenditure on IT service management. This workshop ran by defining the environment within which IT Services operated and why this had changed in the last few years, both technically and culturally. The impact of this change on the new IT user – which is increasingly becoming the man in the street – was explored and why adherence to conventional Service Level Agreements and methodologies may no longer work. The service challenge is a simple one – how do customers react to IT service quality today when compared to 5 years ago – and why?

### The response

Project development expenditure in the UK has largely flattened out and the era of 'big bang' systems is now one of fond memory rather than forward planning. Now taking the place of flagship core systems is a series of smaller, shorter running projects that are designed to realise incremental ROI (Return on Investment) and which, by their nature, cannot take development of the supporting infrastructure into their scope. And when this is compounded by

the affordability offered by offshore development, many companies are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of projects now being brought into service. As none of these projects are themselves funding infrastructure growth or capability but are of such size and duration that some companies can afford to deliver 40 projects a year instead of 10, it can be seen that infrastructure instability is an inevitable result. This needs a response by the people best placed to own both the 'new age' IT customer interface and the solution to robust management of the service infrastructure – the IT Services Department. Which means you!

The sections below describe the findings from this workshop and amplify the examples which showed how 30% – 75% ROI can, and have, been achieved.

### The solution – In Terms of Culture

Out of the 75 delegates attending, over 30 focused on the session which looked at how the People side of IT needs to change to support the 'new age' customer interface and how that customer proposition should be tackled. Interestingly, whilst the facts and figures presented weren't challenged in terms of their validity, it was very revealing to find out how many companies found the justification and achievement of 'first choice' employer status hard to justify to their management. There was some scepticism about staff reaction to 'best practice' mechanisms such as regular satisfaction surveys; how it was possible to maintain an adequate training allocation within a busy annual schedule plus how to manage the interface with Systems Development. There was also some active debate around the means by which customer satisfaction was achieved, both in terms of the mechanisms used and the standards by which satisfaction should be measured – with topics such as MOT (Moments of Truth) and training methodologies playing an increasingly important role.

There was some interesting debate around the design of user facing systems to comply, say, with the new Disability Discrimination Act where disabled staff already in an IT organisation could find they have an enhanced role in ensuring compliance. These aspects all serve to explain why, of the three sessions, the cultural realignment of a services function – both internally and in managing the customer – is going to be harder to address than the issues surrounding the more objective choice of process and technologies.

### The solution – In Terms of Processes

Out of the workshop session, another 30 or so focused on the session which looked at how the Process side of IT needs to support the very rapid and complex service environment created by multiple systems initiatives. There was a strong feeling here that the core IT team – the technicians – actually enjoy fire fighting and the hero culture, because they become the heroes and are therefore regarded as indispensable. They give process a bad name and themselves regard process as a dirty word, which relates back to the earlier point about addressing the cultural aspect of a services change programme before getting down to implementing something like ITIL.

Another concern was to ensure that a plan to sell the service management solution to everyone concerned was created and this could take the form of a 'game' involving staff taking on different roles within a simulated organisation. These games can be sourced from a number of suppliers and are designed to highlight the issues which arise when a 'best practice' service management solution is not at the heart of the organisation.

Another offering on this subject was the recommendation to 'pilot' a process and demonstrate the benefits before rolling the full 12 ITIL process set across the organisation and to use 'champions' to nurture adoption by all the relevant stakeholders. One concern raised was where KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) might be used to relate pay and personal development to the performance of the organisation, a similar point raised in the cultural session as well. However, a strong empathy towards the replacement of SLA's with higher order business metrics was felt and this balances out the concern about pay/performance linkage by relating what IT people are paid to the business results they achieve.

High 'first time fix' rates being a false indicator was another concern expressed. Whilst 'first time fix' rates are an important focus for the service desk, this may be masking an ineffective problem management capability who should be removing the root causes of recurring faults and thus avoid the need for repetitive fault resolution by the service analysts.

### The solution – In Terms of Technology

The remaining delegates were interested

in discussing how Technology could help them in solving the service conundrum. The debate in this session examined the issues of writing business cases for new applications that affected shared servers, or for growth business cases that are part of the infrastructure expansion and are therefore written by IT and reconciled with the business. This raised the age-old solution of single server, multiple systems that was the province of the mainframe era but which is now back in the limelight as a result of recent server consolidation exercises – and the Capacity Planning process that is needed as a result. There was some interest in the building of relationships between IT Services and the business based on why this would be necessary – and is the sponsoring business likely to co-operate? Again, this was a fascinating insight into how much work IT Services need to invest in relationship building, to address an area where Systems Development have been operating for years. Ways of getting better Customer input on IT satisfaction surveys so that the results are a true reflection on how other departments feel about IT were explored with a true delineation between Services and Development competencies. This was especially so if the questions were carefully phrased to make it obvious which aspect of the overall IT competency was being rated by the answers.

Another technology issue was about the availability of end-to-end management tools that could address all the elements in a service delivery chain. There was limited understanding of what



*A typical conference scene*

these were and where they could be sourced from and the users present were very interested in this aspect and how it could be used to improve overall infrastructure uptime. This was especially so for the 52% of websites in the UK not currently proactively managed by the IT function.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the workshop was very well received and everyone who participated thought it was a lively and interactive event. The format of breaking into three separate focus areas within one session was a new one but based on the feedback received, is one that could be used again – we hope to progress this with the *itSMF* Conference ESC including

ways to improve future sessions of this type. Our thanks go to the facilitation and support teams who made sure we had three projectors and screens in the same room at the same time, and also to Terry Wingrave and Andy Richardson from Partners in IT who helped me to run the session – to time and quality!

The bottom line is that making improvements to service delivery capability is more about cultural change and process alignment than it is about technology, tools and products. Whilst this was the belief at the outset, the workshop participants eloquently amplified for us why this was so.

Editors note: If you attended this presentation and would like to add to Peter's conclusion or comment further send us an email.

### **Winners of the Raffle Prizes:**

***itSMF* Memory Stick:** Alan McCarthy, PinkRoccade

**Fox IT Hotel Package:** Barry Mobbs, DEFRA

**e2e Customer Services Cuddly Ape:**

Diane Davies, DEFRA

**Hilton Brighton Metropole Bed & Breakfast for 2:**

Lorraine Stonelake

**PinkRoccade iPAC:** Aidan Lawes, *itSMF*

**Axios Systems Ltd Healthcheck Voucher:**

Steve Scott, Cogent DSN Ltd

**Axios Systems Ltd Polar Bear:**

Caroline Phillips Ball,

Threadneedle Asset Management

*The unclaimed prizes follow. These are being held at the *itSMF* office.*

*Contact Maxine on 0118 926 0888 to claim your prize:*

**Pink 76-80 BMC – Screwdriver set**

**Orange 16-20 Karyfi Consulting – Bottle of Glenfiddich Whisky**

**Pink 496-500 Remedy T-shirt, mousemat and phone holder**

**Pink 386-390 Axios Systems Ltd – Bottle of Single highland malt**

**Orange 126-130 Centennial – Bottle of Laurent Perrier**



*The *itSMF* Stand at the Exhibition*

## The Partners Programme

Bob Fishleigh & Pam Forster

Tuesday 11 November dawned grey and cold, but did not dampen the spirits of the Partners who had opted to go "out on the town". The coach arrived at the hotel doorstep at 10.30, the passengers "clocked in" and we were off to our first destination just five minutes away.

### The Brighton Royal Pavilion

#### A Brief History

We were introduced to our excellent guide and ushered into a private lecture room, where we were given a half-hour presentation entitled 'Farmhouse to Palace: the Development of the Royal Pavilion'. The presentation also covered the history of the town, which during the Pavilion's development became a fashionable health spa. The wealthy travelled from London, by fast coach to "take the waters" which meant not only bathing in the sea, but drinking a recommended "cure-all" made up of sea water, milk and dead wood lice!

During the presentation, and at the eleventh hour, we joined in the act of remembrance and observed the 2-minute silence.

#### Then a Tour

We were then given a very interesting tour of the Pavilion and visited most of the ground floor rooms and some of the upstairs quarters. The Pavilion, was developed from a farm house which had attracted the Prince Regent's eye. He personally supervised its transformation into a spectacularly opulent palace over some 35 years. Today it appears to be in a permanent state of restoration, but in spite of some internal scaffold work there was a tremendous amount to see, almost too much to take in during one visit. The tour lasted about an hour and took in the magnificent Banqueting Hall, the kitchens, the reception areas, corridors and the fantastic Music Room. Sadly, after the death of George IV, Queen Victoria came to the throne, and, disliking the Pavilion intensely, ordered everything to be stripped out and sent to Buckingham Palace! The Pavilion has a fascinating history and we thought the following snippets would whet the reader's appetite!

