

# servicetalk

The Journal of the it Service Management Forum

April Theme Articles

## BS15000: the background to and implications of

3 articles which help to explain

### The Top Five Mistakes

A practical guide to  
improving IT service delivery

### IT Service Continuity

"Know the Unknowns"

### Keeping the IT Balancing Act on the Tight Rope

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April 2004  
Issue No. 66

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## Chief Executive Officer's Remarks

Service Management is high on the agenda for CIOs and IT Directors around the globe, which is evidenced by the continued growth in *itSMF* chapters. Increasingly, those new to the ITSM philosophy are asking, "Is it worth it? Will there be a real return on an investment in ITSM?" In many ways, it seems inappropriate to try to justify service management in isolation. Enterprises should be looking at total IT investment returns – and that means complete life-cycle management. Before investing in any new development, enterprises should understand the full cost of development plus an acceptable operational cost for a defined service quality over the expected operational life of the development. It is only from these figures that they can make a business decision as to whether the value derived justifies the expenditure.



However, the sad truth is that enterprises haven't taken a true end-to-end view and hence, for many, a specific investment in service management is necessary. Intuitively, those who understand the subject find the argument to be almost self-evident; successful service improvement programmes drive up the quality of delivered service, and often reduce operating costs at the same time. And certainly the lot of the service provider is vastly improved as they move from whipping boy to a position of respect. But how do you convince the sceptics or those who want hard financial figures?

In order to try to provide some empirical answers, we have been engaged in some research work, through an independent agency, with a number of organisations that have successfully implemented "best practice" solutions. The aim is not merely to quantify some of the benefits achieved, but also to understand how such quantification might be modelled. Progress is slower than we had hoped, because it appears that many organisations aren't measuring and articulating the benefits in hard business terms. We will publish the findings in due course, with the first tranche by the end of April, but meantime if you have information in this space that you are willing to share, we'd be delighted to hear from you. ■

### 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.

### *itSMF* officers and staff

Chairman – Mark Hall; Vice Chairman – Ken Goff; Treasurer – Mary Fishleigh;  
 Chief Executive Officer – Aidan Lawes; Events Manager – Maxine McMahon;  
 Membership Services Manager – John McDermott; Marketing Manager – Kim May;  
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# itSMF and ITIL Best Practice

Are we getting the message?

**David Barker**

*Qube Holdings Ltd*

Over the last year 600 servicetalk readers have been interviewed, representing over 550 companies. In all over 20,000 questions have been asked and over 600 hours spent interviewing readers such as yourselves.

So what have been the key messages, what has been learnt and what should be done about it? These questions apply to the *itSMF* as much as they do to you as practitioners of ITIL best practice.

## So what collectively have we learnt?

In essence there are 4 key areas of learning:

- What ITIL Best Practice activities are happening and what you would like from the *itSMF* in support.
- The differences in understanding as to what the *itSMF* can do in support of your activities and what services it has to offer.
- Your views of the *itSMF* as an organisation and whether it offers value for money.
- Your needs of the *itSMF* as an organisation and overall what more you would like from it.

## What is happening in ITIL Best Practice?

The overriding initiatives undertaken over the last 12 months have been as

Figure 1

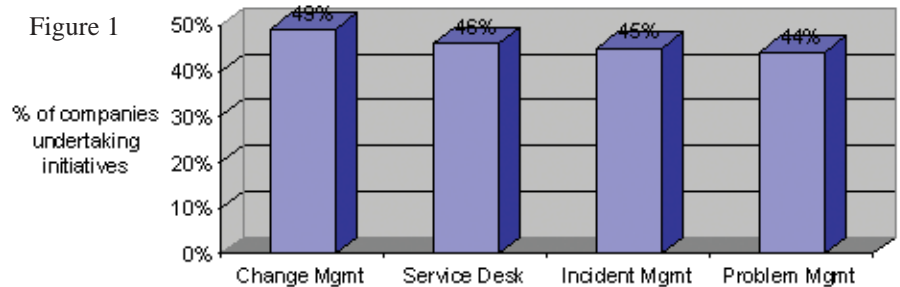
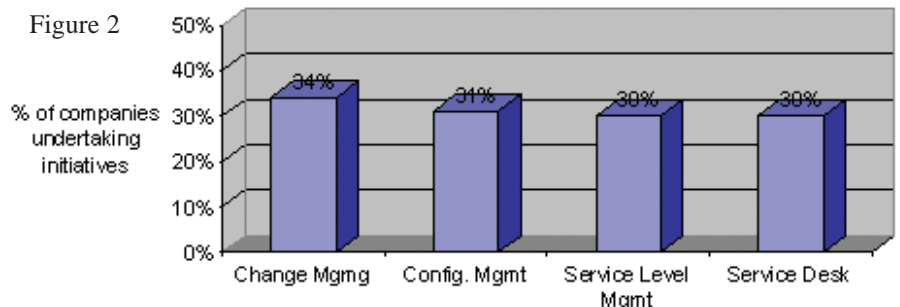


Figure 2



shown in Figure 1 above whilst in terms of those which are continuing during the next 12 months are shown in Figure 2.

Thus the level of ITIL Best Practice activity has been and will continue to be high. Although the priorities appear to be changing slightly it should be noted that over 61% of you are continuing to implement activity into this coming year. But what is this telling us? How does this information help? Well, many have been asking the *itSMF* to give information more specific to their sector. Indeed, when separated out there are many priority

differences between sectors. (See Chart 1 below).

Whilst there is little difference in the top four initiatives, significant variation occurs as you move down the list. This can be shown by the following examples:  
**Service Level Agreements**  
 Pharmaceuticals (2) vs Government (11)  
**Financial Management**  
 Government (12) vs Utilities (4)

This information might be helpful if you are looking to implement an initiative and wish for some comparative industry

**Sector Last 1 Months** – Prioritised 1- 12 where 1 is the highest volume of implementation and 12 is the lowest

	Business Services	Clubs & Charity	Comms & IT	Finance & Ins.	Government	Pharmaceuticals	Retail	Utilities
Service Desk	4	1	2	4	1	4	2	1
Incident Management	3	2	4	3	2	2	3	4
Problem Management	2	3	3	2	4	4	5	1
Change Management	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	1
Configuration Management	7	11	8	7	6	8	6	4
Release Management	8	3	12	6	9	8	9	10
Service Level Management	6	7	5	8	11	2	3	4
Availability Management	12	11	11	11	6	10	10	10
Capacity Management	11	7	8	9	10	10	12	12
IT Service Cont./ DR	5	7	7	5	5	6	8	8
Financial Management	9	3	10	11	12	10	11	4
IT Security	9	7	6	9	8	6	7	8

**Chart 1: Ranking of Activity by Sector**

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**itSMF**



**Sector Next 12 Months** – Prioritised 1- 12 where 1 is the highest volume of implementation and 12 is the lowest

	Business Services	Clubs & Charity	Comms & IT	Finance & Ins.	Government	Pharma-ceuticals	Retail	Utilities
Service Desk	2	2	2	2	4	6	8	1
Incident Management	6	2	4	5	7	2	3	1
Problem Management	7	7	3	10	2	4	3	7
Change Management	2	7	1	3	1	1	1	1
Configuration Management	1	7	8	1	4	4	2	10
Release Management	9	7	12	5	3	6	8	10
Service Level Management	2	2	5	4	6	2	3	7
Availability Management	9	2	11	8	10	11	8	7
Capacity Management	8	1	8	9	11	9	6	1
IT Service Cont./	2	11	7	5	8	6	7	1
Financial Management	11	11	10	12	12	9	12	1
IT Security	11	2	6	11	9	11	11	10

**Chart 2: Ranking of Activities by Sector**

information. It also gives a sense of ‘flavour of the month’ in each sector as priorities and issues clearly vary between them.

In terms of coming activity, it is also useful to know what activities are continuing by sector, as well as the support for any implementation plans you might have for the coming year (see Chart 2 above).

As with the previous chart there are significant variations when you move out of the top four initiatives.

**Release Management**

Government (3)  
vs Communications/IT (12)

**Service Desk**

Retail (8)  
vs Financial Services ( 2)

Well if that is what you are doing, what help do you want from the *itSMF*? The truth is that the overriding request has been for specific and detailed case studies. There is a huge pent up demand across *servicetalk* readers for case studies. Indeed out of the 600 interviews, 180 of you said you would be willing to complete a case study in the next year.

In order to move this forward the *itSMF* has commissioned Qube to contact you to see who could actually complete a case study and so far 101 of you have agreed to be interviewed once your projects are completed. Due to the protracted nature of project completion, the *itSMF* intend to publish anonymous case study data over the course of this year in *servicetalk*, as and when you are interviewed.

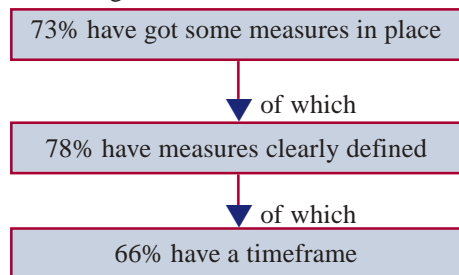
This will lead to more detailed case

studies becoming available in due course. In addition to case studies, there have also been a variety of additional requests, for example:

- More research into the specific activities such as release management, configuration management etc.
- An e-mail newsletter
- More communication between members – perhaps a forum?

However, one of the areas of possible support that has not been specifically asked for, but would appear to be of help to the readership, is the issue of customer service improvement measurement.

Currently 74% of all initiatives completed were designed to improve customer service. This was by far the largest reason for implementing ITIL Best Practice initiatives. What is interesting however is that of this 74%:



Therefore:

**73% x 78% x 66% = 38%**  
have clearly defined measures in place with a specific timeframe for results.

Clearly, with such an important output as improved customer service, and with so many of you saying this is the reason for implementing ITIL Best Practice, these results are at best worrying.

Although not directly requested, the

*itSMF* is reviewing ways in which it might be able to offer support and advice in the accurate measurement of service improvement.

In addition, the management team will be reviewing all the above requests for additional service and will assess how they fit into the current portfolio of what is offered.

**What about your understanding of what we can offer you?**

In all, 16 “service” offerings were identified that the *itSMF* provides to its members. Interviewees were asked which they were aware of.

They were also asked which they had actually used in the last 12 months and which they were likely to use in the next 12. The results are shown overleaf on page 6.

An interesting exercise for the *itSMF*. Perhaps you want to try it yourself. Which are you aware of?

The *itSMF* view was that before expanding their range of services they must first drive up the awareness of what is offered and then check as to the usage. It is clear this needs to be done as awareness is only above 50% in 3 out of the 16 services the *itSMF* offers. The question is will awareness drive up usage? This is hard to tell. However, before this can be assessed there must be clarity in the range of services offered to members as many members commented that they simply weren’t aware of what the *itSMF* had to offer!






To this end the *itSMF* have produced a



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Service	Awareness	Used	Going to Use
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Regional Groups	50%	13%	10%
Contribution to Best Practice	43%	7%	4%
Web Discussion Forum	41%	10%	8%
Web Products/Service Catalogues	40%	10%	8%
Bookshop	39%	9%	7%
Market Research	38%	8%	5%
Web Chat	30%	5%	4%
Self Assessment Questionnaire	28%	7%	4%
Web Guide to Vendor Services	26%	7%	5%
Publication Opportunities	24%	3%	2%
Members Database Services	22%	4%	4%
Access an Expert	21%	4%	3%
Discount Affiliate Products	21%	4%	4%

handbook which was distributed to over 800 people at their conference. A further 100+ people have requested a copy of the handbook and each new member is issued with a copy in their welcome pack. The handbook covers all the itSMF services and explains the benefits.

### So what do you think of us at the itSMF?

Well, currently of those interviewed, 91%

of you are already members. In terms of whether the existing members would renew, 91%, said they would, 91% said they would recommend the itSMF to others and 87% said the itSMF offers value for money.

Although the itSMF is delighted with these results, it is striving to achieve even higher scores through improved communication and delivery of its

services. It is also constantly looking at ways to improve servicetalk to increase its relevance and your readership of it. Currently, 71% said servicetalk was relevant to them and 72% always or often read it. The itSMF would like to improve this so any suggestions are always very welcome as it is your magazine, not theirs!

### Finally, what are your needs of the itSMF as an organisation and what more would you like from them?

Well, clearly from all that you have told us, the itSMF is currently actively striving to improve its communication to you and explore new services which it could provide. As was previously stated any views or ideas you have to move these forward are always gratefully received.

In a final phase of improvement the itSMF is currently undertaking a strategic review of its whole operation, looking at the next two years' direction. It is hoped this will ensure continued success for you and the itSMF into the future. ■

## "Sailing with ITIL in a Sea of Strategies" Held at Stoke – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004

**Joanne Laker**  
*House of Commons*

My job title is Performance Reporting Officer and within my organisation the establishment of ITIL best practice is still in its infancy. My aim was to look to our future and, once ITIL has been fully implemented, explore ways of developing performance measurement.

This was the first *itSMF* seminar I had attended and I was impressed by two things. Firstly, the quality of the speakers' presentations was of a very high standard. Without exception they were all confident and knowledgeable within their respective fields and also displayed a wider understanding of the

relationships between ITIL and other measurement methodologies. Secondly, the agenda was logically structured because the topic of BS15000 certification was covered first before looking at the more comprehensive methodologies such as Balanced Scorecard, Sixth Sigma and CobiT. To conclude, Steve Ingall from Fox IT provided an absorbing overview examining the implications of introducing these measurement frameworks in a business and how they relate to business strategy and service excellence.

During the panel forum at the end of the

day there was a consensus of opinion that ITIL is the first step and foundation to establishing processes within an organisation. BS15000 certification is a relatively quick means of assessing process maturity and effectiveness and the other methodologies of the Balance Scorecard, Sixth Sigma and CobiT provide the means for more detailed and in-depth analysis.

