Ivanti IT Service Management (ITSM) Attainment Model

Introduction

The Ivanti® IT Service Management (ITSM) Attainment Model is a roadmap to help IT service management teams plan for continual improvement. For help desk teams having trouble moving beyond break/fix or ticket management, the ITSM Attainment Model can serve as a guide to help define next steps to increase the value and impact of IT Service Management to the overall business.

The ITSM Attainment Model identifies challenges that service management teams face at each attainment level, along with their priority. The model provides guidance to help teams move from a reactive and turbulent state, to a state that is more proactive, managed, and strategic—and valued more greatly by the overall business.

The Attainment Model provides all interested parties, including executives, with a common understanding about goals and the path forward to achieve them. Sometimes IT teams attempt to skip levels, but more often than not, teams are more successful as they build upon the firm foundation of each preceding step. This paper presents an overview of the five levels of the model, with impact on costs, risks, time, and quality described for each level.

The Attainment Model

Level 1: Unmanaged

At the Unmanaged level, support activities are very tactical and reactive. There isn't a systematic approach to move beyond short term outcomes with issues resolved ad-hoc, without visibility of status or impact. Help-desk staff activity is heavily biased toward firefighting on a first-come, first-served basis.

At this level activity is primarily the logging and tracking of tickets. Agent tools aren't extensive nor connected to other systems. Most processes are manual without consistent workflows or standards, with little to no reporting. IT support isn't delivered systematically, leading to spotty performance and little management support or leadership for more investment.

Service quality and resolution times usually fail to meet expectations, and customer satisfaction and staff morale often suffer. Ongoing costs and risks are high, resolution timelines often lengthen, and service quality is low. Senior management is unaware of the help desk's impact and rarely supportive of more investment.

Level 2: Tracking

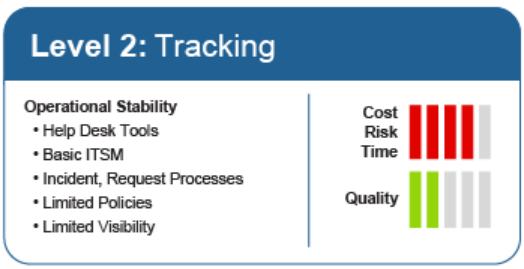
Level 2 focuses on tracking what work is coming into the service desk, with the goal of improving operational stability, usually driven by IT. Increasing an understanding of what work comes to the help desk—and how work comes in—is critical to being successful at Level 2.

Activities center on basic help-desk tools to better handle and track incidents, break/fix and requests, and measure response times. Automation is introduced at this level but usually with little integration to other tools. Analysts respond to issues without being strategic, deal with many manual tasks such as asset acquisition, without full visibility into business needs and impact.

Key capabilities to implement include Incident Management and Request Management to begin standardizing processes, measuring response times, and leveraging automation. Self-Service and Service Catalog implementations should be introduced to begin offloading work from the help desk. Deliver Knowledge Management so analysts aren't 'reinventing the wheel' when resolving incidents or fulfilling requests.

Metrics and KPIs are operational and measure activities such as call volume, closure rates, resolution times, and types of tickets. Teams should use these metrics to identify the 'low hanging fruit' areas of improvement—such as most-common user requests—using automation and other tools to improve efficiency and reduce workloads.

At this level, visibility is increasing but costs and risks are high, timeframes for initiatives are still extended, and service quality is low. Tools begin to help reduce firefighting, and workloads become more controlled. But now it's easier for the help desk to set more realistic expectations and customer satisfaction may show some improvement.



Level 3: Managed

Level 3 focuses on the goal of increasing operational effectiveness. Building on the tracking capabilities in place in Level 2, IT teams can shift from tracking how work comes in, to managing how work gets done within IT. At this level, the IT team starts becoming more proactive in what and how it resolves issues to better support users and the business.

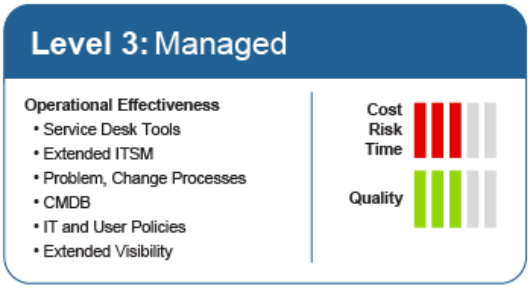
Teams start applying management principles of resource allocation and activity prioritization, along with formalizing and communicating standard processes across IT. Staff starts tracking and understanding service impacts when part of the IT infrastructure changes or when major incidents occur, so teams begin implementing configuration management processes—along with the beginnings of a Configuration Management Database (CMDB)—for better insight into supported IT assets.

Key capabilities and processes to implement include Problem and Change Management. Implement Service Level Management so IT teams can track and communicate how well they support the business and users. Self-Service capabilities, including a Service Catalog, ramp up to give users more options to help resolve common issues or requests themselves, including easy access to search and find information.

Metrics become less operational and more focused on supported services. Example KPIs include number of incidents against a service, number of changes against an asset, number of releases against a key business application, and total unplanned downtimes of vital services.

Achievement of this level means IT understands how work gets done in IT and is better able to prioritize actions. Coordinating IT changes reduces outages caused by planned and unplanned releases. The service desk resolves incidents more efficiently, leading to improved customer satisfaction.

