

Understanding ITSM: Information Technology Service Management

ITSM (Information Technology Service Management), which may be better known in your organization as “user support” or “help-desk support”, is an increasing and gaining importance as an area where organizations can improve productivity and reduce costs.

ITSM is concerned with the "back office" of *information technology management*, and not with *technology development*. For example, the process of writing computer software for sale, or designing a microprocessor would not be the focus of the discipline, but the computer systems used by marketing and business development staff in software and hardware companies would be. Many non-technology companies, such as those in the financial, retail, and travel industries, have significant information technology systems which are not exposed to customers. ¹

WHY IS ITSM IMPORTANT? ITSM is important because as businesses increasingly rely on technology to run daily operations, transact business, and communicate with customers, suppliers, and employees, NOT having the back office IT systems running optimally can cost an organization. These costs can be measured in terms of lost dollars on orders not being placed, lost customers because a proposal was not submitted on time, and lost productivity because the spreadsheet you worked on over the past week is corrupted (and the backup system did not back up that spreadsheet).

WHAT TO DO ABOUT ITSM? Just as most organizations perform an annual review of their financial condition in the form of a financial review or financial audit, an organization would benefit from an audit of the methods and effectiveness of their “user support”/“help-desk support”/ITSM operation.

Recent advances in tools and technologies provide better services at lower prices, including methods that automate heretofore manual tasks, such as:

1. Server and workstation patch management, such as Windows updates
2. Anti-virus management
3. Anti-spyware management
4. Backup management
5. System monitoring
6. Help desk ticketing and resolution

We'll discuss tools that automate these tasks in our next newsletter.

If you wish to explore this topic further in the meantime, please call David Gadway, IT Consulting Manager at 802.651.7220 or email at: dfg@gfc.com.

References:

- 1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IT_service_management