



Delivering Effective IT Support Adopting ITIL to fit your IT Business Model

A discussion paper from Numara Software

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While ITIL works brilliantly on paper, it is difficult to implement into all IT support procedures, especially if people are not familiar with ITIL best practice.

1. Introduction

In our fast paced commercial world, companies face a multitude of challenges and are heavily reliant on IT in order to keep abreast of these demands. Today technology is a given, and the more forward thinking companies already understand that their focus must move away from the nuts and bolts of 'doing IT', towards a more business service-oriented approach. IT no longer just fixes problems, IT needs to think strategically.

For many organisations ITIL, a customisable framework of best practices, is actually enabling this service culture. The most recent version (V3) was released in June 2007 and a staggering 50,000 copies were sold within the first few weeks. Version 3 presents a rigorously updated source of best practices on IT Service Management and introduces the Service Lifecycle as the main structure for its guidance.

This 'ITIL without the handcuffs' guide offers readers a very practical and concise summary on ITIL, with examples of how organisations are adopting best practice – either by following ITIL to the letter or by incorporating the elements of ITIL that are most applicable to specific business needs. Shirley Lacy, ITIL V3 author, provides an overview of the differences between V2 and V3 as well as an introduction to the five new core books.

The consensus is that ITIL V3 meets the needs of today and tomorrow better than previous adaptations have done and is more aligned to the business – but it is no panacea.

In reality the mainstream market has only just begun to explore the concept of managing IT resources against specific business requirements. In recent research commissioned by Numara Software, we actually found very low awareness of ITIL, in fact only 10 percent of those organisations questioned had adopted or were in the process of adopting ITIL.

In our experience, when looking at best practice approaches most companies need to acknowledge their own unique starting points. Culture and a service mindset are also critical to exploring how technology and the business can become more closely integrated, as is a good understanding of your internal

needs and historical technology investments, and how this might fit or adapt to recognised industry standards. It is also worth noting that there are substantial overheads associated with ITIL. For example, some of the companies interviewed to compile this guide, who were adopting ITIL best practices, cited two to three years worth of time investment alone.

In today's competitive environment, companies want processes that enable them to take control of their IT infrastructure in a pragmatic way. They want technology, policies and procedures that empower them, rather than be handcuffed to rigid systems which take years to implement or change.

Does ITIL provide all the answers?

I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions!



Andy White
Managing Director for EMEA & APAC

“The metaphor I use is changing the tyres on a moving vehicle. We’re still supporting the business while we are trying to implement ITIL.”

2. The Relevance and Irrelevance of ITIL

What is ITIL?

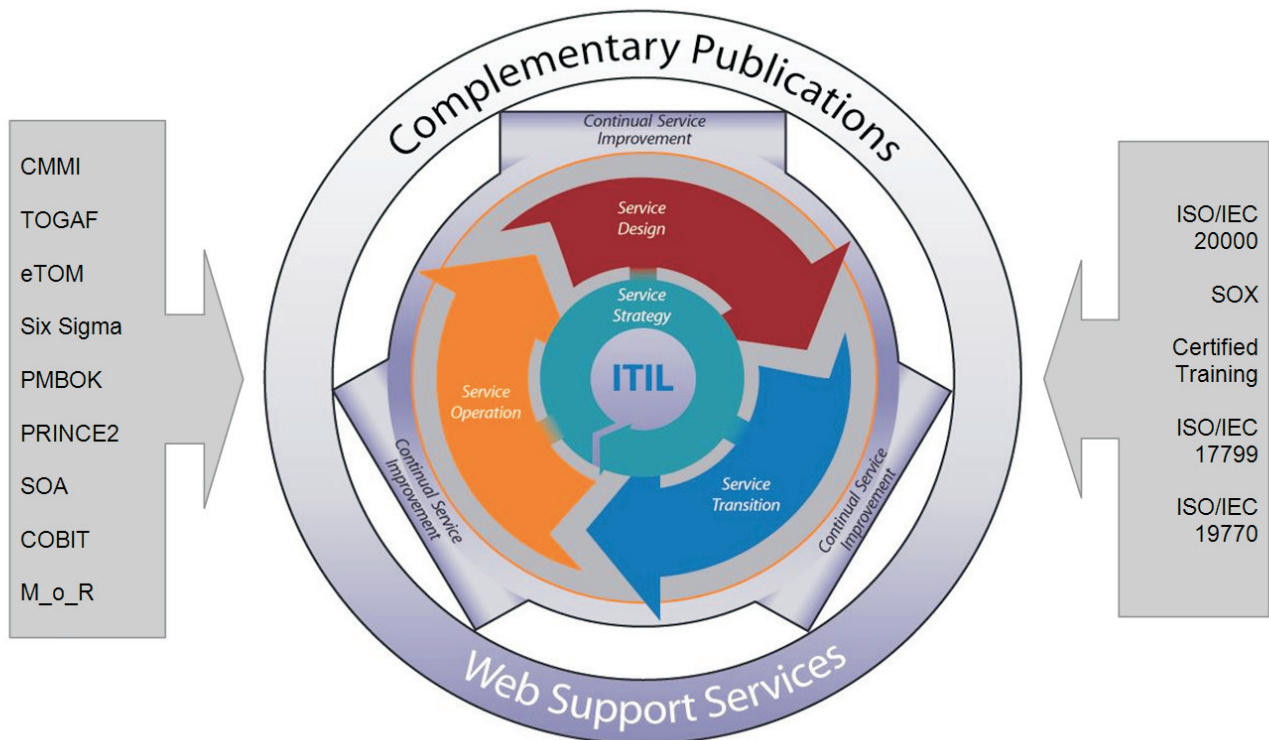
ITIL is very simply what it stands for – the Information Technology Infrastructure Library - a set of books that provides guidelines on the best practice to use to deliver IT services, addressing core issues such as problems, incidents, changes and request management. Over the course of the last 5 years ITIL has grown into a globally accepted set of best practice guidelines within the world of IT Service Management. ITIL outlines an extensive set of management procedures that are intended to support businesses in achieving both quality and value in IT operations.

