



Collaborative Business Design

Improving and innovating the design
of IT-driven business services

BRIAN JOHNSON & LÉON-PAUL DE ROUW



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EXTRACT



IT Governance Publishing

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FOREWORD

Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

Arthur C Clarke, 1917-2008

Most enterprises consider IT an expensive necessity, although more and more business leaders comprehend the importance and added value of digital services. Often large strides are made but too often the experience of delivered IT services is disappointing, sometimes it is just plainly unacceptable given the cost of IT.

Business managers spend an enormous amount of time worrying about IT when problems arise and even more time using services (comprised usually of one or more IT applications) that gather the information they need, process the information they need, or spit out the information they need.

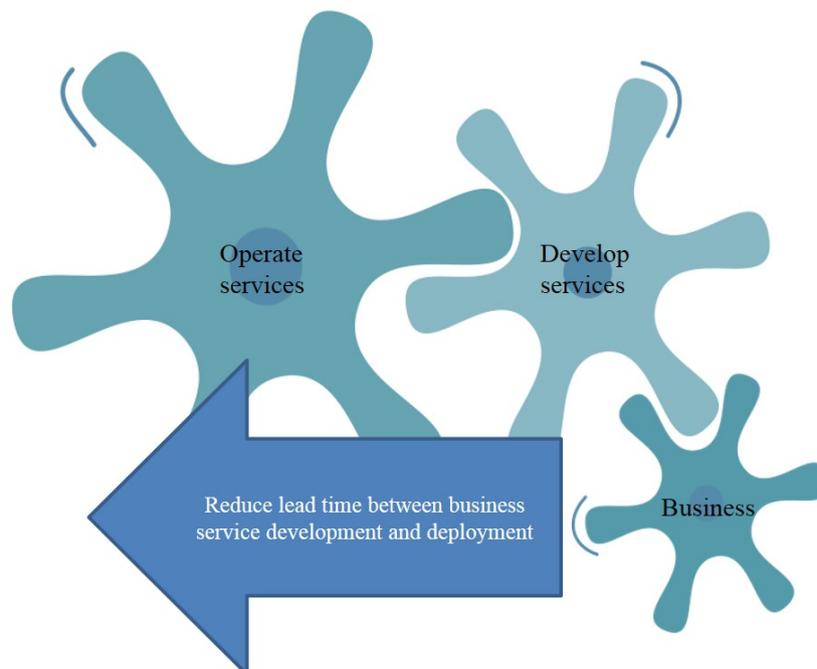


Figure 1: Purpose of the service design statement

Figure 1 illustrates the way that business service thinking relates to development and to delivery; business cogs move swiftly, services are developed too slowly to support the business, and the huge, slow moving cog that is operations is very slow in deploying services; lead times are therefore an issue. The business needs an alliance with IT to reduce these lead times so that services are developed and in operational use more swiftly (and neither Agile methods or DevOps can guarantee accelerated risk-averse delivery). Neither focuses on the user experience, both focus on expedited delivery which is not the same thing or necessarily what customers want. Ask anyone investing two, five, ten or 20 million pounds or dollars if they want it fast or if they want it functional. The answer is usually both.

Rarely, however, do business managers pay the same attention to making sure the service they need is designed according to all their requirements and recognising all the constraints (regulatory for

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Foreword

example). This lack of attention, though hardly an omission of anything more than overlooking some essential factors because they are simply too busy to address every key point in a service design, leads to poor customer experience. Business managers will understand regulatory issues but IT may know about them. IT is so far removed from the nature of business that IT professionals might have only a superficial understanding of regulatory constraints.

Poor understanding of the overall design is a concern because the lines of business in almost every enterprise are entirely dependent on IT. All of the supporting organisational services, such as payroll, HR, facilities or purchasing, for example, are IT driven; and IT is essential in the customer oriented services in the Lines of Business (LoB). IT is more and more fundamental to the value proposition in any business.