Overall I felt that this was an extremely beneficial seminar because looking beyond ITIL itself and its context within business strategies and best practices is essential to its evolution. ■

### Individual

Ivanska Radka  
(*Severomoravska Energetika AS*)  
Serge Thorn (*Serono International SA*)  
Geoff Thirlwall (*Bossman Swan*)  
Simon Lloyd Evans  
(*New Zealand Police*)  
Erik Stevens (*J.D Edwards*)  
Eileen Keddie (*Consignit*)  
Katrin Gorma (*D&B International*)  
Wendy Stewart  
(*British Sky Broadcasting*)  
Jon Salter (*Neural Technologies*)  
David Phelps (*Wandara Consulting*)  
Rupert Prall (*MBNA International Bank*)  
Juergen Reetz (*Netplan Reetz & Partner*)  
Sharon Hampton (*Itnet plc*)  
Natalia Iglesias (*Einsa Multimedia*)  
Dave Rudd (*Harcourt Education*)  
Dave Oldham (*Norfolkline*)  
Steve Perkins (*Chorus*)  
Alain Cadorette (*Novell*)  
Greg Hibbert (*Fibernet*)  
Tim Wilson (*Wilson Computing*)  
Mark Fenton (*Saudi Business Machines*)  
Stephen Aspinall

### Individual (cont.)

Mark Lang  
(*Eclipse Networking Limited*)  
Christian Fronteras (*Netential Limited*)  
Padraic Tallon (*FETAC*)  
Atif Mahmood (*Bradford Met Council*)  
Dave Sutton (*Keynote Housing Group*)

### Sole Trader

David Salter (*Port162 Ltd*)  
Phil Hector (*Konick Limited*)  
Irzan Ahmad (*Vertinets Consulting*)  
Julie Goddard  
Shane Hiller (*Shapen IT*)  
Simon Anderson  
(*Maltings IT Consultancy*)  
Jan Boons (*ADIT BVBA*)  
David Spencer (*BC Care Limited*)  
Matthew Clayton  
(*General Systems Development*)

### Corporate 5

Herbert Smith  
Larfarge Aggregates  
Hammonds

### Corporate 5 (cont.)

University of Nottingham  
United Utilites  
Intelligent Finance  
Fronrange Solutions  
Intergralis Ltd  
Lynx Technology  
Edexel  
Cable and Wireless  
University of Huddersfield  
CSF Group Plc  
Omnicom Praha

### Corporate 10

Scottish Enterprise  
University Hospital of North Staffs  
BUPA

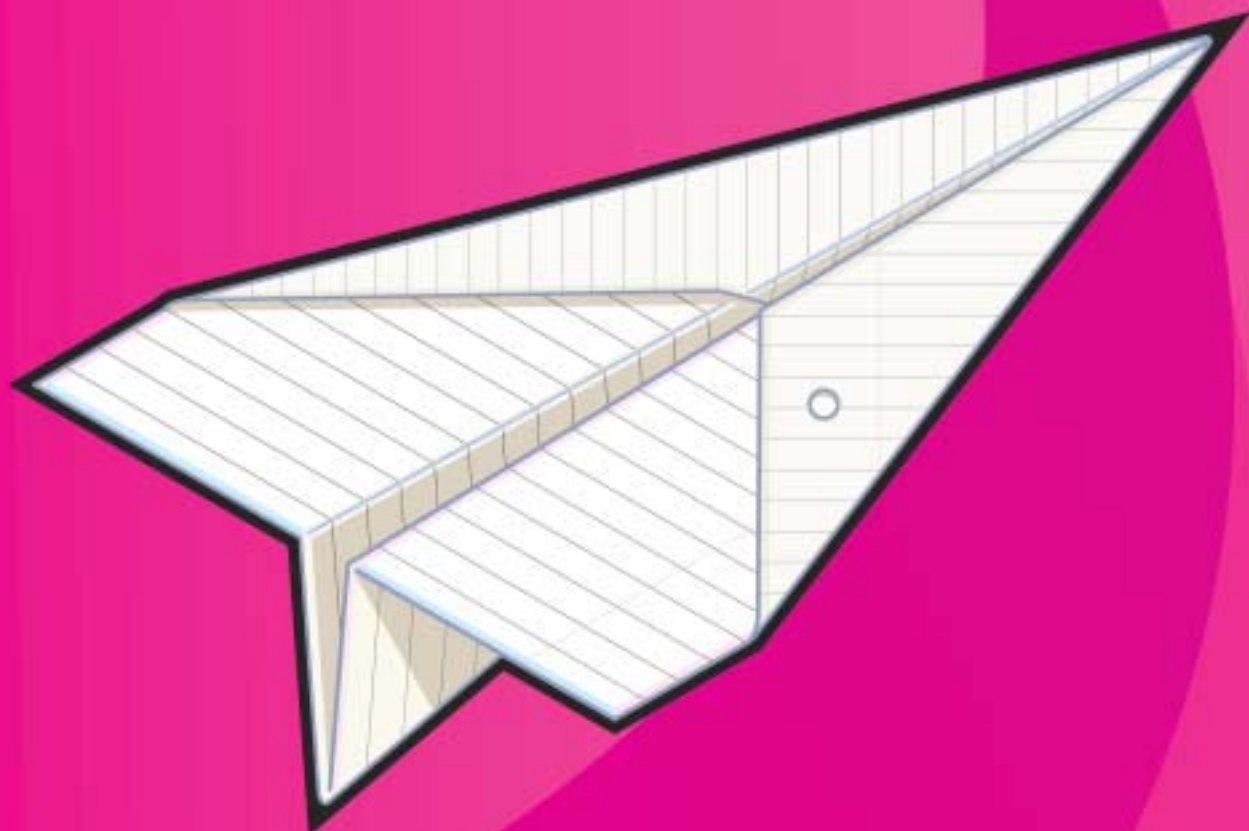
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# Planning To Achieve BS15000

**Tony Brooks**

*Principal Consultant  
Fox IT*

**This article is about what has to be done to achieve a specific and measurable quality standard: it isn't about using a project management tool and nor is it about the well-understood stages of a typical project although that would be a sensible approach to adopt. Instead, it is an attempt to identify some of the fundamental issues that need to be considered as part of the planning process. It discusses some generic quality related issues and a number of standard-specific issues but I will not go through each process in detail: the most fundamental point to understand is the scoping requirement of the scheme and the approach that you will need to adopt.**

To start with, a few words about the role of quality standards. The purpose of a standard is to establish a generally recognised level of achievement. As such, in a commercial environment certification can be understood to be part of a legal trade description if it is quoted and identified clearly, or even if only "compliance" or "conformance" is claimed, and it is important to ensure that any claims made or inferred in this way are not misleading to clients.

This is why it is important to be very

clear about the role of a quality standard, the reasons for obtaining one and the way that it will be used or interpreted by clients and suppliers. The ISO9000 quality standard is a broad based standard and serves suppliers in various industry sectors well. It is primarily management focussed, being concerned to ensure that defined processes are followed and evidenced rather than ensuring that "best practice" processes are defined in the first place.

## A Functionally Based Standard

As a functionally based standard, BS15000 is different: it is specific to the IT Service Management industry and describes an industry consensus on what constitutes a quality service and, as a result, is becoming commonly specified as a contract requirement. The BS15000 Certification Scheme is managed by the *itSMF*, which means that the official BS15000 Certificates are issued by auditors on behalf of the *itSMF* and will feature the *itSMF* scheme logo. This does not detract from ISO9000 but complements it.

This means that in order to achieve BS15000 Certification, an organisation has not only to conform to overall

management quality standards to demonstrate appropriate management controls, but also needs to demonstrate industry best practice which is based around the ITIL guidelines. If an organisation is already ISO9000 certified, then much of the management requirement is likely to be met but you shouldn't assume that to be the case.

## BS15000 – and the Meaning of Best Practice

So the question is, what does best practice mean in relation to BS15000? While all of the ITIL processes are covered, it is a mistake to think that ITIL alone will be enough. BS 15000 is more extensive than the ITIL processes. It is also worth pointing out that the Service Desk is not identified as an auditable area – the concentration is on the processes wherever they are operated and this is an important scoping issue. Apart from process best practice, there are also management control areas to consider. So that we are clear about what has to be included in the scope, planning and eventual audit, the table at the foot of the page shows the specific auditable areas.

Now that we have a starting point we need to understand the scoping

### Managerial Areas

Overall management system

- Management responsibility
- Documentation requirements
- Competence, awareness and training

Planning and implementing service management

- Plan service management
- Implement service management
- Monitor, measuring and reviewing
- Continuous improvement

Planning and implementing new or changed services

### Functional Areas

Service Level Management

Service Reporting

Availability & Service Continuity Management

Budgeting and Accounting for IT Services

Capacity Management

Information Security Management

Business Relationship Management Supplier

Relationship Management Incident Management

Problem Management

Configuration Management

Change Management

Release Processes

requirements of BS15000. Put simply, the Certificate can only be issued to a single legal entity and it follows that to achieve the Certificate, an organisation must be able to demonstrate that it is responsible for delivering all of the processes defined by the scheme. While some limited exceptions are possible, they will be subject to specific agreement with the auditing body (and confirmation with the *itSMF*), and are likely to be restricted to processes covered by external contract. Where an exception is allowed it will be identified on the Certificate when issued, this is similar to the approach taken under ISO9000: 2000. As an example, it may be possible to exclude resource capacity management but not all aspects of the process i.e. service and business capacity management.

### How Self-Assessment Operates By Determination of Standards

Let's now consider some specifics: it is important to be realistic about what you are trying to achieve: in that respect it is important to discover where you are now by establishing a baseline. There are two main options for this: self-assessment against an appropriate workbook or external assessment. Whichever you choose, you have to be sure that the results will be realistic, objective and "fit for purpose"—you will need to be careful not to end up with an outcome which is inaccurate or incomplete, because the work done at this stage will be fundamental in defining the timescale for the standards project. I describe the assessment as being "fit for purpose" because the baseline must give you a comprehensive view: not only the traditional view of process maturity assessment but also an assessment of the extent to which suitable audit evidence and managerial controls exists.

The difficulty at this stage is to determine what constitutes conformance to the standard. The assessment of ITIL processes is mature and should present no difficulty, however, the additional processes may be less clearly understood and may not be as easy to define and demonstrate: in practice, it may prove difficult to identify where they are performed and who is responsible for them in the first place. As an example, consider Supplier Management: the

objective of this process within the standard is to "manage third party suppliers to ensure the provision of seamless, quality services". To achieve this aspect, you must understand and document the full service delivery chain and this includes sub-contracted suppliers. To assess a baseline we must determine a standard against which to be assessed.

### The All-Important Selection of a Registered Certification Body

While the assessment is going on, you should select a Registered Certification Body (RCB) – this is your auditing partner and establishing this relationship at an early point is vital to the success of the project. The sooner that you can select an RCB, the sooner you can define and agree the scope of the standards project. This is vital if you are considering an exception clause in the audit scope, as you must be certain that the scope is valid. You must be careful at this stage to be clear that your RCB is officially registered with the *itSMF* and that you are going to be certificated under the official scheme.

You do have to be careful to distinguish between the role of an auditing body and that of an implementation partner: the auditor cannot help directly with implementation of any aspect of the scheme and you should be cautious of any claim to provide an end-to-end service. Equally, while implementation partners can advise on any aspect of the project, they are not authoritative as far as the audit stage is concerned.

The assessment should give you a series of improvement recommendations and, as long as the terms of reference for the assessment were properly defined, those improvements should give you a roadmap through to an auditable standard of performance. The roadmap will identify improvement dependencies, groupings, and priorities and should link the improvements to identifiable areas of the standard. You may find that some recommendations can be achieved through fine-tuning in some areas while others involve more substantial work: this is where you need to start detailed project planning. It is probable that there will be work packages that can be handled as projects and that different projects can be

linked: this naturally takes you into a programme of improvement, ie a CSIP.

Projects need to be resourced: the success potential of your certification project will be improved if you get this stage right. It is no secret that projects are often seen to have failed because objectives were poorly defined, expectations were unrealistic or resources were inadequate: you need to avoid these common failings. You must also remember that the general audit requirement of three months records is likely to be required and will need to be established as evidence of compliance. This might be an appropriate point to think about integrating the BS15000 project with other quality initiatives eg Six Sigma, Balanced Scorecard etc. These integrate well with process based organisations and can provide a significant contribution to the evidence required during the Certification audit.

### The Role of Management Mustn't Be Forgotten

As a final word, do not overlook the management requirements. It is tempting to focus on the processes alone because we understand them and evidence can be gathered relatively easily but the management requirements are central to success. These areas can be hard to assess but they are fundamental in establishing a culture of quality management by illustrating sustained commitment. These areas will be responsible for maintaining and improving standards over time, which will be critical to maintaining the Certificate. This is best demonstrated by identifying an overall "owner" for the Certification programme, perhaps an existing Quality Manager (QM), and an overall Service Delivery Manager (SDM). Each role has specific responsibilities: the QM for providing objective internal quality audit services while the SDM for the process element of service provision.

Achieving a defined standard of performance is never easy and shouldn't be so. The points that I have raised will hopefully help to ease the path but there will be work to be done, even if you are already implementing ITIL-based solutions, but it will be worth making the journey. ■



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A landmark date for the Institute of Service Management (ISM), as the first ever “members-only” event took place. The event was attended by around 20 members of the ISM which given that this was our first ever event of this type was felt to be a respectable number. Certainly no complaints could be made as to the input from the attendees, as a great deal of discussion and debate took place with very positive results.

Colin Rudd, in his role as president, took the chair for the event and guided the attendees through the event agenda. To start the event with some positive news attendees were briefed on the developing agreement between the BCS and the ISM for each to become a trusted partner of the other. While still only in the early stages of agreement, with a lot of the detail still to be fleshed out, this should mean that membership of one organisation will be accepted as evidence to support the membership requirements of the other, reducing administration overheads of both the individual and the organisation and will also lead to a closer working relationship between the BCS and the ISM in the future.

