Changing ITSM to support the digital world
Transforming IT service management to support the digital enterprise

IT services used to exist to support and enable the business, but now IT is the business – and the nature of IT service management must change to aid digital transformation

Digital transformation is ubiquitous, and most organisations are gearing themselves up for the change. While doing so, many have realised that the nature of IT service management (ITSM) must also shift as they implement the change programmes.

This change comes down to the fundamental role of IT. In the past, technology and IT services existed mainly to support and enable the business. In today’s highly digitised world, however, IT is no longer just the facilitator; IT is the business itself.

IT-enabled business models are springing up all over the world and in every industry. Two high-profile cases in point are Uber and Airbnb. Both companies have a net worth in the tens of billions of dollars, but Uber doesn’t own any taxis, nor Airbnb any hotels. This marks a departure from the traditional business model: rather than the company assets being the most significant components, things such as technology, processes and intellectual property are the more important aspects of the business.

In addition, digital disruptors such as these are fully reliant on systems that are highly responsive, reliable and fast: if an app doesn’t work, it affects business.
IT is the business

Modern business models require IT systems that move away from silos and support integrated, interconnected processes. They need the highest levels of availability, seamless orchestration of processes and tools, and integration at the provider and platform levels. These things are essential to serve the ‘new age’ digital consumer who is highly mobile, app-equipped, always-on and expectant of excellent customer service.

And due to today’s fast-paced business environment, organisations also need to become leaner and more agile, so they can create, modify and scale apps and processes at speed, for example.

Meanwhile, the difference between internal and external customers is shrinking: IT organisations now cater for both employees and outside customers, which, again, requires them to have an agile service infrastructure and a better integrated systems architecture.

Furthermore, as organisations become more cost-conscious, every department has to prove its value, which means the IT model needs to be able to capture the value it provides to the business, with any IT enhancement being justified by a robust business case.

A new service approach

For enterprises to be successful in their digital transformation, and compete with the multitude of digital disruptors that are emerging, they will need to approach IT services in a new way.

Traditional IT services frameworks and standards – and even established IT services measurements, such as Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) – need to change to adapt to the faster pace of change, the new digital business agenda, and emerging technologies that make agile IT possible.

Change is happening fast, with technology advancements – from software-defined datacentres, to IT automation and industrialisation – providing us with a plethora of options, opportunities, speed and agility. Some of the biggest areas of IT transformation are being fuelled by Smac technologies – social, mobile, analytics and cloud – which capitalise on IT advances such as big data, web-based communication and collaboration, portable consumer apps, location services and virtualisation.

As a result, IT is enabling business to improve financial performance, user experience and marketplace competitiveness, among many other things.

However, the foundational layer remains an ITSM infrastructure that increasingly needs to support business and consumer-centric services that are integrated, and digitise processes from one end of the business to the other.

This framework also needs to offer high levels of speed and agility, with continuous availability; and it must also deliver cohesive, centralised management across all of the organisation’s services.

Cognizant’s eNGaGE ITSM framework

Cognizant has developed such a framework for next-generation service delivery and management, called eNGaGE (enabling next-generation global enterprise). The global IT services firm strongly believes that this ITSM blueprint will enable the next generation of global enterprises to succeed in their digital transformation and deliver superior experience to the service consumers.
The framework is based on the concept of ‘value levers’ – IT service elements that create value for the business. These are achieved through the use of ‘engineering levers’ – specific technologies and processes.

One of the strengths of the framework is that it supports evolving service management priorities, such as the move from technology-focused fire-fighting and incident management, to integrated services focused on the customer and processes that can manage and prevent problems.

Consequently, for organisations that are starting their IT modernisation process, the framework can act as an on-ramp to digital transformation, enabling them to gradually add digitisation and automation features to their IT services operation.

Value levers

The Cognizant platform incorporates the concept of value levers: five core outcomes that businesses should look to gain when sourcing their IT services, and which Cognizant’s ITSM model is able to provide. These are as follows:

1. Contextualised ITSM
The first lever puts the framework into the individual business and user context, taking into account the industry in which it operates. For example, manufacturing and finance may need different levels of service – perhaps requiring greater processing or network capacity for specific periods of the month or year to meet demand. The ITSM system can automatically reconfigure resources so particular departments or users will get this special access, and then roll back to standard user levels afterwards.

Contextualised ITSM can customise many different rules, operations and responses to make them contextual for the individual business. As a result, businesses can optimise and automate their operations to make them much more efficient.

