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The problem with problems

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Contents

Editorial 3
Pagers, mainframes and agile solutions

Meet the new Board! 4
Introducing the new directors around the itSMF UK table

itSMF UK events in 2020 4
Take a look at the masterclasses, member events, webinars and forums that we're lining up for next year

Focus on: Martin Neville 6
ServiceTalk talks to the new itSMF UK Chair Martin Neville about his vision for the organisation

New look for PSMF with version 2.0 8
Unveiling the new features and options available with the latest version of our competency platform

The problem with problems 9
Richard Horton reports back from the latest North Region meet-up, where conversation turned to problem-solving and how to approach it

Transitioning to ITIL 4 10
Stuart Rance describes the ITIL 4 Managing Professional – and explains the next steps for the guidance and qualifications

A pocket-sized companion to the ITIL 4 Foundation 13
We unveil the new ITIL 4 Foundation Revision Guide, the latest pocket guide from itSMF UK and TSO

Cloud computing: make it about the business! 14
More and more organisations are adopting cloud-based services. Mark O'Loughlin considers the implications for the organisation.

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EDITORIAL

Pagers, mainframes and agile solutions

Something that caught my eye at the beginning of October was the news that Japan had closed its last remaining pager service. Pagers don't get a lot a news coverage these days, so it's not too surprising that the event went by almost unnoticed. But from subsequent coverage on the BBC news site (www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-49906336) I discovered that more than 10% of the world's remaining pagers are used by 130,000 people who work for the NHS across 80% of British hospitals.

Why does this seemingly outdated device persist in such large quantities? For one thing, says the article, reception is always good: some hospital rooms are designed to contain X-rays, but this also ends up blocking telephone signals. Pagers' radio signals are fine. They're also fast, and useful in emergencies. In other words, the pager performs a specific role within the business that can't (yet) by equalled by newer technologies. Suddenly it doesn't sound so outdated.

Like a lot of people in this community, my career started in the mainframe world. Some people will remember the religious wars between mainframes, Unix and Windows servers, with conference streams focused not on service transformation and business relationship management but on performance tuning, capacity management and how to add an extra digit to your 99.99x% uptime. Although these topics are still of critical importance for IT, for many organisations they have now been automated into the background; and, like the trusty pagers keeping our health service running, they don't often make the news. Business-critical systems still fail, though, and when that happens IT infrastructure can find itself in the headlines again.

Incoming itSMF UK Chair Martin Neville, in his interview in this issue, argues that the shift towards Cloud and commoditisation in IT helps us to focus on the real business issues rather than the underlying technology. "The cloud has really changed the value proposition; with greater agility, the move to infrastructure as a service and the commoditisation of IT services, our thinking has moved from 'what can the computer do?' to 'what new services can we deliver within the time you want it done?' By stripping out the infrastructure support and bespoke software development, all that's left is the service element."

It's a beguiling prospect for those overwhelmed by endless technical support issues. Cloud solutions and agile working feature prominently in this year's ITSM19 Conference programme, and show just how businesses facing huge competitive pressures can be transformed with a different approach to IT delivery.

But it's clear that service management is no less important in the Cloud-based world, and has a key role to play regardless of the delivery channel. Whether we're moving from big iron to commodity apps or replacing pagers with, well... whatever comes next, it is critical to ensure that the correct processes and practices are in place to manage the transition and the ensuing incidents and problems.

Mark Lillycrop
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Meet the new Board!

itSMF UK's Board of Directors plays an essential role in setting the strategy for the Forum and representing the membership in all of our activities. Following the recent round of elections and appointments, there are a number of new faces around the table. Here's the new line-up.

In the Chair is Martin Neville, a Principal Consultant at Tata Consultancy Services. Martin replaces Rosemary Gurney of Global Knowledge, who has served as Chair of the Forum since 2015 and was recently elected to the Board of itSMF International.

Replacing Martin Neville as Vice Chair is Richard Horton, Service Portfolio Manager at NIHR CRNCC, who moves from his previous role as Director for Member Groups (SIGs and Regionals).

Newcomers to the Board include:

- Adrian Chiffi, Vice President, Client Engagement at CGI and a long-standing member of itSMF. He led his team at CGI to receive the first PSMF (Professional Service Management Framework) Verified Partner award in recognition of their commitment to professional development.
- Claire Drake, a Service Architect at Fujitsu UK with 12 years' experience in service management. She is a regular contributor to itSMF activities as speaker, awards judge and SIG member and is also a contributing author to ITIL 4.
- Claire Burn, Head of IT Asset Management at HMRC and a keen supporter of regional events, has been elected as the director responsible for member groups, including regional committees and SIGs.
- Kevin O'Brien, Director of Business Systems & Process at IT Lab, joins the Board as the representative for Enterprise 5 and Enterprise 10 members.

Dave Walker, a member of the Board since 2015, takes on a new role as Individual Member representative. Independent Consultant Barclay Rae, Karen Brusch of Nationwide Building Society, Nathan McDonald of Deloitte, and Rosh Hosany of PwC continue in their board roles, Karen representing Corporate and Enterprise 25/50 members and Nathan recently becoming Conference Chair.

Commenting on the new appointments, Martin Neville thanked the outgoing chair Rosemary Gurney for all the hard work and dedication of her Board during their term of office, and said he was delighted to be welcoming the new Directors, whose breadth of experience and interests reflected the growing diversity of the membership.

Adrian Chiffi

Claire Drake

Claire Burn

Kevin O'Brien

Join us for a member event in 2020

Events are the lifeblood of itSMF UK, a great opportunity to meet up with other members, share experiences and develop new competencies. Going into the New Year we'll be further expanding the broad range of events established during 2019.

Masterclasses

Masterclasses cover a whole range of service management related topics, from more traditional themes such as problem and change management, building a service catalogue, and planning for major incidents, to customer case skills, knowledge management and using the popular Operating Model Canvas.

Each masterclass is led by an experienced facilitator, offering the chance both to learn from an experienced industry subject matter expert and share your own experiences with other participants.

Simulations

Our sims have proved extremely popular over recent months. Focusing on key frameworks

and methodologies such as ITIL 4, IT4IT and DevOps, these events allow delegates to explore service management issues in a carefully devised game environment, adopting team roles and responding to changing business events. Simulations offer an ideal way to explore increasingly complex scenarios and the best ways to respond to them.

