serviceTALK

Teamwork at OVO Energy
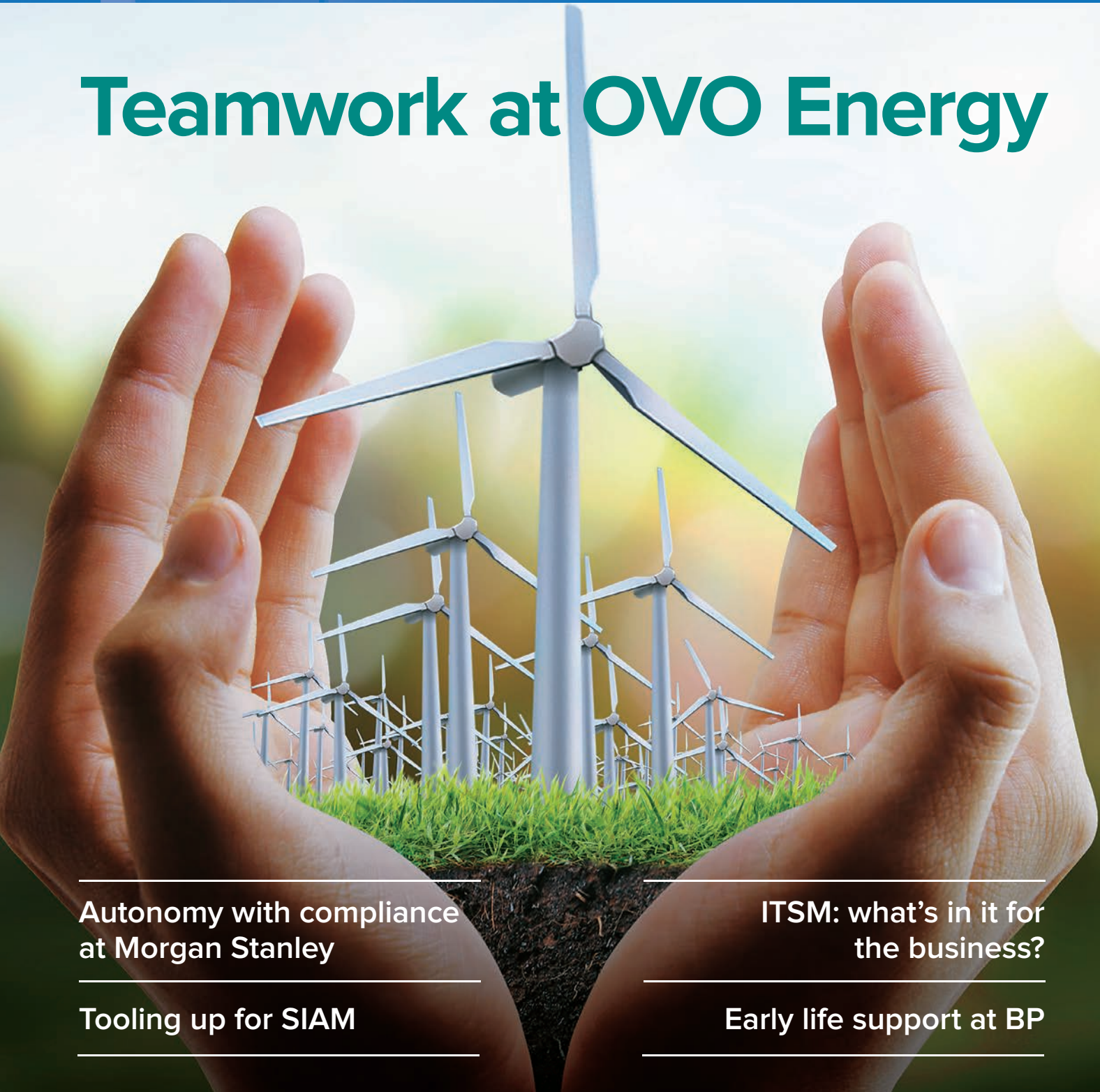
Autonomy with compliance at Morgan Stanley

Tooling up for SIAM

ITSM: what's in it for the business?

Early life support at BP

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Does your organisation value ITSM?

I'm always intrigued by obscure phrases that we use every day, and one that particularly fascinates me is 'to hide one's light under a bushel'.

The expression has biblical origins, and at the time of the King James translation of the Bible, a bushel was a commonplace device used for measuring dry grain, with a capacity of eight gallons (about four pecks, for those more familiar with the eponymous song in Guys and Dolls). I imagine there's an EU directive somewhere that would dictate a metric interpretation of the scripture these days, but it's a colourful image that lingers on in the language as a metaphor for a bright talent hidden from sight through modesty or lack of confidence.

We may be less inclined to hide candles beneath upturned buckets now, but the ITSM world is rife with people hiding their talents or at least failing to communicate why what they do is so valuable. Do senior managers really know what IT service management is and what difference it makes to the business? Are we grasping every opportunity to tell them? As the main contact for publishing and content queries at ITSMF UK, I can't count how many times I've been asked for an overview of ITSM aimed at senior management level – "not so much a summary of ITIL processes but a broad view of the value that ITSM provides to the business." There have been many attempts to provide a high-level view of service management that lights the CEO's candle, but the message has somehow remained frustratingly elusive.

This theme – how to communicate the role of service management and celebrate its successes – runs through this issue of *ServiceTalk*.

Our chairman John Windebank offers a call to action in his column on page 12: "Come on, join in... help us make some noise and kick up some dust." John argues that ITSMF – as the champion of IT service management – needs to help ITSM professionals stand up and be counted. That view is echoed by AXELOS' ITIL front-man Phil Hearsum in his article, *ITSM: what's in it for the business?* on page 34. "Too often the IT team sits – both metaphorically and physically – in a darkened room," he opines, "quietly doing the work while the rest of the business takes the benefits but remains unaware who is responsible for the solutions."

The great thing about belonging to a forum like ITSMF is that we get to hear about members' success stories, many of which result in senior management recognising the value that good ITSM brings to the business. Read about Julia Harrison's Service Introduction Framework at Morgan Stanley (*Autonomy with compliance,* page 26) or Priscilla Smith's work at BP (*The importance of Early Life Support,* page 18) and you discover real high-profile service management in action. The best way to 'get the message across' to senior management is to share some of these stories with them.

For Catherine Cheetham and Jon Dodkins at OVO Energy (*It's all down to teamwork at OVO Energy,* page 22), the contribution of ITSM to the business was fundamental in supporting a rapidly growing business in a highly competitive sector. It was work that led to them to receiving our ITSM Team of the Year award at the end of last year.

Which brings me nicely to my final point. There's no better way to communicate the successes of IT service management than through our conference and annual awards. With the call for speakers and award nominations currently underway, why not give some thought to sharing your experiences with your peers within the Forum, and 'make some noise' for ITSM?
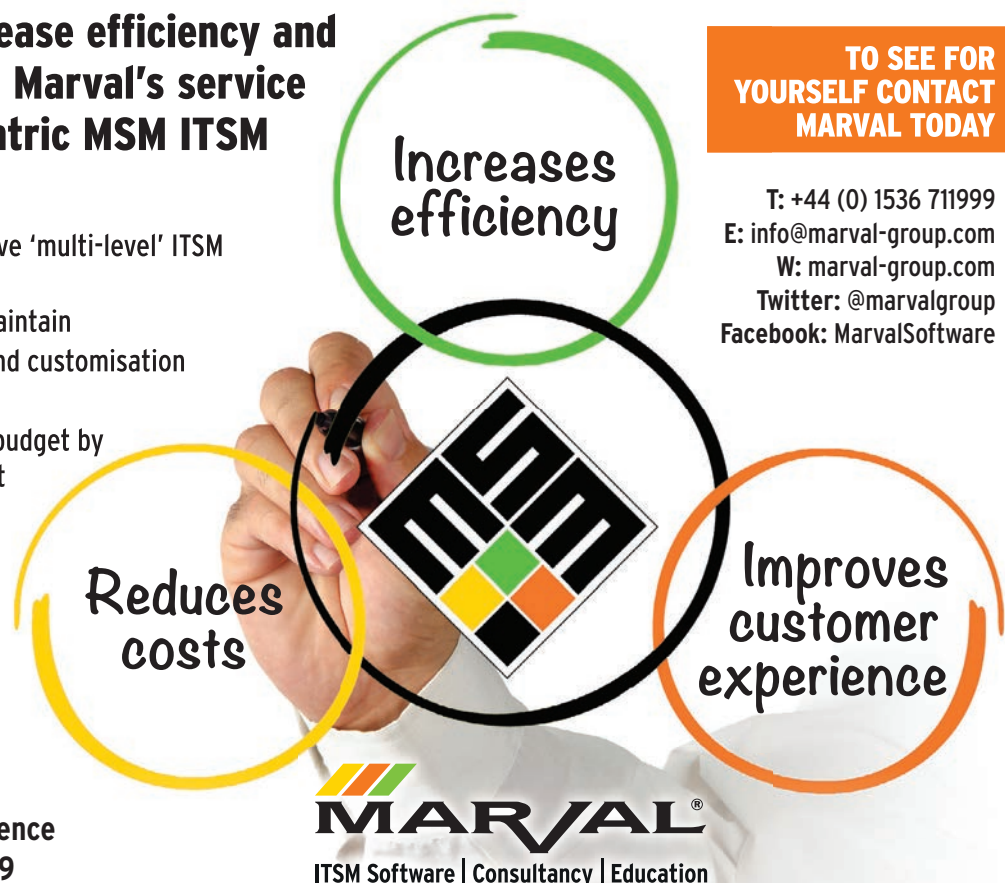
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AXELOS introduces ITIL
Practitioner qualification

AXELOS has announced a new ITIL Practitioner qualification, described as "the most significant evolution in the ITIL best practice framework" since the organisation became its owner. ITIL Practitioner is being developed to help organisations and individuals increase the value they obtain from using ITIL, says AXELOS, by offering additional practical guidance to adopt and adapt the framework to support the business. It will be the next step after ITIL Foundation for professionals who have already learned the basics of ITSM and the business value of well-designed and delivered services.

Addressing the demand from ITSM practitioners and organisations of all sizes worldwide, the first ITIL Practitioner exam will be available globally by the end of 2015 and will equip ITSM professionals with added practical guidance to help them leverage ITIL in line with their organisations' business goals.

ITIL Practitioner will focus on:
- Giving practical guidance on how individuals can leverage Continual Service Improvement (CSI) to maximise the benefits of its adoption and adaption
- Aiming to improve the capability of individuals throughout the business, to adopt and adapt ITIL in their day to day roles for maximum business benefits
- Making use of further evolved technological capabilities – such as automation, real-time reporting and Cloud computing – to increase the quality of service design and the efficiency of service delivery
- Leveraging other philosophies, frameworks, good practices and methodologies – including Lean, DevOps, Agile and SIAM – to further enhance the value of ITSM.

Kaimar Karu, Head of ITSM at AXELOS, explained: "ITIL is the overarching framework that brings together all the good practice in ITSM, globally. Traditionally, ITIL has focused on the 'what' and the 'why', leaving it to the practitioners to apply the guidance in their specific organisational context and find the best ways for the 'how' of adopt and adapt. As good practices appear, evolve and grow, the need for more practical guidance on the 'how' has increased significantly.

"The numerous case studies demonstrating how ITIL's guidance has helped organisations to succeed, our own experiences and that of practitioners worldwide have highlighted several key challenges for a successful improvement journey. ITIL Practitioner is being developed collaboratively with seasoned professionals worldwide to address these challenges."

Karu: "practical guidance on the 'how'"

FireScope announces acquisition of Pangea Systems

FireScope Inc., the leader in aligning customers' technology performance to their business and customer experiences, has announced its acquisition of Pangea Systems, a leader in ITSM consultancy and process innovation.

"This acquisition was a logical next step to the highly successful partnership that has already existed between FireScope and Pangea Systems over the past year," said Leanne Porter, newly appointed CEO of FireScope, Inc. "Both teams have already been working tightly to deliver considerable value to our joint customers, so the transition to a single organisation will be seamless for our customers. This also lets us focus our combined talents to find new ways of helping IT measure and communicate the value it generates for the business."

With the integration of the Pangea Systems team, FireScope will be offering an enriched menu of services, support and account management capabilities that will enable current and future customers to maximise the return on their FireScope investments. Additionally, says the company, FireScope's partner network will be able to leverage highly experienced ITSM experts and process innovators to enhance their own FireScope solution offerings.

Cherwell mApp Solutions win Pink Elephant's IT Excellence Award for Innovation of the Year

Cherwell Software has been awarded Pink Elephant's Innovation of the Year Award for mApp solutions and the Cherwell mApp Exchange. As one of three finalists for the award, Cherwell was recognised for easily and powerfully enabling customers to extend the value of their Cherwell Service Management (CSM) installation.

A Cherwell mergeable application – or mApp solution – is an application that is part of the Cherwell Service Management platform, enabling customers and partners to quickly and easily merge specific new functionality or capabilities, says the vendor. While the concept of application integration is not new, the concept of actually fusing together or merging together two different applications with a few simple steps is fundamentally new, and patent-pending, technology. The reason Cherwell is able to revolutionise this process is because its software platform operates at the data level and leverages a codeless environment. mApp capabilities thus enable merging applications without breaking existing configurations or breaking future upgrades, a common pain point for IT teams that integrate or customise solutions.

St Andrews tops global university rankings for IT services

St Andrews University has become the first university in the world to gain a four-star service desk certificate from SDI.

