

Business Process Management— The Key to ITIL Success

LANDesk® Process Manager Helps IT Organizations
Master the Process of IT Service Delivery



White Paper



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Executive Summary

As IT organizations worldwide make the conceptual transition from managers of technology assets to providers of quality-managed services, many are turning to the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) as a source of standardized best practices for service-oriented IT management. The goal of ITIL is to improve the quality and efficiency, and reduce the cost of IT services through standardization. But many who attempt to implement the framework discover that manually creating ITIL-compliant processes and managing them over time can be a complex, time-consuming, and ultimately expensive undertaking.

This paper describes how ITIL implementation can be rendered simpler, faster, more effective and more affordable by combining new service-oriented Business Process Management (BPM) tools with the established functionality of task-oriented IT management software. In particular, this paper describes LANDesk® Process Manager, a complete toolset for modeling, documenting, executing and monitoring IT Service Management processes, which is tightly integrated with the entire LANDesk® suite of enterprise systems management applications.

Introduction: Standardizing IT Management

In many organizations the IT department is the last bastion of homegrown, non-standardized management practice; but the restless forces of competition, compliance and cost control are massing at the department gate. Management is increasingly insistent that IT, no less than finance, HR, manufacturing or legal, conduct its affairs according to generally accepted industry standards. IT professionals with a career-long focus on managing technology are now required to redefine their role in terms of services delivered, to measure and track performance, to set and meet quality goals, and to create both a methodology and culture of continuous improvement.

As a result, IT managers worldwide are evaluating ITIL—the most comprehensive and widely accepted framework of best practice IT management processes—for its potential to help them reduce costs, improve service quality, increase efficiency, tighten security, achieve regulatory compliance, and align IT more closely with its business unit customers.

ITIL: An Introduction

ITIL is a customizable framework of best practice procedures for managing IT operations that was developed in the late 1980s by the British government's Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA), which was succeeded by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), an office of the U.K. Treasury. ITIL describes IT management processes in terms of core functions and services, and is both vendor and tool agnostic. For more than a decade, ITIL has been promoted as a standard for IT Service Management (ITSM). It has been incorporated in the British standard BS15000, and in an international standard, ISO20000.

The Problem of Process Management

ITIL approaches IT service management in terms of processes or workflows—defined and repeatable sequences of actions and events orchestrated to achieve a specified objective. It describes the processes necessary to ensure efficient and consistent service delivery, but provides no guidance on the selection of tools or agents to carry out individual process stages, or on the matter of tools to manage the processes themselves.

Needless to say, commercial software vendors offer a wide range of task-specific tools for the core workloads of enterprise IT management—system and network management, software distribution and maintenance, asset tracking and security administration. Many of these products provide a degree of task automation within the limits of their functionality.

Until now, however, no software solution has existed for linking and integrating the functionality of existing IT management tools into defined, repeatable ITIL-compliant business processes. There has been no IT-specific capability for process modeling and documentation, automated and monitored execution, managed change, quality assurance and compliance.

In short, the primary challenge of implementing ITIL-compliant processes for IT management has been the lack of integrated Business Process Management (BPM). It's more than a little ironic, given the central role of IT in implementing BPM in the larger organization.

Introducing LANDesk® Process Manager

LANDesk is introducing the first BPM solution specifically targeted for IT management applications. LANDesk® Process Manager 2.0 is a robust BPM solution that integrates seamlessly with most commercial IT management tools, including the complete LANDesk® portfolio. LANDesk Process Manager simplifies and expedites ITIL implementation with a comprehensive toolset for creating, documenting, executing and optimizing IT Service Management processes.

LANDesk Process Manager 2.0 is the new release of Autobahn™ Process Manager, which joined the LANDesk product line with the strategic acquisition of NewRoad Software in early 2006. Release 2.0 has been fully integrated with the complete LANDesk® product line, and is offered both as an integral part of that product line, and as a standalone BPM solution that is fully compatible with IT management tools from other leading providers.

LANDesk Process Manager 2.0 was designed from the outset to simplify and expedite BPM implementation, and unlike most competitive solutions, requires no additional application services or integration framework software. Furthermore, while it is in every sense a full-functioned, general purpose BPM solution, LANDesk Process Manager 2.0 was created first and foremost to support the Service Delivery and Service Support disciplines that form the core of ITSM.