Regional meet-ups and SIG focus days

Regional and SIG events are held across the country and are free for all members to attend. Regionals combine carefully selected guest presentations from member organisations with plenty of time for networking and discussion.

Our Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have evolved to explore topics of particular interest to members, such as SIAM, problem management and service design. The new SIG focus day format is designed to bring a group of members together for an intensive day of discussion and research, with a view to developing content and guidance for use across the Forum. Our recent focus days on problem management & ITIL 4, service design, and agile transition have provided a wealth of ideas for further exploration.

Service Management Forums

Our service management forums (previously known as SMtechs) combine the insights of industry experts and service providers, offering complementary perspectives on timely themes such as artificial intelligence, asset management and cloud. Look out for a range of new SMFs during 2020.

Webinars

Our latest addition to the event schedule is an exciting new programme of webinars – the best of our speakers and thought leaders coming straight to your desk. First up, Automating Network Operations, sponsored by NetBrain and facilitated by Barclay Rae, takes place on 27th November and explores new ways of empowering front-line support staff.

Whatever your interests, we look forward to welcoming you to an itSMF UK event in the coming year.

itSMF UK event schedule 2020

	PRICE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
MASTERCLASSES													
Change & Release Management	£295			20 (L)						17 (Le)			
Customer Care Skills for the Service Desk	£195			05 (L)								03 (Le)	
Cyber Security	£295	TBA											
Designing Your Operating Model using the Operating Model Canvas	£295				23 (L)								
DevOps Simulation	FREE		12 (L)				10 (M)						
IT4IT Simulation	FREE									23 (L)			
ITIL 4 in Action Simulation	FREE		13 (L)				11 (M)			24 (L)			
IT Service Continuity Management	£295	TBA											
Knowledge Management (KCS)	£295					19 (L)					09 (Le)		
Lean IT	£295	TBA											
Major Incident Management	£295	30 (Le)					11 (Be)				15 (L)		
People Management Skills	£195				30 (L)							04 (Le)	
Post Incident Review	£295					14 (Le)							
Pragmatic Continual Improvement	£295							16 (L)					
Problem Management	£295		11 (L)				23 (G)						03 (L)
Service Catalogue	£295				28 (L)								
Software Asset Management	£295							07 (L)					
What, Where, When, Why, How of ISO/IEC 20000	£295				21 (L)								
MEMBER MEET-UPS													
London & South East	FREE			12							20		
Midlands & East Anglia	FREE						16						10
North	FREE			31							06		
Northern Ireland	FREE						12					06	
Scotland	FREE			24			02				27		
South West & Wales	FREE							09					3
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS													
SIG Focus Days	FREE		20				9			22			08
FORUMS AND WEBINARS													
Service Management Forums & Webinars	FREE	TBA											
ANNUAL CONFERENCE													
ITSM20 Conference & Awards	SEE WEB											16-17 (L)	

Key: (Be) Belfast, (G) Glasgow, (Le) Leeds, (L) London, (M) Manchester. For the exact location, or where location is not listed, please visit the website for latest details.

For more information on any of our events visit - www.itsmf.co.uk/events

FOCUS ON: Martin Neville

ServiceTalk talks to new itSMF UK Chair Martin Neville about life as an accountant, the role of minimum viable products, keeping agile with martial arts, and why our organisation needs to find its voice again.

ST So, Martin, how did you get into service management?

MN Well, it was via a somewhat unorthodox route. I started off as an estate agent, which I didn't enjoy very much; then I qualified as an accountant, which I didn't find very inspiring either. Eventually I found myself in an IT role – largely because, as the youngest person in the office, I was expected to understand technology. I dabbled in development, operations and business management. Then one day my boss gave me a leaflet about something called ITIL, and I quickly realised that what I really enjoyed doing was called service management. I had found my vocation!

So for the last 20 years I've been working in ITSM in one form or another, eventually rising to Head of Service Management and CTO (which was quite amusing in view of my background) in a government organisation. From there I joined Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as part of the ITSM consulting practice, and that's what I've been doing ever since.

ST At what point did you become involved in itSMF?

MN The ITIL leaflet I mentioned earlier was provided by Pink Elephant, and we invited them in to assess our service management needs. Among other things they recommended an ITIL training programme. We selected Fox IT as our training partner, who sent in legendary trainer Vernon Lloyd to help us through it. Vernon has been an ambassador for itSMF for many years, and he suggested we get involved in the Forum.

I signed up and asked if I could attend some events, which I found very useful. Some time later I received an email saying that that itSMF UK was looking for a chair and vice chair for its Public Sector SIG. As I'd worked in government and believed in the principle that you should "do something each day that scares you," I put my name forward and was greeted with open arms. From there I joined the Services and Conference Committees and have now been on the Board for five years.

ST Wow, all from Vernon's recommendation! I wonder how many members he has recruited over the years. What do you see as the major changes to the ITSM value proposition over the 20 years you've been involved in the industry? How different are the challenges and opportunities now?

MN Service management has evolved along much the same lines as the underlying technology. 20 years ago we had data centres full of mainframes, along with a very structured 'waterfall style' approach to IT which needed a lot of technical support. The cloud has really changed the value proposition; with greater agility, the move to infrastructure as a service and the commoditisation of IT services, our thinking has moved from 'what can the computer do?' to 'what new services can we deliver within the time you want it done?' By stripping out the infrastructure support and bespoke software development, all that's left is the service element.

So now we can focus much more clearly on our value to the business, and what contribution service management really provides. We're moving away from being 'the function standing between IT and the business, translating between the two' (arguably the traditional role of ITSM) and towards service brokerage – where do we find the service we need at the right time and at the right price?

The other thing that's changed is the notion of value. In the past we had a more formal way of devising and delivering software and services, usually resulting in a well-crafted product, but with a long timeline and relatively little flexibility for change or re-use. Today, we have less control over that end to end process but in many cases we're happy with a minimum viable product, delivered at a fraction of the cost and in a much shorter time (sometimes hours instead of months). This allows us to respond to rapidly changing requirements in a far more agile way.

ST How do you now maintain a level of trust with the customer? In the past this was done through strict service level agreements. In an 'on the fly' agile world, what does the customer relationship look like?

