

Smartform White Paper

Introduction

How do you orchestrate an IT Service Management quick hit that generates guaranteed executive support for a larger ITIL cost reduction initiative? Where do you turn for an immediate customer satisfaction improvement, visible to every employee in the organization, but don't want to buy expensive commercial software packages up front that take months to implement? What do you do to rein in the explosion of business initiated SaaS solutions for niche services?

The answer is Smartform.

Vision

A business manager at a large energy services company fires up his browser and pulls up the new "Smartform" that was launched several months ago. He has a new employee starting next week and needs him to hit the ground with his feet running. Smartform automatically knows who the business manager is, everyone that works for him, and everything this new employee needs to perform their intended job function. In just 3 clicks, he's done populating the shopping cart, fires off the request and promptly forgets about it because he knows everything the new hire needs - laptop, phone, PDA, specialized software applications, security and remote access will be provisioned by the IT department perfectly and on time.

It wasn't always this way. In fact it was a nightmare and he usually delegated the task to his admin who fought the battle on his behalf. IT request forms were on line but there was one for PC's, one for software, one for security access and another for phones. Then the phone calls would start from the IT service desk asking for clarification and many times, the dreaded denial requiring the manager to go back to Go and start over. His company recently completed an IT Service Management transformation using the ITIL framework and life from his perspective got better, almost overnight.

Reality

The No. 1 job of every CIO used to be keeping his customers happy. With downsizing and cost reduction dominating business strategies, shared services organizations like HR, Accounting, Supply Chain and IT have turned to self service technology but CIO's have not only failed to properly address the requests process within IT but have lost the fight to enforce standards across the other shared services functions. The result in a myriad of silo user interfaces provided by SaaS vendors that managers and employees must navigate in order to get their jobs done. Parochial cost reduction initiatives by these support organizations have resulted in costing the company far more money in terms of lost time and moral across the entire employee population, day after day. If you did that to your external customers, you would be out of business.

IT Service Management is a complex challenge. Many IT groups are still straddled with heterogeneous legacy environments resulting from rampant M&A activity and compounded by traditional IT organization structures, fostering silo solutions for requesting PC's, printers, peripherals, software, phones and security access. Never has the term "cobbler's son" been more apparent than in the way IT

Service Management is funded in most IT organizations. Users can't find the right forms. When they do, it's so confusing, most give up and turn it over to someone "in the know" or they call the Help Desk, if you have still have one. When they finally figure out how to submit the request, it then goes into the black hole of Calcutta never to be heard of again. You would also think that basic questions like what services are available, what are the policies that govern those services, how much does each service cost and what to expect from each service - would be addressed up front in easy to understand laymen's terms.

Change

Historically, ITSM functions sit on the lowest rung in the IT department pecking order and suffer from the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" syndrome. As a band aid, many CIO's have instituted VIP processes that allow company brass to fast track through the maze but it's only a matter of time before someone on top calls for a stop to the madness, even in these economic times. User expectations have gone up exponentially. People go home at night and order things on line using slick ecommerce tools in seconds and then come into work and it's like the dark ages. If you are not administering at least an annual satisfaction survey you should be. IT services, in particular IT security provisioning, is the biggest end user dissatisfier for most IT organizations today.

Barriers

The ITIL framework, providing best practice guidelines for IT Service support and delivery, has been gaining steam in the US, but many companies have been slow to adopt. Most focus on the Help Desk or NOC using Incident Management systems from BMC, HP, CA and a growing list of tier 2 providers that swear that they are ITIL compliant. However, none of them do IT Requests for hardware, software and security very well. The problem is that each vendor category provides their own self service portal and CMDB's. The Incident management vendors provide a "services" capability and catalog CMDB. The Asset Management vendors also have a CMDB and go deep on the hardware and software asset configuration, procurement and licensing side as well as handle delivery. Security Identity Management solutions provide an entitlement CMDB of sorts and have their own web interface to request, approve and audit security access and entitlement compliance. As a result there are a lot of bad home grown request systems out there that keep chugging away year after year, generate a lot of complaints and hidden cost.

Solution

Like all frameworks, ITIL is big and onerous and focuses heavily on IT back office efficiencies - which is where the big cost reduction plays can be made. However, what you need to gain momentum and build business support is a quick hit that benefits the business consumer in a big way. One way to get your company to support ITIL is to focus on the front office of IT and improve customer satisfaction by making it easier to deal with your organization - and the front door to IT is Smartform.

Smartform is a one stop shopping user interface that provides easy to use wizards, menus and drop down selection lists that drastically reduce guess work and rework due to one primary feature: free form

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data entry is not allowed, anywhere. The following chart lays out the best practice features of Smartform and serves as a benchmark for requirements when designing and evaluating solutions. Without the requisite infrastructure in place, you may have to “simulate” some of the functionality by constructing interim data bases or leave it “under construction” until infrastructure improvements catch up. The success of Smartform in your organization will help prioritize which infrastructure improvements are worth investing in. Cost reductions generated by implementing the big process reengineering improvements and supporting tool sets, including commercial Incident, Asset and Security Management applications, are much easier to justify when they translate into simultaneous improvements in customer service.

