

ITIL - It's value to IT Infrastructure Management Services

Abstract:

In globally-connected, information-based business world, IT infrastructure is core to the business growth. ITIL emphasizes the alignment of IT to business perspective. This white paper covers this emphasis through cost advantage, quality, and timeliness in delivering IT services through ITIL framework. DCM Data Systems' quality initiatives including ITIL are also covered in this paper

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1. Introduction

IT infrastructure is an all-pervading component of global economy. It however; does not form the core competence of the business it is deployed. Consequently the IT budget escalations are happening slowly whereas the expectations, because of business alignment with global economy, are rising.

Forrester has identified several market trends that may influence the infrastructure management services. These include:

- IT budgets in most countries will grow just 1-2 percent
- Process maturity of service providers, which is rising, is a critical component to reduce outsourcing risk of an IT network to a remote location.

Most vendors and service providers are of the opinion that adaptive enterprise infrastructure management is the only way for enterprise to stay competitive.

Adaptive management is the integration of people, processes, and technology to run IT as a business and automate the dynamic link between business and IT. Standardizing and/or adopting and implementing operational best practices in the area of people, processes, and technology is the right way forward.

2. Why ITIL

IT operational best practices such as Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) are assuming greater significance for organizations that desire cost-effective and efficient service management. The implementation of process standards and best practices result in well-defined operational procedures and reduced human errors, thereby improving operational efficiency.

Additionally, recent regulations such as Sarbanes Oxley (SOX), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which require adherence to best practices, reinforces the necessity and importance of ITIL.

3. What is ITIL

ITIL provides structured, scalable, and common sense best practices for IT processes. Rather than a rigid set of rules, ITIL provides a framework that companies can adopt and adapt to meet their own needs. Organizations may not implement every process, just those which make sense and fit into the way the organizations want to do the business in future. Some processes may be abandoned later when post-implementation reviews show limited value, while others may be implemented as gaps are uncovered or needs change.

ITIL breaks down IT functions into discrete components called services. These services are addressed at three different levels:

- Strategic – Long term goals of the particular service and high level activities needed to accomplish them
- Tactical – Specific processes that guide the tasks and activities needed to perform and provision the service.
- Operational – Actual execution of the processes to provide the service to the customer. Successful completion of the operational tasks means that strategic goals are accomplished within the expected time frames.

ITIL is segmented into following components:

- 3.1 Business Perspective
- 3.2 Service Delivery
- 3.3 Service Support
- 3.4 Application Management
- 3.5 Security
- 3.6 ICT Infrastructure Management
- 3.7 Software Asset Management

3.1 Business Perspective:

This area covers the interaction between business and IT and how business requirements are gathered and translated into IT resource requirements. Business perspective owns the processes that ensure all work performed by IT have been reviewed, approved by management and prioritized. It further breaks down into:

- 3.1.1 Business Relationship Management
- 3.1.2 Supplier Relationship Management
- 3.1.3 Liaison, Education, and Communication
- 3.1.4 Planning, Review, and Development

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3.2 Service Delivery:

It further breaks down into:

3.2.1 Service Level Management

It establishes clear service delivery standards, providing the means to objectively measure how well IT is meeting business requirements. The sub-components of SLM are Service Catalogue, Service Level Agreement, and Operational Level Agreement.

3.2.2 Capacity Management

It defines the exact items it needs to achieve those service levels. The activities here are proactive rather than reactive. The discipline further breaks down into:

3.2.2.1 Business Capacity Management (Strategic)

3.2.2.2 Service Capacity Management (Tactical)

3.2.2.3 Resource Capacity Management (Operational)

3.2.3 Financial Management of IT Services

These processes are used for financial aspects of running the business of IT. They include:

3.2.3.1 Budgeting

3.2.3.2 IT Accounting

3.2.3.3 Chargeback

3.2.4 Availability Management

These processes ensure plans are in place for quick restoration of services in the event of IT infrastructure component failure.

3.3 Service Support:

3.3.1 Help Desk

It is the frontal line of IT which interacts with customers or end-users. They are responsible for logging problem reports or service requests, forwarding them to responsible services, tracking progress, reporting status to requesters and management escalation if necessary, and closing requests when the work has been completed.

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3.3.2 Incident Management

These processes address identification of service anomalies and restoration of systems as quickly as possible to mitigate the impact on business and bring the services back up to the level of SLAs and OLAs.