The future direction of the ISM was then opened to the floor using the business plans as a reference, which generated some good ideas and suggestions from the assembled group. A popular choice of discussion (as always) are the application form(s) that the Institute uses and this was picked up by the group. The feeling of the group discussion was that the forms **do** require a commitment of time and effort to complete, even with the ability to use the reduced format form with a current CV. This commitment was felt to be important as it created the “baseline” in terms of the experience and

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2004

**Sean Lewis**  
*Sysop*

skills of the individual and was an important means of helping and being able to give advice on the members’ development and driving the CPD process. The outcome was a consensus of feeling that it was a case of short-term pain for a long-term gain.

The Institute’s CPD scheme is certainly one of the most popular benefits of the Institute for its members as was shown by the interest in this area. Discussions on how the Institute was developing this scheme led to some good ideas and suggestions being generated on how the Institute can further develop the CPD scheme as well as the mentoring. As a result of these discussions and ideas it is likely that the next Institute event will use this as its theme, so watch this space and the web site for further information.

The Institute is involving itself with e-skills UK on the development and updating of the skills framework for the information age (SFIA) alongside other professional bodies. It is hoped that this will mean that the specific roles and skills of service management are identified and included into this framework. This framework will in turn influence the qualification areas like NVQ’s, B/TEC and higher education qualifications.

It was suggested at the event that the Institute needs a “strap line” in order to help promote itself and its purpose and a few suggestions were made without unfortunately firing the imagination of the event attendees, so it was suggested

that a larger audience may be able to generate some better ideas. Therefore if anyone does have any ideas for Institute strap lines please send them to us via email to [admin@iosm.com](mailto:admin@iosm.com) with the subject of “ISM strap line”. We may be able to offer the best suggestion a small prize, as well as the recognition of being a suitably clever individual.

Advertising the ISM and promoting its benefits to the wider business community was also a large subject of discussion. It was agreed that we need to target the recruitment and human resource elements of the business community in addition to those already involved in the main field of Service Management. A campaign to tackle this issue is being planned, but it was also suggested that some form of targeted advertising outside of *servicetalk* into associated trade press and journals may also reap some rewards. If any readers of this article are involved with or aware of any publications that you think would be suitable then please send us the relevant names and contact details and we will follow these suggested leads. Any suggestions via email please to [admin@iosm.com](mailto:admin@iosm.com) with “Advertising ISM” as the subject line.

The future of these events was discussed by the group and it was felt that holding these events quarterly was about right in terms of the time gap and that scheduling the events to take place from 4pm to around 8pm was also about right. The next two events should then take place around May and August time, and further announcements will be made closer to the time as the dates, venues and topics for these are further firmed-up.

For the full list of current members see the web site [www.iosm.com](http://www.iosm.com). ■

## Institute New Members

Name	Organisation	Status
Barry Corless	Sysop	Member
Michelle Hales	Homebase	Member
Christian Nissen	Post Denmark A/S (Royal Mail Denmark)	Fellow
Ronnie Coles	Nuffield Hospitals	Practitioner
Jonathan Traer-Clark	Icore Ltd	Member

Name	Organisation	Status
Neil Battell	Fox IT	Member
Neil McCarthy	Gartmore Investment Management	Member
Phillip Ives	Yell	Member
Jeremy Nuttall	Schlumbergersema	Practitioner
Brian Broadhurst	Fox IT Ltd	Member

# itSMF announces BS15000 Training and Qualification

**Ian Whyte**

*Bishops Beech Ltd*

*Vice Chair of the itSMF Certification Committee*

**itSMF are the owners of the BS15000 Certification Scheme and are committed to the further development and promotion of BS15000.**

There has already been significant world-wide interest in the Scheme, and coupled with that there has been considerable demand for training courses. In response to this, and to support further the take-up of BS15000, the itSMF have commissioned courses aimed at three distinct audiences:

- external auditors working with Registered Certification Bodies (RCBs)
- internal auditors with organisations seeking to adopt BS15000
- consultants giving advice to organisations preparing for BS15000

## Training Objectives

The objectives of the training are to ensure that delegates are sufficiently knowledgeable about BS15000 so that, in the case of external auditors, they will add value to audits which they are carrying out against the standard whereas, in the case of internal auditors and consultants, they can help organisations make preparations for adoption of the standard, eventual audit, certification and ongoing compliance with it.

The training will also prepare delegates for an examination held at the end of the course, success in which results in the award of an itSMF BS15000 qualification.

The details of the qualification structure are still being worked out but one possibility is that there could be three levels of award – one for itSMF BS15000 Auditors, one for itSMF BS15000 Internal Auditors and one for itSMF BS15000 Consultants with the particular award depending on the course attended

and the delegate's supporting qualifications and experience.

## Training Options

The training options being made available are a two-day course and a three-day course, the choice depending on the objectives of the delegate.

The two-day course is specifically for external auditors currently qualified to audit against ISO9000 (specifically in the IT sector) or BS7799-2:2002 and assumes a thorough knowledge of audit techniques. It is primarily focussed on orientating existing auditors to the requirements of BS15000.

The three-day course is aimed at internal auditors preparing to adopt BS15000, and consultants wishing to give advice in this area. This training is more general than the two-day option and whilst knowledge of audit techniques is helpful, it is not currently a pre-requisite.

ITIL qualifications, whilst obviously helpful, are not a pre-requisite for either option. There are of course many similarities between ITIL and BS15000 but the emphasis of BS15000 is somewhat different and it contains several areas which are not addressed in ITIL, hence the need for a more focussed approach.

## The Syllabus

The syllabus for the two-day external auditor course is intended to cover areas such as:

- The background to BS15000, where it came from, similarities with ITIL
- The itSMF Certification Scheme, the role of the RCB, Scheme regulations and operation in practice
- BS15000 terminology, the process objectives and interfaces between them

- Application of the requirements of the standard in the real world
- Scoping issues such as what type of organisational structure is likely to meet the requirements, what degree of outsourcing is allowable, dealing with multiple locations, etc
- An overview of typical Service Management tools in use
- A BS15000 Auditor examination

The three-day training for internal auditors and consultants will cover the above, although the emphasis is changed slightly, and will also address areas such as:

- Starting off the project
- What is involved in planning to meet the requirements of BS15000
- Techniques for conducting a gap analysis against BS15000, to establish where we are now and how to get to where we want to be
- The importance of staff and management commitment to the project – not just at the start but throughout and continuing into the future
- The relationship between the organisation and the Registered Certification Body
- Where consultancy stops and certification starts
- Planning and preparing for the BS15000 audit
- Ensuring the standard continues to be met into the future
- A BS15000 Internal Auditor/Consultant examination

Dates for public courses will be notified in servicetalk and on both [www.itsmf.com](http://www.itsmf.com) and [www.bs15000certification.com](http://www.bs15000certification.com).

In-house courses can also be arranged, and further details can be found by following the links on these sites. ■

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**Firstly, I'd like to complement you on the last issue – it looked different and it felt different. I was particularly impressed by the inclusion of the challenging article by Neil McBride from De Montfort University. With such a provocative argument it would be fantastic if you could include a regular letters page allowing feedback. I submit the following in optimistic anticipation.**

This article attempts to shake the very foundations of Service Management, confronting its reason for existing and advocating (if I'm reading it correctly) a return to the chaotic and anarchistic days where finding high systems availability, business alignment, cost control and prompt quality service were as likely as discovering WMD in Iraq or the Beagle 2 on Mars. It will make every Service Manager step back and think – but not for long.

Perhaps De Montfort University users are laid back and can wait until the IT Services Department ponder and hypothesise over innovative ways to deliver services but today's businesses can't. The demand for 24x7 IT services from ever more complex applications and infrastructure requires a high degree of discipline and best practice. The author suggests that best practice and standards stifle innovation – this is not the case. If anything, the adoption of SM promotes it by providing more time and resources to be focused on service improvements. What most IT organisations want is to be trusted by the business, to be seen as "value added" and not as a cost. This simply can't be achieved in today's world without continually improving reliability, customer satisfaction and earning respect. This opens doors and promotes collaboration between the Business and IT. Indeed, after time the barriers between them disperse and IT become a fully paid up member of the business,

## servicetalk feedback/letter

**Alan Drewett**  
*Head of European Technology  
Bausch & Lomb*

contributing equally to the desires and objectives of the company.

There is also another issue to consider – some aspects of infrastructure are becoming commodity. As Utility Computing gains acceptance, sections of infrastructure will be honed down to the point where they will be treated, as Neil says, just like a telephone. There is absolutely no point in waisting time trying to work out how to get a competitive advantage from these components. But Service Management must nevertheless be applied irrespective of whether these services are in-house or outsourced.

So is Service Management a Strategy? Absolutely. Without getting bogged down in semantics a strategy is to execute against a plan in order to achieve a specific goal. So you can take your pick on what business goal SM may fit into (reducing bottom line costs, customer satisfaction, e-commerce services).

Can Service Management provide a competitive edge? Yes. The theory that SM's value or "ITIL/BS 15000 compliance" will become valueless because everyone will have it is simplistic in the extreme. Given that it could take several years to achieve compliance those that have it or are well down the road will already be enjoying its benefits. Also consider what will happen if the big players in the B2B supply chain demanded BS15000 or BS7799 certification. Many pundits

would argue this is coming soon as more and more companies review their suppliers for IT stability and security. In the US, the Sarbanes Oxley Act, a reaction to corporate scandals is forcing companies to review fiscal, IT and ethical procedures. Cobit and ITIL have never been in such demand to help ensure corporate compliance. Imagine your customer base disappearing overnight because you could not prove you had a IT service continuity plan or because you could not guarantee you had the procedures to deal with a denial or service attack. If you can't prove continued operations in adverse conditions why should your customer put themselves at risk.

On a softer issue customer service from IT is an underestimated but significant workforce morale booster. It serves to emulate and contribute to the company's culture. Happier staff are more positive and more productive. Consider the opposite – "If IT can't give me a reliable service why should I be so concerned about the quality of my work, I only make this widget that goes somewhere on the undercarriage of a large commercial aircraft".

Is there a need for innovation? Of course, but this runs happily alongside Service Management disciplines. Service Level Management and Service Improvement Programs act as the feeds for innovation and the introduction and maintenance of value added services. Change and Release Management will ensure that they are delivered to the business in the correct manner without risking continuing operations.

*[Ed. We are delighted to receive and print responses to articles, etc published in the magazine. We have attempted to have a letters page in the past and will continue to do so – it merely requires some provocative and thought-provoking articles and some willing correspondents! We try to encourage and provide the former – over to you!!!]*

## People on the Move

Fox IT are delighted to announce that Richard Stinton has joined as Business Development Manager for HP Openview from BMC Patrol and Mark O'Neil has joined as a Senior Consultant from the Post Office and CSC Prism Alliance.

A previous Student of the Year and Service Manager of the Year, Geoff Thirlwall, has left Diageo to start his own consultancy practice, Bossman Swan.

# BS15000: Past, Present and Future

**Dr. Jenny Dugmore**

*ConnectSphere*

*Chair, BSI Service Management Group*

**The first BS15000 audits**

The first successful BS15000 audits, done under the official *itSMF* certification scheme, have been completed.

**Moving to ISO**

The BSI has accepted the business case for BS15000 to become an International standard. This change is subject to agreement by other national standards bodies and if agreed is expected to take 18 months.

**What is this "BS15000"?**

BS15000 is the world's first standard specifically aimed at Service Management. It is published by the British Standards Institution. The standard defines the features of service management processes that are essential for delivery of high quality services. BS15000 is based on the knowledge and experience of experts working in service management.

BS15000 covers:

- Scope of service management
- Terms and definitions
- Requirements for a "Plan-Do-Check-Act" management system

- Planning and implementing service management processes
- Planning and implementing new or changed services
- The 13 processes shown in Figure 1

The standard is in two parts. BS15000-1 is a formal *Specification* that defines what is required for service management processes to reach best practice standards. It is against Part 1 that audits are performed. BS15000-2 is a supporting *Code of Practice* that describes best practices and by doing so explains the requirements of Part 1. It is not itself part of the requirements. The standard is part of the BS15000 series, which includes a *Self-Assessment Workbook* and a *Management Guide to Service Management*.

**The origins of BS15000**

The standard was produced by the BSI's Service Management Group. This group consists of industry experts representing a range of organisations and professional bodies, with practical understanding of service management.

This BSI group started work in the dim

and distant 80's, initially producing a code of practice covering four core processes. This was replaced in 1998 by a second edition covering the 13 processes shown in Figure 1.

At this stage attention was directed to producing the standard now referred to as BS15000. The first edition of BS15000 was published in 2000. At the same time the group also published the *IT Service Management – A Self-Assessment Workbook (PD 0015)*. The workbook is used to check the quality of service management processes.

As well as the BSI group many organisations have been involved in review and testing the BS15000 series. Thanks for this work are due to the organisations in Figure 2.

**Fig. 1- BS 15000 Service Management Processes**



**Fig. 2 - Contributing Organisations**

- Barclays, BBC Technology, BCS, Centrics, CGEY, ConnectSphere, Co-operative Bank, Elsevier, Friends Provident, GlaxoSmithKline, Harvard Systems, IT Service Improvement, itSMF, Littlewoods Home Shopping, Mainland Sequoia, Marval, NAO, National Air Traffic Services, NFC Europe, NTL, Office of Government Commerce, Office of National Statistics, Police IT Organisation, Proctor & Gamble, Quint Wellington Redwood, Royal Hull Hospital, Shell International, South Staffordshire Health Authority, Stock Exchange, Stoke on Trent City Council, Xansa, Yorkshire Building Society

**The role of "Early Adopters"**

It was agreed that the BS15000 series should be tested before a certification



scheme was developed. This was done with the support of the “*Early Adopters*”, 16 organisations who provided valuable feedback based on actual use of BS15000.

The Early Adopters views can be summarised as:

- Realistic as a broad minimum
- Fair, understandable and consistent
- More specific than ISO 9000
- Provides a suitable benchmark

During this test stage feedback was also solicited from professional auditors, quality expert, operational service delivery managers and practitioners. Following improvements based on the feedback the BS15000 series was re-published in 2002.