These procedures are supplier-independent and have been developed to provide guidance across the breadth of IT infrastructure, development, and operations. ITIL is published in a series of books (hence the term Library), each of which covers a core area within IT Management. The names ITIL and IT Infrastructure Library are Registered Trade Marks of the United Kingdom’s Office of Government Commerce (OGC).

In these days of shrinking IT budgets, ITIL is a means by which IT directors can leverage best practice to meet the relentless challenge of doing more with less. As well as

being a mechanism to allow them to remove or automate the mundane IT processes, releasing them to think more strategically. However it should be noted that in some cases, the implementation of ITIL in an organisation can actually cost the organisation more and slow process down in return for strict and specific process control and compliance requirements. The latest version of ITIL has built on the solid foundations of the first two versions and delivers a more business focused set of best practices for delivering IT Services.

The diagram below shows a high level view of how the five books in ITIL version 3 (Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation and Continual Service Improvement) sit together. It also shows the consideration taken in the new version for standards and other recognised best practice techniques. The idea of the lifecycle approach builds on the concept in version 2 that for Service Management to work all processes need to be embraced. By showing how each part of the lifecycle follows on, we will be able to see how fluid Service Management can be and how this can benefit an organisation.



“I’m not 100 percent sure what ITIL is, but I don’t think we are busy enough to be adopting these sorts of standards yet. We simply don’t have the resources or the manpower.”

Why is ITIL considered to be important?

Today, everything we do needs to add value to the organisation we are part of and IT Service Management is no exception - ITIL has evolved to help organisations do this. ITIL has been described as the equivalent of the Bosch management system, fitted as standard to most cars, but invisible to the driver. You wouldn’t try and adapt it because it’s the most widely used set of ‘standards’ available. Once it’s in place, the driver concentrates his skills on driving the car, just as the IT department looks after its customers within the business.

ITIL is actually not a standard, though it is frequently labelled as such. Nor should firms gain a misconception that they need to comply with it. ITIL is no Sarbanes-Oxley-like compliance agenda, but a best practice guide that should only be followed in areas applicable to individual organisations. (Having said this ITIL can help organisations to achieve the ISO/IEC 20000 standard for Service Management.)

Nor is ITIL a quick and easy solution; its complex best practices encompass the width, depth and breadth of the entire organisation, covering many concepts, which take significant time to understand. Perhaps for this reason, it is more relevant to larger organisations - which have greater resources: time, staff costs, and skills – to be able to implement it.

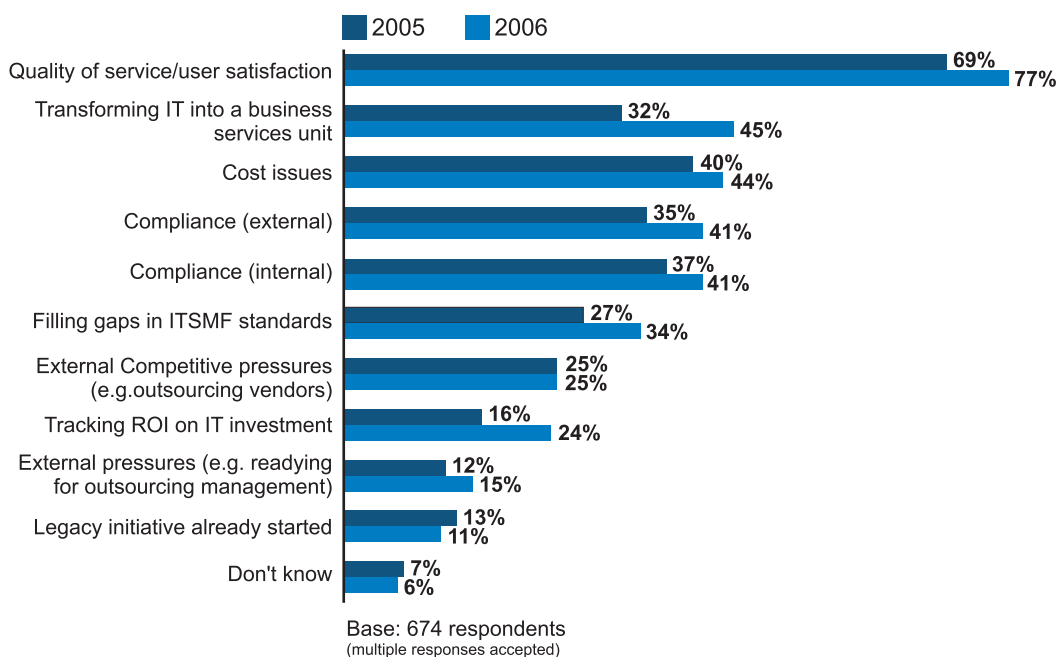
It also requires top management endorsement because in many cases, implementation of best practices will require organisational and cultural change.

Let’s look at why organisations have started to implement ITIL best practices.

This research, carried out by Forrester on behalf of the itSMF, highlights the underlying reason for investing in IT Service Management. We can see that the level of service that an organisation gets is of paramount importance – coupled alongside number two in the list, transforming IT into a business services unit - demonstrating that there is a move within the marketplace towards IT becoming a unified part of the business.

It is also clear that other factors such as compliance (internal and external), costs and ROI are high on the priorities list, but do not carry the weight of service quality. The research suggests that if quality of service is high the other factors are driven forward by this level of service and the benefits will then follow.

“What were/are your main drivers for investing in service management?”



Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Who is adopting ITIL?

In its different guises ITIL has been adopted by a large cross section of organisations. There is no true pattern or criteria depicting the type of organisation that has embraced ITIL, although having said this there are some typically strong sectors and organisation types who have taken it up.

