



The ITIL Story

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1. ITIL Defined

The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is a set of guidance developed by the United Kingdom's Office Of Government Commerce (OGC). The guidance, documented in a set of books, describe an integrated, process based, best practice framework for managing IT services. To date, these books are the only comprehensive, non-proprietary, publicly available guidance for IT Service Management.

ITIL was conceived in the late 1980s. It was originally initiated to improve IT Service Management at the UK central government, however it is relevant to all organizations; public or private sector, large or small, centralized or distributed.

Today, ITIL represents more than books alone. It has generated an entire industry that includes:

- Training
- Certification
- Consulting
- Software Tools
- Trade Association (*itSMF*)

2. Non-Proprietary

The OGC did not write the entire library. They approached many different organizations -- including Pink Elephant -- for assistance. Editorial boards consisting of industry experts determined the scope of the books. The books were written by one organization and quality assured by others. The OGC performed an editorial function and examined processes presented in the books. They ensured the processes matched any requirements from the ISO9001 quality system to ensure ITIL supported the ISO quality approach.

As a result, the books are:

1. Non-proprietary because the end results are not based on a single person or organization's view of a particular process.
2. Best practice because the books represent the experience of many IT professionals.
3. Written to quality standards because OGC ensured processes met with ISO9001 requirements.
4. Public domain because they are a Crown Copyright.



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3. Concepts Behind The Library

IT service to many organizations is usually provided by an internal department (known as the IT organization) and consists of an IT Infrastructure. The IT infrastructure is a term used to describe hardware, software, procedures, computer-related communications, documentation and skills required to support IT services. These components and their use must be managed -- hence the term IT infrastructure management. Overall, IT services and management of the IT infrastructure is referred to as *IT Service Management*. However, the terms *IT Service Delivery* and *IT System Management* are also commonly used to describe this function.

4. Library Coverage

The first ITIL books were completed by 1995. They cover *functions* of IT Service Management and provide cross-references to other books. Each book can be read and functions applied to organizations, in isolation. However, more benefit is derived from viewing IT Service Management as an inter-related set of functions. In fact, the value obtained from the whole library is greater than the value of the individual books.

Following completion of the first books, OGC initiated further guidance, complementary to the comprehensive *function descriptive* books. These titles expanded the coverage of the library and offered guidance for applying the ideas from the first set in specific environments.

5. Books In The Library

Five sets of books are concerned with the IT service provision and managing the IT infrastructure and *three sets* with managing the supporting environment infrastructure. These sets are described here:

IT Service Provision And IT Infrastructure Management Sets

Two books -- *Service Support* and *Service Delivery* -- describe key processes IT organizations must have in place to provide quality IT services for its customers. *Service Support* reviews a function and the operational processes. *Service Delivery* reviews the tactical processes. These books are described in more detail here:

Service Support

This book describes the related components that provide stability and flexibility for IT services. It deals with identifying and recording IT configuration items, incidents, problems and changes. It covers the following function and processes:

Service Desk (Function)

Service Desk is not a process but a function. The Service Desk's objective is to provide a central point of contact between users and the IT service organization. The book provides guidance about creating and operating a Service Desk to provide an efficient channel of communication between the user community and the IT provider



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- **Incident Management**
The Incident Management process aims to restore normal service operation as quickly as possible and minimize the adverse impact on business operations. This ensures that the best possible levels of service quality and availability are maintained.
- **Problem Management**
The process of Problem Management diagnoses the underlying cause of the incidents identified by the Service Desk. It arranges for correcting errors in the IT infrastructure and performs proactive problem prevention.
- **Change Management**
The Change Management process ensures that standardized methods and procedures are used for efficient and prompt handling of all changes. This minimizes the impact of change related incidents on service quality. Consequently, change management aims to improve the day-to-day operation of the organization.
- **Release Management**
Good resource planning and management are essential to package and distribute a release successfully to the customer. Release Management takes a holistic view of an IT service change and ensures that all aspects of a release -- both technical and non-technical -- are considered together.
- **Configuration Management**
Configuration Management provides a logical model of the infrastructure or a service by identifying, controlling, maintaining and verifying the Configuration Items in existence.