And so, we come to the target of this book. It is a book about helping business managers/experts and IT managers/experts to understand the needs and drivers of business and IT. Thus, we delve into the inner workings of services and the relationship between IT and business services. The ultimate goal is to make sure each side, business and IT, understand one another, and to make certain we can improve by creating the services that we need; services that are robust and that entirely support business. We present a simple approach to designing the overarching architecture for any IT driven business service and provide guidance about business stakeholder thinking by ensuring every aspect of a service need is analysed. We have of course thought about a term to use for this type of thinking, we opted for Business Service Design (BSD, because we come from an IT background and need another acronym to be credible) because the term seems sympathetic with the goal of building a service design statement to cement an alliance between business and IT. In doing so, this helps in ensuring that business is in receipt of the services they need. BSD is not an architecture for software development or for technology support, such architectures are well served by frameworks, such as TOGAF®, IT4IT™ and ITIL®. BSD is focused on the business architecture, an animal rarely, if ever, described prior to designing an IT intensive, complex business service. BSD will help you to innovate around the design process, making sure that the mistakes made rushing to conclusions about outcomes are eliminated, by taking a holistic picture of requirements.

It complements other good practices, such as BiSL® Next, where the new guidance focuses on the information needs of the business and the design of the data architecture necessary to transform the enterprise, and of course ITIL, which guides the technology angle.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Brian Johnson has published over a dozen official titles in the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) and a total of more than 30 books. He is the author of many books about best practices in business and IT. He designed and led the programme for ITIL version 2, which is widely used in the Netherlands and throughout the world.

Brian has had several functions and roles during his career, including vice president, lead architect, director and consultant.

One of his current roles is as chief architect at the ASL BSL Foundation. The Utrecht-based Foundation provides guidance on business information management to a wide range of public- and private-sector businesses in the Benelux region. It publishes best-practice guidance and, together with certification bodies, provides education and examinations. Brian is chief architect for the redesign of all guidance and will be the author of new strategic publications.

Léon-Paul de Rouw studied technical management and organisation sociology. He worked for several years as a consultant and researcher in the private sector. Since 2003, he has been a programme manager with the central government in the Netherlands. He is responsible for all types of projects and programmes that focus on IT and business (outsourcing, implementation and change).

Currently, he is the project manager for a multi-million euro project on the nationwide implementation of IT-driven business services.

In general, his interests include policy development, innovation, design and implementation, and management, mostly in the field of IT. Because of this, in addition to his professional career, he also writes, teaches, consults and delivers workshops and masterclasses.

Léon-Paul's previous books were primarily written for professionals in their field, including IT demand-supply and facilities management. The books have since been used by a number of institutions as guides and textbooks and have also been incorporated into postgraduate courses.

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EXTRACT

CHAPTER 1: IT-DRIVEN BUSINESS SERVICES

To boldly go where no man has gone before.¹

Covered in this chapter

- About IT-driven services
 - The needs of business and IT
 - The value of a service design statement
 - Using business service design to understand the characteristics of IT intensive services
 - Documenting a service design statement
-

1.1 IT-driven business services

The use of IT in business day-to-day activities is now almost inseparable from business activity. In the past, we only could accelerate and improve information processing through the use of computers. After years of change to these IT services, and because of the dependence upon IT, failures are highly disruptive and can potentially lead to a standstill of the business delivery processes. Even worse, new IT intensive services are increasingly in the spotlight because of high profile failures to deliver what was either required, expected or promised.

Imagine you have to travel from Schiphol, through London to New York, and you have more than enough faith to travel with a new airline, 'Mythical Airlines'. Without much more than swearing a few times about the speed of your internet service, you make reservations via the Mythical portal, you check in the day before you go to Schiphol using the same portal, and print a boarding pass. At Schiphol, you queue for two or three days, then use your boarding pass at the automatic check in gates. After that you offer your luggage at the counter, queue again at customs and security and eventually do some shopping at the tax-free shops before boarding the airplane. If you are headed for the US, and you are wise, you shave off your beard.

After about eight hours you arrive at JFK, get out, suffer the usual abuse from immigration, and wait for around a week or so to be processed, collect your luggage, and finally exit through customs. Perhaps you have hired a car using Mythical because they have partners in the business, and you collect your car from the parking lot, program the destination in the SatNav and attempt driving to your hotel (also a Mythical partner) without falling asleep.

Vacation or business, or both, this sort of experience is common and when Mythical Airlines does what is expected, nobody has any idea what is hidden behind the scenes. Unless you forgot the advice about the beard.

