

How Much ITIL Does Your Organization Really Require

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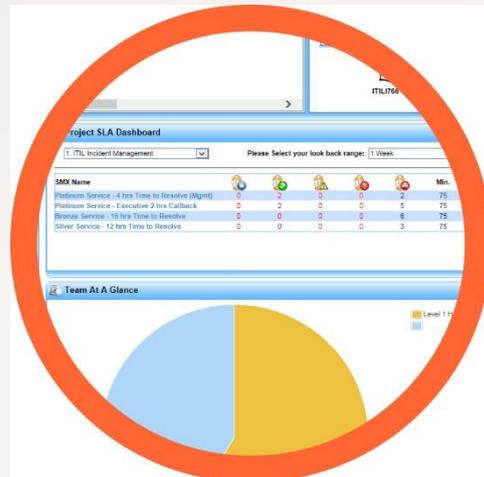
ITIL has become more widely accepted and many organizations have adopted the framework. Larger organizations were the early adopters of ITIL, more recently small to medium sized businesses are implementing ITIL and realizing the benefits of documented, streamlined processes. In this document we'll discuss;

- Why ITIL has become so prevalent within Information Technology;
- With this prevalence should you implement ITIL;
- If ITIL fits your organizational needs how to best approach an implementation

Why is ITIL so prevalent?

Companies depend on IT. Problems with hardware, software or access to corporate systems can result in a significant impact to the performance of employees, departments or even the company. ITIL was developed to achieve better quality IT services through the efficient and financially responsible use of IT resources. ITIL also allows IT organizations to concentrate on the services required by the customer, rather than focusing on technologies.

For example, an upgrade of business-critical software can have a significant impact on the organization if it is not coordinated and managed correctly. Imagine that a business-critical application is upgraded and the new release was not properly tested. The service desk stresses out as many users log incident requests and cannot do their job. Service desk agents can get very frustrated especially if change, release and deployment processes that could have prevented this situation were in place. This upgrade can cause the service desk to firefight, employees to be unproductive and it can have a negative financial impact on the business. Documented, best-practice processes could have prevented this failure from occurring and the subsequent negative impact.



According to Gartner, companies identified improved customer satisfaction after implementing ITIL. Communication and information flows between IT Staff and customers improved. This immediately caused a reduction of cost. Forrester studies show that over 80% of businesses who implemented ITIL believe it improved their organizational productivity and service quality.

We strongly believe that Service Excellence is the differentiator for any company today. As competition gets stronger and quality of products continuous improve.

Should you implement ITIL?

Reading the above, the answer would be YES. But where do you start?

It's no doubt that you have heard about the failed implementations of ITIL in organizations and pundits stating that it's too cumbersome and complex for most organizations. We believe ITIL can help Large as well as Small organizations. But ITIL should be implemented in a structured way, starting with the simplest processes to prepare the organization.



The actual problem resides in the fact that a tool is purchased that is “ITIL Compatible” (many state they are ITIL Compliant but this is a violation of the ITIL copyright) and everyone expects this to simply implement ITIL in a non-obtrusive fashion. Well... that’s not the case. If your organization is not willing, at the present moment, to buy into ITIL and its benefits, you should start off with a Request Management tool that allows you to grow into ITIL and easily add capabilities as your Service and Client Organizations grow and mature.

Too many times ITIL implementations begin with mapping out a CMDB – the most difficult exercise to tackle – it’s not a quick win and users do not see a direct benefit for a long period of time. In the end it’s your end users that you need to keep happy and productive – the very essence of ITIL. Start with Incident Management (or Request Management) and grow into other processes as needed.

So how can you start?

First of all understand the need for improving the processes and the needs of the organization. Every organization is unique. We see many organizations that try to change to support ITIL procedures. They use the pile of ITIL Books as the bible the company should work against. We believe that ITIL is a theory that provides the framework that can help your organization. It is not specifically necessary to do exactly what ITIL describes. The best practices from ITIL are very useful. Therefore turn it around. Take step back and look at your current organization from the ITIL point of view. Now see where there are quick wins which will help you.