The university IT department went from 'failing' to a top service thanks to a new CIO "sorting out the basics" of infrastructure and a big improvement in the relationship with staff and students," according to IT business relationship manager Pauline Brown. "I suppose it goes back to 2010, when we appointed a CIO [Steve Watt]. He was brought in because IT was seen as failing, not delivering what the staff and students needed. They would do their own IT without telling us, they'd lost confidence in us," Brown said in an interview with Computerworld UK.

The university asked the Service Desk Institute (SDI) to come and audit its IT team in December 2012. The audit assesses leadership, strategy, people management, processes, resources, satisfaction internally

"The 90-strong IT team supports about 8,000 students and 2,000 staff"
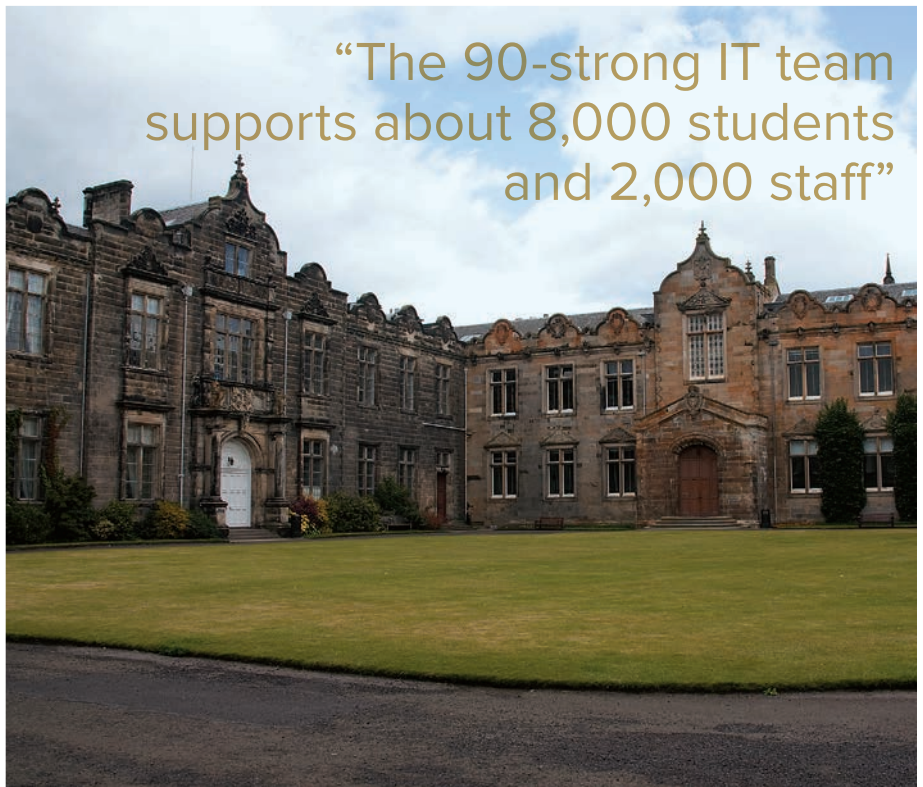
and externally and performance results. The 90-strong IT team supports about 8,000 students and 2,000 staff and has an annual budget of £10 million.

The SDI awarded St Andrews two stars in 2012, three in 2013 and four stars in 2014.

ServiceNow expands in governance, risk and compliance

ServiceNow, the enterprise cloud company, has announced that it is accelerating its investment in enterprise governance, risk and compliance (GRC) solutions. ServiceNow is acquiring Intréis, a team of experts focused on integrating GRC and service management across enterprise environments. ServiceNow has also integrated the Unified Compliance Framework (UCF) database of compliance documents into the latest release of its existing GRC solution.

ServiceNow is changing the way organisations manage risk by aligning the compliance process seamlessly with the way they already run their business, says the company. By integrating and automating compliance testing and auditing processes into existing service management processes, companies can improve visibility into their risk profile,

better mitigate those risks and drive more effective risk-based decision making. That ultimately will drive higher levels of customer confidence and provide those companies with a competitive advantage.

Intréis is a team of GRC experts with a unique approach to implementing GRC-enabled service management solutions across the enterprise. The company has focused its business on building a single system of record with ServiceNow to power their customers' internal controls framework in order to meet stringent risk management and compliance obligations. They have grown rapidly over the last several years by improving operational effectiveness, reducing costs and demonstrating compliance to regulators and auditors for their customers.

FrontRange and Lumension merge to create HEAT Software

FrontRange and Lumension, leading providers of Hybrid Service Management and Unified Endpoint Management software solutions, have announced that the companies will merge to create HEAT Software.

HEAT Software will be led by industry veteran Jonathan Temple as CEO, and the new company will feature a blended management team with senior executives from both companies. The combined company, which will have more than 350 employees serving its global customer base, will be headquartered in Milpitas, CA in the USA and will maintain operations in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Managing millions of service interactions and endpoints every day for organisations around the world, HEAT Software has the scale and ability to serve enterprises across all geographies and verticals, says the company. The combination of the two companies offers customers the ability to deliver world-class service while maximising operational efficiencies with reduced cost and complexity. Additionally, the platform offers enhanced capabilities in the management of endpoint operations, security and compliance.

Sysop launches e-learning programme for ITSM professionals

IT educator and consultant Sysop is launching IT service management (ITIL®) and project management (PRINCE2®, Agile PM®) e-learning courses for IT professionals from March 2015, the company has announced. The launch is a response to market demand for quality IT-discipline distance learning, especially from larger UK-headquartered, global companies with IT staff worldwide, says Sysop.

Sysop already provides classroom education internationally through associates in Europe, the Middle East and Far East, and runs one e-learning ITIL foundation course alongside some 26 classroom courses and workshops.

"In our experience e-learning pass rates are broadly comparable to those for classroom courses – at half the price" says Sysop lead consultant and managing director Stuart Sawle. "E-learning courses are proving increasingly popular as they allow students to study at their own pace without spending time out of the office in the classroom."

Fruition Partners becomes first and only ServiceNow Master Solutions Partner in both Europe and USA

Fruition Partners, a leading provider of technology-enabled solutions for the Service Management sector, has become one of the first UK companies to achieve the ServiceNow® Master Solutions Partner designation. Fruition Partners is now the only ServiceNow partner to earn this top status in both Europe and the US, where it has been a Master Solutions Partner since January 2014. As a result, Fruition Partners continues to reinforce its global position as one of the leading ServiceNow solution providers.

The ServiceNow Master Solutions Partner status designation recognises Fruition Partners' investment in training, certification programmes, and achievement of consistently high customer satisfaction ratings in providing high-quality ServiceNow implementations.

The designation also entitles Fruition Partners UK access to additional ServiceNow tools and resources, enabling the company to accelerate service management engagements across a range of functions, from IT to human resources and facilities management.

"As a business dedicated to delivering ServiceNow solutions, Fruition Partners in Europe and the US has demonstrated strong commitment to our shared customers, coupled with innovative product expertise and the ability to understand and support the most complex organisational environments," said Tom Moore, vice president of partners and service providers, ServiceNow.

SITS unveils new name for 2015

3-4 JUNE 2015
OLYMPIA, LONDON

Diversified Communications UK has revealed new branding for 'SITS – The Service Desk & IT Support Show', which is moving forward as 'SITS15 – The IT Service Management Show'.

This subtle yet significant change to the show's name reflects the evolving nature of the vibrant sector that it serves, says the company. As a leading exhibition and conference for ITSM professionals, SITS has enjoyed continued industry prominence and support throughout its 21-year history. From its early beginnings as The Helpdesk User Group (HUG) Exhibition to its latest incarnation, the event has grown and adapted to meet the ever changing needs of IT service teams. Today, as ever, it remains a vital business forum for sharing ideas and innovations within the ITSM community

"It's an exciting change for the show and a modern reflection of how the IT services industry is developing," explains event manager Toby Moore. "This year's event will bring a renewed focus on understanding the true value of front-line service desk staff and the leadership values of ITSM, as this has fast become the greatest asset for successful IT service teams today."

Join
*it*SMF *UK*
at **SITS15**
3-4 June at Olympia, London

ITSM15 - do you have a good story to tell?

ITSM15, our Annual Conference and Exhibition, will be landing at the Sofitel London Heathrow on 23rd and 24th November, and we're currently looking for new speakers.

The over-arching theme for this year's Conference is 'New challenges, new solutions', reflecting the emphasis of our Big4 Agenda around ITSM futures, skills, customer experience and collaboration. We are calling for speakers and presentations that help attendees to develop their ideas in these areas, specifically relating to one of the following streams:

• Change & collaboration
• Cloud & service integration
• People & skills
• Service culture & customer experience

Full details can be found in the ITSM15 Call for Speakers form and guidelines at **www.itsmf.co.uk/?page=ITSM15**

ITSM15 is Europe's leading service management event, offering four dedicated tracks of educational presentations, interactive sessions and case studies, our celebrated annual awards dinner, and an excellent ITSM exhibition.

Please put the date in your diary and keep an eye out for further details.

Early bird booking now open

Check out the website for full details.

ITSM15
NEW CHALLENGES NEW SOLUTIONS

The one-stop ITSM reference

The ITSMF UK website reference area continues to grow as part of our commitment to provide a one-stop ITSM resource for members. If you haven't visited the website in a while, it's definitely worth a browse - all you have to do is log in. The new content includes:

• **ServiceTalk**
the latest issues of our flagship magazine, covering topics such as SIAM, the Cloud, ITSM beyond ITIL, business relationship management, cyber resilience, agile, DevOps, and service culture.

• **The ITSMF UK pocket guides**
view or download the PDF pocket guides on CCRM, ISO/IEC 20000, SFIA, Service Level Management, plus our ITSM dictionary

• **Standards and frameworks in business and service management**
check out these three-minute outlines of 35 ITSM-related frameworks

• **The ITSMF UK library of white papers and case studies**
contributed by members for other members to share

• **Video breaks**
members share their views on camera about key service management issues

• **Proceedings of SIG and regional meetings**
with presentations from guest speakers

• **eKnowledge Library**
our partner library of around 1000 papers on ITSM related themes, contributed by ITSMF International members and coordinated by Van Haren Publishing.

In the coming months we'll be adding further content for members to share. If you have any queries of suggestions for further reference material, please contact publications@itsmf.co.uk.

Sign up for a **masterclass!**

Masterclasses are focused, interactive events designed for experienced service management professionals. Led by an expert facilitator, they provide an excellent opportunity for attendees to work through real-life ITSM issues and share their knowledge and expertise with other delegates. Check out details of our April and May events below and watch the website for the full calendar.

Understanding Release Management

16th April 2015, 9.30am - 4.30pm,

Univ of Nottingham

There are many hidden challenges for those introducing changes and releases within a complex IT environment, and every organisation faces different issues. This Masterclass, led by Jon Morley and Matt Hoey from the Service Transition SIG, helps attendees to gain a real understanding of release management and provides an opportunity to share experiences and solutions.

Getting to grips with Service Design

28th April 2015, 9.30am - 4.30pm,

ITSMF UK, Reading

This Masterclass, facilitated by Karen Brusch of Nationwide Building Society, helps attendees to gain a clear understanding of the role and importance of service design. Issues that will be addressed include what drives the service design, why decision making techniques are so important for requirements, the challenge of moving to holistic service design, and the challenges of the digital age.

Implementing ISO/IEC 20000

13th May 2015, 9.30am - 4.30pm,

ITSMF UK, Reading

This masterclass, facilitated by distinguished ISO/IEC 20000 author and examiner Lynda Cooper, considers the benefits of ISO/IEC 20000 implementation for the organisation and the pitfalls to look out for along the way. Real life stories, group sessions and plenty of time for questions will ensure that everyone goes away ready to start work on implementing or improving their service management system.

Special interest groups on SIAM, governance and skills

Special interest groups are the backbone of member activity within ITSMF UK, and our current groups (Problem Management, Service Transition, Service Design, Service Level Management and CSI) continue to provide a focus for members' particular areas of interest.

Plans are afoot to roll out three new SIGs during 2015, dedicated to IT governance, skills, and service integration and management. These are key topics, affecting the way that IT responds to changing business demands for the future. If you are interested in taking part in any of these new groups, please contact membership@itsmf.co.uk for further information.
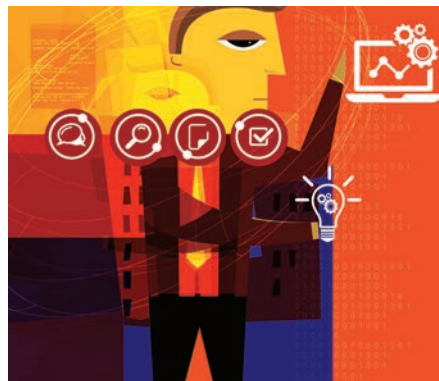
And the winner is...

ITSMF UK's annual awards are a great way to recognise the achievements of your team and organisation, and to share your successes with other Forum members.

Nominations for the 2015 awards will soon be open – with some new award categories to reflect our changing industry. Why not put your colleagues forward and help them to gain the recognition they deserve? **Check out the website for details.**

Take a look at our winners at last year's awards evening...

Service Management Project of the Year
Sponsored by Marval Software
Presented to the organisation that has completed the most successful and challenging IT Service Management project during the year.

