



ITIL – *Lite*

A Right-sized Approach to
IT Support Services
for Small to Medium Business

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Just like many large enterprises, small to medium (SMB) size organizations are heavily dependent upon their technology infrastructure to run their business. While this infrastructure may not be as complex as an enterprise, the pressure and challenge of keeping the business engine purring is more acute due to a lack of IT resources, budget and the tools to ensure high levels of service all the time. The importance of maximizing productivity for every IT staff member is critical to the success of your overall business. Many SMB IT groups struggle to just keep your technology up and running let alone focus on high value projects to increase productivity. Unfortunately this creates a viscous cycle that will eventually be lost.

This paper provides a down-to-earth overview of what you can do to increase IT productivity and end user service levels without high expense and costly implementations in a digestible approach.

The approach suggests implementing common sense business processes along with efficient tools that leverage your existing infrastructure to substantially increase your productivity as an IT support organization. We will use the basic ideas in ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and apply automation via Crow Canyon's Support Center suite of tools.

What is ITIL?

ITIL is a set of guidelines for delivery of IT Services. These guidelines provide a unified framework that allows IT support to become much more proactive and at the same time more productive. It was developed in England in the 1980's and has become a defacto standard for enterprise level management of IT Services. These definitions were compiled in a set of 14 books and covered every area from Incident Management through Configuration Management. Intended for organizations managing 1000s of PCs by large IT groups, the framework while powerful is business process heavy and not applicable directly to the SMB IT organization. However, there is opportunity to learn from this unified approach and apply the concepts in a simpler, more efficient manner to smaller IT organizations. We shall call this ITIL – *Lite*.

ITIL – *Lite*, a unified framework for Small to Medium Business.

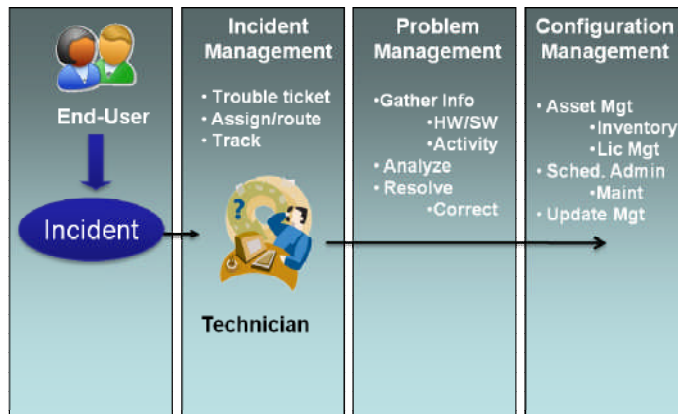
ITIL is designed for IT organizations with many departments potentially spread across the organizations where business process workflow and structured communication and approvals are critical. Its framework is business process heavy with many levels of workflow implemented.

SMB IT organizations often have 15 or less resources managing 10s to 100s of desktops. These IT resources may serve in multiple roles across Support (Help Desk incidents), Administration (ie. LAN management) and Configuration management (deploying new applications, upgrades and hardware). They talk daily, and work together closely. The very nature of their environment is often reactive and can sometimes become chaotic.

Key to their productivity is the ability to quickly address and track issues while establishing a more proactive approach to IT Service Management. What they need are a set of simple processes and the tools that automate these processes leveraging their existing infrastructure (collaboration, email, and network).

If we look at the typical process flow in the SMB IT Support group, we see that it is often driven by an end-user call which starts the incident management process. The problem may be captured either manually or through a help desk or trouble ticket system. The manager may assign the incident to be resolved to a technician and he/she then goes about the process to resolve the problem, collecting and analyzing configuration data, change or event activity data and asking other technicians for past experience with this issue. The specific incident is resolve and then the IT Manager reviews the issue to decide if it is a more global issue that must address as part of their change management tasks.

The figure below shows the process step by step.



Today, this process is typically a time consuming manual process or somewhat automated with individual utilities and tools.