In 1787 Henry Holland extended the original farmhouse into a neo-classical building known as the Marine Pavilion. From 1815-1823 John Nash used the new cast iron technology to transform the Marine Pavilion into the Indian style building, with its domes and minarets, that exists today. The town purchased the

Palace from Victoria in 1850 and restoration "commenced". Serious work however began in 1982, lasting some ten years and costing over £10 million. The original programme to reinstate the interior decorative schemes approved by George IV in the early 1820s still continues.

The Banqueting Room remains one of the most magnificent interiors in the Pavilion. Its imaginative and bold design was the work of Robert Jones, a little-known but extremely talented artist who began work for the Prince Regent in 1815.

One of George IV's great passions was music. Appropriately the second extension in Nash's scheme was the Music Room. In this extraordinary interior, lit by nine lotus-shaped chandeliers, the King's own band entertained guests with selections from Handel or Italian opera. Tragically this splendid room was severely damaged by fire in 1975, although all but one of the original wall paintings survived. After a decade of intensive work, restoration was completed including a reproduction of the original hand-knotted and fitted Axminster carpet. Restoration was barely completed when the hurricane of October 1987 dislodged a stone ball on top of one of the minarets, which then fell through the newly restored ceiling and embedded itself in the newly laid carpet. After further works by the Pavilion conservation team the room has now been restored to the original scheme.

#### Followed by Refreshments (and the Gift Shop!)

Having had our fill of the magnificence of all the rooms on the ground floor we were ushered upstairs to partake of tea and biscuits in the Queen Adelaide Tearoom – most welcome! By now time was pressing, but not pressing enough to overcome the temptation of the Gift Shop – oh dear! Suffice it to say, we did eventually get all the troops back on the coach, which, by the way, was parked on double yellow lines with the engine running!

#### Next Stop – The Wine Centre

The next phase of the day out was about to commence: our destination, the English Wine Centre at Alfriston, about half an hour's drive out of Brighton.

On arrival we were met by a most charming host who ushered us into Walton's Old Barn where tables were laid for our wine tasting and lunch. We were first, however, given a fascinating

introduction to the English Wine Centre, which was established in 1972 to provide visitors with the opportunity to taste a range of English wine from different vineyards and winemakers. We then embarked on what was billed as a light hearted but informative tasting of a range of English Wines as well as organic drinks - about 10 wines and juices mainly from around this part of the South East.

For the tasting we were each issued with a glass and a 'spittoon' (a beer mug in the middle of the table). Such, however, was the wont of the participating tasters, that your writers have to report, the spittoon wasn't used much (as far as we can remember that is)! Of the wines tasted there were English Whites, Rosés and Reds to sample. These were followed by a Kir, a Sparkling Lemon Refresher and Local Apple Juice to finish.

We were then given the opportunity to explore the Centre while the staff prepared lunch. Naturally by now we were in just the right frame of mind to visit the shop! The shop was particularly interesting because, apart from selling the wines we had already tasted, there was quite a wide range of other wines available – even the facility to design your own Wine Label! Chateau Chez Nous, anybody?

Finally therefore, back to Walton's Barn, laden with our purchases, to partake of a typical Sussex Ploughman's Lunch of Regional Cheeses, Homemade Soda Bread, Local Sausages, Salad and Hot New Potatoes ending with tea or coffee. Everything was well prepared, well presented and we all had that 'at home' feeling, not only at lunch, but also during the whole of the visit. Nothing to do with the wine you understand.

#### Back to Base...

##### ...and More Food and Drink!

However, time marches on, and all too soon we said farewell to downtown Alfriston, (st)rolled back to the coach for the return journey to Brighton by the Sea, the Conference Centre and, guess what: the Gala Dinner!

Was it too much for weary partners? Well we did consider asking if the programme next year could be extended by a day to enable Partners to have a full 2 days worth just like the delegates: but on reflection we decided that might be taking things a bit too far (only joking)! So we thought we would just restrict our comments to "Thank you iSMF for looking after us so well".

P.S. We only lost one partner, but don't worry Steve we didn't let on that it was your idea. ■



# BS15000 Certification

IAN WHYTE

*This is a synopsis of a presentation given at the itSMF 2003 Conference*

## BS15000<sup>1</sup> and ITIL<sup>2</sup>

What is the relationship between BS15000 and ITIL?

Well, one thing that's been addressed is that there is no debate about how to pronounce 'BS15000', unlike ITIL, variously pronounced ITT'L, Eye-TIL or even I-T-I-L!

ITIL provides proven best practice processes and guidelines which can be adapted to suit our particular business. However at the end of the day these are really only recommendations and it is not practical to make a pass/fail decision against them – indeed that is the reason BS15000 was developed.

BS15000 has close links with ITIL and specifies a level of quality which can be audited. It is aimed at service provider organisations and each process has some mandatory requirements and an objective which puts these in context. The service provider organisation must comply with the process requirements at a level that is appropriate for the organisation. An example could be a capacity plan which would have a level of detail and complexity appropriate to that service provider's organisation.

There is a concordat between BSI, itSMF and OGC which formalises the relationships and in part it states "...all parties agree that it is important that industry should not be confused by the publication of two sets of documentation from two different but authoritative sources and that their publications should align and cross-refer. The intention is that both sets of publications form parts of the same logical structure. As a consequence the ITIL books and the BSI publications on service management have been integrated...."

In terms of certification it would be right to think of ITIL as being a route to certify the competence of an individual and BS15000 as being aimed at certifying a service provider's processes.

BS15000 Certification means that an organisation has proved that it is deploying best practice processes effectively, because an external evaluation against the whole formal standard has been carried out by an itSMF registered independent audit organisation.

## Why Should I Consider Adopting BS15000?

BS15000 is now the industry-accepted

quality standard for IT Service Management. It is widely recognised throughout the world and becoming a business requirement in the same way as ISO9000, for example in invitations to tender BS15000 certification will be accepted as evidence of an organisation's commitment to best practice in their IT services.

So, BS15000 certification provides hard evidence that quality of IT Service Management is being taken seriously in an organisation. Adopting ITIL is fine and gets you a long way down the road but it is not the whole answer.

For example, before we had BS15000 an organisation we're thinking about buying services from could claim to be ITIL compliant but we had no real way of assessing that claim. We could talk to them and we'll find that their sales guys are using the right buzzwords, we can even get a statement from them that a certain percentage of their staff have ITIL qualifications, but what they won't tell us is that they don't actually do Release or Capacity management or whatever.

Without us actually going in there and virtually doing our own audit we had no way of knowing the degree to which they were 'compliant'.

Now, of course, if they are able to produce a Certificate of BS15000 Compliance issued by an organisation that is a Registered Certification Body under the Certification Scheme managed by itSMF then we can have a much greater degree of confidence in their ability.

The principal benefit of BS15000 Certification is that it demonstrates that an organisation has established a high standard of IT Service Management processes and is therefore delivering managed services in a systematic, controlled and cost-effective manner. Some of the other benefits which would accrue are:

- Effective managed services that meet customer and business requirements
- Market advantage through having Certification associated with itSMF
- Cost reduction through optimised structures and processes
- Clear and focused documentation
- Staff with a good understanding of their service management responsibilities
- Regular evaluation of the processes to

improve their effectiveness

- Effective business continuity management and meeting legal requirements for risk management
- For example in the Finance sector the introduction in 2006 of the Basel II agreement requires financial organisations to put aside a proportion of their assets, the proportion depending on their assessed risks. This will affect over 30,000 banks in 110 countries. BS15000 certification may be an accepted factor in demonstrating that risks are being properly managed and therefore less has to be put on deposit. Even a 1% reduction in the requirement could mean massive amounts of money to these organisations.

Another benefit would be that it sets a significant milestone for an IT Department, as achieving certification is something which could take quite a lot of time and effort, and successful outcome of the audit is sure to be a worthy cause for celebration.

Also staff morale will improve if they are working in a high-quality environment, and of course it helps to enforce process compliance generally because people will be operating under the prospect of being audited and any instances of non-compliance are sure to be highlighted and could lead to the certification being withdrawn – at least that's what we can say to the people who try to circumvent the processes! Auditors have a great knack of homing in on the areas we would least like them to see!