Larger organisations have embraced ITIL because it helps to put standard working processes and procedures into place across their IT teams and therefore helps to ensure consistency throughout the IT Services they deliver. Not surprisingly the public sector (where ITIL originated) has also shown a high degree of usage as do those sectors that find themselves heavily regulated such as financial services, telecoms, pharmaceutical etc.

Despite uptake amongst a large number of organisations there are still many who are yet to understand the benefits of ITIL. The SME market and manufacturing demonstrate just two such areas and whilst these sectors are not well versed in ITIL at present there is potential for companies here to gain some benefit from adoption of best practices within IT Service Management.

However, qualitative research with a focus group of 30 companies undertaken by Numara Software in April 2008 highlighted that less than 10 percent of these organisations were aware of ITIL and adopting it in some form. Many companies felt that they had insufficient resources to implement such rigorous IT support standards as ITIL. Negative attitudes centred on standards being too much hassle, too costly or just not important enough to spend time on.

This attitude is reflected in a recent interview with Numara Software customer Gary Raper, Corporate IT Manager for the European leader in custom manufacturing, ColepCCL who commented on his organisation's view of ITIL: "Currently our support is very much 'hands-on' and although we have several procedures for tasks such as creating new users, troubleshooting, etc. we don't follow the standard ITIL policies."

However, he added: "This will become an issue for us moving forward. We are heavily regulated, as one of our factories produces pharmaceutical products and is currently undertaking a complete validation process of its computer systems. Validation is required to get FDA approval for the export to the USA and is standard practice for our pharmaceutical customers. Validation poses very restrictive practices when changing anything with the IT infrastructure, as every request, change and installation needs to be carefully documented. In addition any systems that are used to document these must also be validated to ensure compliance and no data manipulation. Therefore, moving forward it would be very useful for us to have more ITIL type processes in place."

Getting the balance right – realising the true benefits of ITIL

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, ITIL is a set of books that carves out a framework for delivering IT Services. What sets ITIL apart from other frameworks is its strict focus on IT operations. When it is implemented effectively, ITIL helps IT departments improve their quality of service, including increased system uptime, faster problem resolution and better security. To this end it is a tool that can be used by organisations of all sizes to help deliver quality IT Services. It should, however, be remembered that it is just a set of best practice guidelines and must be used in the most appropriate way. Every company is unique and ITIL must be adapted differently by each organisation in order to get the most out of it.

However ITIL is implemented or adapted, the dividends can be high for those that make ITIL work: improved service availability at a reduced cost; better responsiveness to business change; and noticeably enhanced customer satisfaction levels.

A case example

The CIO of MeadWestvaco, a US company in the forestry and packaging products sector, had gone through a large merger and was wrestling to standardise his IT to match an overhaul of the organisation's business processes. The IT department, however, was continuing to follow its usual collection of ad hoc systems. Even the group responsible for developing and enforcing a set of common business processes didn't have a process to call its own, so the IT department could hardly hold itself to the same standards it was applying to the rest of the organisation. What it needed was a focus on process.

In searching for a framework to create a more streamlined and efficient department, one that could anticipate and solve problems before they happened and adapt to changes in the business as quickly as the business itself changed, the CIO came across ITIL. The CIO bought ten copies of ITIL and swiftly formalised a plan to use ITIL to rebuild the way his IT department operated. The work is still ongoing – however the ITIL implementation has already resulted in significant benefit - the company has eliminated more than \$100,000 annually in IT maintenance contracts and achieved a 10 percent gain in operational stability. And it puts these savings down to ITIL.

Key points for the reader:

- ITIL is a collection of best practices that address IT service management and business-focused discipline
- ITIL is more applicable to larger companies, though small companies can benefit
- ITIL brings IT into closer alignment with the business
- ITIL awareness and adoption is low within the mainstream market
- ITIL is a long-term commitment, not a short-term fix

ITIL decreases the flexibility within an organisation, especially within smaller companies. Some of the standards in the market today are meant for larger companies that actually have the infrastructure in place to make these standards work. In smaller businesses you need to be flexible and remain within budget.

3. Checks and Balances

Why would you want ITIL?

ITIL's influence is growing compared with other frameworks, such as Six Sigma, CoBIT (Control Objectives for Information and related Technology) or MOF (Microsoft Operations Framework), and has become the de facto standard of best practices to facilitate the delivery and management of high quality IT services.

The need to build a bridge between business objectives and IT, while helping to deliver greater strategic alignment between them with tighter integration for mission-critical processes, is what is driving larger organisations towards ITIL adoption. As ITIL best practices are implemented, others within the organisation gain a better understanding of what IT does and how it makes the organisation tick. So adopting ITIL transforms the IT department from being 'that tech support unit' towards becoming a strategic business component – and 'one of us'.

In larger organisations process control is a necessity rather than a luxury, and ITIL was developed to meet this need. ITIL helps technology function more efficiently. As IT departments grow to support more users, internal functions and disciplines become segregated, creating a need for process control to co-ordinate information flow. Checks and balances are needed, and ITIL offers a framework to achieve this.

For the IT Director or CIO, there is also significant personal benefit that can be gained from ITIL adoption. As ITIL helps the organisation's IT management processes move up the Gartner IT management 'process maturity model' from 'chaotic' through 'reactive' and 'proactive' categories towards being value-based, the CIO can expect his or her credibility within the organisation to rise. Achieving better business outcomes through ITIL thus gains the IT department much-needed breathing space or even extra resources for other projects.

Why would you not want ITIL?

ITIL implementation is a long-term endeavour that can take years to implement effectively. There are no shortcuts, nor is there one product that can make an organisation 'ITIL-compliant'. The process change is so substantial that an ITIL project should be regarded like an ERP implementation, with progress measured in years, not months.

ITIL requires time, money and effort to achieve real gains, and some companies struggle to find the resources to implement it, with management failing to understand the benefits, and IT staff and users resistant to change. Often the overheads simply outweigh the benefits.

