Think Services, Not Servers
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Organizations today rely heavily on IT to deliver corporate objectives and strategic goals, while maintaining day-to-day operations. This dependency demands that IT service and support departments reduce costs, manage risks and improve technological and employee efficiency. The tight integration of people, process and technology is a business strategy being adopted to align organizational objectives with IT service delivery. This integration means that IT departments no longer think in terms of servers, but of services provided to the organization and its customers. This change of focus results in a high-quality service that is accountable, transparent and predictable. To achieve business-orientated service management, IT service organizations are modeling service capabilities around ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) best practice guidelines.

**What Is ITIL?**

ITIL, or the Information Technology Infrastructure Library, is a flexible framework designed to guide service organizations with the integration of people, process and technology to develop and deliver quality IT service. However, ITIL does not dictate business processes but instead provides a comprehensive, consistent and coherent set of best practices for IT service management. ITIL promotes a quality approach to achieving business effectiveness and efficiency by using information systems. More formally, ITIL is a series of books that outline a comprehensive set of best practices for IT service management. The OGC (Office of Government Commerce) in the UK developed ITIL in the mid 1980s. The current revision (v3) was published in 2007. ITIL separates the service desk function into two areas: service support and service delivery.

These support and delivery areas consist of a total of ten key IT disciplines. These disciplines are related to organizational objectives to improve service management process and effectiveness.
Customer Service Desk Objectives

High customer expectations and the distributed nature of companies mean that the delivery of a first-class service is fast becoming a true differentiating factor and, without doubt, a major competitive advantage for many organizations.

The service desk acts as the central point of contact between customers and IT service management. This means that all incidents (including other forms of service requests) are handled through the service desk. It is also serves as an interface for other activities such as change, problem, configuration, release, service level and IT service continuity management.

As the operational interface between business and IT, it is imperative that the service desk successfully align technology with the service objectives of the organization. This ensures IT service management continues as a strategic business asset.

Implementing a Service Desk Structure

Needless to say, adopting ITIL to design an organization’s support infrastructure is a critical undertaking, one that should be managed as a formal business project with clear ownership, defined business goals, responsibilities, deliverables and management commitment. Before designing the new service desk, all existing service workflows should be assessed and potential for improvement identified. This process is an opportunity for business analysts to rethink and redesign existing processes and activities in order to increase productivity, add value, and reduce costs. As the shop front for organizations, the service desk serves as a golden opportunity to enhance the customer’s perception of the organization.
**The Service Support Process Model**

**Internal Change Management: Balancing Strategy and Tactics**

The implementation of necessary IT service improvements must strike a workable balance between strategic and practical requirements to avoid any undue staff tension. Strategic thinkers such as the company’s Chief Information Officer or the Financial Controller should keep their focus on service catalogs and costs. Tactical roles such as Service Desk Supervisor and technicians should remain concerned with incident resolution and meeting service level requirements.

The following table outlines the service desk implementation process, balanced between strategic and tactical objectives:
### Steps to a Successful ITIL Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where are you now?</th>
<th>Where do you want to be?</th>
<th>How to move toward the Target?</th>
<th>The Target, Your ideal situation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access existing service desk maturity relative to ITIL. Refer to Maturity Model below</td>
<td>Identify gaps between existing processes and ITIL.</td>
<td>Align people, process and technology.</td>
<td>Demonstrable process improvement in line with strategic goals.</td>
</tr>
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#### Tactical

**Understanding the following:**
- What are your business drivers?
- Who are your IT shareholders, what are their needs and are their needs presently being met?
- What will be the impact to IT organization and business if you do not change?
- What skill sets are currently in place?

**Develop internal change management strategy:**
- Access the organizational impact of combining the proposed people, process and technology changes.
- Obtain the necessary buy-in from key stakeholders.

**Introduce ITIL to Management:**
- Produce ITIL compliant Service Desk System.
- Train all staff to utilize new procedures.

**Quantitative management feedback in the form of detailed metrics and reporting:**
- Business processes understood and controlled.

#### Strategic

**Understanding the following:**
- What are your technology drivers?
- Who are your IT shareholders, what are their needs and are their needs presently being met?
- What processes are currently in place?
- What technology do you have in place?

**Design new service desk workflows:**
- Obtain the necessary buy-in from key stakeholders.
- Obtain the necessary sign-off on new workflows.

**Introduce ITIL to Operational staff:**
- Develop techniques and procedures
- Document system requirements.
- Research tools.
- Train service desk staff to manage new workflows.

**Continuous and repeat improvement:**
- Quantitative feedback.
- Pilot programs and new technology introduced with little interruption.
- ITSM processes understood and controlled.

To avoid conflict and frustration, ample time needs to be taken to build and translate the organizational objectives into process and technology initiatives to balance both perspectives. Collaboration and joint planning between strategic and operational teams will do much to ensure that there is project support across all levels of the organization.
As the service processes are assessed in line with the business objectives and realigned with ITIL guidelines, the technology used to automate and manage these processes also needs to align with IT service delivery requirements. This will guarantee that the service solution selected capitalizes on existing infrastructure and evolves well into the future.

