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DevOps: 3 ways of transition

SIAM – How does it all work?

Industry news: ITIL and VeriSM

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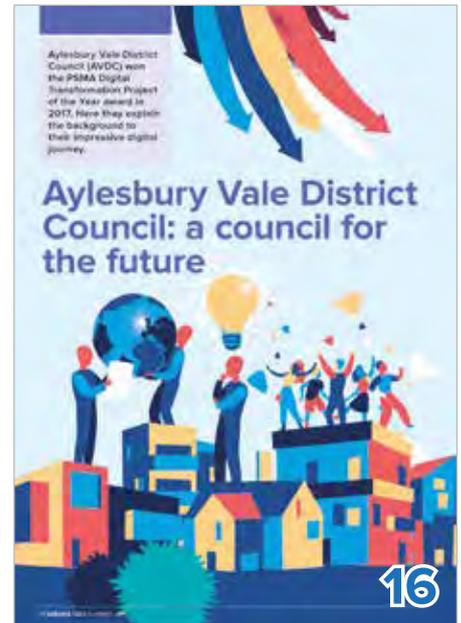


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Contents

Editorial: bringing the skills together	4
A word from the Chair and CEO Rosemary Gurney and Barclay Rae outline the next steps for the Forum	5
PSMA18 – recognising and rewarding service excellence Details of the finalists lined up for this year's gala awards dinner	6
News from itSMF UK Conference speakers, new mentoring scheme, and PSMA Verified Partnership	8
DevOps and the three ways of transition Our Service Transition Specialist Interest Group take on the task of applying the three ways of DevOps to Service Transition	10
ITIL® Update: putting principles before process Stuart Rance explains some of the guiding principles that are shaping the new ITIL	14
Aylesbury Vale District Council: a council for the future Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) won the PSMA Digital Transformation Project of the Year award in 2017. They explain the background to their impressive digital journey.	16
Site Reliability Engineer: the new kid on the block The digital world is transforming fast: Rob Stroud encourages operations teams to brush up their coding and automation skills	20
VeriSM: so what's happening with the project? VeriSM – a new Service Management approach “tailored to help organisations succeed in the world of digital services” – was launched at ITSM17 last November. ServiceTalk drops in to find out what has happened since then	22
What's new at SITS 2018? The Service Desk & IT Support Show returns to Olympia London on 5-6 June, offering thousands of IT professionals the opportunity to discover the latest ideas and tools needed to transform, evolve and improve their IT service delivery. With the countdown now underway, here's a preview of what's in store for 2018	24
Take a bite out of Business Analysis The business analyst plays an increasingly important role at the heart of the IT-focused organisation. Kat Turner considers the personal and professional skills required	26
SIAM – How does it all work? itSMF UK CEO Barclay Rae provides a concise overview of Service Integration and Management (SIAM) to share with colleagues and stakeholders	29



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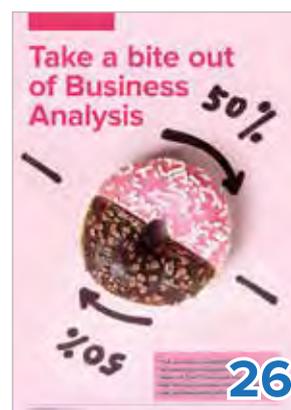
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Bringing the skills together

We've talked a lot in recent months about the need for new competencies in service management, and particularly 'soft' people skills to complement the more technical areas of knowledge that have defined IT roles in the past. But it's not so much about the skills themselves as bringing them together at the right time.

I was speaking recently to members of the service management team at the Co-operative Group about their pioneering DevOps work. Many of the concepts they are introducing have been widely discussed for some time in the DevOps world – breaking down the silos, engendering an atmosphere of openness and honesty, opening “war-rooms for significant incidents where developers and service analysts can swarm on fixing the problem.” For them, one of the spin-off benefits of this approach is that anyone can join the impromptu ‘chats’, including the product owners and business stakeholders, and instantly discover what each member brings to the table and how their different perspectives really complement each other. Making these ‘meetings of minds’ really effective depends on excellent communications, sound leadership and negotiation skills, and

a spirit of trust that is still lacking in so many traditionally structured organisations.

This year's annual awards are full of similar stories of service management teams that are achieving great things by bringing together people with different skills and insights. At the same time, we're beginning to see the emergence of new (or repurposed) roles that belong firmly in this dynamically changing environment and complement the skills of the core process owners at the heart of ITSM. In this issue of ServiceTalk, for example, Kat Turner discusses the Business Analyst, an established figure in many organisations but increasingly significant in the world of agile service delivery. Meanwhile, popular ServiceTalk columnist Rob Stroud returns to our pages with a fascinating portrait of the Site Reliability Engineer.

Our Service Transition SIG swings into action with a ground-breaking article on DevOps and the Three Ways of Transition, short-listed for this year's Thought Leadership Award, and we go behind the scenes with Aylesbury Vale District Council, last year's Digital Transformation Project of the Year, as they explain how digital is revitalising the services they provide to local residents.

I hope you can join us for this year's Awards Dinner and for our Annual Conference in November, to find out more about the businesses that are pushing the service management boundaries, and the people skills that are allowing it to happen.



Mark Lillycrop
Professional Services Manager, itSMF UK
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A word from the Chair

New brands and leadership changes

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of ServiceTalk. You are just in time to help us celebrate the achievements of so many individuals and groups at the Professional Service Management Awards on 5th June in London.

Behind the scenes, 2018 has been a very busy year so far for us and I would like to share some of that work with you all. You may remember that we launched EssentialSM at the 2017 conference in Manchester. This new organisation, wholly owned by itSMF UK, was established to enable us to form new relationships with third parties and help bring service management to a wider audience through a variety of products and services. This is proving to be very successful; however, it is taking up quite a large chunk of our current CEO's time and so the Board have decided that we need to make some changes to the organisational structure.

Barclay Rae, who has been the interim CEO for nearly three years now, will leave the role as of

31st May. Barclay has done an amazing job for us all, steering us through the launch of PSMF and creating a range of products and services which we are proud to have under the itSMF brand. We now need him to concentrate on building EssentialSM; he will remain on the main itSMF UK board as a co-opted director with responsibility for the sales portfolio and he will also take on the challenge of driving the new business forward.

In his place, managing the day-to-day business of the organisation, we have appointed Ken Wilson as interim General Manager. Ken is well known within our industry; he has built and developed some big ITSM brands such as Pink Elephant and worked previously for a number of major ITSM brands, such as CA, Cherwell and G2G3. He has many years of experience in leading teams and promoting best practice.

I would like to thank Barclay for his support and encouragement over the last three years and I am delighted that he is staying with us whilst we bring Ken on board to continue the work.



Rosemary Gurney
Chair, itSMF UK
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CEO View

An industry in existential flux

Over the last 2¾ years it has been my great privilege and honour to lead the UK itSMF organisation. This has been a truly amazing experience, to see the industry from a number of perspectives, to be at the centre of many discussions and initiatives, plus of course to lead the team in new and familiar areas.

It's been a challenge as the industry itself is in existential flux, the very nature of ITSM constantly being challenged whilst we still are expected to 'keep the world running'. The nature of membership organisations, events, conferences, publications and general guidance is changing, as is the way that we communicate and of course use marketing. We have had to consider how we compete for business and services with others in the industry, including with our own members, sponsors and partners. We are also expected to operate as an independent body and in a non-commercial manner, with relatively limited resources.

itSMF UK continues to work under numerous pressures and constraints. It's a tough market at present. What we have achieved is a re-appraisal of our position and a clearer view of how we can best get our message

across. We've upgraded our messaging and marketing, our partnership model, value proposition, and of course our services. I'm proud of what we've created with PSMF and our new content-based workshops, as well as our member events, annual conference and awards – not to mention our new subsidiary company, EssentialSM. We have a great portfolio of services to offer all parts of the industry.

I'm delighted now to be moving on to new adventures. I'll stay close to the itSMF family, as part of the Board, initially supporting our new GM Ken Wilson and then building up the EssentialSM brand. I'll have more time for consulting, which for me is still my core activity, and I'll continue to create new content across the industry. Of course it's also a great honour and experience to be involved with the current ITIL update.

I've known Ken Wilson for many years. He's going to be a great asset to itSMF UK and he will bring a strong commercial perspective to the organisation. I wish Ken and the team all the best. I'd also like to thank all of the itSMF UK 'family' for their support – the staff, Board and group volunteers, and of course the members. There has also been some

extremely positive feedback and support from the wider (global) ITSM industry and I'm very thankful for that.

I hope you will all support itSMF UK and gain maximum value from your ITSM journey.



Barclay Rae,
CEO, itSMF UK
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PROFESSIONAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT AWARDS



18

JOIN US FOR
AN EVENING OF
NETWORKING AND
CELEBRATION WITH
THE INDUSTRY'S
TOP TEAMS AND
FUTURE LEADERS

5th June 2018 at the Sheraton Grand, Park Lane, London

The Professional Service Management Awards (PSMA18), run by itSMF UK, celebrate individual and team achievements across the service management profession.

Our awards gala dinner takes place on 5th June at the prestigious Sheraton Grand Hotel, Park Lane in London, hosted this year by celebrity cricket commentator Henry 'Blowers' Blofeld.

THE AWARDS DINNER PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Prestigious London location
- Welcome drink of Champagne
- Guest host
- 3 course dinner & wine
- Silent auction
- PSMA awards ceremony

TICKETS

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Table of 10:	£1,300 + VAT

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PSMA18 categories and finalists

Digital Transformation Project of the Year

Central Bank of Ireland
Agilisys
Network Rail
Computacenter

Service Management Team of the Year

Thebes
Computacenter
BJSS
Infinity Group
Barnardo's
Department for Work and Pensions
Agilisys

Thought Leadership Award

Mean Time Between Fiascos - **Ian MacDonald, Edenfield IT Consulting**
DevOps and the Three Ways of Transition - **Service Transition SIG**
Producing a SIAM Business Case - **Richard Oliver, SIAM SIG**
What processes should be in a SIAM process model? - **Wayne Freeman, SIAM SIG**

Special Innovation Awards

The Co-operative Group
Wipro/RSA Insurance Group.