## The Scope of Certification

Certification is aimed at organisations which provide a Service Management operation, whether that is to internal customers or external customers, or a combination of both.

Certification is the process of assessing an organisation against the requirements of the standard. If the organisation is successful then they are issued with a Certificate of Compliance.

This will contain a scoping statement that defines the scope of the audit and the certificate. This may show that it is not the whole service provider organisation which is compliant but only the part for which service management



## Service Management in Action - a new learning experience from Fox IT

Fox IT's new "Service Management In Action" day is an innovative business simulation game that provides delegates with practical experience of aligning business and technology processes.

During a lively and energetic day, teams of delegates 'manage their own business' and experience for themselves how improved processes result in improved business profitability. Teamwork and communication is required to overcome challenges, maximise revenue and minimise incidents. And with the support of an experienced facilitator, students experience ITIL best practice in action.

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processes are directly relevant. For example only the outsourcing division of a large company, or perhaps the service management processes at a particular location or indeed only the parts of an organisation which are involved in servicing a particular customer.

It's worth pointing out here that certification is not appropriate for a consultancy organisation which gives best practice advice. A consultancy organisation may have BS15000 Certification for its own internal IT department and although that would tell us something about the culture, it does not tell us anything about the abilities of the consultants as the certification doesn't cover that area!

It is true that some certifying bodies have a consultancy division but these must operate at arm's length from the auditing division of the organisation. This is a basic requirement in law and of the *i*SMF Certification scheme. *i*SMF only accept applications from organisations which are themselves accredited by their national standards body, which in the UK would mean the organisation is accredited by UKAS and their auditor independence is guaranteed by this accreditation.

### Registered Certification Bodies

Audit organisations seeking Registration apply to *i*SMF, and provided they meet the registration criteria, *i*SMF will register them as Registered Certification Bodies (RCBs) and grant them permission to use the *i*SMF's BS15000 scheme logo on the certificates they award following a successful audit, in turn giving the certified organisations the right to use the logo on letterheads, etc.

The RCBs operate totally independently of any consultancy organisation, and their auditors have been specifically trained in IT Service Management. Under some circumstances the RCB may bring in a subject expert to supplement the specialised knowledge.

It is the *i*SMF's intention that RCBs should add value to the organisation being audited. A BS 15000 audit under the *i*SMF scheme is not just a routine formal audit but will also add value because the audit is conducted by people competent in this area who will make observations and report on them. This also helps to maintain the quality and credibility of the certification.

And why should we use an *i*SMF RCB? An independent audit carried out under the auspices of the Certification Scheme

gives us confidence that the audit is carried out to the same consistently high standard as all other BS15000 audits, and is genuinely aimed at establishing the true position without any considerations of generating other business because it is being carried out by a wholly independent organisation with no vested interest in the outcome.

At the time of the Conference we had two RCBs on board and there were several others in the pipeline. The first two are Det Norske Veritas (DNV) and KPMG Audit plc, and their details, along with any others who become registered, can be found on the website at [www.bs15000certification.com](http://www.bs15000certification.com).

### BS15000 Is Not Just For the UK

Although BS15000 is currently a British standard, the certification process can be applied anywhere in the world and a non-UK or multi-national service provider organisation may be audited against the standard. All the RCBs offer an international service and will be happy to audit against the standard anywhere.

The *i*SMF certification committee are intending to offer worldwide auditor training in 2004 as well as that already offered in the UK. To help facilitate the international dimension *i*SMF are actively seeking the involvement of the local *i*SMF chapters across the world in managing the scheme in their local areas to help with this roll out and also in lobbying their respective national standards bodies to adopt the standard. *i*SMF are hopeful that the standard will also be adopted as an international standard in 2 years.

### Main Steps To Certification

First you will need to appoint a Certification Body as your BS15000 auditors, and will probably want to appoint an internal BS15000 co-ordinator.

It is advisable to carry out a pre-audit review to get information on where any areas for improvement may exist. This review can be done internally (maybe using the BS15000 Self Assessment workbook) or by an external organisation which offers a gap analysis service. There are obvious benefits from each approach, such as an internal auditor will know his way around and quite probably also know the areas most in need of an audit, but the experience of an external organisation can add

significant value and a degree of independence. Ultimately, a mix is probably the best answer.

Remember though that the organisation giving consultancy advice cannot be the same organisation which you have appointed as your RCB, as to avoid conflicts of interest RCBs are not permitted to provide consultancy advice in the area in which they would then go on to certify!

### The Certification Audit

Next we should confirm the scope of the audit and the terms of reference.

Typically, the certification process will then involve:

- A plan – dates, timescales, locations etc
- Offsite analysis of the BS15000 process documentation.
- On site audit usually a mixture of formal interviews with staff and informal 'show-me' checks.
- Analysis of the information gathered and issue of the BS15000 audit report
- And of course if successful, a BS15000 certificate!

If unsuccessful, details will be given of the areas of non-compliance which require to be addressed to comply with the standard.

It may be possible at this stage to agree a re-audit in one month, three months etc depending on the scale of the non-compliance. The re-audit will usually only focus on the areas of non-compliance to make sure they have been fixed and are now compliant.

### After Certification

After we've got our Certification and once the hangovers have cleared from the celebration, our organisation is subject to surveillance audits for the next three years (at least once a year) with a full reassessment on the third anniversary.

So in summary, *i*SMF have invested heavily in getting the standard and the Certification Scheme in place, we now have the RCBs in place, the documentation is available from the *i*SMF bookshop or BSI – now it's over to you to start getting certified! ■

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Although referred to in this article as BS15000 for ease of reading, the standard actually consists of two parts. These are BS 15000-1:2002 which is the Specification for Service Management, and BS 15000-2:2003, the Code of Practice. The standard is the copyright of the British Standards Institute (BSI).

<sup>2</sup> ITIL is a registered trademark of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC).



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# Institute of IT Service Management Logo

For a while now the Council of the Institute of Service Management (the Institute) has been considering a request by a number of individuals and organisations wishing to use the Institute's Logo. In these circumstances individuals or organisations would like to display the Institute logo as part of their marketing and sales materials. The issues are summarised in the following questions and their answers:

## Do we wish the logo to be used by individuals and companies?

The Institute provides many benefits and use of the logo could be seen as a benefit to anyone who holds a status of fellow, member, practitioner, student or associate with the institute. This could also be classed as a benefit to an organisation, in that the Institute would recognise a level of commitment from an organisation to a code of conduct and also to the professional nature, continuous professional development and



the ethics of the Institute. The Institute is willing to collaborate with organisations that employ members, who operate in the IT Service Management field, and who share similar motives. This can be achieved by applying good practice within their organisation and to help others do the same by providing quality Service Management solutions, services or products to their clients, and through promotion of further improvements.

As one element of such a collaboration, mutual respect and mutual support, the Institute will consider applications by such parties who wish to use the Institute logo in association with their own name, brand, trademark or other distinctive device.

## How will this work?

With individuals the use of the logo is

simple. The applicant wishing to use the logo should hold a status within the Institute but needs to apply for a licence to use the logo. For companies there would need to be a demonstration that either they were sponsors of their employees in terms of application to the Institute but also that they had a number of employees who had applied to the Institute and gained membership at the varying levels. The organisation would need to apply for a logo licence.

## Will there be any safeguards?

Yes there will be safeguards. The Institute has a policy document which sets out the circumstances under which the logo can be used. It also covers the conditions within which this will be granted and also under what circumstances the logo permissions would be revoked.

## Are there advantages for the Institute?

The Institute acknowledges that approved use of the Institute logo by others creates an opportunity for the

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Institute to enhance its visibility in the market place. Vendor organisations will be expected to promote the Institute whenever appropriate, and thus help the Institute to increase its membership and grow the member services and benefits. This, in turn, should benefit the employing organisation.

### If an individual or an organisation wishes to apply what do they need to supply?

The minimum information that is required in the application form or supplied when applying for use of the logo will be:

A paragraph of approximately 80-100 words describing your offering, detailing specifically why you wish to reference the Institute and the intended use of the Institute logo. The Institute reserves the right to recommend editorial change to your text, or to return it to you for editing, whether for length, clarity, positioning vis-a-vis the Institute, or other reason. Details on the numbers of your employees who are members of the Institute and their grades. The application form requires you to name a minimum number of such employees specifically. A user organisation should have at least one Institute member employed, and a training or

consultancy organisation should have at least 25% of their employees who are ITSM trainers or ITSM consultants (respectively) being Institute members.

