

The Role of Service Request Management

Rick Leopoldi



Overview and Introduction

A primary objective of many organizations today is revenue growth, while cost containment remains a high priority. In addition, most organizations expect to be able to strategically transform their enterprise to become more responsive to customer demand while accommodating the launch of significant transformation initiatives within a tactical horizon. Many executives believe a major barrier to change is limited internal skills, capabilities and leadership to manage the transition.

There has been and will continue to be a major thrust by many organizations to strive for ways to increase productivity beyond that delivered by traditional approaches to make their businesses more secure, their IT infrastructure more competitive and to transition evolutionary change needed to meet a whole new standard of corporate governance standards.

Given these pressures to innovate, most organizations realize the desire to do this on their own terms that includes the leveraging of vendor partnerships and the necessity of investigating where they are investing their time, energy and resources so their issues can be addressed one step at a time, with results delivered incrementally.

There is an increasing demand from business areas looking for new ways to achieve growth, productivity and an optimized technology environment aligned to the business. This is typical of a demand driven business model that is fundamentally more horizontally integrated, flexible and responsive to achieve greater competitive business value. Companies that look to improve their business processes and work to get them integrated end-to-end are moving the farthest along to enable their business to respond with greater agility and adaptability and be more competitive.

This orientation puts an increased focus on meeting the needs of the demand driven business side of an organization with an IT service provider supply driven orientation that has the ability and capability for IT to deliver services that meet these business requirements.

In this demand and supply driven paradigm, there is a necessity for the business to be able to articulate what its requirements are in terms that IT can understand, provision for, and most importantly manage to. Needs such as these can be satisfied by a Service Request Management process with the appropriate subject matter expertise to use the process, technology to accommodate it, and information to measure, manage, and report on it.

In this white paper, Rick Leopoldi will discuss the necessity for the business to be able to articulate what its requirements are in terms that IT can understand, provision for, and most importantly, manage. Also, how needs such as these can be satisfied by a Service Management process with the appropriate subject matter expertise.

Customers have different internal views and requirements as to where they are investing time, energy, and resources such that the CEO needs:

- Revenue growth with cost containment
- Responsive to business conditions

- Agile to pursue new market opportunities

This places the following challenges before CIO:

- Aligning IT and business goals to grow revenue and contain costs
- Building responsiveness and agility into the organization through IT
- How can IT help enable people and teams to be more effective?

These needs and requirements should best be addressed with a renewed focus on an enhanced set of Supply, Demand, and Service models that includes the areas listed below.

A new vision and approach for funding and delivering IT and business services such that there is a delineated Supply Model that encompasses:

- Tax-driven cost models
- “best effort” service delivery
- SLO’s determined by what IT has or is able to do
- “Silo” platforms and delivery

With a Service Model that is articulated by:

- Service catalog (w/ tiered services) built through aggregated customer requirements
- Business units’ project demand through services
- Services priced through cost model and projected demand
- Business units purchase services from catalog
- Monthly bill for service delivered to business units
- Shared Services and Resource Pools

This in turn drives a Demand Model with the following characteristics:

- Committed technology planning by the line of business - customer accountable
- “Rightsizing” consumption levers
- Visibility based measures - social engineering:
 - Price based measures - carrot and stick
 - Control based measures - pre-set consumption limits

Meeting customer service requests plays a critical role in providing the necessary service to end-users with many companies realizing they need to formalize the request process.

Business customers need a clear, well defined, responsive, and reliable way to make requests that are less than major changes, such as projects, and typically fall outside of items requiring immediate Service Desk resolution such as incidents or problems.

For example, below is a list of some typical problem areas:

- Different ordering mechanisms for different services
- Non-standard service delivery processes across the various NCS sites
- Inefficient hand-offs between delivery teams

- Unnecessary costs incurred due to poor communication between IT and the business
- Metrics are difficult to produce and communicate to the business

Service Request Management addresses these problem areas as follows:

- Single web front-end for ordering all internal services
- Catalog of standardized services
- Automated and consistent processes for Service Delivery built-in
- Ability to rapidly change services to support a dynamic business environment
- Executive dashboard and service metrics

Any Service Request Management solution would be based on an ITIL best practice process framework such that a Service Request Management process would provide the structure for providing clear and well-defined services to end users that includes Service Catalog, Service Level Agreements, and Service Requests.