Numara Software customer, Gary Raper, Corporate IT Manager for leading custom manufacturer, ColepCCL comments on his experience of ITIL: "I have read two books on ITIL and that's about as far as it goes. From what I have read it gives guidelines rather than hard and fast rules and requires a lot of time upfront to develop."

Research from Freeform Dynamics, commissioned by Numara Software, has also shown that large enterprises of over 10,000 employees are five times more likely to be committed to IT support best practices, such as ITIL, than smaller companies, for whom barriers to implementation include cost justification, cultural fit, acquiring the relevant skills and knowledge, management support and general relevance.

That is not to say, however, that elements of ITIL are not applicable to smaller companies – but they should seek to 'cherry pick' useful best practice ideas where appropriate and practical. ITIL's rigour can certainly benefit smaller companies with incident or problem management. For example, adopting ITIL has helped Numara Software customer, Ryanair, a low-cost airline to increase the visibility of the way in which calls and requests are logged and handled, resulting in the fast resolution of queries and an overall 99 percent satisfaction level with users.

Importantly, each individual organisation should know when 'enough is enough'. ITIL should be constantly reviewed to ensure that it is being utilised effectively and not counterproductively for the organisation, because too much process control can be as costly and crippling as not enough.

Key points for the reader:

- ITIL has become the de facto standard for IT Service Management
- ITIL is more likely to apply to larger companies of over 10,000 employees
- ITIL can help the CIO enhance his personal standing with 'the business'
- ITIL is less applicable to small and medium sized organisations and they should 'cherry pick' best practice elements
- Organisations adopting ITIL should know when 'enough is enough'.

ITIL is a framework, not a rulebook, so you have to understand and apply it to your organisation and not just use it out of a book – basically you have to do your homework.

4. Fit for Purpose

How do I know where my organisation fits?

Not every business will see ITIL benefits. The framework's very complexity means that, in reality, only around 10 percent of organisations are actually following industry best practices for internal IT support delivery according to research commissioned by Numara Software (Freeform Dynamics 2006). A further 25 percent review best practice guidelines and then simply extract and apply the ideas they think are most applicable to them. The remaining organisations cannot see the relevance, have been disillusioned by the hype-cycle for a string of IT operations management tools, strategies, and processes, are too busy getting on with their business to take notice, or are simply unaware that best practices exist in this area.

At Numara Software, we believe there are three types of IT customers: those who need ITIL; those who think they need ITIL but actually don't and those who know they don't need ITIL. As discussed, there is a significant cost, time and resource implication and for many companies, ITIL simply doesn't make sense. However, because there has been so much hype around ITIL, especially in the last 12 months, many organisations are misguided into thinking that they do.

There are no hard and fast rules on size, because complexity of operations can also be a reason for adopting ITIL, but a general rule of thumb would be:

- Organisations with over 10,000 employees are most likely to adopt ITIL
- Organisations between 1,000 and 10,000 may adopt certain elements of best practice
- For organisations with less than 1,000 employees, ITIL probably doesn't justify the cost versus the return

Additionally, the types of organisation most likely to adopt ITIL are those that are more highly regulated. Although ITIL is not a compliance driver, its adoption in the heavily regulated financial services sector is higher than average because compliance initiatives such as Sarbanes-Oxley frequently include IT accountability within their scope. The public sector is also a key user, followed by the telecoms sector, education and larger industrial organisations.

Understanding the true cost 'versus' the opportunity

For IT organisations, just maintaining the status quo takes around 80 percent of the total IT budget. Research and IT process improvement case studies show organisations applying ITIL do achieve a 20-40 percent reduction in the effort required for ongoing IT operations.

A study conducted by the market research company IDC pointed to an overall IT efficiency gain of 30 percent by the application of ITIL, including the following gains: incident management and desk support - 40.5 percent; managing and supporting servers - 30.9 percent; change management - 28.4 percent; managing applications - 10 percent; problem management - 9.4 percent; and service level management - 8.5 percent. In all, the IDC study documented significant gains on a three-year cost of investment of £1.1 million, including annual cost savings and increased revenue of £7.7 million; a payback period of 11.8 months; and a ROI over a three-year project life cycle of 422 percent.

Significant case study examples of organisation 'wins' through ITIL include:

- Proctor and Gamble reported a saving of \$500 million, as well as a 6-8 percent reduction in operating costs and a 15-20 percent reduction in technology personnel
- Nationwide Insurance's implementation of key ITIL processes led to a 40 percent reduction of its systems outages, and a \$4.3 million return on its ITIL investment over the next three years
- An ITIL programme at Capital One that began in 2001 resulted in a 30 percent reduction in systems crashes and software-distribution errors, and a 92 percent reduction in business-critical incidents

Yet, despite these impressive figures and IT organisations' desire to improve the service they offer to their customers, there are significant barriers to ITIL adoption – including an often overwhelming resistance on the part of IT staff to the changes required to adopt ITIL. In IDC's research, 81 percent of organisations adopting ITIL give 'the organisation's resistance to change' as the biggest risk of failure, while a Forrester survey for the IT Service Management Forum (itSMF) found that 60 percent believed their main challenge in implementing service management to be staff's lack of knowledge and experience of process-based methodologies.

In Dynamic Market's qualitative research (Adoption of ITIL and Other Standards, April 2008) commissioned by Numara Software, time, money, the hassle factor and IT's constant battle, fire fighting everyday issues, were some of the reasons cited against adopting such standards.

Key points for the reader:

- Applying ITIL consistently can achieve a 20-40 percent reduction in the effort required for ongoing IT management
- Necessary drivers for a successful ITIL implementation include commitment from senior management and the willingness of IT staff to adapt to change.
- The upfront investment such as time, costs and resources are key considerations before embarking on an ITIL journey

IT service management is not just about the IT assets and liabilities and unauthorised changes. It's about managing your complexity and risk and taking an integrated approach to this. With ITIL you can start from anywhere, it doesn't really matter. In a global environment some may want to stick with version 2, or if you are new to ITIL you can move up to the highest level in an efficient way.

