

IBM Tivoli Unified Process (ITUP): Connecting the Dots

Highlights

Vendor name: IBM

Product name: IBM Tivoli Unified Process (ITUP) 2.0

Product function: Utility tool for mapping ITIL processes to actionable workflows, work products, roles and tools.

Vendor contact:
Rob Goodling, ITUP Market Manager

Pricing: Free

Availability: Download from
<http://www-306.ibm.com/software/tivoli/features/it-serv-mgmt/itup/index.html>

Abstract

Enterprise Management Associates (EMA) has noted a growing trend amongst enterprise customers who are implementing advanced IT initiatives such as SOA applications and CMDB projects, and focusing heavily on implementing IT processes to enable IT to operate more like a business. At the same time, organizations are investing in the IT Infrastructure Library® (ITIL) training and deployment, which has created an escalating struggle due to the abstracted nature of ITIL. Process mapping is a basic requirement for many IT functions including automation and data correlation, and ITIL offers a framework for such processes. Yet, at the same time, it is a set of guidelines rather than actionable procedures, and it is precisely due to this fact that IT is in need of tools that can move beyond the theoretical into action.

While there are a number of tools available to help companies map ITIL processes to their IT operations, none have achieved the broad coverage enterprise customers need. The March 2006 release of IBM Tivoli Unified Process (ITUP) 2.0 marks a major advancement in ITIL mapping tools, providing customers with the most comprehensive content available to date. In 3Q06, IBM will release a product version of ITUP that will allow customers to customize ITUP with their own process and tool information. ITUP provides users with a simple point-and-click interface

showing a comprehensive diagram of all the ITIL processes and their interdependencies. Based on decades of IBM consulting experience, ITUP allows users to gain an understanding of their processes and then drill down to assess the relationships between processes, and the roles and tools involved in an efficient IT Service Management (ITSM) implementation. EMA expects other vendors to release expanded ITIL mapping utilities in the next twelve months.

IT Maturity: Moving Towards IT Service Management

A number of models exist to help companies assess their current level of IT sophistication. IBM's IT Service Management model and EMA's IT Development Assessment model are two examples that illustrate the evolution of IT from a traditional, technology-focused organization to an on-demand, business-focused corporate partner. At the lowest level of this model, resource availability is the primary focus, and management is focused on technology. As the organization evolves, focus on availability shifts to performance, and some tasks become automated, but IT is still viewed as a corporate cost center and oftentimes as a black hole for investments. As IT matures, it becomes a business partner, providing robust services that make it a corporate profit center as well as a competitive advantage. At this point, processes become automated, IT services are proactively provisioned and data across the infrastructure can be integrated into a shared, common Configuration Management Database (CMDB).

In industry surveys and consulting engagements during the last five years, EMA has measured a steady increase in the number of large enterprises where IT technology silos are beginning to be broken down to more effectively manage the entire infrastructure with all its dependencies. It is evident that, in many cases, IT is also quickly becoming a service provider with an integrated face to its internal, external and business partner clients. However, one area of weakness has stood out in interviews with IT personnel at all levels of the organization.

Most large enterprises are struggling with defining processes and automating workflows, and the ones that solve this problem are gaining a competitive advantage.

Business priorities must shift to consciously defined processes, and workflows must become more automated to capture best practices. These are areas where many large organizations are failing.

The Importance of Process

Process is at the heart of all major IT maturity models. EMA's model is built upon the equal importance of tools, process and organization. IBM's IT Service Management model, shown in the figure below, also illustrates the strong link process plays IT operations.

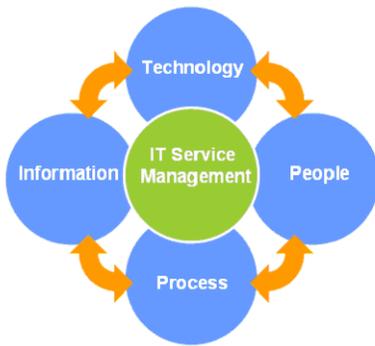


Figure 1: IBM's IT Service Management Model

Efficiently managing IT is a difficult balance between meeting the current demands for computing services within the company and understanding and implementing new technologies to anticipate the future needs of the user community. As infrastructures grew in complexity in the 1980's, a collaborative set of IT best practices evolved based on the experiences of enterprise IT organizations and management vendors. The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is the result of that effort. In order to define processes for the broadest possible audience, the ITIL libraries are highly abstracted and do not address industry-specific issues and, more importantly, do not answer the question, "How?"

In recent studies, EMA has measured an increase in the number of companies attempting to implement ITIL initiatives. Activities include ITIL training and outside consulting to help employees understand the ITIL lexicon, and begin to communicate with each other about ITIL processes. Communications between a diverse collection of IT staff, each with their own silo of expertise (i.e., databases, networks, etc.), is difficult even on well-defined technical issues. In the case of ITIL, it is likely that most of the staff will be less conversant in ITIL practices and some will be struggling with the basics. It is no wonder that many companies are struggling to apply the ITIL methodology to their own complex business practices.

The single largest barrier for companies attempting to implement an ITIL strategy is moving from the classroom to the daily details of IT operations.

Customers looking for the answer to determine how to map their ITIL processes to the infrastructure can choose from a myriad of process mapping tools and consulting services. All of the major and many of the smaller IT management vendors offer tools, and an entire army of ITIL consultants exist. A survey of the available process mapping tools, however, shows that most either focus on one vendor's solution or a small subset of ITIL processes. In both cases, current tools give an incomplete picture of IT operations. Without robust tools to aid companies in connecting the dots between ITIL theory and practice, most implementations rely on extensive consulting engagements. EMA has discovered ITIL implementations at large enterprises with price tags exceeding \$2M.