If you are responsible for organising the hidden backstage services however, you are aware that all the services that make up the experience are built on processes that are nowadays driven by IT. Without IT, your experience would be a lot different and certainly not as smooth as described above.

¹ All quotes at the beginning of chapters are taken from Star Trek and Star Trek: The Next Generation.

Until all the check-in terminals are down because of a massive IT failure behind the scenes or the airline check-in computers go into meltdown (again).

All IT-intensive services that are being developed in an enterprise must contribute in one way or another to the enterprise business goals, either as a primary activity, as part of the core, or as part of a necessary secondary process. In the last few years, the distinction between primary and secondary processes has become more diffuse, as execution of work and supporting processes becomes more difficult to separate.

It therefore does not come as a surprise that service developments, or services that change vigorously, attract the attention of stakeholders within an enterprise. Business stakeholders want to be involved in the development and implementation, or adaptation, of highly IT-driven business services to ensure that different perspectives, interests and principles are included.

It is thus imperative to understand the characteristics of IT-driven services and service offerings, to understand service requirements and to describe a structured approach to gather the right requirements for effective service solutions. After all, your life might depend on IT software running, as it should in an airliner.

In this book we will explore the characteristics of IT-driven business services, their requirements, and how to gather the right requirements to improve the service lifecycle throughout development and maintenance and until decommissioning. By understanding IT-driven business services and anchoring them in a service design statement, you will be able to accelerate the translation of the needs of the business to the delivery of IT-intensive business services.

1.2 Business need and value

An enterprise exists to serve a purpose; to make money usually. Except in non-profit and government where the purpose is more prosaic and where the purpose is also (at least partially) for the general good of the members or citizens. Irrespective, all enterprises will only value services that they need and can use efficiently and effectively to carry out their business transactions and meet enterprise goals.

Any medium or large enterprise can have several lines of business (LoB); an insurance company, for example, will almost certainly sell property insurance, personal insurance, holiday insurance and many others. Each of these is likely to be an organisational entity or unit. Other units will also exist, HR, payroll, audit, finance, even IT is an organisational unit, which can and will be comprised of other units. The lines of business and organisational units will all be supported by a combination of specific IT services. IT services that are dependent on one another and IT services that are invisible technology, i.e. they exist only to support the existence and operations of IT.

The purpose of the LoB is to continue to exist and to create money, or to otherwise ensure that the enterprise serves its stated objectives and goals. Generally, specific business purposes are supported by IT services that were designed and built and operated in house, though operational running of IT service has, increasingly, become outsourced.

Organisational units of the enterprise provide the support needed by the LoB. Though some of these units are not contributing to the bottom line of, let's say, end of year profit, they ensure that people are continuously hired to enable the business to continue to exist and to make sure the environment is clean and comfortable and that people get paid.

The purpose of the organisational units is supported by IT services that more often than not are off-the-shelf products that may often exist outside of internal IT operations (payroll being a common example).

A relatively simple enterprise that exists to provide meeting rooms in office locations throughout a city, will have numerous lines of business supported by several services (book a room in the office in a building, provide audiovisual equipment, provide paper and pencils, catering, pay staff, invoice customers, cleaning, security, Wi-Fi, IT support for the daily problems when the audiovisual does not work or when the attendees cannot get on the Internet).

At the other end of the spectrum, you will find the virtual retail enterprise and robotics; the autonomous car or 'the smart city', with numerous IT-driven services that range from data analytics to city-as-a-platform.

Thus, the definition of a business service depends on your perspective. A business service might be 'issuing a passport', though the IT processing of the business information (name, address, age, presence of beard, terrorist status) once entered into the computing environment, might be considered as an IT service by those responsible for writing the service transaction and coding. IT will often think of 'business services' in a different way to those involved in writing insurance policies, or building cars, or dealing with pension applications.

In the world of IT, services that support business, such as password resetting, email, incident management via the service desk, change management via the service desk, on-boarding new staff, security, managing IT capacity and resilience, managing IT outages, or development of applications, are often called business services. In this book, these are IT services. And they are important to ensure that LoB services work as they should. They do not add value in the same way as say, the service of issuing a passport or airline ticket but they support those services.

The primary focus of this book is the needs of the business; what information must be collected, how is IT processed, what is automated, what can be automated, what can never be automated, what is the result we are looking for, how will the new service be paid for and what (if any) income is required from it.

