

Business Process Framework (eTOM)

For The Information and Communications Services Industry

Addendum W:

Working Together: ITIL and eTOM

GB921 Addendum W

Version 11.2



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Executive Summary

For this document, we are focusing on the overview of how the two frameworks (ITIL and the Business Process Framework, eTOM) can work together. This turns out to be quite workable in practice, but the issues involved can be subtle since ITIL and eTOM do not attempt to address the same set of concerns. Instead, and rather happily, they are complementary and the support each provides is compatible with the other and adds to it. Thus, it is feasible and practical to deliver ITIL “good practice” services using process flows built using eTOM (i.e. the Business Process Framework).

Note that it is certainly not the intention that this somehow supplants or replaces the ITIL view – the whole strategy is to leave each framework with its own status and evolution path. However, the goal is to ensure that there is clear support for ITIL within eTOM, and much has already been implemented in the Business Process Framework in existing releases, where we have embedded a “bridge” across to the itSMF/ITIL specifications for ITIL good practice areas.

This work described in this document has been developed collaboratively by itSMF (the trade body whose members develop ITIL) and TM Forum. As noted in the preface to the previous analysis document for this work (TR143 “Building Bridges ITIL and eTOM”), Keith Aldis, Chief Executive itSMF International and Keith Willetts, CEO TM Forum, jointly commented:

“Both itSMF and TM Forum recognize that both frameworks have strengths and weaknesses and that, if combined, would have major benefits for all the industry sectors involved with delivering convergent services to market. So, we are actively co-operating to put ITIL and eTOM on a converging course, address any interworking issues, and ensure that more integrated support is available to users.”

1. Introduction

Many companies are seeing an increasing importance in the issue of how within their businesses they achieve a better and more effective integration of their IT with the business activity. To assist with this, integration and convergence between ITIL and the Business Process Framework (eTOM) has been a topic of considerable interest for a number of years now.

TM Forum and itSMF (the trade body whose members develop ITIL) have worked together to develop and publish techniques and mechanisms to bring the two frameworks together and this has been applied with success in industry. To that extent, there is already a body of user guidance and example material available to assist those who wish to gain advantage from the complementary strengths of ITIL and eTOM. Additionally, we are currently developing further guidance on this.

For this document, we are focusing on the overview of how the two frameworks can work together. This turns out to be quite workable in practice, but the issues involved can be subtle since ITIL and eTOM do not attempt to address the same set of concerns. Instead, and rather happily, they are complementary and the support each provides is compatible with the other and adds to it. Thus, it is feasible and practical to deliver ITIL “good practice” services using process flows built using eTOM (i.e. the Business Process Framework).

There is not just one way of approaching these issues, and it is not the intent that any viable approach is somehow excluded, since different users may find that one approach works better for them. The themes developed in this document can therefore be taken to represent one such viable approach. It builds on real-world experience in blending the perspectives of the two frameworks that centers on the enterprise-wide view provided by the eTOM Business Process Framework, and then seeks to gain additional insight from ITIL. The mechanisms and techniques discussed have now been applied commercially, as can be seen in Case Studies published on the TM Forum website, so we have here a practical and effective guide to blending the two framework and, underlying this, facilitating the integration of the “two cultures” within companies that is the business need driving this work.

The approach used is to position the eTOM framework as a means of “implementing” ITIL – i.e. supporting the development of ITIL-aligned process-based solutions. Note that it is certainly not the intention that this somehow supplants or replaces the ITIL view – the whole strategy is to leave each framework with its own status and evolution path. However, the goal is to ensure that there is clear support for ITIL within eTOM, and much has already been implemented in the Business Process Framework in existing releases, where we have embedded a “bridge” within Enterprise Management across to the itSMF/ITIL specifications for ITIL good practice areas. This existing work has included definition of how these ITIL good practices would influence and moderate the behavior of the rest of the enterprise where the users decided to apply ITIL with eTOM in the enterprise areas concerned.



This document focuses on explaining the philosophy and methodology for all this, since although the working mechanisms are already documented within the published Business Process Framework material, there are a number of important details that may not be obvious in all the detail, and it is important that the principles are not misunderstood. This document might therefore be thought of as a “primer” on how ITIL and eTOM can be integrated successfully.

2. Addressing the Business Drivers

The backdrop to the whole exercise on finding common ground between ITIL and eTOM is the growing demand to integrate more effectively the IT support within companies with their business focus. This was explored as part of the already-published TR143 “Building Bridges ITIL and eTOM” that was endorsed by both TM Forum and itSMF.

Figure 2-1 shows how Business and IT are becoming increasingly co-dependent within enterprises and how the already-established technique (from TR143) of building eTOM business process flows that deliver ITIL good practice services can successfully address this need and provides a practical method of supporting the merged environment.