2014 finalists:
Telefonica, NHS Greater Manchester CSU, Barclays Bank

WINNER... NHS Greater Manchester CSU

Service Innovation of the Year
Sponsored by Fox IT
Presented to the organisation offering the most novel product or service offering that has been developed over the past year. Finalists will be assessed on the level of ingenuity and inventiveness in their offering and the originality of the solution.

2014 finalists:
Virtusa, Marval, HP

WINNER... Virtusa (VTAF)

IT Service Management Team of the Year
Sponsored by Global Knowledge
Presented to the members or leader of a team that have supported each other and their customers in providing inspirational service delivery and significant business benefit.

2014 finalists:
The Co-operative Group, OVO Energy, EE

WINNER... OVO Energy

Ashley Hanna Contributor of the Year Award
Presented to an individual who, in the judges' view, has made an outstanding contribution to the ITSMF UK organisation as a volunteer in the last year.

2014 finalists:
Richard Horton, NIHR Clinical Research, Network,
John McDermott, HP,
Warren Dakin, Piksel
Barry Corless, Global Knowledge
Karen Brusch, Nationwide
Cath Bartlett, Dyson
Tony Brough, Holistic Service Management

WINNER... Karen Brusch, Nationwide

Student of the Year – ITIL
Sponsored by PeopleCert
Presented to the ITIL student who has achieved ITIL Expert through the current ITIL qualification scheme between 1 August 2013 and 1 August 2014 with the highest average score across all Intermediate and MALC modules.

2014 finalists:
Damien Bowen, NTT Data
Norman Driskell, The Home Office
Garry Hargreaves, NATO

WINNER... Garry Hargreaves, NATO

Student of the Year - ISO/IEC 20000
Sponsored by APMG International
Presented to the individual who has achieved the highest marks in the ISO/IEC 20000 Practitioners examination during the year.

2014 finalists:
Luke Reader, SHL
Tommy Thunheim, Alcom
Carol Groom, BT Lancashire Services

WINNER... Luke Reader, SHL

Trainer of the Year
Sponsored by AXELOS
Presented to the individual who has been the most successful and consistent IT Service Management trainer during the year.

2014 finalists:
Ron Beales, Pink Elephant
George Bailey, Global Knowledge
Alan Nixon, Fox ITSM

WINNER... Alan Nixon, Fox IT

Submission of the Year
Sponsored by IT Training Zone
Presented to the author of the white paper, article or case study that provides the most informative, educational and thought-provoking ITSM content.

2014 finalists:
• Patrick Bolger (Hornbill) and Matt Hoey (Grant Thornton) - *"Agile Service Transition"*
• Robert Spencer (Independent Consultant) - *"Enterprise release management"*
• Debarshi Bandyopadhyay and Vikas Singhai (Infosys) - *"How to avoid failed IT changes"*

WINNER... Robert Spencer

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.

WINNER... Rob Stroud, CA Technologies

View from the Chair

Someone that I really respect as a voice of common sense and no-nonsense opinion challenged me recently when I referred to the IT service management 'industry'. His view was, and I suspect still is, that IT service management isn't something that can simply be associated with a specific set of people or organisations, it is part of the plumbing of any organisation – everyone is involved in it in some way.

I absolutely take the point. IT service management isn't an optional extra. The successful running of an organisation that delivers IT services requires that there is some order, some consistency in how things are done, a common understanding of what needs to be done and why, and what the output needs to be.

As long as there is a general understanding that an IT service is something that a business utilises in some way to enable that business to generate value, then there must be some form of IT service management going on. That's how the provider is able to provide the service to that business.

So – is IT service management just 'done' by a niche set of individuals? No. But even if ITSM permeates the business and instils a 'service culture', we still need the individuals and organisations that are specialists in IT service management. In the same way, health and safety isn't just done by those working in the health and safety department; it's part of the personal responsibility of all individuals in the organisation to understand and comply with health and safety policy and process. However, some individuals are health and safety strategy owners, planners, managers and auditors. These individuals procure and use specific health and safety tools and equipment from specific health and safety tools and equipment providers. These individuals also procure the assistance of specialist trainers and consultants, and hire from specialist recruitment organisations. They are reliant upon academia to produce appropriately skilled new blood into their organisations. They utilise the output from

standards and best practice bodies to provide reference points that their organisations can use to assess and develop their current capability and maturity.

IT service management is no different. We have specialist providers of IT service management tools. We have consultancy organisations providing specialist IT service management advice; academics who specialise in IT service management; and specific ITSM standards. We have ITSM best practice providers, we have recruitment and resource provider organisations specialising in ITSM skills provision and we have individuals within internal and external IT service-providing organisations that are specialists in some field of ITSM. This collectively is the 'industry' that I was referring to.

I absolutely believe that there is an ITSM industry, and I absolutely believe that I am part of it.

I continue to be concerned by the low profile of our industry and those that work within it. It was recently announced that the global annual spend on IT will rise to over $3.8 trillion in 2015. That $3.8 trillion dollar investment in IT by the organisations we work for and serve as customers is simply dead money up to the point at which it comes together in the form of IT services that assist those organisations to generate business value. The collective business value must presumably be worth far more than the $3.8 trillion dollar investment. Our IT service management industry is responsible for the successful management and delivery of the

services that help generate the business value. So isn't it a little odd that IT service management is largely invisible?

I am convinced that the ITSM industry's lack of profile is a major constraint to the industry as a whole and to its constituent organisations and individuals. It is imperative that, as a collective industry, we apply significant focus on how we better articulate the value, purpose and criticality of ITSM to those outside of our niche. If we don't solve this we will always struggle to attract and retain the best resources, we will continue to be at the wrong end of the queue when it comes to acquiring investment funding, we will regrettably continue to have insufficient recognition and influence on the architecture and design of the very services that we have to sustain in delivery. Our industry and those within it continue to be misunderstood and marginalised. We have the responsibility but insufficient authority and recognition to adequately influence how the $3.8 trillion dollars should be invested to deliver the maximum return.

How many ITSM roles are really regarded as destination careers? How often are the opinions of ITSM senior practitioners consulted and quoted in the media? And how often do you come across revered enterprise architects in lofty positions who are still thinking that business issues are solved by bolting together chunks of technology? [side note... this isn't a swipe at all enterprise architects. I know many who are brilliant and massively valuable assets to the organisations they work for. They also tend to be the ones who openly recognise

> "It was recently announced that the **global annual spend on IT will rise to over $3.8** trillion in 2015."

the essential need for active involvement and input from those specialising in IT service management.]

You are seeing a change in the way ITSMF UK operates for its members. We will, of course, continue to drive initiatives within our industry to share, evolve and innovate in the field of IT service management, but we are also pushing ahead with the Forum's role of championing the ITSM industry. This means raising our industry's voice and profile in the UK, extending the reach and understanding of the value of ITSM and the organisations and individuals that make up that industry. It also means attracting attention, achieving greater recognition for the industry that our members represent, striving for a higher profile for ITSM and a position of greater influence.

Come on, join in... help us make some noise and kick up some dust. Let's have some fun raising our collective industry profile and influence, and strive to capture the increased opportunities that this will bring.

Now's the time to raise our voices.

John Windebank
Chairman, ITSMF UK
john.windebank@itsmf.co.uk

a tooling strategy for SIAM

Steve Morgan discusses the key tooling requirements of an effective SIAM environment.

"To make multisourcing arrangements effective, customers must get suppliers to work together, both from the commercial and operational standpoint. The Services Integration layer, comprising elements of process, tools, service level agreements and related structures, is absolutely critical to the success of these arrangements"

Forrester Research, September 2011

What is SIAM, and how can it benefit your business?

As organisations move towards a multi-vendor, tower-based sourcing model, there is a need to create a central capability to coordinate and manage service management processes, exert governance and manage service provider performance. The SIAM (Service Integration and Management) function can be retained or sourced as an over-arching tower function.

As Forrester stated (left), it is critical to get the suppliers in the eco-system to work together, and this is facilitated to a large extent by the tooling.

The SIAM function is accountable for ensuring consistent execution of processes, as well as acting as the translation layer between the technical services provided by the tower providers to business services consumed by the business. This is described in the simple SIAM model in Figure 1.

In this article we will explore and analyse the tools required to successfully create an effective SIAM model. To keep things simple we will keep tools that are specific to other functions, for example password reset tools used in a Service Desk environment, out of the equation and look at them in more detail in a future article.
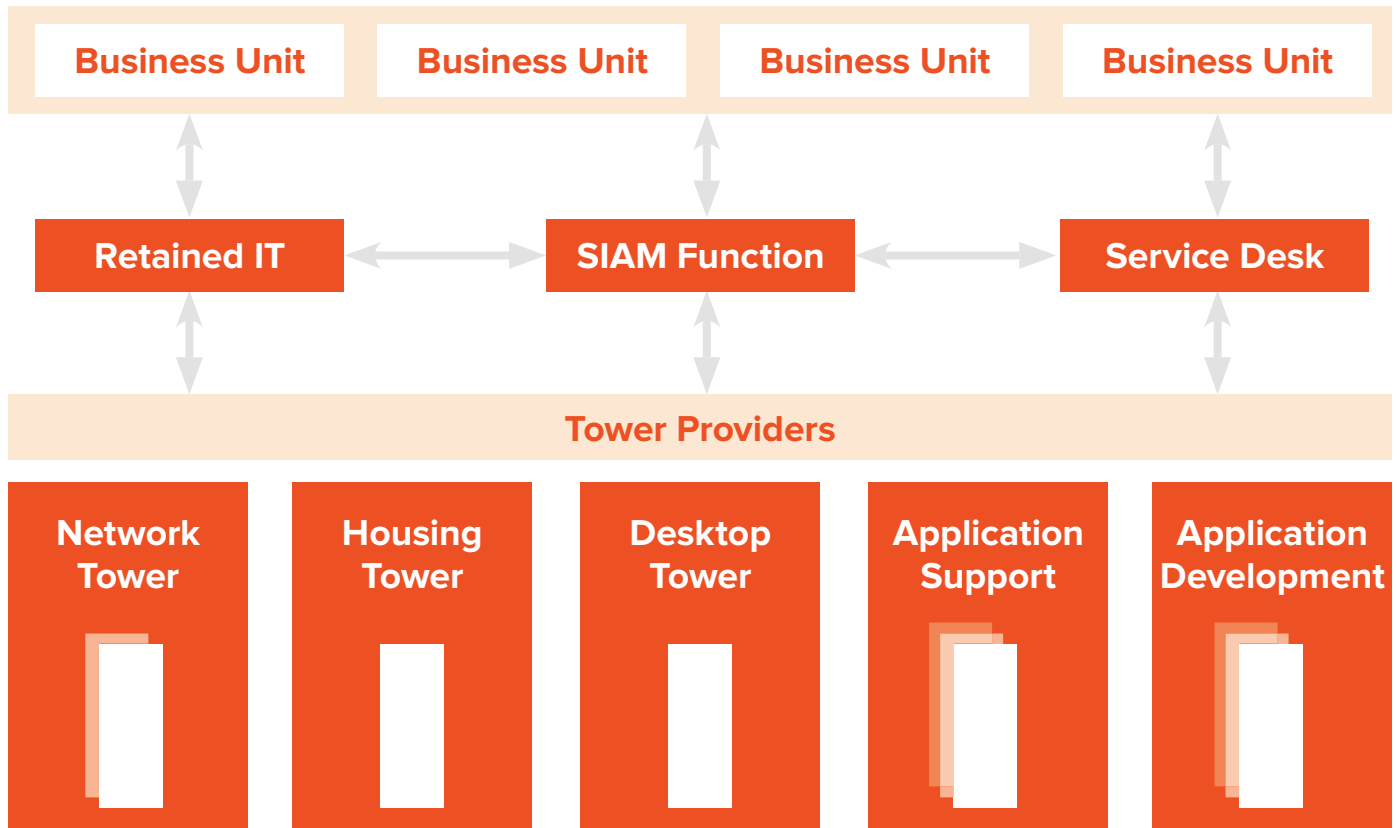
Figure 1: A simple SIAM model

SIAM tooling strategy

As more and more organisations embark upon a SIAM strategy to IT sourcing, where a multi-vendor approach is adopted, the importance of a robust tooling strategy has become even more important.

Figure 2:
SIAM tooling – key areas

This renewed importance is primarily due to the fact that, in a multi-vendor environment, ownership of the various tools in the overall portfolio can become unclear. In order to maximise the business benefits of the SIAM model, your existing toolset will, at the very least, require configuration changes. In all likelihood, a completely new toolset will be required if you want to see the full value and of your transformation and a clear return on your investment.

With these business goals in mind, let's take a look at the six primary areas of focus for SIAM tools, as set out in Figure 2, and then clearly set out the requirements for a good SIAM tooling strategy.

IT service management

The selection and adoption of the right service management tool lies at the heart of any successful IT strategy. Organisations with legacy service management tools first need to redefine their requirements, then re-evaluate their existing tools and decide whether they are fit for purpose in a SIAM eco-system. The next section explores some of the

core attributes of an ITSM tool in a SIAM environment, which are over and above the core functionality expected from an ITSM tool.

From my experience, a good ITSM tool will have the following features:

• **Seamless integration**
Uppermost of these essential characteristics is the ability to integrate seamlessly with other tools through the use of industry standard interface technologies. This will allow the real-time transfer of incident, problem, change and request tickets between different systems, which is particularly important in a SIAM environment as there is the potential for numerous suppliers to be involved in the resolution of a single ticket. Ideally, a single, common toolset should be established, as the single source of record and all suppliers should use this system for simplicity and accuracy. This avoids the requirement for complex tool integrations, but SIAM organisations need to be wary of the fact that, if a supplier is forced to use a designated toolset, they will undoubtedly have to integrate the chosen tool and their own in-house toolset in order to exchange data with shared service teams within their own organisation.