Scope and Objectives

The goals of Service Request Management are to:

- To promote customer satisfaction
- To attain service level targets for user contact responsiveness and quality
- To articulate and route requests to the service provider accurately and appropriately
- To ensure accurate and timely communication of status
- To close or escalate requests with user consensus

Approach

The Service Request Management Process would be designed in such a way that it would be a formal process is used to manage each user contact and interaction with the provider of IT and business services. This would facilitate alignment of Business Services to IT Services.

The controls would comprise:

- Business Plans
- IT Management Plans
- Corporate and IT Management Ecosystems
- Service Catalog

The inputs would be:

- User Requests
- Catalog Requests
- Portfolio Requests

The outputs would be:

- Completed Service Requests
- Customer Satisfaction
- Financial and Performance Data

THE SERVICE REQUEST MANAGEMENT PROCESS DETAILS

The Service Request Management Process would encompass:

- Establishing a Process framework
- Receive and assess the User Request
- Fulfill or route the User Request
- Monitor and communicate User Request status
- Analyze and report on User Requests
- Evaluate process performance

TYPES OF SERVICE REQUESTS

User Request - A service already contracted for by the business

- Entitlement has been established
- A request for information
- A request for work or routine activity to be performed

Catalog Request - A service offered via the Service Catalog

- Not currently contracted for
- Purchase a defined and offered service
- Change to an existing service
- Evaluated by approval authority

Portfolio Request - A service not offered via the Service Catalog

- A new service to be added to the catalog
- Evaluated by approval authority

SAMPLE OF SERVICE REQUESTS

Facilities

- Office/furniture moves
- HVAC maintenance
- Window repairs

Security

- Building access control
- Pre-employment screening and background checks

Information Technology

- Desktop setup
- Application hosting
- New employee setup

Telecommunications

- Cell phones
- Pagers
- Home office connectivity

Benefits

Organizations expect the IT Service Delivery process provide for services that are defined from a customer perspective. Typically, the terminology and metrics used internally within IT are not meaningful to internal customers with IT operations that tends to be organized around technical, functional data and existing metrics that tend to be related to infrastructure and systems management components.

Typically, effective Service Catalogs define services and metrics in business-relevant terms such that business-relevant services tend to be bundles of IT service activities that support business processes and business-oriented metrics tend to be expressed in terms of financial or productivity impact on the business

In general customers do not want to think about the service provider. Customers want a Service Catalog to be available when they want to obtain services to accommodate when they need something, or want an update on a service request and when they review budget allocations or charges or to make sourcing and budgeting decisions.

IT Benefits

- Alignment with Demand
- Demand Planning
- Aids Communication
- Enforceable Standards
- Standard Delivery Processes
- Process Governance
- Costs Visibility
- Continuous Improvement

Business Benefits

- Services Meet Business Needs
- Cost Transparency
- Service Support
- One Stop IT Shopping
- Service Level Reliability
- Spending Controls & Compliance

- Comparison Pricing
- Business Value

SERVICE CATALOG ESSENTIALS

- Defined portfolio of business and IT services provided to internal customers
- Provides business oriented agreements that align services with business needs
- Consolidates demand through a central help desk or self-service capability for all types of services
- Uses standard operational processes to improve efficiency
- Monitors consistent service quality
- Enables continuous improvement through financial and operational measurements and reporting

PROACTIVELY COMMUNICATE BUSINESS RELEVANT METRICS

The Service Catalog can provide a marketing vehicle to communicate what IT does and how well it does it answering the business customers' unspoken questions such as:

- What are we getting from the IT organization?
- How we tell if what we spend on IT is reasonable
- How do our IT operations compare to industry standards or outsourcing alternatives?
- How does IT deliver value to the business?

VALUE TO THE CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS

Through the use of ITIL best practices and implementing an effective service management environment for Service Request Management, the following can be realized:

- Improved on-time delivery of services (SLA adherence), improved organizational scalability, improved asset utilization
- Significant reduction in Help Desk calls
- Improved customer satisfaction (self-service and on-time delivery)
- Reduced reporting and analytics costs
- Hard dollar annual savings

Conclusions

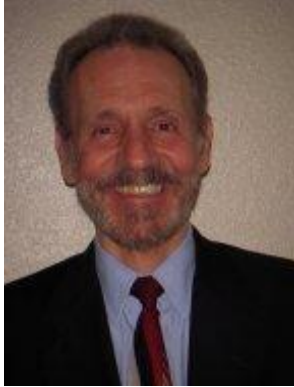
Develop a Service Request Management Process that includes receiving a customer enquiry, through the design of a business solution, procuring the resources and equipment, planning the installation, to the full implementation of the solution and obtaining customer acceptance that they received what they asked for and it works.