MN In many ways the relationship with the customer is becoming more important, as we're now being judged against qualitative rather than quantitative criteria. The service level agreement is fine when it works well, but so often the customer is unhappy even when the figures suggest that IT Is hitting its targets. The worst scenario is when the SLA is used as a weapon – as proof that IT has fulfilled its side of the bargain even when the business is suffering. In this case, we're not using the right metrics. Perception is reality, as they say; if the customer isn't happy we need to do something about it.

In an agile world, the metrics have to be clearly related to business objectives, even if that means they are less formal in structure. This isn't always easy for IT people to grasp: many prefer success to be measured against a clear numeric value.

A friend of mine was working in recruitment and found he was struggling with his personal targets. He was expected to deliver a pre-determined number of CVs to the client for each advertised job. He found that by pre-screening the applicants and coming up with a smaller number of higher quality candidates, he could achieve a higher

conversion rate for the customer. Surely everyone was happy? Not really. What prevented him from doing this was a badly structured SLA which judged performance on the number of CVs delivered rather than the result for the customer.So we need to find the right metrics that drive the right behaviours rather than something that can be easily measured.

But if we're delivering services to the business, we also need to act as a 'critical friend'. Too many times as a consultant, I've encountered customers who argue forcefully for a particular product or service which is clearly inappropriate to their needs. In this situation we need to be able to challenge the service consumer, and have a frank conversation about the actual problem that needs to be solved. An agile approach makes this easier by allowing some trial and error in fine-tuning the product to their exact needs, but sometimes you just have to step back and encourage the business to re-consider what its needs are. This takes courage as a service provider but it also builds respect on both sides.

ST Hasn't this always been the case, though: the mismatch between what the customers think they want and what IT can actually deliver?

MN Yes, it's an age-old problem, the expectation gap between the badly defined customer requirement and the service provider doing the minimum necessary to meet the contract. And when you get into solutioning mode, you end up focusing purely on the solution and the original requirements go out the window. The problem is, in a non-agile world it might take two years or more to arrive at the solution, and by then the needs of the business have moved on and the product might no longer be relevant. So there's a lot to be said for a long-term, almost 'tactile' relationship between customer and solution provider, so that you can quickly identify the changes in business objectives as they occur and respond in an agile fashion.

ST And I imagine the way the business chooses to consume IT services might also have changed?

MN Yes, indeed. Ten years ago we had a more homogenous approach to IT, with centralised control either by an outsourced or insourced service provider. Today multi-sourcing is very popular, which can theoretically mean best-in-class for everything if you do it right, but it also means mediating between multiple suppliers and making sure they all play by the same rules. This is not easy, and approaches like SIAM (Service Integration and Management) have grown up to make sure the process works effectively all along the value chain.

ST Do senior IT managers have the right skills for this new world?

MN Not always. A senior manager today may have followed a very traditional route, maybe starting on the mainframe or Unix, with a good grounding in operations and/or development but still largely technical. Today they are facing an agile, Cloud-based world and they need expertise in areas such as contract management, negotiation, and financial planning, as well as broad business knowledge. Of course there are many IT leaders who have these skills in abundance, but others need help to bridge the gap in their skillset.

ST Do you sometimes find a client saying, we need to do something disruptive to remain competitive but we don't know what. What do you recommend?

MN Yes, that happens, and it's not an easy question to answer. A good business shouldn't outsource its strategy. A consultant can help steer the right path, can add skills where required, and can also help with training and cultural change; but the core strategic thinking needs to belong to the business. Similarly, sometimes customers will say, "make us more agile!", as if it comes out of a box. We can provide tools to help, but again it comes down to the culture. An agile way of working – with minimum viable products and decisions made in hours or days rather than weeks or months – is a big step for many organisations. But they have to be willing to make thewe change in the way they work, otherwise the strategy will fail. And many large businesses face a big challenge in responding as fast as the new kids on the block.

ST Where does ITIL fit within the agile world?

MN ITIL is an excellent resource, if used correctly. Again, it will give you some useful tools but won't tell you how to run your IT estate. It's a framework, not a methodology, and provides excellent guidance if you're looking, for example, to formalise a process or finding a new approach to an existing practice. As is so often said, though, you need to adopt and adapt the guidance to your particular needs.

ITIL took a bashing during the Version 3 days, and many people accused it of being too detailed and out of step with the agile ways of working. But sometimes that level of detail is essential for business-critical applications. ITIL 4 seems to address many of the issues with agility, and it's certainly quite different in its approach.

Of course, there are plenty of other sources of guidance around that offer a complementary perspective – for example, COBIT is an extremely useful governance tool and the excellent VeriSM Management Mesh has attracted a lot of attention recently. But as always you need to do what works for your organisation. Sometimes the rigor of a waterfall-style approach is what's needed, on other occasions you need to be more agile. Whatever you need to do, industry guidance is there to offer support.

ST That brings us nicely to itSMF UK. You've been involved with it for 20 years. What changes do you hope to see during your time as Chair?

MN itSMF UK needs to be seen as THE focus of networking and expertise for the service management community. We're not the ITIL user group, as we've been described so often over the years. We're a forum for professionals to meet and share best practice and experience, and I believe we still do this better than anyone else.

We also need to find our voice again. At one time we were very prominent within the industry, championing new ideas and representing the organisations and individuals within our membership. It's more difficult today, with the sheer diversity of social media, to retain that role but I certainly intend to try.

And we need to be a catalyst for moving ITSM forward. We've been a little reactive in recent years, and we need to be more proactive in stressing the relevance and importance of service management in today's fast-moving world. Indeed, the disciplines and practices that have grown up within ITSM (for example around change, problem and incident management) are often applicable across the enterprise, and I would like to see us cooperate with other business functions - finance, HR etc - to share some of that best practice know-how.

ST So finally, what do you do to relax when you're away from the day job?

MN Well, I have a black belt in taekwondo and I've also enjoyed fencing and archery in the past. I'm slightly out of practice now, but I've recently taking up running again (after dislocating a knee in a half marathon!) and try to get in about 30 miles a week, and I also enjoy cycling when I have the time. Of course my main interest is my family. My elder daughter recently graduated and has now moved to London. The younger twins will be finishing A-levels this year, so we might be facing empty nest syndrome soon. That will be a new challenge!