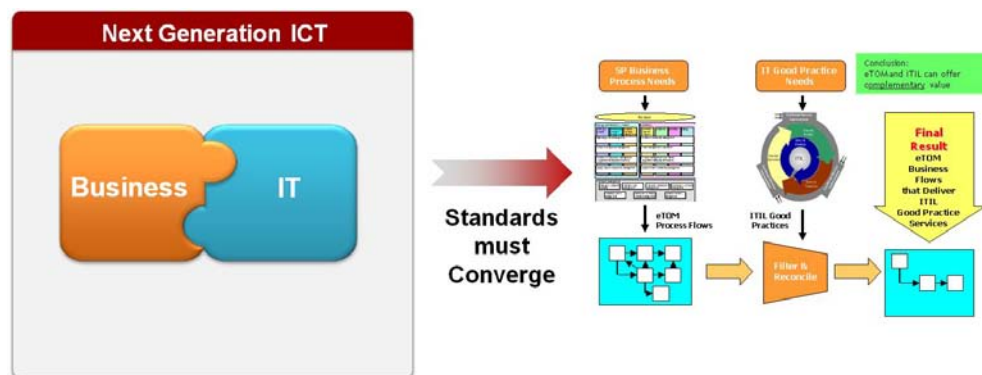


Figure 2-1: Connecting the Business with IT

The eTOM flow approach is shown more clearly in Figure 2-2.

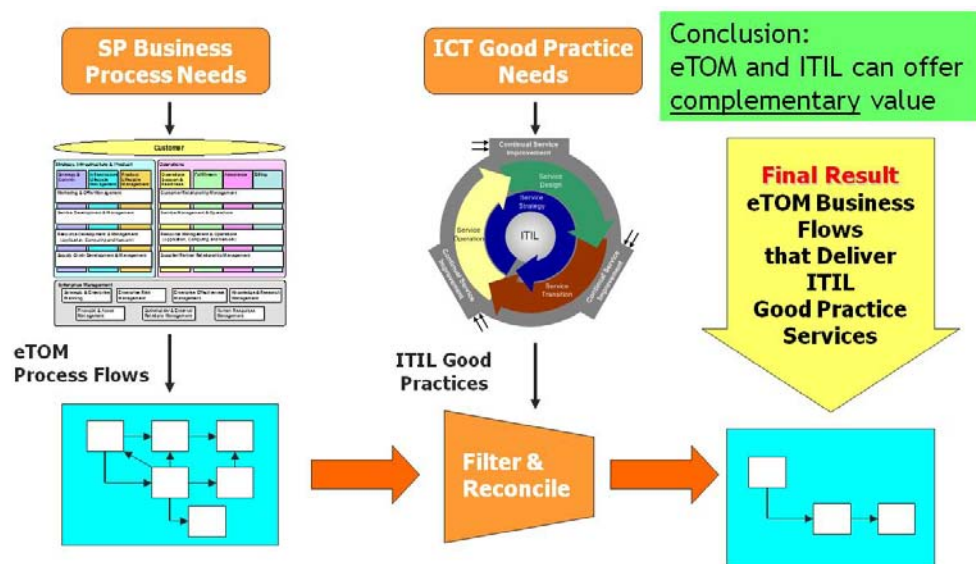


Figure 2-2: ITIL and eTOM – Flowing together

Here, the eTOM Business Process Framework on the left provides a response to the general industry desire to model business process needs, for Service Providers and also enterprises generally. From this a wide range of business process flows can be specified (bottom left), addressing a range of scenarios and use cases, which could reflect a whole variety of policies and practices. In some cases, these could be designed to be aligned with ITIL, and in others, where some users do not choose to employ ITIL, the flows could be designed differently. The eTOM framework, and its process element structure, is flexible enough to support this.

In the middle, ITIL responds to the need for good practices in the ICT domain. At the middle bottom, we have a conceptual “filter” where all the possible process flows that could be built with eTOM are selected so that the subset that are designed to align with ITIL “pass through” and are collected bottom right. Of course, in practice we do not randomly design process flows and then look to see which are useful, but this illustrates how it is possible to collect ITIL-aligned flows that employ eTOM to deliver ITIL support directly. Note that the idea here is to avoid having to juggle both eTOM and ITIL as cohabiting process content within the working environment. Instead, we here use ITIL at the design stage to ensure that eTOM is implementing ITIL directly. This greatly simplifies the management of the process behavior, and is discussed further later in this document.

Note that the bottom line is that there is no intrinsic conflict between ITIL and eTOM. They come from different perspectives, and are different kinds of artifact (see Figure 2-3), but offer complementary strengths and are mutually supportive.