A Robust BPM Solution

LANDesk® Process Manager 2.0 is a compact but complete BPM solution that is easy to deploy and use. Built on the Microsoft .NET Web services foundation, it provides full support for creating, executing and monitoring complex management processes, and for integrating a wide range of assets through industry standard interfaces.

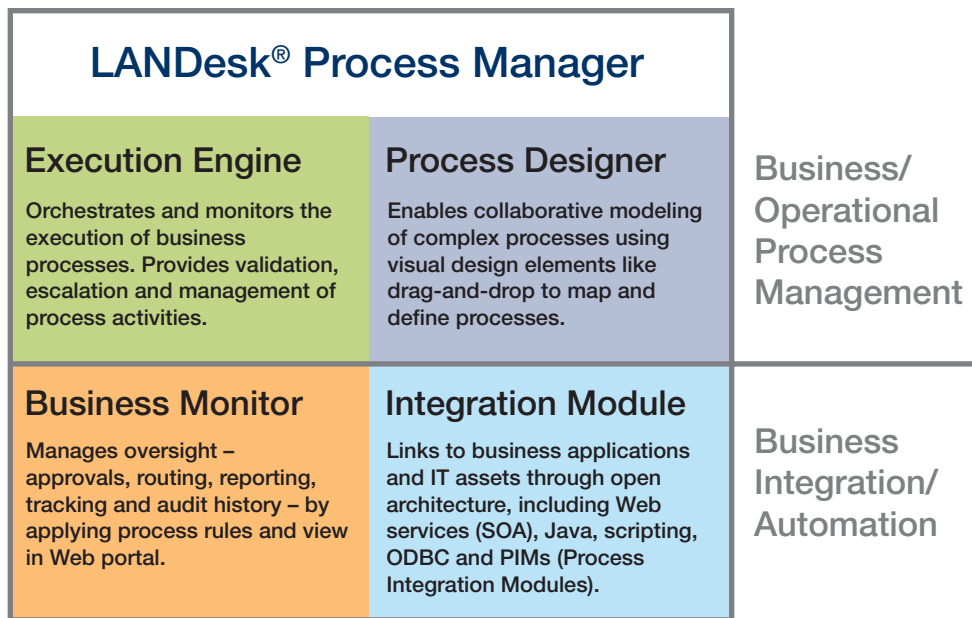


Figure 1: Core components of LANDesk® Process Manager

Core components include:

- An Execution Engine that manages, validates and escalates process activities, eliminating manual stages and process interruptions wherever possible.
- A Process Designer that provides simple, intuitive process modeling through a graphical drag-and-drop interface. LANDesk® Process Manager eliminates manual code generation, making ITIL process design accessible to average business users.
- A Business Monitor that provides rule-based process tracking and audit logging, manages routing and approvals, and supports browser-based reporting and log access.
- An Integration Module that links business processes to other applications and IT assets through open, standards-based interfaces, including Web services (SOA), Java, scripting, ODBC, and Process Integration Modules (PIMs).