ITUP: A Unique Approach

IBM is a founding member of the ITIL research committee and still actively involved in the support and creation of new library materials including ITIL, Version 3. In May 2005, the company launched the IBM Tivoli Unified Process (ITUP). ITUP is a set of best practices developed by real-world experience at hundreds of customer engagements by both IBM Global Services and Tivoli consultants. ITUP provides guidance for customers seeking to connect the dots between ITIL training and IT implementation.

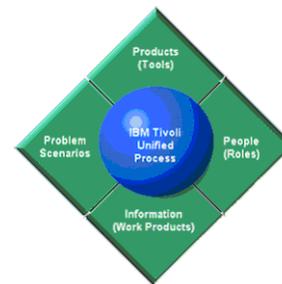


Figure 2: ITUP Process Model

ITUP is not simply a collection of best practices documents. ITUP provides users with an intuitive web-based tool with a content-rich database, the ITUP Method Library, which contains the ITIL experience of decades of IBM consulting experience. At the heart of ITUP is a comprehensive diagram of all IT

processes drawn from IBM's Process Reference Model for IT (PRM-IT). PRM-IT is based on ITIL principles, and outwardly resembles the classic ITIL process model. A simple point-and-click interface allows users to gain a basic understanding of each process and then drill down to understand the relationships between processes, and the roles and tools involved in efficiently managing them.

Each IT process (i.e., change management, problem management, etc.) has a set of defining documents including:

- An introduction describing goals, mission, scope, concepts, key performance indicators and relationships with other processes
- A workflow diagram showing all activities and outputs along with a detailed description of each
- A description of the roles associated with the process
- A very comprehensive list of work products for the process
- A list of relevant IBM tools along with a tool mentor that briefly describes the use of the tool in the context of the process
- Common use scenarios, which help walk users through tasks that are relevant to most users (i.e., users report a web application is not responding).

The biggest value of the ITUP tool for most companies struggling with ITIL implementations is not increasing IT staff knowledge in their own areas of expertise. Rather, it is in providing a one-click understanding of other disciplines and a visual overview of the complex interdependencies between all the technology silos. ITUP provides this common lexicon and a solid basis for IT staff that must work together but may not be familiar with the other's technologies and processes.

ITUP's tool mentoring capabilities should not be overlooked. The tool mentors help users understand how to implement process activities using specific tools. This functionality provides the final link between ITIL process and real-world tasks. Understanding how to use existing tools to meet process requirements is a significant hurdle for many companies attempting to make ITIL actionable. The most significant shortcoming of the current ITUP tool is that customers with non-IBM solutions cannot complete the final step of the process and map their tools to the workflow diagrams and work products.

In March 2006, IBM announced the release of ITUP Version 2. This version, available as a free download from the IBM website, has significantly increased the amount of process content, tool mentors, scenarios and process mappings.

Upcoming ITUP Product Version Connects the Final Dot

In Q306, IBM will release a product version of ITUP. This version extends the ITUP tool by allowing users to customize and extend the process content. In ITUP 2.0, all of the data on processes, roles, work products, and scenarios are in HTML format and are read only. It cannot be customized, to include, for instance, non-IBM products. In the upcoming product version of ITUP, the XML-based content of the ITUP Method Library can be modified and extended using the included Rational Method Composer. This data can then be published on a customized web site or distributed for enterprise-wide internal use.

IBM's product version of ITUP will significantly raise the bar in helping customers map ITIL processes all the way down to the actual management products used in the enterprise.

While the importance of allowing companies to customize the ITUP processes and include non-IBM tools into the model cannot be overstated, the upcoming product version release also includes deeper process content and new IBM ITSM solutions. Available initially in English, future releases of the product will be available with translated content.

EMA's Perspective

Based on industry research, EMA believes that the demand for actionable ITSM and ITIL implementation roadmaps will continue to rise. These customers, representing those who are moving into more advanced stages of IT maturity, will continue to struggle to map abstract ITIL processes to their organization. This process transformation is strategic and can take months or years to complete. The rewards of successfully implementing ITSM and ITIL, however, are significant, and will continue to drive adoption across all industries.

Just as the Rational Unified Process is the foundation for the development phase of IBM's IT Lifecycle Management solution, ITUP provides an excellent basis for a robust ITSM solution. IBM has made a significant investment in the development of both ITUP content and the tool itself over the last two years. The result of this effort is a comprehensive solution based on real-world consulting experiences. Since May 2005, the ITUP tool has been downloaded by over 3,000 customers. Future directions for ITUP show that IBM is serious about continuing to provide leadership in this market.

The release of the product version of ITUP will significantly simplify developing actionable ITIL roadmaps for many enterprise users. The flexibility to modify the underlying process data as well as add non-IBM tools into the ITUP Method Library will be invaluable to customers. With a minimum amount of effort, companies will be able to customize the ITUP tool and publish internal websites clearly showing how ITIL processes map all the way down to roles, work products, scenarios and tools. While it is possible to use the product version of ITUP without any underlying IBM tools in the enterprise, EMA expects early adoption to be driven by IBM-aware companies.

EMA predicts other IT management vendors will announce similar products and product extensions in the upcoming months. Many of these will require extensive consulting commitments, and few competitors have the pedigree or deep pockets to match IBM's investment in this market. EMA recommends that any company interested in implementing an ITIL initiative, download and evaluate the ITUP tool. IBM's insightful work with ITUP will help jumpstart ITIL deployment in enterprises where those investments are being made.

Enterprise Management Associates

2585 Central Avenue, Suite 100

Boulder, CO 80301

Phone: 303.543.9500, Fax: 303.543.7687

www.enterprisemanagement.com

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