### A Management System

The major improvement was the addition of the “*Plan-Do-Check-Act*” methodology. This aligned BS15000 with management system standards such as

symptoms and causes of inadequate service management. It helps managers understand the benefits of implementing the processes.

The *Self-Assessment Workbook* was also updated to keep in step with the BS15000 standard.

### Who is the standard for?

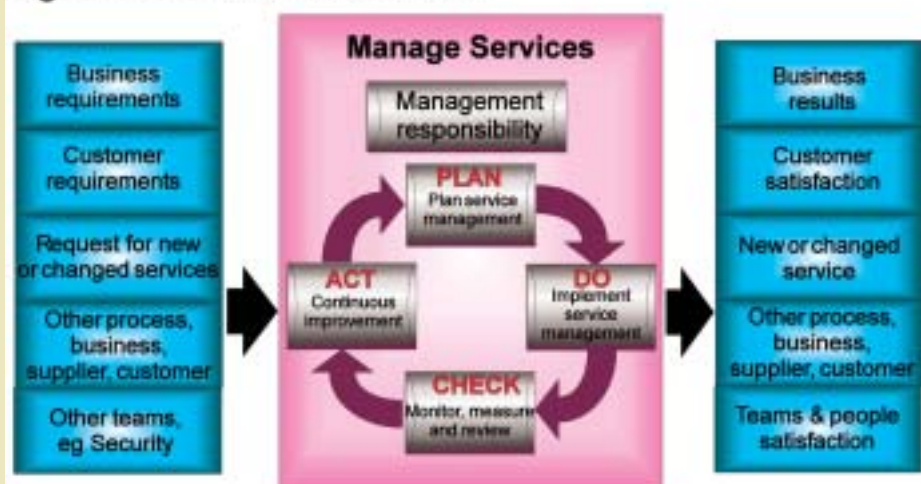
The standard is of use to all service providers, but in particular IT service providers. As BS15000 is process based the requirements are independent of organisational form, and can be used by large and small organisations, across all sectors. It applies to commercial service organisations as well as in-house service providers.

### BS15000 business benefits

Many companies are using BS15000 not only for their own benefit but also to help qualify and choose suppliers and partner organisations.

- Helps management by requiring ownership and responsibility at all levels
- Common inter-enterprise operational processes, giving easier management across a diverse environment, with inter-changeability of staff and service providers
- Reduced risk and thus reduced cost in using external service arrangements
- Assists with major organisational changes, such as mergers, by providing a standard approach across the new organisation
- Reliable, consistent and cost-effective services, giving competitive advantage
- Improve overall reputation and perception of IS.
- Shift the balance towards proactive processes
- Improves inter-departmental relationships by giving clarity on “who does what” and common goals
- A framework for staff training
- Framework for automation of service management

Fig. 3 Plan - Do - Check - Act



ISO 9000. This is shown in Figure 3. “*Plan-Do-Check-Act*” crosses all service management process. In practical terms this means that BS15000 requires more than a high standard for individual processes.

It is also essential to have senior management commitment, service management plans and policies, clear process ownership, for the individual processes to be integrated, and with interfaces clearly defined and well understood.

At this stage a *Managers’ Guide to Service Management* was published. It includes practical details such as the

Is BS15000 right for your organisation? Will it bring you business benefits? BS15000 is not a panacea for all quality issues but can bring a wide range of business benefits, even when service management processes fall far short of BS15000’s requirements.

The benefits include:

- Alignment of business strategy and IT services
- A framework for existing service improvement programmes and assists in building the business cases for new programmes
- Shows how your service *really* compares to best practices and best in breed service providers

In a Gartner research note (Gartner Strategic Planning, SPA-13-3434, Research Note, S. Mingay, M. Govekar, 4 March 2002) the standard was reported as a major step toward IT Service Delivery becoming mature and stable with a level of cross enterprise consistency.

Gartner also predicted that international recognition or an international equivalent was needed for the standard to achieve full potential. This is now happening, with active take-up of BS15000 outside the UK and support for BS15000 to become an international standard.

### BS15000 and ITIL

Following a concordat between the BSI, Office of Government Commerce and *itSMF*, BS15000 and ITIL were aligned. The alignment of BS15000 and ITIL does not mean you have to choose one – they are *not* interchangeable and serve different purposes:

- ITIL sets out the best practices that, if adopted, would assist an organisation to achieve the quality of service management required by BS15000.
- BS15000 sets the standards that service management processes should aim for, and objectively tests that best practices really have been adopted. ►

## Taking the *Theory* out of the *Classroom*...

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20-22 April	London
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17-19 May	London
7-9 June	Newcastle
14-16 June	Cheshire

### ITIL Managers

Service Support	24-28 May	London
Service Delivery	28 Jun-2 July	London
Revision Day	22 July	London
Service Support	21-25 June	Cheshire
Service Delivery	5-9 July	Cheshire
Revision Day	20 July	Cheshire



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The relationship between the two sets of publications is shown in Figure 4.

**Fig. 4 - BS 15000 and ITIL**



### The others?

Increased maturity in the service industry has seen an explosion in the production and use of best practice advice, capability and maturity models and standards. This includes not only ITIL but many others: TQM, Six Sigma, CobiT, EFQM, eSCM, ISO12207, BS8600, ISO15505, COPC-

2000, ISO15288, to name just some.

There are many examples of proprietary material. Useful ideas and techniques for service and process improvements are available from these other publications.

Experience has shown that it is beneficial to align service management improvements to the initiatives adopted in your organisation. The key distinction between BS15000 and other publications is that BS1500 is a management system that is specific to service

management processes which checks:

- are you doing the *right* things?
- and
- are you doing them *correctly*?

Some organisations use a '*bottom up*' approach to adopting best practices, this can lead to duplication of effort, gaps and overlaps in processes. Implementing

BS15000 requires a "*top down*" approach that checks and eliminates these failings. Applied properly BS15000 will help organisations achieve significant improvements without wasting resources

### The *itSMF* Certification Scheme

Claims to comply with BS15000 can be independently verified as part of a formal certification scheme. The *itSMF* created and now manage the official Certification Scheme which provides this independence. ■

### How and where to buy the BS15000 series

The publications can be obtained from the BSI.

Visit: <http://www.bsi-global.com>. *itSMF* are also a distributor of the BS15000 series.

Visit <http://www.itSMF.com>

[And of course members are entitled to discounts!]

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*itSMF Regional Groups provide a vital link with our members. Their regular meetings offer the chance to discuss issues of current concern and to network with fellow professionals. These reports illustrate the importance of the groups.*

## London & South East

### Beaty Tyrrell Abbey

St Valentine's day often prompts thoughts of cards and presents, bought or to be bought, and how this might affect our current relationship. Therefore the theme of 'Relationships' was an apt choice for the seminar held on St Valentine's eve, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004, and hosted by Abbey at their Head Office in Triton Square, London.

Ken Goff (Prudential), Chairman of the Region opened the event by explaining that, unlike a seminar day, this was a day for the attendees to participate, an opportunity for members to network and exchange experiences and develop ideas based on the theme of the day – Relationships – What are they? – Why are they important? – What are your experiences?

This was followed by a brief welcoming speech by Linda Chapman on behalf of the hosting organisation Abbey.

Ken returned to the floor to provide an *itSMF* update, which included information on new *itSMF* chapters, the March Seminar and Annual Conference.

The initial presentation was given by Sue Southern (of Southern Assignments) who introduced the subject of **Customer / Supplier Relationships**, covering matters such as Relationship Issues, the importance of Perception Management, the concept of the Balanced Scorecard and the Kano Model. This presentation prompted many questions and led to a lively discussion of topics ranging from – Who is the Customer? – through – Are Senior Managers more interested in projects than Business as Usual Activity? – to – Is there a perception that people involved in support and delivery activities are lesser beings than Project Managers?

Paul Simpson then provided an interesting insight as to how Abbey has addressed the issue of **Internal Relationships**. The presentation detailed how different initiatives had been instigated within different areas of the company in order to foster understanding and improve relationships. The initiatives were tailored to each of the relationship areas, as there was an understanding that each area would have different views, perceptions and expectations. Again discussion followed on a variety of topics including the need to promote ITIL Awareness outside of Service Management areas in order to gain some 'buy-in', as well as how internal presentations, mentoring and learning games can be used to maintain an appropriate ongoing level of awareness in staff that have undergone formal ITIL training.

Following lunch Jane Curry (Exel) started the afternoon session by speaking about **Business Relationships**. The basis of her presentation was, 'Do we need Relationship Management and what is the impact of not having it?' Jane has been involved in developing an effective business relationship from a poor foundation and was able to provide the audience with details of her experiences in the areas of appropriate communication, hidden agendas and understanding the culture of the company. The fact that this period is normally deemed the 'graveyard' slot seemed to have slipped the audiences mind and yet again there followed a period of interesting discussion covering topics from, how to supply your customers with the appropriate facts, to the management of OLA's.

The last session of the day was begun by Mike Askew (Atkins Global), who presented on the topic of **Third-Party Relationships**. The presentation detailed

a case study based on multi-party relationships and what lessons were learnt. How, in spite of SLA's having been agreed with all parties, there can still be underlying discontent resulting in strained relationships, which needs to be continually monitored and addressed. Also, how it became evident that if members of the consortium have a similar service offering, it is not always possible to eradicate the natural embedded competitiveness that exists within the individual organisations. A lively floor debate followed covering issues such as the importance of sharing both work and rewards, the need to reduce overlap of expertise and the importance of attaining a workable dynamic within group relationships.

Finally, Ken brought the day's event to a close, thanking everyone for their contribution and thought provoking discussion. Roll on St Valentine's Day and a better understanding of the importance of making relationships work!

## Scottish

### Caroline Drummond FMS

Ian French of FMS and the Scottish *itSMF* Regional Chair welcomed members to the event at The Holiday Inn, Glasgow on 16 February 2004. He then outlined the format for the day's events and introduced Jon Efford and Zoe Armstrong representatives from Abbey who were sponsoring the event.

The first part of the meeting took the form of a presentation by first of all Ian French followed by Ian Whyte (Bishops Beech Consultancy). They presented around the topic of **IT Reporting to Business Teams**. Ian French began with some background information about himself and then discussed the main issues surrounding the collection of

information and presentation of service reports. The following questions were used to examine this subject:

- What do we need to supply?
- Are statistics really any good?
- IT meets SLA's but does it meet the Business?

Reporting is dependent upon the environment in which the company operates and the type of services which it offers. In order for reports to add value there should be frequent discussions i.e. monthly or quarterly between the customer and supplier to review these reports. The nature of the reports that are produced will depend on an agreement, which is usually included in the contract. All meaningful reports will contain a management summary which will include for example the incidents that occurred, steps taken to rectify those incidents, key changes, plans for the future and service level reporting.

The first step to producing worthwhile statistics is first of all to establish what it is that you're trying to do and then look at how the systems can help to achieve this. Statistics can be measured on both hard subjects (availability) and soft subjects (training). Unfortunately statistics are open to interpretation. This presents a problem in that there is a high probability that these statistics will be interpreted wrongly. Statistics help to understand performance, continuous improvement and planning.

Service Level Agreements (SLA's) are often constructed and agreed in advance of the service being available. It is important to:

- Review SLA's for achievement
- Review SLA's for relevance
- Review them in the context of the impact on the business.

Building a good relationship with a customer is important, and putting achievement into context is essential to understanding how IT provides added value to the business.

Ian Whyte then took to the floor to talk about IT reporting in relation to the relevance of measurement and statistics. He covered the following points:

- Under the current BS15000 standard, IT Reporting is a process in its own right.

- Reports should be fit for purpose.
- SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound.
- Where service fails to satisfy expectation then a penalty charge may apply. This should be reviewed closely prior to entering into any agreement.

This was an informative presentation that generated discussion and feedback from the other attendees.

John McDermott from *itSMF* provided an update from the office of new developments in publications and mentioned the prospect of a new Events Manager post. He then facilitated a discussion on the issues, which were raised during the presentation and asked for some suggestions for future seminar topics. Ian then summarised and thanked those involved for their efforts in organising the event.

We then retired to lunch where the Holiday Inn had provided an excellent meal enjoyed by everyone! The event provided useful information for all involved and provided an excellent opportunity for networking. Our thanks again to Abbey for sponsoring the event.

## East Anglian & Midland Sarah Whittaker Computacenter

For the January meeting of this regional group we were again welcomed by Norwich Union. Jim Davies our regional chairman opened the day by welcoming the 26 members attending and introduced the agenda for the day.

For the morning myself, Jim, and Dave Backham of Microsoft, ran a facilitated workshop around the topic 'How can we put into practice the guidance in the new publication, *Planning to Implement Service Management*?' I don't think any of us could put hand on heart and say we'd read it from cover to cover! Many of those present were however finding it useful to dip into when required as a point of reference.

We discussed questions such as, How useful and relevant is the book? How do we get the positive involvement of colleagues and user-customers? Which of the disciplines should we tackle first?

And how 'pragmatic' is Appendix E in reality?

These workshops generated so much material that we plan to refine and condense it into the discussion topics for the next group get-together.

In the afternoon each of the 3 groups had a different subject to brainstorm and then present back to the others. These were, Reasons for Implementing ITIL, How can we sustain interest in ITIL? And What should you Implement first? Some reasons for implementation highlighted were, it's accessible, adaptable and credible within the industry. The favourite choice to implement first was the Service Catalogue.

We were particularly keen for feedback on sustaining interest, as this ties in with the theme of the 2004 conference. Annelise Savill from TSO was able to make us aware of just how much new and relevant material they are able to provide in order to assist in keeping up with the market. Their new website [www.get-best-practice.co.uk](http://www.get-best-practice.co.uk) is firmly focused on business success both in ITSM and Project Management. Customers can subscribe to have access to OGC material, glossaries and information on training organisations. Both easy to use and practical, it acts as a useful springboard to best practice.