• **CMDB integration/synchronisation**
In a multi-vendor organisation, it is critical to have a single consolidated Configuration Management Database (CMDB), so that there is only one point of reference for impact analysis and a single view of the end-to-end

IT services delivered. However defining, building and maintaining this model can be extremely challenging for an IT organisation.

From my experience of CMDB implementation, I would recommend taking the following two steps, which will help to reduce this complexity:

1. Define the CMDB data model, which describes the Configuration Items (CIs), attributes, and the initial data load and data maintenance mechanisms for each CI

2. Reduce the circumstances where suppliers are using their own CMDB and then updating the SIAM CMDB. Separate CMDBs can be effective for maintaining CI data accuracy, but this approach fails completely when attempting to maintain the dependencies and relationships between CIs. Whilst many suppliers will need to use their CMDB as part of a broader shared service offering, the risk of CI data inaccuracy as a result is a very real one

- **End-to-end workflow**
This functionality enables the definition of complex workflows, which simultaneously support the allocation of tasks to multiple resolvers, perhaps on different tools. This is particularly important in a multi-vendor environment, given that any incident, request or problem is likely to require multiple parties to be involved in its resolution/fulfilment. In the case of change management, the process can become more complex, as reviewers and approvers of a given change will be drawn from the entire supplier eco-system, and as such there are multiple 'calls' out from the SIAM tool to the supplier eco-system at each stage of the change process.

A failure to create an end-to-end workflow across the supplier eco-system will mean either manual data entry or manual processing is necessary, which will slow down the process and introduce the risk of errors occurring. Ultimately, this will reduce the speed with which incidents can be implemented, changes assessed, authorised and implemented or user service requests fulfilled.

- **Common data dictionary**
The tool set needs to reference a common data dictionary whereby data such as incident priorities, change types, and request catalogues follow common definitions and data values. This will avoid the need for data translation across groups and thus reduce the risk of information being lost in translation.

The common data dictionary is best defined in an interface control document, which describes, at field level, the contents of each ticket type and the CMDB CIs and their attributes. The interface control document also needs to describe the relevant data transmission protocols that allow ticket and configuration data to pass between the SIAM ITSM tool and the tools being used elsewhere in the vendor eco-system. This is critical to

ensure that service providers in the eco-system can work together collaboratively, using the service management tool as the single source of record for all of their work.

Discovery

Above, we made reference to the CMDB and emphasised its importance. However, we also need to understand how data gets in there and how is it is maintained. This is critical to ensure that the CMDB data is complete and accurate, as the CMDB will be used across the SIAM eco-system for impact analysis of incidents, problems, and prospective changes.

"In a SIAM environment, discovery can become an extremely contentious subject."

In order to achieve and maintain CMDB accuracy, initial data loads and the auditing of CMDB content should be undertaken using a discovery toolset. These can range from simple 'asset' discovery, right through to complex application dependency mapping tools, which provide end-to-end service views based upon the components discovered.

In a SIAM environment, discovery can become an extremely contentious subject. The need for it is undisputed, but each service provider in the eco-system is likely to have their own discovery tool, and will want to insist that this is used, as they will trust their solution and have staff trained in its operation.

Ideally, you need to impose a single tool set here, to reduce the CMDB integration challenges that arise when you try to populate the CMDB from multiple discovery sources. In addition, if you accept an 'anything goes' approach to discovery tooling you may end up with tools that cannot transmit to the CMDB effectively or that are unable to capture valuable data about the relationships between CIs. This could negatively impact upon the wider business by reducing the availability of service-focused CMDB data. Remember, if the CMDB is inaccurate or incomplete, critical impact analysis decisions could be made on

incidents or prospective changes which are based on false data. This will eventually lead to service unavailability, reputation damage and customer dissatisfaction.

Software asset management

Allied to discovery is the need not only to manage the hardware assets, but also the software assets and particularly the licensing. In a SIAM environment, this is more complex due to the fact that:
- Suppliers in the eco-system may each retain some software licensing responsibility, but it is generally the organisation using the software which has the software liability.
- There is often a need to consolidate software entitlement and usage data across systems managed by multiple vendors.

In order to combat/pre-empt these issues, I recommend that the SIAM organisation maintains a central software asset management tool that is able to receive and analyse data from multiple sources in order to create a single, consolidated organisation-wide view.

Event management

A requirement that is often overlooked due to the focus on ITSM tooling is the ability to correlate events generated elsewhere in the SIAM eco-system and apply a service view to these. In other words, if a technology component fails, which service is impacted by the failure? Another way to look at this is that the SIAM layer is service-focused, whereas the technical towers are infrastructure-focused. The SIAM function needs a correlation tool to enable it to perform the service integration role effectively

Due to the siloed nature of the SIAM sourcing model, the service providers in the SIAM eco-system are unlikely to possess the full end-to-end view of the all the infrastructure and application components that come together to form the service. This information is typically found within the CMDB. The relationships between these 'physical' CIs and their logical counterparts, such as business processes and services, should also be contained within the CMDB but this is seldom the case because of the complexity involved in obtaining information about services and the infrastructure upon which it runs.

This issue needs addressing because, in a complex SIAM model, a service-orientated CMDB will improve incident impact analysis and improve change impact assessment. Failure to build this 'single version of the truth' CMDB could lead to unexpected service failures, business productivity impact, dissatisfied users and reputational damage. To combat this issue application dependency mapping is required to supplement the information relating the physical CIs to the business applications, operations and processes so that the complete service can be mapped, dependent infrastructure items

identified and impact analysis performed effectively.

The recent failure of Royal Bank of Scotland systems further supports this need. In this case, not only did they suffer from all of the adverse impacts above, they also received a massive regulatory fine.

One CIO I know gave a great reason for needing this functionality by saying: "when my phone rings, the event correlation tooling will tell me why it's ringing before I pick up". I thought this really summed up why this tooling was required.

Reporting

A common problem in a SIAM organisation is the production of reports, because there is a tendency for reporting to become all consuming, with a myriad of reports all showing supplier and service performance metrics which often mean little to the business. Reporting can easily become a 'cottage industry' in its own right. There is a simple way to address this which we will look at below but first let's consider the different types of reporting, which tend to fall into a number of categories, as follows:

• Vendor-focused commercial reporting
This describes how the vendor is performing against their commercial SLAs and KPIs, and describes the overall commercial picture, highlighting where measures have been achieved and describing where failures have occurred and why they happened

• Vendor-focused service reporting
This focuses on the performance of the services provided by the vendor, in terms of SLA performance, for example the processing of incidents, problems and changes

• Business-focused volumetric reporting
This focuses on the number of tickets raised during the reporting period, and provides trending over time. In my opinion, there is limited value in this type of reporting, but it is surprisingly common! The fact is that this type of reporting is quantitative rather than qualitative, and is therefore fairly one-dimensional in nature.

• Business-focused service reporting
This tends to focus on the performance of the business in terms of end-to-end services, and is perhaps the most useful in giving business insight into the quality of service being provided.

Ideally, reporting will be largely sourced from the service management tool, which should act as the single authoritative source of ticket data from across the SIAM eco-system. This 'single source of truth' reduces the need for manual data manipulation and provides a sound and trusted basis for all reporting.

Where the service management tool is not sufficient to meet the reporting needs, it may be appropriate to supplement this with a specialist reporting tool with sophisticated

data analytics capabilities. However, this is likely to require a significant amount of configuration and user training before the organisation can receive valuable management information from it. In my experience, the configuration effort pays dividends in the long term. However, be sure to build the analytics capabilities gradually to ensure they are sustainable, and ensure that there is strong governance in place to manage requirements. Failure to do this could result in the organisation meeting every reporting requirement presented to it but failing to provide business value through the provision of insightful and useful content.

> "Above all else, remember that SIAM tooling is there to support the SIAM strategy."

Capacity management

Commonly, the service providers in the SIAM eco-system will each have a responsibility to deliver capacity data to the SIAM organisation. Typically this will be 'tower-focused' data, which focuses on the infrastructure or applications within that service provider's tower. In ITIL terms, we would call this resource/component capacity data.

This data needs to be consolidated and brought into service views, so that you can really gain some confidence that your business processes and services have sufficient capacity to meet the planned needs of the business. This is the role of the SIAM organisation, and the tooling that performs this consolidation should be managed by the SIAM organisation.

However, the means by which this is achieved needs clarification. In essence, what we are hoping to achieve is to take all this component-focused data, apply a service lens to it and produce capacity reporting, which will allow us to demonstrate to the business either that all is well for the foreseeable future or, more commonly, that they need to invest in some new infrastructure to meet the growth plans of the service.

Conclusion

So, having drawn a clearer picture of the 'shopping list' required for successful SIAM tooling, here are some tips for bringing this

to reality:
• Define a **tooling strategy** which outlines what you need, who is going to own what tool, and how they will come together to meet the stated requirements

• Define a set of functional and non-functional **requirements** and **score** each potential vendor using a formal process
• Use a set formula and agreed common language for defining your requirements, selecting potential vendors and managing a **slick selection process**

• Don't be tempted to go with the vendor with the shiniest brochures or the slickest salesman!

• Focus upon **interoperability** between tools, not just the tools themselves.

Remember that tooling is only one part of the challenge. **Tools** are configured to perform against defined processes. They are operated by **people** who are working within an effective and appropriate **organisation** model. The people, process and tools come together to deliver **outcomes**, which are managed by an over-arching **governance** model.

Above all else, remember that SIAM tooling is there to support the SIAM strategy. The original decision to embark upon a SIAM approach will have had its own set of objectives and outcomes it was looking to achieve. The implementation of the tooling strategy should seek to deliver against these objectives and outcomes. After all, it is likely that SIAM objectives which involve reducing complexity, improving service quality and efficiency, and improving end-user satisfaction will be largely delivered through an effective set of tools, processes and people deployed across the SIAM eco-system.

Steve Morgan is Director of Syniad IT Solutions. He has over 25 years of experience of working in IT, both in operational and consulting roles. He led the KPMG Service Management team in the UK before leaving to form Syniad IT Solutions Ltd in February 2012. Steve has extensive experience of working on complex SIAM programmes, having helped organisations such as BP, Royal Mail Group and Zurich Insurance design, build and operate multi-vendor IT sourcing models. He is also the former Chairman of the ITSMF UK SLM Special Interest Group.

The Importance of
Early Life Support

Organisations spend millions for projects to go live on time and on budget, but what does that mean for support? Support costs are those that will go on for the life of the application. Priscilla Smith of BP explains how to reduce that risk through proper transitioning from project to support focusing on the importance of Early Life Support.

When organisations begin to implement Service Management they typically concentrate on Incident, Problem and Change. Support teams and management often grow weary before getting to other processes after seeing the initial quick wins with the first three. Service Transition allows an organization to be proactive with regard to what is to be supported and what support costs might be; ultimately reducing the risk of high priority incidents when projects go live. A key component of Service Transition is the introduction into operational service through Early Life Support (ELS).

Description

The tendency in project work is to save money and time on project deployments by eliminating or modifying requirements for critical elements for transition to operations. ELS is often overlooked in the rush to operations despite being critical to lowering risk. Typically, ELS is the accountability of the Project team to provide the right level of technical expertise and documentation for an effective management of change. Understanding and addressing operational costs and risk up front can save companies double or triple the cost of the project as operational costs can live on as the applications are many times in production for years. Having a build to operate approach can create a culture of reduced costs rather than continuous service improvement reviews for operational cost cutting.

