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Integrated Service Management: The Magic Elixir Of ITSM

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Introduction

The IT Service Management (ITSM) discipline is a set of specialized organizational capabilities that provide value to customers in the form of services, with ITIL® being *the* best practice to solve all IT service delivery issues.

As the competitive market began to transform at a never-before-seen pace, IT departments were struggling to keep up with demand. Simultaneously, IT professionals were faced with the introduction of new best practices such as DevOps, Lean, and Agile, with each claiming to be the next new best thing. With so much happening, it was no longer easy to identify a solution based on a single method or framework that would keep IT afloat.

However, not all is lost, as it has been proven that carefully aligning these best practices and using key elements that are ‘fit for purpose’ can result in incredible synergies across the value chain to reach desired business outcomes. Realizing this balance achieves the pinnacle of ITSM known as **Integrated Service Management**.

Integrated Service Management is a natural progression of the interconnectivity that has evolved from various frameworks and accelerators being used in the IT industry. Many organizations have invested in these practices over the years and the great news is that these investments are still sound! You don’t have to pick just one or two practices, they all serve a purpose, you just need to determine what elements to use to meet your specific business objectives.

The best practices of ITIL, Lean, Agile, DevOps – along with the often-overlooked Organizational Change Management that ensures the key resource, people, are on board – work together to strengthen IT processes and deliver IT services more efficiently. The synergistic result of these practices working as a cohesive unit allows an organization to deliver a better customer experience while meeting the ongoing challenges of digital transformation.

In this white paper on Integrated Service Management, we will examine why Integrated Service Management is the “magic elixir” the IT industry needs, and how integration enables businesses to meet customers’ demands by providing superior services in a timely manner.

Challenges

As today's marketplace has become increasingly global, existing business organizations face correspondingly greater challenges to keep up with the competition. The mantra that IT often hears from their business partners is the need to deliver value **better, faster, cheaper**. Just some of the challenges that IT can face when trying to achieve this goal include:

- **Digital Agility:** New built-on-the-web app-enabled brands come to market with ground-breaking and disruptive products much more quickly than it takes most brick-and-mortar businesses to accelerate their speed to market or achieve organizational agility and innovation.
- **Internal Challenges:** In addition to the external pressure from competitors, organizations also face internal challenges. They have accumulated technical debt and bloated processes over the years, as well as old ways of thinking, including silos of specialization.
- **Misplaced Blame:** Despite investing in new technologies, organizations often struggle to ensure the frameworks or quality systems are properly implemented. When they fail, it is often the new methodology or technology that is blamed – instead of recognizing that a lack of understanding of the framework and how it is applied is the reason.

Recognizing Synergies

We have already mentioned a number of popular best practices available today for IT managers to leverage. Each framework has a defined set of capabilities as a reference model for effectiveness, while quality systems focus on capabilities to ensure they continually evolve and remain relevant to meet current and future needs. They may have different goals but are mutually beneficial and symbiotic.

Rather than relying on any one framework or quality system to magically improve the end-to-end value chain, organizations need to put their investments in process improvements that will be sustainable and applicable over time and ensure continual progress.

The key to this is *integration*. With Integrated Service Management, organizations will discover the right blend of principles, processes, practices and methodologies that ensures how the systems can, should and need to work together to recognize synergies.

Integrated Service Management

Process or capability frameworks such as ITIL, Agile, COBIT®, etc. draw on the premise that it's easier and faster to adopt and adapt an existing reference than to create or invent one from scratch. Similarly, the goal of a quality system such as Lean, Six Sigma, TQM, etc. is to focus any capability on the need to continually evolve and remain relevant to meet current and future needs.

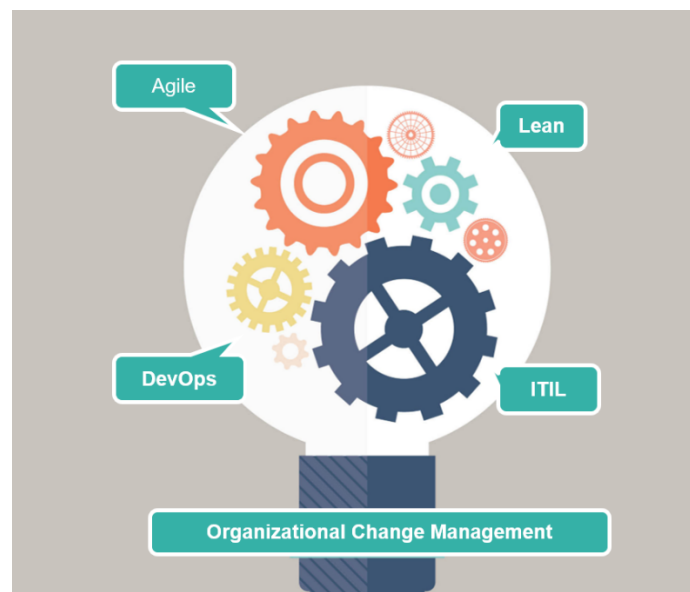


Figure 1: The gears that run the Integrated Service Management machine

Each of these frameworks and/or quality systems individually contribute to improving the delivery of business value and, when properly integrated, they function as a synergistic whole. Proven ITIL capabilities and Lean, Agile, DevOps and Organizational Change Management practices can work together to enable successful outcomes and increase business value.



This is the basic tenet of Integrated Service Management – adopt the right elements of a best practice suited to meet your business needs, then adapt them to optimize their value, recognize synergies and then leverage them across the value chain.

Let's take a look at a sample strength of each discipline:

- **ITIL** provides the necessary foundation and structure for the underlying processes.
- At the center of the **Lean** philosophy is a never-ending focus on perfection and continual improvement.
- **Agile** creates a culture of increased collaboration and flexibility for project management while balancing an increasing speed of value delivery.
- **DevOps** emphasizes transformational leadership, self-organizing teams, communication and sharing, and automation. DevOps also promotes experimentation and innovation to support the goal of continuous delivery.
- Under **Organizational Change Management**, any organizational transformation needs to be approached as a people transition. At the heart of ITSM are the people having the right roles, competencies and skills to create value.

Conclusion

When these frameworks and quality systems function as a cohesive whole, it gives IT organizations the “magic elixir” to help keep up with the demands of the business. Some of the first steps to take towards this Integrated Service Management journey include:

- Understand the business goals and objectives of your company
- Identify the challenges limiting your IT organization's success in providing value to business partners
- Start thinking of IT as providing a service rather than just technology
- Learn more about how to make the best of the best practices work together to deliver enhanced business value throughout the organization better, faster and cheaper!



Want To Learn More About This Subject?

- Attend the [Integrated Service Management Essentials™](#) certification course and learn how Lean, Agile, DevOps, ITIL and proven organizational change management principles work together to enable successful business outcomes.
- Attend the [Integrated Service Management Overview™](#) course and learn the essential knowledge needed to adopt new practices and deliver business value throughout the organization.
- Attend [Pink19](#) – the world’s largest gathering of ITSM professionals – which covers today’s most relevant and meaningful subjects, and includes an entire [track](#) devoted to how ITIL, DevOps, Lean, Agile, BRM, and Organizational Change Management all work together to create true business value.

About The Author

Known for delivering high-quality consulting and educational services to his clients, Charlie is regarded as one of the leading experts in ITSM and ITIL. He has many years of experience in the IT industry and is a sought-after consultant and trainer. His expertise and proven success in helping organizations with critical process-related initiatives – such as process design, maturity and implementation, strategic planning, operations and continual service improvement – ensures Charlie is a frequent speaker and presenter at key industry events, conferences and associations.

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