ST Well, thank you Martin – and best of luck in your new role!

MN Thank you. It's kind of scary and exciting at the same time, but I feel really honoured to have been asked to take the Chair. I will report back shortly.

New look for PSMF with version 2.0

We're delighted to announce that version 2 of PSMF Global is now nearing completion, with the enhanced platform available from January.

PSMF Global is the personal profiling and scorecard system behind the Professional Service Management Framework, helping organisations to recognise professional competencies across their service management team. It allows participants to collect endorsements and credits (leading to digital badges) in each of the 42 competency areas covered by the framework – grouped within the categories Core ITSM, Your organisation and marketplace, IT/technical knowledge, Interpersonal/relationship skills, Self-management and leadership, and General business and management.

PSMF 2.0 gives the platform an exciting new look and feel, with a streamlined profile registration process and improved usability and navigation for those awarding and receiving endorsements and credits.

For PSMF Verified Partners, there are new management tools offering more extensive reporting on individuals' professional development, and a graphical dashboard to help the organisation identify knowledge gaps and potential training requirements.

The PSMF framework and supporting competency descriptors and other content are available to all members through the itSMF UK website.

Why not check it out today, create your PSMF profile, and start to explore the ways that PSMF can bolster ITSM professional development among your staff?

What is a PSMF Verified Partner?

The PSMF Verified Partner Programme is a short assessment and endorsement, which enables organisations to demonstrate their commitment and maturity in approaching ITSM professionalism.

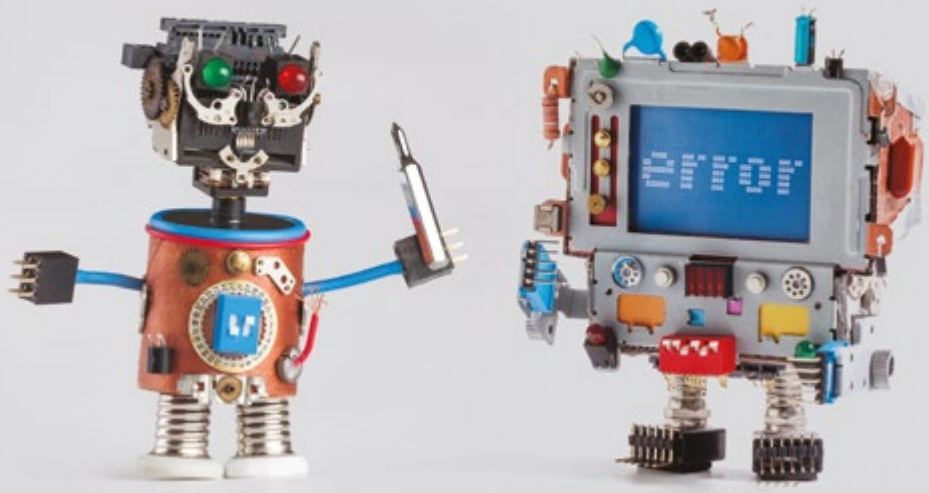
Once certified as a Verified Partner, the member organisation will have access to further management tools within PSMF Global that allow PSMF to be integrated more easily into their own appraisal system, with additional support for endorsement conversion and digital badging.

As part of the PSMF 2.0 refresh, the PSMF Verified Partner process has also been revised and simplified, allowing members to step up to VP status more readily. The new questionnaire-based approach to assessment will be rolled out shortly.

PSMF Verified Partnership is an excellent way to demonstrate commitment to the service management professionals in your business. If you'd like more information on PSMF Verified Partnership or the new-look PSMF Global scorecard, please contact the itSMF UK office on 0118 918 6500 or visit psmf.global or www.itsmf.co.uk/services/psmf.

THE PROBLEM WITH PROBLEMS

Richard Horton reports on the latest itSMF UK North Region meet-up, where conversation turned to the question of problem solving and how it should be approached as a key element of service management.



At the recent Northern Regional Meet Up at the Co-op in Manchester there was the customary stimulating range of presentations and discussions. We looked at the Co-op's large-scale movement from local data centres into the Cloud, with corresponding process improvements, and a more forensic view on structuring, so that support and project work can co-exist. At the end of the day, after pulling together the most keenly debated themes of the event, I concluded that it wasn't any of the technical or process points that rose to the top. People factors were the ones seen as most significant, particularly our approach to problem management.

As I've said before the conversations in between sessions can be as revealing or thought provoking as the presentations themselves. In one of these breaks we considered what is happening to problem-solving. Independent IT support consultant Noel Bruton argued that it seems to be taking longer to solve support problems now than in the past, and wondered whether this was down to personal skills or the processes being followed. We mused over sandwiches whether the 'old school' progression path, where people started in very technical roles, provided a good background in systematic approaches to problem resolution which has stood them in good stead but maybe isn't happening in the same way now. Even if the problem-solving skills are still to be found, maybe the management direction is incorrect. Noel's research findings also suggest that there's insufficient focus on the right problems – the ones with maximum business impact – leading to reduced efficiency and effectiveness.

As I mulled on this further I wondered whether problem-solving has evolved into a different animal. For example, when I try to work out something on my smartphone I realise that the skillset has changed. Instead of trying to deconstruct it or find a reference manual to identify an action to take, it feels as if a more experimental approach is required. What would a designer have seen as intuitive? Let's try it and see if it has the desired effect. With this approach the manual becomes redundant. Witness the disconcerting lack of instructions when you open the box of a new product – no longer needed apparently because it's intuitive. Having said that, products can be maddeningly non-intuitive, particularly for the digital non-native. Then the skill shifts to identifying which Google search will uncover the solution.

Anyway, thinking back, the aspiration was that we would get rid of the simple support issues through intuitive self-service, and support staff would be able to get to grips with the meaty problems. So maybe we should be glad to see the trend Noel has identified ... as long as it is the more complex problems that are being solved. It does feel as though the complexities we have now are different. Components are more likely to be commodities with assured reliablity, but how we stitch them together creates a new complexity. And as there are multiple parties involved, relationships and how they work can take on an increased importance.

