

# IS I.T STRUGGLING TO FIT?

More and more IT organisations struggle with learning how to fit and align within the larger context of what the business is trying to achieve, the increased demand on IT services, how to enable business growth, and last but not least how to optimise the business value of IT.



**These challenging objectives can met** through the transition of IT from its technology focused status to become a service focused organisation by introducing, integrating, automating, and optimising end to end key business processes.

To a large degree, most IT organisations today may still focus on the technical aspects while lacking the business understanding and the effectiveness of the IT services being provided, therefore, a well structured IT Service Management (ITSM) approach is required for IT executives to significantly move their organisations from being internally focused to customer focused, from efficiency to business value and from delivering technology to deliver cost-effective IT services and solutions.

ITSM encompasses standardisation and frameworks such as ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library - framework for a service management strategy), Service Delivery and Service Support which can be further broken down into Service Desk, Incident, Problem, Change, Configuration, and Release Management, Service Level, Availability, Capacity, Continuity, and Financial Management. ITSM provides structured approach for IT services and if adopted properly it can improve the overall quality and delivery of the IT services, the responsiveness to business needs and continuously changing requirements, end-to-end process definition and automation, reporting, auditing, and compliancy.

Generally speaking, in many organisations where ITSM is implemented, a strong presence for the operational layer (service desk, incident and problem, configuration and change management) is usually realised with complete absence of the tactical layer, except may be for the service level management. The service desk is usually the early adopter, functioning as the single point of contact "hub" for all IT services, the link for all internal and external customers and the focus for the delivery of IT services.

## **Who benefits the most?**

Some argue on what type of organisations benefit the most from ROI point of view, on the investment in ITSM? The ones with a completely reactive and technology focused operation or a customer focused, rationalised and dynamic operation that can further drive higher value from implementing and adopting ITSM?

Well, both can benefit. However the successful delivery of ITSM is usually based on leveraging people, processes and technology and



ITSM initiatives tend to be more applicable in large enterprise and mid-sized organisations that heavily rely on IT to deliver and provision high quality services and solutions, drive efficiency, enhance availability of services and systems, reduce time to resolve incidents and improve overall customer satisfaction.

Organisations that are maximising the return on their investments are also the ones that have defined and agreed to service levels internally and externally with customers, business partners, suppliers and vendors after having documented, reviewed and automated their processes by using ITSM system tools to ensure their service management team and staff can deliver value to the overall business.

### ITSM and ITIL framework: meshing in

Executing an ITSM strategy is based on leveraging the applicable best practices to provide business value through process, technology, and organisational change. Process

### Business or IT?

So who is accountable? The answer to this is very simple. As the business greatly depends on IT to drive value and as technology becomes more and more integrated into the business life, the more the dependency the greater the impact on business. Therefore, IT organisations are accountable for driving and enabling ITSM initiatives and capabilities and similarly the business is accountable for making sure that IT understands its value and criticality to the business. Some believe that IT credibility is on the line if the initiation of the ITSM initiatives start from non-IT line of business and in such case the business may need to re-examine the IT investment and consider making drastic changes and take serious decisions to realign the value of IT.

### What are the challenges?

Many agree that if ITSM and its associated components and framework is approached and implemented in the right manner it can bring significant promise to the business. There are

in implementing ITSM try answering and quantifying at least the following:

- Are the IT services aligned with business objectives and do they facilitate business value to be achieved?
- Is IT perceived as customer focused or technology focused practice?
- Was the customers' satisfaction improved?
- Is the IT organisation able to measure and ensure the performance, quality and availability of IT services and resources?
- Are the end-to-end key business processes optimised and efficient?
- Did IT lowered the cost and was the IT return on investment improved?

### ITSM and regional adoption

ITSM is the effective and efficient delivery of IT (customer focused) services that create and add business value, it has been around for number of years now (almost two decades), however, it started to gain momentum in the last five years. ITIL framework has also played a major role in this and has been helping existing and new adopters to better understand and successfully implement and continuously support ITSM in their organisations.

In this region we have started to see organisations either thinking about or starting ITSM initiatives, or actually having begun the implementation to move towards a more comprehensive IT service management approach. This trend is expected to pick up speed as the pressure on IT in this region increases and organisations are forced to change the traditional way of doing business.

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oriented frameworks such as ITIL can greatly facilitate the adoption and acceptance of ITSM in the business environment but are not essential for implementing ITSM. Many IT organisations that lack the process maturity and the ability to develop from scratch or reengineer their processes in fact tend to refer to ITIL in the case of ITSM to quickly and effectively leverage the best practices within this framework in order for them to drive tangible and measurable business results and value.

Therefore the successful implementation of ITSM based on proven framework such as ITIL that can enhance IT services delivery and availability and improves customers' satisfaction. Having said that, depending solely on best practices is not advisable, organisations must know their scope, the constraints and limitations surrounding their businesses and should never lose sight of context. It is strictly up to the ITSM adopters to appropriately apply and make the most out of the best practices enlisted.

however many challenges that must be carefully assessed and handled including decisions on standards, best practices framework, obtaining and maintaining management and staff interest and commitment, choosing what components to start with, understanding where to initiate the process of improvement, defining scope and addressing level of integration, selecting the systems tools, solution and the vendor / business partner, delivering quick short term wins while maintaining the long term vision of the ITSM initiatives.

### How to succeed with ITSM?

Succeeding with ITSM strictly depends on the support and the buy-in from the business executive management. Organisational and cultural change is inevitable and key. Expectations therefore should be set accordingly and stakeholders must be involved from the early stages. A phased approach which looks at continuous improvement is recommended over doing all in one go. Investment in efforts, time, money and people is also a requirement to succeed.

To find out if and how well you have succeeded



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