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Foreword

Back in the 1980s no one truly understood IT service management (ITSM), although it was clear that it was a concept that needed to be explored. Hence a UK government initiative was instigated and ITIL® was born. Over the years, ITIL has evolved and, arguably, is now the most widely adopted approach in ITSM. It is globally recognized as the best-practice framework. ITIL's universal appeal is that it continues to provide a set of processes and procedures that are efficient, reliable and adaptable to organizations of all sizes, enabling them to improve their own service provision.

In the modern world the concept of having a strategy to drive the business forward with adequate planning and design transitioning into day-to-day operation is compelling. Once services have been transitioned into the live environment they need to be monitored, controlled and reviewed as part of service operation. When things go wrong, there should be robust processes in place to record, resolve and ensure that they do not re-occur. The aim of service operation is to ensure that the live operational environment runs as smoothly as possible. Business users and customers interact directly with the operational services and any problems here can have a direct impact on their perception of your business and ultimately to your reputation. In that respect service operation is the most visible part of the service lifecycle. However, it is important that service operation does not drive the lifecycle. Good operational services have been through the stages of strategy, design and transition, and have captured the appropriate metrics in order to maintain the levels of service required.

The principles contained within *ITIL Service Operation* have been proven countless times in the real world. We encourage feedback from business and the ITSM community, as well as other experts in the field, to ensure that ITIL remains relevant. This practice of continual service improvement is one of the cornerstones of the ITIL framework and the fruits of this labour are here before you in this updated edition.

There is an associated qualification scheme so that individuals can demonstrate their understanding and application of the ITIL practices. So whether you are starting out or continuing along the ITIL path, you are joining a legion of individuals and organizations who have recognized the benefits of good quality service and have a genuine resolve to improve their service level provision.

ITIL is not a panacea to all problems. It is, however, a tried and tested approach that has been proven to work.

I wish you every success in your service management journey.

Frances Scarff

Head of Best Management Practice
Cabinet Office

Preface

'The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.' Bill Gates

This is the fourth book in the series of five ITIL core publications containing advice and guidance around the activities and processes associated with the five stages of the service lifecycle. The primary purpose of the service operation stage of the service lifecycle is to coordinate, deliver and manage services to ensure that the levels agreed with the business, customers and users are met or exceeded. Service operation is also responsible for the ongoing management of the technology that is used to deliver and support the services.

Service operation accepts the new, modified, retiring or retired services from service transition once the test and acceptance criteria have been met. Service operation then ensures that those new or modified services will meet all of their agreed operational targets, as well as ensuring that all existing services continue to meet all of their targets. This stage of the lifecycle performs the vital day-to-day activities and processes that collect the data and information which are essential to the activities of continual service improvement, the final stage of the service lifecycle.

Service operation is the critical stage of the service lifecycle. It is the stage of the lifecycle where the service really starts to deliver benefit and value to the business, customers and users. A well designed and implemented service and its processes will be of little value if they are poorly supported, operated and managed. Service operation staff should have in place effective processes with supporting tools to allow them an overall view of the service and service operation (rather than just the separate components, such as hardware, software applications and networks). This will enable them to rapidly detect any threats or failures to the service and service quality. Service operation staff act as the 'eyes and ears' for the service provider organization, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, giving early warning of any abnormal situations, especially on 'mission-critical' services.

ITIL Service Operation also provides advice and guidance on application management, technical management and the service desk, the functions within the service operation stage of the lifecycle.

ITIL Service Operation provides essential reading to any member of an IT service provider organization trying to deliver service excellence through outstanding operational performance. Unfortunately, the more effective an organization becomes within service operation, the less it seems to need it. However, ongoing service excellence can only be achieved through continual focus, application and commitment.

Contact information

Full details of the range of material published under the ITIL banner can be found at:

www.best-management-practice.com/IT-Service-Management-ITIL/

If you would like to inform us of any changes that may be required to this publication, please log them at:

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Wider team

Change advisory board

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2007 EDITION

Chief architect and authors

Thanks are still due to those who contributed to the 2007 edition of Service Operation, upon which this updated edition is based.

Sharon Taylor (Aspect Group Inc)	Chief architect
David Cannon (HP)	Author
David Wheeldon (HP)	Author

All names and organizations were correct at publication in 2007.

For a full list of all those who contributed to the 2007 and 2011 editions of *Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation* and *Continual Service Improvement*, please go to

www.itil-officialsite.com/Publications/PublicationAcknowledgements.aspx

1 Introduction

1 Introduction

ITIL is part of a suite of best-practice publications for IT service management (ITSM).[1] ITIL provides guidance to service providers on the provision of quality IT services, and on the processes, functions and other capabilities needed to support them. ITIL is used by many hundreds of organizations around the world and offers best-practice guidance applicable to all types of organization that provide services. ITIL is not a standard that has to be followed; it is guidance that should be read and understood, and used to create value for the service provider and its customers. Organizations are encouraged to adopt ITIL best practices and to adapt them to work in their specific environments in ways that meet their needs.