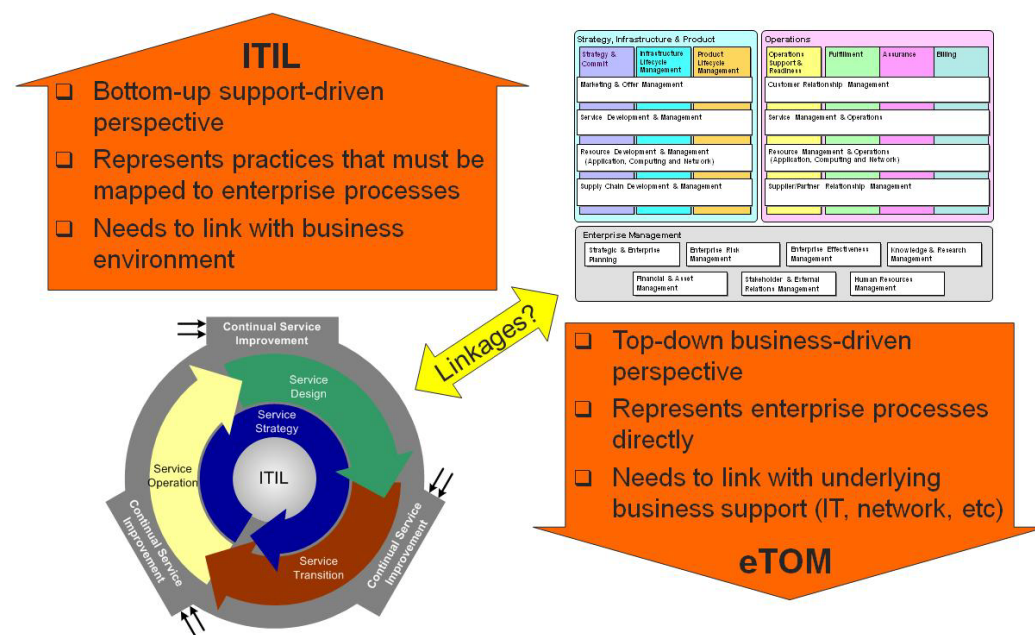


Figure 2-3: Contrasting the ITIL and eTOM Frameworks

3. Methodology for Integrating ITIL with the Business Process Framework

3.1. Good Practices and Enterprise Process Structure

The Business Process Framework structure that we have already seen in earlier diagrams, is shown in Figure 3-1. Here the three major “Level 0” process elements (e.g. Operations” are decomposed into the next level, Level 1, as indicated.

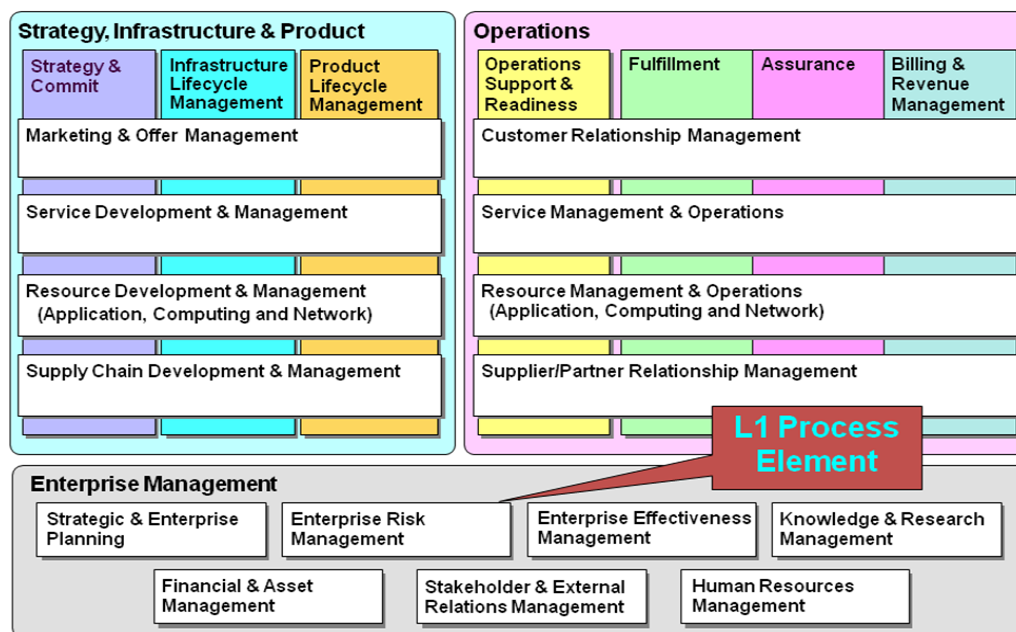


Figure 3-1: The Business Process Framework

Each of these Level 1s can be further decomposed and Figure 3-2 shows how this is done for the Level 1s within Enterprise Management. As will be seen, a number of the resulting Level 2s are named beginning with “ITIL” (e.g. “ITIL Change Management” shown within the “Strategic & Enterprise Planning” Level 1). These “ITIL” level 2s are highlighted in red for emphasis. Note that all these ITIL Level 2s were introduced in Release 8.0 of the Business Process Framework.

There is a fundamental difference between these new ITIL Level 2s and the remainder of the eTOM process elements, and it is central to the mechanism which allows eTOM and ITIL to co-operate. All the 14 ITIL process elements within Enterprise Management represent “good practices”. ITIL positions itself as a set of Good Practices, and this has a significant impact when applying ITIL within an enterprise. Specific good practices will be applied in various areas of the business, according to the choice of the user concerned. There is therefore a need (sometimes not fully recognized) to map

the good practices into the enterprise area concerned. This is important as such mapping will typically involve several enterprise areas with a different, specific mapping in each case.