Finally I'd like to pick up another thread prompted by the discussion. Financial organisations are well versed in working with risk, and the Co-operative's input reminded me of a presentation I attended at an itSMF UK Conference a while ago. An organisation was describing how they had approached problem management as a risk management exercise. This way of thinking is very much in line with the ITIL 4 guidance that we should understand the effect on business value presented by a problem and what that means in terms of risk to the organisation. This was one of the topics of discussion at the recent SIG Focus Day on ITIL 4 and Problem Management. I look forward to seeing the conclusions of their work.

Richard Horton is Vice Chair of itSMF UK and Service Portfolio Manager at NIHR CRNCC.

Transitioning to ITIL 4

Stuart Rance describes the ITIL 4 Managing Professional – the second major step in the ITIL 4 guidance following the Foundation Book at the beginning of the year – and explains how the ManPro content and Transition qualification will be rolled out in the months ahead.

Since the release of ITIL 4 Foundation in February of this year, a lot of people have been asking me about what's coming next, and the short answer is an updated and improved set of best practice publications for IT professionals and a new certification system to go with them. Now that the first of the ITIL 4 Managing Professional publications have been released, I can share some of the content with you.

What's been released so far?

February saw the release of ITIL 4 Foundation, and in early October 2019 AXELOS released the ITIL 4 Managing Professional Transition certification. I had a great time teaching lots of trainers all about this, to help them prepare themselves, and their organisations, to be able to deliver the training. In fact, the Transition Training and some of the ways that it differs from the full syllabus is what much of this article is about.

What's still to come?

In November 2019 the publications and certification for the first two Managing Professional modules will be released. These are ITIL 4 Specialist: Create, Deliver and Support and ITIL 4 Strategist: Direct, Plan and Improve.

Q1 2019 will see the release of the other two Managing Professional publications, ITIL 4 Specialist: Drive Stakeholder Value and ITIL 4 Specialist: High Velocity IT. Later in the first half of 2020 the ITIL 4 Strategic Leader module will be released.

The publications will be available initially only as 'beta' online content with the books/ebooks themselves coming in the New Year. There are various options to access the online content and pre-order books through itSMF UK – please check the website for details.

The ITIL practices will be available online, to anyone who subscribes to the AXELOS My ITIL service. The first practices will be published in November 2019.

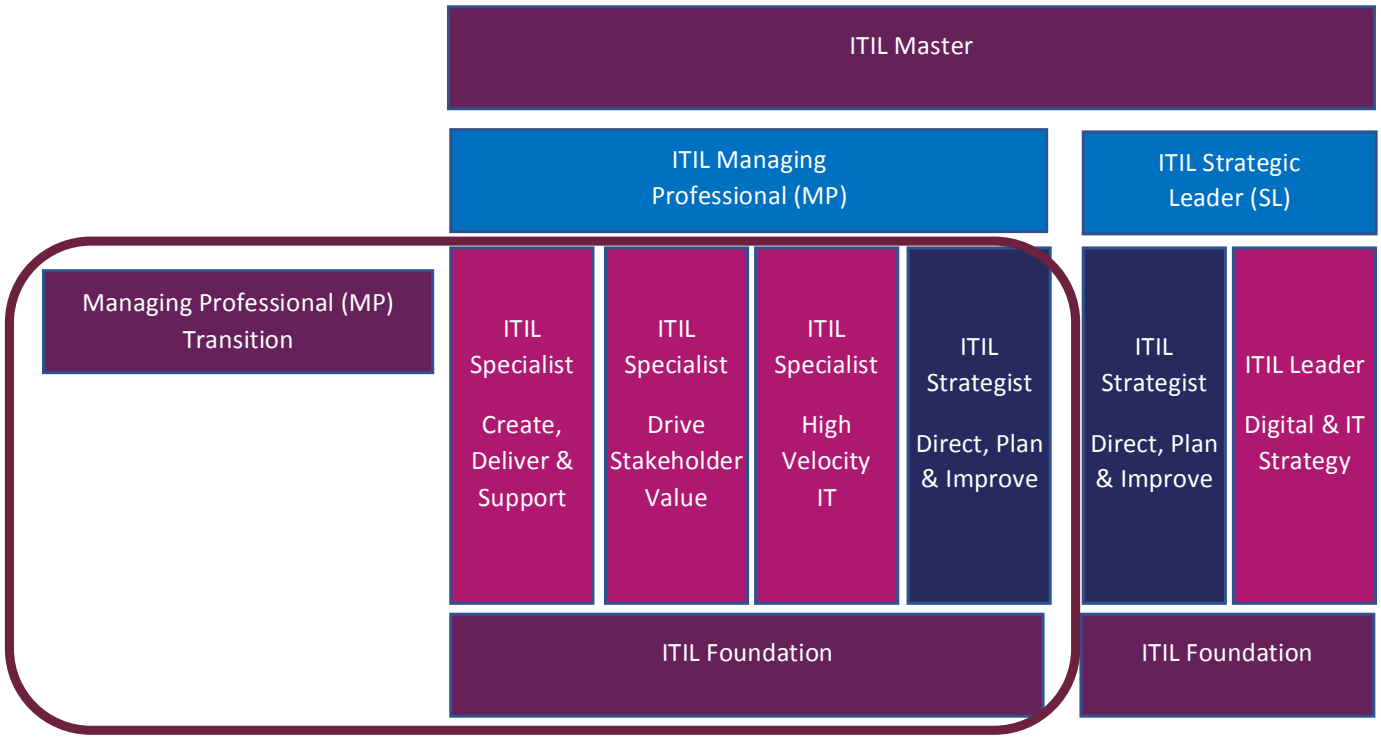
How does it all fit together?

ITIL Foundation is intended for anyone who is involved in planning, managing, delivering or improving services. It is a pre-requisite for all the other ITIL courses except for Managing Professional Transition, which I will be exploring in more depth below.

It's important to understand that ITIL Managing Professional is a designation which is awarded to anyone who passes all four of the Managing Professional exams. You don't need to sit another exam to get the award. Similarly, ITIL Strategic Leader is also a designation. Anyone who passes both of the Strategic Leader exams will be awarded the Strategic Leader designation.

You will have noticed that the Direct, Plan & Improve certification is a requirement for both designations, but don't worry, you only need to take the exam once, even if you want to achieve both designations. Once you have achieved the Managing Professional designation there is just one more exam to take to become a Strategic Leader.