The ELS period should be a targeted period of time within the lifecycle of the project and should only be exited once the business stakeholders, project team and the operational service owner have agreed
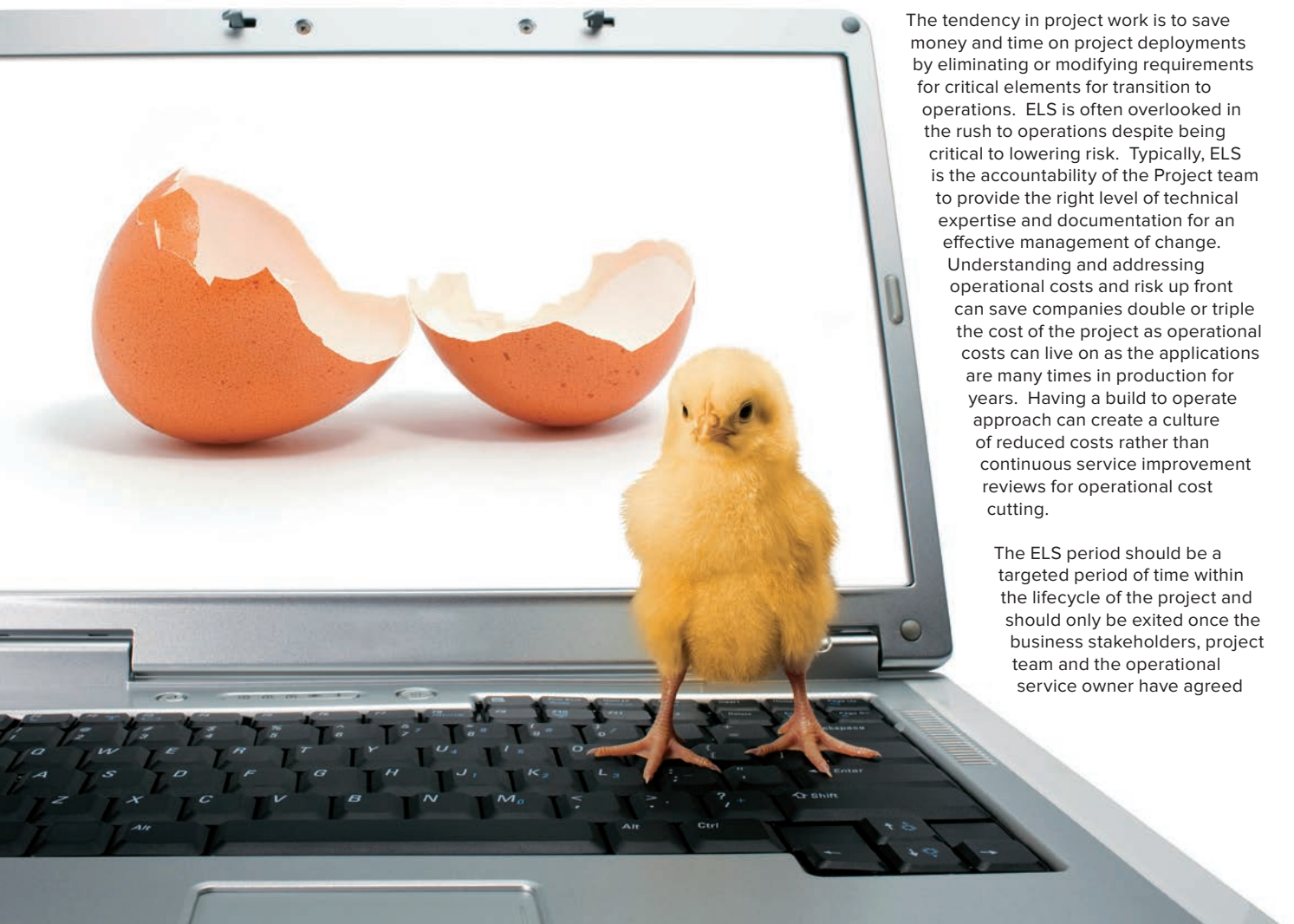
that all the criteria have been met and the system is stable. This should provide ample time to verify the deployment of the approved and tested service (pre- production) that is now in production since go live. This period should also allow time to validate and verify the service meets the business needs and is sustainable as completed in this period.

Entering into Early Life Support

Before an application enters into production for the start of ELS it is important to determine the criterion by which it will enter and exit. Entering into ELS should happen only when the application has been fully on-boarded into the Service Management tool so proper metrics can be recorded. Checks should be conducted to determine if business functionality has been delivered along with any engagement, or build to operate requirements. Testing, which includes interfaces with other internal and external systems should be signed off as completed.

The exit criterion contains the specific metrics and criteria for ELS and the documentation required for knowledge transfer and handover. This criterion should be agreed upon by stakeholders prior to the project commencing, when discussions around business requirements and service needs are decided. It is important to include any standard production requirements for underlying infrastructure and vendor contractual agreements which might impact handover.

All incidents and service requests should be recorded in the standard Incident Management tool to ensure accurate reporting. Therefore applications or infrastructure should be appropriately on boarded in the tool before ELS begins. This will ensure that:

• All data is captured correctly.

• Ability to manage a Priority 1 or Priority 2 incident effectively is reflected.

• Support performance metrics are captured.

• Proper production support processes and security processes can be followed.

• Connectivity with other IT services can be assessed.

Early Life Support in review

ELS gives operations and the project the opportunity to respond to elements of the applications that could increase support costs and complete thorough knowledge transfer to ensure operations is well prepared to deliver the agreed services.

During ELS, the project team resolves problems that help to stabilize the service. The project resources will gradually back out from providing the additional support as the users and operational teams become familiar with the changes and the incidents and risks reduce.

Potential metrics for the target deployment group are; measure of service performance, performance of the Service Management processes, operations processes, the number of incidents and problems by type. The deployment team's aim is to stabilize the service for the target deployment group or environment as quickly and effectively as possible. Keep in mind a variation in performance between different deployment groups and service units should be analysed and lessons learned from one deployment should be documented and used to improve subsequent deployments.

During ELS, the project team should ensure that the documentation and knowledge base are updated with additional diagnostics, known errors, workarounds and frequently asked questions. The team should also resolve any knowledge transfer or support training gaps within the production support teams receiving the service. At agreed milestones during ELS, it is important to assess the issues and risks, particularly those that impact the handover schedule and costs.

Handover considerations may include:

• Users can use the service effectively and efficiently for their business activities.

• Service owners and process owners are committed to manage and operate the service in accordance with the service model, performance standards and processes.

• Service delivery is managed and controlled across any service provider interfaces.

• Consistent progress is being made towards delivering the expected benefits and value at each milestone in early life support.

• Service levels and service performance standards are being consistently achieved without unexpected variation before formal handover to Service Operations.

• SLAs are finalized and signed off by senior management and business stakeholders.

• Unexpected variations in the performance of the service and customer assets such as changes in residual risks are monitored, reported and managed appropriately.

• Confirmed support group training and knowledge transfer activities are completed by obtaining positive confirmation from the target audience. This may be in the form of competency tests.

• The service release, the SLA, other agreements and any contractual deliverables are signed off.

Early Life Support Framework:
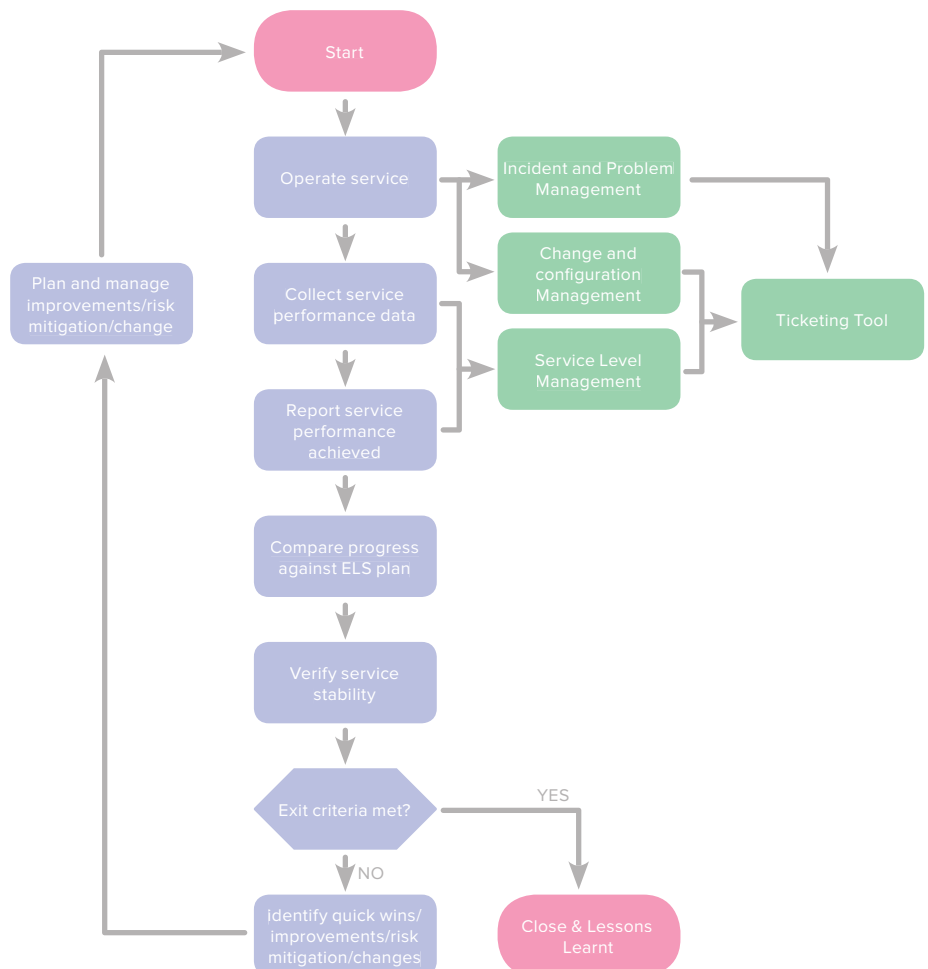
Early Life Support responsibilities

It is often believed that ELS starts when the service has actually been transitioned into operational use. This is not the case. Early Life Support should be considered as an integral role within the release and deployment phase of the project in execution. Those involved in ELS support should have the following key responsibilities and should be the accountability of the project team:

• Provide IT service and business functional support prior to final acceptance by Service Operations.

• Ensure delivery of appropriate support documentation as per service readiness.

• Provide release acceptance for provision of initial support.

• Provide initial support in response to incidents and errors detected within a new or changed service.

• Adapt and perfect elements that evolve with initial usage, such as:
  - User documentation
  - Support documentation including service desk scripts
  - Data management, including archiving
  - Embed activities for a new or changed service

• Monitor incidents and problems, and undertake problem management during release and deployment, raising requests for change as required.

• Provide initial performance reporting and undertake service risk assessment based on performance.

Reviewing and entering into Production Support

Before an application enters production it is essential that testing is complete and both the project team and the support team agree the application is ready to enter into a pre- production type support environment. Testing criterion should be based on operational as well as user specified requirements. It is also essential that the application and infrastructure have been properly on boarded to the Service Management tool so metrics can be captured

> "Testing criterion should be based on operational as well as user specified requirements."

and operational workflows can be followed during ELS. When reviewing a deployment for production the following activities should be included:

• Capture experiences and feedback on customer, user and service provider satisfaction with the deployment, e.g. through feedback surveys.

• Highlight quality criteria that were not met via the service readiness.

• Check that any actions, necessary fixes to known errors are complete or have remediation pans approved and in place.

• Review open changes and ensure that funding and responsibility for open changes are agreed prior to handover.

• Review performance targets and achievements, including resource use and capacity such as user accesses, transactions and data volumes.

Knowledge transfer

Knowledge transfer from the project team to the support team should include a list of knowledge items that have been agreed by both teams and should be part of a Knowledge Transfer Plan which includes supporting documentation for the application and knowledge articles customized for each transition. Documents should be delivered 3 to 4 weeks ahead of handover to support, depending on the size of the project.

• During the Knowledge Transfer stage the project team will provide full support.

• The project team will provide a plan to have the Knowledge Transfer including the

business processes of the various business functions with supporting documentation

• Project replay sessions should be done to ensure the knowledge has been received correctly and is understood by the receiving production support areas.

The phases of Knowledge transfer are described below:

Project Primary Support – 'Project Team Member resolves, Support Team watches'

During this phase the project team will resolve support tickets raised in the incident management tool.

• The support team will work with the project team to bridge any gap in knowledge.

• The support team will go through structured discussions with project team to understand design considerations and dependencies.

• The set up for the initial support process and systems are put into place.

• Support documentation should also be verified.

Parallel Support – 'Support Team resolves, Project Team watches'

During this phase the support team will act as secondary support during this phase.

• The support team will work the ticket, however the project team will be accountable for resolution of the issues as this is a new deployment.

• Resolutions from support team will be validated by project team before sending to requestor.

• Identify gaps in knowledge and manage accordingly.

• Updates to system documentation should continue to reflect feedback during ELS.

• Track and measure the support metrics

Production Primary Support – 'Support Team resolves, Project Team catches if they fall'

During this phase the support team will act as the primary support.

• The support team will act as the primary point of contact while the project team will only play a supporting role.

• The support team will seek inputs from project team wherever necessary.

• The identified gaps in knowledge will be resolved or agreed production work arounds will be documented and applied as part of production support.

• Updates to system documents are finalized in the appropriate archived location.

• The support metrics have been shared with both the project and support leadership.

Typical Timeline flow diagram

Timeline	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12

UAT
★ Go-Live

Knowledge Transition Plan

ELS Phase 1

ELS Phase 2

ELS Phase 3

★ Exit ELS and begin steady state support

Production Resource

Project Resource

Production support

Project Primary Support
- Project team is the primary support
- Complete Knowledge transition
- Complete Handover of documentation

Parallel Support
- Project team is the primary support
- Support team will assist as needed
- All open defects and the resolution plans are handed over to Global support teams

Production Primary Support
- Support team is the primary support
- Review the performance metrics
- Review the incident metrics
- Review exit criteria

Exiting from Early Life Support

Criterion for exiting ELS should be based upon business functional requirements as defined by the project team at the beginning of the project as well as IT operational requirements for support. All criteria for exiting ELS and entering into Operations should be included in closing documentation for the project. This allows for reflection during lessons learned meetings and as historical documentation as to what was agreed if there are challenges after operational support begins.

Final closing and exit from ELS:

In order to exit ELS and enter into operational production support, the following components should be considered;

- Agreed Exit Criterion from Early Life Support:
  - Include confirmation of known errors and bug fixes
  - All knowledge transfer sessions have been completed between the Project Resources and End Users and Operational Support teams
  - Documentation completed as per Service Readiness requirements
  - Confirmation of Production environment access has been revoked for project resources

> "...there may be pressure to close projects without properly testing the real time support environment"

- The Business stakeholders are in agreement to release Early Life Support project resources.
- Performance Reporting of the service and stability has been presented and the results agreed upon by all stakeholders.
- The user communities have used the service to cover the full business process that the service compliments.
- Early Life Support Resources and business community have proven the performance to a level that can be deemed as 'Business as Usual' as defined and agreed in the initial scope of the project

- Any outstanding items / exit criteria that have not been met have a remediation plan in place which is acceptable to all parties.
- Any decommissioning that was agreed as part of the initial scope of the project has been completed or is in flight.