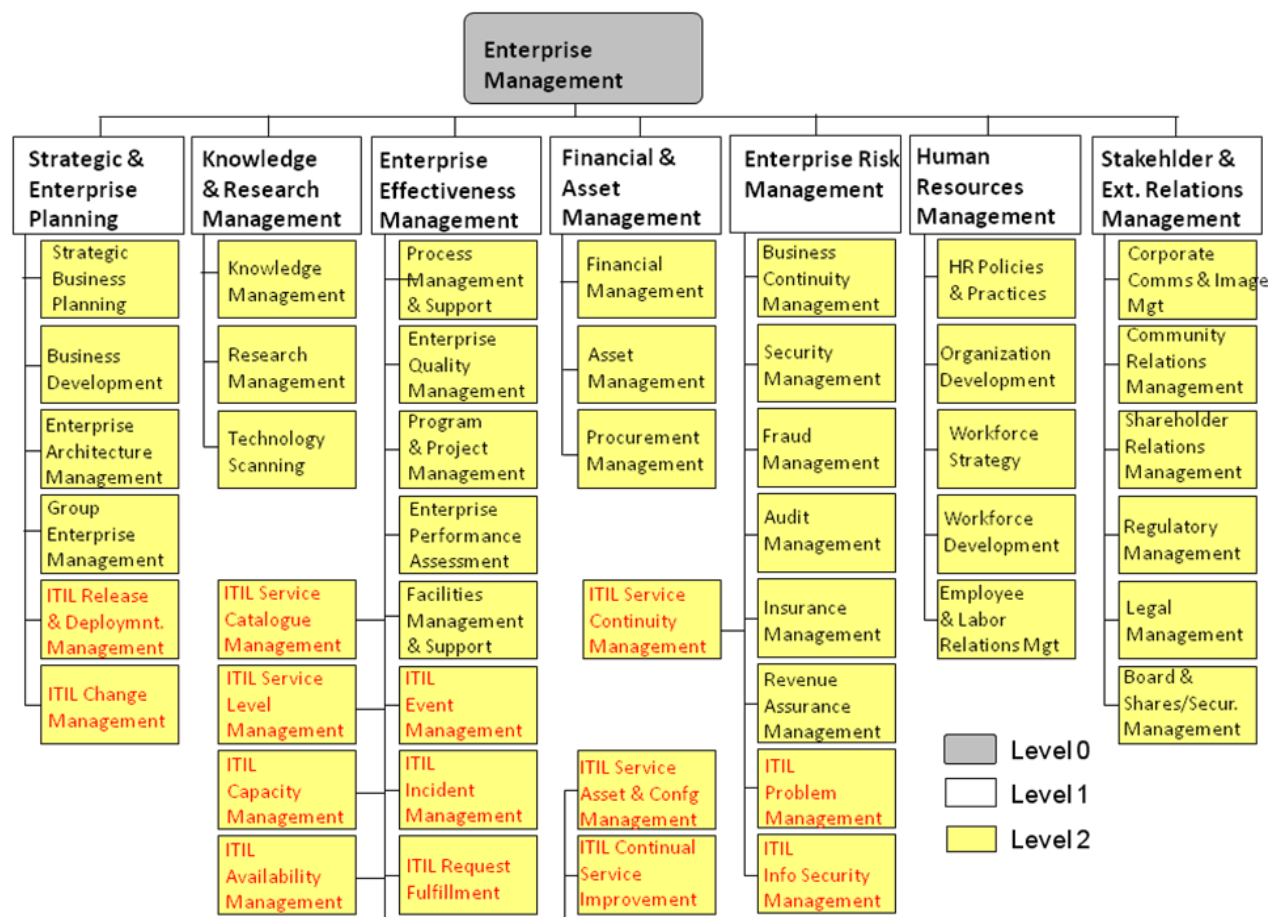


Figure 3-2: Enterprise Management Level 2 Process Elements

This results in the need to acknowledge that the ITIL process elements are good practices and are not directly enterprise processes that focus on a specific enterprise area. This is handled in eTOM by introducing the concept of a “Process Context” for each process element. The Process Context for each of the 14 ITIL Level 2s states:

This process element has a different status from many elsewhere in the overall Business Process Framework. This process is not directly instantiated within the enterprise but represents a corporate policy that, where applied, guides the operation and behavior of other process areas. Note also that some enterprises may choose not to use this process for guidance, which does not invalidate general alignment with the Business Process Framework (although clearly, in such cases, alignment with this specific process would not apply.)

So, this process context supports the role of ITIL as good practices that are used to moderate or influence the way that the enterprise carries out specific activities (e.g. change management). Note that it is not the intent that eTOM “absorbs” ITIL in this. These ITIL L2s represent a “bridge” across to

the separate world of ITIL documentation and experience. Only a minimal outline definition is provided within eTOM for each ITIL L2, with a pointer to itSMF and ITIL for the real detail.

Figure 3-3 shows the 14 ITIL good practice areas that are now represented as L2 process elements, and indicates how these map into the major ITIL lifecycle areas (Service Design, Service Transition, etc).

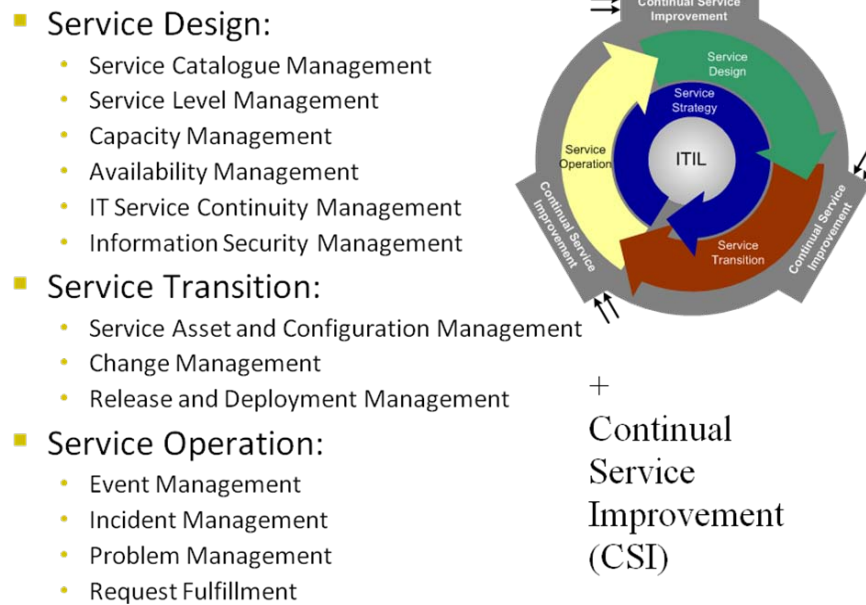


Figure 3-3: ITIL Good Practice areas now represented directly in the Business Process Framework

