FIVE BENEFITS OF EVALUATING SERVICE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE FOR ITIL COMPLIANCE

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When you invest in service management software, can you really be assured that you are getting IT Infrastructure Library® (ITIL®) processes out of the box and ready for use without customization? You can by utilizing the certification program sponsored by the UK Office of Government Commerce (OGC), which provides the designation of "ITIL® Process Compliant" to software products that support ITIL out of the box. This designation means that the certified software is driving true IT process improvements and efficiency in accordance with ITIL best practices. To be awarded this prestigious designation, the software must successfully complete rigorous testing for achieving ITIL fundamental processes in the areas it is designed to serve, such as incident and problem management, change management, request fulfillment, and event management.

Adopting the ITIL framework means using best practices for streamlining IT processes and aligning IT systems and services with the business outcomes they support. This certification program provides confidence in the solutions based on ITIL best practices. ITIL best practices can help IT organizations achieve the benefits of Business Service Management (BSM), a comprehensive approach and unified platform that helps IT organizations meet the needs of the business customer and at the same time cut cost, reduce risk, and drive overall business efficiency.

The Certification Process

The ITIL Process Compliant certification is a completely independent review. It is far more extensive and unbiased than self-reporting by vendors. In this process, a licensed assessor looks at the submitted software tools, examines the user documentation to make sure the processes are consistent with the software, looks at a vendor's process model, and evaluates what percentage of compliance the vendor has attained. A software tool can be certified as ITIL Process Compliant at one of three levels: Bronze, Silver, or Gold. The designation of Gold compliance (the highest level possible) indicates confirmation from at least three customers using the tool in a production environment for the ITIL process or processes evaluated.

Five Benefits of ITIL Process Compliance

By evaluating service management software for ITIL compliance, you can do the following:

1. SAFEGUARD YOUR INVESTMENT

With the ITIL Process Compliant certification, you'll know that the software you purchase is based on a tested best-practices program. Because ITIL is comprised of many different, interconnected processes,

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BMC Software was the first vendor to be awarded the new OGC-approved ITIL Process Compliant certification and trademark. As of this writing, the following BMC products have been certified:

Level	Tool	Processes Assessed
Gold	BMC Remedy Change Management 7.6	Change Management
Gold	BMC Remedy Service Desk 7.0, 7.5, 7.6	Incident Management, Problem Management
Gold	BMC Service Request Management 7.6	Request Fulfillment
Bronze	BMC Service Desk Express Suite 10.0	Incident Management, Problem Management
Bronze	BMC Service Impact Management 7.3 (Now part of BMC ProactiveNet Performance Management)	Event Management

most IT departments do not normally try to implement all of them at once. Instead, they start by choosing key processes to address strategic business outcomes. Then they apply the ITIL best-practice guidance for improvement — such as increasing efficiency, reducing manual errors, or lowering costs — by ensuring that the same steps are followed over and over. Software that is ITIL compliant helps with the challenges of integrating ITIL processes for business value realization.

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Incident management is the process that most IT organizations implement first because of how it impacts service quality. It's also one of the most critical services that businesses deliver to support their customers or end users. Technology that addresses incident management processes based on ITIL guidance can help the service desk become more customer-focused, proactive, and business-driven.

There is often a strong connection between the adoption of incident management and problem management.

As a result, the ITIL Process Compliant assessment allows for a joint certification of both processes using a single management tool. Both incident and problem management directly address customer satisfaction, quality of service, quality of response, and service availability. They focus on quickly restoring the service and then work to ensure that it continuously delivers business value at desired service levels by permanently fixing any problems that continue to arise.

ITIL process compliance is also critical for change management. Most IT system failures are related to poorly managed change brought on by ongoing technology innovations and continual shifts in business strategy — including upgrades, patches, new systems, and new technologies affecting both desktop systems and data centers. By gaining control of change management processes, you can eliminate the leading cause of unplanned IT failures. A solution that is certified as ITIL Process Compliant for change management should be able to deliver comprehensive policy, process management, and planning capabilities that help you increase the speed and consistency of implementing changes while also minimizing business risk and disruption. Change management also helps with organizational agility, such as in cloud-enabled environments for business service, platform, and infrastructure provisioning.

Another key area where ITIL process compliance is particularly important is request fulfillment. The service desk is often overloaded with repetitive end-user requests that limit IT's ability to focus on restoring critical business services and executing projects that deliver new value to the business. Many requests are for standard services, such as employee on-boarding, equipment requests, platform enablement, and password resets. Additionally, the back-office tasks for these types of

requests are often delayed, unfulfilled, or fulfilled manually, resulting in limited approval tracking, service level monitoring, and compliance assessment. This often results in delayed request fulfillment, inefficient and unreliable service delivery, and a reduction in users' perceived value of IT.

By using a solution that has been certified as ITIL Process Compliant for request fulfillment, IT can empower end users to take more control over their service requests through a self-service interface, while also improving the efficiency and effectiveness of processing end-user service requests. This helps to ensure high-quality service delivery, reduce costs, and provide greater customer satisfaction.

It's also important to consider ITIL process compliance for event management. An event management solution that meets these standards should be able to help your organization increase operational efficiencies and lower costs with a single platform for enterprise event, impact, availability, and performance management for physical, virtual, and cloud environments. This allows you to have confidence that the solution you are using can help IT focus on outage avoidance with predictive root cause and service impact capabilities. This can help you reduce mean time to repair (MTTR) and increase service levels.