Usually it is wise to start with a Request Management system which will help you to prepare for future Service Management maturity. It is without a doubt that ITIL can help your organization but you must always consider the following aspects as your Service Organization grows:

- What Service downtime is ok for your business
- Identify areas which are more business critical than others
- Look at the different areas and try to come up with an SLA – what is an acceptable recovery time for your organization
- Creating customer value from a service industry perspective (i.e. reduced non-productive time by faster resolutions)
- Running an integrated help desk (single point of contact simplifies the organizational structure and streamlines resolutions)
- Reducing Operational Costs by reducing non-productive time
- Improve availability through integrated processes
- Optimization of resource utilization

Keeping these main points front and centre throughout the entire life span of an ITIL implementation will improve your overall ITIL implementation. For example always considering the point of *Improve Availability through Integrated Processes* when you begin to implement Problem Management following an Incident Management implementation ensures there is sufficient process integration to ensure we can improve availability (**Note:** *always question the process design and implementation plan with the above critical decision points*).

ITIL process implementation

Looking at the above it does not matter if it is a large or a small organization:

1. Usually the best start is to initiate an ITIL implementation with discussions between the business and IT team. Outcome of this will be where ITIL will have the quickest win in order to support the business



2. Second step is that the resources, the service desk, should strongly support this implementation. They should see it as a tool that will really help them do their job better and make their life easier.
3. Third, don't go too fast. We see many organizations want to start with Service Asset & Configuration Management in order to get a better understanding of their assets. This is probably the most difficult and labor intensive area of ITIL and at many organizations results in unsuccessful ITIL implementations. The first start should be a solid incident management process to capture incidents and follow specific steps to solve them and inform your customers. Implement the basics of your SLA as well
4. Be very transparent and open a web portal from day 1 to your end users. Service is communication and information. The better informed the end user is the happier they are. Give them attention! It will help to adopt the complete ITIL framework in your organization.
5. When Incident Management works and the service desk team is used to working with the supporting tool, implement Knowledge Management and open Knowledge base articles to your support team and your end users. Many end users are smart enough to solve issues if they have access to knowledge articles and it will help support agents to solve known issues quicker. When implementing ITIL it is key that you keep the support agent work in your mind. They must adopt it and must feel it helps them. Continuously make their life easier.
6. Processes to follow after these two are Change Management and Problem Management. Both are very good processes to improve your overall stability of the organization and your service desk performance. Try to stay away from complexity and make sure the workflows you use are simple, understandable and are open for flexibility. Sometimes we see change management processes that are so structured and bureaucratic that changes take forever to be implemented.
7. Now you have slowly implemented the core of ITIL with Service Level Management, Incident Management, Change Management, Problem Management and Knowledge Management. It is time to evaluate and improve the processes.
8. When this all works smoothly look at the other ITIL processes starting with Service Catalog Management, Release Management and Asset Management. But only if your organization really benefits from this. Don't just implement because ITIL says so.

A Final Word About IncidentMonitor™



IncidentMonitor enables you to easily adapt to the needs of your organization. With its configuration capabilities and unique project concept you are able to start with

a simplistic linear request management system and grow this over time. We see many implementations start with a simplistic Incident Management approach which simply aggregates all of the out-of-band (i.e. e-mail, chat, web requests, etc.) and in-band data (service requests, incidents, change requests etc.) into a single system for reporting and statistics. Then as the organization matures (by organization we mean your service organization and your end user community) other aspects are turned on (or enabled).



A Final Word About Monitor 24-7 Inc.



processes -- right out of the box. Our goal is to help customers reduce running costs, manage change, implement a fully functional advanced software solution and lower the cost of ownership.

Monitor 24-7 is a Canadian software development organization focused on service management. The software is purely developed by Canadian and Dutch developers. Years of experience and many different customers have brought us where we are today. We believe we have proven ourselves and we are very proud of our flagship IncidentMonitor -- an enterprise service management solution which is being used in many different environments.

- 100% dedication to Service Management since 1999
- Over 250 customers, more than 10,000 licenses sold
- Active in 10 countries

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