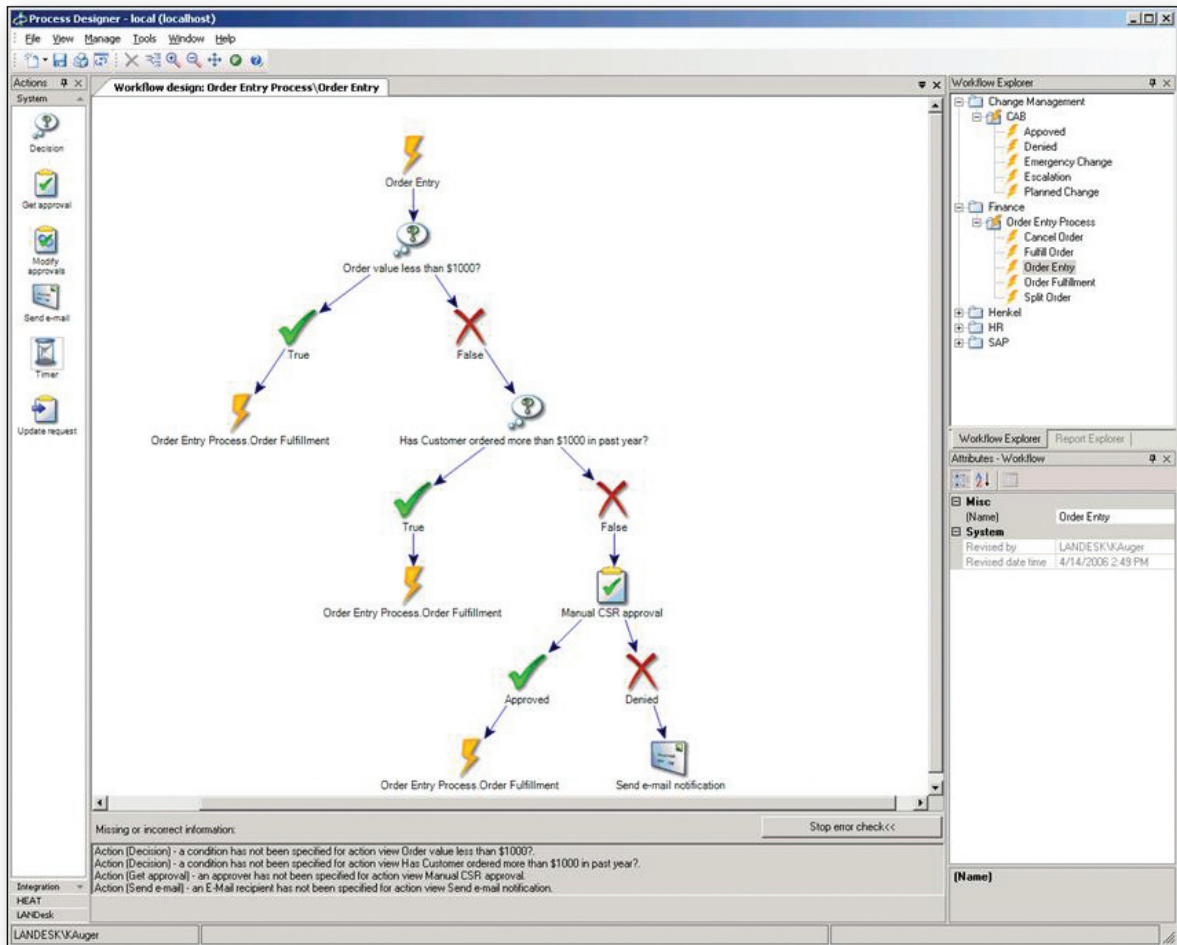


Figure 2: The Process Designer in LANDesk Process Manager provides a process editor in an intuitively simple format that allows novice or expert workflow designers to easily navigate and design workflows.

Taking the Cost and Complexity out of ITIL Best Practices

With LANDesk® Process Manager, implementing ITIL-compliant processes for IT Service Management becomes a vastly simpler, faster, less expensive and more easily manageable task. With the intuitive graphical interface, anyone who understands the business environment and objectives can model and edit a process. And the built-in support for automation, monitoring, integration and change management eliminate the technical hurdles that turn so many process design initiatives into documentation nightmares. With best practice processes in place to ensure service quality, management can be sure that its IT investments will be repaid in performance, efficiency, agility, discipline and bottom-line business value.

LANDesk® Process Manager:

- Reduces process design and implementation time from days or weeks to hours or minutes.
- Lets users develop a library of reusable process functions. Widely used functions can be edited once and instantly updated in all process instances.
- Supports automation of manual processes to expedite execution, reduce costs, and eliminate the most common source of human error.
- Provides a detailed audit trail and central log repository to support reporting and compliance requirements.
- Allows disparate applications to be linked in seamless workflows.
- Provides features that fulfill elements of ISO, COBIT, Six Sigma and other standardization methodologies.

Key Applications: Managing Change and Configuration

If there are two ITSM disciplines where process management and automation can make the greatest contribution to higher service quality, faster delivery and lower cost, it is certainly in the areas of change and configuration management.

To Control Change, Manage the Process

Controlling change in the IT environment is essential to maintaining order, efficiency and productivity. LANDesk® Process Manager provides the mechanism to help develop change management processes that address all ITIL-defined control points, to consistently enforce those processes in practice, and to thoroughly document all changes.

