



**How can ISO 20000
help your business grow?**

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Introduction

In today's competing environment, every customer counts. That's also true if you are providing IT services. Customers notice the quality of service, how you perform while delivering the services, and whether you continuously work on improving your organization and services. Since none of the organization's parts can stand alone, IT service delivery is not an exception. Integration with business, orientation towards customer satisfaction, and management of suppliers is a must.

Implementing an effective and robust Service Management System (SMS) will help you to focus on the important areas of your business and improve efficiency. Processes that are to be established throughout your SMS will provide a sound foundation, leading to increased efficiency and profit. This, in turn, will improve your customer acquisition and retention. Additionally, that makes your management satisfied and your own staff motivated.

In some cases (e.g. public tenders), ISO 20000:2018 certificate is a must-have. In some other cases, customers will recognize your dedication to excellence in IT Service Management by being ISO 20000:2018 certified. Whatever the situation, even with the cost of the implementation, ISO 20000 brings many benefits to your business.

Why customers like ISO 20000 certified companies?

IT services has become the cornerstone of every organization. That means if IT doesn't work, business is probably endangered, and there is no company which would allow that to happen. In order to respond to challenges posed by IT technology, many organizations are looking for reliable partners to support their business by providing them state-of-the-art IT services (and supporting technology).

But, how does a company decide among so many IT service providers? Which ones are reliable partners? Because, if a company buys IT services and bases its business operation activities on it, they would like to be sure that it's in "good hands." That means companies want to be sure that IT services are actively managed, monitored and improved. Also, when they have issues or requests, customer companies want to be sure that their IT service provider will respond, react and be proactive.

Over the years, [ISO 20000](#), the leading global framework for implementation of Service Management Systems (SMS), has established itself a key management system tool to ensure that IT services meet specified requirements and achieve customer satisfaction in a systematic, cost-effective way.

Because of its world-wide position as a key framework, ISO 20000 is also known to your customers. When they consider ISO 20000 certified companies as their service provider, your customers expect that you:

- Provide reliable and resilient IT services
- Manage complete IT service lifecycle
- Monitor, measure and report
- Improve services and your own team's efficiency
- Communicate and collaborate with them inside the SMS

SMS implementation is a strategic decision. That means that a company needs to set clear goals for the SMS implementation, but also needs to determine what impact the SMS has on their business.

This paper's goal is to explain how an ISO 20000-based SMS can help grow a company's business in order to differentiate them from competition, and position themselves on the market as a valuable and reliable partner.

For more information, see [5 key benefits of ISO 20000 implementation](#) and [5 ways ITIL can help your small business grow](#).

What is a Service Management System?

A Service Management System, or SMS, is a set of documentation (procedures, policies and records), processes and other capabilities (e.g. knowledge) needed to deliver value to the customer in the form of services. An SMS includes policies, objectives, necessary plans, processes, resources and all needed documented information required to manage planning, design, transition, delivery/operation and improvement of services. The SMS describes the rules within a company that prescribe how services are created and provided to customers. A successful SMS needs to be designed around the specific business targets of the company and customer-agreed service requirements. ISO 20000 serves as a guide for companies during implementation, so that all important components are present in the SMS.

Although ISO 20000 requires that all the standard's requirements are implemented, it is important to stress that ISO 20000 is not that rigid. Each company has flexibility in how it will implement its Service Management System. This freedom allows the ISO 20000 standard to be used in a wide range of organizations, and in businesses large and small.

There are two important aspects of the ISO 20000. Firstly, ISO 20000 goes deep into daily activities of the company because it covers the complete lifecycle of the services (from plan/design to delivery, i.e. improvement). Secondly, ISO 20000 is a process-oriented approach. When implementing an ISO 20000-based SMS, it's important to avoid looking at a company's departments and individual processes. ISO 20000 enables and requires that a company looks at "the big picture." Who are you and how do you make company profitable? Who are the stakeholders of your services? How do processes interact? How do they integrate with each other? What are the important aspects of the services?

While implementing your SMS, [ITIL](#) can help you resolve most of the implementation challenges (particularly during process implementation). ITIL and ISO 20000 are not the same but they are closely related. A good way to think of it is that ISO 20000 says what you need to do, while ITIL tells you how to do it.

Learn more in the article [What's needed for successful ISO 20000 certification of your company?](#) and in the free download [How to Budget an ISO 20000 Implementation Project](#).

What does ISO 20000 bring to your company?

If you don't just look the standard and think what ISO 20000 brings to your company, you might be amazed. Positive effects of ISO 20000 implementation influence both internal and external issues. Here's how your company might benefit:

Understand your environment – Although it sounds strange, many managers are focused on daily activities and “forget” to take a wider look. By knowing your external and internal context, strengths, weaknesses, by understanding who your stakeholders (particularly customers) are, understanding customers' requirements, i.e. value they are looking for – ISO 20000 will make an IT Service Manager's life much easier.

Consistent approach – Doing everything in the same way may sound boring. The other possibility is to allow everyone inside the organization to do things their own way, which can cause chaos and is not advisable. ISO 20000 enables a consistent approach to the activities needed for an organization to deliver reliable services, support and improvement. Customers appreciate that.

Clear roles and responsibilities inside the organization – Setting up processes and related activities includes defining clear roles and responsibilities. A major prerequisite is to require staff efficiency in designing, transitioning, delivering, maintaining and improving services.

Increased efficiency – ISO 20000 goes deep into the daily activities of an organization and coordinates activities, resources and required knowledge. Therefore, all needed processes and their activities are managed. That gives managers opportunity to monitor, measure and improve.