Paul Rappaport Award for Outstanding Contribution to ITSM

Presented to an individual who has made a sustained and outstanding contribution over a number of years to the field of IT service management. The winner is chosen by the ITSMF UK directors.

Young ITSM Professional of the Year

Holly Palmer, Littlefish
Shoaib Qureshi, BJSS
Gary Hobbs, Thebes
Jonathan Robison, Agilisys
Aimee Norton, Orange Bus

ITIL Experience Award

Agilisys
Network Rail
Grupo Bimbo
IQVIA

Ashley Hanna Contributor of the Year

Karen Brusch, Nationwide Building Society
Andy Turner, Fujitsu
Jon Morley, Independent Consultant
Mark Temple, University of Glasgow
Matt Hoey, Grant Thornton

..."The PSMA awards identify organisations and teams that aren't just excelling within their own industry sector but genuinely breaking new ground."

Barclay Rae

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Our awards host

Stalwart of cricket commentary Henry Blofeld was educated at Eton and Cambridge, where he became the "lowest achieving cricket Blue since the Boer War."

After three and a half years into a struggling career in merchant banking, the young Blofeld fled to Fleet Street to report on cricket for The Times. He started broadcasting on Test Match Special in 1974 and has remained a regular ever since - apart from a short-lived defection to Sky. His return brought a storm

of approval from listeners who had missed his descriptions of passing buses, planes and pigeons.

Aside from his many tales of events on and off the pitch, Henry takes a self-deprecating look at a life well-lived: adventures, mishaps and misunderstandings from around the world as he gets into scrapes with England cricketers, gets locked out of hotel rooms at midnight, and deals with on-air confusion.

Conference is back in Town

Our Annual Conference is back in London on 19th and 20th November – with a new format and a great programme of speakers. This year we have a choice of workshops running alongside the main agenda, focusing on themes such as major incident management, SIAM, cybersecurity, DevOps, problem management, and service catalogue.

Conference provides an outstanding opportunity to network with those at the leading edge of service management practice, and provides practical content and analysis that you can adopt and adapt back at the office.

Speakers at ITSM18 include:

- Karen Ferris, Macanta Consulting
- Rob Stroud, XebiaLabs
- Claudio Pastori, European Central Bank
- Sanjeev NC, Freshworks
- Clare McAleese, Vocalink Mastercard
- Lorraine Brown, Orange Bus
- Karen Brusch, Nationwide Building Society
- Lynda Cooper, Service 20000 Ltd
- Kat Turner, ITSM Zone
- Amrit Saroya, Axelos
- Kaimar Karu, itSMF Estonia
- David J Maskell, Computacenter
- Alan Nance, Virtual Clarity
- Alex Hocking, Marval

ITSM18

19TH - 20TH NOVEMBER
Bishopsgate, London

- Claudio Pastori, European Central Bank
- Scarlett Bayes, Service Desk Institute
- Duncan Watkins, Forrester Research
- Grant Harris, Western Sussex NHS
- Alan Sherwen, Arriva
- Simone Jo Moore, SJM
- Johann Diaz, End to End Service
- Nick Waring, Deloitte
- Matt Klassen, Cherwell Software
- Claire Drake, British Car Auctions
- Rosh Hosany, PwC
- Chris Bryan, TCS
- Akshay Anand, Axelos
- Steve Leach, 6point6 Cloud Gateway

Check out the details at www.itsmf.co.uk/itsm18. We look forward to seeing you there!

Making the most of mentoring

As a benefit to our members and a complementary service to PSMF, itSMF UK are looking to facilitate a mentoring scheme to assist with professional development within the service management industry.

Mentors can help share a wealth of first-hand experience, independently and in confidence, to guide and coach less experienced professionals or those looking to move in a different direction. The method and frequency of contact would be agreed between the two parties, and both would agree to participate within the guidelines of a professional joint code of conduct.

If you are an experienced professional and interested in mentoring others, or would like further information about being mentored, please contact the office on 0118 918 6500.



GDPR and your member data

If those four letters send a shiver running down your spine, fear not. Suffice to say itSMF UK have – like everyone else – revised our privacy policy in line with the new European and UK legislation and you can find all the details at www.itsmf.co.uk/privacy. It's worth mentioning, though, that most of the information we hold about our members can be edited online via your member login.

Please do check your details from time to time so that we can stay in touch and keep you up to date with relevant content and event details.

BT gains PSMF Verified Partner status

BT is the latest itSMF UK member organisation to be granted PSMF Verified Partnership status. The endorsement – the first stage in a major adoption of itSMF's Professional Service Management Framework (PSMF) – follows a review of BT's professional development practices, based on a pilot group drawn from across the business.

BT will now be rolling out the PSMF Global recognition platform to 50 of its service management professionals, with a view to extending the initiative across the wider team over the coming months.

BT's Service Management Profession Lead Melanie Kirby said, "I am delighted that BT have received this important accolade from itSMF UK in recognition of our commitment to professional development. I'm now looking forward to making PSMF Global available to our pilot team as part of our on-going reward and recognition programme."

What is Verified Partnership?

BT joins a growing number of member organisations, including Computacenter, NTT Data and CGI, that are taking advantage of the Verified Partner review scheme to help them develop the right service management competencies within the organisation as part of a clearly defined career path.

Use of the PSMF framework and the supporting content and PSMF Global are part of the itSMF membership package. Verified Partnership allows the organisation to take PSMF compliance to the next level. It includes:

- An on-site assessment by itSMF UK (including report and presentation) of the professional development practices used within the organisation
- PSMF Global tooling to allow endorsements received by staff members to be verified as credits with digital badges
- An on-going opportunity to shape and promote a unique best practice professional recognition platform, integrated with the organisation's own processes for service management people management.

The VP assessment

"Every organisation I visit as a PSMF Verified Partnership assessor has a slightly different approach to professional development," said VP assessor John Noctor. "That's what makes this role so fulfilling. Just about every company we see understands that people skills are essential to successful service

management, and that only by retaining the best staff can they deliver first-class services to the business.

"What varies is the detail – how each organisation recognises and rewards excellence, how they provide effective access to the right training and mentoring, how their appraisal processes work, and how they measure success. The VP review allows us to identify and promote best practice while helping members to embrace the benefits of the PSMF framework, scorecard and underlying L&D guidance. For me it's a fascinating learning curve."

Rik Hawke, Director of Global Service Management Operations at Verified Partner Computacenter, supports this view. "We strongly believe that the combination of the PSMF and our dedication to professional development will not just benefit Computacenter but the wider Service Management community."



Team members from BT (above) and Computacenter receive their PSMF Verified Partner status from itSMF UK assessors



For further information about PSMF Verified Partnership, please contact the office or visit [PSMF.global](https://www.psmf.global)

The itSMF UK Service Transition Specialist Interest Group take on the task of applying the three ways of DevOps to Service Transition... that's right, Service Transition!

DevOps and the three ways of transition

To begin, let's debunk a couple of myths.

Firstly, DevOps isn't just for software. Secondly, it isn't a methodology or process. It's "...a set of practices that encourage continuous integration into production".

We first meet the three ways of DevOps in the Pheonix Project novel. Eric, a slightly New Age and IT-based version of the Karate Kid's Mr Miyagi, mentors Bill in the three ways of DevOps. The three ways underpin the DevOps principles and in a nutshell are:

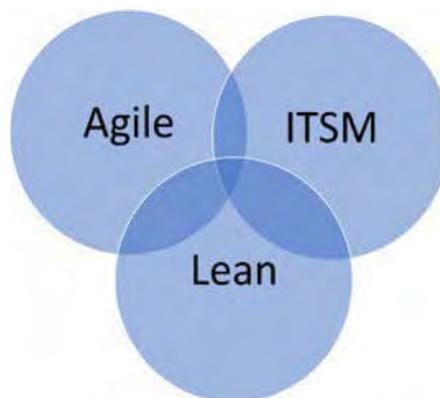
The first way: focus on the performance of the system as a whole, rather than the performance of a particular department, team or silo

The second way: utilise feedback loops and make them as efficient as possible to bring about timely value-adding improvements

The third way: create a culture of experimentation and learning (fail fast and learn from it) as well as mastery of the essential skills that will allow us to take those risks

The aim of this article is to show, through

practical advice, how the Three Ways of DevOps can be blended with agile, lean and ITSM to leverage a modern, exciting and value-driven approach to Transition.



The first way: systems thinking



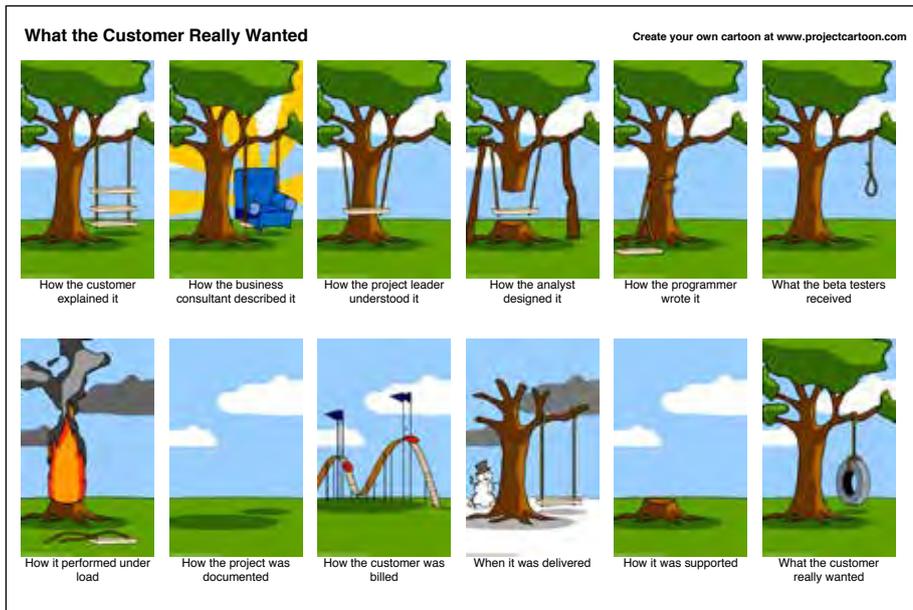
How often have we seen the infamous IT project tree illustration (see opposite)?

