

# ITSM reporting is integral to service delivery

 By [Edward Carbutt](#)

8 Dec 2015

As IT Service Management (ITSM) solutions enable organisations to improve IT service delivery for its customers, reporting capabilities are often an afterthought in the process, but it should be a priority. It ensures that relevant insight is available for decision-making and is an integral part of continual service improvement.



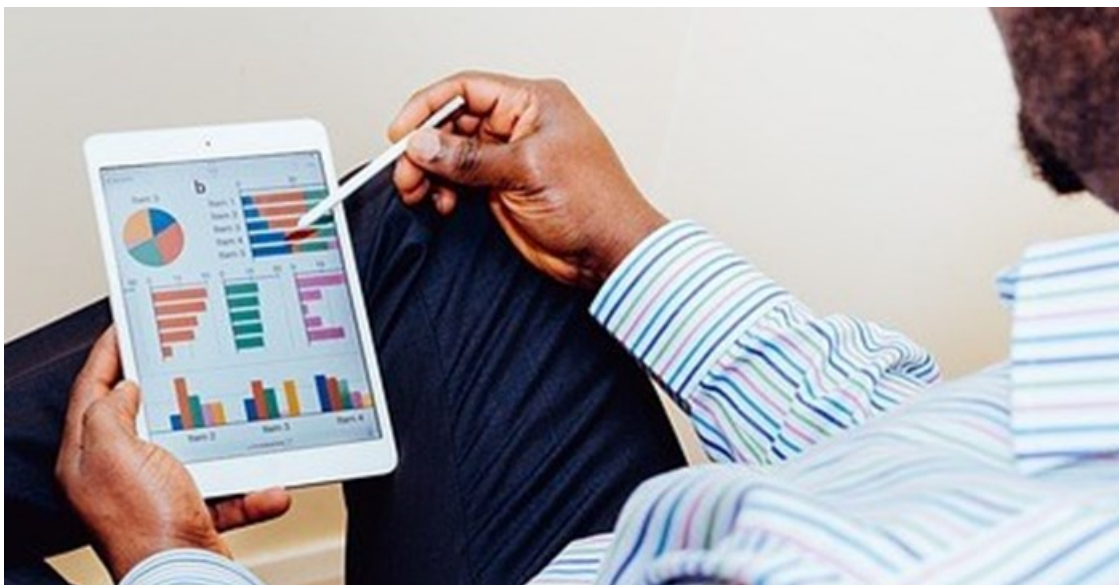
Edward Carbutt

ITSM solutions are enabling tools that help organisations improve service delivery and increase customer satisfaction, which is essential for competitiveness. However, as the saying goes, you cannot manage what you cannot measure. Improving service delivery requires information - the case for reporting - which is essential for measuring progress, identifying problematic areas and understanding what needs to be changed in order to rectify.

## Turn data into business wisdom

Adding context is instrumental in transforming data into information. Yet information alone is not enough. By applying experience, ideas and analysis of information, knowledge is gained. Together with the knowledge gained, wisdom is obtained which enables decisions to be made that have a positive impact on the business. This is the basis of valuable and insightful reporting. ITSM reporting should cover three areas: strategic, tactical and operational. At a fundamental level, there are three questions that must be asked: What is required from a day to day perspective? What is needed in order to implement improvements? And finally, how can we plan for the future in terms of capacity and availability? Reporting assists to provide insight into these three key areas and questions.

What must be considered is that the incidents identified through reporting are merely a symptom of an underlying problem. For example, a report might indicate an unusually high number of print problems or incidents. The natural response is to allocate more resources to resolve the additional incidents quickly in order to prevent a dip in productivity. With knowledge and experience, one can identify the root cause - a network change. Through wisdom, a change in a process might be required to prevent this from happening again. This is an important component of continual service improvement.



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**Data quality, simplicity and relevance are essential**

However, saying this, inaccurate or incomplete data delivers inaccurate results and as such, the quality of data is an important consideration. In addition, in order to maximise value, reporting should be simple and easy to use. In order to obtain more in-depth information, a user must be able to generate a new report with different criteria easily and quickly. Although reporting may seem to be the panacea to many service delivery related issues, reporting for the sake of reporting is not the solution either. When a report is prepared and generated, it is vital to understand the purpose of the report and the value that will be derived from it. Actionable intelligence is attained if the information available is relevant, so it is vital to focus on what is important to the business.

Reporting is as useful as the insights gained from it. It is therefore essential to ensure the correct inputs are in place at the beginning in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Organisations are required to understand what information they need for decision-making, which must be factored into their reporting needs. Information and the ability to derive actionable insights is an important component of service improvement, and the context provided by relevant reporting is critical in helping organisations to transform data to information, knowledge and wisdom.

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Executive Director at Marval Africa

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