ITIL Master has not yet been announced and details of how this can be achieved are not available.



Who is Managing Professional Transition for?

This certification is different from other ITIL 4 certifications. It is intended for people who are already experienced in service management, and want to learn about what's new in ITIL 4. To be eligible for this exam you need to have an ITIL V3 Expert certification, or at least 17 points on the ITIL V3 exam scheme.

If you have the experience needed to take this course, then it is the quickest way to achieve the ITIL 4 Managing Professional designation. It is also the only way to get there until the last two Managing Professional modules are released early next year.

The Transition syllabus and timeframe

We expect a typical ITIL Foundation course, which would include learning about some of the practices, to take two or three days to deliver. Once they are published, we expect the four Managing Professional courses to take about three days each. This means that anyone following the full Managing Professional syllabus will typically need to undertake 14 or 15 days of training.

However, the Transition syllabus is designed around a five-day training course (although training organisations may prefer to deliver the training differently, for example as online modules). It allows about ½ day for Foundation, one day for each of the Managing Professional modules, and ½ day for mock exams and exams.

Obviously, given the shorter timeframe, the Transition training does not cover all the topics on the full syllabus. This is because we assume that Transition candidates already know many things about IT service management, and specifically that they are familiar with many, if not most of the practices that would be taught on the full course.

I'm going to take a closer look at some of the differences between what is delivered on the Transition training and what we expect would typically be covered on the full syllabus; and I will share with you some of the thinking behind the way in which we have chosen to abridge the content. This boils down to three factors:

- There are things we expect transition candidates to know, so we don't bother repeating them
- There is new content with which they are unlikely to be familiar
- We want to focus on the shift in emphasis which we believe is of particular value.

Foundation

ITIL 4 Foundation covers the following key concepts, as well as a number of practices:

- **Value co-creation:** We can't deliver value to our customers and users; we co-create value with them. There is a lot of emphasis on value, outcomes, costs, and risks, throughout ITIL 4.
- **The four dimensions of service management:** Processes and value streams are important, but they are just one of the four dimensions of service management. The other three dimensions are Organisations and People; Information & Technology; and Partners & Suppliers. Every ITIL practice is described in terms of these four dimensions, and service providers need to manage resources within each dimension if they want to help create value.
- **The ITIL guiding principles:** These are the principles used to guide decision making, planning work, resolving conflicts, or prioritising opportunities and actions. You can read more about these in my blog The 7 Guiding Principles of ITIL 4: Practical Advice to Help You Make Decisions, or by watching my webinar Guiding principles: The most practical part of ITIL 4.
- **The Service Value System (SVS):** This includes everything needed to create value in the form of services. It includes the guiding principles, continual improvement, governance, 34 practices, and a service value chain. You can read more about the SVS in my blog ITIL 4 Value System, Value Chain, Value Stream: What's the Difference?
- **The service value chain:** This describes six activities that work together to take incoming demand and create corresponding value. You can think of these as being an update to the ITIL V3 lifecycle, but with much more iteration and many possible paths through the activities. Each path through the value chain is a value stream.

The Transition training assumes that the practices are already familiar to participants, and so the limited time available is devoted to aspects of these key concepts, particularly any that prove to be less familiar to the group.

Create, Deliver and Support (CDS)

I think of CDS as being the 'engine room' of IT. It comprises all the things that an organisation must do to create, deliver, and support services.

A full CDS course would include study of

- Practices such as service design, software development and management, deployment management, release management, service validation and testing, change enablement, service desk, incident management, problem management, knowledge management, service level management, and monitoring and event management.
- Technologies such as analytics, CI/CD pipelines, artificial intelligence, machine learning etc.

However, we don't teach any of these topics on the Transition course, which superficially might seem a little odd. What we are relying on here is the fact that people qualified to take the Transition training already have the background required to make such coverage superfluous, so that we can focus on what is likely to be less familiar.

The CDS transition module emphasises the people aspects of service management, which were only covered briefly in ITIL V3. There is also a lot of content on value streams.

Topics covered in CDS include:

- Organisational and team structure
- Capabilities, roles and competencies
- Team culture, customer-orientation, employee satisfaction
- Communication and collaboration
- Culture of continual improvement
- Managing queues and backlogs, and prioritising work
- Sourcing, and service integration and management.

Coverage of value streams includes:

- How to understand and document value streams
- Steps in a model value stream for developing a new service
- Steps in a model value stream for restoring a live service.

The model value streams we teach include contributions from many different practices, even though these practices are not specifically taught on the Transition course. I found teaching these to experienced service management professionals quite rewarding, as they were quick to recognise the value of focussing on the end-to-end creation of value, rather than on the detail of individual processes that they already knew.

If you want to learn more about how thinking of value streams, instead of processes, can help you, then have a look at my blog How Value Streams Can Help you do a Better Job.

Drive Stakeholder Value (DSV)

If CDS is the engine room of service management, then DSV is the customer relations. It covers everything needed to plan and manage customer journeys, and to ensure value is co-created. It considers services from the viewpoint of the service consumer, as well as the service provider, but only those aspects of a service which are visible to both parties.

Topics covered in DPI include:

- The concept of a customer journey. If you're not familiar with this concept then please read my blog A great customer journey has to be planned from end-to-end.
- Steps on a customer journey
  - **Explore:** Understanding and targeting markets
  - **Engage:** Fostering relationships
  - Offer: Shaping demand and service offerings, specifying and managing customer requirements
  - **Agree:** Aligning expectations, agreeing services, planning value co-creation
  - Onboard and offboard: Planning and executing onboarding and offboarding of customers and users
  - **Co-create:** Providing and consuming services
  - **Realise:** Capturing value and improving.

We don't cover all these topics equally in the Transition course, because we assume that students are already familiar with topics such as service marketing, understanding requirements, and managing service levels. On the other hand we do devote time to concepts which may be less familiar, for example:

- Line of visibility and band of visibility: that part of the service provider that is visible to the service consumer, and that part of the service consumer that is visible to the service provider
- Touchpoints, interactions, and moments of truth: opportunities to change how customers and users feel about the service provider
- Designing service experiences: using approaches such as lean thinking and design thinking.

