

Understanding the value of Enterprise Service Management (ESM):

how ESM works in the 'experience industry' and what it offers your organisation and customers

As customers with increased choice and the ability to easily switch our buying allegiances, this is the era where we expect organisations to provide a seamless and joined-up level of service 'experience'. We live and operate in the 'experience' industry.

This 'experience' needs to extend to 'back-office' operations, which require synergy, collaboration and integration of their processes, tools and ways of working. As businesses and organisations, we describe this focus on 'experience' as being part of the 'digital transformation' of work. Our customers do not need or expect to have to manage their path through our internal 'silos'.

Much of this activity is now driven from the external customer-focused activity of consuming services, interacting with technology etc. From the internal perspective, we can also drive improvements and 'joined-up' working to achieve benefits for employees, reducing friction between teams, increasing efficiency and also improving the internal employee experience.

This 'internal digital transformation' often uses much of the approach, tools, knowledge, skills and experience gained from IT Service Management – now applied way beyond IT or any single team as 'Enterprise Service Management'.

What is Enterprise Service Management (ESM)?

In simple terms, ESM is an approach to get internal teams working together, seamlessly on the same platforms and to the same processes, metrics and standards. Most importantly it is about ensuring that the whole organisation is working towards the same goals, using the same governance, and optimised ways of working.

It's always challenging for the C-level to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of their organisation, if everyone is working to different targets, using different systems.

ESM is about joining all of these elements up and creating 'one' organisation – or at least working towards that.

It also ensures that corporate governance is observed across the organisation. ESM is much more than just ITSM applied to a wider business context. For years organisations have seen elements of this where IT, HR and other' internal teams have set up some collaborative processes and achieved improvement. ESM often uses some of the same toolsets, processes and skills required to make (IT) service management work.

The difference now is that ESM is being driven as an organisation-wide (enterprise-wide) initiative, not just 'ad hoc' or organic areas of improvement.

ESM offers the opportunity to bring the organisation together and to be more manageable, transparent and optimal in delivery.

What are the benefits to organisations?

Some of the many benefits of ESM include:

Improved employee experience – attracting and retaining good people is a key current challenge. ESM provides the opportunity to offer a seamless experience as standard for co-workers.

Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness – this is achieved through streamlining, optimising and reducing the number of processes and tools in use to provide a more unified and transparent working landscape.

Managing costs and the drive for savings – this is done via increased visibility and by removing overlapping and manual/error prone processes. This ongoing approach also helps to identify more areas for improved efficiency.

Operating with unified corporate governance and accountability – visibility, cross-functional governance and management, data analysis and good business intelligence are all aspects of modern, effective and robust service organisations.

Opportunities for effective Automation and Digital strategies – these are all possible and viable for an organisation that is operating with synergy and ‘joined-up’ working.

Improved external customer experience and efficiency – to support the need for clear differentiation of services. Improved internal efficiency and reduced ‘silos’ of work also help to improve overall integration and focus on external customer experience.

What are the challenges with ESM?

ESM can't simply be ‘switched on’ or ‘implemented’ with a tool or ‘best practice’ process. Tools, automation and good practices can really make a difference of course, but there is a need to take an organisational change management (OCM) approach to ensure success.

Some issues that need to be addressed include:

- **The need to establish a clear strategy**, supported by good leadership and governance – to clarify the ‘why’ and the expected outcomes.
- **Building practical OCM planning** to manage and support people and their teams through the change – developing ‘buy-in’ and working towards the ‘why’.

- **Building some measureable targets and expectations for value-based outcomes** – both for the change programme and ongoing business-as-usual operations. Then ensuring that these are regularly reviewed for progress and success.

Summary:

There is a need to do some initial assessment, feasibility, cost-benefit and socialising of ideas and options, in order to achieve success with ESM.

It is also vital to involve some key change-agents – people who can make change happen and who can command support across the organisation – as early as possible.