5. Moving on Up

What's the difference between ITIL V2 and V3?

According to Shirley Lacy, ITIL author, V3 is an important evolutionary step that recognises the need to manage services in dynamic, high risk, volatile and rapidly changing business environments and cope with new challenges. The objective of the ITIL V3 Service Management Practice framework is to provide services to business customers that are fit for purpose, stable and are so reliable, the business views them as a trusted utility. Key differences can be summarised as:

Integration of the business and IT

ITIL V3 raises the bar for IT Service Management (ITSM) by establishing the integration of business strategy with IT service strategy. ITIL V3 provides the practices to measure IT in business value outcomes and provide assurance to business managers that applications and the underlying infrastructure will support new business initiatives.

Establishing service management as a practice and organisational capability

Some organisations have implemented IT controls to comply with ISO/IEC 20000, corporate and regulatory requirements. These organisations have demonstrated that implementing repeatable and auditable processes improves predictability and service performance. ITIL V3 builds on these examples through the implementation of a service management system that establishes controls and continual improvement. Adopting this approach enables service providers to establish service management as an organisational capability and strategic asset for their company.

Changing business and technical environments

Firms have become more dependent on IT services to enable the communication, coordination, and control of the business. As a result, IT organisations have been tasked with reducing costs through consolidation, transformation, automation, multi-sourcing and standardisation. ITIL V3 reflects the way that ITSM needs to respond effectively and efficiently to meet these changing environments. The updated practices recognise the complexity of services and systems today and illustrations in the books are based on today's real life examples such as multi-sourcing, service oriented architectures, virtualisation and Web services.

The architecture of ITIL V3

The ITIL V3 core library combines the process based view of ITIL that many people were familiar with in V2, with a service lifecycle approach. This reflects the reality of most organisations, where management systems, roles, and responsibilities require the use of multiple control perspectives. The objectives for those responsible for the design, development and improvement of service management systems are best achieved using a process view of the organisation. The objectives for those responsible for the design, transition, operation, and improvement of services and contracts are accomplished using a lifecycle view. The ITIL V3 core books are based on the Service Lifecycle:

The Service Lifecycle consists of five phases. Each volume of the new ITIL core books describes one of these phases. The related processes are described in detail in the book in which they find their key application. The five core books are:

- Service Strategy
- Service Design
- Service Transition
- Service Operation
- Continual Service Improvement.

Service strategy sits at the heart of the Service Lifecycle and drives all other phases; it is the defining phase of policymaking and setting business objectives. The Service Design, Service Transition, and Service Operation phases are guided by this strategy and their continual theme is one of adjustment and change. The Continual Service Improvement phase stands for learning and improving, and embraces all other lifecycle phases. This phase initiates improvement programmes and projects and prioritises them based on the strategic objectives of the organisation. The Web Support services provide on line support to help organisations during adoption.

How do I go about implementing ITIL?

Attending seminars and reading will help individuals to understand the potential benefits of adopting ITIL. The OGC/TSO ITIL V3 publication "The Official Introduction to ITIL" explains the basic concept of IT Service Management and why the Service Lifecycle approach is best practice in today's business environment.

The ITIL V3 framework offers opportunities for service providers to move up to deliver superior services. After understanding the principles of ITIL V3, the senior management and the service/process improvement team should explore the benefits of adopting ITIL V3 together through workshops and pilot projects.

As part of an individual's professional development, the ITIL foundation course helps people to understand the breadth and value of ITIL service management. An individual gains a basic qualification in IT service management by successfully passing the examination. For individuals who already hold the V1 or V2 Foundation certificates and want to update their V3 knowledge, there is an ITIL V2 to V3 Foundation or Manager's Bridge course. Gaining the qualifications will enable an individual to continue the higher-level studies in the V3 Qualification scheme.

First steps

Instilling the right corporate culture and mind set is critical to exploring how ITIL might work effectively for the business. This is especially true of organisations which would not naturally see themselves as having a 'service-culture'. Implementing ITIL impacts all the organisation's employees. Engagement, communications and training are key to success: from the initial engagement of senior stakeholders to ongoing manager-level ITIL training.

ITIL process implementation has significant IT-wide impact; it is not an isolated initiative. Therefore, to avoid resource and programming constraints, implementation must be tightly aligned with other business initiatives. It is also really important for organisations to consider the post ITIL business, what it will take to continue operating a business that meets ITIL best practice, in order for the business to understand the resourcing and maintenance requirements moving forward.

A comparison of internal requirements against industry standard tools and other methodologies could also be a useful early activity, but it is critical to attempt this with the knowledge of the limitations of existing IT management capabilities so that shortcomings can be properly understood before future investment is considered.

While it is important to take a holistic view of your ITIL implementation it is not imperative to implement all processes concurrently to realise operational improvements and a significant ROI. Processes should be selected and prioritised based on the benefits sought by the organisation and the ones that drive the most business value.

As ITIL is a long journey, it is important to identify some 'quick wins' to ensure continued stakeholder commitment. Failure to achieve early success can double resistance to change and halve stakeholder support within six months. And finally, do not treat an ITIL implementation as a one-time project. Implementing IT Service Management is a continuous improvement programme, not a project in itself. Organisations who start; measure; and refine will continuously improve.

Key points for the reader:

- Every organisation can benefit from elements of ITIL, but you don't need to adopt the whole process
- There are serious cost implications - ask yourself how many people you need in the organisation to run ITIL and whether you can sustain this level of resourcing on an ongoing basis?
- Implementing a process won't necessarily fix the problem – you will also need to change the culture
- Engage, engage and engage – communication and training are key to ITIL success.

