


"IT has done a terrific job of automating processes around developing software, but the opposite is true when it comes down to automation in operations and production environments."

Jean-Pierre Garbani, Forrester Research

HOW TO GET ITIL DONE

Implementing ITIL and making it a reality.





Few would argue over the crucial role of IT in today's economy. In our lifetime, we have witnessed IT evolve from a limited service function into a critical core competency of modern organizations.

Stepping out of the shadows and into the limelight has created new challenges for IT, however. Expectations have risen dramatically throughout all levels of the organization and its ecosystem of customers, partners, investors and stakeholders. Everyone expects – and demands – more from IT.

Despite the implications of Moore's Law, IT still represents a significant investment for most organizations. Faced with increased demand and finite resources, many organizations have set their sights on three broad goals:

- Reducing IT costs
- Increasing IT efficiency
- Optimizing existing IT infrastructure

Achieving these three goals requires buy-in from top management and serious effort across the organization. Integrating and automating core business processes are requisite steps. Organizations that ignore these requisites will find it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to extract value from IT investments.

ITIL IS THE PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK

Fortunately, a roadmap for achieving the crucial goals already exists. The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) provides a common framework of all IT activities. This framework enables companies to identify, define, communicate and implement best practices throughout their IT organizations. ITIL also empowers IT organizations to align themselves with the business goals of the larger organizations they serve.

Additionally, the adoption of ITIL often results in improved customer satisfaction through a more professional approach to service delivery and better delivery of third-party services through standardization around ITIL as the basis for service delivery in services procurements.

The process of standardization and alignment is achieved primarily by defining and automating data

center processes. Although most data center tools (monitoring, provisioning, virtualization, service desk, etc.) provide deep task automation within their solutions, they do not automate processes between applications, departments or data silos. This creates a substantial load of additional manual work for IT staff.

Since most IT managers are interested in optimizing the use of their resources by reducing the amount of redundant work done by their staff, there is a strong motivation to leverage ITIL processes by automating them to the greatest extent possible.

Automating ITIL processes requires a platform that **orchestrates applications, automates tasks and integrates data between systems**. The automation platform should be capable of performing these duties simply, swiftly and effectively to ensure consistent results and steady progress towards the goals of reduced costs and improved service levels.

COMMON IMPLEMENTATION HAZARDS

The experiences of several hundred organizations reveal that ITIL initiatives tend to stumble for a variety of reasons. The top three causes for ITIL implementation problems are:

1. Human Weak Link Failure

It is impractical to assume that humans will follow the rules described in ITIL methodologies to a tee. To be successful, enterprises need to remove humans from the process as much as possible and instead rely on automation technologies to better chances of repeatability and consistency.

2. Process Definition Scope Creep

Oftentimes, enterprises do not put enough thought into the constraints of the definition of processes they want to document and enforce, rather it becomes a "what should we do" exercise versus a "what do we need to do" exercise.

3. Communications Failure

IT personnel often fail to market their ITIL project as a way to drive both internal efficiency and service levels, and try to use the ITIL label as the main message. ITIL projects are costly, therefore, IT staff should be able

to demonstrate up front how it will fortify core business processes and make them more reliable. This demonstration will avoid lost budgets or abandoned projects part way through an ITIL implementation.

There is little question about the ultimate value of ITIL to competitive organizations. Indeed, most organizations can rightly expect enormous benefits from ITIL implementations – if they are done properly.

DEMYSTIFYING ITIL PROCESSES

From the onset, IT executives must shoulder responsibility for taking the mystery out of ITIL processes and making a strong business case for supporting ITIL initiatives by explaining potential benefits clearly and by sharing case studies of successful ITIL implementations.

For example, one leading international provider of integrated logistics services with 38,000 employees at over 1,100 locations across the world relies heavily on its IT organization to manage the land, sea and air transportation systems that generate its €6.9 billion in revenues annually.