So, what makes a successful service offering? In other words, services delivered that everyone wants or needs, whatever the market (wholesale or manufacturing, for example) or environment (internal service provider, government organisation). The answer is a service that is fit for purpose and is of a guaranteed (contracted, if provided externally) level of quality.

Your business transformation drivers impact the business model. The enterprise architecture requires that you think about governance and strategy regarding information/data, as well as how to improve and operate delivered services, and you must maintain business, data, service and technology perspectives throughout the creation of your operating model.

1.3 Services that are fit for use: design thinking

You can't always get what you want, but if you try, sometimes you get what you need. Mick Jagger wrote that when the Stones decided to become business consultants because they did not make enough money as rock stars. Well, if true, that would be a terrific business case, though the line is certainly applicable to enterprise IT services that fail to meet business needs despite massive sums being spent (or maybe wasted) on writing detailed requests for information (RFI) and evaluating multiple responses.

1: IT-Driven Business Services

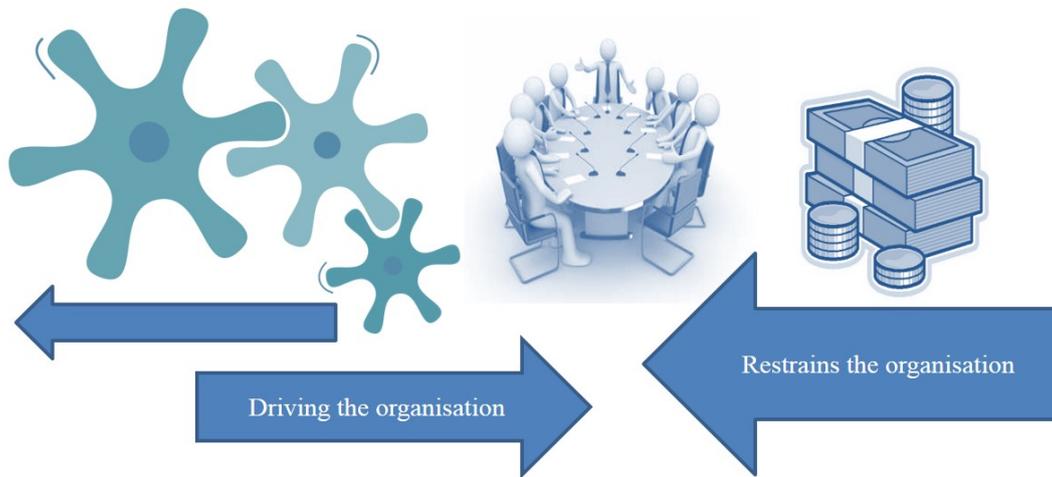


Figure 1.1: Balancing need (driving force) and value (forces of resistance expressed in cost)

Consider Figure 1.1, it is crucial for an enterprise to continuously define, develop and improve services that customers want to use (and of course pay for). Services are more than ever IT driven. Complexity is behind every surface. A service that is needed must be fully understood to know if it is truly of value and worthy of investment. And without an overall architecture, it is difficult to picture every nuance; imagine building the London Underground without knowing what sits above the places where you want to dig a few holes.

We all have examples. Everybody seems very happy when, suddenly, customers are not content with the reliability of the operational IT services, or are complaining bitterly that the services do not fulfil business needs, or that their users do not want the services. And then realisation dawns that customers and users were consulted but not understood, or were not included in the design of the services, or perhaps not enough in the testing of the services in a way that assured the expected outcome.

And the ubiquity and complexity of IT usually means that lines of business often cede control of architectural service design to their internal or external provider, meaning that the enterprise has already given up the possibility of understanding the complexities of IT and helping IT to improve on meeting business needs. Even where a service is not predicated on IT, how often does the delivered product fail to match what was needed?

Often both internal and external providers of services have a difficult time understanding enterprise needs because of the dependencies between multiple lines of business that are either not fully explained to them, are not obvious in a request for information (RFI), or are not surfaced by consulting in the design phase. And internal providers of services struggle if their people have not worked in the business organisation, or have little long-term knowledge of how the enterprise works.