There is clearly a disconnect between the various stakeholders in terms of communication, collaboration or understanding of the customers' needs. However, even if you're starting out on your DevOps journey, the first way, can help you to avoid this!

The first way is fundamentally about getting from A (Dev) to B (Ops). It can be a fairly linear approach; that said, a good place to start might be to try looking at your processes through a different 'lens'.

Chances are that you already have some processes, and using improvement techniques like **systems thinking**, Kanban, Kaizen and so on to drive down 'waste' (i.e. inefficiency) and improve 'value demand' (i.e. what customers want).

Take Change Management for example. Many technicians would strongly oppose the idea of 'hiding' or 'just doing' changes. So, as part of an away day, I used systems thinking and asked the group to think about the process and come up with answers such as:



Identify your stakeholders

Make sure you cover the project and support teams, suppliers, partners, senior managers and customers – and get their input into the requirements.

Use a Kanban board

Have a Kanban board or similar to show the work in progress:

- Agree the 'rules' of the board with your team, e.g. the number of columns, prioritisation, significance of issues, how to deal with blockers and so on
- You should continue to use existing tools for logging calls, e.g. via your ITSM tool – otherwise your board and team can get bogged down/duplicate effort.

Stakeholder plans

Develop and follow an appropriate high-level stakeholder plan to complement lower-level implementation and back-out plans.

So, you've got your approach and your tools – good to go? Not quite...

1. Walk your stakeholders – particularly senior managers and customers – through the plan and agree the communication checkpoints, e.g. daily/weekly reports
2. Have representatives add cards to the Kanban board in accordance with the agreed 'rules'
3. Ensure people do not circumvent the existing ticket logging/incident process
4. Undertake regular (ideally daily) stand-ups for a maximum of 15 minutes with the right people, e.g. project team, support and the customer together
5. Facilitate resolution of any issues requiring deeper investigation outside of the stand-up.

Summing up the first way

As we have seen, the first way is all about starting from somewhere, using what you already have, and adopting different techniques like systems thinking, lean and agile, to drive process and service improvement. Key things to consider are:

1. Looking at your processes through the lens of systems thinking, lean and so on will help you eliminate waste and make them more efficient. Treat them like a service – you ultimately need to get value from them and be able to measure them!
2. Crowdsourcing. Do not underestimate who and when you need to engage – customers, senior stakeholders, project and support teams
3. Have a go at using agile techniques like Kanban boards, Sprints and stand-ups. Review what went well and what didn't, iterate and improve.

- the **purpose** (or the reason) for the Change Management process existing
- the **demand** (or types of request) we get for change from customers
- the **capabilities** we have in terms of dealing with change first time and the measures involved
- the **flow** – what is the actual end-to-end change process? What causes waste?
- the **system conditions** – what are the high-level barriers and frustrations of the current process?

The key thing to remember is that stakeholders were a mixture of compliant, unsure and naysayers. The outcome? The biggest maverick in the organisation shook my hand and became my biggest advocate. Why? Because I got him (and the wider team) to understand that Change Management was not only a house rule, but ultimately involved IT and the business redesigning a process that worked for IT and the business.

A practical example: using systems thinking for Early Life Support

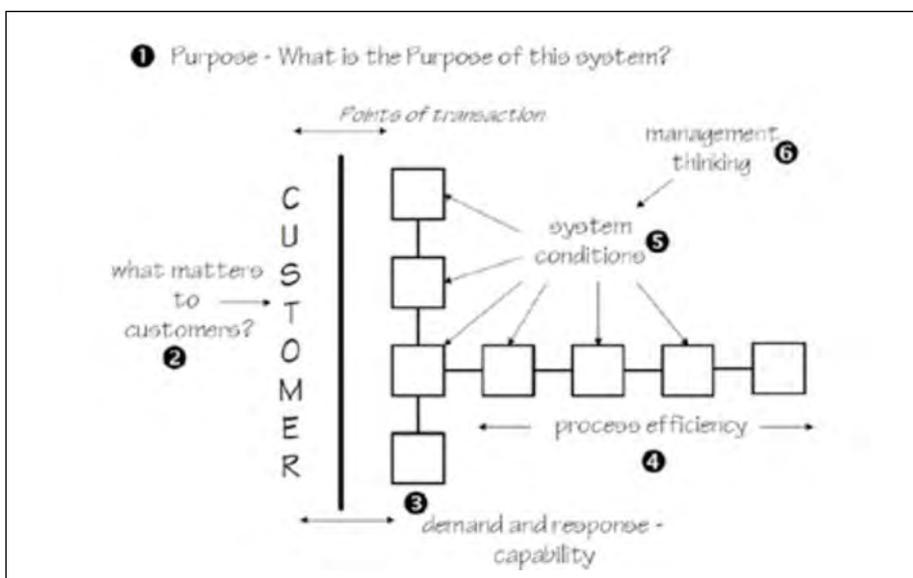
Good Early Life Support (ELS) is, of course, a key step in successful Service Transition. Here's how systems thinking from the first way can help make it great.

Be upfront!

Define and agree your requirements and acceptance criteria for ELS like any another non-functional requirement upfront – regardless of whether they are part of Agile Sprints, or traditional requirements gathering activities.

Requirements and criteria should involve identifying:

- length of the time-boxed warranty period
- where it needs to be located e.g. onsite
- any special requirements e.g. floor walking.



The second way: amplify feedback loops



In DevOps, the Second Way is all about creating the right to left feedback loops.

The goal of almost any process improvement initiative is to shorten and amplify feedback loops so that the necessary corrections can be made ensuring continual service improvement. Shortening and amplifying feedback loops means that any quality issues can be fixed at the source, avoiding defects and rework. Used effectively, feedback loops can significantly increase overall service quality.

So, let's take a look at how we can apply this in the real world of Service Transition.

One of the biggest problems with traditional approaches is that results often weren't visible until late in the process. The reality is that if you're not getting timely feedback it may be too late to fix any issues come release time. Feedback is critical to designing and building the service to the customers' requirements; in other words, we all need feedback and in an IT environment feedback is needed early and regularly so you can continually adapt your product in line with customer requirements. [Source: Elizabeth Hendrickson @testobsessed](#)

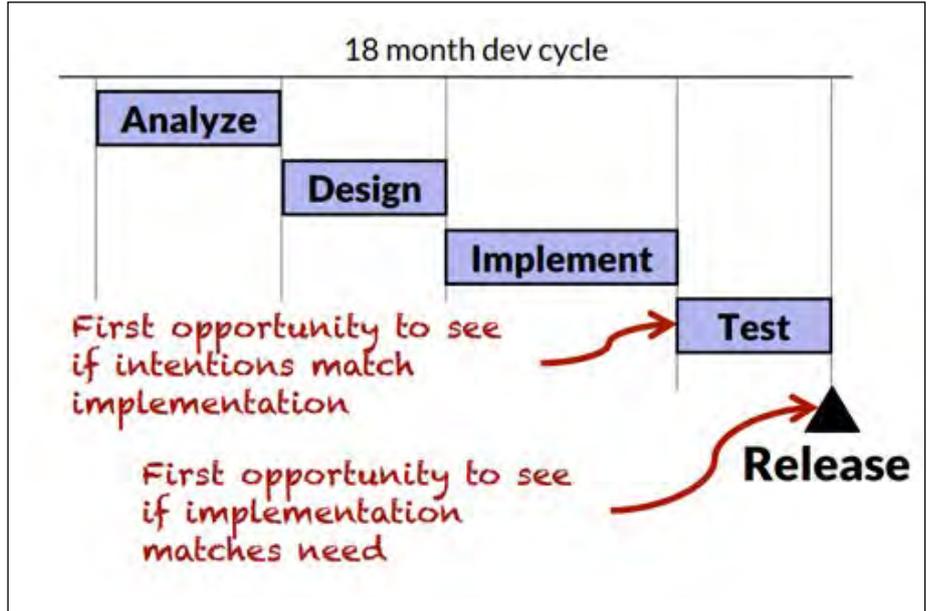
When building in feedback loops, start with an idea, a need or a key deliverable and build a first version with just enough features to deliver some value. Allow the customer to test it and get their feedback. What works? What doesn't? What would make it better? Congratulations! You've just created your Minimum Viable Product (MVP).

Having a MVP is a game changer because it enables us to measure how customers respond and also how our product behaves in real-life conditions so we can learn from it. If customers tell us it is going well and adding value, we either persevere with the direction we're going in and go round the loop, making small changes, collecting feedback, learning from it and improving the product with new features or by fixing errors or removing constraints.

If it is not adding value or not quite what the customer wanted we fail fast, pivot and either change direction or refine the idea and go round the loop again. We have an idea then build, measure, learn. [Source: https://gisellasilva.weebly.com/](https://gisellasilva.weebly.com/) derived from *The Lean Startup* by Eric Ries

So how does this work in the real world? Here are some pointers:

- Reducing batch sizes and having small, frequent changes as per the first way not



only enables that fast flow into production but supports fast and constant feedback flow throughout the design and transition lifecycle.