In closing:

In today's cost cutting culture there may be pressure to close projects without properly testing the real time support environment. Early Life Support allows the project, operations and the business to know and understand what will be required to support the application in question in perpetuity, reflecting true total cost of ownership. Early Life Support documentation allows organizations to learn from the past and improve both project deployments and operations for future endeavours.

Priscilla Smith is Global Service Delivery Capability Lead at BP.

It's all down to teamwork at **OVO Energy**

OVO Energy won ITSMF UK's 2014 Award for Team of the Year, presented to the company that can best demonstrate outstanding team working and show customer commitment above and beyond the norm. So what made the OVO team stand out this year? Catherine Cheetham and Jon Dodkins provide the background to the story.

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SERVICE MANAGEMENT
INDUSTRY AWARDS **WINNER**

OVO energy

Managing rapid growth

OVO Energy is a growing business. The service management team at OVO were serving 180 full-time employees (FTEs) in January 2013, and this number had risen to 530 FTEs by July 2014. At the same time, OVO customer numbers grew from 130,000 to 340,000. Successfully supporting new (and rapidly changing existing) business functions, increased complexity, office moves and expansions with an inevitable plethora of new and legacy third party relationships has been a huge challenge for our team.

In spite of these obstacles, the team have been able to continue delivering changes and maintenance tasks at a 'start-up pace' of change, some weeks seeing up to 50 Requests for Change (RFCs) released into the production environment. All this whilst they were building and implementing entirely new processes, achieving a high level of customer satisfaction and high availability across core services.

In January 2013 there were 15 staff in the Service Management (IT & Systems) team.

We had already begun implementing incident, problem & change management, documenting our service portfolio, service catalogue and using capacity & configuration management to prepare for what was to come. Needless to say resource was an issue; we lacked the engineers we needed along with key management roles such as a change manager. Having recently opened a new office in Bristol, new starters were flooding in as well as a massive relocation project getting staff moved from the previous HQ in Kemble, Gloucestershire.
We had to find new ways of working smarter with what we had in the face of a burgeoning workload. We couldn't do everything we wanted to, so prioritisation was (and continues to be) massively important. We were using systems that were quickly becoming unfit for purpose and a lot of free open source tools which, despite what we gained in cost savings, did not meet our requirements for further growth.

Everything OVO do is underpinned by IT & Systems. It was critical that Service Management maintained a good grasp on BAU activities while supporting the company's appetite for new projects and

business ventures. Between January 2013 and July 2014 OVO have formed completely separate business units for Pay As You Go, SMART metering and OVO Communities; each department with their own technology requirements, management structure and goals.

Our team had to evolve to balance reactive tasks involving creaking systems, major incidents and last minute business demands with essential proactive planning and problem management activities to ensure that we not only maintained but continued to improve the quality and scope of our service offerings.

Meeting key objectives

Our Service Management team decided to take an innovative approach, combining the principles of ITIL and Agile frameworks to ensure that we were able to move quickly and flexibly without compromising stability and quality of service. Within this broad approach we set out to meet three key ojectives:

1

Reduce OVO's cost to serve and propensity to contact through self-service.

'MyOVO' is our customer portal; our 'shop window' that demonstrates our company value proposition that managing your energy supply should be simple and zero effort. We recognised that encouraging customers to self-serve would improve gross margins and, if we got it right, reduce our 'cost to serve' and 'propensity to contact'.

MyOVO 1.0 was launched in September 2012 by a third-party web design agency, but initially we weren't seeing the reduced call and email volumes that we expected. In 2013 a company-wide objective was set to deliver 80% of customer journeys online with an 'OVO experience', which is so important to our culture.

Coding started in earnest in April 2013 and MyOVO 2.0 was released in October 2013, six months after the source code was in-housed. This was a highly visible project, expected to deliver immense company benefits. Also, as a company-wide objective, everyone's bonus depended on successful delivery. We achieved our objective by:

- Bringing source code in-house. There was no time for a complete rewrite so obtaining the source code from our third party was vital. Through effective supplier management using a contract that had been very poorly written, we negotiated the full rights and handover of code.

- Addressing weak configuration management through parallel running. MyOVO 2.0 would be run alongside MyOvo 1.0 and customers could make a choice over what they would use. Two different configuration sets, infrastructure

> ## "We recognised that encouraging customers to self-serve would improve gross margins…"

platforms and service designs required tight configuration management; Linux and Windows are very different beasts but using Chef we could manage them easily.

- Addressing poor capacity planning and scalability through investment. We now have a service-based structure using specific services scalable for future product development; this follows the same principles but is based on a reliable platform.

- Hiring a business facing, technology-savvy product owner with commercial accountability for developing a revenue generating digital product.

- Prioritising features against problems, focusing on those likely to deliver the biggest benefit. This ensured 'coal-face' decision making as if the customer was in the room. We worked on the 'big ticket' items, both new and old, maintaining a 50-50 split between new features and support/maintenance. This defined focus meant that stability and innovation were achieved.

- Introducing Agile working practices which ensured that we released frequently and sought immediate feedback. The product owner and service managers spent days in the contact centre listening to our customers; this feedback loop from agents to developers proved invaluable and ensured we went to market with what the customer wanted.

- Adopting the zero effort principle, which focused our attention on 'right first time'. Our release processes had to be 'fast to market' but with stability. No emergency releases and more normal changes. Quality was assured through developers doing their own unit testing, with testers picking up the Waterfall test phase for full regression testing and more user acceptance testing.

- Using a support model which reflected a DevOps philosophy, with a multi-skilled team capable of developing, monitoring, and releasing. Service Desk continued with traditional first and second line support, with developers acting as third support.

- Diagnostic-led problem management using a tool called logstash to record transaction success rates within My Ovo 2.0. One emergency fault fix release instantly fixed 872 issues out of 883.

This was just the start…

Before the launch of MyOVO 2.0 we estimated fewer than 20,000 logins a month. In June 2014, 473,000 logins were recorded. Between 24th and 30th June we successfully captured a 99.9% transaction success rate. In the last week of June we had 390 errors out of 431,000 unique customer actions within MyOVO 2.0.

Propensity to contact (essentially, the number of times we are likely to receive contacts from a customer during a defined period) is measured between two points: 45 days prior to a customer's supply start date all the way to 60 days after their contract end point; this reflects the entire period we could (in all likelihood) be contacted. In Feb 2014 this figure was 4.4, and reduced to 2.4 when measured in June 2014, supported by the full push to the new MyOVO.

Translating this into cost to service – at 59p per minute over an average ten minute call, this has reduced our per customer figure from £25.96 to £14.16. Taking this saving as £11 across a 350,000 strong customer base equates to a massive saving of £3,850,000 annually.

"Keeping our small start-up culture as we grow at OVO is paramount to maintaining our agility..."

2 Achieve 99.9% availability across customer-facing services

Availability management is not a high priority for a start-up; we weren't really interested in anything outside of 09:30 and 17:00. But with a Q4 2013 strategy for high customer acquisition, we had to focus on measuring customer facing services and guaranteeing 'an OVO customer's ability to use our services'.

We had no real-time reporting. Our only data was from an in-house developed transaction processing monitor using the personal OVO Energy customer account of one of the contact centre agents. So using service outage analysis we identified that the greatest strain was being felt on our most important system, Gentrack - our billing platform. As this was the first system to be installed for OVO, we had developed it quickly and cheaply, resulting in a service design that did not do demand management and did not support extreme peaks of activity and throughput. After continuous customisation, Gentrack has now been heavily modified and architecturally evolved to master all customer data, and therefore supports all customer-facing systems through APIs. Our digression from base configuration and hyper-growth has resulted in a complex service to manage but the stability of the Gentrack platform was key to achieving the objective.

Using a combination of tools - New Relic for front-end availability with logstash and kibana for user journey performance - we could quickly correlate exceptions and unexpected errors. We were not going to focus on overall availability but error reporting, where each error was managed as a problem and worked into iterative development sprints for investigation and resolution. Through extensive problem management, strict CSIP processes that clearly articulated benefit, risk and priority with determined supplier

management, we were able to recover from any downtime experienced within our SLA and, more importantly, we hit our objective of 99.9% availability in December 2013.

This achievement should not be understated. In October 2013 our brand awareness was just 8% (based on independent surveys). At the end of October, after OVO Energy CEO Stephen Fitzpatrick appeared at an MP Select Committee to hold the Big 6 energy suppliers accountable for their seemingly inexplicable price rises, our brand awareness shot up to 25% and created unprecedented contact for OVO, in both the Contact Centre and visits to the website. Our first advertising campaign 'Feel Loved Again' launched in February 2014 and again saw huge spikes in our customer activity.

To continue tracking, we now have weekly reports on all sites measuring downtime, uptime, mean time between failure, duration and frequency, providing us with historical as well as week-to-week performance. All tools cost money, whether off the shelf or developed in-house, but the investment is certainly worthwhile.

3 improve scalability of technology delivery and operations capability for OVO Energy.

A company-wide initiative, 'Ready to grow', prompted technology to focus on demand management and the proactive assessment of our systems and environment for the next big growth spurt.

The service improvement plan included people, process and systems, with the 'big ticket' items delivering the biggest benefit being prioritised.

Some of the key deliverables were:
• Change of Tenancy (COT) automation.

This was a very labour-intensive business process. Being a seasonal activity, we were unable to employ full-time staff so ended up with a large temporary staff pool and no knowledge retention. Service Deck tickets increased and SLAs were impacted. Through proactive analysis of the top five logged tickets we recognised that a new COT wizard would address a number of issues and we developed a wizard (basically a series of questions and scripts) providing knowledge and therefore eliminating error. The result saves approximately ten minutes per COT processed. Considering that we're now processing 550 COTs a week, this is a weekly saving of over 90 hours.

• Broker file sizing. This concerned a key data flow from broker sites, where the quicker they were loaded the more time was allowed for other on-boarding processes, all of which are governed by OFGEM. Through database investigation, careful capacity planning and multi-streaming of processes, we reached an optimum file size of 750KB (the equivalent of 846 customers) from 305KB (420 customers) per file load, which effectively halves sales upload time.

• New payer file efficiency – a priority process which collects the cash; the result of the process running to time can mean thousands for OVO's cash flow. As we have grown, we have seen a gradual degradation in process efficiency and run-time. Being an intensive process, we were unable to run it within business hours, restricting our capacity. But with an additional database index on a scarce table, process times reduced from 9 hours to 4 hours.

• 'GenExchange' upgrade. With more customers, we had more communication and our capacity to send increased batches was deteriorating over time. By adding additional servers and streaming processes across four GenExchange servers, bill runs could be sent within 12-16 hours where previously it was taking 4-5 days to clear down.

• Contact centre platform replacement. A very visible and high-profile project, both internally and externally, directly impacting customer experience. Since the very first system was replaced back in June 2012, we'd been plagued with various incidents

(some of them major), including poor voice quality, configuration issues, hardware failures and an unintuitive design that led to various agent behaviour/training problems. After months of planning, requirements workshops, build and development we released a new CRM-based contact centre platform on 22nd May 2014 with great success.

Teamwork at OVO Energy

In true ITIL fashion, the benefits of OVO Energy's approach to service management success can be broken down into the three Ps: people, process and product/toolset.

People

In all departments at OVO, finding the right culture fit when recruiting is by far the most important selection factor. IT & Systems are no exception. We look for personable, interesting, hard-working, passionate, humble and ambitious people to join our family.

Keeping our small start-up culture as we grow at OVO is paramount to maintaining our agility, high rate of change and high employee satisfaction.

All new staff joining the company attend an ITS induction session that is perhaps a little different from the IT training they are used to. It's a session where roles and responsibilities across the entire team are introduced and explained and, along with some security policy points, active discussion is encouraged around previous experiences with IT and Service Management. We've found this initial rapport-building vital to the team's success in setting (not just managing) expectations. In the induction session, our ITSM toolset is also introduced and we explain who to speak to when something needs to be escalated.

We are serious about being approachable; despite massive growth and the demands that places on the team, everyone in OVO is encouraged to walk up to any member of our team (even the CTO) and ask if they are stuck or urgently need something. Our Service Management challenge is not about avoiding people, but ensuring our online self-service portal is a premium service such that only urgent queries and ideas need to be engaged in person.

Process

Having such a small team forced us to distil all methodologies, frameworks and collective experience into a flexible, bespoke approach that suited OVO. We had to focus on what actually works, as there was simply no time to waste with excessive process, neither could we afford to risk exposure to a company-ending crisis should the requisite structure be lacking.

High workloads and ambitious timeframes will always be placed on the team in this kind of environment. OVO want to launch new ventures quickly with minimum fuss and cost. Rather than develop a resistance to this, we adapted, leveraging a clear opportunity to build real relationships and working rapport with all OVO staff. Back in January 2013, the company was certainly small enough to achieve this easily and we have placed high value on continuing to dedicate effort to this. You have to adapt to your customer base.

Achieving process buy-in is especially challenging when moving a small start-up to medium sizing. The close-knit relationships that we have built within the operation have allowed us to sell the gradual introduction of necessary process and workflow without resistance or cynicism.

In this time period we were able to successfully implement a more mature change management workflow/process (also extending CAB to eCAB), refine our incident and major incident management such that any individual can pick up the procedure, and concretely embed problem and knowledge management into the collective OVO consciousness.