3.3.3 Problem Management

These processes cover the steps IT staff takes in resolving the problems. It includes recording, management, and escalation of service problems, and also the steps to prevent future occurrence of the problems by analyzing the historical data.

3.3.4 Configuration Management

Recording and management of all configuration and operational data of IT infrastructure

3.3.5 Change Management

It ensures no changes are made without proper testing, risk assessment and scheduling

3.3.6 Release Management

These processes govern the version release.

3.4 Application Management:

These processes cover the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) like creating the specifications, designing, writing and testing the code, deploying, operation, and finally reviewing the application to determine ways to improve its efficiency and cut costs.

3.5 Security:

ITIL security processes outline a continuous improvement process to identify risks to information and processing infrastructure, establish security processes and procedures to mitigate them, communicate them to the affected areas in the organization, train people how to use them, monitor them, report anomalies for enforcement/corrective activities and review existing policies and procedures for improvement.

3.6 ICT Infrastructure Management:

This forms the bridge between service management and technologies used to

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deliver these services. They include:

- 3.6.1 Design and Planning
- 3.6.2 Deployment
- 3.6.3 Operations
- 3.6.4 Technical Support

3.7 Software Asset Management:

This service covers processes to maximize software as an asset while minimizing its risks.

4. ITIL – It's value to IT Infrastructure Service Management

All forward looking and best practices companies have begun a shift away from purely operational metrics towards tracking the business-value delivered through their IT initiatives. Traditional approach of delivering IT services by the CIOs has been a combination of cost-effective third party service provider and internal IT resources. More business savvy CIOs however, are gravitating towards cost-effective services with maximization of business values delivered.

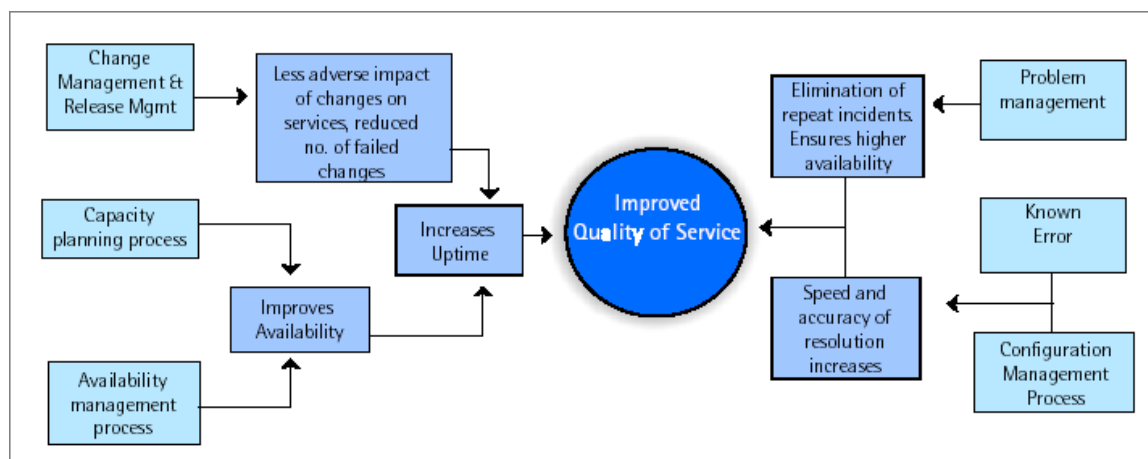
As IT organizations move towards alignment with business values, implementing a value-management process becomes crucial in optimizing the IT investment.

The value of service is measured, in general through following parameters:

- Service alignment towards business
- Cost of delivering service
- Quality of Service
- Timeliness in delivering the service