Smartform Feature / Best Practice	How it Works	Benefit
Service Catalog	<p>A Service Catalog is exposed in the Smartform web interface, listing IT services and service bundles by category with search capability. For each service or service bundle, the catalog provides detail configuration, entitlement, cost and SLA information. The catalog incorporates request approval criteria, routing and service-level management process instructions and allows flexible publication and management of new services. Fulfillment performance may even be tracked in the catalog so users can review historic results. 5 star rating systems may even be incorporated as an auxiliary measure to surveys.</p>	<p>Demand Management- If it's not on the list you can't order it, without a lot of pain. Automated Approvals - Approval routing is clearly established, ensuring justification has been verified up front and budget dollars are available. Clear Policies – entitlement and approval documentation is available at the time of request, no guessing Enforceable Standards – only standard components can be ordered. In order to request an exception, it must be approved, standardized and incorporated into the Service Catalog Effective Charge Back – Users understand exactly, the total cost each service, and can weigh trade-offs. Service Level Management – User expectations are set up front to match what will be delivered, increasing satisfaction along with clear reporting of performance results, in real time. Scalability – Other Business Unit Managers can "publish" services provided by their function, just like IT</p>
Event Based Wizard	<p>To further assist the highest frequency type requests, users are provided a wizard to lead them through “events” such as New Hire, Transfers and Terminations, using the Service Catalog. For example, provisioning a new employee event likely includes identifying a location workspace, ordering a land line and cell phone, ordering a network connection, ordering a computer, creating a login, and applying any application group permissions</p>	<p>Customer Satisfaction – improves the speed and reliability of complex requests Reduced Training – Eliminates or significantly reduces training requirements Less Errors – Users get it right the 1st time Cost reduction - Help Desk calls are significantly reduced. In fact, when the Help Desk is called, they will use Smartform, same as an end user, completing the transaction on behalf of the user in much less time than</p>

	and other security provisioning entitlements. The wizard prompts the user through each step of the request process eliminating the need to remember catalog items and screen processing flow. Some of these items (ordering a phone, ordering a computer) can be done in parallel, while other tasks must be sequentially, based on dependencies.	before.
Minimum Data Entry	In addition to point and click catalog item and event based wizard menu selection, Smartform can pre-fill almost all requisite data entry requirements with the goal of eliminating all free form data entry. Customer records including organization structure can be pulled directly from Active Directory or a Meta directory for all requestor, recipient and approver information. Asset management CMDB's provide all current recipient hardware and software. Request selection menus are provided from a combination of Service Catalog configurations, Security Role based templates or Model As templates as well as custom tables maintained dynamically by the IT Service organization. By eliminating free form text entry, IT can nail the back office requirements the 1 st time and there is no request interpretation error or call backs.	<p>Customer Satisfaction – less work and its intuitive, easy to use</p> <p>Reduced IT Provisioner Call backs – level 2 technician call backs to requesters in order to clarify requirements, are nearly eliminated</p> <p>Reduced Errors – almost 100% point and click makes getting it right the 1st time a snap</p>
Batch Processing	High turnover areas like call centers, companies with high seasonal employment spikes, employee kiosk setup and organization changes are all situations that require the ability to process requests for more than one individual at a time.	Ease of Use –If 20 individuals are all affected by the same change or requirement, nothing is more frustrating than filling out a separate form for each person.
Approval Workflow	Standard approval template activation is built into the Service Catalog including the ability to alter the approvers and approval order. Workflow is provided with email notifications and nagging reminders. Where possible, pre-approved manager and data owner configurations are provided based on dollar level of the request or based on pre-established “roles” for both asset and security related requests. Where approvals are necessary, the use of delegates and nagging mechanisms, both reduce lead time.	<p>Reduced Lead Time –Approval delay can be reduced significantly through automated workflow templates and nagging reminders. Using Roles based provisioning for security and asset request, approvals can be eliminated entirely.</p> <p>Audit Compliance – Manual approvals are logged and time/date stamped. SOX compliance deficiencies are eliminated.</p>
Roles Based Security Templates and Asset Configurations	ITIL v3 mainstreams security as a service bringing Identity Management systems to the forefront - and for good reason. Security provisioning is probably the biggest dissatisfier when users rate their IT departments. Roles Based Security	<p>Customer Sat – provisioning reduced from weeks to minutes using pre-approved templates and application connectors</p> <p>Reduced Access Creep – Free form and Model As, which may grant unwarranted entitlements, are nearly eliminated</p>