A file containing your product or company logo or other chosen device(s) in GIF format, with a maximum size of 120 x 120 pixels and no animation.

A standard URL of where to link the Institute web site to your web site description. For example, <www.yourcompany.com/iosm>.

Then apply to:

The Institute of Service Management,  
Webbs Court, 8 Holmes Road, Earley,  
Reading, RG6 7BH

# The Institute of Service Management

## Latest Members List



Name	Organisation	Membership Status	Name	Organisation	Membership Status
Michael Alves	Bluewater Services UK	Practitioner	Sean Lewis	Sysop	Member
Graham Barnett	Fujitsu Consulting	Member	Christopher Littlewood	Xansa	Member
Jayne Barrand	Aserti	Member	Vernon Lloyd	Fox IT	Fellow
Ronald Beales	PinkRoccade Group UK	Fellow	Ivor MacFarlane	IT Service Improvement	Fellow
David Bingham	Fujitsu Consulting	Fellow	George Martin	Concorde Solutions	Practitioner
Adrian Brown	PinkRoccade Group UK	Member	Colin Meaden	South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust	Fellow
Michael Brown	GlaxoSmithKline	Member	Nigel Mear	Cable & Wireless	Member
Andrew Busby	Superdrug Stores Plc	Associate	Philip Montanaro	EDS	Fellow
Finbar Callan	Spring IT Training	Member	Trevor Morley	English Heritage	Member
Paul Cutress	Royal Bank of Scotland	Member	Gerry Mos	NHS Information Auth.	Member
James Davies	Tradetown	Member	Nicholas Needham	Aseriti	Member
Graham Dawson	Fujitsu Consulting	Member	Jonathan Peacock	Evolution Consulting Group Plc	Practitioner
Margaret Dingwall	Scottish Power Group	Practitioner	Anthony Price	PinkRoccade Group UK	Fellow
Paul Eatwell	Fujitsu Consulting	Member	Colin Rudd	IT Enterprise Management Services	Fellow
David Forster	MOD DCSA	Member	Simon Shelley-Price	Schlumberger Sema	Practitioner
Gerard Gough	Fujitsu Consulting	Member	Lawrence Spriggs	World Class International	Practitioner
Michael Holderness	National Grid Transco	Practitioner	Alan Stevens	Independent Consultant	Associate
Alan Holmes	Rural Payments Agency	Practitioner	Bridget Veitch	Xansa	Member
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Lynn Jackson	LJ Training	Practitioner			
Gary Ladds	Exel	Member			
Aidan Lawes	itSMF	Fellow			
Brian Lee	Fujitsu Consulting	Member			

## Is It Safe?

### IT Security Management Seminar

The Institute of Directors, London played host to the **Is It Safe? IT Security Management Seminar** on a sunny yet blustery 7 October. A small intrigued group of delegates spanning a wide diversity of companies graced the presence of the seminar speakers, but we all had one thing in mind, **'Is It Safe? Are We Safe? Am I Safe?'**.

The agenda of the day was to introduce and raise awareness of IT Security Management, **"Is It Safe?"**. To spread the itSMF and ITIL word, benefits

and experiences alongside the promotion of the only recently published NEW itSMF IT Security Management pocketbook a companion to the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL). The day was also to act as a friendly forum to network amongst others, take back questions and perhaps solutions to our relevant companies to strive to improve what we have today.

**John McDermott** and **Tony Brough** introduced the day and gave an update on news from the itSMF, highlighting its growth internationally, the new book **"The Business Perspective"** becoming available in April with the ability to have

any ITIL book translated into any language if required, many are already out there! A BS15000 overview with promotion of self-accreditations and the membership scheme of the Institute of Service Management (ISM) [www.iosm.com](http://www.iosm.com) offered a well-bodied introduction and helped to ask the questions, can you do the job but need to prove it? Show someone you can? [www.bs15000certification.com](http://www.bs15000certification.com) what is stopping you, only yourself?

**Barclay Rae** – e2e Customer Services headed the seminar with a presentation, **"Getting to the Heart of Security Issues"**. Barclay introduced IT security issues, IT

**TOBY STEVENS, IBM**  
**& REBECCA HERITY, RS Components**



security with service management and future strategies from a business viewpoint. Security should be thought of as both physical and electronic and we're only as secure as our weakest point! Barclay stated that, for businesses to expand, there must be an element of risk taking. With real systems and users doing business, IT security issues must maintain the integrity, confidentiality and availability of the business. IT security must be balanced with convenience and availability with any new policy or procedures being communicated effectively to the business, organisation and staff to ensure success.

Did you know... "49% write down passwords, an average user has 21 passwords some have 70! 66% gave their password away!" Sources SANS/FBI/NTA. Single sign on (SSO)! is this a user-friendly solution? Is it cost justified? Strong passwords – could it be physical, fingerprint, optical? What ever the option/solution, to look towards the bigger picture it must be scalable and be able to be migrated to advance with the business needs, strategy and requirements.

Morning coffee enabled delegates to reflect and view the relevant promotional stands and network amongst themselves. **Bob Bartlett** – Managing Director from SIM/SQS followed with a presentation entitled, "WEB Application Security Testing – A NEW Testing Frontier". Bob outlined how the technologies used to design and develop web applications have created new types of application security vulnerabilities that can be easily exploited by internal and external hackers. "The fact that the application layer is situated behind firewalls does not perhaps ensure that it is the most secure environment." A statement presented set the scene. "Mike Harris, manager of Ernst & Young's advanced security centre in Dublin, said that hackers have shifted their attention to Web Applications after finding that other systems such as firewalls have become more secure."

It was identified that the application layer can be open and liable to potential risk. Bob highlighted 13 possible risks and expanded on how each could be used against us. The good news is: All of the 13 mentioned security risks can be detected with testing, most is non-destructive but should still be done carefully! A testing strategy must be identified and enforced. Bob offered the analogy of an egg, tough on the outside, vulnerable on the inside! The job now is to strengthen security precautions inside to a level that still enables the business to deliver and identify risk areas – application security testing can be an efficient means. A question to take away if nothing else is: "How would you identify your application security risks? Employ the services of an ethical hacker, acquire or develop your own tool set for the many potential areas of risk,

use an application security testing service to identify areas of risk... or let your customers and business partners find the problem? You decide?"

**John Alcock**, Management Consultant from Fujitsu Services topped the morning's talks with a presentation on "Security with Enterprise Management". It encompassed three main areas: security objectives; the basics being processes, procedures and controls; and to look at the case for security with enterprise management by evaluating the positives, negatives and the risks involved. It was explained how Enterprise Management can help and identified what needs to be done to deploy it safely and that it can be safe provided you understand and manage the risks.

John looked at the security objectives in Information Systems that uphold the principals of Integrity, Confidentiality, Availability (the traditional three) and Legality. These principals are achieved by implementing good processes, helpful procedures and affective technical controls. The processes, procedures and controls work together to deter, prevent, detect, contain and recover. It is important to get the correct balance of each measure. He stated, the efforts and costs involved in implementing security controls must not outweigh the benefits gained by preventing security related incidents! How does your business fair in that arena?

After a hearty buffet lunch **John Gibert** of Southcourt introduced the afternoon sessions with "Security Risk and Datacentre Consolidation". John's presentation utilised a case study of a company whose plans were to consolidate their datacentre. It highlighted how to manage residual risk and ask the questions: What is the value of safety? Which or what is the main safety concern and how to invest in this safety? John spoke of balancing the risk with the cost of securing against that risk. Business is all about taking risks he said, managing that risk effectively and taking into account any legality issues and reputation are all keys to success. By effectively managing and identifying different risks, a strategy can be born to provide the correct solution. As mentioned before, we must look towards the bigger picture; anything we do must be scalable and be able to be migrated to advance with the business needs, strategy and requirements. Is your datacentre strategy safe? Go on ask yourself!!

**Martin Tate** from IT Evaluation Ltd followed and presented "How to Select Your New Security Management System". You are considering a new security management system – such as firewall, access control or threat monitoring. However, you are unsure how to select an off the shelf product. Drawing on 36 ICT procurement projects, Martin

presented a proven, rigorous and effective process to find a product suitable for your organisation's needs.