To be clear again on the different philosophies of the eTOM Framework and ITIL:

- eTOM can be viewed as delivering a business-focused view of enterprise-wide needs, expressed through a set of process elements that can be linked in process flows to visualize end-end activities, in a way that is neutral to how downstream system and implementation concerns will be addressed. The eTOM view covers all areas of enterprise process within a common structure (the eTOM Framework), and then - as a further step by the user in applying the eTOM Framework – the processes are instantiated into an organization on a case-by-case basis.
- ITIL can be viewed as delivering an IT-focused view that responds to these business needs through a set of IT-oriented “good practices” covering some, but not all, important aspects of business activity. These good practices are expressed through process steps/sequences and general organizational responsibilities, and also recognize system and implementation aspects that then arise. The ITIL view thus covers selected areas of good practice, that can be linked to show dependencies and interactions, but which must then be mapped by the user into the enterprise in terms of specific processes and other aspects (note that eTOM already does this), and these in turn are then instantiated into an organization on a case-by-case basis.

The ITIL and eTOM viewpoints can be seen almost as orthogonal:

- eTOM represents specific business processes that map directly into an organization
- ITIL represents practices that may be adopted in one or several areas of an enterprise, but must first be mapped into specific processes within the organization

Each viewpoint can support and enhance the other. ITIL specifies the approach (i.e. good practice or policy) but not how this is applied in each area of the enterprise, while eTOM is neutral on the specific approach to be used but specifies how each area of the enterprise can play a part. So, why not combine the best of both?

Building on this, within the definition of each of the ITIL Level 2 process elements there is a list of the enterprise process elements that may be influenced by that ITIL area. This provides a basis for the optional use of ITIL, since not all users will choose to apply ITIL good practices, or may not choose to apply all of them in all areas of their business.

For example, within the ITIL Change Management L2 in Enterprise Management, we find a number of such “Process Impacts”. As an example, we find one of the process impacts listed is for “Service Capability Delivery”:

Where ITIL Change Management is employed as a guiding mechanism, then the Service Capability Delivery processes operate in line with this, so that they are then aligned with the ITIL approach. The Service Capability Delivery processes work with ITIL Change Management to plan and deliver changes within business services, which typically includes IT services.

So, for this example, where a user decides to employ Change Management in line with the ITIL good practice, and then to apply it within the business in areas of the enterprise involving eTOM’s Service Capability Delivery process element, then this guidance provides assistance on this. Support is provided for an extensive list of impacted process elements throughout all the ITIL L2s included in Enterprise Management.

It will be recognized that the explanation above emphasizes that although ITIL process elements have been positioned within Enterprise Management this does not mean that ITIL only affects the Enterprise Management area. On the contrary, ITIL’s influence is pervasive in the enterprise and thus in eTOM. Of course, as ITIL is not a whole enterprise view (which eTOM is), there may be a few areas where ITIL is not involved, and as has already been made clear, individual uses may not choose to use ITIL in all possible areas of their business. However, it will typically also be used widely in the Operations and Strategy, Infrastructure and Product areas of eTOM.

Figure 3-4 provides an overview of where the various areas of ITIL can link with the enterprise-wide view of eTOM. The linkages indicated are then explored in more detail within the “Process Impacts” material included within the definitions of the ITIL L2s in Enterprise Management (as described above).

Figure 3-5 shows this concept pictorially. Here the potential influences/impacts from ITIL Change Management are illustrated, and we can see that these extend widely beyond Enterprise Management. A similar view applies for the other 13 ITIL L2s, and is documented for each of these within the Business Process Framework documentation for the process decompositions.

