



## ITIL® implementation in your IT organization

WHITE PAPER

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# Abstract

In this case study we're looking at a company in the IT industry. Our resident ITIL and ISO 20000 expert, Branimir Valentic, was a part of the implementation team that worked with this company.

In need of a broad range of reforms, the company had process and procedural flaws in a number of essential areas of their IT Service Management (ITSM). Here we will look at the problems faced and how the ITIL framework and processes helped them to improve their business.

## What was the focus of this project?

1. Service desk
2. Supplier management
3. Service level management
4. Service portfolio management
5. Design coordination
6. Incident management
7. Problem management
8. Service Request Fulfillment management

**So, what was going wrong?**

# Service desk

The company previously operated two independent service desks. Both desks served two different areas, so running two seemed logical. However, there were topics common to both service desks, such as server hardware, operating systems, storage, virtualization, databases and so on.

This resulted in, for example, no synergy of resource usage, duplicated organization (management) and no utilization of experts in areas common to both service desks. The result was inefficient and ineffective.

## How did ITIL help?

- The company combined service desks into one central function that managed all incidents, problems and service requests.
- It helped ensure the correct roles, responsibilities and processes were in place and that shared IT requirements were controlled from one place. This eliminated duplicated activities, freeing up resources for other activities, for example: providing the time for investigation of the root causes of problems.

# Supplier management

The company has a lot of services and a lot of suppliers, but they had very poor supplier management processes. This resulted in expensive inefficiencies and the lost opportunities of coordinating their supplier relationships (such as more favorable credit terms and economies of scale).

## How did ITIL help?

- It helped establish processes and authority which provided: a control mechanism of suppliers' performance, a single point of contact and escalation point for all supplier issues, a communication channel toward suppliers, and management of all contracts and related issues.

# Service level management

If you make service level agreements to, say, resolve a priority-one issue in two hours, then you absolutely have to know how long it takes to resolve issues.

Without that control the client was making itself vulnerable to two important issues. Firstly, they could have been failing to deliver on their promises and upsetting their customers. Secondly, if they were resolving priority-one issues much *faster* than two hours, then they could be selling a new premium level service, e.g., a more expensive fast-track service that resolved issues in less than 30 minutes.

## How did ITIL help?

- By recommending procedures to measure incident and problem activity, including resolution times.
- By ensuring that service level agreements were correctly channeled and prioritized in the process.
- By introducing a reporting process that gave management clear visibility of all key data.

# Service portfolio management

No one at the company had sole responsibility or oversight of the IT services and resources needed. It's important that there is a single point where all information, conditions and requirements regarding IT services (and related resources) are managed.

That means one person has control (and ultimate responsibility) for the IT services provided and the resources needed. And, importantly, it's a single person or function that controls any change.

## How did ITIL help?

- It recommended the roles and responsibilities required so a single accountable person managed their entire IT service portfolio.
- It created a catalogue of services, the one place where the services offered to customers are recorded and managed.

# Design coordination

The company's operational personnel had a lot of know-how on the strengths and weaknesses of the IT services that they offered to their customers. However, they were not talking to the developers. So, naturally, the developers were not designing the features, based on experience, which would best optimize the performance of products. Nor was real-life experience being fed back to them, to avoid repetition of design mistakes.

Additionally, when it came to system testing, the process was left to the engineers, without engaging the operational team. The result was an operations team left in the dark upon new releases.

## How did ITIL help?

- The information was already within the business, so ITIL best practice inspired a process for communicating this information from the front line back to the developers. This ensured the best service was being delivered to the customer.
- It also ensured that the people using any new system were included in both the design and testing phases. This had two benefits: it meant that users could influence software design to ensure the best outcomes for customers, and also gain a large amount of system knowledge in the process (reducing the learning curve at release).

# Incident, problem management and service requests

The client threw incidents, problems and service requests all into the same service desk melting pot, with little care given to separating and prioritizing these distinct areas.

This resulted in all issues considered incidents and all technicians choosing what they worked on, based on their own determination of importance. There was no clear structure for resolutions. And management would make sub-par decisions, because they had sub-par information.

This resulted in chaotic, unorganized and uncontrolled incident management, and the ad hoc distribution of tasks.

## How did ITIL help?

- By introducing a proper management system for incidents, ensuring tasks were evenly distributed to team members and issues dealt with in a timely, organized fashion.
- By introducing better reporting processes for incidents, ensuring clear visibility of the type and frequency of issues.
- By introducing a system for problem management, ensuring the root causes of incidents were properly investigated and resolved (reducing the number and cost of incidents).
- By separating incident management from problem management, and including that distinction in customer Service Level Agreements, so the appropriate priority was assigned to each (incidents need fast resolutions, while problems often require more time).

# The benefits gained from ITIL implementation

- **Organized management** – Implementing this range of ITIL best practices has improved the overall effectiveness of the management. Better processes are providing better services, with improved reporting for future decision making.
- **Happy customers** – Incidents now get resolved faster and more effectively. And that means users of the company's IT services can now depend on a more reliable service.
- **Nothing gets lost** – Better processes for recording and reporting mean incidents that need immediate attention do not get lost. And service requests get fulfilled quickly.
- **Proactive, not reactive** – That means no more firefighting. Problems will inevitably arise, but no longer is the company running around from one fire to the next.
- **Requests get actioned** – Employees know that when they make a request for hardware or software, someone has responsibility and that request will be actioned.
- **More accurate costing** – The company now has a much clearer understanding of what their portfolio of services is actually costing them.

## Useful resources

These online materials will help you with ITIL® implementation:

- Here you can download a free preview of [ITIL® Documentation Toolkit](#) – in this free preview, you will be able to see the Table of Contents of each of the mentioned documented procedures, as well as a few sections from each document.
- Use this free [ITIL Gap Analysis Tool](#) to assess your processes and compare them to ITIL recommendations.





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