The presentation identified the importance of understanding the IT risks and how they can affect the business. Also, to capture true requirements and exploit process links as well as experience from all IT service management and ITIL BS15000 disciplines to improve and ensure best practise. It was highlighted that in 38 iterations the method has never been found to be ineffective and identified the better option was nearly always 90% cheaper than the previous chosen solution. The methodology identifies the best option for a business to achieve their goals, based on the stated requirements. The process proves integrity, shows you have done your homework and presents a winner. Martin stated, "I have never known a decision maker to go for the non-proven option just because they like the look of it! They're interested in the effect on the business and market share, not because it looks good!"

Afternoon tea led on to **Graham Barnett** of Fujitsu Consulting who concluded the guest speakers by promoting the new *iSMF IT Security Management* pocketbook of which Graham was the editor. He summarised some key messages and themes running throughout the subject, highlighted the importance of process with the ITIL – IT Security Management process model and enforced the message that process is important for security management as agreed with by the ITIL Security Management book, ISO17799/BS7799 and BS15000.

All delegates were convinced the day had been successful and left more knowledgeable. In essence... All six speakers spoke of IT Security Management in various guises, different techniques, facts, examples and scenarios all of which enforced the need for good IT security, the supporting technology and the importance of managing these technologies. The common thread throughout was process, to help guide and to fundamentally aid the control of IT security. You would never just leave the house without locking the door? Would you? So why leave an unattended workstation alone without locking the screen first or leaving your server room open!! And that is only the physical stuff!!

IT Security Management is the required process. The *iSMF IT Security Management* pocketbook is widely available and adds to the IT Service Management collection, to support ITIL IT Security Management and best practice – go on take a look.

**IT Security Management – Is it Safe? Are you thinking about it? Make sure you take an interest in your assets before someone else does! ■**



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# Getting Buy-In to ITIL: Ideas from Actor Network Theory

NEIL McBRIDE  
IT Service Management  
Research Group  
De Montfort University

One of the major problems with getting ITIL adopted is persuading people that it's in their interests to adopt ITIL. IT managers have to be persuaded of the importance of ITIL. Executives have to be persuaded to invest in IT service management improvements. Staff have to be persuaded that it's worth attending courses and taking exams.

The adoption of best practice such as ITIL and BS15000 standards involves the redefining of organisational behaviour, the changing of practices and the building of different attitudes and cultures. This is no easy task and we need all the help we can get.

The problems in ITIL adoption are not that different from the problems of getting new technology adopted. What causes people to start using mobile telephones, or e-mail, or booking theatre tickets on the Internet. What caused VHS to become standard and not Betamax? Nor is the process that different from the one by which scientific theories or concepts are adopted. How does Newton's Laws, Einstein's Theory of Relativity or the structure of DNA become accepted?

The answer to such questions lies as much in the social sphere as the technical sphere. Whatever the quality of the theory, the technology or the IT service standards, the acceptance of those theories and standards and their embedding in the organisational fabric is a social phenomenon.

The process of embedding ITIL within the organisation is, therefore, one of establishing social acceptance, of developing social networks in which people's interests are similar and the message of ITIL becomes part of everybody's mindset. The social perception of the ITIL, the prevalence of messages such as 'everybody's using it', and the presence of a critical mass of practitioners will determine its success. As people take a positive view of ITIL within IT service management, they begin to adopt the procedures as part of their work and everyday lives and they recommend its use to colleagues.

Such ideas have been developed in

Actor Network Theory (ANT). This theory arose from French sociologists' efforts to understand how scientific theories spread within scientific communities, become embedded in the community and are then taken for granted as a basis for further scientific progress.

Latour (1987)<sup>1</sup> showed that scientific theories are not simply rational, objective and external to the scientists who use them, but are socially constructed, and become established through social interactions within networks of people. The social process is then just as important as the laboratory work in establishing the legitimacy of a theory. The use of ANT quickly extended to providing explanations of how technology is accepted within communities and organisations. Here we'll examine some of the concepts of ANT see how they might help us develop networks of support for ITIL in our organisations and embed ITIL in the organisational structures and processes.

## Networks

ANT considers the process of standards acceptance as one of developing a social network of people, standards and systems. These networks grow as new members, or actors are added when their interests are aligned to, or shown to be similar to the rest of the network. The actor network must grow to reach a critical mass and then reach a state of stability. If the network remains unstable, it can disappear as quickly as it emerges, taking with it the IT service standards which then becomes obsolete and not taken notice of. These socio-technical networks are dynamic, growing and shrinking as new actors are added or removed. Within the network there is then a constant reinforcing of the ITIL message.

## Actors

ANT focuses on the stakeholders, or actors, within the socio-technical network and how they are involved in shaping the form and the social spread of

the standards. Each actor will be an intermediary between other actors. Actors are not limited to humans, but may include the texts which define ITIL, groupings within the organisation and external organisations such as *ITSMF*. Both human and non-human actors have interests and properties which need to be aligned for the technology to be successfully adopted within a network.

## Translation and Inscription

The interests of the actors within our ITIL network may vary widely. Establishing technology requires the aligning of the interests of actors within the network. As the interests of actors within the network are aligned, the network becomes stable and the technology is then firmly established. ANT suggests that the aligning of the interests of actors in the network involves the *translation* of those interests into a common interest in adopting and using the standards. In other words, we have to show why the adoption of ITIL is in the interests of stakeholders within the organisation and why their interests can be met by the adoption of ITIL. This translation is achieved in the network through common definitions, meaning and *inscriptions* attached to the IT service standards. Inscription or definition of its properties, usefulness or desirability may be used to support the translation of interests.

We answer the questions concerning what's in it for them? Why is it in their interests to support ITIL? How are their interests met by the implementation of ITIL?

## Enrolment

The process of alignment of actors' interests with the actor network occurs as actors *enrol* others into the network. As actors are enrolled, the network becomes larger, more established and the use of the technology more common. The successful embedding of ITIL requires that a large actor network emerges such that there are sufficient actors to justify its adoption. If people



ignore ITIL and start to do their own thing or develop service practices incompatible with ITIL then, if sufficient people reject ITIL, it will fail. Again it's up to ITIL practitioners to show others the benefits of the standards, how ITIL meets their needs and how its adoption is in their interest. This is a social process involving talking, meetings, presentations and social interaction outside the formal work practices. ITIL adoption won't occur if we just sit in our offices.

### Irreversibility

In order for stability to be established so that ITIL becomes part of organisational practice, the notion of *irreversibility* must be established. At some point the use of ITIL processes becomes an essential and standard part of IT service practice in the organisation. A point must be reached where the standards are so well used and embedded in the organisation that the effort of undoing them and stopping using them is so great as to be impossible.

The move to ITIL adoption has then become irreversible. This is how technical standards become adopted. Once TCP/IP has become embedded as the Internet standard protocol, its use is irreversible however difficult or awkward it is. Through a social process, the standard has been adopted and established as an irreversible part of the social and technical fabric. In essence we reach a point where we can't imagine organisational practice without ITIL.

### Black Boxes

Once ITIL standards are adopted by the actor network they become difficult to reverse. Hence users become locked into the actor network and its standards.

The IT service standards become a *black box*. The standards are then treated as part of everyday life, embedded in organisational activity and taken-for-granted. Only input and output matters. The standards are then accepted without questioning their rationale, or considering whether they represent the best way to do things.

### Applying Actor Network Theory to ITIL Adoption

By considering what these concepts might mean for ITIL adoption in our organisation we can generate some ideas for how to get ITIL accepted and embedded in organisational practice, both by the IT service providers and the

customers. The following suggests some prescriptive steps you might undertake to get that acceptance and to promote ITIL adoption.