- Use standard changes and models where possible to ensure increased change volumes don't slow down your overall flow.
- If at all possible, use your DML to deploy software releases so that you know the software involved is the correct version, secure from external threats and appropriately licensed.
- Agree nomenclature early on in your process. A really common mistake that lots of us make is to focus so hard on developing the right code, we don't take the time to label it clearly, meaning that it's all too easy to deploy the wrong package or select the wrong folder when loading.
- Make sure that naming conventions are agreed ahead of time to prevent being slowed down because you've deployed the wrong code or rolled a release out to the wrong audience.
- Look at continuous integration, making sure that build and deployment processes work together with a fast, automated suite of tests. Having development teams involved in early life support and operational teams taking part in testing the code means that both sides will gain more

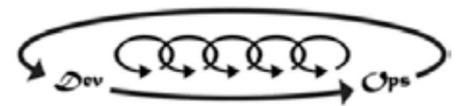
investment in the overall product and will be equally keen to see it work.

- Understand and respond to all customers - make sure that feedback is acknowledged, recorded and acted on.
- Embed knowledge where you need it; no more individual heroes in the Second Way, your entire team is made up of heroes so make sure everyone has the right training and knowledge to make that happen.

The purpose of the Second Way is to understand that a value chain can only be optimised by incorporating feedback. Done well it continues to deliver the results generated by the First Way whilst setting up a solid basis from which the Third Way can continue.

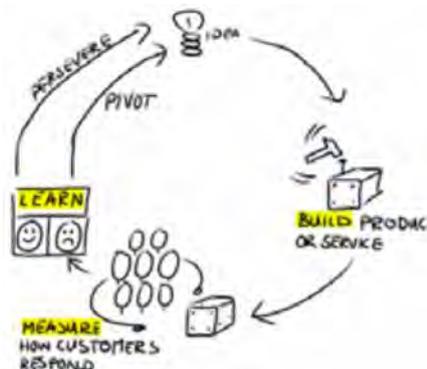
The third way: create a culture of continual experimentation and learning

Cultures are tricky things to get right. Even



experienced CEOs can struggle, so telling a junior process manager or humble team leader to influence company culture can seem daunting or impossible. Cultures mean behaviours, attitudes, support and just the right governance.

Cultures don't have to be monoliths. Cultures in microcosm are very effective too. For example, if you, as a change manager, decide that bad change requests will mean you sit down with someone rather than just reject them, then you've begun to set a culture. If you convince your team to do the same, and you combine this with creating knowledge articles and drop-in sessions, then that's a culture of helping people rather than blocking people. And that spreads.



Now let's focus on transition. Transition, release and change are three terms that can be used almost interchangeably by many people; and does it matter to our customers what we call them? No, of course not. But terminology is useful for common understanding, so let me define the following:

Change Management = should we do it?

Release Management = how do we do it?

Transition Management = how do we operate it?

Release Management is a disappointing process for process engineers. It's usually articulated as a series of linear phases, such as 'plan', 'build', 'accept' and 'deploy'. And I love this. Because there are only so many ways you can get from "I want a change" to "we're operating a changed service". With simple phases come the end of phases, and that usually means gates, or checkpoints, and with checkpoints come checklists, and checklists are magic.

Why are checklists magic? Because when actual brain surgeons started using checklists regularly, surgery deaths in first world countries fell by around 80%. [The Checklist Manifesto, Atul Gawande]

NASA uses checklists. Airline pilots use them. Everyone uses them. Our minds are fallible, and it's easy to forget under pressure, or to be put on the spot when facing a VIP in the business whose marketing initiative simply must go live tomorrow. A list of sensible release criteria with a humble, apologetic, yet firm expression may be all that separates you from Hell Weekend.

That's all well and good, but how do you actually get to the point where you're experimenting with a checklist?

Well, start small. Get a group of people together who really care about what happens as a consequence of a release and propose a checklist. Maybe 4 or 5 checklist items each. Maybe an infrastructure lead, a business relationship person, someone from project office, a business analyst, a developer...

And then start iterating. Experiment. Collaborate. How? Here's an example: Let's say the infrastructure lead wants to test the recovery time and recovery point objectives of a new system going live, so iteration one starts off as:

Iteration 1

We decide to test our disaster recovery time capability on a shiny new system. But we don't know if the result is good. I mean, it looks good, it's 23 seconds for full recovery, but we have 10,000% redundancy, and it's quite expensive. Did we ever ask the business if they need it that fast?

Iteration 2

An analysis of business needs is mapped to what our technology is, but we realise

we're working off an old service design doc, and nobody has actually spoken to any real breathing customers in several years, so let's rouse the service desk to find out if the design is still relevant to current usage and what the likely triggers are.

Iteration 3

The service desk, as usual, come up with a reasonable and relevant suggestion: "Hey, you know....if we did this as an actual rehearsal where we spot a dashboard going red for service failure...wait....we don't have a dashboard for service failure...."

Iteration 4

Now that you have a dashboard for service failure, you can rehearse who spots it, who they get out of bed, who they call to decide whether to invoke recovery, and who needs to be present to do the technical work.

Iteration 5

Someone on a golf course sold someone at your company some incredibly expensive tooling last year, but now you realise that you can use that tooling to respond to that dashboard and ask you if you want to spin up a couple extra app servers with the last known good build.

That's just one example of iterating a checklist collaboratively and experimenting to improve transition through the medium of release checklists, which I'll say again, are magic. NASA uses them. Airline pilots use them. Everyone uses them.

Do you?

Recommended reading (and watching)

- Two Speed Transition (itSMF UK Service Transition SIG)
- The Three Ways: The principles underpinning DevOps (Gene Kim)
- A Personal Reinterpretation Of The Three Ways (Tim Hunter)

The authors (representing the Service Transition SIG)



Jon Morley is IT Service Support Manager at Dunelm (Soft Furnishings) Ltd.



Vawns Murphy is ITSM Manager at Micro Focus



Rob Spencer is an independent consultant at Change & Release Ltd.



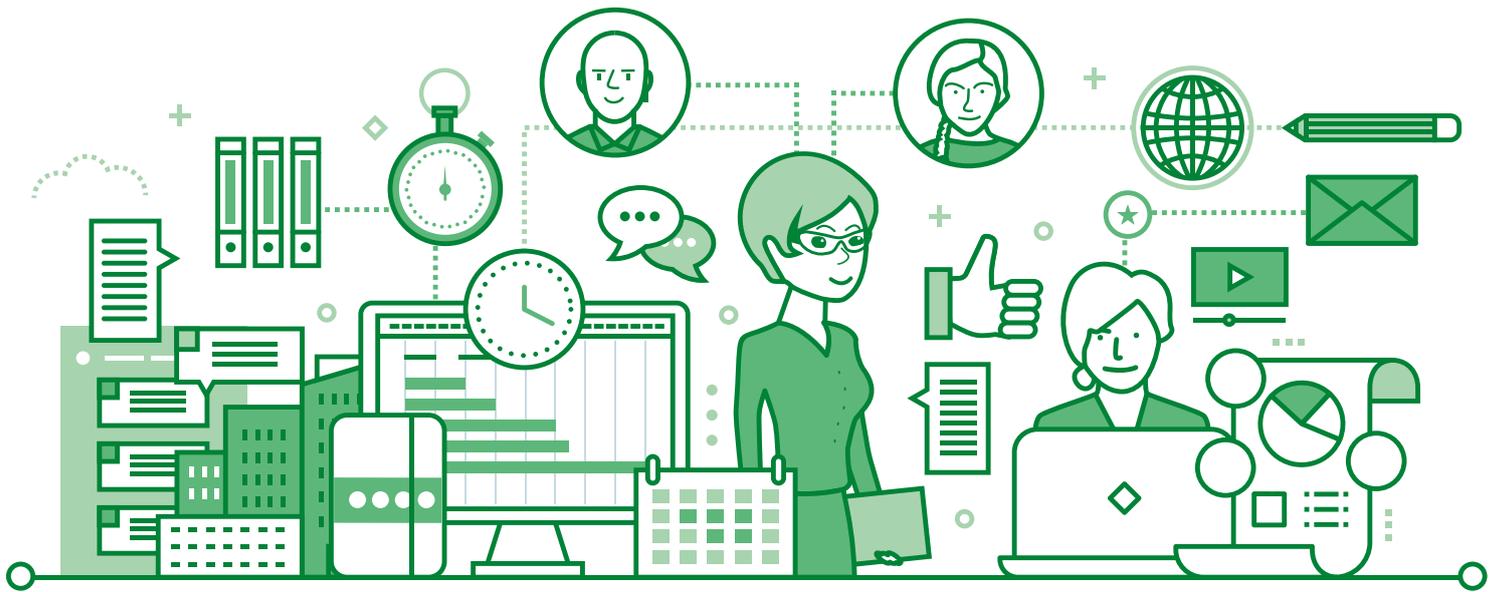
Matt Hoey is Change and Service Quality Manager at Grant Thornton UK LLP

- The Devops Handbook: How to Create World-Class Agility, Reliability, and Security in Technology Organizations (Gene Kim, Jez Humble, Patrick Debois and John Willis)
- The Phoenix Project: A Novel about IT, Devops, and Helping Your Business Win (Gene Kim, Kevin Behr and George Spafford)
- Elisabeth Hendrickson - On the Care and Feeding of Feedback Cycles
- The Lean Toolkit (ITSM17 presentation by Jon Terry)
- Continuous Delivery: Reliable Software Releases through Build, Test, and Deployment Automation (Jez Humble, David Farley)

The Service Transition SIG

From those with a vast experience in traditional enterprise release management to those embarking on a more agile approach to ITSM, the Transition SIG is comprised of enthusiastic and committed practitioners from varied roles across the Service Transition field. This mix of experience, knowledge and thinking from all areas of the field means the SIG is very active and productive. The SIG have produced a number of well received and informative white papers including 'Two Speed Transition' which received the Thought Leadership award at the Professional Service Management Awards in 2016. As well as whitepapers the SIG have collaborated on a popular book around configuration, change and release management, have an active Twitter presence and run masterclasses and free events.