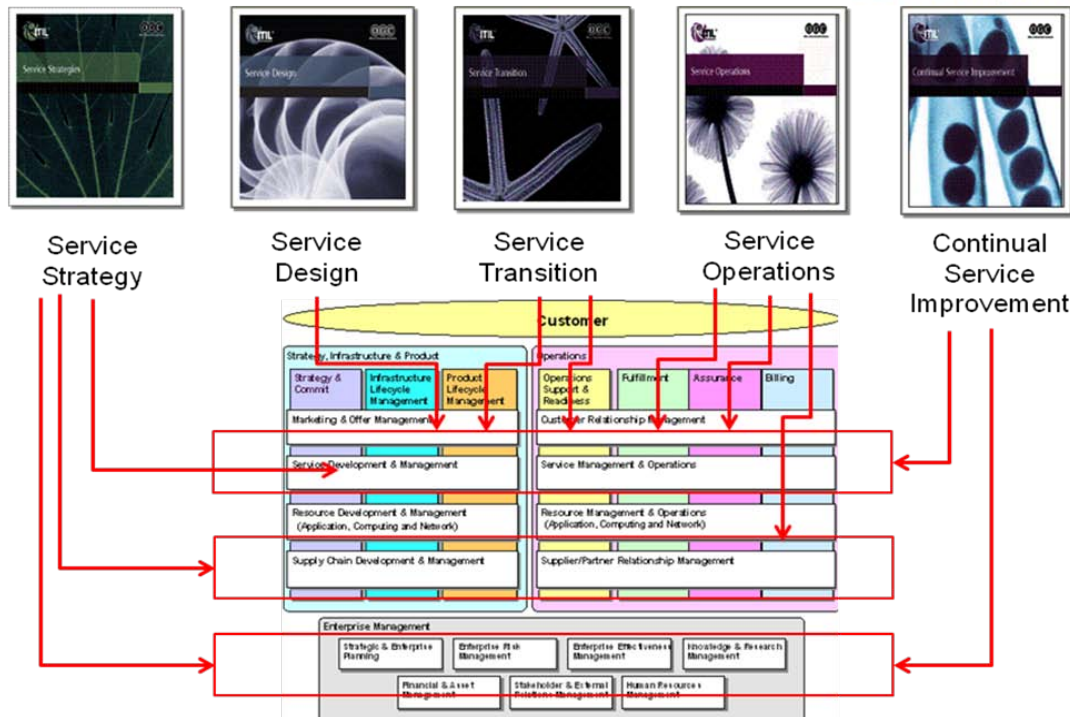


Figure 3-4: ITIL Touch Points in the eTOM Enterprise-Wide View

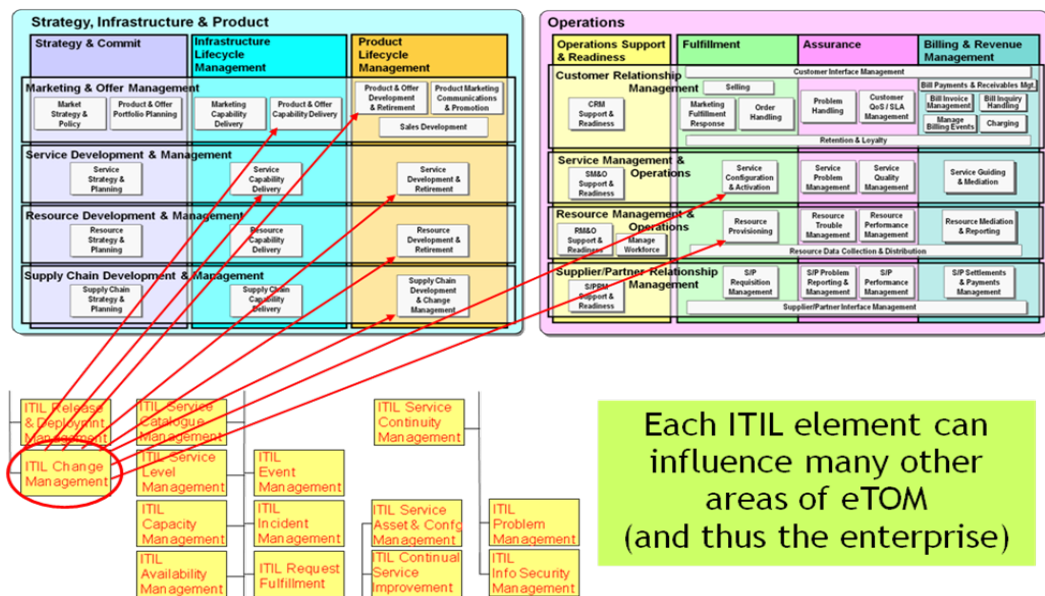


Figure 3-5: ITIL Touch Points in the eTOM Enterprise-Wide View

3.2. Process Flows

As indicated earlier, the interaction between ITIL good practices and the enterprise processes modeled in the Business Process Framework can be seen in practice through process flows. This reflects the ITIL definitions that focus on the steps needed in aligning with the defined good practice.

Figure 2-2 showed the mechanism for this and the idea that eTOM business process flows can deliver ITIL good practice services. This is repeated below as Figure 3-6 for easy reference.

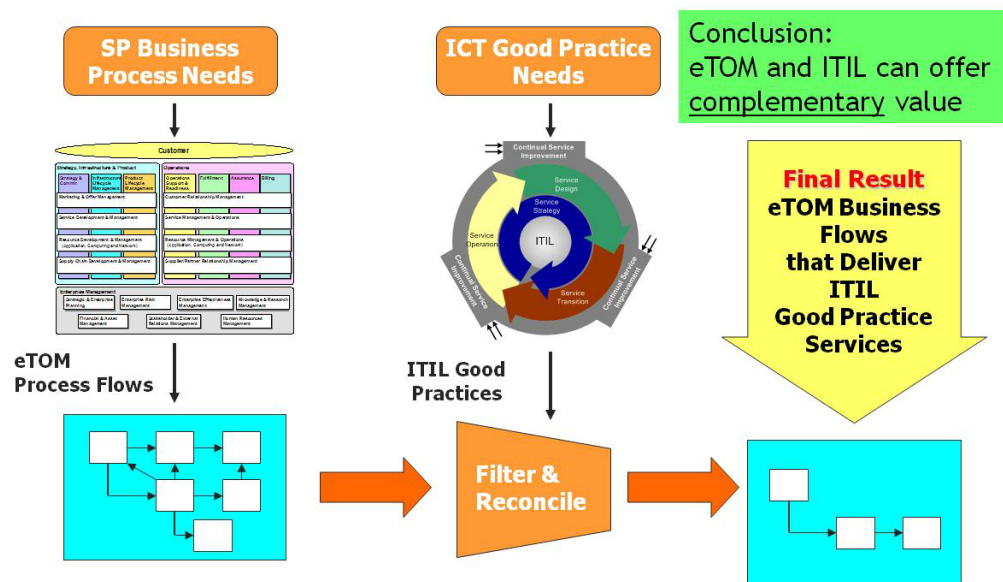


Figure 3-6: ITIL and eTOM – Flowing together

Worked examples based on this eTOM process flow approach have demonstrated the viability of this mechanism, and have successfully developed eTOM flows that implement the selected areas of ITIL.