Service Delivery

This book describes the processes necessary to deliver quality, cost effective IT services. It includes the following processes:

- **Availability Management**
Availability Management's goal is to optimize IT infrastructure capability, its services and the supporting organization. This results in a cost effective, sustained level of service availability that enables the business to meet its objectives.
- **Capacity Management**
Capacity Management enables an organization to manage resources in times of crisis and predict the need for additional capacity in advance. It describes the procedures necessary for planning, implementing and running this process.



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- **IT Service Continuity Management**

IT Service Continuity Management describes managing an organization's ability to continue providing a pre-determined level of IT service following an interruption to the business. This may range from an application or system failure, to a complete loss of the business premises.

- **Service Level Management**

Service Level Management's goal is to maintain and improve IT service quality. This occurs through a constant cycle of agreeing, monitoring and reporting IT service achievements. Service Level Management also instigates actions to eradicate poor service. It allows a stronger relationship to develop between IT and its customers.

- **Financial Management For IT Services**

Financial Management is the sound stewardship of the organization's monetary resources. It supports the enterprise in planning and executing its business objectives. Within an IT organization this process is visible in three main areas: Budgeting, IT accounting and charging.

Other ITIL Books

The other sets provide essential guidance on the tasks and skills necessary to bring core functions into effective operation. Some of the sets relate to the adoption of ITIL practices within particular environments.

Manager's Set

These books are directed to senior IT service managers responsible for a number of functional areas. They are however, likely to be of interest to all IT service managers and staff. They contain information about how to organize staff (functions and roles) as well as how to plan and manage successful relationships with suppliers and customers. These books include:

- Customer Liaison
- IT Services Organization
- Managing Facilities Management
- Managing Supplier Relationships
- Planning And Control For IT Services
- Quality Management For IT Services
- IT Infrastructure Support Tools
- Service Delivery Tools
- Data Management Standards
- Data Management
- Security Management

Software Support Set

This two book set describes aspects of IT Service Management which relate to and impact on, software developers. The books are:

- Software Lifecycle Support
- Testing An IT Service For Operational Use



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Computer Operations Set

This set is relevant to the computer operations manager and those staff involved in running large computer installations, in particular mainframe and centralized machine rooms. The books are:

- Computer Installation And Acceptance
- Computer Operations Management
- Third Party And Single Source Management
- Unattended Operating

Environmental Set

This set provides guidance about environmental issues that need to be addressed for planning, implementation and management of IT infrastructure. This is important to produce quality IT services. The sets are:

1. Environmental Strategy Set

A single book, *Cable Infrastructure Strategy*, describes the need for a strategic approach to installing and maintaining a cabling infrastructure within new and existing buildings.

2. Environment Management Set

Eight books concerned with the provision and management of the accommodation and environmental services to support the IT infrastructure. The books include:

- Accommodation Specification
- Environmental Standards For Equipment Accommodation
- Fire Precautions In IT Installations
- Management Of Electrical Interference
- Secure Power Supplies
- Specification And Management Of Cable Infrastructure
- Maintaining A Quality Environment For IT
- Management Of Acoustic Noise

3. Office Environment Set

This set includes four books that provide guidance about creating a supportive working environment in the office for customers of IT services. These books are:

- Human Factors In The Office Environment
- Office Design And Planning And IT
- Office Working Environment And IT
- Managing A Quality Working Environment For IT Users

Business Perspective Set

This series of three books addresses issues associated with IT that the business manager may have to deal with. The books are:

1. In Times Of Radical Change

This book addresses the issue of rapid and radical business change and its impact on IT. Its purpose is to help to control IT and to integrate it with the business.



