

# **IT Physician Heal Thyself Building Bridges and Breaking Boundaries**

## **Article 1 –**

### **‘The IT Management Status Quo and the 5 Year Challenge’**

**By John Gibert – Southcourt**

This is the first in a series of six articles that are due to appear in Service Talk, Computing and its sister papers through Europe. They support the theme of this year’s UK itSMF conference in Brighton in November on ‘Breaking Boundaries and Building Bridges’. They are also part of the bITa programme to improve the alignment of Business and IT.

#### **Introduction**

The IT Service Management Conference organised by the UK itSMF in November 2003 is dealing with the need from an ITIL viewpoint to ‘Build Bridges’ between IT management domains and ‘Break the Boundaries’ that separate them.

During 2003 bITa are organising a programme worldwide to address the issues around ‘business – IT alignment’ – ‘bITa’.

The bITa programme is dealing with the People and Process issues that separate IT from the business. This series of articles deals with the process issues. Another series that will appear in 2004 will deal with the people issues.

There are a host of IT management domains including: IT Project Management; IT Service Management; IT Applications Management; IT Infrastructure Management; and IT Strategy & Architecture.

Each of these domains have their own frameworks developed separately and in parallel with one another over time.

The fact that specific frameworks like ITIL, PRINCE2 and BSD/SSADM were developed separately and in parallel means that they were not designed to align with one another.

How problematic the lack of alignment is? How extensive it is? And what are the effects on business effectiveness?, are some of the questions that are being addressed by a series of articles, of which this is the first.

#### **The IT Service Management Perspective**

Let’s start from an IT Service Management perspective with ITIL as the framework. People working in the IT Service Management domain want people in the other parts of IT – the other IT management domains to work in a manner that ensures that IT services are delivered to meet the requirements of the business.

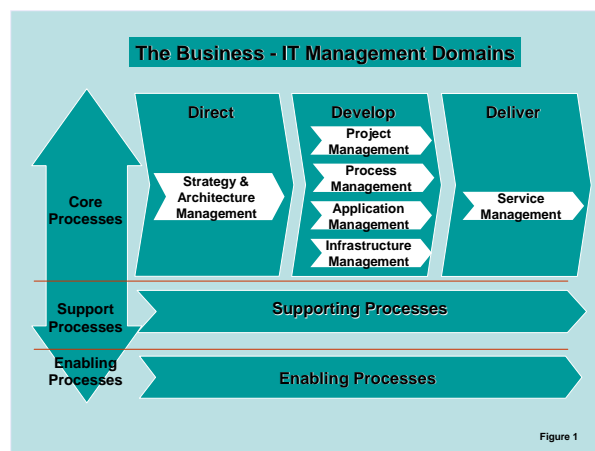
What are the management domains that ITIL needs to bridge with? There are many IT domain models, the one below provides a typical view of domains in an IT organisation with core, support and enabling processes.

In this model, Service Management is seen to operate in the last of the three core domain areas.

The issue broadly speaking is that Service Management needs to bridge with the other Core process areas and also with the support and enabling process areas.

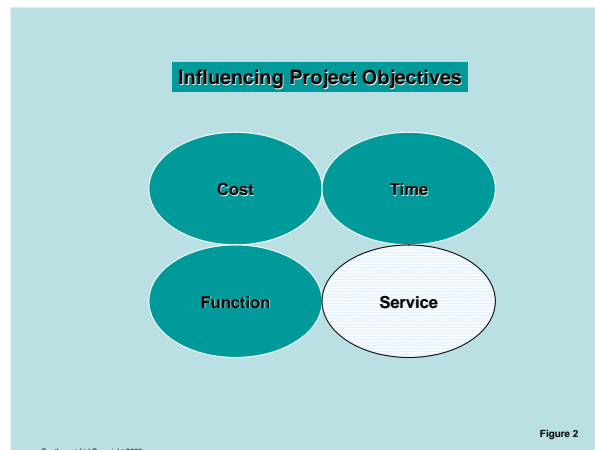
This article focuses on the Core IT management domains within the ‘Direct’, ‘Develop’ and ‘Deliver’ process areas.

Figure 1 puts IT Service Management where most people see it, firmly placed in the IT Delivery process area, at the back end of the IT core processes.



The way it works (regrettably) is that IT Delivery processes receive application systems which are ‘Function Centric’ delivered by projects which are ‘Time Centric’ and development ‘Cost Centric’.

The Service Management fraternity would like the Project Management fraternity to become ‘Service Sensitive’, or even ‘Service Centric’ with Project Management delivering ‘Serviceability’ not just ‘Functionality’ – indeed to put the fourth objective ‘Service’ clearly on the table, as in figure 2.



The issue above is just one aspect where IT management domains need to open themselves up and improve the alignment with one another.