In Figure 3-7, we see a small example where ITIL Change Management is being applied in the area of enterprise concerned with resource changes (e.g. here we are managing change associated with developing a software bug fix).

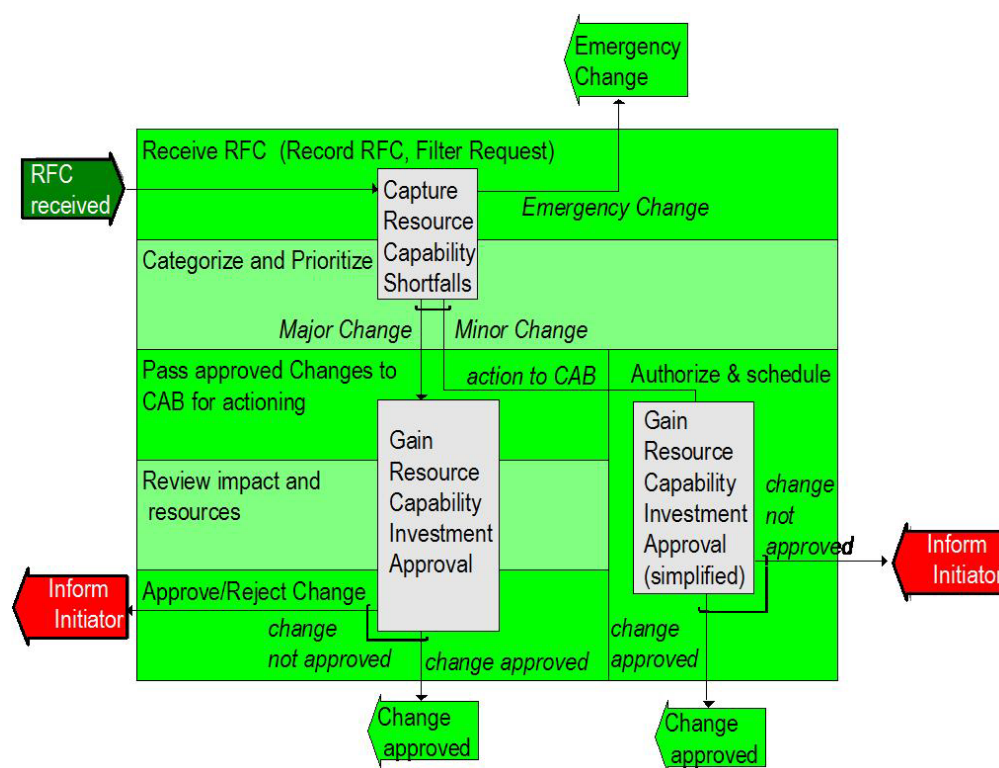


Figure 3-7: Example - Implementing Change Management with the Business Process Framework

The green “swimlanes” (e.g. Categorize and Prioritize) represent the defined steps in ITIL Change Management. The white foreground process elements (e.g. “Gain Resource Capability Investment Approval”) are Level 3 process elements as published in the Business Process Framework. By inspection of the scope and content of the relevant Framework process elements, we have established in this example that the identified Level 3 process elements satisfy the requirements of ITIL Change Management.

We can take advantage of the flexibility now designed into the Business Process Framework to assist with this. As noted earlier, we have embedded a “bridge” within Enterprise Management across to the itSMF/ITIL specifications for ITIL good practice areas which includes definition of how these ITIL good practices would influence and moderate the behavior of the rest of the enterprise where the users decided to apply ITIL with eTOM in the enterprise areas concerned. Thus, in the example shown in Figure 3-7, we have the opportunity to “tune” the behavior of “Gain Resource Capability Investment Approval” (and other process elements) when applying this in support of ITIL Change Management (or in support of other ITIL areas where this arises for the enterprise concerned). The published Business Process Framework already implements this mechanism, through the use of a “Process Context” that is part of the process element definitions and which allows the “good practice” process elements from ITIL to exercise this influence.

As a backstop, additionally it has always been acknowledged that should we find that some aspect of ITIL is not fully satisfied by eTOM as we design these process flows,



then we can look to enhance and update the eTOM process definitions to address this. This has not arisen while working with the Level 3 detail, but as we are now extending to the new Level 4 process elements that are being defined, we can see that this may be coming into play. This is considered separately in other Business Process Framework documentation.

In case this is interpreted as somehow displacing ITIL or reducing its significance, it should be recognized that what has been described is in fact the normal and necessary mechanism by which the ITIL good practices are translated into specific activity in individual enterprise areas. This arises whether or not an enterprise process framework like eTOM is used. The ITIL good practices must always be applied in individual enterprise areas, and different users will typically not always decide to do this in the same areas of their businesses. When this mapping is made, specific process functionality must be implemented, which will follow the guidance of the relevant ITIL good practice, but which will be specific to the enterprise area concerned.