ITIL is a best practice framework, but it is not an all encompassing Bible. Organisations need to be prepared to adapt processes to suit their needs whilst using ITIL to govern standards, progress and maturity.

6. Brave New World

In today's tough global economic climate, businesses have to cope with increasing pressure to cut operating costs and deliver more to their customers with less. This places demands on IT organisations to increase service levels adding to the internal pressure they already face due to complex and diverse integration, compliance issues and the need to embrace new technologies. With these developments in mind ITIL's influence on IT best practices will grow. What would a world without ITIL be like? Well, imagine running a power station without a comprehensive service manual, with no overall plant diagram, no proper identification of equipment, no details about specifications, no systematic way to deal with emergencies, and no guidance to maintain the plant at peak efficiency or means to plan for the future.

ITIL ensures process and procedures are in place for increased IT service levels and while ITIL was once regarded as an 'invader' into systems administrators' territory, today those same administrators are now happy to work to ITIL rules. Previously, when something needed changing or correcting, the possible impact of that change in a production environment was determined by the systems administrator, and then simply executed, putting the customer's i.e. the business's, production systems at risk. Sometimes it worked. On other occasions, however, it went terribly wrong. What ITIL forces IT service managers to do is consider the impact of change on the whole organisation.

But ITIL may not be for everyone and it is important to consider ITIL within the context of your own business and IT service needs. When you reach a certain level of maturity and complexity within the IT department there is a need for adopting a best practice approach – otherwise your processes could spiral out of control - in the same way as the level of complexity within a power station warrants robust regulations and procedures.

At Numara Software, we have seen best practice transform the service environment of many of our customers. Ryanair, for example, has had to adhere to strict compliance regulations and support a busy internal Helpdesk environment at the same time. By adopting a best practice approach and implementing our service management solution, Numara FootPrints™, Ryanair has significantly improved its user's IT experience, and now consistently achieves an amazing 99 percent satisfaction level. At Olympus Europa, with 22 European subsidiaries operating

as a random collection of unrelated organisations, the need was to improve the productivity of its IT support. By standardising operations across Europe using Numara Software's helpdesk product, Track-It!, it achieved a 95 percent RoI within the first year.

The CIO's challenge is to demonstrate 'value for money' from IT and deliver its contribution to the business. Success in achieving this helps shift the business's view of IT away from being simply the 'deliverer' to being that of a valued and active partner in the business. And this also reflects rather well on the CIO. The most recent version of ITIL recognises these challenges and consequently repositions Service Management to exert more control over the full Service Lifecycle to have a positive impact on service quality, cost and risk. Key to the growing success of ITIL is flexibility. ITIL is not a methodology, but a library of advice and guidance on how to deliver and support IT services. It must be needs-adaptive, so that organisations don't have to adopt all ITIL's best practices, but can freely choose only those parts of the framework that are most relevant to their current needs.

Clearly there are significant benefits to ITIL adoption – however the challenges should not be underestimated - especially for smaller organisations that often lack the resources to implement it. In addition, implementing ITIL usually brings sweeping change, altering the entire culture of an IT department and, even the organisation itself. Getting people to buy into these changing processes is critical to success, which is why top-down executive support for ITIL is a necessity.

Without this support, ITIL projects will almost certainly flounder. Some organisations have also complained that the ITIL library can be so extensive that it seems too complicated. However, those who have a good understanding of ITIL suggest this need not be the case and compare the ITIL framework to the London Underground map. It may look complex at first, with many different coloured lines, and a mass of stations. But once you stand back and realise where you are and where you want to be, then it's possible to choose the route that's most convenient and cost effective for you.

7. Key Findings

Research précis

Numara Software has commissioned independent market research over a two year period to better understand the best practice challenges facing organisations today. Below is a summary of the key results from both.

Dynamic Markets Adoption of ITIL and Other Standards – April 2008

Dynamic Markets, independent qualitative research was undertaken in April 2008, providing in-depth telephone interviews, with 30 UK IT professionals, from a variety of industry sectors and organisation sizes.

Key findings:

- Among the random sample of UK organisations there are very low levels of awareness and adoption of ITIL – other standards might be followed, many of which are industry-specific.
- A key way that IT professionals learn about ITIL is through offers of training from training companies or the Internet.
- 10 percent have or are in the process of adopting ITIL. However adoption does not necessarily mean ITIL is used or followed.
- Conversely, some IT professionals are trained in ITIL, but their organisations have not adopted the standard.
- Nevertheless, ITIL and other standards are mostly seen in a positive light, and something that customers value and respect.
- Negative attitudes centre on standards being too much hassle, too costly or just not important enough to spend time on.
- Many comment on insufficient resources to implement such IT support standards.
- A minority think their company is too cutting edge to follow any Government standards.

Extracts from the research:

“I’m not 100 percent sure what ITIL is, but I don’t think we are busy enough to be adopting these sorts of standards yet. We don’t have the resources or the manpower.”

– IT Manager, finance/banking sector

“I don’t think we have got official ITIL qualifications, but we do use parts of ITIL.”

– IT Manager, hi-tech sector

“We follow the standards relevant to our sector and the ones that customers expect, but apart from that... following these standards just looks good.”

– IT Manager, manufacturing sector

“Ideally we could do with some kind of framework, if you like to work around. We don’t do it only because we haven’t got around to doing it yet.”

– Infrastructure Engineer, industrial/manufacturing sector

“Standards are adopted to provide a proven track record, but you are also limited by these when you need to deviate or do things that don’t conform to these standards.”

– Senior Software Engineer, service sector

“For me it is about costs because most of these standards, and there are hundreds of them, involve sending people off on courses.”

– IT Director, service sector

“I think that a good reason for using standards is that it is about processes people can follow, whereas the bad thing is, if there are too many things to follow, you can get tied up with paperwork rather than actually doing what you need to do.”