No matter whether you're a seasoned practitioner or just starting out on your career in an area of Service Transition, the SIG are always keen to hear from new volunteers. If you want to volunteer or simply just contact them, you can do so via the Regional and Special Interest Groups page on the itSMF UK web site or find them on Twitter at @itsmfUKTransMgt.



ITIL® Update: putting principles before process

Stuart Rance explains some of the guiding principles that are shaping the new ITIL

When I first ‘discovered’ ITIL in the 1990s, it was both a revelation and like discovering a ‘family’ I never knew I had.

At that time, I loved that ‘family’ because of how it took us where we needed to be. And it was needed because IT was largely run by people with technical backgrounds and ad-hoc approaches to process and people.

ITIL introduced a set of defined processes and this was an essential stage on the journey from an anarchic, techno-central approach to the more managed, predictable and reliable delivery of service to customers.

Along the journey, however, some people absorbed ITIL in a way that led to an unintended bureaucratic approach, using the guidance as a set of instructions rather than adopting and adapting the advice to meet specific business needs.

Also, people who used to enjoy the techno-centric part of IT saw process as sucking the joy out of their jobs. I remember, in the 1980s, hearing a techie comment that “I don’t do people, I only do computers!” when he was confronted with a customer complaint. I realised then that people who “only did computers” were going to run into problems.

Updating ITIL

The job that now falls to us on AXELOS’ Lead Architect Team (LAT) is guiding the latest ITIL

update; that means seeking ways to be more agile and with greater focus on principles than processes.

Service management needs to move away from being prescriptive and instead focus on value, collaboration and agility. A good example of this is ITIL Practitioner, introduced last year with its 9 Guiding Principles and distilling other practices – such as Agile, DevOps and Lean – into simplified language so that people can use them more easily.

I’d love to see the ITIL update continue that emphasis, moving away from being prescriptive and instead providing principles and practical examples of how others have used them. This means telling people the important things they should be doing but not loading them with great detail about how. It needs to be practical, with good examples of how to apply those principles but ensuring there is a clear separation between what you must do (e.g. focus on value) and the examples, which are illustrative but not to be copied slavishly.

ITIL and DevOps

What should the ITIL update mean to the DevOps community? While it values the power of collaboration, that needs to extend to operations also! It can’t focus solely on automating the development stream at the expense of operational activities.

For change management, it’s possible to have integrated tools in a slick, end-to-end process that doesn’t get in anybody’s way. With IT Service Management (ITSM) people working in parallel with development, you can automate away the bureaucracy of change management and deliver value to the customer. That involves collaboration between development and operations, the latter still ITIL-focused.

The ultimate goal for our team is guiding a new ITIL version that will be concise and well-structured; in other words, short, sharp and helpful to organizations taking the next big step towards agility.



Stuart Rance is principal consultant at Optimal Service Management and a member of the Lead Architecture Team (LAT) working on the ITIL update. For more information on the ITIL update, visit www.AXELOS.com/itil-update



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Transformational Service Delivery
www.axelos.com/itil-more-than-meets-the-i



Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) won the PSMA Digital Transformation Project of the Year award in 2017. Here they explain the background to their impressive digital journey.



Aylesbury Vale District Council: a council for the future



“The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence – it is to act with yesterday’s logic.” Peter Drucker

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) was honoured to win the PSMA Digital Transformation Project of the Year in 2017 for our Right Here Right Now programme. What started as a simple website refresh had turned into a complete overhaul of council services culminating in our award. And this was just one of a number of steps on the journey that we have undertaken since realising in 2010 that government grants were not coming back.

AVDC is leading the way in transforming local government. With lower budgets and greater resident expectations, the council recognised the need to change the way it delivered public services to the 78,000 households in Aylesbury Vale, northern Buckinghamshire. We embarked on a digital transformation programme to cut costs but most importantly to improve services to customers. To do that we realised that we needed to think differently. Councils across the UK have worked hard to reduce costs and implement efficiencies, but the cuts in grants continue and economising will only get us so far.

“If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading.” Lao Tzu

We concluded that only the complete automation of online processes would help

deliver the dramatic savings the council needed. We had already set the target of becoming infrastructure free and 100% cloud based in our IT strategy. Having already saved £11m, we set our sights high to drive council wide savings of a further £5m by 2020.

Right Here, Right Now

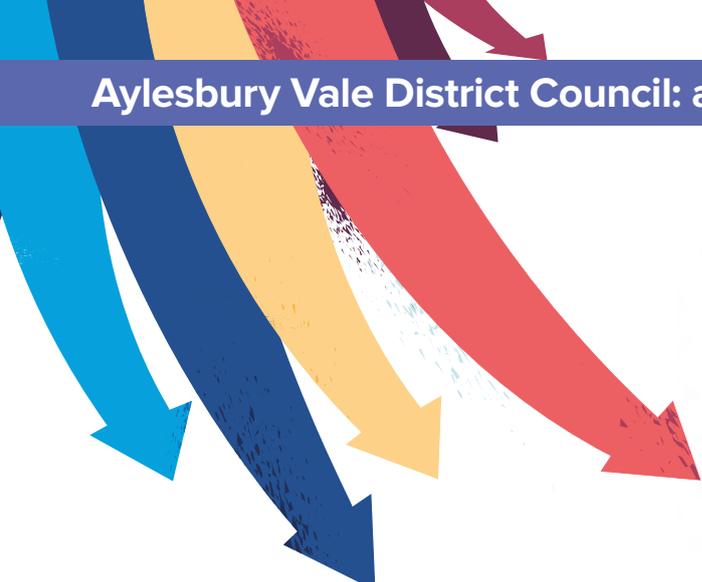
We initially wanted a smart form-integrated customer account, but quickly realised when talking to suppliers that we just couldn’t get what we wanted. We needed more out of our system along with a development partner to enable us to get the end-to-end process automation that we needed to save money and improve services. We knew that just producing forms was not going to be good enough; we needed full API integration and a complete overhaul of the back-end systems used. This required an open platform and we chose Salesforce and worked with an established partner of ours, Arcus Global, who could customise Salesforce and make it fit our purpose.

The digital element of the programme was then split into a number of strands. This included a new website, a new intranet and a

customer self-service portal, Aylesbury Vale My Account, with end-to-end automated transactions fully implemented in the back office.

Any major transformation programme comes with issues and barriers. It became apparent that the programme wasn’t just about deploying new digital





technologies but about creating a more commercially-minded, customer-centric council. This would allow us to push channel shift as a more sustainable option and a full restructure of the council staff to match this vision would support the council going forward. This put cultural change at the heart of our digital transformation.

Get the principles right

The customer is always our top priority and ensuring we could produce a system that was not only beneficial and attractive to use for our residents, as well as saving us money long term, was the key goal through the entire programme. Our starting point was to scope out the project with many 'discovery sessions'. These included working with all sections of the council to understand the different customer entry points, including process flows and systems in use.

We found it invaluable to establish underlying core principles for the project at the outset. As already mentioned we had established cloud first as one of our core drivers. We set about adding customer centricity and ensuring that data drives our relationship with the customer, enabling better interactions now and creating opportunities for the future. We examined customer journeys based on different requirements and identified how we could deploy the technology to best effect, and used customer focus groups to understand our residents requirements better. Transformation is a complex journey and we concluded that we needed a three-track delivery plan. We had to manage our legacy systems to keep our house in order while identifying our strategic digital platform at the same time as finding where we could innovate and develop new commercial opportunities.

Working in a public-facing authority there was a worry that our council members might not be as ambitious as our officers and that we'd receive criticism from the public via the councillors. We were fortunate to have the full backing of our cabinet, senior executive board and the full council when it went to be approved. Stakeholder management was key to this success and our preparation included offering presentations and drop-in sessions for anyone who wanted to know more before taking it to full council for approval. We continue to keep all stakeholders updated and involved in major decisions.

Be agile

Our ambitions for the programme meant there really was only one way of working – agile. Our discovery sessions had underlined that we needed to not only provide an incredible customer experience but also a whole new way of working in the back office. As an example, one of our old processes, to order a new bin, had nine touch points with actual people.

We were also concerned that development periods can often be longer than suppliers promise. This is a concern that stems from experience with legacy systems. Once appointed we were upfront with partners around expected deadlines and worked with them to produce the 'sprints'. This is simply a defined period during which a specific piece of work must be completed and reviewed. Working in an agile way ensured that we are limited to three-week sprints with a delivery at the end of those periods to work towards. We ensured sufficient programme resources internally by seconding people to the project and employing specialists into the roles for which we didn't have the expertise. Resourcing the programme sufficiently was key to keeping us as on time as possible.

Sometimes our ambitions simply meant we had to adapt plans. Instead of going live on time with a solution that we weren't happy with, we delayed implementing a process in order to get it right, which usually meant more automation.

Change the people or change the people

We may have changed the systems but, more significantly, we have changed the people. From our experience digital transformation requires cultural transformation.

To try and integrate the new ways of thinking quickly we created a new team, our Customer Fulfilment Team, who would be in sole charge of managing the customer contact via the new My Account. Getting the team in during the development phase was key to the success of the integration. The team had previously worked for the departments whose processes were being automated and brought into My Account, e.g. Revenues and Benefits, Waste and Council Tax. They developed a real sense of ownership for these new automated processes and were

able, once My Account became 'business as usual', to spread their enthusiasm and become champions for the new way of working.

Since Right Here Right Now was rolled out, the whole council has been transformed by a commercial programme which has streamlined management and removed departmental silos.

A council for the future

We went live with our customer-facing portal, Aylesbury Vale My Account, in November 2016. Our target to sign up 10,000 members within four months was quickly met (around New Year time) and we now have almost 58,000 residents and businesses in the district signed up for an account. We are also now almost 100% in the cloud.