With LANDesk® Process Manager, IT can:

- Ensure that only valid changes occur, by enforcing change management policies and only allowing changes that fully conform to the management process.
- Minimize the risk of failed or bad changes, by requiring that back-out plans are developed, tested and approved.
- Minimize change-related service disruption, by requiring and monitoring customer notification of scheduled outages.
- Prevent unauthorized changes by requiring and monitoring approval by the Change Advisory Board for priority planned changes, and by the Executive Committee for emergency changes.
- Authorize and allocate the resources required to implement changes.
- Ensure changes are implemented cost effectively by requiring and logging time stamped change records for reporting and analysis.
- Report effectively on changes to the environment using the browser-based log access interface.

Managing Configuration

Configuration management is a critical component of many IT services, including new system provisioning, system maintenance, software distribution, problem resolution and security management. LANDesk® Process Manager lets the IT organization define, automate and monitor ITIL-compliant processes for configuration management to ensure consistent execution and standardize configuration data handling. The result: improved system performance and stability throughout the environment.

Indeed, few IT management adaptations hold greater opportunity for improving operational performance than an integrated approach to change and configuration management. Gartner Research Director Ronnie Colville predicts that “through 2009, implementation of a combined configuration and change management strategy will reduce downtime by as much as 35 percent.”¹

Integrated BPM for Every ITIL Application

While change and configuration management are among the highest profile targets for today’s ITIL standardization efforts, LANDesk® Process Manager supports ITIL-compliant process development in a much wider range of applications. Tight integration with the entire LANDesk product portfolio provides a comprehensive toolset for delivering technology management services. To cite only a few examples:

- **Remote Systems Management** – Together, LANDesk® Process Manager and LANDesk® Management Suite support defined processes that let Help Desk personnel control, manage and maintain systems remotely.
- **Software Distribution** – Deploying LANDesk® Process Manager together with LANDesk® Management Suite provides a complete solution stack for creating automated and auditable software distribution processes.
- **Security Management** – In conjunction with LANDesk® Security Suite, LANDesk® Process Manager supports ITIL-compliant processes for securing networks and systems, distributing software patches, identifying threats and vulnerabilities, and isolating and recovering compromised assets.
- **Asset Inventory** – Together with LANDesk® Inventory Manager, LANDesk® Process Manager helps define and manage processes for conducting and maintaining accurate hardware and software asset inventories.

Applications Across the Enterprise

While applications for BPM abound within IT, they certainly don't stop at the department door. LANDesk® Process Manager can easily be used to define, document and automate workflows that IT shares with other business units.

Consider the routine example of new employee provisioning. LANDesk® Process Manager can be used to create a process with discrete steps and tasks for each deliverable—orientation scheduling, a new employee directory account, benefit enrollment, computer and application provisioning, network access, a smart card for building access. The IT, HR and Security departments can separately define the segments of the process for which they are responsible. Various systems and tools can be integrated to accomplish process tasks—e-mail notifications to solicit approvals, for instance. The entire process can be automated and monitored, and escalation provisions built in to ensure timely completion. The results: consistency, accuracy, accountability, and reliable service level compliance.

In fact, LANDesk Process Manager is a general purpose BPM solution that can be beneficially applied anywhere in the enterprise. An IT department can easily deploy it for ITIL process standardization, and then extend access to other business units to support broader process management initiatives.

Conclusion: Managing the Process of IT Service Delivery

For IT departments struggling to transform themselves from technology asset managers into technology service providers, ITIL offers an indispensable guide to the processes required for successful service delivery. To the uninitiated, however, and the unequipped, the workloads associated with creating, documenting, executing, tracking and amending the ITIL-compliant processes required in a large and complex environment can initially appear endless and overwhelming.

As in every job, the key to success lies in having the right tools.

LANDesk® Process Manager is the right tool at the right time for building and maintaining an enterprise-size catalog of ITIL-compliant IT processes. It supports every aspect of process creation and management, from conceptual modeling to compliance auditing. It integrates with the LANDesk® management portfolio and with most other leading IT management applications, linking their functionality in self-executing processes and extending the value of existing management investments. By using LANDesk Process Manager to standardize and streamline service delivery, IT organizations can reduce operating costs, improve service levels, and align their own operations more responsively with enterprise business objectives, which is the entire point of ITIL and IT Service Management.

For more information on LANDesk Process Manager, visit www.landesk.com.

References

¹ Gartner Symposium ITxpo, Orlando, Florida 2005