High Velocity IT (HVIT)

HVIT is different to the other modules. CDS, DSV and DPI consider different aspects of the service value chain, and you would need to study all of them to get a full picture of how the different aspects work together to enable value co-creation. HVIT covers the whole value chain in a single publication, but it considers how things need to be managed differently in a modern high-velocity digital enterprise.

Topics covered in HVIT include:

- Terms and concepts: the meaning and usage of terms such as digital organisation, high velocity IT, digital transformation, IT transformation, digital products, digital technology.
- The five HVIT objectives: valuable investments, fast development, resilient operations, value co-creation, and assured conformance.
- Principles, models, and concepts: these include ethics, safety culture, lean culture, Toyota kata, lean/agile/resilient/continuous, service-dominant logic, design thinking, and complexity thinking. We don't think about each of these in isolation, but in terms of how together they contribute to the HVIT objectives.
- Key behaviour patterns: deal with uncertainty, trust and be trusted, commit to higher performance, help get customers' jobs done, and improving by being inquisitive.

The full HVIT course includes how practices contribute to achieving the five HVIT objectives, but again, this is not part of the Transition course, because experienced professionals should be sufficiently familiar with these practices.

Direct, Plan and Improve (DPI)

DPI is just what the name implies. Everything you need to do so you can direct, plan, and

improve, services and service management. Two important topics covered in DPI should be familiar to existing ITIL V3 experts and are not covered in the Transition training:

- Metrics and measurement
- Continual improvement, how to improve the service value system, value streams, practices, services, etc.

Topics that practitioners are less likely to have in-depth knowledge of include:

- Understanding your own scope of control, and within this scope knowing how to
  - Cascade goals and requirements
  - Define effective policies, controls, and guidelines
  - Place decision-making authority at the correct level.
- Organisational change management, including communications and stakeholder management.

These are the things that the Transition training emphasises.

Summary

ITIL 4 includes many of the great ideas practitioners may have learned from previous versions of ITIL, but there is a lot of new content too. If you are a novice, then ITIL 4 Foundation is a great starting point. If you are already an experienced service management professional then you can learn about the differences in five days of intensive, and fun, training. This training will be challenging, because it assumes you already know a great deal about IT service management and the practices that support it, but it will help properly qualified candidates to understand how ITIL has evolved, and how to use the new ideas to facilitate improved co-creation of value.

References:

The 7 Guiding Principles of ITIL 4: practical advice to help you make decisions
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ITIL 4 Value System, Value Chain, Value Stream: what's the difference?
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Stuart Rance is owner of Optimal Service Management Ltd. He is one of the authors of ITIL 4, as well as author of the 2011 edition of ITIL® Service Transition, a co-author of ITIL Practitioner, and lead author of RESILIA™ Cyber Resilience Best Practice.

A pocket-sized companion to the ITIL 4 Foundation

The new ITIL 4 Foundation Revision Guide offers a perfect companion for those undertaking the new Foundation course. Written by members of itSMF UK's publications team, including experienced training specialists Vernon Lloyd and Barry Corless, the book is perfectly positioned not just to help with revision just before the exam but to provide a pocket-sized reference to the key ITIL 4 terms and concepts back in the workplace.

"The Guide is not intended to replace the more detailed ITIL Foundation: ITIL 4 Edition book or to be a substitute for a course provider's training materials," said Alison Cartlidge, head of service management at Sopra Steria and lead author and editor of the new book. "It offers a précis of the essential learning required for the ITIL 4 examination – ideal for revision – but, as with our previous pocket guides, it also provides some useful additional information that is helpful to know. We use clear symbols in the book to indicate extra content that's not needed for the exam."

The ITIL 4 Foundation Revision Guide is part of a long tradition of pocket guides produced by itSMF UK to help students and summarise the basic elements of the ITIL guidance. Earlier editions, nicknamed the Little ITIL, were published by itSMF itself with widespread success within the community, while the slightly more substantial ITIL 3 Foundation Handbook (2007/2011) and the slim new Revision Guide resulted from the Forum's close association with official publisher TSO.

"For many years I carried the ITIL Foundation Handbook in my laptop bag and used it regularly to jog my memory," said Barclay Rae, a member of the ITIL 4 architect team. "This revision guide follows in the same tradition: a ready companion for those studying the ITIL 4 guidance."

Nargis Mirza, IT Operations Community Manager at the Home Office and a contributor to the pocket guide, said the book "supports digital decision making, acting as a taster to the detailed guidance and enabling cross-industry organisations in implementing ITSM successfully."

Without doubt, it should quickly find a place in the toolkit of everyone going through the Foundation and working with the guidance on a day-today basis.

The ITIL 4 Foundation Revision Guide costs £12.50 (£10.00 to members). Order your copy through the itSMF UK bookstore at tinyurl.com/itsmfitil4

Cloud computing:

make it about the business!

The global trend continues. Organisations around the globe continue to adopt more and more cloud and digital IT services. In a recent report, Gartner forecasts worldwide public cloud revenue to grow 17.5% in 2019[1]. There are many reports indicating strong growth in other digital areas – particularly those involving IoT, big data, blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI).

Cloud services are delivered under the as-a-service model. Within this model features, services and service levels are defined by the cloud provider. The cloud consumer, whether an individual or organisation, accepts such terms – or does not get access to the cloud service or application.

However, while this might seem a little inflexible, there are benefits to the cloud consumer. Cloud-based IT offers many potential advantages to new and established enterprises, in terms of agility, scalability and ease of management, as well as:

- **Reduction in management of IT infrastructure.** The back-end IT infrastructure footprint for organisations is reducing. This means less time building IT infrastructure and more time working with the business to understand their needs and how IT can deliver value to the organisation.
- **Quicker time to implement.** The time to procure and build the IT infrastructure is saved because cloud services are built and ready to go; for example, Software as a Service (SaaS) applications can be accessed in minutes.
- **In-built updates.** Software and infrastructure as a service provider continually update their features and services, many using a CI/CD model. The advantage to the cloud consumer is that they don't have to design, manage and implement low-level updates. However, the cloud consumer may have to manage how these updates affect their use of the cloud service.
- **Focus on value.** By spending less and less time on designing, building, managing and updating basic IT infrastructure, software and applications, the IT function can focus on how they deliver value to the organisation.