Via My Account, residents can check and pay their council tax, apply for benefits, sign up for new services, apply for licences and update their personal information, as well as talk directly to staff using web chat. We identified the most expensive and time-consuming tasks and set about automating them first, and we are well on our way to our cost-saving targets. Remember that process to order a new bin that involved nine different touch points? It's now fully automated, which frees up staff for other activities.

Successful implementation of the waste reporting/ordering/buying of new bins has led to a reduction in phone calls to the waste service of 23%. Calls into our benefit helpline have dropped 20% and council tax line calls have dropped by 26%.

Our webchat service is now dealing with 1,500 enquiries a month, up 83% on 2016-7, and is fast becoming one of the most popular ways to contact us. Recent feedback on the service from webchat users includes "Very quick and efficient", "Quick service and got my issue sorted first time" and "Much better than waiting in a phone queue".

The Right Here Right Now team estimates that My Account saved more than 900 hours of officer time in the first six months after go-live. We now receive two-thirds of all direct debits via My Account and all taxi and vehicle licence requests; and although launched later than originally planned, up to 25% of council tax single person discount requests come via My Account, with no requirement for human contact.



We did have concerns about excluding older members of the community who aren't so tech-savvy, but we've had over 1,500 residents aged 75-plus sign up, including two 92 year olds! The success with older residents is partly due to the council's assisted sign-up programme, where we help people over the phone to sign up to an account and use the service the first time they enquire. This upfront investment means that those assisted initially can go to self-serve in the future.

With far more accurate resident and business information, the council can identify cross-selling and up-selling opportunities. This data also feeds into marketing campaigns and council newsletters, which is something we were unable to do before.



AVDC's achievements have been recognised by our peers within the public sector and beyond such as itSMF UK. We are regularly invited to share how going digital has helped the council deliver substantial improvements and savings. The Right Here Right Now programme has matured into our Connected Knowledge five-year strategy. And it's working; despite the ongoing local government grant cuts we have published a

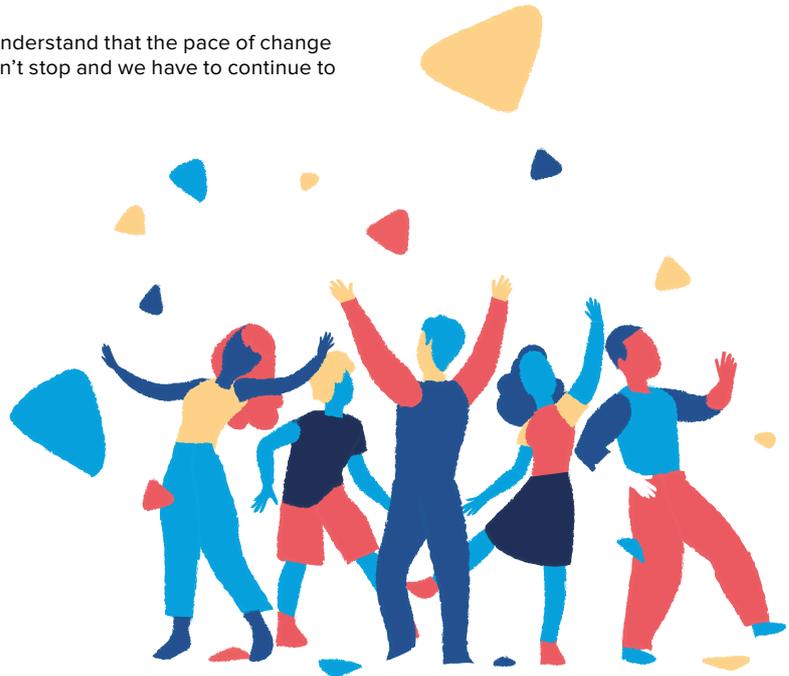
four-year balanced budget. Overall savings from AVDC's transformation in the last 8 years now stand at £18.5m. We have rebuilt ourselves from the inside out and gained a reputation for innovation and doing things differently.

Andrew Grant, CEO of AVDC says, "We exist in a world where the customer is king and convenience rules. Although the initial investment in digital may seem high, the potential long-term savings are much higher. It's about great customer service whilst making cost savings. You can't afford not to do it."

We understand that the pace of change doesn't stop and we have to continue to

set our sights and goals high. We are the first council in the world to launch an Alexa skill and we are now implementing Artificial Intelligence processes within our customer portal. We are starting to look at areas not traditionally in a district council's remit such as social care because we believe the opportunities with digital are only just starting to be realised.

And we remain ambitious. We want to be the council of the future.



The Connected Knowledge Team at Aylesbury Vale District Council

Site Reliability Engineer: the new kid on the block



The digital world is transforming fast: Rob Stroud encourages operations teams to brush up their coding and automation skills.

There is a significant shift happening in operations today. Teams are shrinking and roles disappearing. One large financial services organisation said recently that they had halved their operations team. This is partly the effect of the business transitioning from physical servers to repeatable virtual solutions that scale up and scale down for increased agility, whether deployed on-premise or in the cloud. As well as providing speed and flexibility, the automated implementation of standard infrastructure configurations has seen a dramatic reduction in incidents, allowing team members to focus on coding rather than routine operations functions.

Whether you like it or not, infrastructure is increasingly software-based. The days of hugging servers, building them by hand, giving each its own name, are rapidly ending. The adoption of cloud and the use of containers mandates that infrastructure is developed as any other code artifact and automated. The velocity of change increases – development teams are becoming accountable for the complete lifecycle of code, from development to operational health of the applications. With smaller changes and more frequent deployments, and with all testing automated, the requirement for system administrators, operations and ITSM team member is rapidly declining.

Some large companies now are transforming their teams completely, inserting the operations staff into product groups that are completely self-contained. The teams have responsibility for the code they deploy, and the support calls go straight to the product team. Given overnight support and distraction from coding to fix defects delivered to production, such teams are rapidly implementing automated pipelines that pick up the developer's code, then run the code through automated building, testing, staging, approval and deployment to production. The results include accelerated delivery of features to the business with a dramatic reduction in defects delivered into the wild. All steps can be automated - including functions previously undertaken by operations such as the creation, updating and approval of the change record, the deployment to production, and even backout in the case of failure.

Enter the SRE!

With this cloud-based transformation underway, forward thinking companies are transforming the modern systems administrator role to that of an engineer – or as many refer to it, the Site Reliability Engineer (SRE). Charged with the top-to-bottom development of holistic systems, using software as a base rather than

hardware, the requirement is that everything developed is automated, repeatable and reusable without human intervention. Ops teams can no longer merely watch monitoring screens or hand build untested processes - automated solutions do it more efficiently, and are far less prone to errors.

Ops teams must augment their skills with those of developers. And while coding is mandatory, the teams also need to follow the same good practices as the development organisation. The code developed by the SREs must incorporate continuous integration, continuous testing, version control, staging and use of their solutions. We need to find ways to streamline learning outcomes from downtime and defects, feeding back into the lifecycle for programmatic resolution rather than using manual checks and balances.

“Whether you like it or not, infrastructure is increasingly software-based. The days of hugging servers, building them by hand, giving each its own name, are rapidly ending.”

This approach to automated delivery demands the same rigour that development uses to validate applications – leveraging the good practices of the Dev side of DevOps, including:

- Deliver smaller work packages, incorporating dynamic feedback
- Test each and every change at all stages of the SDLC to ensure speed and quality.
- Leverage automated provisioning of environments to improve consistency, reliability and quality
- Automate release processes to improve velocity and error reduction – in short, all changes to infrastructure and processes are delivered as code, tested and deployed.

SREs as part of a product team

The 2017 Dora State of DevOps Report identified that high performing teams really

drive acceleration, with 46% more frequent code deployments and high performers' changes failing 7.5% of the time instead of 38.5%. Such improvements are at the heart of the transformation taking place across the industry.

The financial services company mentioned earlier, as part of their focus on velocity, formed 'product teams' to maintain their infrastructure. These teams are accountable for building, testing, deploying and maintaining the infrastructure configurations consumed by the organisation – just like an application product team. This new unit has replaced former manual function teams: using automation, they focus on standardisation, performance, security and compliance embedded into the design, so all the business needs to do is consume. Developers can ensure that testing undertaken in development environments is reflective of production estates. The outcome of this approach is better testing – and greater confidence as releases are deployed to production. For the operations teams, this has led to a dramatic decline in the headcount required, allowing for the transition of staff to development.

The time to transition is now

Organisations globally have made the agile transition and if your operations team is not ready to support development deploying at will, you need to rethink your strategy. The operations team should look at gaining coding and automation skills, being ready to deliver consistently and continually at scale. Start the transition now... don't wait or your company could end up like the Dodo bird.



A globally recognised speaker, thought leader and author, Rob is the chief product officer at XebiaLabs and Past International Chairman of the Board and Director, ISACA & ITGI. He can be reached at RStroud@XebiaLabs.com or [@RobertEStroud](https://twitter.com/RobertEStroud).

VeriSM: so what's happening with the project?



VeriSM – a new Service Management approach “tailored to help organisations succeed in the world of digital services” – was launched at ITSM17 last November. ServiceTalk drops in to find out what has happened since then.



The International Foundation for Digital Competencies (IFDC) has had a very busy six months since the launch of the first VeriSM publication.

There have been presentations at conferences including itSMF UK and Spain, Pink18, Service Manager Dag, The Service Desk Institute, DevOps meetups, and events as diverse as train the trainer sessions in Beijing, Adidas service management in Germany, and a Fujitsu awareness session in Japan.

VeriSM certified learning has been launched by accredited training organisations globally. The VeriSM pocket book was launched at the start of 2018, and a new worldwide team has evolved to deliver the next part of the project, VeriSM Professional, focusing on how to weave a VeriSM approach into the fabric of a modern digital organisation.