John McDermott was also on hand to give us an *itSMF* update. Each large ITIL book will have its own pocket guide released by March, and the large books are expected in various languages during Q2. We were again encouraged to join the Institute of Service Management, which offers professionals within this industry the opportunity to have their abilities properly recognised. The forthcoming conference will again be held at the Brighton Metropole from 8-10 November, and submissions for presentations are now being requested for this. John reiterated the fact that this is our forum and if anyone would like to contact the *itSMF* with requests for future seminar topics these would be happily received.

Thanks again to Norwich Union for sponsoring this event. The next regional meeting will be held at Marval's headquarters in Kettering on 7 April. ■

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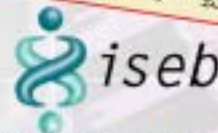
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# creating and maintaining momentum



## 13th Annual Conference & Exhibition 2004 Hilton Metropole Brighton 8 - 10 November 2004

'Creating & Maintaining Momentum' follows last year's 'Breaking Boundaries, Building Bridges' in continuing the overall theme of Creating Stability in a Changing World.

Over the years, more and more companies have come to embrace the concept of managing the provision of their IT services based on industry best practice as documented in ITIL and BS 15000. This is reflected in the increased attendance year-on-year at the annual *itSMF* Conference and Exhibition.

One of the burning issues faced by many IT service providers nowadays is how to create and subsequently build on progress already achieved. The *itSMF* 2004 Conference & Exhibition concentrates on how IT Service Management initiatives may falter or even come to a complete halt due to apathy, lack of management support or focus, flavour of the month syndrome, as well as numerous other influences. It is imperative that these potential pitfalls are recognised and managed should they arise, to ensure that the momentum is maintained throughout a continuous service improvement program.

The event provides the perfect opportunity for all service management professionals to network with others in the same market and to hear views from the experts about the changes in technology and the new challenges that they will bring.

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The renowned *itSMF* awards will be presented on the Tuesday evening (Gala Evening) of the Conference & Exhibition. The awards are for individuals and organisations that have excelled at Service Management or have significantly contributed to this area.

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A not for profit organisation wholly owned by its members, the *itSMF* is dedicated to the development, evolution and promotion of best practice and standards in IT Service Management. This is achieved through close cooperation with organisations such as the OGC and BSI on ITIL, BS 15000 and associated qualification schemes. In fact, many of our members are responsible for and make active contributions to their progress and development. For example, the *itSMF* are responsible for the numerous ITIL - based pocket guides and the QA of new material.

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# Ask the Experts

## QUESTION 1

**My Service Desk is asking me to estimate the likely volume of problems and problem types which will arise following a software release. Given that the size and complexity of the release will change with each release, is there a methodology or process available to assist me in providing this information. What other alternatives are available to help me in assisting the Service Desk?**

## ANSWER 1-1

*Colin Rudd, ITEMS Ltd*

The answer, as always, is it depends. It depends on the type of organisation, the quality and maturity of the processes used, the people involved and the quality of information available. In mature organisations the processes used are subject to continuous improvement therefore there should be an underlying trend of incidents and problems occurring as the result of software releases.

However, in reality the only real answer to this question is to look back at past experience, and analyse what has happened during and subsequent to previous software releases, but unfortunately it's not an exact science. However, if the Service Management processes are mature and provide the right sort of information a lot can be achieved.

By regular analysis of the statistics from previous releases on a "service by service" or "application by application" basis, the characteristics of each type of release of each service or application can be deduced, for example:

- Every time we have a major release of "Service Z" we experience a 30% increase in the number of Service Desk incidents for that service during the first week after the release
- Every time we have a minor release of "Application A" we notice very little increase in the volume of incidents for that application

However, as was previously stated in the best organisations where the Problem

Management, Release Management and Change Management processes are analysing measurements and metrics, the situation is not a static one. The processes would be working together to learn from past experience and proactively improve release by release, through better development, testing, training, documentation etc.

## ANSWER 1-2

*Sean Lewis, Sysop*

Problem Management leaps to mind as a process that would help you to identify and highlight these issues, particularly based on problems detected in past releases. Even without problem management having already performed an analysis of the Incident records following previous releases, you may wish to do this as an exercise and may be able to generate some insights into the type, volume and nature of problems you experience with software releases.

As it is your Service Desk who are highlighting this, it would be a good idea to involve them in this and if possible "own" this activity. This information while not perfect from day 1 will be more meaningful in terms of your own organisation as compared to an industry "norm". This would form your initial measurement on which you can further refine and improve this information and your own metric and reporting/analysis on in the future. Be prepared for some of these issues to be based on breakdown of procedure as well as development errors as this is a common area where releases can be seen to generate problems from.

## QUESTION 2

**Having passed the Foundation exam, how do I know that I'm ready to take the Managers Certificate?**

## ANSWER 2-1

*David Johnston, DAJex Ltd*

Try this mock exam question: "*Configuration Management is a good thing. Discuss.*"

If you can produce (in 35 minutes, long hand, closed book) a cogent and

informed answer which shows that you understand not just the theory and basic concepts but can also show an appreciation of the practical issues facing those who are to implement or operate the function, then you are probably ready.

Don't forget that your answer should set out arguments for and against and come up with a conclusion. As an aside, my view is that it is "A Good Thing" – but there are a few respected players in the world of Service Management (mostly Johnny-Come-Latelys, I would add) who say that true Configuration Management is too ambitious, "get Asset Management right first", they bleat. "Have a bit of vision, have faith and read the Good Book", I respond. Perhaps the heretics would like to engage in a debate on the letters page?? I digress. Back to the question.

Don't forget that your answer should show that you understand all the sub-processes and interfaces. It should also form the basis of a business case – containing benefits, possible problems, options and an appreciation of the costs and resources involved. You should also address the cultural issues of acceptance and the organisational changes that could be involved. Most importantly you should say how Configuration Management will benefit the business goals and improve customer service. Worth mentioning also the issues that could arise if you have outsourced Infrastructure Management and parts of Service Management – how will this affect the situation?

I seem to remember that back in the early 90's when Red Badges were blue all the questions on my exam paper were a bit like this one. These days the questions are much more specific and based on a case study. Not really any easier or harder, just more explicitly designed to bring out the practical application and management angle of Service Management.

If you are confident that you could do this for all the disciplines then you could be heading for a distinction or the much-

coveted Student of The Year award. If the question seems daunting – then do your research. Read the books, trawl the internet for white papers, but most importantly – understand how you do Service Management in your own organisation. Be a nuisance. Find out about the Business and Service Continuity recovery strategies. Visit the Service Desk. Talk to the Problem Manager. Read your SLAs. Have a good play with your integrated Service Management tool-set – if you haven't got one, what problems is that causing? Find out what your Release Management policy is. Dig out all process documentation. Speak to the Head of Service Management about the overall Strategy and Framework.

Research BS15000 – is your organisation planning to seek certification? Get hold of the project plan. Don't stop there – go on a mission of discovery.

Then compare everything you have seen with what the Good Book says. What are the strengths and weaknesses that you have seen? Where are the gaps? What do you think could be done about them?

When you have got the bug and are obsessed with Service Management and service quality then you are ready for greater things. Go for it. The world of Service Management needs more Red Badges.

### **ANSWER 2-2**

*Colin Rudd, ITEMS Ltd*

Congratulations and I think your enthusiasm for Service Management should be welcomed and encouraged. The first thing you should do is to consider joining the Institute of Service Management. As you have now obtained your Foundation Certificate, if you have at least one year's experience in the Service Management area, then you can join the Institute as a Practitioner member. This enables you to gain all of the benefits associated with membership of the Institute such as:

- Use post nominal letters after your name (FISM, MISM, PISM, AISM and SISM)
- Attend Institute events and workshops
- Join, network and consult with like-minded Service Management professionals
- Be involved in the Institute's

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme**

Members of the Institute will help you to develop your own CPD plan, geared to your own skills, knowledge and experience. Many of the members have faced a similar dilemma to that which is now facing you and would be happy to assist you in achieving your ambition of gaining the Manager's Certificate. Many of the members already have the Manager's Certificate, some having passed it years ago and some having only recently achieved it, any of whom would be ideally placed to provide advice and guidance to someone such as yourself. Further information is available from the Institute's web site at [www.iosm.com](http://www.iosm.com).

### **ANSWER 2-3**

*Sean Lewis, Sysop*

When is a person ready to take the Managers Certificate? I could argue that the answer to that is, Never! Perhaps a better way of stating the question might be – how can I make sure that I am ready to take the Managers Certificate.

The Managers Certificate is based very much on the belief that delegates should be a manager or should have their next career step into management. This in itself assumes that the person has a good understanding of management issues, such as people management, project management, supplier management, financial issues and constraints etc. This background knowledge of management issues is an assumed pre-requisite of the course itself and the course will draw on this experience and further develop the candidates knowledge, but does not expect to teach these concepts as a part of the course itself. Would you feel comfortable in being able to give a presentation to a CEO or board and feel confident in being able to speak to them in their own language?

One of the biggest dangers with the Managers course is to focus on the two weeks and two exam days as being the sole limit of commitment to the course. The courses are intensive and are VERY hard work and will probably require something in the region of 6+ weeks worth of study which encompasses these two weeks of Service Support and Service Delivery, but the extra commitment of self-study and revision

work also needs to be factored in to the equation. For these two weeks you will need to be prepared to make sacrifices in terms of your social and personal life and have the capability of spending a serious amount of time on this commitment. So do you have time to give to this amount of study? Refer to the article about attending a Managers course, in an earlier edition of servicetalk by Paul Wigzel if you doubt this statement.

Before attending a Managers course make sure that you are ready to participate in a knowledgeable way about the SS and SD topics, which means brushing the dust off the Foundation course you did and maybe even getting hold of the SS and SD books themselves and doing some pre-study if you feel that your knowledge is a little rusty or weaker than you would like it to be. Do you feel you would be able to talk about any of the disciplines in a confident and informed manner?

If you are lucky enough to work in an organisation that has people who have already gone through the Managers, ask them for their thoughts, advice and experiences and then ask yourself – Am I ready for this? If the answer is yes to this and the above then you are probably ready to take the Managers certificate.

### **QUESTION 3**

**With so many patches / updates being automated by the supplier (for example Windows XP Updates or AV definition updates) how do I decide within which specific process(es) the activities associated with the management of patches, fixes, bugs, applications and / or infrastructure best fit? Is this simply a function of Release Management or are there other considerations?**

### **ANSWER 3-1**

*Colin Rudd, ITEMS Ltd*

There are many processes involved in the implementation of patches to operating systems, applications software and anti-virus definitions. The major ones being:

- Release Management
- Change Management
- Configuration Management
- Underpinning, technical support, distribution and implementation processes and procedures

It is essential that all of the processes are

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followed and all of them wherever possible are automated and integrated. The whole process should be triggered by an incident, problem or a proactive preventative action. Once the need has been identified a change should be raised within the Change Management process, often this step is an automated link from either an incident or a problem.

Once the change has been raised then the change should be assessed for risk, impact and benefit and if deemed necessary should be authorised for building and testing. This stage of the change lifecycle relies heavily on the quality and accuracy of the information contained within the Configuration Management Database (CMDB). In a good CMDB, relationships between infrastructure components and their relative impacts will all be readily available and the assessment activity can be quickly completed.

For high volume routine or standard changes "change models" should exist that automate as many aspects of the change lifecycle as possible. These models enable these types of change to fast track through the system particularly where they are changes that are implemented on a frequent and regular basis. Again automated build techniques can be employed together with pre-assembled "test beds" enabling rapid

testing of changes. Techniques can also be developed where the back-out plans for such changes are also repeatable, but they also need to be tested on a regular basis. Once testing has been completed then final authorisation will be needed from Change Management ensuring that everybody is aware of what is happening and that all communication, documentation and support is available for the new software.

#### ANSWER 3-2

*Sean Lewis, Sysop*

Answer: It depends. There, I've said it, so we can get that out of the way right at the start. Release management in conjunction with Change and Security management should be able to define a workable solution for an organisation. The main purpose of this activity that you identify is risk management in particular in terms of a security hole being exploited or an unknown error in your live environment occurring and causing service disruptions.

I find that there is a large amount of trust placed in the quality control of third parties and suppliers who are providing this sort of service, in terms of their own controls being sufficient that their own processes are robust enough so that a patch/update of this sort will not effect my live environment in any way. History tells me that this is not always the case.

Best practice tells me to protect the live environment as far as possible and to manage risks that could cause disruption to the best of my ability. With this in mind I would be very wary of allowing updates to my live environment operate outside of my change/release controls. Security management in an organisation will wish to have the ability to ensure that these are done on very quick timescales but we also then have to be able to test and release these in a controlled manner - maybe in some form of test office facility. Many vendors are now providing tools that can be used to support this type of strategy, which is good news and means that this can be controlled far more effectively. Some of this will be done through a formal release mechanism whereas some may have to be implemented under change control or even during emergency change control, it's the consideration of your organisational structure, approach to risk management and the facilities at your disposal which will normally define the who, why, where and how the necessary actions are carried out. ■

**If you want to either:  
Add your views to the above  
Join our panel of Experts  
Then contact:  
John McDermott at the office  
(t) 0118 926 0888  
(e) john.mcdermott@itsmf.com**

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## Clarity Provided and Questions Answered

**Chris Bradbrook-Armit**

*Vendor Executive Committee Chairperson*

It is not often that the Vendor community of the *itSMF* is able to make an announcement, which is not related to their own company's products and services, but this is a rare occasion when we can.

The ***itSMF* Vendor Guidelines** have been produced by the Vendor Executive Committee in conjunction with the Marketing Executive Committee and Aidan Lawes, the CEO.

The Vendor Guidelines provide answers

to those frequently asked questions from the Vendor community of 'How do we go about getting a *specific* service from the *itSMF*?' or 'What services are available to us?'

