



**ITIL V3: The Past & The Future**  
**The Evolution Of Service Management Philosophy**

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PinkLink – May 2007



It has often been said that the only constant is change! In the dynamic world we live in, this is true of all organic things and ITIL® is no different. From its humble beginnings as an internal UK government initiative, to its growth and adoption as a global best practice and standard for Service Management, ITIL has taken many steps along the road of progress and maturity.

The *ITIL Refresh Publications & Newsletters* published by the TSO have given us some interesting insight into the future of IT Service Management as documented by ITIL. You will find links to these documents on Pink Elephant's [ITIL v3 - Information Central](#) webpage.

It is my view that ITIL v3 is definitely taking a major step in the right direction. We can observe a glimpse of this from a table that was published as part of the *ITIL Refresh Newsletter, 1st Edition, Autumn 2006*. I would like to call your attention to that table.

ITIL v2	ITIL v3
Business & IT Alignment	Business & IT Integration
Value Chain Management	Value Service Network Integration
Linear Service Catalogs	Dynamic Service Portfolios
Collection of Integrated Processes	Service Management Lifecycle

From this table, we can identify and interpret some key evolutions in ITSM Philosophy.

**Alignment vs. Integration:** For many years, we have been discussing the topic of how to align Business and IT objectives. We have done this from the assumption that while they (business and IT) shared the same corporate brand, they were somehow two separate and very distinct functions. However, when does the line between the business process and its supporting technology begin to fade to a point where there is no longer a true ability to separate or revert back to manual options?

If you consider banking as an example, the Financial Management business processes and their supporting technologies are now so inter-dependent that they are inseparable. It is due to this growing realization that the term *alignment* is being replaced with the concept of *integration*.

**Value Chain Management vs. Value Service Network Integration:** When reading ITIL v2, you get the perception that the business and IT relationship is primarily about a business customer being supported by a single internal IT Service Provider (Value Chain Management). Little acknowledgement or guidance is provided about the reality of life never being quite that simple. Today's business and IT relationship for service provision is much more complicated and complex than the concept of a single provider meeting all business needs. We need to consider that yes, there are internal IT functions, but some are found within a business unit structure where others are providing a shared service model to multiple business units. Add to this the option of using different external outsourcing options or leveraging software as a service model and what you end up with is what ITIL v3 refers to as an *Integrated Value Service Network*.

**Linear Service Catalogs vs. Dynamic Service Portfolios:** While ITIL has always been referred to as an IT Service Management Framework, the primary focus up until now has been on the ten Service Support and Delivery processes. In previous versions of ITIL, the concept of a 'service' has almost been an afterthought or at least something you would get to later. Consider that in ITIL v2 the process of Service Level Management has, as one of its many deliverables, a Service Catalog which can be summarized from the theory as a brochure of IT Services where IT publishes the services it provides with their default characteristics and attributes or *Linear Service Catalog*.



In contrast to this, a *Dynamic Service Portfolio* can be interpreted as the product of a strategic process where service strategy and design conceive of and create services that are built and transitioned into the production environment based on business value. From this point, an actionable service catalog represents the published services and is the starting point or basis for service operations and ongoing business engagement. The services documented in this catalog are bundled together into fit-for-purpose offerings which are then subscribed to as a collection and consumed by business units.

**Collection Of Integrated Processes vs. Service Management Lifecycle:** Based on publicly available information, we know that the ITIL v3 core books are structured around a Service Lifecycle. This new structure organizes the processes we understand from ITIL v2 with additional content and processes we are waiting to hear more about within the context of the life span of IT Services. From this observation, we can see that the primary focus is shifting from process to IT Service. While processes are important, they are secondary and only exist to plan for, deliver and support services. This moves the importance and profile of the Service Catalog from being an accessory of the Service Level Management process to being the corner stone of ITSM.

As organizations evolve from a technology focus to a service orientation focus, these core changes to ITIL provide the context and ability to support this emerging reality.