This process would accomplish the following objectives:

- Provide a single point of contact where customers can request technical assistance in supplying a solution to a business requirement.

- The request will be registered, referenced, passed to Expert Domain referral groups, progress chased and reported upon at every step of the process.
- The request will be assessed, translated into an action plan, costed, agreed and delivered to time scales and quality.
- The process covers the appointment and management of any third party contractors to the same Service Level Agreements.
- The process will facilitate a primary focal point to include interfaces with other IT infrastructure and systems management processes to include Service Desk operations, Incident, Problem, Change, Configuration, and Service Level Management
- The process interfaces with and links to Procurement, Asset, configuration and capacity Management processes and applies the disciplines to achieve an end-to-end Service Level Agreement.
- The process is designed, measured and managed to consistently deliver services to time and quality with minimal senior management intervention, thereby enabling senior management to focus on continual Improvement.

About the author



Rick Leopoldi, specializes in delivering business oriented consulting service solutions that assess, plan, architect and design, and implement solutions across an enterprise-wide heterogeneous environment and data center operations to align IT to business requirements.

Mr. Leopoldi has been an IT Service Management Managing Business Consultant having more than 40 years of experience in IT. For the past 30 years he has developed and delivered process, methods, and technology infrastructure consulting solutions for major organizations worldwide and specializes in ITIL and ITSM best practices. He has held various senior level positions with companies such as CA, FoxIT, IBM, HP, CompuCom and Fujitsu consulting. Rick is a certified ITIL V2 Service Manager and V3 Expert.

In addition to hosting a premier ITSM website, www.itsm.info, Rick has authored two books. One is on ITSM Implementation and the other an HDI Focus Book on Service Level Management and Service Catalog. In addition, he has published more than 60 articles, whitepapers, and reference papers that appear regularly in ITSMWatch.com, SearchCIO.com, TechTarget.com and TechRepublic.com to name a few. Rick presents on a regular basis at many national and local conferences such as itSMF, HDI, CMG, ASMI, BrightTalk and GMIS. His proprietary ITSM Assessment methodology was licensed and utilized by Proctor and Gamble.

Mr. Leopoldi holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Lehman College in New York and a Master's degree in Business Administration/Computer Science from the University of Hartford in Connecticut.

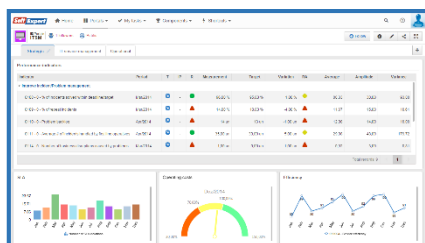


SoftExpert ITSM

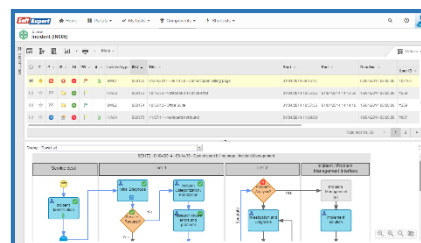
IT Service Management



SoftExpert ITSM is a powerful but easy-to-use, modular and cost-effective ITIL® based software suite for automating and improving IT service requests, incident and problem management, configuration management, and IT human resources.

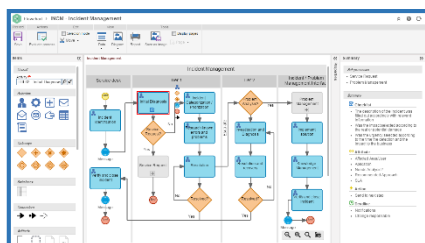


[IT Strategy](#)

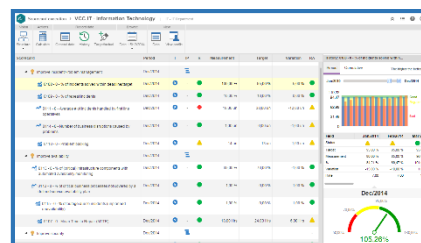


[Service Catalogue](#)

SoftExpert ITSM allows organizations of all sizes and in every industry to improve IT governance, optimize service levels, boost productivity and reduce related costs, aligning IT infrastructure management with strategic business objectives.



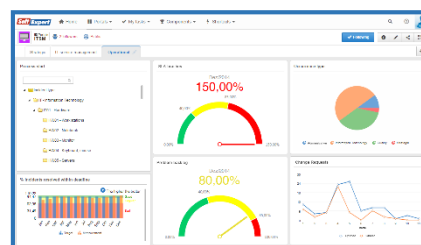
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