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2. Surviving IT Infrastructure Transitions

IT infrastructure changes can impact the manner in which business is conducted or the continuity of business operations. It is important that business managers take notice of these changes and ensure that steps are taken to safeguard the business from adverse side effects. This book is designed to help business and IT managers address their worst fears about IT transitions.

3. Understanding And Improving

This guide provides the business manager with the awareness and insight needed to play a part in ensuring the right quality of IT support is available for the business processes of the organization. It describes the responsibilities and opportunities available to the business manager to improve what is -- in most organizations -- one of the key contributing services to business efficiency and effectiveness.

6. The ITIL Philosophy

ITIL's existence triggered the growth of a healthy industry. The industry grew from the OGC's realization that supporting products need to be available to facilitate the adoption of the ITIL functions and from OGC's work with the Information Systems Examination Board (ISEB) in 1990 to develop the first certifications based on ITIL. With the exception of examinations -- where it was felt that a non-proprietary approach was important for credibility and wide acceptability -- the private sector was encouraged to develop supporting products in a commercial and competitive environment. Supporting products include:

- Software Tools
- Books
- Training
- Consulting
- *itSMF*

Customers are provided with a range and selection of competing commercial products. Nonetheless, the fact that the books and examinations are non-proprietary permits the commercial products surrounding it to flourish. ITIL's independence remains its major strength.

7. Certification

Three organizations offer formal certification, using ITIL as their syllabus. These organizations are:

Examination Institute For Information Science (EXIN), based in the Netherlands, providing examinations in the UK, throughout Europe and the rest of the world, in different languages.

Information Systems Examination Board (ISEB), operates the UK and British Commonwealth in English only.



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Loyalist College Of Applied Arts And Technology operates in Belleville, Ontario, Canada. It organizes EXIN's paper-based ITIL exams in the United States and Canada and provides independent proctoring and administrative services.

All three organizations are non-proprietary and non-profit. They prepare and administer examinations but do not deliver training themselves. They work closely on ITIL exams, believing that a single broad approach, adapted to take account of differing local conditions, is best. As a result, all three bodies use the same examination papers.

Training organizations are accredited by the examination bodies to deliver courses, which lead to the exams. Pink Elephant is an accredited organization.

EXIN, ISEB and Loyalist provide three types of certificates. They are:

Foundation Certificate In IT Service Management

This certifies that the holder has a basic understanding of the ITIL principles: the terminology, the Service Desk function, the 10 core processes and their relationships and interfaces with other processes and the business. This certificate is awarded after exam participants achieve a passing grade of 65% on a multiple-choice examination.

Practitioner Certificate In IT Service Management

A practitioner certificate is available for each process. It identifies that the holder has an in-depth knowledge of the applicable ITIL process and is capable of managing and implementing that process in an organization. The prerequisite is three to four years of line management experience in IT plus the *Foundation Certificate In IT Service Management*. This certificate is awarded after exam participants achieve a passing grade of 65% on a multiple-choice examination.

Manager's Certificate In IT Service Management

This certifies that the holder has an overall management view of the Service Desk, the 10 core disciplines of IT Service Management and their interrelationships and interfaces. It also identifies that the holder is capable of overseeing and managing an entire IT Service Management department either in the implementation stages or in a standing organization. The prerequisite is three to four years of management and/or consulting experience plus the *Foundation Certificate In IT Service Management*. This certificate is awarded after participants meet the following criteria:

- Receive a passing grade of 50% on a management skills assessment
- Receive a passing grade of 50% on the Service Support examination and a passing grade of 50% on the Service Delivery examination

All examinations are designed to be taken following an approved training course. The examinations are held regularly, in several countries and languages around the world.



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8. Who Should Read The IT Infrastructure Library

ITIL is primarily targeted at people responsible for managing the delivery of quality IT services. However, all staff delivering IT services will find the books useful. The books help them gain an understanding of the context of their work.