1. **Identify Actors.** Who do we need to talk to about ITIL? What are their roles? What are their interests in ITIL? What power do they have to determine the success or failure of ITIL adoption?
2. **Investigate Actors.** Look at their interests, attitudes, relationships, roles, power and influence and involvement in the IT in the organisation. Looking at interests involves an examination of the stakeholders' rational, organisational and individual interests. Rational interests concern their logical interests and the objective view they take of ITIL. Organisational interests concern their political and social interests arising from their job roles in the organisation. Individual interests concern personal interests, for example, status, career progress and job security.
3. **Identify Actor Interactions.** What are the relationships between stakeholders in terms of extent of communication, power, trust, resource control and influence? What are the links between actors? Who talks to whom?
4. **Follow the Actors.** What are their perceptions of IT, IT services and ITIL? What messages, emails, and texts currently circulate amongst the actors? The complexity of the actor network can then be assessed. This will have an influence on strategies for aligning the actor-network with the desired outcomes.
5. **Design Inscriptions.** Inscriptions which will support the alignment of actors' interests in the network need to be developed, taking into account not only the interests of the actors, but also the organisational context. Previous exposure to ITIL, together with the history, culture and politics of IT in the organisation may have a significant effect on the development of the network though the attitudes and values which have been laid down within the social groups. Inscriptions will include both the messages and marketing associated with the ITIL and with the services provided by IT.
6. **Design Enrolment Strategies.** In addition to understanding the stakeholders and designing the messages and services around the IT service function, the establishing of a stable actor network will require

good enrolment strategies. This may involve challenging the stakeholders' current assumptions, and opening existing black boxes in order to promote their replacement with new standards and practice. Lock-in to current technology and ways of doing things will act as an inhibitor to the adoption of new technology and standards. The right economic model involving costs and benefits will be required. Enrolment strategies must address attitudes, power and politics. The aim is to promote lock-in, in which ITIL becomes socially acceptable within the organisation, has a positive social construction placed on it and becomes socially embedded as the default means of IT service management among the stakeholders. Through enrolment strategies, both customer and provider expectations will be defined. Where ITIL is successfully embedded in the organisation expectations are defined by ITIL procedures and activities and hence easily agreed between the IT service providers and the organisational customers.

### Conclusion

Actor Network Theory suggests, quite rightly, that standards adoption is not a just a technical process of writing the procedures and getting people trained. It is primarily a social process by which groups of people come to share interests and adopt similar attitudes. If we're to get ITIL accepted in our organisations, it is these social processes that must be addressed first. This requires that we move in all the organisation's social networks, connecting socially with senior management, shop floor staff and technical staff. It requires that the social links between IT services and the rest of the organisation are strong enough that actor networks can be established and the message of ITIL transmitted so that people are enrolled into an ITIL network. Their interests must be shown to be aligned with the interests of the ITIL network. They must see that ITIL will help them achieve their objectives. Without this social connection all manner of memos, manuals, training package and service catalogues will be of limited value. In the end you might be better off down on the tennis courts spending time with your user manager before you write the next SLA. ■

Reference:

<sup>1</sup>Latour, B. (1987) *Science in Action* Open University Press.

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# Real Time Infrastructure Technologies: Shifting the Boundaries of Service Support

**SHIRALEE  
RAWSTHORNE-HOUGHTON  
& JON FORD**  
Sun Microsystems

## Shifting Boundaries

In the previous articles, we looked at the arrival of Real Time Infrastructure (RTI) Technologies – systems that can self-configure, self-manage and self-optimize – such as those being provided by Sun™, HP, & IBM. We described how RTI will change the rules of Service Management, by moving much of the burden of managing systems from people to the technology, leading to a reduction in complexity and cost: enabling the infrastructure to become more dynamic and adaptable.

We described how some Service Delivery functions will change from manual and reporting activities to encoded procedures; while other functions will become more significant than they are today.

In this article we explore the impact on what is traditionally the strongest of ITIL disciplines in most companies – the Service Support functions.

## Service Desk

A Service Desk is typically the main contact point within the IT department for its customers, and will therefore be a key factor in how the IT department is perceived. It is typically a single point through which to channel customer contact; there may be variants or additions:

- To handle special types of call, such as requests for information in response to a Major Incident
- Localised – possibly departmental – helpdesks that may take calls for a *particular user group* or helpdesks that may take calls for a *specialist locally-supported system*.

Initially, it is not obvious that RTI would have any impact on Service Desk processes. However, the number of customer calls should be significantly reduced as a result of the RTI management system taking automated action.

A failure or potential bottleneck in such environments can often be anticipated in advance of any degradation

of service being noticed by the end-user. This will prevent a call being initiated to the service desk.

The controlling policies encoded in the technology allows the system dynamically to reconfigure itself in such situations, automatically. Therefore:

1. Change tasks and manual intervention are reduced.
2. This in turn results in a reduction in human error and risk.
3. Thereby a reduction in calls to the service desk.
4. Hence a reduction in the volume of calls and a reduction in severity of those calls received.

## Incident Management

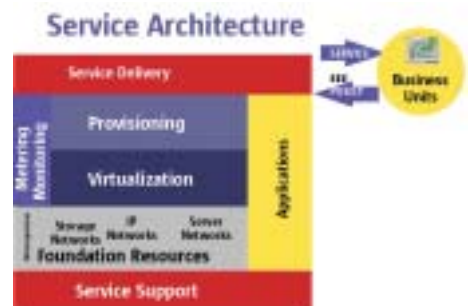
RTI systems will have a major impact on Incident Management, because they will enable faster identification and resolution of incidents, and lead to a reduction in human intervention. RTI systems continually monitor the health of system. They automatically re-configure the infrastructure and provision services to maintain service levels in response to situations that may cause an outage or a degradation of service.

Loss of a service could be caused by any number of things (see table below).

If this is a typical list then incident volumes should be reduced significantly.

## Problem Management

Problem Management has both proactive and reactive elements. Reactive Problem Management supports Incident Management while Proactive Problem Management is concerned with identifying and solving problems and



known errors before they give rise to customer impacting incidents.

Although much of the incident management function will become automated, the expectation is that problem management will shift its focus and become much more proactive. Failures will still occur and, although their impact will be reduced, the root cause will still need to be identified.

Problem Management will be changed by RTI because it can provide tools to monitor the underlying infrastructure and to pin point root cause more effectively. This enables problem management to become more proactive. It should also allow most problem managers to focus on application errors and improvements in user training, both of which can have significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of your business.

## Change Management

Change Management ensures that all changes to the production environment (whether they be hardware or software) are implemented in a controlled manner. The change management process facilitates the movement of requested changes from inception to implementation in a controlled manner.

RTI will automate all routine changes inside the abstracted resource pool, thereby enabling changes to be dealt with in a faster and more efficient manner. This should also reduce the change management overhead and thereby

Causes of loss of a service

<b>Network problem</b>	● Automatically handled by RTI
<b>Storage problem</b>	● Automatically handled by RTI
<b>Desk top failure</b>	● Dependant on cause may still result in an incident
<b>Loss of CPU</b>	● Automatically handled by RTI



## take a step beyond

Xansa Education & Training courses not only enable delegates to obtain Service Management accreditations, but also provide insight into how practical application of the key principles of Service Management Best Practice can produce real benefits within their organisations.

Xansa has always recognised the importance of Service Management training, and were involved in the launch of the first accredited courses.

With the progress of time, the courses have been enhanced to provide additional insight into the significant role that Service Management has to play within an organisation.

Our consultant lecturers are experienced Service Managers who undertake a mixture of consultancy assignments and training delivery. With full Service Management accreditation and active involvement with the itSMF, they provide an up-to-date, well informed dimension to our courses.

Course Title	Location*	2004	Non Residential	Residential
ITIL Service Management Foundation Certificate	London Poole/Bournemouth Haydock/Warrington	21 - 25 January 4 - 6 February 5 - 5 March	£885 £861 £861	£1,025 £1,025 £1,479
ITIL Service Management Support	Poole/Bournemouth London	9 - 13 February 23 - 27 February	£1,155 £1,195	£1,479
ITIL Service Management Delivery	Poole/Bournemouth London	8 - 12 March 15 - 19 March	£1,155 £1,195	£1,479
IT Change Management Practitioner	Poole/Bournemouth	26 - 28 May	£861	£1,025
Management of Risk	Poole/Bournemouth	26 - 30 January 22 - 26 March	£1,670	£1,994
IS Consultancy Practice	Poole/Bournemouth	2 - 6 February	£1,805	£2,129

\* Optionally, all our courses can be delivered on customer sites or tailored to meet specific customer needs.

the total cost of ownership. Many of the activities that are categorised today as changes, would merely become scheduled system events; for example the addition of processing power on demand via a pre-agreed, pre-tested policy.

Normal changes will be significantly reduced as some of the day to day changes are superseded by the RTI system. Initially, many of these automated events will be handled as normal changes: until such time as the IT department has confidence that the system can accurately interpret the service definitions.

Eventually, these events will become either routine changes or scheduled system events.