2. ACHIEVE FASTER RAMP-UP TIME, WHICH YIELDS FASTER RESULTS

Using software that is certified as ITIL Process Compliant for incident management, for example, significantly accelerates the time to productivity for new service desk employees. This is important because support staff responsible for incident management have the highest churn rate of any of the IT functions. They typically stay in that position for only six to nine months.

People tend to go into service desk and incident management jobs — such as Level 1 and Level 2 service desk — as a means to move to another position. If you have to train an employee on a customized process and a tool customized to match that process, then your employees won't be fully effective for perhaps up to six months. And if the employee leaves the job three months later, you've wasted two-thirds of the employee's time just getting him or her up to speed.

By adopting software that supports ITIL best practices out of the box, a service desk employee can become productive much more quickly, usually within the first

month. In addition, because the assessment covers the user documentation to ensure it is ITIL complaint, staff efficiency increases, ensuring that tasks are done the same way every time, which reduces manual errors and ad hoc work.

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3. PROVIDE FASTER IMPLEMENTATION

Depending on how customized and specialized your current processes are, you can implement them significantly faster by using ITIL Process Compliant software. For example, the first step in the incident management process is incident registration. One company had an incident registration form that required 17 clicks and completion of 46 fields. Before implementing the ITIL incident management process, the company's incident registration form required fields for every possible situation and configuration. The tools had to take into account all the different types of situations and unique data required.

By adopting ITIL and ITIL Process Compliant software, the company's incident registration form has been reduced from 46 fields to just 12, decreasing registration time for new incidents by 70 percent. The service desk now collects only the minimum required data for decision support, so they can move the incident along based on best-practice processes and restore the service faster. The main goal for incident management is to restore the service as fast as possible, not to spend time managing the incident. Software that directly supports ITIL out of the box makes that possible.

4. SPEED THE PATH TO ISO/IEC 20000 ACCREDITATION

Your IT department trains and assesses your employees to determine their qualifications and their understanding of ITIL. Complementary to ITIL is the ISO/IEC 20000 standard, the first international standard for IT service management. The standard promotes adoption of an integrated process approach for effectively delivering managed services. Rather than validate software tools, the ISO/IEC 20000 certification is an assessment of your own IT department or organization as a means of showing that you've reached a level of maturity for delivery of your services. However, until recently, there has not been an officially sanctioned way to verify whether the vendors' tools that you purchased were certified.

With ITIL Process Compliant certification, that's changing. Now, your organization can get your IT staff trained, know that the product that you've purchased is ITIL aligned on a process-by-process basis, and then, with confidence, strive for ISO/IEC 20000 accreditation of your service delivery to the business.

5. ACHIEVE INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION

When you're evaluating software solutions for ITIL, look for independent verification that the vendor has embedded ITIL processes. When a product is labeled as ITIL Process Compliant for a specific process or processes, you can be confident that those ITIL processes are baked into that particular tool. This saves your organization time, helps reduce labor costs, and improves efficiency and overall organizational effectiveness.

To be awarded the designation of ITIL Process Compliant, the BMC Remedy IT Service Management Suite successfully completed rigorous testing for ITIL fundamentals in incident and problem management, change management, request fulfillment, and event management. This included an analysis of software capability, user documentation, and process flows to ensure that customers receive an ITIL compliant solution out of the box. For more information, visit www.bmc.com.

ABOUT THE ITIL PROCESS CERTIFICATION LEVELS

The **Bronze** ITIL Process Compliant certification is for new tools that have not yet been implemented in a production environment by customers. The vendor may complete this assessment to assure customers that the tool is compliant with ITIL recommendations for a particular process.

The **Silver** certification, like the Bronze certification, assures customers that the tool is compliant with ITIL recommendations for a particular process. This level of certification also indicates that the solution has been implemented in a live production environment, with customer references verified by the assessor.

The **Gold** certification, currently the top level, is awarded only when the tool passes the process assessment and the vendor provides three or more references from actual customers. These customers must verify that they are using the tool in line with ITIL practices in a production environment and that the processes adhere to ITIL guidelines when using the tool off the shelf. These claims must be verified by the assessor.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Orr, director of service management for BMC Software, has more than 30 years of experience in managerial, consulting, marketing, and technical positions for IT service management strategies and implementations. He has helped numerous BMC customers worldwide with Business Service Management (BSM) strategies, education, and implementations. Anthony is currently working on the ITIL V3 publication update project as an author. He is also a senior examiner for APMG with responsibilities for the ITIL V3 exams and scheme. Anthony is a frequent speaker on best practices at industry events and BMC customer forums. He has authored numerous white papers, pamphlets, podcasts, videos, and articles on service management topics. He is certified in ISO 20000 and ITIL Foundation, Practitioner, Service Manager, and ITIL V3 Expert levels and holds a B.A.A.S. degree in computer information science.

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Business thrives when IT runs smarter, faster and stronger. That's why the most demanding IT organizations in the world rely on BMC Software across distributed, mainframe, virtual and cloud environments. Recognized as the leader in Business Service Management, BMC offers a comprehensive approach and unified platform that helps IT organizations cut cost, reduce risk and drive business profit. For the four fiscal quarters ended December 31, 2010, BMC revenue was approximately $2 billion. Visit **www.bmc.com** for more information.

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