In the example shown previously in Figure 3-7, we see ITIL Change Management applied in the enterprise area concerned with resource changes (the example uses eTOM of course, but an equivalent diagram/design would still be needed without eTOM, to identify which process areas in the resource area of the enterprise are used to implement the Change Management good practice from ITIL). Now, if the same user also wanted to apply ITIL Change Management for product changes, this would involve the same ITIL steps, and hence swimlanes, but would call upon process functionality in the product area of the enterprise. Thus, a similar but distinct process flow would apply, and what is actually implemented is this enterprise-focused process view that supports the ITIL good practice, rather than the ITIL good practice directly. For illustration, see Figure 3-8 where ITIL Change Management is being applied for changes in product development. Here, the Level 3 process elements in the flow are from the “Product & Offer Development & Retirement” area of eTOM, whereas those in the Figure 3-7, resource focused, example are from the “Resource Capability Delivery” area.

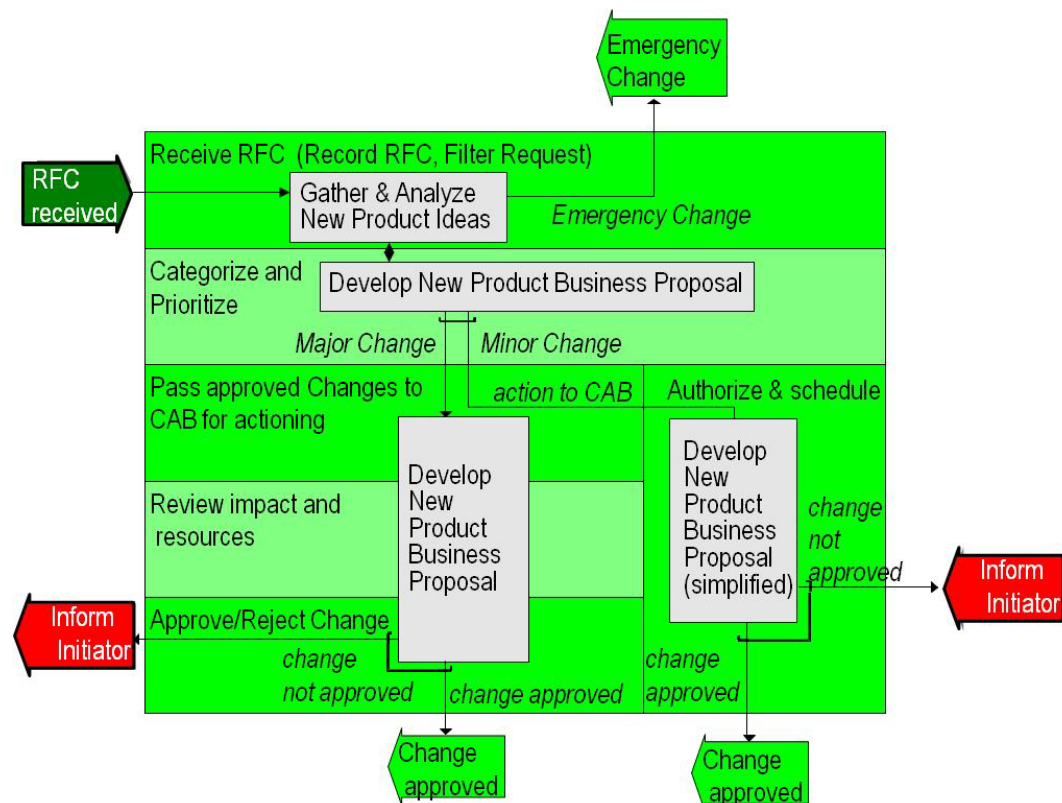


Figure 3-8: Example - Implementing Change Management for Product Development

So, in general applying ITIL within the enterprise will involve translating the good practice “policy” into practice by mapping this to specific process detail in one, or several, process areas within the business, according to the needs and intent if the user concerned. Different users may apply each area of ITIL in different areas, with each requiring the sort of defined process flows shown in the examples.

Note that one major benefit of linking ITIL and eTOM is that eTOM provides the ready-made enterprise-wide process view against which ITIL can be easily mapped, using the techniques shown.

4. Administrative Appendix

This Appendix provides additional background material about the TM Forum and this document.

4.1. About this document

This is a TM Forum Guidebook. The guidebook format is used when:

- The document lays out a 'core' part of TM Forum's approach to automating business processes. Such guidebooks would include the Telecom Operations Map and the Technology Integration Map, but not the detailed specifications that are developed in support of the approach.
- Information about TM Forum policy, or goals or programs is provided, such as the Strategic Plan or Operating Plan.
- Information about the marketplace is provided, as in the report on the size of the OSS market.

4.2. Document History

4.2.1. Version History

Version Number	Date Modified	Modified by:	Description of changes
11.1	Sep 2011	Mike Kelly	first issue of document
11.2	Oct 2011	Alicja Kawecki	Minor cosmetic corrections prior to web posting and ME

4.2.2. Release History

<This section records the changes between this and the previous Official document release>

Release Number	Date Modified	Modified by:	Description of changes
11.5	Sep 2011	Mike Kelly	first issue of document

4.3. Acknowledgments

This document was prepared by the members of the TM Forum Business Process Framework (eTOM team. Mike Kelly, TM Forum, acted as editor.

A wide variety of individuals and companies have been involved in the eTOM/ITIL work that is overviewed here, through both TM Forum and itSMF.