IT people operate with some confidence in their own domain but tend to be uncomfortable with other peoples' domains.

A project manager knows what a 'Work Breakdown Structure' is, but he doesn't know what a 'Configuration Item' or the 'CMDB' is. A service manager knows what an 'Error' is, but he doesn't know what an 'Off Specification' is', and so forth.

Each IT management domain has grown from its own origins, they have all had different drivers – and resulted in people speaking different languages.

Frequently two terms have been developed in different domains for the same thing (Issue and Incident), and then there are situations where same term (e.g. Infrastructure Management) is used in different domains to mean different things.

The domains can be considered to be different islands where people speak different tongues, however to many people they are more like different continents with different cultures, beliefs, and values.

Now readers may well be thinking so what?

Well the reality is that IT has to be as integrated as the businesses they serve. 'Fragmented IT delivers poor solutions which become even poorer services – poor being expensive, inflexible and ineffective'.

Now let's look at businesses and how they have aligned their processes to be cost efficient, effective and flexible.

### The Alignment of Business Processes

IT has enabled bridges to be built between business functions, departments and has facilitated the integration of the processes of most enterprises.

The barriers between sales, marketing, production, procurement and finance have been overcome in most enterprises, enabled by IT, integrated databases and BPR.

It is worth reflecting on the typical progress of business integration and the period over which it took place.

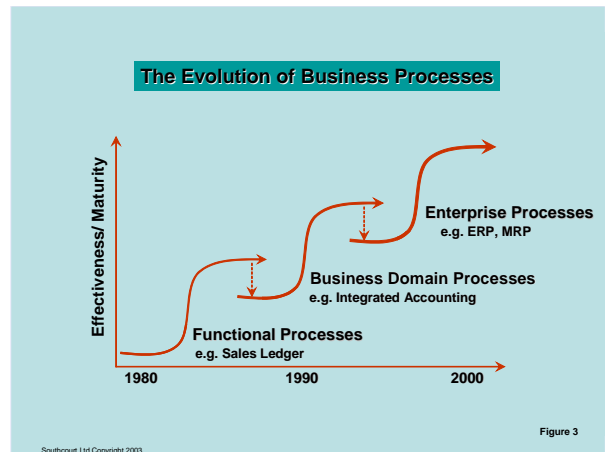


Figure 3 shows that between 1980 and 2000 many enterprisers integrated their processes in a number of evolutionary steps, shown by 3 'S-Curves':

- From single functional processes and systems of the 1980s like the sales ledger.
- Though the next evolution of business area processes and systems of the 1990s like the integrated accounting.
- To the norm for 2000, ERP systems that integrate the core and support activities of a business.

IT and BPR have been the Physicians that have enabled business to be healed into a whole unified being.

### Back to the IT Model

IT needs to do the same as the businesses that they serve, IT needs to heal itself. – Physician Heal Thyself is the title of this first article.

IT needs to apply BPR to its core and support processes to fully align them.

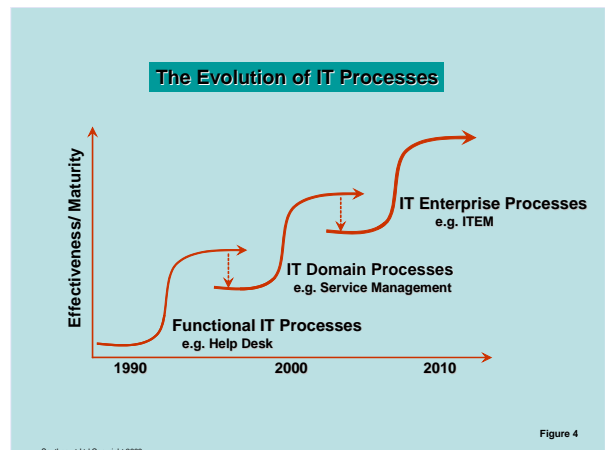


Figure 4 provides a picture of IT process evolution. Contrast it to business process maturity in figure 3.

Some could say IT works, so don't fix it. In reality IT today – 2003 - is as fragmented as most businesses were ten years ago. IT is managed in silos, the same kind of silos as businesses used to be.

Is a Physician needed - how sick is the IT patient?

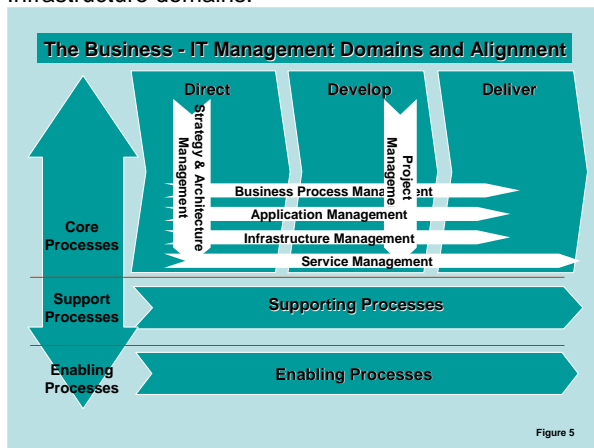
Importantly where does this challenge of IT alignment rate among all the other business and management challenges IT management are faced with?

