BRINGING
IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT
AND INNOVATION TO SMES
IN CENTRAL EUROPE
“Innovation” – a fuzzy term and still the dominating concept of the European Union’s economic world. Let’s start with some thoughts that explain what INNOTRAIN IT has to do with it.

Innovation – thinking in new ways and realizing new thoughts in research or on the market – has become the key process of economic activity in the European Union. Being the most competitive and most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world! Growing in a smart, sustainable and inclusive way! – Those are the ambitious but by far not unrealistic visions described by the European Council in Lisbon in the year 2000, which have then been developed into the Europe 2020 strategy.

Innovation might start with a brilliant idea, but is much more than that: successful and intelligent development needs a productive and encouraging environment. Building such an environment might start with a strategy: formulating goals and processes on the management level of a business enterprise or describing policy recommendations on high administrative levels are for sure important cornerstones of such an environment. But becoming more competitive in the end is a people’s business. Therefore, the bases of a successful knowledge economy are its knowledge workers: employees who have the capability of thinking as an entrepreneur, who are taking the courage to change old ways of thinking into new ideas in their everyday work.

Innovation needs an organisational structure. Knowledge workers from the very concrete project work up to a high management level are the designers of such a structure. They have various options to start creating their own innovation environment: they can select more advanced ways of production, they can choose the best location for their business, they can setup most productive teams and departments, they can try to generate short and fast ways of communication with project partners and so on.

The Information Technology (IT) of a business enterprise is that element of an innovation environment INNOTRAIN IT deals with. Why is it so important? Because modern IT offers enterprises manifold chances to enhance their competitiveness and their position on the market. Thanks to IT, business processes can be designed in an efficient way, new sales channels can be opened up and, last but by far not least, quality can be enhanced. However, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), that with a percentage of 99.8% of all enterprises and more than two third of all employees are the dominant form of business organisation in the European Union, often don’t take advantage of the opportunities IT presents. IT is rather seen as too complex, too technical and establishing a management structure to govern IT is in many small companies often perceived as a bureaucratic burden, rather than as an opportunity to increase profitability.

Changing this view is the aim of INNOTRAIN IT, project implemented in the EU’s Central Europe Programme, “Innovation Training IT Central Europe”, full project title, runs from April 2010 to March 2013.

With a co-funding by the European Regional Development Fund of 1,5 € million, twelve project partners in the Central Europe region have conducted case-studies about the use of IT in European SMEs and developed a “do-it-yourself” modelling tool that helps SMEs to enhance their IT infrastructure. And since, as we have said earlier, enhancing competitiveness is a people’s business, the project partners of INNOTRAIN IT approach exactly the ones who can turn IT from standard operating procedure into a key to become better. With a series of training sessions for 1,000 IT users on both strategic and operative levels of SMEs, INNOTRAIN IT teaches ways to handle IT in a more efficient and effective way – we call it “IT Service Management” (ITSM).

Changing the innovative environment in European SMEs. Establishing IT as a strategic tool. Training IT Service Management on different decision making levels of SMEs. – Those are the cornerstones of INNOTRAIN IT. The report at hand gives you an insight of how INNOTRAIN IT has realized this concept and what are the experiences that both the project partners and the trainees within SMEs made. First, this report outlines some basic trends around the use of IT in SMEs and gives you as a reader information about the region the project is active in. You will then learn what IT Service Management is, how INNOTRAIN IT has turned it into a concrete concept for innovation trainings and what those trainings have actually changed in SMEs.
Managing today’s complexity of IT and business simultaneously is a tremendously hard job—in particular for SMEs. Proprietors and managers of SMEs often don’t know how IT contributes to their business and occupy themselves with managing basic IT functions, which wastes financial and human resources as well as limits their capacity for process and product innovation.

In a global economy speed and quality of decision-making are one of the crucial factors for success. Looking at companies like Google or Facebook it becomes clear that SMEs in the information age, especially in the digital products sector, are often not far away from growing to multinational companies within only a few years. Based on the hyper-growth-effects, as described by Shapiro and Varian, an increasing number of SMEs with a medium and higher share of information in their products are facing a revolution that can only be managed based on a reliable IT infrastructure. Even SMEs which are working in quite different areas, such as the construction or production sectors, are dependent on reliable IT systems to provide visibility into the progress of construction projects, the production of plants. Additionally, they have to fulfill an increasing number of compliance issues such as saving financial or technical data. In the early 1990s, the “Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development” (OECD) wrote a report about SMEs and their relation to technology and competitiveness. It was recognised that IT would have a highly influence on SMEs development, but the accompanying specific issues and opportunities were not clear. “Although IT enabled SMEs were identified as a driver for our economy”, as indicated by Levy and Powell, research in this area remained scarce and difficult issues between IT and SMEs continue to persist until today. However, ITSM has the potential to provide an opportunity for SMEs to solve these problems, as long as the suggested methods and tools are simple, clearly applicable and less resource consuming, otherwise ITSM will fail to produce the improvements in SMEs performance that are needed for their continuing success.