2. Service ecosystem management
The Cognizant ITSM framework can facilitate complete ecosystems of technology suppliers, which will increasingly allow you to orchestrate your range of IT services. This provides a way of uniting cloud suppliers, service desks, user services, application services and consultants working on specific business problems. Service ecosystem management also gives you a way of communicating between service providers, and coordinating your data governance activities. The result is better service orchestration.
3. Integrated performance management
As part of the service ecosystem management value lever, you can measure suppliers on how quickly they fix an incident, or how compliant they are to a service request – giving you more business-aligned performance metrics. So, if a business is hired to process a certain number of invoices, but is failing, you can find out whether the bottleneck is an internal business process or an external supplier, and act accordingly.

4. User experience engineering
It’s becoming imperative to ensure that users – whether they are employees, customers or business partners – have a high-quality experience. User experience engineering is a new concept, and addresses the shrinking gap, particularly in larger organisations, between workers and customers when it comes to accessing systems such as enterprise resource planning.

Companies are increasingly exposing their internal systems to the customer, so whereas it may not matter to internal users, a three-second lag on a billing system could affect your customer service and loyalty. The Cognizant platform addresses this value lever by making sure processes run smoothly.

5. Business value articulation
Cognizant strongly believes that ITSM is moving away from measuring service level agreements and more towards delivering certain value to the business. Business value articulation is where the IT service infrastructure can help you understand the business and financial value of implementing a particular process or system, or partner ecosystem, and work out whether the service should be run in-house or via an external provider.

Engineering levers
To successfully achieve these five value levers, the ITSM infrastructure needs to deploy certain engineering levers: IT service capabilities that will create...
a positive impact or outcome when they are used in particular ways. The combination will differ from industry to industry, but Cognizant defines five engineering levers as follows, describing how particular technologies or processes can help facilitate them:

1. Service provision management
The first engineering lever makes it easier for businesses to provision and tailor their resources more effectively. For example, it employs user persona engineering to analyse the requirements of business service users, based on factors such as their needs, interests, behaviours and preferences.

The Cognizant platform also offers workflow automation and minimum touch provisioning, both of which enable businesses to provision their IT services with minimal intervention.

2. Platform management
This engineering lever provides an integrated technology platform, with ITIL-aligned delivery; and a plug-and-play design that offers scalability, flexibility and control. Another aspect of platform management includes smart analytics, which help to identify and analyse important patterns, give real-time business insights, define business behaviour and improve future operations.

A more advanced feature is autonomies: dynamic self-managing or self-learning platforms, that can auto-identify an issue and provide a remedial action in time.

3. Delivery orchestration
Cognizant’s service delivery model is designed to manage a ‘constantly ready’ state, where IT services are responsive and flexible. It supports three separate but coherent styles of IT operations: run, change and innovate, with tools to facilitate these and measure their effectiveness.

Other features of delivery orchestration are Smac stack integration, catalogue-based delivery, and service orchestration and assurance – to make sure that defined services meet specific business objectives.

4. Smart governance
The platform achieves smart governance by using business-aligned key performance indicators, business performance-related security and risk management, and analytics and reporting based on self-service.

5. Value management
The Cognizant ITSM framework manages value in multiple ways, such as through providing service cost transparency, or measuring the value of IT to the business. It can also manage innovation by aligning transformation to business objectives, and it can calculate the effect of changes in business processes, organisational structures or culture changes.

The road to ITSM maturity
These technologies and processes represent points on a maturity roadmap. Deployed methodically and strategically, Cognizant’s ITSM framework will enable enterprises to transition to a highly sophisticated IT services infrastructure. Most importantly, it’s possible to begin developing next-generation service management today.

The framework is modular in nature, making it adaptable and flexible, so it can be tailored to a spectrum of industry or customer needs and complexities.

ITSM holds the key to digital transformation; how are you progressing towards automated, business-focused services?

Cognizant’s ITSM framework will enable enterprises to transition to a highly sophisticated IT services infrastructure

---

**Glossary of terms**

**ITSM:** Information Technology Service Management  
**ITIL:** Information Technology Infrastructure Library  
**SMAC:** Social, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud  
**ENGAGE:** Enabling Next Generation Global Enterprise  
**HCI:** Hyper Converged Infrastructure  
**AIICC:** App-Infra Integrated Command Center  
**CMMI:** Capability Maturity Model Integration  
**COBIT:** Control Objectives for Information and related Technology