The ITIL-Lite provides a framework for automating this process using integrated



approach. ITIL-Lite addresses the following IT Service areas:

- **Incident Management** – the process of capturing, tracking, assigning and managing trouble tickets and communicating with the end-user.
- **Problem Management** –the detection, analysis, resolution and prevention of incidents. It includes collecting configuration (HW/SW)

data, activities (events, changes) which relate to the asset involved. Analyzing the data and defining the underlying cause of the incident. Then includes the resolution or fix of the incident and how it may relate to a larger problem.

- **Configuration Management** – Is the identification of the hardware and software configuration, the tracking of changes and the administering of updates, and the installation of new hardware and software.
- **Service Level Management** – is the definition, capture and measurement of level of service to the end-user community. It is the primary way to set goals (uptime, response time etc.) and measure the IT groups performance.

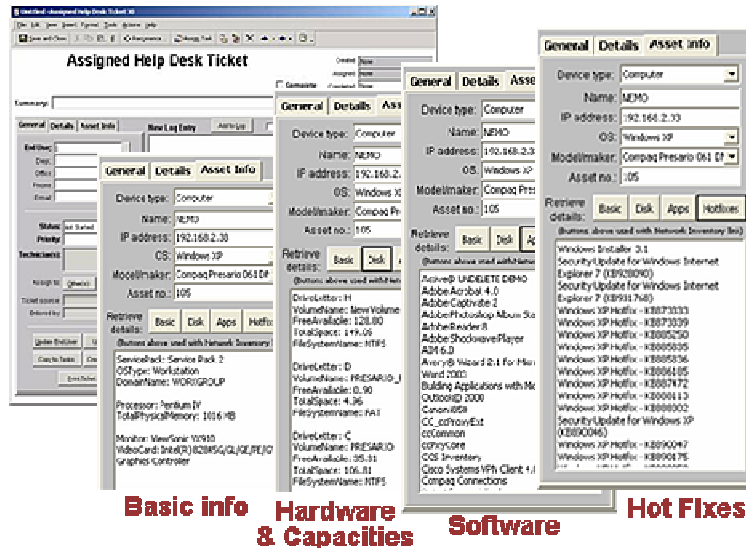
There are many ways to group IT processes and activities, for instance some list change management on its own or as a part of configuration as we have done. Regardless, the point is that all these processes are minimally required in SMB IT organizations and are critical to maximizing productivity and service levels.

Software's Role in ITIL-Lite

The role of Software in Successful Implementation of ITIL-Lite

Software cannot in itself implement ITIL-Lite in an organization. However it is an integral part of automating the processes within ITIL-Lite. Crow Canyon has designed its applications and tools to work together to promote productivity by bringing the right information and the right tools to the technician at the right time in the process. This allows the technician to concentrate on getting the asset or user back online rather than leaving his station to visit the user's machine.

With Crow Canyon's Support Center tools, the end-user enters a trouble ticket right from an Outlook form, email or website (Outlook HelpDesk). This ticket is routed to the Help Desk staff for review and assignment. Once the appropriate



technician receives the ticket he/she can start the problem resolution process immediately. With the click of a button from the trouble ticket form, the technician can review all relevant hardware and software configuration information (CCS Network Inventory). Capacity status and event activities can be reviewed for the relevant desktop or asset (CCS RemoteDesktop). Also, any relevant past incidents and resolutions can be accessed from the knowledgebase (Outlook HelpDesk). Armed with this information and never leaving the trouble ticket screen, the technician determines an incorrect update was done for a driver and uses a remote control tool (CCS RemoteDesktop) to fix the problem on the spot. The technician then logs the change (CCS ChangeMgr) so that it is tracked and can be reviewed for further action.

The task is now complete, the end-user is emailed a resolution note, and the service attributes are put into the service level log database for inclusion to future reporting and measurement.

Like the ITIL-Lite process, the software to support it must be efficient, and flexible in its implementation. It should leverage your existing infrastructure and not require redundant hardware, software or administrative tasks. A vast majority of SMB's technology infrastructure is based upon Microsoft Exchange or SharePoint and Outlook as the underlying collaboration platform. Your software should exploit these platforms and operate as an integral part of your infrastructure.

CCS Support Center