ITIL is the most widely recognized framework for ITSM in the world. In the 20 years since it was created, ITIL has evolved and changed its breadth and depth as technologies and business practices have developed. ISO/IEC 20000 provides a formal and universal standard for organizations seeking to have their service management capabilities audited and certified. While ISO/IEC 20000 is a standard to be achieved and maintained, ITIL offers a body of knowledge useful for achieving the standard.

In 2007, the second major refresh of ITIL was published in response to significant advancements in technology and emerging challenges for IT service providers. New models and architectures such as outsourcing, shared services, utility computing, cloud computing, virtualization, web services and mobile commerce have become widespread within IT. The process-based approach of ITIL was augmented with the service lifecycle to address these additional service management challenges. In 2011, as part of its commitment to continual improvement, the Cabinet Office published this update to improve consistency across the core publications.

The ITIL framework is based on the five stages of the service lifecycle as shown in Figure 1.1, with a core publication providing best-practice guidance for each stage. This guidance includes key principles, required processes and activities, organization and roles, technology, associated challenges, critical success factors and risks. The service lifecycle uses a hub-and-spoke design, with service strategy at the hub, and service design, transition and operation as the revolving lifecycle stages or 'spokes'. Continual service improvement surrounds and supports all stages of the service lifecycle. Each stage of the lifecycle exerts influence on the others and relies on them for inputs and feedback. In this way, a constant set of checks and balances throughout the service lifecycle ensures that as business demand changes with business need, the services can adapt and respond effectively.

In addition to the core publications, there is also a complementary set of ITIL publications providing guidance specific to industry sectors, organization types, operating models and technology architectures.

1.1 CHAPTER SUMMARY

ITIL Service Operation provides best-practice guidance for the service operation stage of the ITIL service lifecycle. Although this publication can be

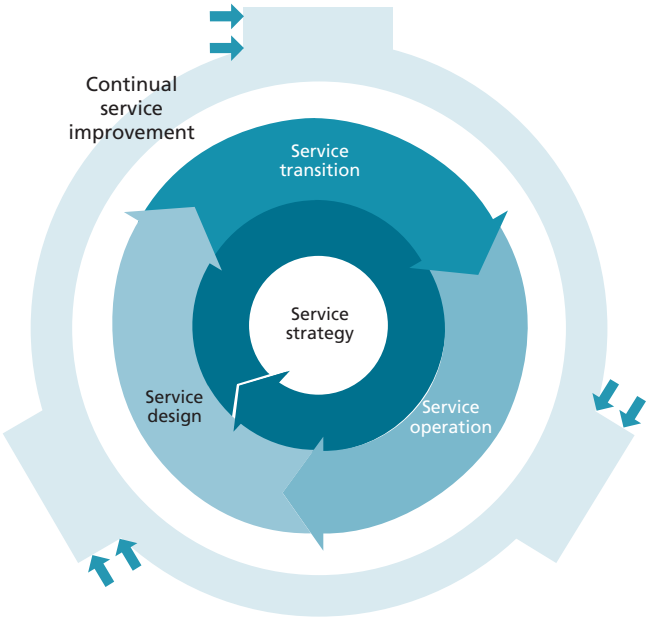

Figure 1.1 The ITIL service lifecycle

[1] ITSM and other concepts from this chapter are described in more detail in Chapter 2.

read in isolation, it is recommended that it is used in conjunction with the other core ITIL publications.

1.1.1 Purpose and objectives of service operation

The purpose of the service operation stage of the service lifecycle is to coordinate and carry out the activities and processes required to deliver and manage services at agreed levels to business users and customers. Service operation is also responsible for the ongoing management of the technology that is used to deliver and support services.

Service operation is a critical stage of the service lifecycle. Well-planned and well-implemented processes will be to no avail if the day-to-day operation of those processes is not properly conducted, controlled and managed. Nor will service improvements be possible if day-to-day activities to monitor performance, assess metrics and gather operational data are not systematically conducted during service operation.

Staff involved in the service operation stage of the service lifecycle should have processes and support tools in place that allow them to have an overall view of service operation and delivery (rather than just the separate components, such as hardware, software applications and networks, that make up the end-to-end service from a business perspective). These processes and tools should also detect any threats or failures to service quality.

As services may be provided, in whole or in part, by one or more partner/supplier organizations, the service operation view of the end-to-end service should be extended to encompass external aspects of service provision. When necessary, shared or interfacing processes and tools should be deployed to manage cross-organizational workflows.