Indeed, our ITIL problem management model has been adopted by other business areas to structure their own approach to tackling their 'growth pains', championed by Service Management.

The toolset

In March 2013, we rolled out BMC Footprints as our primary Service Management toolset.

Prior to this we had been using a free, open source product called Spiceworks. Whilst it addressed our needs at the time, it lacked the structure and ease of workflow customisation we needed to take our Service Management approach to the next level.

We chose the Footprints product because of the ease and depth of self-customisation available. We built a comprehensive customer self-service portal – complete with a basic service catalogue and quick ticket templates – and launched OVO Motion to much fanfare. We knew the key to making this a success would not be getting everything perfect on launch day, but rather establishing a feedback loop with our customers and an efficient mechanism to quickly turn around on-going iterative improvements to the system.

Since launch we have refined all corners of the service and continue to glean feedback from regular user groups, steadily making changes to improve customer experience without compromising the management information we need to incident match, prioritise and maintain good visibility of our environment.

Around the same time we also installed BMC's Asset Core product to get a better view of our desktop and server estate, refining our approach to inventory, software deployment and desktop management.

Bringing it all together

In September 2013 we launched a new intranet CMS platform on Sharepoint 2013 – called the Kitchen Table.

Back when OVO were very small, the Managing Director Stephen Fitzpatrick would have a daily meeting around his kitchen table for everyone to share what they were doing that day. This ethos has been embodied in our intranet service through its name and approach.

Besides embracing the Facebook-meets-Twitter style interface across the business, we in Service Management specifically intended to exploit the knowledge management advantages Sharepoint brings. We created a 'Wiki-Geeks' user guide section that encourages users to Google their issue within the document library, picking up relevant documents via metadata keyword tagging.

We began publishing our weekly KPI Dashboard for all to see, and even creating 'how to' videos so that OVO staff could train themselves. Utilising the Sharepoint list/calendar views, the business weekly CAB and IT&S Technical CAB meetings became slicker and, as access was open to all in one central place, valuable time in the meetings themselves gradually became more efficiently spent in useful discussion over the week's activities.

Where the RFC throughput is high and change is rapid, 'closing the knowledge gap' has become our most valuable support asset and enabled us to maintain a self-service service desk function without compromising the quality of interactions we share with our customers.

In conclusion

IT and Systems are very much seen as the 'team of choice' to work in at OVO. Any secondment opportunities advertised are met with a flood of internal applications from all over the business. The appeal no doubt stems from the obvious camaraderie of the team, the leaps and bounds we've come in tangibly improving systems and services, and the opportunity the team presents for both progressing one's own career and making OVO stronger, all great reasons to climb on board. With further growth, a new office, the expansion of OVO Group, Pay As You Go, Smart Metering, OVO Communities – all wrapped up with an increasingly innovative approach to both ITIL and agile in the team... it's an exciting time.

Jon Dodkins and Catherine Cheetham of OVO Energy collect the award for Team of the Year at ITSM15.

Julia Harrison of Morgan Stanley explains how a principles-based approach to service management can lead to empowered decision-making.

Autonomy with
compliance

When we introduce new processes, compliance can be a challenge. How do we get our teams to do what we need them to do? Heavy-handed mandate ("do it or else") can result in a box-ticking culture that delivers the mechanics of a process without delivering the real value we were hoping for.

In his book Drive, Dan Pink tells us about the three elements of intrinsic motivation: autonomy, mastery and purpose. We train our people and help them grow their expertise (mastery), we share our company and departmental visions and show our teams how they contribute towards them (purpose), but what about autonomy? How can we allow our skilled IT professionals to exercise autonomy and still ensure they comply with processes?

I faced this conundrum recently while establishing a new Service Introduction Framework with a technology group. The framework provides a series of interactions, aligned to development and engineering milestones, to make sure the right conversations are happening, with the right people, as early as possible. Using the framework should result in service design happening in tandem with technical design, service acceptance criteria being defined and built into project plans as early as possible, and no nasty surprises in the run-up to go-live.

The changes being introduced in our group can vary wildly in scope and complexity, from a small update of a system utility to a whole new user-facing application, so there will never be a "one size fits all" template to follow. The framework needed the flexibility to allow people to use their domain expertise and their good judgement to decide what's appropriate to their project. After all, if our work could be reduced to a set of inputs and a function that generates an output, our jobs would have been automated by now.

"...a solution that satisfies the principles is always a good solution."

The framework was launched gradually, targeting only a few project teams to begin with, but the early feedback was surprising, with skilled, experienced people asking about things which seemed obvious. Many of the questions that came up could be answered just by talking to other stakeholders to understand or clarify their needs, rather than looking for the solution in a manual.

Presented with a new way of working, people often look for the comfort of certainty – "if A happens, do B". The lack of such rigid guidance was disorientating, but in this case there would never be detailed procedures at that level. A colleague summed up what we saw when he jokingly suggested we should "write a procedure document to tell them they're allowed to think".

On reflection, it wasn't such a far-fetched idea. None of our framework documentation actually told people – explicitly – that we expected them to use their judgement. In an organisation with such strict regulatory compliance requirements, where new processes usually involve some kind of form-filling, it was hardly surprising that they didn't instinctively 'get' it.

First, principles

If you've ever trained in Project Management using PRINCE2, you will have learnt seven principles of managing successful projects. The specifics of PRINCE2 aren't important here, but using a principles-based approach creates a method that can be scaled and made appropriate to any organisation or project. There's a lot of flexibility in how to apply the principles, but if the principles aren't being followed, it's not a PRINCE2 project.

I realised that borrowing from that approach could help people adopt the new framework without needing detailed procedures, so I started work on a set of Principles for Service Introduction.

By looking at the goals of a successful introduction, then examining the cases where we already met these goals, it became apparent that collaboration, communication, openness and common sense were the behaviours most important for success, along with clarity of roles and requirements. These formed the basis of our 11 principles.

Now when presenting the framework to people for the first time, we emphasise the principles first. The framework activities (tick-boxes, if you like) are important, but not all of them are required in all situations, and judgement is required to choose which are appropriate. But a solution that satisfies the principles is always a good solution.

With a complete set of principles, supported by our managers, teams are now more confident that their judgement on 'the right thing to do' won't be second-guessed, and this leads to more confident decision-making. Better still, feedback shows that relationships have improved between the project teams and the teams receiving handover; the principles are being used to hold each other to account where it matters, without getting bogged down over unimportant details.

By emphasising principles over actions, we equip and empower people to make good decisions. We get compliance with – and more importantly value from – our service management processes, taking advantage of the expertise in our groups, not stifling it.

Principles for Service Introduction

Our framework has 11 principles, here are just three:

1 Work as a team with flexible roles but clear ownership

- Successful handover is a common goal. Work together as one team to make it happen.
- When things get tough, talk to each other. Work together to find the best way forward.
- 'Co-ownership is no ownership' - make it clear who is accountable for each action.
- Help each other and share workload when it makes sense – ownership can be reassigned, just make sure it's clear who the new owner is.

2 Share early, share often

- Lean towards early sharing over completeness or certainty of information. Expect to refine and update things later when you know more.
- Use a 'good enough for planning' mind-set for information required in early activities.
- Schedule regular catch-ups to share new information and adjust accordingly.

3 Make conscious decisions

- Make exceptions where necessary, be clear about why, and make sure there is consensus between stakeholders.
- Think of the activities in the framework as a marker to talk about the activity. If the result of that conversation is "we don't need to do this", make a note of that decision and move on.

Julia Harrison is Service Improvement Lead in the End User Computing group at Morgan Stanley.

Rob Stroud considers how the automation industry is paving the way for proactive service delivery.

2015

the year of
real customer service?

A friend of mine has been attempting to establish a bank account for a new choir that he belongs to. After many lunch breaks, personal time and even some work time, finally the account is open and operational. Elapsed time, three months! My friend describes his experience as a litany of unnecessary hold-ups, duplicated discussions, long wait times 'on hold', not to mention extreme frustration. To make matters worse, business accounts are managed remotely from the branch network, so he cannot walk two doors from his office to the local branch. When he does get through on the phone, after 20 minutes of wait time, the service desk staff are not empowered

to expedite the process. He even tried naming and shaming via their Facebook page. The reply, 'sorry, you must be very frustrated'.

This is a perfect example of a broken service, one where customer dissatisfaction will allow a disruptive competitor who focuses on the execution of the process to rapidly take the market.

Talking of disruptive technology, recently I had the opportunity to speak to a CIO in the automotive industry. Our conversation quickly moved onto the rapid rate of change, not just in the design and build process but also in the way that cars are chosen and acquired. Instead of visiting endless showrooms, test driving various models, and struggling to understand which options are available on which model as in the past, many manufacturers now offer a far more enjoyable online experience with driver simulation and a far more interactive approach to choosing the precise specification you require.

Indeed, my recent car purchase decision was effectively made online. I reviewed the cars that I was considering from the comfort of my armchair, looking at the options, especially the technology options. Then, with the help of a comparison site, I identified all the discounts that I could apply, so I knew what price I would pay before I spoke to the dealer. Only then did I visit a showroom, to confirm my decision, sign the paperwork, and take delivery.

"Real-time or near real-time analysis of performance data are critical..."

On entering the showroom, I was further amazed at the technology available to me to review my choice. There were further simulations of lane changing indictors and collision detection options, an opportunity for the dealer to tell me about a proposed enhancement to the blind spot detection capability, which would be able to override a potential decision to merge into another lane with a car in my path. More interesting to me was the delivery of the vehicle's performance metrics directly to my smartphone.

Additionally the vehicle communicates directly with the manufacturer using the same metrics, part of a continual improvement loop to make sure that any performance or maintenance issues do not go unnoticed. The salesperson explained that, using the data available, the manufacturer issues software patches and proactively pushes them to the car.

The complete integration of technology into our lives is driving a major cultural change within our service management organisations. As service managers we must now move from reactively solving incidents and restoring service to proactively assuring and ensuring continuity and quality of service.

Our customer base, once made up of internal staff, now includes the complete universe of end users who are leveraging our 'IT-enabled business services'. For many service desks the call, email, instant message or tweet is directly from the organisation's customer.

Not only is IT accountable directly for the service being offered, it is also responsible for change, and more than ever before demand is accelerating and IT needs to speed up the rate and pace of response.

Proactive delivery of service and correlation of performance information are going to be critical to a well-oiled and run business in this new economy. Real-time or near real-time analysis of performance data are critical to the understanding of patterns and trends and the identification of impacts on service, and service managers will rely increasingly on such information to prevent outages and other issues. Making sure the right information gets to the right person at the right time requires a significant level of automation

So how do we get from where we are now to where we are going? The challenge comes in balancing the delivery of innovation with 'business as usual'. The modern service management organisation needs to transition to one where appropriate processes are automated, the overall provision of services is automated, and event-based triage and self-resolution contribute to more rapid and effective request fulfilment. But this has to be achieved without compromising existing services and processes.

As service management professionals in a business-driven economy, we have a key role to play in making sure that this essential balance is maintained - a vital step on the road to true proactive service delivery.

Rob Stroud is Vice President, Strategy and Innovation at CA Technologies and President of ISACA. Follow him at @RobertEStroud and share your experiences.

Bad news for mobility maturity

Most IT organisations still feel poorly prepared to support an increasingly mobile workforce, according to recent research.

60%
consider mobile management to be important or critical to their business

When you picture the 1980s, there's a good chance that alongside the Walkmans, people in legwarmers and rollerskates, you'll see someone in a suit using the Motorola Dyna TAC. Many images like that are now obsolete and thankfully mobile devices have come a long way since then too. Likewise, one would be forgiven for thinking that mobile strategies and deployments in modern businesses have, in this day and age, become so established as to barely warrant examination. However, as mobile devices and applications become increasingly advanced, challenges do remain, and there is still some way to go before enterprise mobility reaches full maturity.

In-demand new devices like the iPhone 6, for instance, can create significant headaches for IT departments. Rolling out a new device and provisioning sophisticated enterprise apps for it are just some of the specific tasks that form part of an organisation's broader enterprise mobility management (EMM) responsibilities. Above and beyond individual tasks, an all-encompassing enterprise mobility management philosophy is needed to empower the mobile workforce and remove any obstacles that hinder their productivity.

A new enterprise mobility management survey and whitepaper from Enterprise Management Associates (EMA), entitled Enabling Unified Endpoint and Service Management for a Mobile Workforce, sheds some light on the strategies needed to support an increasingly mobile workforce in modern enterprises. More than 200 IT professionals participated, from a diverse range of industries and regions worldwide, the results of which make for interesting reading for IT teams and employees alike.

A cause for concern was that only 15 per cent of organisations surveyed feel 'fully prepared' to support mobile requirements, despite the fact that 60 per cent consider mobile management to be important or critical to their business – a strong indication that businesses are struggling to provision adequate mobility management solutions.

The survey also revealed a number of noteworthy industry trends such as the growing desire for a unified approach to endpoint management, with more than 50 per cent indicating that they have a preference for a single solution that supports both mobile devices and PCs.

Some of the other interesting findings include:

- More than 80 per cent indicated that, in their organisation, some or all mobile devices may be used for both business and personal tasks
- 60 per cent indicated a preference for cloud-based EMM solutions, with small- to medium-sized businesses (between 500 and 1000 employees) overwhelmingly identifying cloud as the preferred approach (82 per cent)

- 87 per cent of enterprise users that regularly access computing devices to perform job tasks rely on both a PC (desktop or laptop) and at least one mobile device (smartphone or tablet).