To improve or innovate IT-driven business services, it is of utmost importance to understand the difference between the needs and wants of the business and what is offered by suppliers. Services must be fit for use and fit for their intended purpose. A self-driving car that will not collide with other vehicles that do not use the same technology, is fit for use or purpose. One that crashes is not. Figure 1.2 illustrates a simple matrix that can be populated with meaningful bullet points pertaining to understanding objectives and being certain about possible outcomes in terms of cause and effect.

1: IT-Driven Business Services

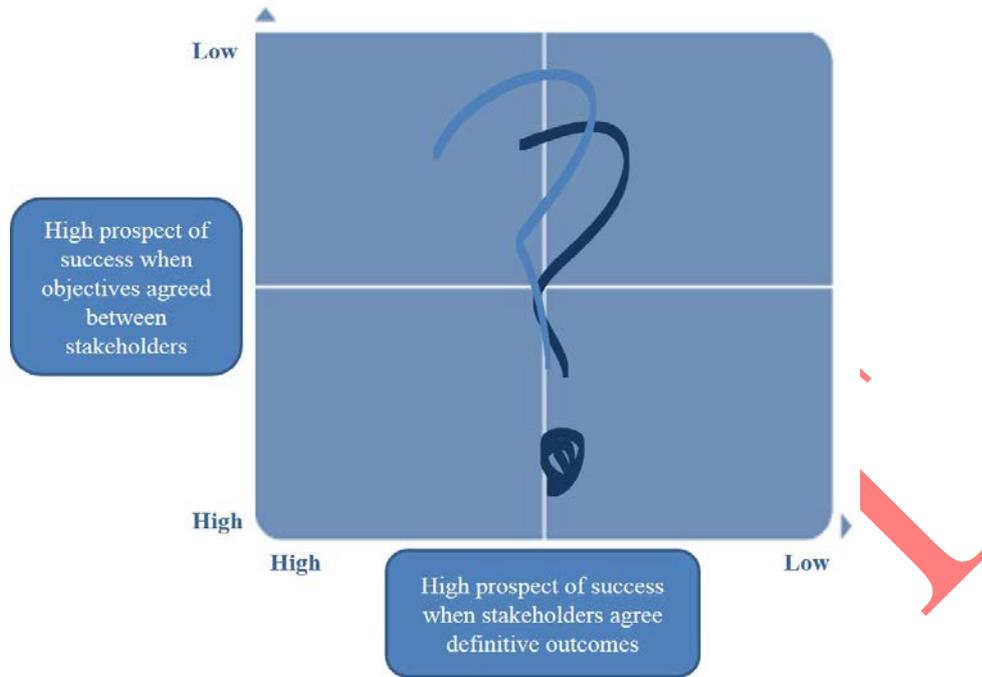


Figure 1.2: Do stakeholders have enough common ground to ensure successful design?

Amplify that, as shown in Figure 1.3, and your simple matrix becomes a useful guide.

Ensuring that you obtain the services you need requires design thinking; and sometimes what you think you want (or worse, what your customer thinks is wanted) is not actually what is needed.