IT management can continue to operate IT in silos for ever, but like businesses that have not taken the steps to integrate their core processes they will cause their enterprise to suffer against its competitors.

The management domains that make up IT – Applications Management, Infrastructure Management, Service Management, Project Management, IT Strategy & Architecture need to make the next evolutionary step into IT Enterprise Management.

They need to be integrated into one model made up of linked domains. Figure 5 provides a better picture of the IT domains as they overlay the IT process model.

In the picture the Strategy & Architecture Processes and the Project Management Processes align the Service, Business Process, Application and Infrastructure domains.



The development of an industry agreed overall IT process model will take a number of years resulting in the development of an ISO standard for IT management.

ITSM and ITIL are now supported by a British standard, but how will an International standard for the whole of IT management be achieved?

### Overcoming Barriers

So things need to change – but who needs to change and what are the barriers to change?

Let's examine a number of issues

Who Feels They Need to Change?

Fifteen years ago, if you took a number of sales, marketing, production, engineering, finance, warehousing people into a room and asked them to agree on integrated processes – it would have been difficult but not impossible.

If you were to do the same thing with a mixed group of IT professionals – they would find it more difficult and in some cases impossible.

IT processes should be no more complex than many business processes – but the problem is entrenched viewpoints of highly paid IT Specialists. The attitude of many IT managers is to protect the status quo either for comfort factors or belief. Others need to change – not them.

### Evolved - No Design – Just Evolved

The fact that most IT management domains have evolved without a design or blueprint and so are not as logically structured as they would be if you designed them from scratch is not seen as material. This is without considering their linkages.

The situation that ITIL's Incident Management deals with Queries and Service Requests – goes unchallenged. The fact that Issues and Risks are managed by full process in Project Management, but there are no definitive Issue and Risk management processes in Service Management goes unchallenged.

There is a lot of legacy in the current IT management domains – a lot of vested interests that will be difficult to overcome in the process of building bridges.

### The IT Process Legacy Challenge

So IT management and the IT industry need to step back to see if they want to duck the IT Process Legacy Challenge – a real show-stopping barrier to effective IT alignment or whether concerted Business IT Alignment with proper BPR is on the agenda.

### The Way Forward

The second article examines the current IT management frameworks, their domains and the compatibility issues.

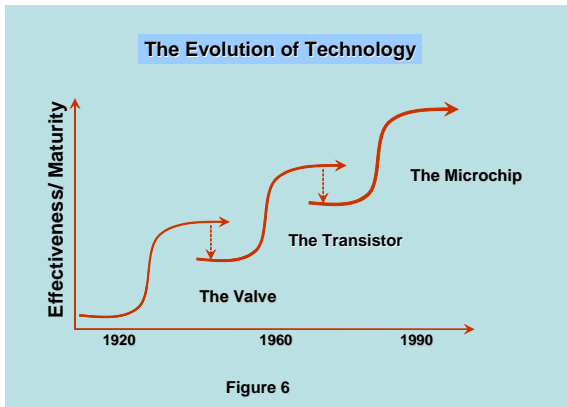
The third article examines the Unified Process Model and its Core Domains from a Business and IT management viewpoints and looks at its two dimensions the 'Governance' dimension with its framework and domains and the 'Value Chain' dimension and its domains.

The fourth article provides a worked example of how the Core processes work end to end and how the Governance framework aligns the Value Chain domains.

The fifth article looks at the Support and Enabling processes that underlie the core domains and provide consistency of approach to doing similar things in different domains.

The sixth article finally examines how IT can move forward to improve the interfaces between the frameworks, to integrate them practically into one Business – IT aligned management framework.

When Edison invented the Valve nobody could imagine the Transistor let alone the Microchip.



The technology evolution S-Curves should remind us that the majority of enterprises that stayed with old technologies were not part of the movement to the new technologies.

As a consequence people and organisations wedded to their existing domain frameworks may not make it to 'IT Enterprise Management'.

For more information on the itSMF and its UK November 2003 conference, contact [service@itsmf.com](mailto:service@itsmf.com)

For more information on bITa and their alignment programme, contact [support@bita-center.com](mailto:support@bita-center.com)

For more information from the author of this article, contact [J.Gibert@btopenworld.com](mailto:J.Gibert@btopenworld.com)