The objectives of service operation are to:

- Maintain business satisfaction and confidence in IT through effective and efficient delivery and support of agreed IT services
- Minimize the impact of service outages on day-to-day business activities
- Ensure that access to agreed IT services is only provided to those authorized to receive those services.

1.1.2 Scope

ITIL Service Operation describes the processes, functions, organization and tools used to underpin the ongoing activities required to deliver and support services. The guidance provided in this publication includes:

- **The services themselves** Activities that form part of a service are included in service operation, whether it is performed by the service provider, an external supplier or the user or customer of that service.
- **Service management processes** The ongoing management and execution of the many service management processes that are performed in service operation. Even though a number of ITIL processes (such as change and capacity management) originate at the service design or service transition stage of the service lifecycle, they are in use continually in service operation. Some processes are not included specifically in service operation, such as strategy management for IT services and the actual design process itself. These processes focus more on longer-term planning and improvement activities, which are outside the direct scope of service operation; however, service operation provides input and influences these processes regularly as part of the lifecycle of service management.
- **Technology** All services require some form of technology to deliver them. Managing this technology is not a separate issue, but an integral part of the management of the services themselves. Therefore a large part of *ITIL Service Operation* is concerned with the management of the infrastructure used to deliver services.
- **People** Regardless of what services, processes and technology are managed, they are all about people. It is people who drive the demand for the organization's services and products and it is people who decide how this will be done. Ultimately, it is people who manage the technology, processes and services. Failure to recognize this will result (and has resulted) in the failure of service management activities.

1.1.3 Usage

ITIL Service Operation provides access to proven best practice based on the skill and knowledge of experienced industry practitioners in adopting a

standardized and controlled approach to service management. Although this publication can be used and applied in isolation, it is recommended that it is used in conjunction with the other core ITIL publications. All of the core publications need to be read to fully appreciate and understand the overall lifecycle of services and IT service management.

1.1.4 Value to business

Selecting and adopting the best practice as recommended in this publication will assist organizations in delivering significant benefits. Adopting and implementing standard and consistent approaches for service operation will:

- Reduce unplanned labour and costs for both the business and IT through optimized handling of service outages and identification of their root causes.
- Reduce the duration and frequency of service outages which will allow the business to take full advantage of the value created by the services they are receiving.
- Provide operational results and data that can be used by other ITIL processes to improve services continually and provide justification for investing in ongoing service improvement activities and supporting technologies.
- Meet the goals and objectives of the organization's security policy by ensuring that IT services will be accessed only by those authorized to use them.
- Provide quick and effective access to standard services which business staff can use to improve their productivity or the quality of business services and products.
- Provide a basis for automated operations, thus increasing efficiencies and allowing expensive human resources to be used for more innovative work, such as designing new or improved functionality or defining new ways in which the business can exploit technology for increased competitive advantage.

1.1.5 Target audience

ITIL Service Operation is relevant to organizations involved in the development, delivery or support of services, including:

- Service providers, both internal and external
- Organizations that aim to improve services through the effective application of service management and service lifecycle processes to improve their service quality
- Organizations that require a consistent managed approach across all service providers in a supply chain or value network
- Organizations that are going out to tender for their services.

In addition, this publication is relevant to any professional involved in the management of services, particularly:

- IT managers and practitioners
- IT operations and support personnel
- Service desk management and staff
- Technical management staff
- Application management personnel.

1.2 CONTEXT

The context of this publication is the ITIL service lifecycle as shown in Figure 1.1.

The ITIL core consists of five lifecycle publications. Each provides part of the guidance necessary for an integrated approach as required by the ISO/IEC 20000 standard specification. The five publications are:

- *ITIL Service Strategy*
- *ITIL Service Design*
- *ITIL Service Transition*
- *ITIL Service Operation*
- *ITIL Continual Service Improvement*

Each one addresses capabilities having direct impact on a service provider's performance. The core is expected to provide structure, stability and strength to service management capabilities, with durable principles, methods and tools. This serves to protect investments and provide the necessary basis for measurement, learning and improvement. The introductory guide, *Introduction to the ITIL Service Lifecycle*, provides an overview of the lifecycle stages described in the ITIL core.

ITIL guidance can be adapted to support various business environments and organizational strategies. Complementary ITIL publications provide flexibility to implement the core in a diverse range of environments. Practitioners can select complementary publications as needed

The preceding pages provide a preview of the information contained in ITIL v3 2011 Service Operation.

ITIL v3 2011 Service Operation provides best-practice guidance on efficiently and effectively delivering these services for the benefit of the business, customers and users.

To purchase ITIL v3 2011 Service Operation, please visit:
http://itgsmshop.webs.com/itil