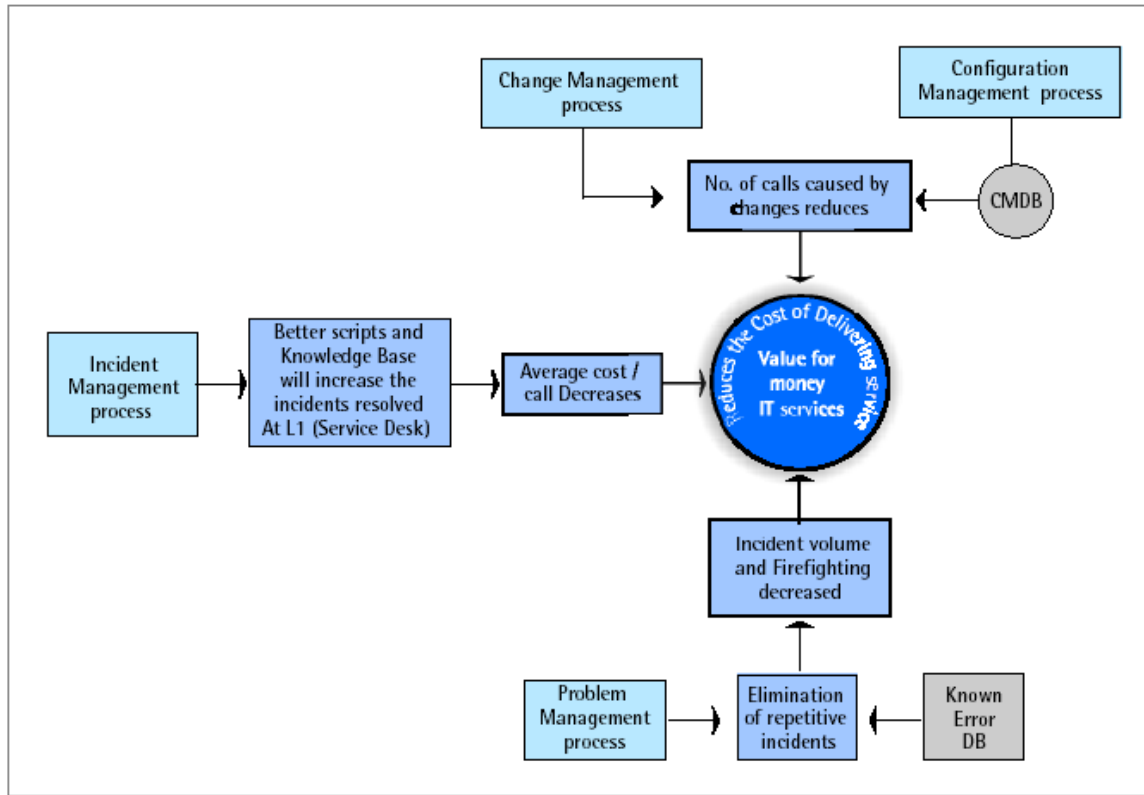
ITIL with its business aligned service-delivery ensures defining the right expectations of business requirements and IT service delivery as covered in SLA. It is able to provide advance alert about business expectations and service delivery mapped to the cost of delivery.