So, are organisations and IT functions realising the benefits from their adoption of cloud and digital services?

Research from the Cloud Credential Council (https://www.cloudcredential.org/) indicates that organisations are defining strategies for the adoption of cloud and digital technologies. What is less clear is how effective these strategies will be in delivering expected, and required, business results. It is not enough to just use cloud for the sake of it.

There must be clear reasons for adoption, and these reasons should be understood from a business perspective e.g. increasing competitive advantage, improving organisational agility, providing customers with new products and services etc.

However, the IT function is struggling to keep up with the rate of change taking place. Many IT operations support their business in adopting cloud services but often fail to realise the full potential or value of the

solution. In short, organisations are struggling to become more agile in order to take advantage of all these agile-enabled cloud services.

Many organisations are now using a mix of legacy IT, traditional IT, cloud and digital technologies. Some have little in the way of legacy IT and are considered to be digital natives. However, due to the current rate of change in IT and digital IT applications and services, what is non-legacy today could quickly become legacy or obsolete in a short period of time. This certainly is one area to watch carefully.

It is no surprise that almost half (47%) of all organisations reported using a hybrid or multi-cloud model where some, or all, of these old and new technologies are in use. These models and strategies are becoming more popular and a standard approach for organisations to adopt. However, to be effective with hybrid or multi-cloud requires more than just focusing on the technology and getting that right. Expect challenges with architecture and security design, interoperability of services from multiple cloud vendors, and a raft of subscription and billing options.

IT Service Management (ITSM) remains as important in a cloud-based environment as in a traditional data centre. ITSM should lead in the provision of business services constructed from multi-cloud and hybrid configurations as one seamless business user experience. Clearly defined change/release, incident and problem procedures are essential to any mature business, while configuration and service level management take on a new significance in the cloud. Only with a rigorous and formal approach to service management can multi-cloud be managed from a business (as opposed to technological) viewpoint.

1 https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2019-04-02-gartner-forecasts-worldwide-public-cloud-revenue-to-g

Look out for the special itSMF UK members' edition of the CCC Global Digital Skills survey!

Mark O'Loughlin is the Managing Director of the Cloud Credential Council (CCC). The CCC is a global community-driven organisation that empowers companies in their digital transformation journey by offering vendor-neutral certification for IT professionals including Cloud, Big Data, and IoT.

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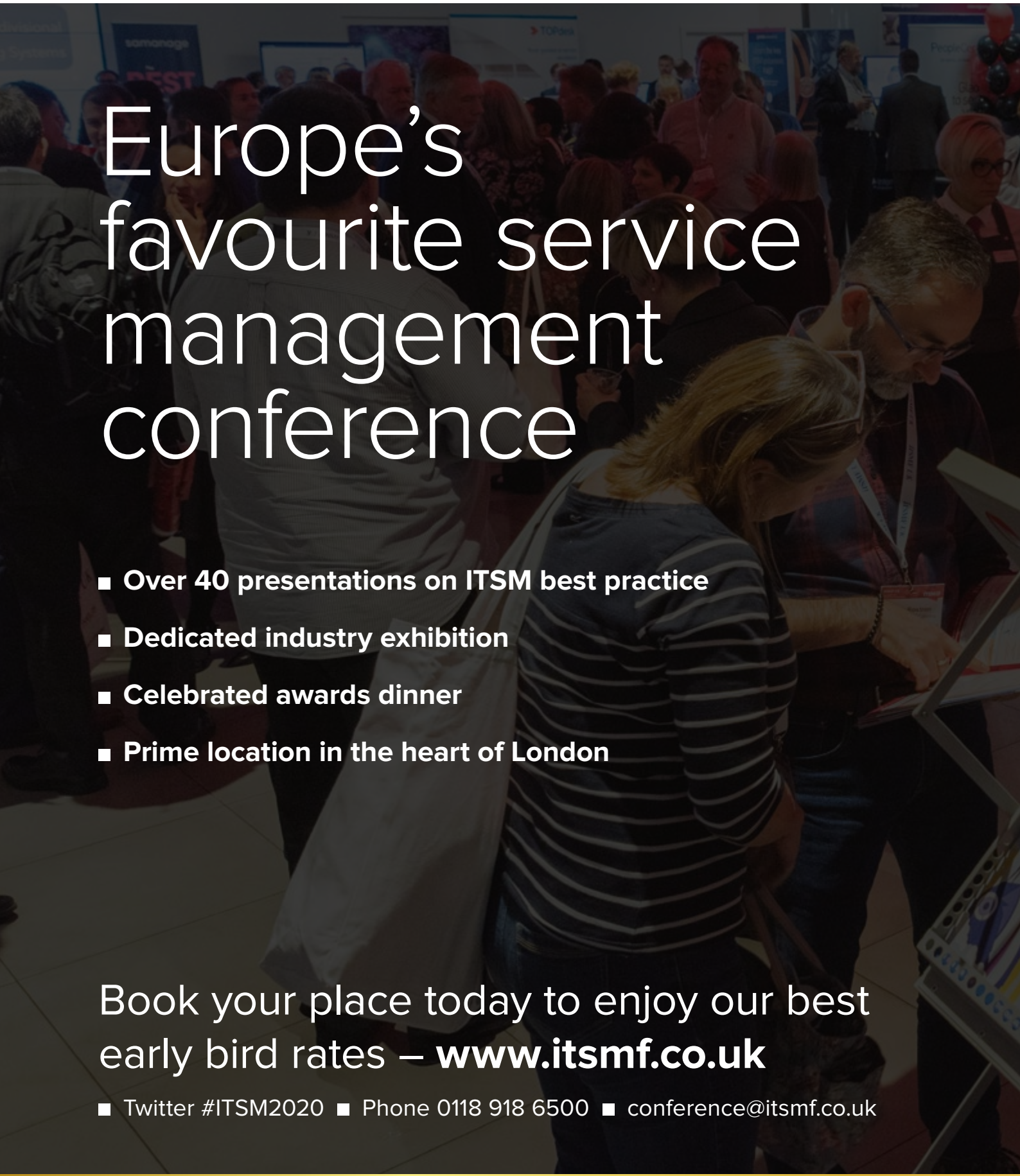

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