However, business impacts from IT issues are still uncertain, and change analysis may be too slow compared to business expectations or requirements. Costs and risks are reduced due to greater visibility and control, timeframes for most IT projects are modest and more predictable, and overall service quality is increasing. End users feel they have the support resources necessary to remain productive, and the business has confidence in IT as a reliable partner that can keep key services and systems available and performing.



Level 4: Optimized

With a solid foundation in place with Levels 2 and 3, the service desk is highly efficient in meeting the requirements of business operations and keeping employees productive. Now it's possible for IT teams to look around and figure out how they can become more a strategic partner and enabler for the business.

At this level, IT's goal is to be viewed as a key partner for other business units, or as one IT executive said, "We have a seat the table now." The focus shifts from an internal perspective to an external one that provides an improved and engaging user experience that better supports new business opportunities and initiatives. This is often combined with efforts to better coordinate and plan projects—with the frequent involvement of a Corporate Project Office (if there is one) given the larger scope and impact of business-critical projects.

IT interactions move beyond the service desk and Tier 1-2 support teams to include more collaboration across Line of Business (LOB) units. At this level, LOBs start recognizing how IT services impact business outcomes directly, for example, with customer- or channel-facing applications. IT roles and policies are more formalized, with LOBs more involved in determining policies and related services.

IT teams engage more with Development teams and the software-development lifecycle. One key reason why is because application bug fixes or enhancement requests often start out as an incident or problem from a customer or partner. Sharing that information and context helps foster greater collaboration, leading to improved DevOps processes and results. Increased efforts to better coordinate and plan key projects among cross-organizational teams often accompany this, once again sometimes with the help of the Corporate Project Office.

Key capabilities include Project Portfolio Management for better managing the risks of more involved projects. Release, Event, and Availability Management should also be in place to make it easier to maintain the uptime of critical services and better manage the risks of updates. A fully realized CMDB helps provide complete visibility into key IT sources and their relationships to business services and applications. This improves risk management around IT changes or unplanned incidents.

Metrics change from a view of IT services to a view that's more expansive of the IT portfolio, supporting key business capabilities. For example, rather than just counting service incidents—for example, an email outage—metrics should begin to measure the business impact.

Service management teams should have clear visibility of business and LOB priorities, and the relationship between business functions and IT services. IT can plan and coordinate activities across multiple teams more effectively, leverage automation across multiple tools and applications, and better support new business initiatives. It's not uncommon for LOBs to start contributing to IT financially. Costs, risks, and timeframes are reduced and more predictable, and service quality is good.

Level 5: Transformed

At this level, reactive issues and processes are well controlled; governance and policies are in place and performing well. A strong culture of collaboration extends throughout and beyond IT with proven results. IT is now poised to not only accelerate the business but to enable a digital transformation of the business.

At Level 5, the main business driver for digital transformation is to increase innovation and boost competitive advantage. IT is critical to a successful transformation of the business, working in partnership with the business and executive management in a cross-organizational approach. In a comprehensive Service Portfolio, projects, initiatives, and supplier relationships are tightly managed.

One of the best-known examples of digital transformation is Amazon. It started as an online reseller of books, branched out to more products, but now is a leader in cloud IT with its AWS platform. Amazon's IT teams became highly adept at delivering IT services internally to support its operations and employees; so good that it saw an opportunity to leverage its expertise and capacity as a service provider to

external companies. This is one example of a company taking advantage of its financial, risk, innovation, and management capabilities to drive a new opportunity where IT is the business.

All enterprise ITSM capabilities come into play, building upon the foundation from previous levels. Portfolio Management expands to take a larger view of Service Portfolios, often including a framework for Service Integration and Management (SIAM) to integrate IT services suppliers to provide a single view to the business. Financial Management should also be implemented, along with strong Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) processes, given the strategic nature of initiatives.

Data-driven insight is critical for success, with real-time analysis on data from multiple sources across IT and the business. Analytics are needed to continually improve existing services, as well as how to best use and deliver new technologies, including Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Executive dashboards and scorecards should focus on the business, with financial and risk metrics that clearly communicate results and forecasts for transformative initiatives.

At level 5, organizations have the people, processes, and technology in place to fully embrace innovation—with the ability to identify, track, and manage risk. Businesses are able to leverage IT and innovation as a competitive strength and enabler for new business opportunities. Costs and risks are highly visible and well managed, timeframes are shorter and responsive, and service quality is high, with IT and the business tightly aligned on goals and initiatives.

Summary

The ITSM Attainment Model is a roadmap to help IT teams understand their current level of attainment, with next steps and specific goals for continual improvement. It is not meant to be a firm checklist since not all capabilities and activities apply equally to every business.

Once organizations start to follow the attainment roadmap, they should consider that success requires dedicated efforts, with enough resources and capabilities in place to achieve desired goals along the way. Progression along the model must be viewed as a business initiative for ongoing improvement and transformation to support the business, not just as an IT project only. Metrics and reports should tell a supporting narrative to build ongoing support and investment for the goals at each level. Teams should remember that this is an ongoing journey where each improvement and realized milestone should be recognized and celebrated as the successes they indeed are.

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