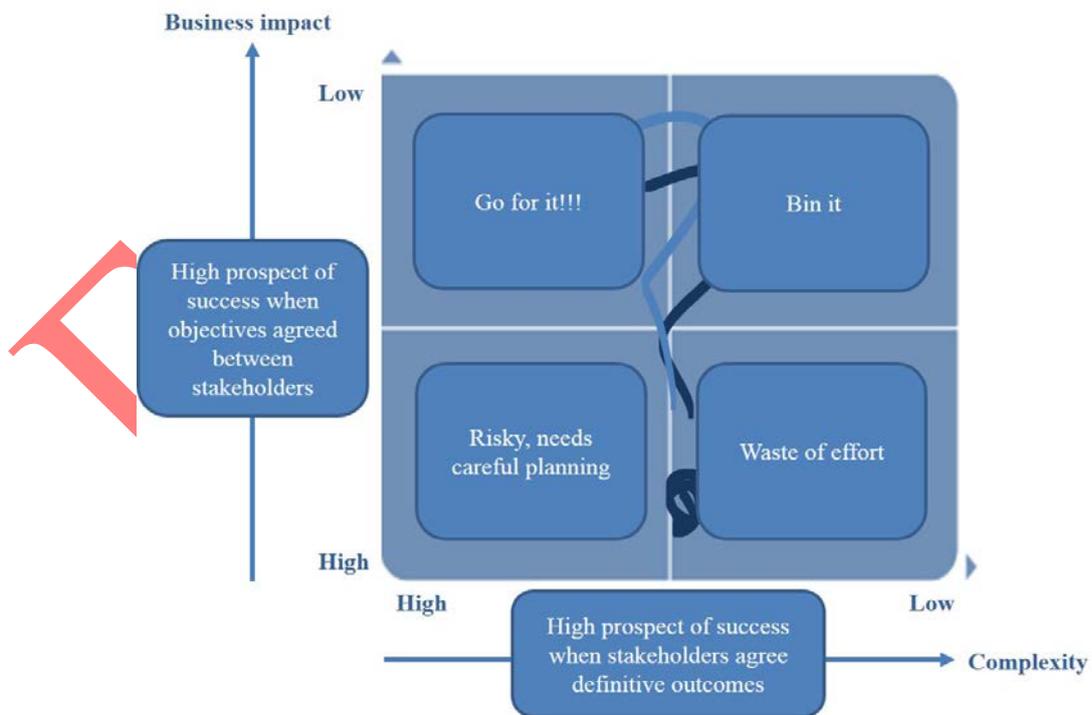


Figure 1.3: Simple guidance is often best

Design thinking is the required mindset that enables you to be successful. Consider another example; if your enterprise wants to use the 'Internet of things' to monitor the movement of people for some business purpose or other, perhaps travel related, there are about 40 billion devices that already link up to provide surveillance and this is predicted to increase to 160 billion within five years. What exactly was the service they wanted? With a service design statement, you invest in IT infrastructure and really understand what is needed to provide value.

Even very simple guidance at the early stages of stakeholder involvement will help. In Figure 1.4, even knowing you have agreed objectives will not help you be certain about the outcome of a business change. Establishing that something is needed quickly but has a high impact, will be enough to ensure that the stakeholders think about detailed plans. If there is little impact and a programme is complicated, that should be enough to kill off the programme and save a bundle of money.

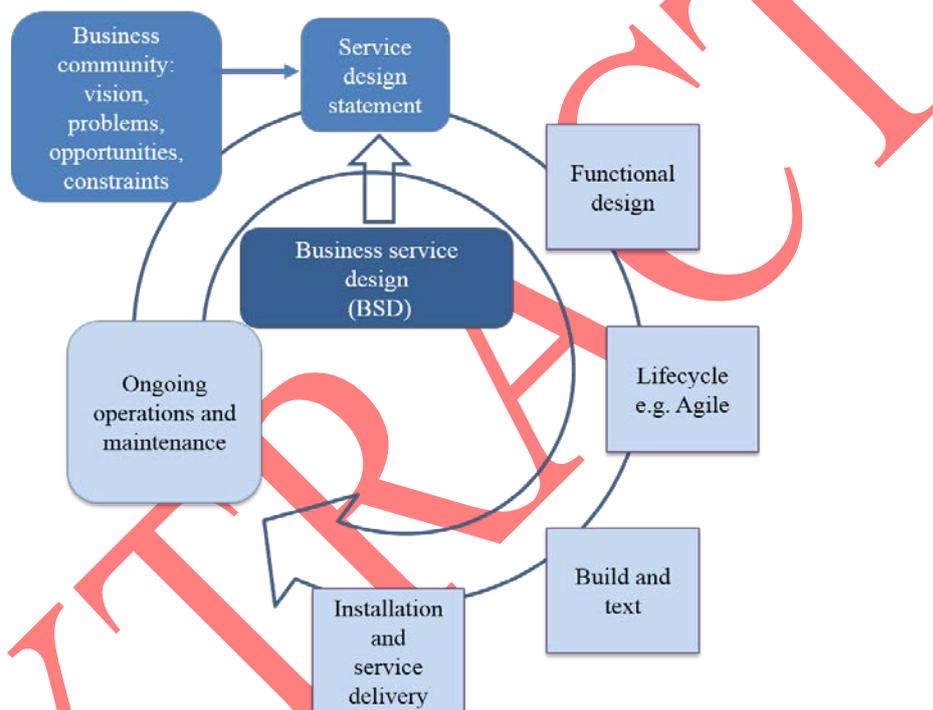


Figure 1.4: Positioning the service design statement

1.4 Capturing the characteristics of IT-driven services in a service design statement

To understand the requirements of an IT-driven service that is fit for use and captured in a service design statement, we propose an approach that is called business service design (BSD). BSD is a best practice rooted in design thinking to better understand IT-driven business services, its characteristics and its requirements, from a business perspective. BSD is rooted in the pragmatic approach and logic of the UK Government Gateway method; the method of service blueprinting and the well understood stakeholder approach of obtaining executive consensus.