Proof of excellence in service management – So, you've set your organization, processes, roles and responsibilities and you are achieving excellent results. You are also aware that potential customers are looking for best-in-class, and you have to show them that you are worth their investment. Before they get to know you better, an ISO 20000 certificate is the only guarantee they have. You should use it and deliver evidence of your efficiency once they start using your services.

Customer satisfaction – ISO 20000 focuses on the customer throughout the service lifecycle. It starts with clearly defining requirements and what value means for the customer. Built on that foundation, services transitioned in a live environment will fulfil their expectations. Once the service is in the customers' use, the real test of organizational capabilities starts. ISO 20000 becomes your tool to excel in service delivery and keep increasing customer satisfaction.

Make improvement the norm – As with many standards, the goal of ISO 20000 is continual improvement. This improvement means your company can realize greater and greater savings in resources like time and money. Besides savings, continuous improvement includes improvements of customer relationships and satisfaction with delivered services, not to mention the value your services create.

Bridge the gap with business –The main drivers of ISO 20000 are customer satisfaction, benefits achieved, and value created within the scope of the IT Service Management. These drivers create an excellent bridge between business and IT services. Actually, ISO 20000:2018, helps you explain the benefits of the service in business language; and that's not easy. By doing this, however, you will get a better look at IT services from a business point of view.

Learn more about ISO 20000 implementation: [12 steps for ISO 20000 implementation](#).

How does ISO 20000 fit to SME's?

ISO 20000 is a generic standard that can be applied to an organization of regardless of the type or size or the services they deliver. However, SME's have some specifics (compared to large organizations) and ISO 20000 makes an excellent fit.

Managing risks – Risks are often something that SME's rarely manage until they occur. In order to be proactive, ISO 20000:2018 emphasizes risk management throughout the service lifecycle. That means start managing risks early and gain more benefits (fewer surprises).

Competitiveness and credibility – Implementing ISO 20000 will improve your company's reputation because you've adopted an internationally recognized standard for IT service management. Because of your ability to compete with much bigger, well-organized competitors, you gain a competitive edge. The perception and image of your company also changes because an ISO certificate generally improves the way partners/suppliers and customers perceive the organization. Finally, your company gains credibility because your customers will trust you when they see that your internal organization and processes are aligned with ISO 20000.

Finances – ISO 20000 is rarely related to financial aspects of the services. But, an ISO 20000:2018-based SMS enables you to be aware of the financial aspects of new service implementation or maintenance of existing ones. In that way, you hold your financial situation "in your hands," i.e. there are fewer surprises down the road. This is important for your management and for you as well. On the other hand, financial management in the scope of ISO 20000 implementation will be your controlling mechanism once the service enters the live environment. In other words, the return on investment will be calculated once the service is operational.

Focus on essentials vs. focus dispersion – Often (and this is particularly true for start-ups), companies try to do everything by themselves. You can't be the best in everything, and that often leads to situations when you can't respond with the required quality. This is where third parties can jump in. The point is to keep them managed and their delivery within the scope of service requirements. For example, the Supplier Management process in scope of ISO 20000:2018 implementation has mechanisms to ensure that suppliers provide the level of service that your customers require.

Lack of plans – ISO 20000:2018 requires you to plan for crucial parameters of your services. That doesn't mean that you have to create activities by generating plans for everything. In fact, one of the goals of ISO 20000:2018 is increasing efficiency of resources. There is a saying: "If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail." Ad-hoc events usually happen in the beginning, but every serious business needs a plan, and so do your services and resources. No guessing, but facts and figures. You have to understand customers' demands and be prepared to answer existing and future requirements with appropriate capacity and availability. You have to monitor demand, follow-up with trends and relate them to your finances. ISO 20000:2018 has processes and methodologies that do exactly that.

Enroll the [webinar on how to use a documentation toolkit](#) to see how implementation can be done in an efficient way.

Conclusion

No matter whether you are supplying IT services to internal or external customers, you need to invest in IT Service Management. Otherwise, it will be a costly method of trial and error. By implementing ISO 20000:2018 you are obliged to proactively manage services from their plan/design until the end of their lifecycle. On the other hand, this responsibility gives you a tool that lets you control your services, your team and external suppliers. Maintaining or improving the quality of service, as well as keeping the costs of ITSM as low as possible should be achievable.

The results of certification against ISO 20000 are:

- Well-defined and documented procedures improve the consistency of output
- Service achievements are constantly measured
- Procedures ensure appropriate action is taken whenever an issue occurs
- Customer satisfaction increases
- Issues are detected earlier and are corrected at a lower cost
- Documented procedures are easier for new employees to follow
- The ongoing benefits of ISO 9001 certification

A well-designed and implemented Service Management System based on ISO 20000 has been shown to provide organizations with the following benefits:

- You will have consistent, repeatable processes and a common system
- You will have fewer incidents and unsuccessful changes in delivering services
- Your people will know what to do and how you want it done
- You'll know more quickly if things are going wrong, and where; you will stop spending money or wasting time on the same old problems

ISO 20000 is a company's powerful tool to succeed in business. Yes, implementation and maintenance costs some money, but it also influences the profitability of the company—positively.

Use this free [ITIL Return on Investment \(ROI\) Calculator](#) to perform a cost-benefit analysis of the implementation.

Sample documentation templates

[ISO 20000 Documentation Toolkit](#)

References

[20000 Academy](#)





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