Due to the inbuilt resilience and reliability of an abstracted resource pool emergency changes will also become exceedingly rare events. However, the change process will have to be extremely robust when dealing with additions to the virtual resource pool, and many companies will have to supplement their current change testing and impact analysis to cater for this.

### Release Management

Currently, Release Management plans, prepares schedules, distributes and installs all the components of a release. RTI requires a level of maturity around Release Management processes that will in return provide enormous business benefits. RTI provides facilities for automating software provisioning. Inclusion into the resource pool requires rigorous release management but thereafter reallocation is automated, enabling high utilisation of assets with the minimum of intervention.

As a consequence, the Release Management function in most companies will be the first function to change. This will ensure that as part of the handover into production, the new service definitions are produced in conjunction with the business; and, in turn, that the

impact of these definitions are understood by all parties to the agreement. Testing must be undertaken and must be more comprehensive than is currently the norm.

### Configuration Management

In Configuration Management terminology, IT infrastructure components are referred to as 'Configuration Items'. Configuration Items include hardware items, software components, network items, documentation and any other part of the IT infrastructure, or items associated with it, that you wish to control.

Through virtualisation and abstraction, RTI allows us to change the entire way in which we view configuration items. Once a configuration item has been introduced to the resource pool it will be automatically allocated to different services, according to the predefined service description. RTI will automatically track and record the configuration item usage and assignment: thereby providing completely accurate identification and status accounting.

The new configuration management function will still require a process to introduce and decommission an asset; and these assets will still need to be physically labelled.

However, all other functions will be totally automated. With RTI, fewer infrastructure components require explicit management or configuration, thereby speeding up deployment of services.

RTI will eliminate the overhead of Configuration Management on the business and the IT function, enabling accurate tracking of configuration items in different data centres and even different countries. RTI enables the storage of service definition and configuration templates. These can then be used for recreating services both for test or production, and for Disaster Recovery purposes. These infrastructure

templates are at the core of tomorrow's service management.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the advent of a completely automated RTI environment affects Service Support and Service Delivery at a fundamental level; and, hence the IT and the Business that it supports.

At the very least, we will need to shift our current preconceptions about the current ITIL disciplines:

- Capacity Management, Availability Management and Configuration Management almost entirely disappear.
- A drastic reduction in effort and resources for Incident Management, Service Desk, Change Management, Release Management and IT Service Continuity.
- Problem Management, Service Level Management and IT Financial Management become critical priorities to effective IT services.

But the opportunity is this: the technology, such as RTI, could help to solve the Service Management headache, by enabling computing resources to self manage through policy automation. This in turn will extend the Service Management focus beyond the traditional process improvement and organisational alignment, to enable lower costs, higher availability and greater agility.

RTI will herald an increase in efficiency and productivity and demand a new maturity to IT processes, a maturity that will result in an unprecedented increase in the efficiency and the responsiveness of IT in delivering service to the Business.

#### Endnotes

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## ITIL Business Benefits

itSMF is sponsoring Market Research into the cost and quality benefits of the ITIL approach. This will see itSMF lead the industry by providing independent information on the cost benefits, quality benefits and Return on Investment (ROI), of ITIL implementations and projects.

*'We are responding to requests for itSMF-sanctioned statistics on the actual business value of ITIL'* said Aidan Lawes, itSMF CEO, *'this should help to spread the benefits message clearly at board level to*

*support buy-in to ITIL projects'.*

The research work will involve independent research by an external MR company into up to 100 organisations who have implemented an ITIL approach for some or all of their Service Management, looking in detail at the actual benefits achieved.

Most importantly the output from this will be presented and published in 'non-operational or non-ITIL' business language – and aimed at senior people to

clarify the messages on the real business value achieved by their organisation from their ITIL project.

The work with the MR company will be managed and reviewed by a small itSMF team of industry experts, reporting to the itSMF board.

If you would like more information on this or would like your organisation to participate, please contact: Barclay Rae via the itSMF office (marketing@itsmf.com). ■



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# Service Catalogue Launches

At this year's 12<sup>th</sup> Conference and Exhibition the itSMF launched their Service Catalogue. The Service Catalogue is an informative brochure which updates our members on the services and benefits that are on offer from the itSMF which has been developed by our Service ESC. If you require a copy of the **Service Catalogue** then please email [marketing@itsmf.com](mailto:marketing@itsmf.com).



Mary Fishleigh, Chair Services ESC  
in proud possession of the Service Catalogue

## People on the *MOVE*

Experienced Service Management consultants **Paul Whitlock** and **Paul Gurr** have joined **Plan-Net** to head their newly launched Service Management arm. Gurr and Whitlock each have over 15 years real world Service Management experience in FTSE 100 companies; Whitlock joins Plan-Net after 6 years with Vodafone UK, whilst Gurr was previously working with 3 UK.

Since their appointment, Whitlock and Gurr have been instrumental in establishing PlanSmart – a suite of four Service Management services that assist with reviewing, planning, improving and implementing effective Service Management processes and systems.

Joining **CEC Europe**, the international Service Management company, are **Andy Smith**, **Geoff Maginess** and **Nicola Reeves**. Andy has many years experience and will divide his time between lecturing and consultancy. He leaves EDS to take up this new role. Geoff Maginess has worked for many years in the role of Account Manager for FoxIT and Sanderson. Geoff will continue in this role concentrating in the North. Nicola Reeves has considerable experience in process re-engineering, training testing and supplier management and will join the consultancy and training team.



## Press Releases



*Members should send items of interest to other members to the itSMF office ([marketing@itsmf.com](mailto:marketing@itsmf.com)) which will pass them on to the Editor for consideration and possible inclusion in future issues*

### O2 Selects Digital Fuel For Contact Centre Performance Management Solution

Mobile network operator O2 (UK) Limited has selected **Digital Fuel's ServiceFlow** platform as the contact centre performance management platform for its UK customer service operations. The contract covers 4000 seats in four O2 contact centres and represents the second major contract between the two companies.

ServiceFlow will provide O2 with a total performance measurement system to deliver consistent metrics and reports, spanning individual advisors for the entire customer contact operation. Role-based dashboards will permit employees to monitor their own performance against objectives while providing management with the information necessary to measure and manage employee performance and customer service quality effectively.

"We are committed to delivering the best possible customer experience," said Richard Holden, Head of Strategy and Business

development, O2. "Digital Fuel allows us to employ an innovative balanced scorecard approach that combines quantifiable and qualitative measures to drive both customer satisfaction and operational excellence."

Digital Fuel ServiceFlow tracks, analyses, and presents comprehensive performance metrics from all employees, contact centre components and service applications, delivering custom role-based views and management capabilities appropriate to each level in the organisation. Industry studies find that such performance management systems can dramatically improve customer satisfaction by focusing the entire organisation on key customer-centric performance metrics. At the same time, clear and objective performance measures and reports greatly increase employee productivity and job satisfaction, and enable efficient and auditable management decisions.

"Improving contact centre performance has immense client benefits and is a natural fit with our focus on enterprise services management," noted Digital Fuel CEO,

Benny Lehmann. "We are proud to be selected for a second project by O2. ServiceFlow will now provide a standard platform that manages the delivery of O2's innovative wireless services as well as their excellent customer service."

### Hornbill Continues Growth and Expansion

*Basilica select Hornbill Solution for service delivery to Regus worldwide*

**Hornbill Systems Limited**, an innovative provider of solutions that automate organisation's support request processes, has continued its impressive start to 2003 by announcing the contract to supply Basilica with its IT service management solution, Supportworks. Hornbill's solution is key to Basilica's ability to support Regus, the worldwide operator of business centres.

Basilica Computing is a service-focused solutions provider who recently won the bid to support all 439 Regus locations worldwide. Regus offer a global network

of fully equipped offices and meeting rooms which can be hired for an hour, a day, a month, a year or longer.

Regus deploy state-of-the-art telecommunications with an IT infrastructure powered by HP so "resident" workers can easily hook into a network for full office operability and maintaining these services are a critical part of the Regus proposition and now a crucial element of the support contract won by Basilica.

Basilica's support centre is located at their UK headquarters in Hertfordshire and the Regus contract win gave the Service Delivery Team the opportunity to re-assess their IT service management systems, as Paul Briggs, the Company's transition manager, explains: "Regus truly is a global organisation with locations on every continent and every major city so the contract win provided us with an ideal time to appraise our delivery in terms of our processes and the technology we use. We knew best practice methodologies, such as ITIL, would provide immediate process improvements and the ability to automate those processes through a solution would significantly speed the delivery of our services. After careful review Supportworks provided the capability we needed from an

IT service management perspective."

