

# IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT with FitSM Version 3

A practical and lightweight  
framework for IT

Anselm Rohrer | Dierk Soellner

## IT Service Management with FitSM Version 3

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framework for IT**



# Colophon

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# Foreword

I have watched for 40 years as organizations struggle to gain the hoped-for value from an investment in ITSM best practices, such as ITIL. Organizations make the same mistakes again and again with each adoption of the latest shiny new best practice framework. Often it is unclear why they are being adopted; there is a poor understanding of where to start; they are not applied in an end-to-end approach; employees are not engaged in designing the working practices; the adoptions are often oversized for what is needed; smaller organizations struggle with the size and complexity of the frameworks and, all importantly in my mind, adoptions are mostly not embedded in a culture of continual improvement. There is an expression “Cannot see the wood for the trees”, meaning that people focus too much on the details of something and so they do not notice what is important about the thing as a whole, which is a common characteristic for the failures mentioned above.

Is FitSM the next Shiny New thing and will we make the same mistakes again?

In this book, and the subsequent practical follow up book, Anselm Rohrer and Dierk Soellner draw upon their extensive experiences in small and medium sized organizations to provide a ‘practical and application-oriented path’ to address the challenges mentioned above. The approach is based upon 82 concise requirements and draws upon ISO/IEC 20000, COBIT and ITIL for content. These requirements help organizations see through the details into what is important. The author’s motto, drawn from FitSM, seems to be “keep it simple”, describing ‘what’ needs to be done, and focusing on 14 core processes – reducing the size and complexity of an ITSM adoption. As the authors stress, those requiring more can look to ITIL, COBIT or other extensive frameworks.

For the authors the strength of the FitSM approach lies in the focus on the ‘requirements’ to be met for a functioning IT service management system, supported by the ‘maturity assessment’ that provides a reference point for continual improvement. Continual improvement in my mind, and endorsed by the authors, needs to be a core capability. Yet according to my global survey, 76% score this as a ‘Weak’ to ‘Poor’ capability. Based upon findings from the assessment, the authors then recommend improving maturity

“In small steps with small changes”, with an emphasis on addressing the all-important ‘People’ factor, which I believe is the number one success or fail factor for adopting best practices. These small improvements are enabled by an easy-to-implement, simply structured approach, backed up by a role model, templates and implementation guides. The implementation guidance will appear in the follow up book to this publication.

Another strength lies in presenting the processes in a value-stream oriented way which fits in with a growing market shift towards value stream thinking and more agile ways of working. FitSM scopes the following value streams: Offer and Agree, Plan and Ensure, Monitor and Roll out, Eliminate and Prevent, Report and Improve, Protect and Secure and maps the 14 core processes across these value streams.

With recent shifts towards agile and DevOps ways of working, more organizations are adopting ‘principles’ to drive the all-important behaviors underpinning these new ways of working. I identified three core common principles shared by agile, DevOps, Lean and ITIL4 – these being ‘Focus on value’, ‘Collaboration and flow’ and ‘Continual learning and improving’. FitSM aligns powerfully with these, the authors placing an emphasis on what they label as systematic IT service management, focusing on ‘Service and customer orientation’, ‘Process orientation’, and ‘Continual improvement’ – once again, an example of focusing on what is important. This systematic approach is supported by the basic FitSM principles of the FitSM approach: Practical, Consistent, Sufficient and Expandable.

I am also delighted to see that the authors stress the importance of Governance, Customer Relationship Management and Service Portfolio Management. In my global surveys a massive 80% scored these as ‘Weak’ to ‘Poor’ capabilities, underpinning our long-standing poor alignment to business needs and priorities. This lack of alignment to business priorities has been the top scoring ‘Attitude, Behavior and Culture (ABC)’ worst practice chosen in global workshops for 15 years in a row!

Finally, the success of FitSM, as with any approach, stands or falls on the ‘people’ factor. Translating FitSM into sustainable, repeatable, desirable behaviors, underpinned by an organization-wide culture of continual improvement is the basic prerequisite for sustainable success. The authors have clearly stressed the importance of engaging people in an approach of continual improvement.

Embracing the philosophy of continual improvement, what I would like to see added to the next iteration of FitSM, is to extend the training and certification from the theoretical foundation and advanced courses, to more practice- and evidence-based certifications, adding as a requirement the adoption of an approach such as the 8-Field model to ensure that training outcomes are scoped up-front and are measured afterwards, to demonstrate the value from a training investment. Our global survey figures match findings from a Harvard study revealing that only 12% apply new skills learned in

Learning & Development programs to their jobs, and only 25% believe that training measurably improved performance. Combining a training approach like this, with the practical guidance from the authors, would be a recipe for continued success.