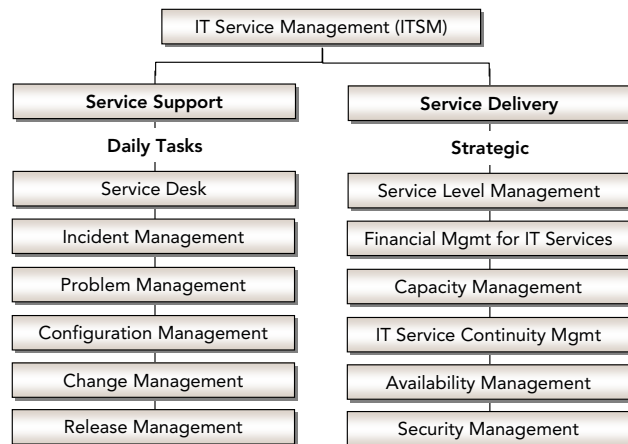
In this company’s situation, early integration and automation of core business processes proved crucial to the success of its ITIL implementation. Their decision to automate routine maintenance procedures such as nightly shutdown and restart of servers, database backups and Electronic Data Interchange transfers reduced IT workloads and freed staff for other projects. This ITIL implementation now helps the company maintain high levels of IT service with a relatively lean IT budget.

Another successful example is one of Europe’s top 10 IT services companies, an industry leader with revenue of more than €1.1 billion and 9,000 employees. One of the firm’s first automation initiatives was consolidating its managed services centers. The secure services are based on standardized methods, including ITIL and service performance indicators. The result was that this organization achieved significant gains in operational efficiency and reliability from the

consolidation – benefits that directly impact the company’s bottom line.

ITIL PROCESSES ARE FOUNDED ON BEST PRACTICES

Based on a “common sense” approach to coping with the real-world challenges of IT service management, ITIL is essentially a collection of best practices for managing requests, incidents, problems, changes, and service level agreements. Ideally, ITIL enables organizations to effectively manage IT costs, increase IT efficiency and optimize existing IT resources.



The ITIL framework is built around two main pillars: **Service Support** and **Service Delivery**. Each of these pillars has five components. Here are brief summaries of each:

SERVICE SUPPORT – DAILY TASKS

1. Configuration Management – The foundation of IT service management, Configuration Management underlies all the processes within the ITIL framework. The essential goals Configuration Management include identifying and defining Configuration Items (CIs), and ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the Configuration Management Database (CMDB).

2. Incident Management – The process for handling incidents from detection to closure, Incident Management is responsible for restoring service swiftly and with minimal impact on business operations.

3. Problem Management – Responsible for minimizing negative effects of incidents, Problem Management helps the organization discover the underlying causes of incidents and identify potential issues before they adversely affect users. Problem management is also a process for analyzing trends that could have a negative impact on productivity.

4. Change Management – By providing a standardized approach to managing changes in the infrastructure, Change Management ensures that changes will have minimal negative impact. Detailed analyses of risk, resource requirements, business continuity and impact are required for achieving an appropriate balance between the need for change and the unavoidable consequences of change in complex IT environments.

5. Release Management – This process ensures consistency throughout rollout and version control of hardware and software. Release Management adopts a holistic view of IT service changes, taking into consideration technical and non-technical aspects of a release. In addition to providing for the consistent distribution of hardware and software packages, it ensures accuracy of the CMDB. Release Management is also responsible for legal and contractual obligations covering software and hardware used throughout the organization.

SERVICE DELIVERY - STRATEGIC

1. Service Level Management – This process helps organizations maintain and improve IT service by working with users to develop new services and ensure consistent delivery of existing services through careful monitoring of service level metrics. The goals of Service Level Management (SLM) include providing accurate metrics measuring support effectiveness, fostering two-way communication between the IT organization and the larger organization it serves, and managing costs of specific services. SLM also negotiates support targets defined in Operational Level Agreements (OLAs).

2. Availability Management – By optimizing infrastructure capability and its supporting organizations, Availability Management ensures cost-effective levels of IT service consistently over time. Availability Management is responsible for

ensuring that promised services meet or exceed their availability targets.

3. Capacity Management – The primary goal of Capacity Management is making certain that asset capacity is available to support business objectives. Capacity Management planning is closely linked to the business strategy of the larger organization. Capacity Management also predicts future needs for additional capacity required to meet business objectives that are likely to arise. Performance Management, Workload Management, Demand Management and Application Sizing and Modeling can also play important roles in the ongoing Capacity Management process.