A key benefit for Basilica was the easy way Supportworks differentiated between incidents and problems. "Understanding the relationship of incidents across such a distributed environment will be key to our ability to manage problems pro-actively and ensure the correct resources are deployed to maintain our service level agreements with Regus. The fact we have transparency within the solution is a tremendous benefit to those managing delivery," continues Briggs.

Pat Bolger, sales director at Hornbill adds. "As a vendor embracing ITIL we have an adaptive framework and common language that ensures processes relating to ITIL services can be realised within the solutions we provide to our customers. For organisations such as Basilica the process of managing end-to-end services is important not just for demonstrating value to their customers but also to ensure value is derived from third party service providers within their control."

Hornbill's professional services team installed the main server at Hertfordshire and provided 30 concurrent licenses on the Regus Service Desk. Supportworks web clients will be used by Basilica's remote support groups to receive

incoming incident details and update the system with latest action and resolutions codes. Basilica has initially launched the Supportworks web SelfService component to VIP customers, typically the MDs and Operations Directors at larger Regus sites, for self-resolution of issues, incident logging and request tracking.

Briggs concludes. "Speed of delivery is important to us as it is part of Basilica's value as we build our services business and target other organisations, like Regus, who wish to outsource IT services. It was significant in building our relationship with Hornbill that they too share the value of delivery. Not only did they deliver to our very tight project deadlines but the solution is perfectly aligned to our processes and commitments to support Regus."

Although the contract sum remains undisclosed out of deference to Basilica and their agreements with Regus, Hornbill are already discussing the next phases that include using Assetworks to help manage standard desktop configurations and Supportworks designable workflow for managing change requests and its customer survey module to help shape future service delivery requirements. ■

<i>itsMF</i>		<b>DIARY</b>		<i>itsMF</i>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>December 4</b>	<b>French Conference</b>	<b>La Défense – Paris</b>		
December 4	Management Board & Council of Members	Reading office		
<b>December 9-10</b>	<b>German Conference</b>	<b>Munchen</b>	<b>Veränderung als Chance zur Stabilität</b>	
<b>December 11</b>	<b>Seminar</b>	<b>The Marriott Hotel, Edinburgh</b>		
December 11	SW & Wales Regional	Somerset CC, Taunton		
December 12	Institute Council	Reading		
<b>2004</b>				
January 6	Vendors ESC	Reading		
January 8	Publications ESC	Reading		
January 12	Services ESC	Reading		
January 20	BS 15000 ESC	Reading		
<b>February 2-4</b>	<b>US Government Event</b>	<b>JW Marriott, Washington</b>	<b>Framework for Achieving Operational Excellence in Government IT</b>	
<b>February 5</b>	<b>Seminar – Title to be confirmed</b>	<b>Moat House Stoke-on-Trent</b>		
March 11	SW & Wales regional	tba		
March 23	BS 15000 ESC	Reading		
<b>March 24-25</b>	<b>Norwegian Conference</b>	<b>Oslo</b>		
March 26	International Executive Board Meeting	Oslo		
May 18	BS 15000 ESC	Reading		



# A Final Few Words

DAVID FORSTER  
Chairman *itSMF*

**A**mong the emails awaiting my attention, when I arrived home from the office one day shortly after the end of our conference, was what might best be described as “an offer I could not refuse”. The Membership Services Manager was inviting me to pen some words to the members, marking the end of my term in office as your Chairman. My first reaction was inadvertently to delete his mail, but my ITIL training quickly overcame that temptation. My second reaction was to pretend I was on holiday and open it after the deadline for **SERVICetalk** had passed. Common sense quickly told me that would not work because I would need to contact him about other matters and he would know I was “home”. My third reaction was to plead pressure of work, but never have I been unable to make time for *itSMF*, and I was not about to do so during my last month in the Chair. So I gritted my teeth, put the day job to one side (again) and emailed him back, thanking him for his **WAGI** (“**W**hat **A** **G**ood **I**dea”) and this is the result!

I have been a disciple of ITIL since its inception, involved in Service Management for almost as long and Service Manager of a seriously large MOD IT programme for the last seven years. I am confident that my Service Management Centre is a model of ITIL best practice and I am equally sure that without ITIL best practice to turn to, indeed to lean upon, the 500 systems that I have responsibility for worldwide, would have been an absolute nightmare to manage. In truth, I suspect they would have been unmanageable. It was also patently obvious, in the early days of my involvement with IT Service Management, that ITIL provided the same common sense and rational structure for Service Management that PRINCE did for Project Management. This led me, inevitably, to appreciate just what a vital role could be played by an organisation such as the emergent *itSMF*, as it was then known, in the entirely independent monitoring of ITIL guidelines and the protection of those guidelines from disproportionate influence from vested and proprietary interests. Twelve years on, that appreciation is as true as it was then. *itSMF* is recognised across the globe as the de facto guardian of ITIL best practice and I am immensely proud of what has been achieved.

In common with all volunteer organisations, no matter how vibrant and successful, *itSMF* is totally reliant upon its

members to stand up and offer their services to keep the wheels turning. True, we now have a superb full-time team at Webb's Court, but they are the engine room, the initiatives still have to come from the Management Board along with the seven Executive sub-Committees and the Regional Groups which support it. I first filled in that simple form, offering to help, in 1994 and I have been involved directly with the Management Board ever since. My first job was as Membership Secretary, I then spent a couple of years on the Publications Executive Sub-Committee at the time when we were grinding out the programme for the first major review of the original 10 volume set of Service Support and Service Delivery. Following that, I was asked if I would be willing to accept nomination as Vice-Chairman – a singular honour – and I accepted without hesitation. Three years later, following an extended spell as Vice-Chairman, you elected me as your Chairman. Now, two very short years later, my time is up and I must move on: as indeed must *itSMF*.

I was tempted to assemble a pot-pouri of milestones and achievements during my time as Chairman, but that would necessarily be incomplete, because it's nearly always the less significant things, which are nevertheless always there in the background, that enable success in the bigger things. It would also be inexcusably arrogant, for while I am enormously proud of our progress during my time in the Chair, I am entirely conscious of the simple fact that many, if not most, of the foundations were laid by my predecessors and the products have been delivered by anyone but me! I was also minded to make mention of significant individual contributions but I quickly realised that actually there are none.

I go nowhere without my fellow Directors and the Management Board. The Management Board achieves nothing without the Executive sub-Committees and Regional Groups and these latter two are entirely composed of you, the members! Furthermore, I need hardly remind you that without the support of Webb's Court, we all grind to a halt. So, “no names and no pack drill”: which is a most apposite quip as I have just watched England win the Webb-Ellis trophy!

I have been asked what role I am going to play next in the continuing advance of *itSMF* and my answer has been “whatever *itSMF* wants me to do”: because it's actually a very difficult question to answer. The voices in my head deliver



conflicting messages: one says you owe yourself, and your better half, a break and a spell doing just one job: another says, that's selfish, you have a wealth of experience which can benefit *itSMF* in numerous ways and a third says put yourself in the new Chairman's shoes, would you want you hanging around your neck like some albatross (or lingering like a bad smell!)? So I have taken the easy way out: I have filled in my Council of Members form but noted on it that “I am unable to join a committee but would like to participate in another capacity”. That of course salves my conscience! It also enables the Management Board to pick me up, or put me down as it thinks fit – something which it has probably been itching to do at various times during the last two years, but been unable to achieve!

As I hand over the Chair to my successor, my message to you is very simple. ITIL best practice provides us with guidelines that must remain responsive to changes in our environment and therefore dynamic. We, the *itSMF* members, can rarely influence the changes, but we must continue to provide the dynamism that enables effective and efficient response to change. If we fail to deliver on this, someone else, or worse a lot of “someone else's” will – and what of best practice then? One thing more: the themes of our last two Conferences have both delivered very powerful messages. Let me remind you what they were. In 2002: “*Creating Stability in a Changing World*” and in 2003: “*Breaking Boundaries, Building Bridges*”. If those themes have not already struck a chord with you, then think about them again in the light of this message.

Thank you for your support, thank you for your encouragement and thank you for your individual and collective contributions to everything we have achieved. Our organisation is a bit like a milking stool: supported at three points by ITIL, *itSMF* and the membership. Remove any one of these and it will fall over. ■