Quality of Service & ITIL

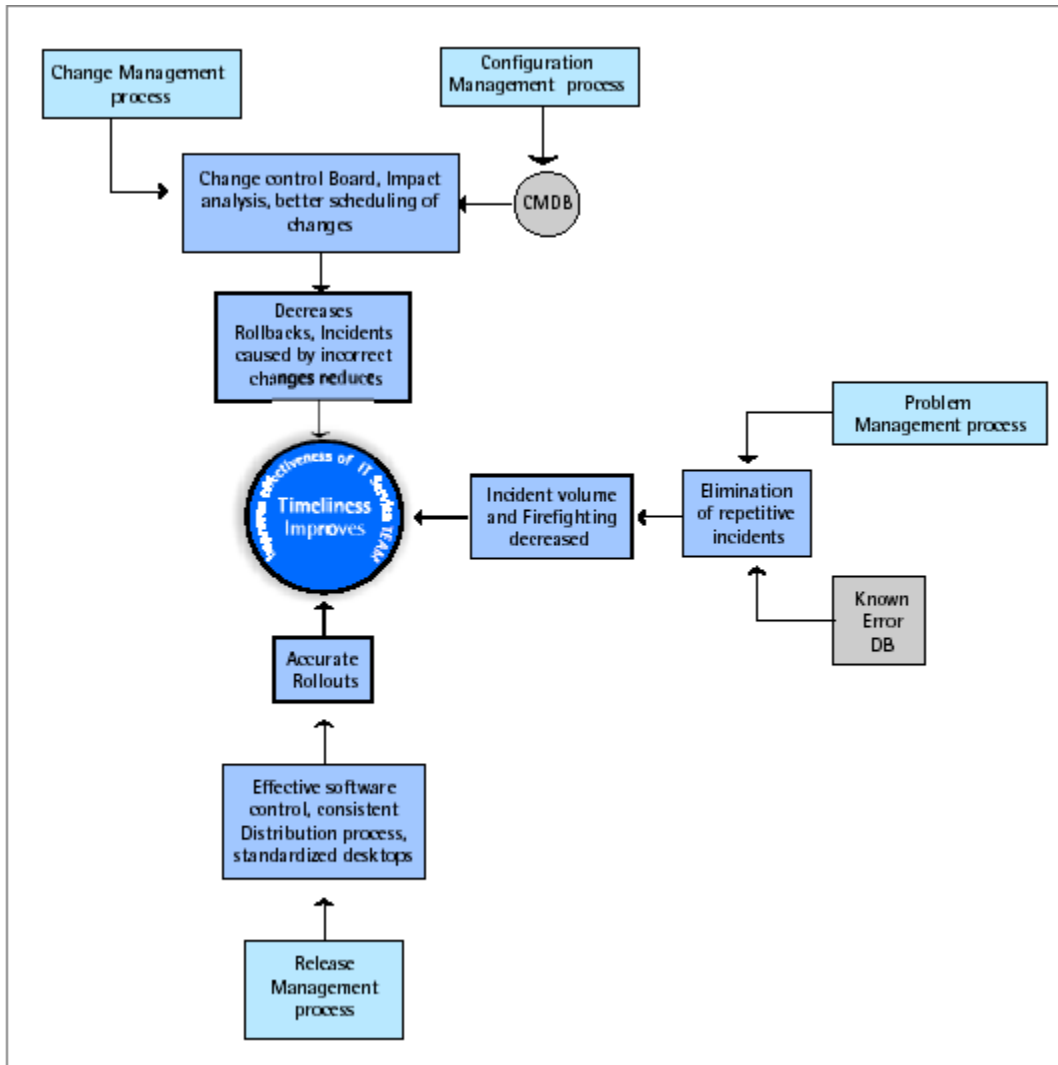


Implementation of ITIL processes can ensure proactive support, accurate resolution of incident/query/request, increased availability, improved professionalism, effective change management resulting in overall customer satisfaction.

Cost Reduction & ITIL



Timeliness of Service & ITIL



Scheduling of major changes viz-a-viz business/IT coordination, percentile of deployment right first time, and capability to operate proactively rather than reactively, are likely benefits through ITIL implementation.

5. Conclusion

As is evident, benefits of adopting and adapting ITIL are many. Organizations are implementing ITIL best practices to improve service. Enjoy cost benefit, streamline work processes and improve productivity. When implemented and adhered to, ITIL processes ensure repeatable, high quality service aligned towards business than technology.

6. Glossary

CIO	– Chief Information Officer
CMDB	– Configuration Management Data Base
DB	– Data Base
HIPAA	– Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
ICT	– Information and Communication Technology
ITIL	– Information Technology Infrastructure Library
OLA	– Operation Level Agreement
QoS	– Quality of Service
SDLC	– Software Development Life Cycle
SLA	– Service Level Agreement
SLM	– Service Level Management
SOX	– Sarbanes Oxley

7. About DCM Data Systems

DCM Data System is a leading pure play service provider of Systems and Storage in IT Infrastructure Services, globally. We have nearly a decade of expertise in Systems and Storage Administration .We are helping customers optimize their IT investments through our highly skilled and certified pool of engineers and cost-effective remote management capabilities, backed by robust processes.

We provide full range of services encompassing System Administration, Storage Management, Backup Recovery, Disaster Management, System Integration, and also On-site Staffing Services for customers' IT needs. We have relationship with blue-chip companies like IBM, Hitachi Data Systems, Brocade, EDS and Indian MNC Wipro etc.

At DCM Data Systems, we have a production method which joins People, Process and Services through use of technology, to meet the high expectations of our enterprise customers. Our managed services leverage economies of scale and expertise that add value and provide benefits over and above cost reduction such as higher SLA, reduced deployment times, and better alignment of IT functions with business goals.

Our value proposition is to integrate human resources, quality process, and expertise in diverse infrastructure technologies to provide services with specific emphasis on "time to market" and "cost to market."

Ever since its inception, we have striven hard to continuously improve the quality of our offerings be they products or services, with a constant emphasis on delighting our customers. The quality and processes management have been a passion for DCM. This has led DCM from ISO 9000 certification in 1994 for our hardware and software development processes to SEI CMM Level 5 in year 2000 for our software development group DCM Technologies. Various other group companies have also embarked upon and successfully embraced other quality norms like TQM. DCM Data System is striving for individual certification like ITIL and organization certification like ISO 20000 for its Infrastructure Services.