LiveTime 3 and ITIL

White Paper
March 2006

What is ITIL and how is it relevant?

The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is a set of guidelines developed by the UK's Office of Government Commerce (OGC) documenting an integrated process based, best practice framework for managing IT services (*IT Service Management*).   ITIL defines overall IT Service management as one function and ten "core" processes that separate into two disciplines – one for IT Service Support, and one for IT Service Delivery.

IT Service Support	IT Service Delivery
- Service Desk	- Capacity Management
- Incident Management	- Financial Management
- Problem Management	- Availability Management
- Change Management	- Service Level Management
- Configuration Management	- Continuity Management
- Release Management	

The framework has been accepted by the international IT community as the de-facto best practice guide to automating IT service management and is now being implemented by many high profile companies to help align IT services with business initiatives.

While ITIL describes many best practices that should be pursued for organizations wanting to successfully manage *service support*, it does not provide any implementation details. ITIL consists of high-level guidelines and recommendations for organizations to reference when implementing the various processes and work-level procedures of automated support.

LiveTime Help Desk and LiveTime Support 3 can be used by organizations that want to fast track the adoption of an ITIL-based framework for its service support requirements.   Designed as a practical Service Management solution, LiveTime easily integrates into any enterprise infrastructure in a matter of hours.

LiveTime 3 and ITIL

LiveTime is a support / help-desk solution that enables enterprises to automate the service desk function using a combination of industry acknowledged best practices and best of breed technology. The LiveTime application automates the service desk process by enabling users to submit, track and manage support incidents using web-based technologies founded on J2EE. More importantly, because the support solution has been implemented using key elements of the ITIL guidelines, support departments can be confident that they have invested in a system that adheres to ITIL guidelines for Service Management.

LiveTime Help Desk and LiveTime Support 3 embraces key elements of the following ITIL *service support* and *delivery support* processes:
- Incident Management
- Configuration Management
- Service Level Management.

LiveTime Service Manager v4.0 will expand on these service support processes to include:
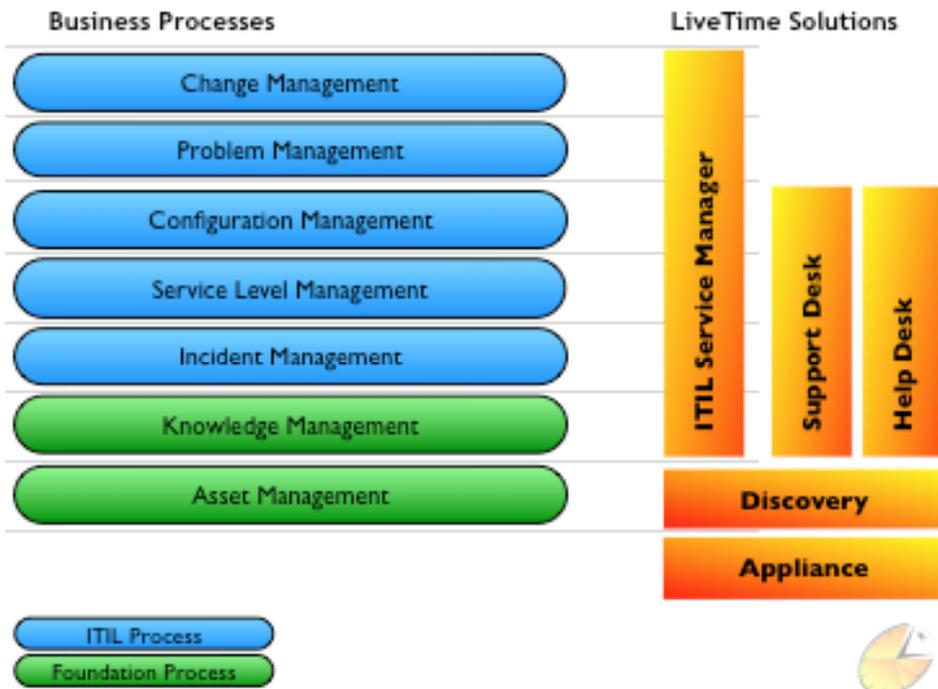- Problem Management
- Change Management

Figure 1: Outlines the business processes as they map to ITIL and the LiveTime product line.

LiveTime 3 implementation of ITIL processes

Incident Management

"The Incident Management process aims to restore normal service operation as quickly as possible and minimize the adverse impact on the business. This ensures that the best possible levels of service quality and availability are maintained."[1]

The out-of-the-box capabilities of LiveTime are compatible with key elements of the Incident Management Process defined by ITIL.   Specifically, incoming service requests can be submitted by the customer, the service desk staff, or via third party applications using the LiveTime Web Services gateway. Configurable business rules defined in the LiveTime escalation engine optimally dispatch incidents to the most appropriate specialist, with follow up notifications that ensure the fastest path to resolution.

Specialists using LiveTime gain immediate access to all information that relates to an incident, this includes an audit trail of all actions and notes, a complete client history and asset / configuration item information. Also, knowledge base articles can be created from incident solutions and accessed at any time to help resolve support issues quickly and consistently. Specialists can query the knowledge base using either the full-text retrieval or fuzzy logic interfaces.

Configuration Management

"Configuration Management provides a logical model of the infrastructure or a service by identifying, controlling, maintaining and verifying the Configuration Items in existence."[4]

LiveTime uses a centralized Configuration Management Database (CMDB) to manage and control infrastructure information. At it simplest level the CMDB can be used to store corporate hardware and software asset details and their dependencies/relationships. LiveTime Configuration Item Type templates are included and can be customized to include user-defined attributes.

The CMDB also allows Configuration Item (CI) baselines to be set so a CI can be returned to a previous state if required. The fully configurable CI lifecycle editor allows the transitional states of different CIs to be pre-configured, which determines the states of change for each CI. Service catalogs can also be

---

[1] The ITIL Story, Pink Elephant Inc., pp5
[4] The ITIL Story, Pink Elephant Inc., pp5

established to define business services and the supporting infrastructure via the CI relationships.

LiveTime's active CMDB can be scheduled to automatically synchronize with third party asset discovery and management tools. This ensures service desk staff has access to the most up-to-date infrastructure information when working on support issues.

Service Level Management

"Service Level Management's goal is to maintain and improve IT service quality. This occurs through a constant cycle of agreeing, monitoring and reporting IT service achievements"[5]

The out-of-the-box capabilities of LiveTime Help Desk and LiveTime Support v3x are compatible with key elements of the Service Level Management Process defined by ITIL. In particular, organizations can use LiveTime's Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to define, manage and track service delivery levels.   Once the service level rules have been specified, LiveTime uses SLAs to control the workflow of an incident. Dashboards are used to monitor, in real time, compliance for all service support processes against SLAs defined in the system.

Conclusion

Organizations adopting ITIL best practices for its support / help desk operations can rely on LiveTime as the deployment platform of choice for implementing scalable ITIL processes. LiveTime adheres to the key elements of ITIL relating to implementing an automated support service, thus enabling organizations to focus on meeting and exceeding customer support expectations.

---

[5] The ITIL Story, Pink Elephant Inc., pp5