A lot of research in the recent years has been focused on evaluating whether IT service management would be a valuable topic for SMEs or, alternatively, whether it would be an administrative overhead that makes sense only to align huge IT departments of global companies to the key objectives of their strategy. In particular, researchers Dibbern and Heinzl indicate that SMEs are interested in IT service management methods because they lack resources. The pressure created by compliance issues in different sectors as well as the pressure initiated by E-Business opportunities and constraints has caused serioius problems for a lot of SMEs in the last years regarding the sourcing of their IT function. The SMEs have tried and are still trying to solve this dilemma in two ways:

- They want to increase the efficiency of their IT function to save existing resources for new processes like compliance issues, enhancement of IT induced business flexibility and innovations;
- They are trying to assess the degree to which IT function contributes to the company’s profitability.

Chapter 1.1

**A LOOK INTO RESEARCH: ITSM IN SMEs – SUMMARIZING THE DEBATE**

**ITSM IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SMEs AS LONG AS METHODS AND TOOLS ARE KEPT SIMPLE**

The following section gives a brief summary of what has been done in this area until today and how it is necessary for IT Governance and IT Service Management in relation to SMEs.

In 1998, Fink wrote a paper about guidelines for the successful adoption of information technology in SMEs. Even though he didn’t focus on ITSM, he raised a number of highly related questions regarding topics like IT benefits, organisational culture, in-house IT expertise and resources, IT implementation and selection, availability, cost, etc. However, he focused rather on adoption issues than IT alignment and operational service management. This might be due to that fact that in 1998 Information Technology was ‘special’ and ‘new’, nowadays IT has become ubiquitous that is highly accepted and needed even in SMEs.

Di Renzo and Feltus published a paper in 2003 on how very small enterprises (VSE), which can be considered as a subset of SMEs, can assess their upcoming challenges with the NAM model. The NAM model is business value driven and designed in five process areas: infrastructure, service support, management, security, and documentation. The processes themselves are based on a combined approach of ISO/IEC 15504 and ITIL. Their approach has a strong focus on process alignment and maturity levels and

in large organisations but also in SMEs. Even though small enterprises might not have a designated IT department it is crucial that any person who is in charge of IT decisions (e.g. the owner of the business) is aware that every single IT investment and IT service needs to be aligned to his business strategy even when the enterprise strategy is rather simple.

According to Porter, any single action in a business needs to add value otherwise the action must not be taken. Di Renzo and Feltus, as well as Fink, argue that low value adding or non-value adding activities such as over-expenditure on IT or IT service shortfalls due to false economies are more important for an SME’s success or failure since their financial and human resources are usually very limited. Therefore, in accordance to Duffy, Luftmann, Weill and Broadbent, the orchestration of IT functions and non-IT functions within an SME should be made clear to decision makers in order to gain leverages and free resources for innovation and competitive advantage.

Scientific publications about IT Governance or, in our words, IT Service Management in relation to SMEs, are very scarce and hard to find. There is little evidence that basic IT problems that trouble SMEs have been resolved, which confirms our contention that new approaches are needed.

In Chapter 1.1, we will focus on the relationship between ITSM and the business areas of SMEs. Especially in the digital products sector, it is necessary to determine whether ITSM can provide an opportunity for SMEs to solve the problems they are facing and gain the benefits of improved performance. The relationship between ITSM and other areas of the business will be examined, and guidelines for the successful adoption of ITSM will be provided.
provided a rather simple method to assess related processes. However, their reliance on ITIL, which is a relatively complex framework, often makes NAOMI too complex for SMEs to manage their operations. We will come back to that later.