Paul Wilkinson





# Foreword of the authors

More than ever, the support of business processes by IT systems and applications is characterized by a high degree of penetration and dependency of operational processes. The use of IT ensures efficient work, increases productivity and often makes new business models possible in the first place. Large organizations and professional IT service providers have been focusing for years on establishing IT service management (for clarification of terms, see Section 2.1 IT service management). Defining processes based on best practice approaches makes it possible to provide IT services professionally.

When applying IT service management frameworks such as ITIL, small and medium-sized IT organizations in business and public administration face the challenge of distilling out the relevant parts for their own organization and transferring them into practical use with little effort. Often, those responsible have neither the financial resources nor the time to successfully complete this task. Thus, it's often the case that oversized process models are applied, complicated processes are implemented, unsuitable specifications are made, or examples and templates are used 'blindly' without the necessary adaptation. This problem has intensified with ITIL Version 4.

FitSM emerged from an EU-funded project, which was launched in part to help small and medium-sized businesses adopt best practices by right-sizing them for their organization using a continual improvement methodology. References to a "lean, lightweight approach" are more effective than a focus on organizational size as they are useful to everyone. EU funding ensures free availability after the end of the project, as the results must be made available to the general public free of charge. The history of the project is described in Section 1.1 History of FitSM.

## Target audience

This book is aimed at the following audiences:

- IT managers who want to establish high-quality, but at the same time lean and efficient IT processes.
- IT managers who want to evaluate the quality of their IT department according to objective criteria.

- IT employees who take on, or are expected to take on, organizational tasks in the future.
- IT staff, who are expected to place their own activities in the overall context in order to optimize them towards the organizational goal.
- Leaders of IT service companies who want to provide customer-optimized IT services and, if necessary, are looking for a way to have this certified.
- People who want to prepare for one of the FitSM certification exams, especially the Foundation and Advanced exams.

### **Motivation for the book**

FitSM has been a standard for IT service management for small and medium-sized enterprises since 2014. With this book, we have created a complete work from the various parts so that the target audience has a consistent entry point. In this way, we would intend to address the need for a complete work on simple IT service management and make the manual compilation of information from various PDF documents superfluous. Anyone interested in FitSM will now find further practical tips and, of course, all relevant information on FitSM sensibly compiled.

### **Objective**

This book bundles the individual components of the FitSM family into a cohesive body of work. This turns a collection of important official sub-documents into a coherent presentation of a lightweight approach to IT service management that:

- Is based on important terms (FitSM-0);
- Includes the goals and activities of the proposed processes (FitSM-2);
- Provides a generic role model (FitSM-3);
- Incorporates the requirements for IT service management (FitSM-1) and the characteristics in terms of a maturity model (FitSM-6).

A framework is described that shows small and medium-sized IT organizations in clear and practicable ways how to meet their current challenges. In doing so, we have linked the requirements from FitSM-1 as the central basis of FitSM in the chapters with the associated capability levels from FitSM-6. The practical example, which runs like a thread through the individual chapters, was important to us. This makes the suggestions and contents of FitSM more tangible for use in the operational world. This practical example also integrates elements from FitSM-4 (providing templates and examples) and FitSM-5 (providing selected implementation guides). These two areas are not part of the core of FitSM, but are very helpful for its practical application.

Perhaps you are among the people who believe that another framework for IT service management is not necessary and that simply omitting individual elements would not make such a framework any easier or more useful to use. However, the experience of the two authors from training and consulting mandates shows that many managers and employees in small and medium-sized IT departments lack a truly usable and

practice-oriented approach. Even in larger organizations, FitSM can now be used to make IT service management more understandable and assist in its implementation. Furthermore, in times when DevOps is increasingly finding its way into companies, FitSM can be a great help in practically implementing IT service management within agile teams. FitSM provides a practical path for IT service management, especially in these smaller IT organizations. Instead of extensive process descriptions and further detailed proposals, it shows the IT manager what needs to be achieved on the basis of transparent requirements. These requirements are based on the ITSM standard ISO 20000 and specify the goal, which can then be addressed by the IT department. Instead of working through many pages of best practice, we show the most important elements and enable the reader to develop himself and his area of responsibility step-by-step.

### **How to work with this book**

This book explains the basics of FitSM. Among other things, it brings together the aspects of the various original documents thematically in a simple, consistent and readable form. The second book *FitSM – A practical implementation guide* contains practical examples and tips for its implementation in IT organizations. This first book provides an understanding of the FitSM framework. It helps the individual reader to build up knowledge about FitSM. In the second book, questions about the introduction of FitSM are clarified, i.e. FitSM is presented in the context of organization-wide use.

If you want to strengthen your knowledge right away, you can read both books simultaneously. First the theoretical basics in this book and immediately afterwards the corresponding chapter for the practical implementation. Of course, it is also possible to read this book completely first and the book *FitSM – A practical implementation guide* afterwards. For those who simply want to pass the exam, the contents of this book are enough.