4. Financial Management for IT Services – This increasingly crucial process provides the foundation for managing the IT organization as a business within the larger business organization. Financial Management for IT is primarily concerned with understanding the true costs of IT services, tracking Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) and forecasting future IT spending. By providing accurate accounting for the costs of IT service delivery and by projecting future costs credibly, Financial Management enables the business organization to make better, more rational decisions on a consistent basis.

5. IT Service Continuity Management – Responsible for ensuring continued support of Service Level Agreements following interruptions and outages, this process generates recovery plans for providing service to agreed levels on an agreed schedule. The IT Service Continuity Management process defines the procedures necessary for returning IT to agreed levels after an outage, monitors infrastructure assets for availability and actively realigns or redeploys resources after an outage to achieve the best possible service levels.

NET TAKEAWAY

As IT services move from the periphery to the virtual center of commercial ecosystems, it becomes increasingly apparent that ad hoc systems of interdependent platforms and applications cannot hope to keep pace with the demands of a global economy driven by information.

ITIL processes represent a logical alternative. ITIL is a serves as a practical framework for raising and maintaining the quality of IT service management. The benefits of using ITIL include reduced IT costs, improved IT customer satisfaction, increased productivity and more effective utilization of IT human resources.

Although ITIL initiatives are more likely to succeed with support from top management, ITIL processes can provide direct and immediate benefits to CIO's, IT directors, IT managers and IT service providers. The potential for ITIL initiatives to play significant roles in managing costs and increasing productivity puts ITIL on the radar of investors, analysts and the media.

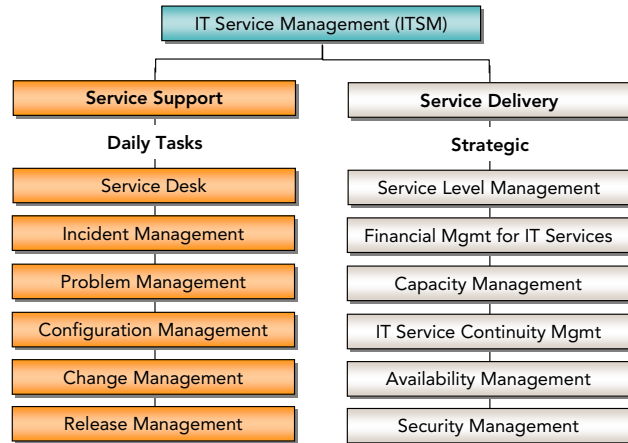
Automation is a critical element in the success of ITIL implementations. Organizations with a serious commitment to ITIL processes are likely to invest in technology that orchestrates applications, automates routine tasks and integrates data between various systems. Organizations that attempt to mount ITIL implementations without first investing in these automation capabilities are likely to face a higher risk of failure.

With ITIL gaining traction, a new industry has emerged to facilitate and support ITIL initiatives. Several vendors offer products and services designed expressly to leverage the power of ITIL processes to improve service levels, balance resources and control costs. The ability to discern critical differences between these vendors and make appropriate choices based on real-world business needs will become increasingly important over the next two to three years.

OPALIS SOLUTIONS

Opalis Solutions automate best practices in Service Support, those being the processes that make up the daily operations in IT. Opalis Solutions for *Incident Process Automation*, *Problem Process Automation*, *Configuration Process Automation*, *Change Process Automation* and *Release Process Automation* provide organizations will the tools to orchestrate applications, automate tasks, and integrate data between systems.

Opalis provides the capabilities to automate the people, processes and technology required to implement best practices, reduce costs and improve service levels.



ABOUT OPALIS

Opalis Software, Inc. is the expert provider of enterprise infrastructure software that enables the integration and automation of data center operations. With Opalis, companies can connect disparate environments and automate routine processes in a way that's simple, fast, and effective. Currently, more than 550 global companies, including Toyota, Harley Davidson, StateStreet, Nokia, Xerox, BlueCross BlueShield, and Woolworths, rely on Opalis server software and integration packs to quickly and easily manage the critical components of their data centers. IT staff can automate processes without scripting or the need of professional services to stay productive and focus on other critical performance management tasks.

Opalis is headquartered in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, and has strategic industry partnerships with EMC, VMware, HP, CA, IBM, Microsoft, NetIQ, BMC, Symantec, and Cognos.

For more information, please visit www.opalis.com.