This approach favours:

- An Agile, structured working method
- Simultaneous requirement analysis and synthesis
- A focus on outcome and output involving all stakeholders and their perspectives and concerns.

BSD assists the enterprise to structure the exploration of business-driven IT services. The result of applying BSD is a total set of requirements of the desired service (business requirements, user and customer

requirements, and functional and system requirements) captured in a service design brief (or as we call it, the service design statement).

Experience suggests it doesn't matter so much how you got here, as what you do after you arrive.

Lois McMaster Bujold

BSD is architectural in the sense of having a blueprint, the 'design of the design', in place to guide development and provides an exploration structure that allows executives enough latitude to arrive at consensus decisions that accurately reflect business needs, values and constraints.

The service design statement (SDS) should be positioned as an output from strategic thinking (as shown in 1.4); BSD will help you to explore the needs of the business and the responsibilities of the parties involved, and identify the essential requirements that cover the complete business need and business responsibility. BSD helps you to ask the right questions, makes you think about the right issues and helps you explain and cover the difference between what is demanded, what is needed and what is delivered. It is an approach, and a mindset, and a way of thinking that directs you to a holistic picture of requirements.

In navigating the BSD approach, you will derive a service design statement before you start designing, prototyping and developing. This explains to all stakeholders what the business wants and needs, what providers should and can deliver, and what essential requirements should be part of final design and delivery (see Figure 1.4). Using BSD you will gain improvement in the total service lifecycle which leads to better operational excellence, more customer intimacy, faster time to market and more strategic agility.

The SDS is the link between the needs of the business and the detailed functional design needed to start up the development or improvement of service offerings. The needs of the business (and what the business will value) are captured in a language of text and pictures, in facts and metaphors, in business and technical principles that will engage all stakeholders, demand and supply alike, in the understanding of the full-service offering. The service design statement is sometimes called the service design brief or terms of design reference. In essence, the SDS describes the overall IT-driven business service offering, its essential requirements and constraints (business and supply alike).

1.5 The value of a service design statement

Insight into the BSD approach to deriving a service design statement is therefore a practical and powerful tool to help you:

- a) Promote the coherent design (and possible disaggregation of services) so that fundamental issues and requirements of needs (requirements) are mapped, based on different perspectives between demand and supply.
- b) To obtain insight into the dynamics between stakeholders within an enterprise.
- c) To reflect on and formulate a practical and realistic roadmap.
- d) Explore ideas or problems and think about and develop possible interventions.

a) Understanding the service offering

BSD supports portfolio, programme and project management by identifying key questions and structuring the creative process of designing services; further it supports reflection on all aspects of a

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service design (a service in the context of the enterprise or organisational groups). Employing BSD leads to a wealth of information about the demands and requirements placed on developing new services. Depending on the stage of the service lifecycle and the wish to renew, improve or decommission the service, BSD can be applied during the feasibility study, or during a full study of a new service. The BSD can explore the basic drivers or essential components of a business case. Next to that it supports gathering the right requirements for changing existing service designs or end of life services.

b) The dynamics between stakeholders

Most often, business units or departments must cooperate to deliver successful services. If their mutual interests conflict, however, successful implementation can be a problem. It is important to consider the likely motivations (and associated emotions) and possible behaviours of various parties to a new or modified service offering (or when a service is discontinued). Adopting the persona of the parties involved will make it easier to understand how a feasibility study should be undertaken. It also eases composing approaches to successful implementations. Transformative changes on the business can be described in terms of the benefits likely to accrue depending on the scale of change. Truly transformational change, however, will require early stakeholder involvement and careful planning.

c) Roadmap service offering

Once your design is realised, consider it a roadmap. A roadmap for a service offering is the schedule indicating a selected period throughout which the service will evolve to a full and complete package. The advantage provided by a roadmap is in understanding the underlying processes and providing support for discussions and involvement of the different stakeholders in the process of development.