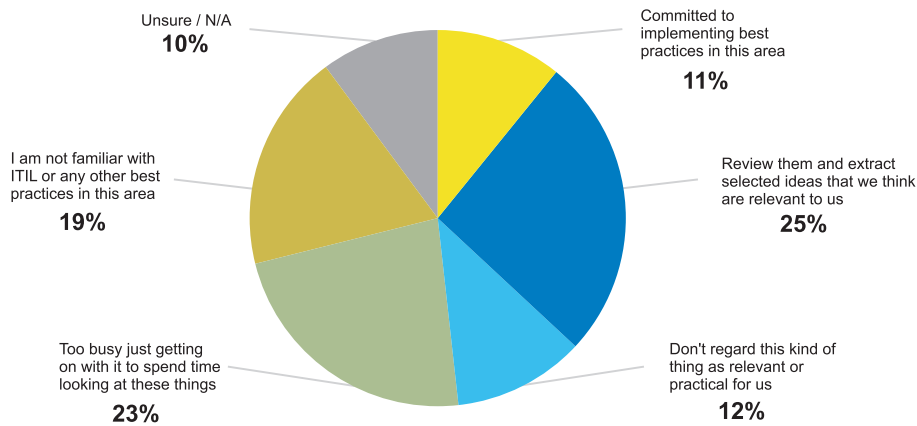
– Business Development Manager, telecoms sector

Freeform Dynamics, 'Delivering Effective IT Support – May 2006

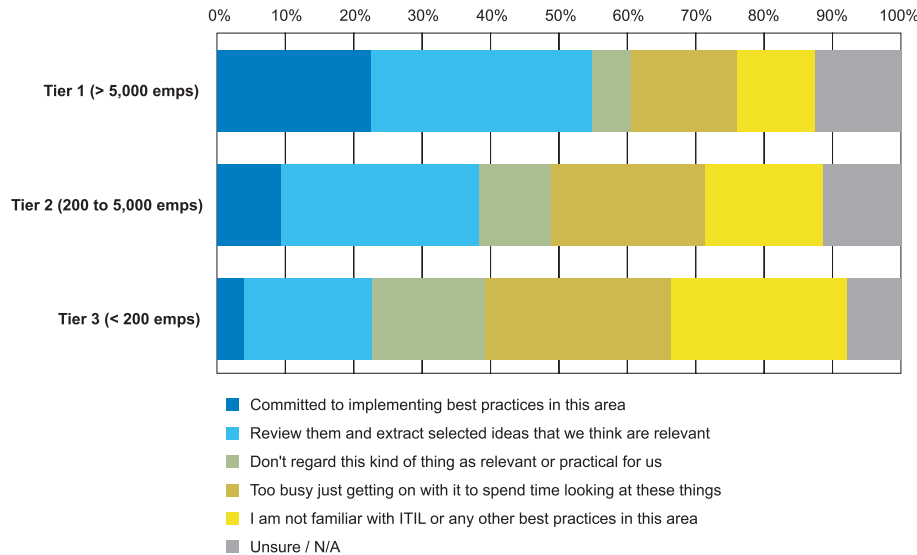
Freeform Dynamic's independent online survey was conducted in May 2006 with a sample size of 2,630 respondents (predominantly IT professionals) across the UK, Europe and USA with a cross section of industries and size of organisations.

Key findings:

What is your organisation's approach to adopting industry best practices in IT support?



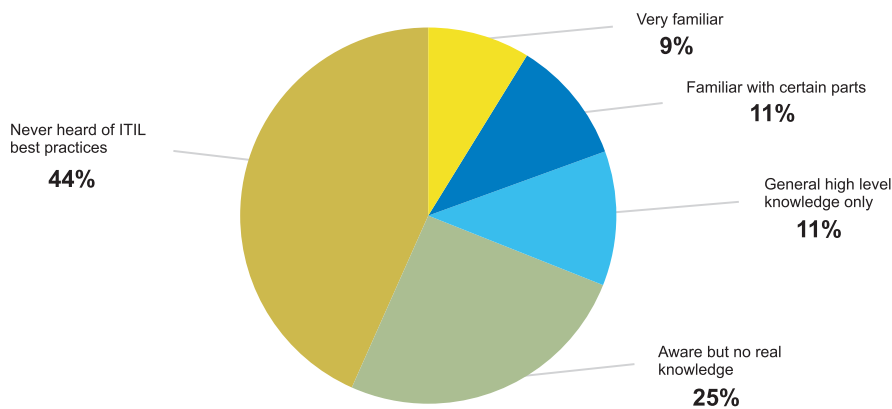
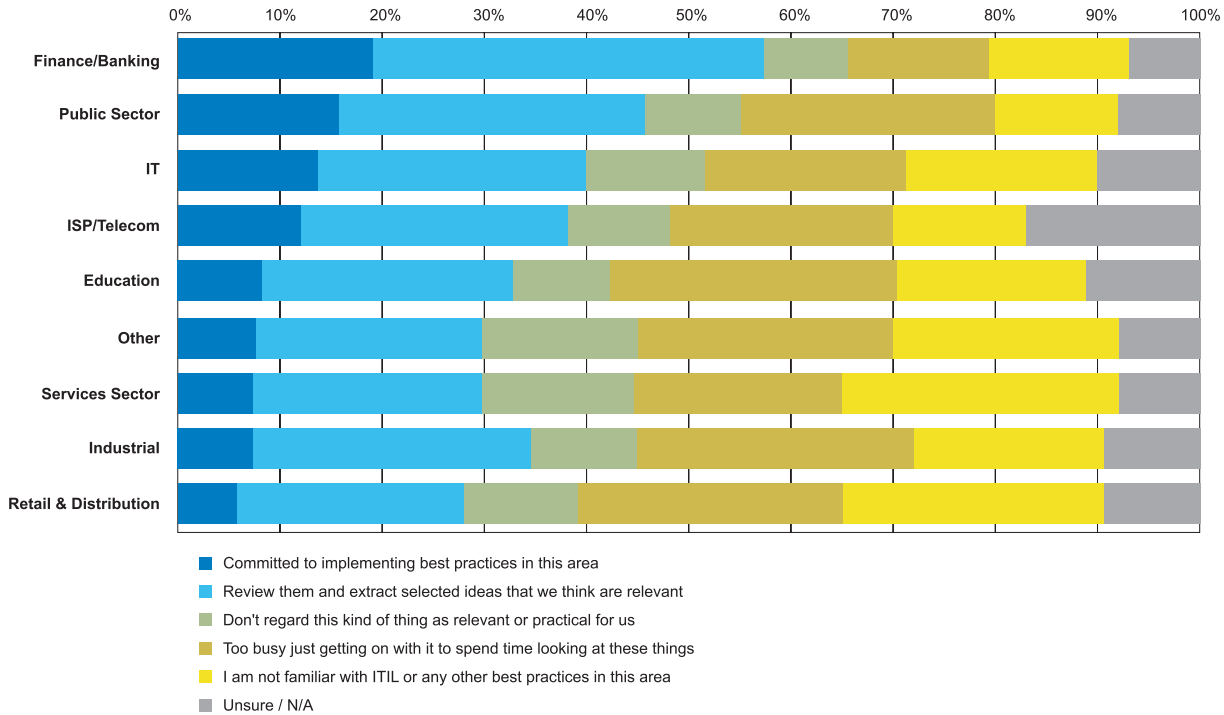
- Highly regulated organisations are more likely to be adopting IT Support best practices.