Suzanne Van Hove and Johann Botha (above, right) are the lead authors of this next stage, VeriSM Uncovered, which is due to be released in Autumn this year. Claire Agutter continues in the role of Chief Architect, overseeing the impressive global team bringing the project to life. There are over 70 authors and reviewers involved in the collaboration to bring together the practical side of VeriSM and how it can be implemented to add value throughout every department using service management principles. There will be an array of case studies and stories from early adopters around their strategic alignment of VeriSM for their organisational goals.

The collaboration between the IFDC and the examination institutes, EXIN, APMG and BCS has seen VeriSM certifications and training taking place in over 50 countries including Japan, China, UAE, US, India, UK, and the Netherlands, with VeriSM publications shipped to some 51 countries. The VeriSM pocket book has recently spent 28 days in the top 10 at Managementboek.nl, the online Dutch bookseller.

Defining the management mesh

Suzanne Van Hove describes VeriSM as the next evolution in service management, that it's about an organisation making a clear statement about being a true service provider and the benefit of that ethos to the customer experience. She is currently tackling the question that many professionals have been asking: "What is the management mesh and how does it work?"

Suzanne and her team are looking at the foundations of a typical organisation and how the management mesh translates into delivery of outcomes, governance and customer experience embodying the values of a true customer focused digital business.

Johann is responsible for the structure of the book and answering many of the questions that occur due to digital transformation and disruption as businesses evolve towards becoming a truly digital organisation. These questions include:

- Consumer behaviour is changing constantly so as a service provider how do we identify what we need to do next?
- How do we stay ahead of the competition?
- How do we ensure that we recognise and implement the right technology, services and governance within our organisations to ensure we can move towards our goals?

The authoring team have begun working on collating case studies for VeriSM Professional featuring early adopters and their thoughts on implementation.

Suzanne commented that it was very important for the authors to get continual feedback from early adopters as part of the community approach of the project. She said the enthusiastic response received from those who are trying VeriSM is really motivating for the whole team and underlines their belief that the content they are delivering is right for today's workplace.

Johann feels that VeriSM offers something more flexible for the modern business in that every organisation is individual and has its own guide rails and governance. "You can start with what you already have and build on it day by day; that is the evolution of change," he commented.

Claire Agutter concluded, "We couldn't be more excited about how VeriSM has been welcomed so far and this is absolutely testament to the hard work, enthusiasm, subject matter knowledge and dedication of our expansive expert team. I can't wait to hear more from people and organisations as they embark on their VeriSM journey."

You can follow more on the VeriSM project by:

- Joining the VeriSM official global group and information page on LinkedIn
- Signing up to the newsletter at www.verism.global



There are now several excellent publications on VeriSM. For further information about these and other books, contact publications@itsmf.co.uk



WHAT'S NEW AT SITS 2018?

SITS – The Service Desk & IT Support Show, returns to Olympia London on 5-6 June, offering thousands of IT professionals the opportunity to discover the latest ideas and tools needed to transform, evolve and improve their IT service delivery. With the countdown now underway, here's a preview of what's in store for 2018.

With an extensive free seminar programme (in three theatres), two breakfast briefings, big name keynotes, hot topic roundtables and an array of new products and services, SITS – the UK's leading event for the IT service management industry – is back with an eclectic mix of exhibitors and fresh content for 2018.

"Shows like SITS bring the best ITSM professionals and evangelists together. It's a melting pot of knowledge and experience that will elevate you and leave you with a lot of new ideas and tools. I like to attend SITS for those reasons; it gives me new insights which I can use in my working environment or use to educate other professionals," says Jan Willem Sewalt, head of service management at Starbucks Technology EMEA.

Netflix, Starbucks and Airbnb confirmed to speak

The SITS Keynote Theatre provides a unique opportunity to gain exclusive insights from a range of high-profile thought-leaders in the industry. This year's line-up includes Dave Hahn from Netflix, Jan Willem Sewalt at Starbucks, Chris Arrington from Airbnb, Dave Snowden at Cynefin Centre, and technology evangelist Dr Sue Black OBE.

Dave Hahn's unmissable session will reference the remarkable story of Netflix, one of the most successful dot-com ventures of our time, to explain why a new approach to

IT is needed. This exclusive keynote offers visiting IT professionals a future casting view of the coming world of technical operations.

With 8 years' experience heading up the service management office for Starbucks Technology EMEA, Jan Willem Sewalt will be explaining how to make the connection between process, happy staff, customer satisfaction and business performance. He'll provide visitors with tips on more effective management to improve their staff loyalty and will outline why he thinks a focus on career development can transform technology's business contribution and will ultimately show how to benefit from processes without being ruled by them.

Worldwide accommodation leader Airbnb will also be delivering an exclusive keynote at the show. Chris Arrington, who manages the productivity tools team at Airbnb, is responsible for creating the Airbnb Service Desk and developing the content and self-service strategy leveraged by the business. Driven by three key tenets - automate, educate or eliminate - Arrington will discuss how to reduce friction by testing self-help services with employees and customers at different phases of a rollout.

Dave Snowden's Cynefin framework is designed to navigate the complexity of service management. In his keynote session at SITS, he'll be offering an ecological perspective on service management to

explain how predictability has a major impact on what methods and tools IT professionals can use.

Dr Sue Black OBE will also be making her debut at the show. As a digital skills expert and champion for women in computing, Black is known for her passion in getting more women into technology and her activism around digital social inclusion. Her talk will give an insight into her personal experience as a woman in tech and her journey from a single mum, studying for a PhD, to an advocate for women working in the tech sector.

For further information, and to view the confirmed keynote programme to date, please visit www.servicedeskshow.com/education/keynote-theatre.

75 market-leading tool and solution providers

The central exhibition at SITS will feature over 75 leading specialist vendors, integrators, consultancies and service providers offering buyers top-quality IT solutions on the market – ranging from automation tools, IT security, and cloud technology, to customer experience services, and network management tools.

New exhibitors for 2018 include Peoplecert, Micro Focus, Perspectium, LeanTech, Marxtar, LapSafe self-service, Real VNC, Tools4ever,

18

SITS

THE SERVICE DESK
& IT SUPPORT SHOW

5-6 JUNE 2018
OLYMPIA LONDON



and Samanage. They'll be joining returning big names like Ivanti, Hornbill, Marval, ServiceNow, Freshdesk, TOPdesk, and Syniad IT.

"We view SITS as a must-attend event to meet potential customers and network with existing customers. The organisation, venue and logistics are all excellent," says Steve Morgan, director at Syniad IT.

To view the exhibitor list to date, please visit www.servicedeskshow.com/why-visit/exhibitor-list.

More unmissable free content

Remaining a vital business forum for sharing ideas and innovations within the ITSM community, SITS' free conference programme consists of 36 free sessions tailored specifically to address key opportunities (and challenges) facing ITSM professionals today. A few highlights include:

- Craig Johnson, head of service management at NHS Digital, explains why the organisation needed a new approach, using a blend of management practices including service management, agile and DevOps to create a refreshed 'digital' view.
- Claire Agutter, director of Scopism, joins him to discuss how VeriSM, the service management approach for the digital age, supports these types of transformation.

- Kevin J Smith, senior vice president at Ivanti, explores the importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the related role of automation, and explains how they will accelerate the remarkable rebirth of IT over the next 10 years. Kevin will also take a close look at the relationship between AI and humanity, considering what AI is capable of doing for IT and what is best left to humans.
- To support its rapid expansion, Clydesdale and Yorkshire Banking Group has overhauled its ITSM tooling. Scott McGarvey, head of ITSM, will be explaining how the company is now driving continuous service improvement through automation, using analytics to enhance decision making, and providing users with a central place to 'get things done'.

Professional Service Management Awards 2018

The Professional Service Management Awards (PSMA18), organised by ItsMF UK, will once again provide a unique opportunity to celebrate individual and team achievements across the service management profession. For ITSM professionals this is a great opportunity to meet and network at SITS, and then move on for an evening of industry recognition and further networking at the awards.

Supported by SITS, the awards gala dinner will take place (after day one of SITS) on the evening of 5 June at the prestigious Sheraton Grand Hotel, Park Lane, London, and will be hosted by celebrity cricket commentator Henry 'Blowers' Blofeld.

Award categories include Team of the Year, Young Professional of the Year, ITIL Experience and Digital Transformation Project, with special innovation awards in key areas such as DevOps and SIAM. Further details are available in this issue and at www.itsmf.co.uk.

Register for a visitor pass now

For more information on SITS18 and to register for a free visitor pass, please visit www.servicedeskshow.com and quote priority code SITS107. SITS18 attendees also benefit from free access to Infosecurity Europe 2018, the region's number one information security event, co-located at Olympia London.

Take a bite out of Business Analysis



The business analyst plays an increasingly important role at the heart of the IT-focused organisation. Kat Turner considers the personal and professional skills required.



The IT Quality Index Model

Great relationships are at the heart of successful business. In today's increasingly interconnected world, a business that chooses to focus on developing open and mutually beneficial relationships with their suppliers, customers and stakeholders will be a business that thrives. Conversely a business that ignores how it interacts with others may very well be left behind by more forward-thinking competitors.

In today's workplace being multi-skilled, experienced and flexible in your approach is highly desirable. The BA role has emerged as a result of organisations discovering the need for help in finding potential answers to business issues, and opportunities, and wanting to gain competitive advantage by the delivery of predicted business benefits.

Why are BAs important?

A new role with a skill set that can support business managers and find options and solutions, that may or may not include the implementation of information systems, has become a necessity. A competent BA offers a good return on investment. They will more than pay for themselves through efficiency and time savings. They are there to help a business make informed decisions and identify problems, even ones they might not have known they had!