IT Directors need to be aware of the books and the subjects they cover to ensure that appropriate staff members within their organizations are aware of the detail. To assist when determining who should read the books, refer to the introduction where the target audience is identified.

The books are of importance to business staff -- both managers and day-to-day customers or end-users -- involved in building good relationships with their IT service providers. Software developers, maintainers and testers need to be aware of IT Service Management requirements so that they can understand their relationship with IT service managers and ensure that requirements are incorporated into new and revised products and services from the outset.

The guidance is useful to any size of organization, in both the public and private sectors. The books intentionally describe functions and staff roles rather than work groups and job titles, so that the guidance can be applied to organizations of various sizes.

All-in-all, the books are relevant to any organization that depends on IT services.

9. Benefits Of Using The ITIL Framework

Benefits

ITIL offers a systematic, professional approach to the management of IT service provision. Adopting its guidance can provide benefits such as:

- Increasing customer satisfaction with IT services
- Reducing the risk of not meeting business requirements for IT services
- Reducing costs when developing procedures and practices within an organization
- Better communication and information flows between IT staff and customers
- Standards and guidance for IT staff
- Greater productivity and better use of skills and experience
- A quality approach to IT services

There are also benefits to the customer of IT services, such as:

- Reassurance that IT services are provided in accordance with documented procedures that can be audited
- The ability to depend upon IT services, enabling the customer to meet business objectives
- The identification of contact points for enquiries or discussions about changing requirements
- The knowledge that information is produced to justify charges for IT services and to provide feedback from monitoring of service level agreements



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ITIL emphasizes the importance of providing IT services to satisfy business needs in a cost effective manner. Many IT organizations are attempting to become more customer oriented to demonstrate their contribution to the business. The library can help IT organizations achieve this.

Organizations are encouraged to adapt the guidance to suit their needs. They are however, cautioned against omitting activities without due consideration, since IT Service Management is a set of integrated and coordinated functions. Organizations are likely to gain most benefit -- in the longer term -- from implementing all of the functions rather than some discrete functions.

Equally important, joining the *ITIL club* admits an organization to a consistent and comprehensive approach to service management ranging from software products to consultancy, training and qualifications. The common approach brings with it a common language of ITIL terms, which permits better communication between IT and suppliers.



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10. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are the books available in electronic format?

A. The books are available on CD ROM and in the future they will be available at:
www.clicktso.com.

Q. What is the difference between ITIL and ISO9001?

A. ISO9001 is a Quality Assurance process that essentially asks, *Are you doing what you say you are doing?* whereas ITIL defines what you should be doing in the first place.

Q. Is the information in some of the older ITIL titles still relevant today with all the changes in technology?

A. ITIL best practices are constantly being updated. This is done to ensure that the advice is consistent with the basic ITIL process model and to take into account changes in technology and business practice. However, the best practice messages in the *older* books are as valid today as when they were written.

Q. Does ITIL work in an e-business environment?

A. Absolutely. The processes to provide an e-business application are no different to any other application. In fact, numerous organizations use the ITIL framework to increase stability in their IT infrastructure to keep e-business operating smoothly.

Q. How can I purchase ITIL Books?

A. Books can be purchased from specialized on-line booksellers at www.ITILbooks.com. Some of the books are also available from Amazon Books at www.amazon.com.

Q. Can the courses leading to certification be delivered on site?

A. In addition to Pink Elephant's public course schedule, the organization also offers courses delivered on site. This can lead to significant savings and the courses can be tailored. Examinations can also be taken on site.

Q. Why are there three examining boards?

A. ISEB offers ITIL examinations to the UK and Commonwealth countries. Since ITIL's appeal is global, EXIN -- based in the Netherlands -- offers examinations to the rest of the world in different languages. Loyalist College of Arts and Technology in Belleville, Ontario, organizes EXIN's paper-based ITIL exams in the United States and Canada and provides independent proctoring and administrative services. All three boards provide exactly the same examinations.