### **Structure**

First, we provide an introduction to FitSM as well as basic concepts and terms in this book. This is followed by a description of the general requirements with which FitSM identifies overarching aspects of successful IT service management. This is followed by a roughly structured description of FitSM's 14 processes, each of which is combined with the associated roles and the requirements.

The description of the processes always follows the same structure. At the beginning, the goal or the main task of the process is presented in a few sentences. This is followed by the process description and an explanation of the most important process-specific roles from FitSM-3. The requirements for the process from FitSM-1 are then listed. The terms and phrases used within these requirements are already explained in the process description. For each of the requirements, the capability levels are considered. This illustrates what is important for an effective and efficient implementation of the process.

**Practical implementation (second book)**

The second book offers a practical guide to FitSM implementation with invaluable insights for organizations looking to adopt this IT service management framework efficiently. The book provides a wealth of actionable tips and best practices, distilled from real-world experiences, to help readers navigate the complexities of FitSM adoption. Through detailed case studies of two distinct organizations, it illustrates the versatility and adaptability of FitSM across different business contexts, offering readers a blueprint for using the framework to meet their specific needs. By combining practical advice with concrete examples, this book serves as an indispensable resource for IT professionals and managers, enabling them to swiftly and effectively implement FitSM within their own organizations.

**Acknowledgements**

Even though both authors have many years of experience in the field of IT service management, such a work cannot be done without broad professional support. With the objective of putting our experience and the resulting knowledge together with the FitSM standard in such a way that it offers real value for the readers from the perspective of small and medium-sized IT organizations, we have deliberately set the bar high.

We would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have made significant contributions to this book: Dr. Michael Brenner and Dr. Thomas Schaaf assisted in the technical editing for the German edition in 2016 and provided valuable comments as well as contributing the chapters on the history of FitSM and the description of the federation-based approach. It was important to both authors that this support provided an official acknowledgement from the FitSM project and the active working group. Finally, due to the generous permission of the association ITEMO e.V. as the rights holder of FitSM to use the logo and the word mark, we believe our book will be seen and used as the standard work on FitSM.

Both authors would like to take this opportunity to thank their wives and daughters for their moral support. Both families have always struck a healthy balance for us. On one hand, they gave (and still give) us space and time for our passion in IT service management and “going the extra mile”, whilst on the other hand, they permanently provide distance to it. They help us to clear our heads, gain distance and enjoy life.

For better readability, a more masculine spelling (“process manager”) is used in this book. We have tried to use gender-neutral terms in places where reading comfort is not affected.

**Contact**

The world of IT service management is still in motion. Both authors have permanent contacts in practice, which open up new questions and other perspectives. With this exchange, which is supported by publications, projects and lectures, a lightweight approach can be continually developed. The website *fitsm.online* offers further information and current references. Contributions are regularly published on topics that cannot find space in a reference book of this kind.

With this book, we would like to open up another source of contact. We would be happy to hear your opinion about FitSM and this book, or about practical IT service management in general. Take the opportunity to tell us your questions and challenges, to discuss them together and to work out solutions. You can reach us in different ways:

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# 1

## Introduction

Business processes in companies are increasingly dependent on working information technology. The IT departments of large companies have long since recognized this fact and are endeavoring to align their operations with proven processes and organize themselves within the framework of IT service management. The need to reduce downtime, plan and implement changes or integrate external service providers in a targeted manner is growing. This affects IT departments in small and medium-sized companies as well as in public administration. The same applies to IT service providers who offer and bill companies for their services. Their customers are also demanding more reliable services and, increasingly, the provision of agreed services instead of project work on a 'time and materials' basis.

All of the organizations mentioned – just like the IT within large organizations – are faced with the growing challenge of organizing IT more in line with customer requirements and building up a reliable organization and a changed quality awareness in addition to enhancing the technical expertise of their own staff. However, they are often faced with the problem that the frameworks developed for larger organizations, such as ITIL and ISO/IEC 20000, are too powerful and complex for their needs or make excessive demands. IT managers of many mid-sized companies consider the established ITIL framework to be too complex, or even completely deny its suitability for mid-sized companies.<sup>12</sup> This is where FitSM comes in. The most important components of established frameworks were worked out and consolidated under the principle “Keep it simple” to the most necessary. FitSM aims to improve things in the right places. In contrast to classical approaches, FitSM focuses on describing ‘what’ needs to be done. The ‘how’ is left to practical implementation and can thus be adapted to individual conditions.

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- 1 Study by *msg services ag* with participation of nearly 300 companies.
- 2 Note by the authors: Statements about other frameworks in IT service management are to be seen in the respective context and are not meant to be generally judgmental. All established frameworks, especially ITIL and ISO/IEC 20000, have their advantages and have earned their current status. Knowledge of these frameworks is also useful for an approach according to FitSM. Therefore, they have been integrated into this book in many places, especially in Section 1.4 Related standards and frameworks.