Published on the *itSMF* website the Guidelines cover a multitude of areas including:

- *itSMF* Services available to the Vendor Community
- Sponsorship
- Participation from both the Vendors and the *itSMF*

- Marketing Communications
- Vendor Conduct

In recognising that the Vendor Guidelines are 'fluid' and will no doubt evolve and be refined over time (continuous improvement), the most up to date and current version will be displayed on the *itSMF* website.

Please take time out to review the document and provide any comments or feedback through the *itSMF* office or via (support@itsmf.com). ■

# IT Physician Heal Thyself

and

## Don't Let HR Pick Up IT's Bad Habits?

**John Gibert**  
*Southcourt*

**Have you five minutes to read this? This is a prelude to the last in the series of seven articles on *IT Physician Heal Thyself*. It has been put in before the last article, hopefully to provide a bit of light relief to readers of the series, which many people have found hard reading.**

A business manager of a key function within the operational part of the business was working at his desk, when a knock at the door interrupted him. Swinging through the door was a smiling, suited gentleman.

“Hello, I am your new HR Account Manager. It's a new role and I am pleased to meet you. I have come to see you today and tell you about the innovative HR services that we are now introducing. You no doubt have seen information about them on notice boards – all part of the new proactive HR function!”

He was looking at the ceiling as he spoke, clearly practised, word perfect and without taking breath. “Now we have a set of new services which we are encouraging our customers to take up, that's you, you're one of our customers, yes? OK?”

He had now found a place on the ceiling to focus his eyes as he spoke. “Now the first one of these new HR services is the use of low-cost, hard working people from Eastern Europe. We have just acquired a load of them and they are well educated and have shown good attitude. We think that they have the potential to replace some of the expensive supervisory and junior management staff across the company and in particular in your department.”

The manager looked up and tried to

engage the eyes of the HR account manager as he spoke but the ceiling was winning his attention. “Well, I don't actually have a problem with my current supervisors or junior managers. I have just managed to get them working effectively individually and as a team. It has taken me three years and I want to leave them just as they are.”

“Well I am sorry to hear that” replied the HR Account Manager. “You are missing a huge opportunity here to reduce your labour costs by 50%; the only alternative is to outsource the work to Libya, yes Libya – that's the latest opportunity and is yielding an 80% saving at present, but we have not got an arrangement lined up yet to do that.”

The HR Account Manager continued again, still without taking breath, “Now it is HR policy to improve the efficiency of the Human Resource across the company, and I am afraid to say that we will stop supporting managers who want to use the old high-costs labour resources. We are undertaking a rationalisation programme to eradicate costs through innovative HR provision and this service, we call it ‘New Resources For Old, nick named NRFO, is a key plank on our HR strategy.”

“What do you mean you will stop supporting managers?” queried the manager, now sitting so far forward that he almost fell from his chair.

“Well what we mean is that we will stop paying the staff involved, and you the managers will have to sort that out with them.”

The first moment's silence was broken by the manager who was now standing up asking, “Is there a downside with this HR

innovation, with what did you call it – NRFO?”

A slight pause for breath and a considered moment later, the HR Account Manager replied. “Not as such – well not as we in HR see it. We just look upon NRFO as an opportunity for developing the new resources. These Eastern European people will pick up the English language and customs quickly, and we in HR, feel that within five years everybody will be looking back saying – what was the problem?”

The manager walked around his desk to face the HR Account Manager, “It's going to take five years?”

“No less than five, we reckon probably just three years” the HR Account Manager was now smiling, he felt that he was getting his message across and that he was providing a level of reassurance to the manager.

The manager leaned over the HR Account Manager, “But that's going to cause us problems! It is going to take us three years to get back to where we are today, and what about our services to our customers?”

The HR Account Manager retorted, “Well it's for the good of the company – in the longer term there's a 150% payback, that's over 10 years, and NRFO is now HR policy. ‘No gain without pain’, as they say, and after all, you are a manager and you get paid a lot of money – to sort out things like this.”

There was a verbal expression of disbelief, as the manager recoiled back into his chair.

The HR account manager carried on in ►

his own excitement, oblivious to the manager now sitting with his head in his hands.

“Now as your HR Account Manager I need to tell you about the other HR innovations we are introducing. We believe they will differentiate us from our competitors.”

“I need to tell you about the ‘Extended Maternity Leave Scheme’ – XMLS – as we are marketing it, where, if an employee has any member of their family that has had a baby, then they can take up to a year off, on half pay, to help.”

“And then there’s the ‘Staff Manager Switch Scheme’ – SMSS – as we have abbreviated it, where members of staff take over the department for a week and the manager does the work of the staff member. This will be very popular.”

“And then there’s the ‘Bring Your Pet To Work’ scheme, that goes by the title, yes I can see you have guessed it, haven’t you? – BYPTW. We are doing more than just extending our crèche arrangements. Pets will be with people in their work place. They are so calming at home that we

thought it would bring that calm to our working environment.”

“So that’s where we are, they are all HR policy, so you will need to know all of them in some detail because these are all being implemented this week”. But you have the reassurance of having me as your own personal HR Account Manager, to help you where I can.”

The HR Account Manager now looked into the eyes of the Manager for the first time and asked, “So what do you think?”



The story is a bit far fetched – of course it is – but can you draw the parallel with IT and the imposition of unwanted counterproductive IT innovation on the business? Just as the business is working smoothly with one set of information technologies – along comes another set – things don’t work, things work differently and people are back to square one – taking a year to get back where they were.

And whose fault is it? The IT industry for

not getting from the IT suppliers what the business needs, which is frequently not this year’s innovation, but the innovation of three years ago that is now working well.

The IT industry is still driven by the need to market IT innovation rather than just find ways to help the business evolve in its competitive markets.

To do this IT needs to understand its business and the business processes, far more than this year’s technology innovations. This is where ITIL should help IT take the Business Perspective and not its own perspective of the business world.

Has anybody heard of HRIL? Our HR companions need it in the company involved in the story above. ■

This article was written by John Gibert of Southcourt as part of the *IT Physician Help Thyself* articles, as a prelude to the last in the series of seven articles that will appear in the next edition of *servicetalk*. Any queries or comments please contact him at [John@Be-st.co.uk](mailto:John@Be-st.co.uk)

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# SLAs: An Evolution That Might Leave Darwin in a Daze

**Brian Hendry**  
*Senior Consultant*  
*Axios Systems*

**Remember when you first heard about Service Level Agreements?**

**It may have been more than a decade ago, when the trade press had firmly dubbed SLAs as the NBT – the Next Big Thing. And no wonder.**

For the first time, SLAs offered the alluring possibility of formalising an agreement to guarantee performance of

an IT function, such as network availability or desktop performance.

But after an initial buzz, SLAs were no longer the thing of headlines and the column inches were overtaken by other IT fashions of the day. One may well ask – what went wrong?

Actually, the fact is that SLAs and management of SLAs (SLM) have been

maturing steadily over the past decade, developing in line with the establishment of ITIL, the internationally accepted guidelines for best practice in IT service management. An increasing number of companies have moved from talking about SLAs to actual implementation, across industries ranging from finance to manufacturing.

What has changed, however, is the nature

of the SLA itself. The Service Level Agreement of today is a very different beast from the SLA of 1993, and here's why.

First, let's appreciate what the SLA actually is. At its core, it is a formalised agreement between the IT function and the business it serves. SLAs can be between outsourced technology providers and their clients but, quite crucially, they also cover the relationship between a company's internal IT function and the wider organisation. SLAs are about ensuring that the IT infrastructure serves the business function, and as that infrastructure has changed, so the SLA has become a different animal indeed – and the evolution has occurred so quickly it might leave even Darwin breathless.

From straightforward mainframe systems connecting dumb terminals to a humming cabinet of powerhouse systems locked in the basement, the corporate IT infrastructure has rapidly transformed into a frighteningly complex chain with many more links...which of course means more points of failure. The desktop PC links to a hub on the local area network, the LAN may link to other LANs and wide-area networks, including intranets, extranets and the Internet. All the applications, hubs, routers, switches and servers may make the IT manager think fondly of the days when dumb terminals walked the earth.

Today the SLAs that we see in companies are far more wide-ranging than in the old days, and that's precisely because IT isn't locked in the basement any more. Functionally, IT has moved into a strategic position at the very nucleus of modern business. When the end user's system is down, he or she doesn't care whether it's the PC, the local server, the telecom network, the Web server or some other element that has failed. They just want their system up again. This means SLAs of today must be as wide-ranging as the IT function itself, covering not just a single function – such as network availability – but the whole gamut of services that IT supports.

### We Don't Need That Around Here

If SLAs are so wonderful, why isn't an integrated SLM programme already in place in every business in the world? One

reason is that IT managers themselves may look askance at SLAs, fearing that they're just a sneaky management tool aimed at cutting costs, cutting jobs, or rooting out embarrassing inefficiencies in "the way we do things." One of the first things that we at Axios Systems always try to help companies realise is that SLAs can be empowering for everyone in the company. They don't have to be a big stick.

On a practical level, implementing an SLA entails looking at the key IT processes that must perform to a certain efficiency level for the business to run smoothly. This process of examination forges a new, open line of communication between management and IT, because both parties must clearly enunciate what the business expects of IT, and what the IT department can realistically deliver.

Some of the "gotchas" that can taint an SLA implementation are when companies do not set realistic goals for delivery of a service.

The functions that SLAs govern can vary hugely but they may include availability of key financial applications, response times for incidents or help desk queries, or timing for delivery of hardware components. Part of the process of putting in place a realistic SLA is not just identifying what functions should be monitored, but also negotiating what levels of availability can realistically be attained.

For instance, when first broaching an SLA, management may demand 100% availability of the accounting package. But following negotiation with IT – and after hearing how much it will cost to get 100% availability all the time – management may realise that 95% is completely satisfactory most of the time, and that 100% is needed only for crunch

periods such as the end of the month or close of the financial quarter.

### Let's Look At That Again

Is a company on the road to complete efficiency once it has identified the functions to be monitored and set realistic targets for availability in its SLA? The answer is no. All of the SLA preparation work will certainly be for nothing unless strict procedures are in place for reporting and remedial action. Unless a company examines the areas in which its SLA is being violated, it can't start to look for the causes. It's only by looking closely at the areas that are falling down that a company can diagnose the underlying triggers and really start its process of continuous improvement.

If a company wants to get into its stride with its SLA and develop that culture of constant improvement, it must look at these Service Level Agreements as part of a deeper alignment of the IT function with the business function. Some very important business benefits emerge when the IT people and the business management people have established that dialogue – budgeting is just one of them.

For example, if management takes a decision that it wants to grow by 20% next year, what chance do you think it has of achieving that goal if its network resources are already operating at 90% utilisation? A company that has Service Level Management as part of its corporate culture will be communicating its goals to the IT department. That means that IT can then look ahead, calculate what new people and systems resources will be needed to provide for 20% growth over 12 months, and the company can budget accordingly.

Looking back at what's changed with Service Level Agreements over the past decade or 15 years, what strikes me most is how very much broader SLAs have become to cater for the maturing role of the IT department as a service provider. The IT department isn't just providing boxes and software and cabling any more. It has become – and I believe it is beginning to see itself as – a real service provider, catering to its customers, who are its colleagues in the rest of the organisation. ■

# The Top Five Mistakes

A practical guide to improving IT service delivery

**Derek Brown**

*Managing Director*

*Available Systems Limited*

One of the biggest challenges for IT departments today is delivering high availability of systems to meet the ever-increasing expectations of customers, both internally and externally. IT environments are complex in their organisation, approach and infrastructure and have to grow and change at a pace to match the rate of business development. Is it any wonder therefore that things frequently go wrong and both sides end up disappointed and disillusioned!

Virtually any issue that has a detrimental effect on IT service delivery has an impact on the business as a whole. From my 30 years experience in the IT sector the top five issues which IT departments have to address to negate this impact are:

- Poor understanding of the business and customer relationships
- Difficulties managing the quantity and speed of change required by the business.
- An inappropriate balance between technology and process.
- Communication between development and service delivery is ineffective.
- Too much top-down focus on the “fire-fighting spiral” means service protection, recovery and improvement is neglected.

So how do we address these issues?

## Poor business understanding and customer relationships

It never ceases to amaze me how difficult relationships can be between IT departments and the businesses they serve. Frequently things can be exacerbated when outsourcing is in place. Nevertheless, even within a company one wonders if they are working on the same team.

IT is such an integral part of every business today that good communications between the customer and IT are absolutely crucial. Fostering trust and honesty is vital as the relationship grows and develops. Some difficult questions

need to be answered honestly:

- What efforts do we as IT professionals make to understand and support the drivers and challenges faced by our customers?
- What efforts do we make to build and develop relationships with our customers?
- How well do we manage customer expectations so that we don't constantly over-promise and under-deliver?
- Do we do enough to deliver metrics that are meaningful in business terms? Long gone are the days when percentage availability of the mainframe is of any value to anyone!

You may say it's a two-way street; the customer has to participate equally in maintaining and growing the relationship. Of course that's right but IT can still take the lead. This can be done by ensuring your IT function makes this a primary focus and has agreed processes in place which determine how the relationship will operate and what is expected of each party. Having this will provide a solid foundation upon which to deliver service and deal properly with the issues that will inevitably arise.

## Difficulty managing the quantity and speed of change required by the business

Of course, the customer wants the new development at the lowest price and they want it tomorrow. Relationship and processes are again key. Whilst we don't expect the customer to accept the fact that our development will take “for ever” and cost a “fortune” they have to be realistic enough to know that it won't be delivered “yesterday” for “free”.

In a mature relationship expectations will be realistic on both sides. Obviously there will be business-critical developments where IT has to pull out all the stops, but this can't be achieved all the time. The development workload has to be prioritised by the business.

With regard to processes, there has to be a solid Application Development methodology with the business playing a key role throughout the life cycle as well as Release and Change Management processes to control risk effectively.

## Inappropriate balance between technology and process

It's a fact that as techies we are in love with technology. After all, without the technology where would we be?

