

Chapter 4

Business Continuity Planning in Business–Aligned IT Service Management

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims at presenting the common planning issues in service-oriented Information Technology (IT) management. They include the following aspects - the key issues for implementing ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) based IT service management in practical case, how to improve the understandings of business services in IT operations as well as the role of business continuity planning (BCP) processes in IT service management. In commercial operations, it is common for IT functions to have different focus with business functions. Business-aligned IT management forms one of the missions for senior management especially the IT manager. The exercises in initiating and implementing BCP provide a platform for an organization's management to realize the mapping of IT and business operations, which kick-off the campaign of business-aligned IT services.

INTRODUCTION

Information Technology (IT) is one of many dependencies the organization has in the delivery of its products and services. It is a tool to support business functions for an organization. The introduction of IT into the business operation has caused substantial change from traditional manual processes into an era where the business operations are IT-enabled. One of the major concerns for a

customer using IT services for business functions is the quality of service and its created value. No matter in-source or out-source, it could be a masterpiece in service management for a service provider to support and deliver IT services to align with business goals.

In an organization's operation, business goals require IT support for effective communications and business processes automation. Conversely, the investment in IT infrastructure (network, system and applications) requires the substantiation of business needs. The gap created by the mismatch

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between business and IT is not uncommon in commercial operations. The results could be too technological which go beyond the understanding and expectation of business operations. Or insufficient resource allocation for IT makes it become fire-fighting mode of operations. Business-driven IT management is state-of-the-art in operations which relates to several management issues such as user's requirement, expectation, process, finance and technology.

Historically, Business Continuity Planning (BCP) was focused on protection against unlikely but large events such as fire, flood, natural disaster. The objective of this chapter is to make use of BCP to further extend its reach in general IT operational management to improve the efficiency of service team. The materials in this chapter outline the value of adopting BCP relevant processes during the course of service impact analysis. Service-dependency and resource-dependency are the key components in IT service management, which provide proactive response for event management to minimize respective impacts on business activities.

BACKGROUND

The existing service management standard, process management frameworks and the approaches for BCP processes are discussed below.

International Standard of IT Service Management

The international standard ISO/IEC 20000 Information Technology – Service Management series (ISO, 2005) is the world's first standard for IT Service Management (ITSM). The standard specifies a set of inter-related management processes, and is based heavily upon the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework. As a process-based standard, organizations developing service management tools, products and systems may use both specification and the code of practice in part 1

and part 2 respectively to develop tools, products and system that support service-oriented IT management. ISO/IEC 20000 specifies a number of related service management processes as shown in Figure 1.

In ISO/IEC 20000 **Part 1**. Specification, it lays out the objective and defines the requirements for each of the service management processes. To deliver managed services effectively and meet the business and customer requirements, it promotes the application of Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology/framework for all processes.

In ISO/IEC 20000 **Part 2**. Code of practice, it takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It recommends that the organizations aiming to achieve the standard should adopt common terminology and a more consistent approach to service management. It gives a common basis for improvements in services and provides a framework for use by supplier or service management tools. This part of ISO/IEC 20000 provides guidance to auditors and offers assistance to service providers planning service improvements.

ITIL

ITIL is owned by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) of UK and consists of a series of publications giving guidance on the provision of quality IT services, and on the processes and facilities needed to support them. Developed in the late 1980's, starting as a guide for UK government, the ITIL framework has proved to be useful to organizations in all sectors through its adoption by many service management companies. ITIL provides a comprehensive, consistent and coherent set of best practices for ITSM processes, promoting a quality approach to achieving business effectiveness and efficiency in the use of information systems. By the mid-1990s, ITIL was recognized as the world *defacto* standard for service management (OGC, 2001). ITIL focuses on providing high quality services with a particular focus on customer relationships.

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