- ITIL is nowhere near as well known and accepted as many IT vendors, analyst firms and consulting houses would have us believe.

What is your organisation's approach to adopting industry best practices in IT support?

• Highly regulated organisations are more likely to be adopting IT Support best practices.



• ITIL is nowhere near as well known and accepted as many IT vendors, analyst firms and consulting houses would have us believe.

The practical challenges of trying to implement best practices were cited as:

- Understanding it all
- Simply finding the time with the staff available
- Managing buy-in (time and money commitment)
- Finding a good reason to implement rather than for the sake of it
- Tailoring best practice to fit the business and importantly identifying the benefits you want to realise before you implement
- Sometimes strict models like ITIL don't fit the real world exactly.
- Changing processes and procedures without impacting support levels in the process

8. ITIL Do's and Don'ts

The Do's

ITIL Implementation best practice can be defined around three areas: Organisation, Process and Technology.

Organisation

- **Do approach ITIL implementation as part of an organisation-wide strategy.**
ITIL process implementation has significant IT-wide impact; it is not an isolated initiative. To avoid resource and programming constraints, implementation must be aligned with other business initiatives.
- **Do consider the post-ITIL organisation before completing the process design.**
Introducing ITIL-based processes generates requirements for new functions and roles, which could impact the current service management structure. A new structure may be needed to guide and support the new IT organisation.
- **Do engage, engage, engage.**
Implementing ITIL impacts all the organisation's employees. Engagement, communications and training are key to success: from the initial engagement of senior stakeholders to manager-level ITIL training.
- **Do set realistic expectations about benefits realisation and establish a baseline from which to monitor improvements.**
Change within any organisation takes time and implementing ITIL is no different. Implementation of ITIL focuses on improving customer service and as processes mature, the subsequent ROI will be recognised.

Process

- **Do identify and deliver quick wins.**
It is important that the organisation achieves, communicates, and celebrates early successes. This buys time for the process implementation and helps gain stakeholder engagement across the organisation. Failure to achieve early success can double resistance to change and halve stakeholder support within six months.
- **Do realise that maximum benefit can only be achieved if the impact each process has on another is understood.**
For effective deployment, the relationship, impact and interdependencies across the ITIL framework must be defined and understood. Close integration and understanding of processes enables the continual flow of timely, critical and accurate information that isolates new areas for service improvement.

- **Do prioritise process selection based on current maturity; but don't bite off more than you can chew!**
It is important to take a holistic view of ITIL implementation, but it is not imperative to implement all processes concurrently to realise operational improvements and a significant ROI. Processes should be selected based on the benefits sought by the organisation and the ones that drive the most business value.
- **Do use success as a springboard for further improvement.**
Implementing ITIL is a strategic commitment that takes years to fully implement with many different parts of the IT organisation required to change. So it is important to implement a programme of continuous improvement that drives further improvement, rather than assumptions that the job is done, with the risk of slipping back into old habits.

Technology

- **Do combine process and tool activities from day one as part of a single solution approach.**
Implementing ITIL is not just about evaluating and revising processes, it is about change: changing the way people work and are rewarded; changing technology platforms; and changing behaviour across an entire organisation.
- **Technology is an important aspect of ITIL.**
Selecting the right technology platform is key to enabling the organisation to install and support best practice processes. Businesses change rapidly and an organisation should seek solutions that are needs-adaptive and can be aligned and realigned to the business as it evolves.

The Dont's

- **Do not treat an ITIL implementation as an IT project; it is an organisation change project.**
IT organisations make the mistake of following their own Change and Problem Management processes and fail to see a wider-world view.
- **Do not have an imbalance between strategic efforts and short-term wins.**
Organisations planning their IT service management strategy must balance short-term wins with building their process foundation.
- **Do not focus on one or several ITIL processes; instead focus on all service support and delivery processes.**
Organisations must have an overall view of where they want to be while planning and implementing processes and activities to ensure successful operations and relationships.
- **Do not over-design ITIL process solutions.**
Paying too much attention to the detail of a solution could make the relationship of a process obsolete as your implementation matures.
- **Do not put too much emphasis on process maturity as a goal or end state.**
Continually measuring and monitoring progress and performance is always good practice throughout an ITIL implementation.
- **Do not treat ITIL implementation as a one-time project.**
Implementing IT Service Management is a continuous improvement programme, not a project in itself. Organisations who start; measure; and refine will continuously improve.



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