However, so many issues arise because processes have been neglected. Either they have not been developed properly or not adhered to – or both. The key processes required to run an effective IT department are well covered by ITIL documents. These are a very useful set of guidelines and with a pragmatic approach to process development and implementation, it is possible to achieve some very good practice in your IT operations.

## Ineffective communications between development and service delivery

Application Development and Operations teams often have widely different agendas. Development is only interested in delivering on time, within budget and meeting the functional requirements. Operation's prime aim is for the implementation to go cleanly and the system to be operable. The mind-sets may be different but the end-game has to be the same.

Operations and Development need to work in partnership to design, build and deliver a solution that:

- Takes account of non-functional requirements as well as functional.
- Accounts for the running costs of a solution as well as the development costs.
- Includes sign-off points throughout the life cycle.
- Interfaces with Release and Change



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Management processes.

- Retains development support for a “warranty” period following implementation (ensuring this support is properly costed and not “thrown in” for free).

### Fire Fighting Spiral

Delivering consistently reliable service to customer is what it's all about. Hardware, software, processes and people will fail at some stage or another. However, the effort put into reducing the risk of failure can pay dividends. Why not use your fire-fighting resources as gatekeepers and checkers instead?

Make sure you have top-level support in the organisation for service protection, service recovery and service improvement by considering the following:

#### Service Protection:

- Identify critical components in your IT infrastructure and configure them to minimise or avoid business impact upon failure.
- Changes cause problems, ensure you have effective processes to manage

change and risk.

- Be proactive in addressing issues that you know leave your service vulnerable.
- Ensure ownership and accountability are at the heart of everything you do.
- Take time to learn and apply solutions from incidents and problems encountered.
- Test your procedures on a regular basis to ensure they will stand up to a real crisis.
- Human behaviour is unpredictable – robust, highly-conformant best practice processes and procedures are therefore vital.

#### Service Recovery:

- Ensure that incidents are detected either before service is affected or at worst immediately it is affected.
- Quickly implement diagnostic and recovery skills and techniques to detect the cause and expedite service recovery.
- Manage incidents effectively including where necessary escalation and invocation of Crisis Management procedures.

- Keep the customer fully informed of progress and manage expectations for service restoration.

#### Service Improvement:

- Have a management focus on improving service – continually review your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Develop and manage a formal service improvement programme with an allocated budget and involve ALL areas of IT as well as a customer representative.
- Measure key performance indicators and set realistic, but demanding improvement targets.
- Have a management system for formally reviewing service and introducing additional activities to the service improvement programme.

In conclusion, problems and issues over IT will always be with us but if technology, communications and processes are correctly aligned it should go a long way to minimising the risks of failure and hopefully producing delighted customers! ■



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# Keeping the IT Balancing Act on the Tight Rope

**Tim Young**  
*Proxima Technology*

A great deal is written about the value of measurement, but apart from knowing that it is necessary, it appears to be something that we generally need improvement on. As a result, business decisions are made based on empirical evidence that is either lacking or woolly to say the least. “Gut feel” and “intuition” are very much the order of the day and any moves to put in place a measurement system invariably lead to cries of protest about freedom, trust and creativity. While intuition has undoubtedly created some of the world’s most successful businesses, it has probably wreaked havoc on many more. So the adage—you can’t improve what you don’t measure—needs to be your mantra if you are to become an effective decision maker.

A balanced scorecard is a measurement system that provides real insight into the status of a business or some part of it. According to Gartner, balanced scorecards are the most widely recognised business measurement systems<sup>1</sup>. Developed in the 1990s by Kaplan and Norton, this approach converts value drivers—such as customer service, innovation, operational efficiency and financial performance—to a series of defined metrics. Companies record and analyse these metrics to help determine if they are achieving strategic goals, and use this model to ensure each potentially conflicting perspective is in balance. For example, an insurance company may increase profitability by offering incentives to Claims Assessors for taking a tough stance on payout, but they will also quickly find dissatisfaction among their clients that may lead to attrition. Scorecards help get this balance right and are a significant breakthrough over more traditional single dimension approaches that tend to be based purely on expense management and business growth. An example of a balanced scorecard is shown in Figure 1 above.

Balanced scorecards are very relevant to IT service-level management (SLM). Not only is this a data intensive task that needs unscrambling, but also our universe is an electronic one in which you can easily capture and analyse vast amounts of data to establish true meaning. Furthermore, IT departments need tools to improve service quality and reduce costs, but they also need tools to articulate their value in terms meaningful to their colleagues in other departments. Finally corporate executives need to understand fully where their IT investment is paying off. So what better than to use the defacto management measurement system for this purpose?

A scorecard implementation takes the “less is more” adage to its logical conclusion to provide a picture of service quality that is instantly accessible to all participants in Service Delivery. From the technicians operating the service, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) accountable for it, to the end-users who are the ultimate beneficiaries, everyone has a common understanding of value—with each viewpoint tailored to specific responsibilities. This hierarchy is illustrated in Figure 2 overleaf.

At the top-level, sits the CIO accountable for the service of the overall investment in IT. Here, interest focuses on the business value of IT and the impact of any failure or some service improvement activity. This view requires alignment



between IT services and the business processes they support to allow IT service quality to be analysed in the context of the resultant effect to the business. A vehicle for achieving this alignment is the scorecard, which delivers metrics that chosen at this level, will reflect corporate business strategy in order to show how IT contributes to these end goals.

The next level in our hierarchy is occupied by Service Delivery Managers who are responsible for quality of application service. Essentially, this part of our scorecard reports service level agreement (SLA) compliance. This view also requires IT services to be aligned with at least the critical business processes in order sensibly to prioritise and direct the service provisioning task. Scorecard users at this level may also include business process owners who are responsible for the IT-dependant business processes and who need to understand how IT affects business services, at any given moment. Although these business



process owners are not in a position to address IT problems, being aware of how IT impacts business service allows them to take steps to minimise disruption. For example, a manager of a customer response centre can instruct every other agent to take customer details for subsequent call-back in the event of a system slow-down.

At the lowest level in the hierarchy, although playing a critical role none the less, are the technicians responsible for the constituent parts of the service, for example, the Database Administrators (DBA) and Systems Administrations. The view taken here is to clearly understand the root cause of any problem and the value of the scorecard lies very much in the shared viewpoint. This allows Administrators to see situations clearly where they are responsible for a root cause versus simply being affected by it and to take action as appropriate.

### The Value Perspectives in the SLM Scorecard

In an SLM scorecard, the internal process perspective shows you the effectiveness of your Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) service delivery process.

Organisations that take continuous improvement seriously and have standardised on a quality management process—such as Six Sigma—will also benefit from having a ready-made recipe for measuring the effectiveness of these processes. Furthermore, these quality management methods identify adverse waste and report this in meaningful cost

to the business terms (it's a wonder that so many people take a negative stance towards quality management!). For the organisations using these quality management processes, the balanced scorecard simply provides a placeholder for metrics that are already available, such as process sigma and cost of poor quality. Although it somewhat defeats the purpose of the exercise to propose pre-canned metrics, since the metrics ought to reflect strategy, metrics that we would not be surprised to see in the process perspective include: performance to SLAs, throughput, availability, capacity forecasts, accuracy of capacity forecasts, incident recovery, mean time to fix (MTF) and mean time between failure (MTBF).

In order of ease-of-implementation, probably the next perspective is that of finance since there already exists an abundance of well-defined and well-policed metrics. Although matters fiscal are generally well known to upper management, it is a concept that rank and file employees may have had little exposure to. Since this is the harshest of all realities, it can only be a good thing that it becomes a factor in routine decision-making—particularly since this relates directly to the scorecard user's area of responsibility. For example, a DBA aware of the cost of poor quality of a poorly running database is more likely to direct attention to this, even though a service may not actually be in breach. Another aspect of the financial perspective that has a bearing (at least to longer term planning) is that of capitalisation: that is, how many resources you are consuming to provide a

service. While over capitalisation cannot be addressed overnight, a downward trend in this regard provides a good indicator of cost savings. Candidate metrics for the finance perspective include: billing, consumption, performance to budget, savings, COPQ, penalty payments, asset depreciation costs, ROI, profitability (by user/customer).

The customer perspective shows the opinions and behaviour of our target customer (or end user). The opinions of the end-user customer are significant and oftentimes a perception of reality can carry more weight than actual events. So it makes a lot of sense to capture and understand this viewpoint. Measuring the user perspective is not straightforward, but the voice of the customer (VOC) is a technique that can be deployed to great effect. VOC is basically a survey, but with advances in technology, can be deployed on a corporate intranet, kiosk style. Apart from measuring user perception, VOC becomes a huge marketing exercise: when users express their opinion, they feel part of the process—providing someone actually listens, that is.

Of all the perspectives on our scorecard, probably the most troublesome is that of innovation and learning. This perspective describes our capability at achieving the required results in the other perspectives. This boils down to the skill set of our workers, their effectiveness and the capability of the infrastructure that allows them to execute the internal processes to create happy customers and achieve the desired profitability and revenue goals. This perspective is more easily understood with example metrics, which could include: rewards and recognition, classes taken, lateral moves, teamwork, "Corporate Citizen", upgrade activity, efficiency and so on.

### Summary

Keeping a balanced scorecard is key to providing understanding, accountability and insight into the overall business. By maintaining records of business-relevant metrics, cross-department employees achieve one strategic business vision. Having one solid perspective across the organisation is more effective as compared to many; and using this model seeks keep the IT balancing act in-check. ■

<sup>1</sup> Gartner Inc., "Drivers and Challenges of Corporate Performance Management" Jan 2004

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*“There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things we know we don’t know. But, there are also unknown unknowns. These are things we don’t know we don’t know.”*

Donald Rumsfeld

Well thanks for clearing that one up Donald! In fact, to manage IT Service Continuity effectively, an IT Manager needs to know one of these known unknowns.

### A Known Unknown

A common known unknown for many IT Managers is the relative priority of IT Services provided to the business. Often the business itself does not understand:

- The dependency placed on IT Services.
- The cost that the business would incur if IT Service was lost.

### Why Is This A Problem?

The IT Manager is in a difficult position of having to allocate scarce resources to provide IT Service Continuity capability, often with little or no input or direction from the business. This is because business managers often assume that IT Service Continuity is a problem only for the IT Manager.

Of course IT Service Continuity should be a shared responsibility between IT and the business. After all, following IT Service loss it is the business managers that will incur the cost and they will expect the IT Manager to fix it.

### Sharing Responsibility for IT Service Continuity

In order to share responsibility effectively, the gap between IT and the business needs to be bridged. To manage IT Service Continuity effectively, it is critical there is a mutual understanding of how IT and the business work together.

This is a broader issue, but in the context of IT Service Continuity, the IT Manager could set the following objectives:

1. To understand the business impacts of IT Service loss.
2. To allocate resources to effectively mitigate business impacts.

### Achieving These Objectives

Achieving these objectives and a



# IT Service Continuity – “Know the Unknowns”

**Gary Donlon**  
Senior Consultant  
Jermyn Consulting

practical application of the ITIL model for IT Service Continuity can be accomplished by the following **Five Steps to Success**.

#### Step 1 – Measure IT Service Loss

The IT Manager needs to work with representatives from the business to measure the impact of loss of each IT Service, over time. Agree the measurement criteria in advance, remembering that impacts / losses to the business could be incurred qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

#### Step 2 – Develop recovery policies for IT Services

The recovery policy is the time during which IT Services must be recovered before the business incurs an unacceptable loss. Each IT Service and the assets supporting them should be

assigned an appropriate recovery policy. The limitations of available technologies should be considered when assigning recovery policies.

#### Step 3 – Demonstrate recovery capability and identify gaps

The Financial Services Authority and Civil Contingencies Bill both contain specific reference to the need to demonstrate recovery capability. By implementing a robust Service continuity programme, the IT Manager can develop a gap analysis between recovery policies and current capabilities. A robust Service Continuity programme includes:

- Documented recovery procedures for each type of asset.
- A recovery-testing programme that proves technical recoverability.
- An alignment between actual or expected recovery timeframes and the recovery policy.
- Third party contracts and Service Level Agreements that may assist recovery (e.g. maintenance and disaster recovery contracts).
- A maintenance system to manage changes in technology, IT Services, business priorities and business impacts.
- A Disaster Recovery Plan that integrates emergency management procedures with IT functional recovery.

Where any of these components are missing, recovery capability is diminished. Remedial work to reduce or eliminate the gaps should be prioritised according to the business impacts. The table at the foot of the page illustrates the relationship between business impacts and prioritisation of remedial works.

#### Step 4 – Identify appropriate solutions

Developing solutions to close the gap between recovery policies and current capabilities may require a substantial investment in time and money. Often the

**Table 1 – Recovery Capability Gap Analysis**

	Email	ERP	Payroll	Management Information	Intranet
<b>Business impact</b>	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
<b>Current recovery capability</b>	3 days	4 hours	1 day	4 hours	3 days
<b>Priority for remedial work</b>	HIGH	Not req.	Not req.	MEDIUM <sup>1</sup>	Not req.
Note 1: A MEDIUM priority for remedial work has been assigned to this IT Service since it may be appropriate to reduce recovery capability.					

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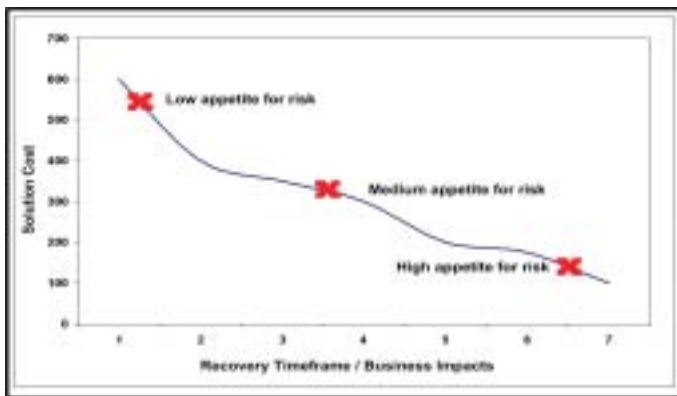
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**Chart 1 – Cost v Benefit Model**



cost of the solution is inversely related to the required recovery timeframe. A wide range of technical and procedural solutions is available in the market, and in order to obtain the necessary resources, the IT Manager needs to build a business case.