Features to consider when selecting a service desk tool include the central administration offered by fully web-based products. The advantage here is that these solutions include a browser-based GUI with no installations or plug-ins required on the client-side, saving time and money during the implementation process and when changes or upgrades are required. Also, accessing the service desk tool from anywhere over the web gives users the freedom to choose their work environment—be that in the office, out on the road or at home—as user role privileges are not restricted by the place of access.

The ability to integrate with existing infrastructure such as Active Directory or LDAP authentication servers should also be seriously considered. Also, to capitalize on the implementation of a Configuration Management Database (CMDB), tight integration with an asset management tool is required. This will ensure that data stored in the CMDB is always relevant and provides support technicians with a complete picture when responding to customer issues.

On the server side, a multi-tiered design approach will allow the support solution to achieve maximum performance and scalability. Advanced applications such as Novell® Service Desk run on any standard J2EE* or J2SE* server and support multiple instances,
load balancing and clustering. This model also allows the support solution to operate at over five times the speed of competing applications with additional speed gains. This is achieved through the use of intelligent caching and database fetching, which ensures that users have real time access to all information relevant to issues logged with the system.

Implementing ITIL Service Desk Guidelines with Novell Service Desk

Novell Service Desk is a comprehensive ITIL Service support solution that incorporates the core service support processes of incident, configuration, problem and change management, as well as the service delivery process of Service Level Management.

Novell Service Desk’s recommended two-stage approach includes:

- **Phase I.** Implement Configuration, Service Level and Incident Management
- **Phase II.** Progress to Problem and Change Management

The following is a summary of the guided steps for organizations when implementing Novell Service Desk as either a phased or all-in-one installation.

**People**

Adopting ITIL best practices will require a culture change for the organization, in addition to the changes to the service desk process itself. This will require:

- Educating staff about the benefits of ITIL and winning champions to the cause
- Training service desk staff on working with relevant processes
- Maintaining and supporting process improvements through the completion of self-audits

**Technology**

**Setup and Install:**
- Hardware, O/S, RDBMS, Application Server, Web Server, Novell Service Desk application

**Migration of Service Desk data (optional):**
- Perform data mapping between existing and new system
- Perform data migration
- Validate migration

**Integration:**
- Asset Discovery
- Authentication (ADS/LDAP/SSO)
- Mail
- Web Services

**Process: Phase I**

Organizations can fully configure and automate incident management to reflect preferred workflow through the following steps:

- Review current process
- Define objectives
- Create incident management workflow
- Create incident support teams and assign members to relevant escalation layer
- Plan review of process using employee feedback and relevant reporting metrics

Service level management in Novell Service Desk improves internal and external communication for service desk users and assists in managing support requests in a timely manner. In addition, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) within Novell Service Desk can be underpinned by an Operational Level Agreement (OLA) to guarantee that internal capacity meets customer service expectations through the following steps:

- Review IT services offered to the organization
- Establish teams for areas of specialty with relevant escalation layers
- Create a list of services offered by each team and associate with the service catalog
Establish SLAs relative to the business unit requirements and support by appropriate OLAs
Define metrics for measuring efficiency and effectiveness of process
Implement a review/audit program to ensure service levels meet the organizational needs

Configuration management is only effective if the data associated with the core IT operational processes is stored and managed appropriately. To guarantee the validity and accuracy of the CMDB:

- Assign owner(s) to the configuration management process
- Assign accountability for operational repository—setup, ongoing maintenance and support of the CMDB
- Synchronize with third-party asset management and discovery tools (optional)
- Create baselines for CIs
- Plan audit and validation of CMDB data

Process: Phase II
After the initial phase has settled, the processes are rolled out. Problem management is tightly integrated with incident and change management in Novell Service Desk, allowing problems and changes to be created manually from incidents. Furthermore, organizations can customize parameters in the application to allow for automatic detection and escalation of incidents to problem management through the following steps:

- Review current process and set objectives
- Define workflow
- Define team and assign staff to relevant escalation layers
- Define parameters that are to be included in Novell Service Desk, which will allow for auto-detection of problems
- Define metrics for measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the process
- Plan review and audit of process

Change management typically includes defining multiple workflows relevant to the types of changes that are handled by the service desk. To implement change management using Novell Service Desk, complete an audit of the current processes so all change workflows are defined within the application.

- Define change management workflows—identify the types of changes to be handled and how priority is assigned to the change request
- Allocate the roles and responsibilities of the IT support staff within workflows
- Define measurements used to track the efficiency of change implementation
- Monitor/review process by evaluating and reporting on implemented changes

Partner with Novell Service Desk for Superior Service
Novell Service Desk provides a roadmap for organizations planning to implement an ITIL-compliant service desk tool. This roadmap helps organizations avoid ITIL rollout pitfalls, which often plague such deployments.

In general, Novell Service Desk promotes a staged approach to design, configure and implement ITIL workflows. This process allows organizations to incrementally plan and deliver best practice ITIL processes. It also allows time for education, design, integration and implementation of the relevant processes and technology. However, Novell Service Desk can support a one-off full ITIL Service support rollout, if this option is better aligned with organizational needs.

Learn More
For more information about Novell Service Desk or to discuss how Novell can assist you in your service desk project, please visit our website at: [www.novell.com/products/service-desk/](http://www.novell.com/products/service-desk/)
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