	<p>Management (RBSM) templates can be developed that allow selection of pre-approved security configurations based on the job function of the recipient. Click the “Call Center Representative #1” security template and this individual will get everything they need to perform their job. Further, if “connectors” are in place to automate the actual provisioning process, the target applications are provisioned in minutes with zero touch. Workers are assigned everything (and only what) they need to perform their job function eliminating access creep. These same roles can be used to create asset configurations - what hardware and software applications are required to perform a job function.</p>	<p>Audit Compliance – reduced access creep and the annual user access attestation verification effort is significantly reduced. Sarbanes Oxley deficiencies, in particular, termination provisioning errors are nearly eliminated.</p> <p>Cost Reduction – Roles based security provisioning can drastically reduce the requirement for IT Risk staff and roles based asset configurations can significantly reduce the labor associated with imaging and building new or replacement computers. In addition, roles based asset configurations reduces software license creep without a sophisticated metering solution.</p>
<p>Shopping Cart</p>	<p>All service catalog and event based selections items are moved into a cart providing all the functionality of an Amazon.com shopping experience. Users can visually verify their request as its being built, comprehend cumulative costs and make adjustments on the fly before committing the request.</p>	<p>Ease of Use – allows the user to verify and edit their request, save the request and complete it later. Users can even reuse previous requests to save even more time.</p> <p>WOW Factor – Shopping carts may be old news, but in a corporate application, it will be perceived as innovation</p>
<p>Real Time Status, Escalations, Satisfaction Survey</p>	<p>Once the request is submitted, the user is presented a tracking number and an email confirmation providing a link to a request status portal. Status against key milestones is indicated on a progress bar along with links for further detail drill down and escalation. IT management is automatically notified when SLA’s are breached. Request history and performance are visible and a satisfaction survey is provided at closure supporting a 5 star rating system that becomes public domain in the service catalog.</p>	<p>Reduced Help Desk/NOC Call Volume – status checking and escalation are now self service functions</p> <p>Reduced Expediting – Direct calls to IT provisioners and Management to address missed dates and errors are significantly reduced</p> <p>Continuous IT Service Improvement – Real time rating system provides continuous “focus group” feedback to improve management of the service portfolio. Management escalations drive operational performance tuning and the organization is hyper focused on results.</p>
<p>Fulfillment Workflow and Backend Integration</p>	<p>Smartform ideally sits on top of a modern Incident Management (Help Desk) system and utilizes built in workflow generators to create parallel level 2 fulfillment processes, queues , performance tracking and escalation in order to meet SLA’s. The newer systems may even provide a flexible user interface platform to create Smartform or custom development may be required. Smartform utilizes the Incident Management System Customer Records, populated by Active Directory or equivalent Meta Directory.</p>	<p>IT Staff Accountability – IT staff resolver groups monitor queues for incidents and requests and are tracked on time to respond and time to resolve metrics. Because its being monitored, the work gets done. You get what you measure.</p> <p>Supply Chain Management – Integrating with an asset management system allows automation of the procurement cycle by initiating routine buys without manual intervention. Downstream goods receipt is kicks off workflow for accounting and asset deployment .</p>

	<p>Smartform serves up the Incident Management System Service Catalog and CMDB in an easy to understand interface. The CMDB may be the Asset Management System of record or you may have to tap a full function asset management system that also performs procurement, inventory management, software distribution, license tracking, monitoring, remote control, and lease management.</p> <p>Smartform can be integrated with an Identity Management System to serve up Roles Based Templates to automate security provisioning. The Incident Management System opens and closes the request and status is provided by the Identity Management system that controls provisioning workflow, approvals and fulfillment.</p>	<p>Lead Time Reduction – Security provisioning in large, complex companies with hundreds of applications, each with their own proprietary security interface, is very time consuming. And it’s not just the technical provisioning process. Reaching out to management and data owners for attestation can take weeks. Roles Based Security Management solves the problem by defining roles in each department and assigning entitlements to each role that are pre-approved by data owners. Smartform serves up the roles available to a department manager. He selects a role, for instance Call Center Rep #1, and if the Identity Management system has “connectors” in place, LAN access (active directory), Email (Exchange), SAP, Mainframe (RACF) and more are fully provisioned in minutes – with one click, and the auditors are happy.</p> <p>Head Count Reduction – add it up</p>
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Conclusion

Smartform is much more than a tactical quick hit to increase customer satisfaction and jump start a larger ITIL effort. While the end goal is to gain momentum, ultimately turning the spot light on IT back office efficiencies and cost reduction – the more highly leveraged cost savings associated with reducing end user time spent requesting, monitoring and consuming IT services far exceeds gains achieved in IT. Smartform further establishes IT as the cost reduction engine for the entire organization. IT can set the example for franchise innovations using Smartform across other areas of the business, especially other shared service functions such as HR, Accounting and Facilities. Curtailing and/or standardizing the proliferation of third party, self service applications, requires leadership and a transition of IT to the role of systems integrator. Smartform is all about integration and provides the perfect platform to jump start IT Service Management innovation.

Feedback

If you have feedback or comments regarding this case study, or would like more information on this topic, please contact info@enterprisecsx.com.