Enterprise mobile policies

The survey found that enterprises have adopted a variety of policies for the distribution of mobile devices to their employees, to varying degrees of popularity, including:

- Business-only devices – the company selects and purchases all mobile devices used by employees
- Choose Your Own Device (CYOD) – the company purchases mobile devices for employees, but the users have the option of choosing which device best meets their needs
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) – the employees purchase their own devices, but are permitted to use them to access business resources, including applications, data, and other services
- Bring Your Own Applications (BYOA) – the employees purchase their own devices as well as any applications they wish to use to perform business tasks.

Overall, BYOD, CYOD, and business-only policies were each indicated by roughly a third of respondents, while BYOA was only reported by about two per cent. Also, BYOA was only noted by smaller organisations with less than 1000 employees and only by businesses in the technology and finance industries. This indicates a clear trend – while device purchase and ownership may vary between organisations, the applications used for business tasks are overwhelmingly being provided and supported by the enterprise.

Only 15 per cent of organisations surveyed feel 'fully prepared' to support mobile requirements...

It is important to note that, regardless of which mobile approach is adopted and whether the devices are business-owned or employee-owned, the broad majority of organisations allow devices to be used for both business tasks and personal tasks. Even among the enterprises that only allow business-owned devices to be used by employees, 71 per cent reported that they permit some or all of their devices to also be used to perform personal tasks. This underscores the need for enterprises to logically segment business resources from personal resources so that they can secure and manage the former without diminishing the performance of the latter.

Death of the PC?

We read a lot about the supposed 'death of the PC', but this research would suggest that its demise has been greatly exaggerated. 87 per cent of enterprise users who regularly access computing devices to perform job tasks rely on both a PC (desktop or laptop) and at least one mobile device (smartphone or tablet). It is clear that mobile devices are being adopted to supplement, rather than replace, the use of PCs. This has substantially increased the burden on IT operations to remotely support a wider number of heterogeneous platforms while reliably enabling access to critical business applications, data, and services and still meeting enterprise requirements for security and compliance. Although the majority of PC and mobile management solutions suites evolved along completely separate development paths, it is becoming clear that maintaining separate platforms is no longer a practical long-term solution.

In the kind of business environment revealed by these findings, in which users no longer have just one device but a plethora of devices to manage, Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) processes become essential. UEM solutions provide a common interface for performing administrative tasks on both PC and mobile devices as well as consolidated asset databases and reporting engines. The expectation is that a unified platform enables improved service management that will help boost user productivity and accelerate business agility.

Service desk teams will be familiar with many of the issues and trends mentioned above but the survey is certainly a timely reminder of the enterprise mobility issues that will face IT professionals and users alike throughout 2015. Likewise, it will be interesting to see how these trends develop in the next twelve months.

Release management: deliver more, break less!

Richard Horton reports on the findings of a recent Service Transition special interest group meeting on release management.

> ## "Planning is an important area. We considered the factors that can torpedo what might look like a good plan..."

If you want a one-line summary of the challenge faced by people delivering IT services, you could do worse than "How to deliver more and break less".

Given that there isn't a limitless pile of money available to throw at this problem, and that there are constant pressures to reduce costs, clearly we need to improve our practice if we are going to reduce the breakages.

The good news is that there is room for improvement. Despite years when change and release management have been viewed as core ITIL processes, likely to get an organisation's attention before many others, we still haven't got these essential elements cracked. Much is spoken about agile and DevOps, but when push comes to shove, many people are still taking a more 'traditional' approach to release management, if they have got that far.

In the last Service Transition SIG meeting, we took a look at the sort of challenges that face us in deciding how to do release management, and a range of approaches we can use in addressing them.

We started with our hosts Arqiva, who outlined to us the complexities that they face as they serve customers with competing demands. They have to balance their requirements on a shared infrastructure. And if they mess up, they are acutely aware that the nation will know, as their mistakes have the power to bring down television or radio transmission. Arqiva explained how they have delivered impressive increases in the reliability of change implementation, but still face some challenges in release management.

So what sort of models could be applied? There isn't a 'one size fits all' here. Some organisations, we discovered at the meeting, focus their release management more at the technical level, while others opt for an implementation scheduling approach.

Others might want more of an enterprise overview, coordinating the dependencies which projects look after. We looked at the challenges faced in each case and the potential role conflicts inherent to each approach.

We then considered how to bundle releases, whether going for the 'small and often' or the 'big and occasional' approach (or a mixture). We considered the possible constraints in both cases and what kind of a release plan you might put in place to help alleviate these limitations.

Smaller and faster projects tend to be linked with agile, but this isn't necessarily the case. Those using the traditional 'waterfall' approach can learn from agile here. On the other hand, if attempts to be more agile are too eager, there is a danger of relaxing the waterfall controls without recognising that agile has controls too. Basically there isn't a shortcut. If you want to improve you have to work at it.

Planning is an important area. We considered the factors that can torpedo what might look like a good plan, complete with plenty of contingency, as projects still end up getting put back and put back, with huge overruns resulting.

So, now we have set ourselves up to deliver more. Great... but only if it works. How do we reduce the fallout? Approaches to testing are key. A measured approach comes in handy here. Things don't always work first time so why do we assume they will? We want a well thought through approach to testing, including awareness of the risk/opportunity equation, so that we are not just doing endless testing for the sake of being bullet proof, but delivering too late to be of any use.

If we understand the importance of good testing we will prepare our scenarios in advance, consider where automation can help (bearing in mind the pay-back period) and, where we are not automating, assign people to perform testing who have both the right skills and the will to do it. And it would be really helpful if we could ensure our environments match as well, so that we are testing like for like and can see the wood for the trees.

If you would like to find out more about the Service Transition SIG's work on release management, a white paper has been produced that develops this theme. Check out the website for **Deliver More, Break Less: How to Improve Release Management.**

Rob Spencer (Transition SIG Vice Chair), Peter Mills and Jon Morley prepared the materials and led this SIG day, with Richard Horton (Transition SIG Chair) writing it up and creating the white paper.

Phil Hearsum encourages ITSM professionals to celebrate success at every opportunity.

"ITSM must communicate more and position itself as a value provider rather than a cost."

ITSM: what's in it for the business?

Even when the work of IT service management professionals is a success, they can be their own worst enemies when telling the rest of the world about it.

It might be in the nature of service management to simply get on with the job and not shout about it, but it's important to celebrate success and demonstrate to the rest of an organisation what's in it for them. Not only is service management about fixing IT problems, it is about applying best practice to support the introduction of new capabilities to the business.

However, ITSM professionals often don't explain to the organisation what they are doing or why a particular process or activity is required. To enable others to understand and buy into these processes, it might take examples of how ITSM is providing benefits to the individual and the wider organisation.

What does success look like for ITSM professionals?

In its most elemental form, success is about making a positive difference to the business in the way things are done; you need to understand what the business does, its needs, its constraints and how to improve the service it gets.

Communicating more effectively with customers means helping them understand what's happening and what the results are. This includes explaining and forecasting upcoming events such as planned maintenance. However it is also about showing how faster incident resolution, taking a proactive approach to problem management and working towards continuous service improvement will assist users in their day

to day job; how logging your call into the service desk's incident management process feeds into recognising trends and recurring incidents, prompting the creation of effective workarounds to fix major problems in the short to medium term and sharing these benefits throughout the organisation.

All of the above benefits the organisation, but too often the IT team sits – both metaphorically and physically – in a darkened room, quietly doing the work while the rest of the business takes the benefits but remains unaware who is responsible for the solutions.

What does ITSM mean for the business?

The business wants a seamless, uninterrupted, on-demand IT service, in the same way that it wants an electricity and water supply. Therefore – whether recognising it or not – the business needs the service management approach.

Despite what might seem, at first sight, bureaucratic ITIL best practice methods, real business benefits can be demonstrated. But it's vitally important to emphasise the partnership approach: it's because the business has cooperated with the ITIL processes adopted by the ITSM team that a positive result and an improved service are achieved.

And though ITIL is designed for IT service management, it is moving into other areas such as enterprise service management. The service desk is, in some instances, becoming a single point of contact for other business areas as well as IT. When done well, it brings best practice to any environment which needs the combination of processes and communication.

Naturally, as ITSM matures, the business may begin to understand the spread of benefits that are available and possible across the whole IT infrastructure. At that point ITSM has shifted from being a commodity to a real asset. But that doesn't reduce the need to celebrate ITSM successes in the organisation.

What are the typical barriers to ITSM celebrating success?

While ITSM may try to meld with the business, it can at times persist with the IT mentality of fixing problems 'under cover of night' without demonstrating value. This, paradoxically, is often most visible when organisations are starting to implement service management;

the time when they should be striving to take the business with them by showing the value that service management can deliver.

Service management is underpinned with processes, but it's also about the softer skills: discussion, building trust and relationships. That is where ITSM can fail if it introduces ITIL processes without the cultural change of taking the business on the journey too.

How can the business understand better the value of ITSM?

There's no escaping it: helping the business understand ITSM value is about providing the value and showing the business how you provide it; this doesn't require bunting and banners but explanation. It means reaching out and bringing users with you and – as with any change in perception and attitude – winning the hearts and minds of the people.

Simply, ITSM must communicate more and position itself as a value provider rather than a cost. Having a committed IT team that understands customer service and service management is essential in explaining value to the business. Having people understand how the partnership with IT works, what is expected from them and how that delivers value to them is also vital. If people at all levels in the business understand these things they are more likely to support and help you. This appreciation ranges from one person calling to log an issue through to having a non-IT ally among the senior management team who understands the value of your work and will help to build the momentum of showing value.

So, make the time and effort to celebrate your successes; find quick wins and publicise them. The power of introducing regular communication about what you've achieved should not be underestimated, especially in the less mature ITSM organisation where, frankly, ITSM needs all the help it can get!
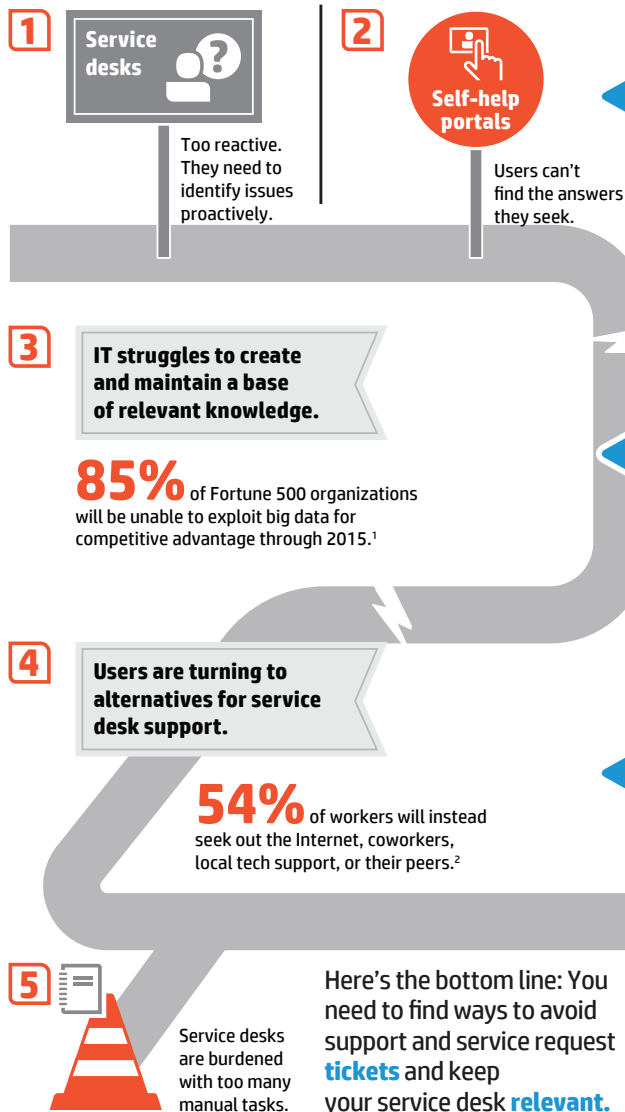

Phil Hearsum is ITSM Portfolio Manager at AXELOS.

Overcoming five roadblocks in your ticketless IT journey

HP

Do you recognize **these roadblocks?**

1 Service desks

Too reactive. They need to identify issues proactively.

2 Self-help portals

Users can't find the answers they seek.

3 IT struggles to create and maintain a base of relevant knowledge.

85% of Fortune 500 organizations will be unable to exploit big data for competitive advantage through 2015.[1]

4 Users are turning to alternatives for service desk support.

54% of workers will instead seek out the Internet, coworkers, local tech support, or their peers.[2]

5 Service desks are burdened with too many manual tasks.

Here's the bottom line: You need to find ways to avoid support and service request **tickets** and keep your service desk **relevant.**

HP Service Anywhere removes the roadblocks to accelerate your ticketless IT journey

1 Basic self-service
- Provide an engaging service portal.
- Enable context-aware search.

2 Social self-service
- Capture organizational knowledge.
- Share and reuse knowledge.

3 Knowledge management
- Build a knowledge base.
- Extract knowledge from your environment.

4 Hot-topic analysis
- Identify patterns and trends.
- Fix problems proactively.

5 Automated actions
- Automate common service desk tasks.
- Automate the handling of tickets.

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1. Gartner Research, "Information 2020: Big Data and Beyond," July 2013.
2. Forrester, "This Isn't Your Grandfather's Service Desk," by Amy DeMartine, November 15, 2013.

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