As Peter Hynes, a Technical Business Analyst states: "We really help a business to solve projects and make decisions more effectively. An in-house BA can research new developments in the industry, identify problems that they may not be fully aware of, and present it in such a way as to help inform the decision, making process."

It is a BA's job to consider all aspects of the IT/business relationship: for example, the processes, IT systems, job roles, skills and

resources that will be needed to develop a business case for change and identify and quantify the business benefits. BAs may also be required to support the implementation of the changes. This can include advising business users as they adopt new processes and procedures or assisting in the user acceptance testing activity for an IT system.

Charlotte Jones, a business analyst in the financial sector agrees:

"Change BAs work closely with the doers of the business, the operations guys, people who speak to customers, and those who work finance systems. We are the middle men to IT, we sit down with those people to understand and articulate what they do, so that any changes to be developed from an IT point of view are affected properly, taking into account the voice of the business."

BAs work in every sector, and the BA role can be specific or broad depending on the needs of the organisation. For example, a business can have one or many BAs who each have their own areas of expertise and work within a particular business function, i.e. technical, finance, marketing, claims, Business Intelligence (BI) or Management Information (MI), operations and so on.

What makes the role so interesting?

The BA's role is highly interactive; they liaise with a variety of people across the organisation. A BA will be required to apply effective stakeholder management strategies as these are crucial to a project's success, and they will get satisfaction from breaking down complex processes to help facilitate the direction the business takes. An ability to problem solve, investigate situations, consider perspectives and analyse and evaluate options using modelling techniques and tools is also a must.

No two days are the same. A BA could be analysing data, facilitating workshops, working with project managers or developers to define requirements, writing up requirements, or defining use cases and system cases depending on the stage of the project. Alongside that the BA might need to be involved in small changes coming in for processes that have no real impact on IT development. In summary, there is no typical day, but it's always interesting and your skill set will evolve as you progress through the role.

Communication is the key

Almost all projects that fail do so because of poor communication and a lack of understanding of priorities outside of a stakeholder's own remit. An organisational culture that actively encourages staff to engage with each other, and work collaboratively across departments, will lead to more successful completion of projects and business benefits. Valuing the BA, and the many aspects of their role, is key to this.



Kat Turner is the Education Portfolio Manager at ITSM Zone. She has twelve years' experience in writing and validating courses.

For more information on developing BA-related skills, check out the EXIN BCS Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis, which offers wide-ranging practical guidance on how to apply business analysis concepts and techniques. The course is now live and can be accessed at ITSM.Zone.

18

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SIAM – How does it all work?

Service integration and management (SIAM) is currently a very hot IT service management (ITSM) topic, and the drive is on for IT organisations (that will be helped by it) to start investigating and adopting some of the SIAM good practice – i.e. to co-ordinate their supply chain and manage suppliers in a collaborative and effective manner. itSMF UK CEO [Barclay Rae](#) provides a concise overview of the subject to share with colleagues and stakeholders.

What is SIAM?

SIAM is a layer of management and control over a number of third-party suppliers, and there are four main models which can be used:

1. Retained client as SIAM – where the retained organisation manages all suppliers and co-ordinates the SIAM function itself.
2. Single supplier – where the Managed Service Provider (MSP) provides all of the service and the SIAM layer of management.
3. Service guardian – where an MSP provides the SIAM layer and one or more delivery functions, as well as managing other suppliers.
4. Separate service integrator – where an MSP provides the SIAM layer (but with no delivery function) and manages all the other suppliers.

As to which is the best model for your company, you'll need to consider the pros and cons of each to reach your desired approach and then transition to a more co-ordinated service-supplier landscape as you prepare for SIAM. The real challenge here is to identify this need and then to work towards this new

state with clarity and focus both internally and with suppliers.

How to Approach SIAM

SIAM needs to create value, as opposed to being a simple supply chain mechanism. This is growing in importance now as:

- SIAM contracts are often awarded separately from service provider contracts.
- Outsourcing contracts are now generally shorter (2-5 years instead of >10 years).
- There's an increasing number of outsourcers competing.

It's also important to create a vision to determine strategy and the type of SIAM model required for business needs, rather than simply creating SIAM because it's the current buzzword. Thus a clear structure and governance model is required for a successful implementation of SIAM.

SIAM Implementation

For a SIAM implementation, typically the approach is "from the bottom up" in an effort

to "keep the lights on", whereas the purist approach is for SIAM to be designed from the top down, i.e. service strategy.

With conflicting approaches, the best approach is to commence at both the top and bottom, working towards the middle. This enables a solution to meet immediate requirements, whilst also providing the building blocks to allow the implementation of the complete SIAM model. Such an approach also helps manage the inherent challenges within SIAM, in particular:

- When applying proprietary SIAM models to a diverse multi-supplier environment, due to the complexity of mapping everything together there will be a limit to flexibility, end-to-end reporting, tooling integration, and reporting.
- Providing awareness of potential lock-ins with SIAM and service providers – for example, if the data and tools are owned by providers, any organisation replacing said providers face starting from scratch. Would there be a desire to absorb such cost in the future?

There's also a need to clearly define services that businesses can understand and relate to,



to enable SIAM in managing providers to the organisation's requirements. If need be, via the use of "tension commercial architecture", i.e. contracts drafted in a manner that encourages suppliers to behave in the desired manner with each other and towards the organisation.

Boundaries of responsibility and clarity on processes are also key to a successful SIAM implementation. Two causes of SIAM failures often highlighted are:

- Constraints, where it's for retained IT organisation to resolve.
- Inefficiencies, where it's for the supplier to resolve.

It should also be remembered when embarking on a SIAM roadmap, not to exclude other IT functions that may not be in the SIAM scope. Knowing how they and SIAM will interact is key. If no direct link between them and SIAM is defined, there will be a gap in the service provision (to the business) as the organisation will no doubt need a number of their services. Again, returning to the need for understanding the services the organisation is consuming and how.

Advice for Getting Started with SIAM

When starting out with SIAM, there are a number of key points to recognise, understand, consider, and address:

- Positioning SIAM within the organisation.
- What the organisation does now and how contracts are currently governed.
- The many variables to consider prior to positioning SIAM.
- The complexity of the services provided often dictate the SIAM approach.
- If outsourcing is the initial answer to providing services, it's key to up-skill internally following outsourcing to better understand and manage the services.

SIAM strategy and design:

- Prior to creating a SIAM model, it's key to identify the problem first and what needs solving.
- Identify the CIO drivers – cost, quality, agility, the move away from a monolithic supplier to managed best in class, etc. You need to be able to answer: "Why SIAM?".
- Question whether there's a need for particular SIAM skills and knowledge to enable a successful SIAM introduction in your organisation. Many of the skills required may already exist in the organisation under roles that SIAM may need to function.
- The devil is in the detail. Be sure to set realistic expectations.
- SIAM is a journey of evolution to achieve maturity. Remember that the solution is not delivered by simply introducing SIAM.

Tooling and reporting:

- Reporting should be bottom up. Providers should report to SIAM, SIAM should report to the business, and ultimately the data should be owned by the business.
- Some large clients could be in a position to insist on single tools, but how will multiple licensing be funded? Be sure to question this.
- Irrespective of approach, standardising across organisations is key e.g. incident closure codes across all supplier systems.

SIAM and service level agreements (SLAs):

- Metrics were traditionally about technical issues. With SIAM they're about behaviours, culture, and people. A clear vision is required to determine the best metrics to use.
- Are your SLAs realistic? They need to be driven from the business but, at the same time, the business needs to understand what they mean, e.g. is 99.999% availability a "must have" or a "nice to have"?
- Are the SLAs driving the right behaviours amongst providers or are they playing each other off to hit their own targets?



- Are we discussing openly with all vendors/ stakeholders? Are we moving towards continual service improvement (CSI)? Consider having all share the credit or debit.
- When creating a multiple supplier model, it's important to remember that services are likely to sit across more than one provider.
- You need a good service desk and knowledge management capabilities with the right tools to enable effective management of records across different providers.
- Business need to be sufficiently mature before multi-sourcing and potentially losing their internal subject matter experts.

5 Important Things to Remember About SIAM

In addition to the above, it's important to recognise that:

1. SIAM is not a silver bullet – any problems currently in place will not disappear by swapping what's in place with SIAM. This is because swapping what's in place with a different set of individuals/organisations is unlikely to remove any inefficiencies or constraints.
2. Successful SIAM implementation requires a collaborative approach – a service is in effect a supply chain that may cross several reporting lines. Customers/users need to be consulted and involved, as

well as stakeholders across the IT "supply chain". Providers need to collaborate to ensure value can also be delivered to the business.

3. Many providers provide their own SIAM model and method of working for each ITIL process. This can save a lot of time from creating something new should the organisation be immature but will bring with it many challenges if the organisation does not adapt its own way of working.
4. A visual representation of the structure of the provided services is useful to identify responsibilities – a picture can be vastly more descriptive than a 20-page document and will help nail down roles and responsibilities.
5. Approach SIAM from both a top down and down top perspective – top down will help set vision, strategy, and help achieve medium to long term organisational goals, whilst a down top approach will ensure focus remains on current pain points.

In Summary

SIAM is an opportunity to realise improvements in efficiency and quality, as well as offering practical options on the co-ordination of complex IT supply chains and interlinked systems. Simply replacing what an organisation already does or has is not the answer and will not achieve success or tangible improvements.

Processes need to be adapted to current working cultures and enhanced over

time. This means accepting that different providers are likely to apply the same process differently and a need for service level management (SLM) remains as SIAM does not replace the need for SLM.

So, service delivery still needs to be managed against service levels and those service levels need to remain relevant to the service received by the users. With SIAM's role being to consider these complex and multi-level scenarios and consider impacts prior to defining service levels. This can extend to using financial incentives across all providers when sharing success, whilst penalising all where service failure exists. Such mechanisms are essential to encourage real collaboration across the supplier landscape.



Barclay Rae is itSMF UK CEO



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