The business case is made by comparing the cost of achieving the recovery policies against the benefit of avoiding the business impacts. This equation is slightly more complex however, since the

organisation's appetite for risk has a bearing on the decision.

Building IT Service Continuity capability is not just about implementing the technology. Equally important is the organisation's ability to identify when an incident becomes an emergency, and then to

manage the response.

The effective integration of incident management, emergency management and resolution procedures underpins recovery capability. This is a subject matter in its own right and will be discussed in a future issue of servicetalk.

### Step 5 – Implement the solutions

Often, IT operational staff assume that serious IT Service failure will not happen to them, or that they will be able to resolve the problem when it arises. This

apparent complacency is broadly responsible for the ineffective implementation of solutions.

To overcome this complacency, the IT Manager must increase awareness regarding the impact of IT Service loss. To achieve this it is useful to assign responsibility for IT Service Continuity to individuals. Improvements in capability can be measured through regular performance reviews and a testing programme.

### In Summary

The impact of IT Service loss is a known unknown for many IT Managers. By following our Five Steps to Success, an IT Manager can be confident that:

- A known unknown becomes a known known!
- Recovery capability will be improved.
- The likelihood of serious disruption to IT Services will be reduced.
- Resources will be assigned where needed most.
- The level of understanding between IT and the business will be increased. ■

# Axios Systems Achieve BS15000 Certification

**Brian Kerr**

*BS15000 Project Director*

*Axios Systems*

On 27th February 2004, Axios Systems, the leading international Help Desk & IT Service Management solution vendor, became one of the first organisations in the world successfully to achieve BS15000 accreditation as verified by the official IT Service Management Forum (*itSMF*) BS15000 certification scheme.

BS15000 is the first worldwide standard specifically aimed at ITSM and is based on the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL), the internationally accepted Best Practice framework. The certification scheme was launched last year to provide independent verification against the standard.

This is the story of our certification process; the highs and lows, the internal commitment and activities required in order to be a Best Practice success.

## Axios Systems and Best Practice – a winning partnership

Since its inception in 1988, Axios Systems have embraced ITIL and Best Practice methodology and subsequently designed our core solution, *assyst*, around the ITIL processes. With the introduction of BS15000 as the only recognised measurement of a company's ITIL compliance, it seemed a logical step that Axios should set themselves the goal of being one of the first organisations in the world to achieve certification against the standard. In achieving this certification, we would demonstrate our commitment to ITIL and Best Practice and also show that we practice what we preach.

## Embrace across the whole organisation – starting at the top

The crucial first step on our BS15000

journey was to ensure Director level commitment to the project. Given our historical commitment to ITIL, our Directors and other senior members of staff embraced the concept and encouraged everyone in the organisation to display the same level of commitment to the certification process. The next step was to appoint a project manager and allocate roles and responsibilities. The certification project was then formally launched throughout Axios Systems.

## Where are we now?

Embarking on our certification journey, the primary approach taken was similar to that of the audit. We had to establish where we were, where we needed to be and what we needed to do to close the gap. A useful tool in this exercise was the PD0015 workbook – a self-assessment tool from British Standards that helped us determine our position at that point. We were pleased by the positive result of our initial self-assessment – but knew there was still considerable work to be done to meet the exacting standard!!

## Evidence is all-important

In adhering to BS15000, documentation is extremely important as it is regarded as evidence of the provision of quality Service Management. Historical records are also used during the process as evidence of the performance of past Service Management activities. We therefore built a team to gather all documentation relating to ITSM and establish that which we did not have. Because we operate a policy of continuous improvement, we didn't have to create new processes to meet the Standard; we just had to ensure that our

documentation correctly reflected the processes and working practises already in place within Axios. This step provided us with a list of tasks that were then allocated to specific individuals within the Project team. Regular review meetings ensured we were maintaining our momentum, staying on track and building our enthusiasm for the project!

## Let your tool assist you

During our BS15000 journey, we found that much of the evidence required by BS15000 can be provided through use of a fully integrated IT Service Management tool. A key component therefore in demonstrating our conformance to the standard was our own use of our core solution, *assyst*.

Using *assyst* we were able to demonstrate the recording, tracking, updating and formal closure of Incidents, Problems and Changes. *assyst* also contained pre-defined automated workflows and escalation paths depending on the circumstances of the Incident, Problem or Change being logged.

We were also able to demonstrate the recording and measurement of Service Level Agreements (SLA's), Operational Level Agreements (OLA's) and Supplier Contracts within *assyst* as well as holding comprehensive asset information, including relationships between assets.

## Be prepared – readiness is key

We were fortunate to have qualified auditors and ITIL qualified Service Managers within Axios who could undertake an internal pre-audit of our readiness for the full audit. We used the



results from this pre-audit to plug any gaps identified and when we were satisfied with the results booked the final audit through one of the itSMF registered auditors, KPMG.

### The audit itself

In scheduling the audit we discovered that the audit length can vary in terms of the number of days required based on the size of the organisation being audited. Our audit took approximately six days in total to complete.

On arrival, KPMG undertook a Gap Analysis exercise of our documentation against that required by the Standard. They also reviewed our supporting records and trend analysis reports generated from assyst, which offered definitive proof that we follow our documented processes.

The result of this phase of the audit was a corrective action plan for Axios from KPMG; this thankfully was reasonably short as a result of our own successful pre-audit activities. We then had to address the issues raised in the corrective action plan and move onto the certification audit stage. As with the Gap Analysis stage, the audit generated a list of recommendations, of which none were major. The auditors were then in a position to recommend certification against the standard.

### Success!

Following recommendation that Axios Systems be awarded BS15000 certification, formal sign off was required by a senior partner within KPMG. Our certificate confirming our success was issued on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2004. ■

*Colin Rudd, Chair of the itSMF BS15000 Certification Committee said, "The standard is very demanding in its requirements of IT service providers. It is incredible that Axios have been able to demonstrate that they have achieved such a high level of process maturity so soon. This far exceeds our expectation and we hope that many other organisations will follow their excellent example".*

*Rudd went on to say "Although the standard and scheme have been developed in Britain the attention is not confined purely there. The enthusiasm for this activity is happening on a global basis, with organisations in India, Australia, USA and the Far East also actively working toward the standard and certification. The fact that Axios have been the first in Europe to achieve certification under the scheme is a major accomplishment for them and demonstrates their commitment to service quality."*



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Member

# International News

The spread of *itSMF* across the globe continues apace, with significant development in the Asia Pacific region.

## Italy

February saw Italy become the latest country to join the community.

## India

A business plan has been submitted and is currently undergoing minor rework. A number of customer and vendor organisations are committed to bringing the chapter into being.

## Singapore

With significant input from EXEL, HP, IBM, Singapore Computer Society and a number of independent consultants, a steering committee has commenced work on establishing the legal entity with the aim of launching formally with an event in August.

## China

A steering committee comprised of representatives from HP, IBM, half-a dozen user organisations and a government agency are formalising the legal entity.

## Hong Kong

A first meeting of interested parties comprising representatives from Fujitsu, HK Computer Society, HK Jockey Club, HK MTR, HP & IBM has been held. A steering committee will commence work on the business plan and chapter formation. Cathay Pacific have since joined the group.

## New Zealand

Following several presentations last year from CEO, Aidan Lawes, planning meetings for establishing the chapter are being held in early April with assistance from Brian Jennings, *itSMF* Australia President.

Elsewhere, **Brazil's** business plan has been approved and subject to ratification at the International Board, they will be accepted as an official chapter. Other countries where there are activities underway include **Finland, Hungary, Poland** and **Spain**.

By the time this reaches your desk, the first meeting of the International Executive Board will have occurred. There are significant changes to the International operations under review and the next issue will contain full details of the outcome. With the growth in chapters, there is now a wide range of conferences on offer – see the diary for dates. ■

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# servicetalk

## Deadline Dates

Issue	Copy Deadline	Advertising
June 2004	Tuesday May 4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday May 6 <sup>th</sup>
August 2004	Tuesday July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday July 8 <sup>th</sup>
October 2004	Tuesday September 7 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday September 9 <sup>th</sup>
December 2004	Tuesday November 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thursday November 4 <sup>th</sup>
February 2005	Tuesday January 4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday January 6 <sup>th</sup>

## Advertising rates

As from February 2004

	<i>itSMF</i> Vendor Members	Non-Vendor members
1 x Full page	£450	£650
1 x Half-page	£275	£425
1 x Quarter page	£150	£250

A 10% reduction is available if a series of 6 adverts is booked and paid for in advance.

Contact [publications@itsmf.com](mailto:publications@itsmf.com) to book advertising.

## Thinking about submitting an article?

Articles should be between 1200 – 1500 words in length, and in PC compatible format.

## File Formats for Photos or Graphics

Any accompanying photographs need to be high resolution files (300dpi). Graphics need to be supported by the separate original files in which they are created – not just a copy of the Word document. Ideally these files should be created in a high quality programme such as Photoshop (as a 300dpi TIF file or JPG file for colour material or BMP file for mono material), or in Illustrator (as a high resolution EPS file).

Articles should be emailed to [publications@itsmf.com](mailto:publications@itsmf.com) as an attachment to an accompanying email detailing the topic of the article

# Diary 2004

Date	Meeting	Venue	Comments
April 6	Institute of Service Management meeting	Reading	
April 7	Midlands & East Anglia Regional Group Meeting	Kettering	
April 15	South West & Wales Regional Group	tbc	
April 21	Scottish Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
April 22	Northern Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
<b>May 13</b>	<b>itSMF Seminar: Problem Management</b>	<b>Dublin</b>	
May 18	BS 15000 Certification committee	Reading	
<b>May 18-19</b>	<b>itSMF South Africa Conference</b>	<b>Indaba Hotel, Johannesburg</b>	<b>IT Service Management Safari – the journey to success</b>
<b>May 25</b>	<b>itSMF Portugal – Conference</b>	<b>Lisbon</b>	
June 3	Management Board	Reading	
June 3	Northern Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
June 8	Institute of Service Management meeting	Reading	
June 10	South West & Wales Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
<b>June 29</b>	<b>itSMF Seminar: BS15000 Seminar</b>	<b>Reading</b>	
June 29	Vendors ESC Meeting	Reading	
July 7	Midlands & East Anglia Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
July 8	Publications ESC Meeting	Reading	
<b>July 28</b>	<b>itSMF Seminar: Business Perspective</b>	<b>Birmingham</b>	
<b>August 2- 4</b>	<b>itSMF Australia Annual Conference</b>	<b>Melbourne</b>	
September 1	Scottish Regional Group Meeting	tba	
September 2	Management Board	Reading	
September 9	South West & Wales Regional Group Meeting	tba	
<b>September 9</b>	<b>itSMF Canada Annual Conference</b>	<b>Toronto</b>	
<b>September 16</b>	<b>itSMF Seminar</b>	<b>tbc</b>	
<b>September 27 – 2 October</b>	<b>itSMF USA Annual Conference</b>	<b>Long Beach</b>	<b>ITSM: Beyond the Foundation, Building the Future</b>
October 6	Midlands & East Anglia Regional Group Meeting	tbc	
October 7	Publications ESC meeting	Reading	
<b>November 8 – 10</b>	<b>itSMF 13<sup>th</sup> Annual UK Conference &amp; Exhibition</b>	<b>Brighton Metropole</b>	<b>“Creating &amp; Maintaining the Momentum” — Book Early!</b>
November 24	Scottish Regional Group Meeting	tba	
December 2	Management Board & Council of members	Reading	
<b>December 7-8</b>	<b>itSMF Germany Annual Conference</b>	<b>Hamburg</b>	
<b>December 8</b>	<b>itSMF Seminar</b>	<b>tbc</b>	
December 9	South West & Regional Group Meeting	tbc	

# *itSMF* Forthcoming Seminars

The IT Service Management Forum

## "Out of the Darkness in to the Light!"

13 May 2004 Dublin

The *itSMF* return to Ireland with one of the most problematical (excuse the pun) aspects of Service Support, that of Problem Management. The ITIL framework appears simple to understand, but is the implementation in reality a great deal more complex? Without due care a fog can descend, obscuring the lines between Incident and Problem Management adding to the swirling mist surrounding that of problem control, error control and proactive prevention; it is easy to become encased in complete darkness. Is there a magic light bulb? Or do you have to find some tinder and a spark to find your way out of the darkness, back in to the light?

This seminar will consider and cover some of the following areas:

- How to Achieve Problem Solving at the Strategic Level
- Ensuring Analysis of the Real Problem and the Cost of Analysing the Wrong One
- The Importance of Problem Solving with a Disciplined Approach
- Good Problem Managers need to be Good Problem Solvers – Discuss!
- Does the Theory Fit the Reality?
- Can We Afford to Ignore Proactive Problem Management?

## BS 15000 Certification – "From the Horse's Mouth!"

29 June 2004 Reading

Everyone seems to want to know about BS 15000 and plenty have their own view, but what is the reality? As the *itSMF* is the owner of the official certification scheme it would seem sensible to hear it as it were, "from the horse's mouth"! In this seminar we will dispel any misconceptions and put you and your organisation on the right track. We will also listen to your comments about future communication. The final programme has yet to be decided but is anticipated to include:

- BS15000 The Standard Explained
- BS15000 The Certification Scheme
- An Auditors Experience
- A User Experience
- Benefits and ROI

Please check the website for a list of speakers and associated synopsis.  
Recent Seminars organised and run by the *itSMF* have been extremely successful and so we suggest you consider booking early to avoid disappointment.

Finally, future seminar topics are being considered.  
Is there a subject matter that is becoming a burning issue?  
Please email Jenny at [events@itsmf.com](mailto:events@itsmf.com) with your suggestion.