The roadmap approach fits well with Agile and DevOps philosophies, in that you will make progress more quickly by prototyping the big picture at an early stage, particularly when a service is innovative or has no precedent.

d) Explore ideas and interventions

BSD can act as a tool that boosts the interaction between stakeholders and supports the understanding of relationships. It provides a vocabulary, insight and overview to all concerned to have the right discussions and make the appropriate arrangements to achieve appropriate, correctly functioning services.

A service design statement is intended to promote the understanding of IT-driven business services by all stakeholders, demand and supply alike, and anchor them into a statement created in a shared language; in this way, you are able to accelerate the translation of the needs of the business to the delivery of IT-intensive business services. The total service lifecycle lead time is reduced which leads to a faster time to market and strategic agility, reduced cost and to improved customer relations.

1.6 Who should read this book

This book is intended for anyone responsible for designing and implementing IT-driven services, or is involved in their operation. This includes everybody on both sides of the Maginot line of demand and supply who is responsible for bridging the gap between what is needed by the lines of business and what is being delivered. If you are the senior responsible owner of major programmes of work in

a large or small enterprise, public or private, you need to ensure value for money. You may not wish to become a BSD practitioner, but you should have access to people that you trust who are such experts. The people you wish to be practitioners should read the remainder of this book so that they too understand the need and value of both BSD and the service design statement.

Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please.

Mark Twain

On the demand side, examples range from business, financial, sales, marketing and operations managers who are responsible for output and outcome, sales and product managers that need to present and improve service offerings, developers that need to develop new and improved service offerings, contract managers and those responsible for purchasing to negotiate better value for the business and of course consultants and strategists. Role examples include business manager, business process owner and business architect, business information manager, chief information officer, information systems owner and information architects.

Enterprises that have instantiated the role or organisational unit of business relationship will find guidance that will assist in identifying the most important information and technology requirements of the business, and ensuring that these are implemented in any solutions proposed by internal or external suppliers. On the supply side, any internal or external provider of a service, whether IT based or not, will also benefit. Think about service managers, contract managers, bid managers, lead architects, requirement-analysts, etc.

This book may also prove to be useful to consultants involved with the set up or professionalisation of business service design and to students of business administration, business informatics and service management.

1.7 Structure of the book

Next, in *chapter two*, the gap in understanding between IT and business is explored. To close the gap, a means of understanding IT-driven services requirements is proposed. To understand the characteristics of IT-driven business services an analytic approach is presented, the business service design (BSD). An overview of the different components that must be analysed to obtain insight into the characteristics of IT-driven business services and to anchor these insights into a service design statement (SDS) is provided.

The different parts of the BSD and SDS are elaborated on in chapters *three, four, five* and *six*. Concluding in *chapter seven*, obtaining insight into the design of IT-driven business services using business service design, is explored. Practical consequences for business transformation to continuously define, develop and improve services that customers want to use, are discussed. Appendices are included to amplify some details, or concepts, that we consider being germane but would disrupt the flow of discussing the approach. Appendix B covers service lifecycles and how different levels of maturity require different good practices to improve. The appendices also provide a bibliography and glossary.



Introducing business service design (BSD) – a methodology for creating IT-driven business services, aimed at everyone responsible for their design and implementation, or involved in their operation.

- Examines the gap in understanding between IT and business.
- Introduces BSD – an analytic approach to understanding the characteristics of IT-driven business services.
- Provides an overview of the components and characteristics of IT-driven business services.
- Considers the different parts of the BSD and SDS.
- Offers insight into the design of IT-driven business services using BSD.
- Discusses practical consequences for business transformation to continuously define, develop and improve services that customers want to use.

As an enterprise architect I and my colleagues find it difficult to get any interest in IT architectural methods. Business service design provides me the means to gain trust and mutual understanding. It effectively allows me to use my methods training in the context that business people understand.

Drs Suresh Mangroo, Enterprise Architect, (Ministerie van Binnelandse Zaken en Koninkrijkrelaties)

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