In 2005, a consortium of the Linux Solutions Group (LiSoG) – today known as Open Source Business Alliance), Salzburg University and different business partners worked on the Open-ITIL project. The project, as described by the consortium, aimed to provide SMEs with knowledge, processes and descriptions for the implementation of ITSM aligned with ITIL and to enable the verification of open source software based on a reference implementation. A group around Mavrianni has discussed a flexible architecture to support the delivery of information technology (IT) systems management services in 2007. They developed a method, which is able to combine different tools and services to create specific, customized IT service solutions. And in 2009, Ayat and other have published their work on "CMDB Implementation Approaches and Considerations in SME/SITU’s Companies." Even though we agree that CMDB is a central part of ITSM, we argue that an ITSM process can only be implemented with a holistic methodology. We see CMDB as a tool and commodity, which is necessary but interchangeable.

The most recent papers related to ITSM in SMEs have been written in the APA region. The paper of Lin et al. (2010) about "SME Oriented Service Delivery Approaches and Considerations in SME/SITU’s Companies." Even though we agree that CMDB is a central part of ITSM, we argue that an ITSM process can only be implemented with a holistic methodology. We see CMDB as a tool and commodity, which is necessary but interchangeable.

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Some sources for further information


Duffy, L.: “IT business alignment: is it an option or is it mandatory?” IOC, 2002.


With a current economic output (GDP) per capita of around 35,000 € and purchasing power per capita of more than 20,000 € (national average: 19,000 €), Baden-Württemberg ranks around 40% above the average in the European Union. Baden-Württemberg’s employment rate of 74% lies around 15% above the European Union average.

Global players such as Daimler/Chrysler, Bosch, Porsche, Heidelberg Druckmaschinen and SAP are based in Baden-Württemberg. Major foreign companies such as IBM, Sony, Hewlett Packard, Alcatel SEL, ABIB and Michelin have set up their German or European headquarters and development divisions in the state in order to supply European markets.

Many small and medium-sized enterprises in Baden-Württemberg also lay claim to a leading position. The approximately 420,000 SMEs employ around half of Baden-Württemberg’s wage earners. With both more than 200,000 employees the Creative Industries and the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become economic strongholds in Baden-Württemberg besides well-known champions in the automotive industry and engineering.

While poor in natural resources, Baden-Württemberg has grown prosperous through a population rich in ideas and inventiveness. Baden-Württemberg’s economy is today driven by technology and innovation. Over 4% of the total GDP goes into research and development.

The ICT branch hereby is exemplarily. Not only the many small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in Észak-Alföld might still be stronger in absolute figures, but also the many small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in Észak-Alföld region play an important role in the country. There are more than 100,000 SMEs employing more than 60% of the workforce in the region.

The city of Debrecen has an international airport and a significant logistics potential. The region has good potential for increasing the proportion of renewable energy production, having a significant surface and subterranean water reserves mainly used for thermal water.

Hungary’s GDP per capita is 66% of the EU average and the region’s GDP per capita (6,038,08 €) is relatively low compared to the rest of the country (9,711,9 €) and to the EU average (25,740 €). The activity rate is 54.6%, which is higher than a decade before. The regional unemployment rate was 14.5% in 2011 (national rate: 10.4%).

Észak-Alföld is highly specialised in the food industry, which represents more than 5% of the total employment. The region also has significant research and development capacity that promotes intensive development of innovation-oriented technologies, holds the second position at national level regarding R&D expenditure and is third in the number of R&D personnel. Hence it provides a solid R&D base concentrated in Debrecen and in the other two county seats, Szolnok and Nyíregyháza, which could be attractive to companies with high quality requirements.

The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) input indicators of the region suggest that it has a
Malopolska Region, Poland (A)

Malopolska is one of Poland’s 16 administrative provinces, with Krakow as the capital city, and comprises 8.3% of the country’s population. Malopolska province is placed right in the centre of Europe, in Poland’s south. The region takes up the upper Vistula river basin, Malopolska is divided into 19 districts and 3 municipal districts, each composed of 182 communities. The area’s GDP in 2008 was 94.790 million PLN (around 23.000 € million) or 7.4% of the domestic product in Poland. Malopolska is one of Poland’s most developed regions and is an advantage in terms of the IT projects’ competitiveness.

The number of registered business entities in 2009 was at 314.017, differentiated in:

- 94.6% micro businesses (less than 9 employees)
- 4.5% small businesses (10 – 49 employees)
- 0.8% medium businesses (50 – 249 employees)
- 0.1% big businesses (more than 250 employees).

In 2007 there were 3.240 companies with foreign capital share registered in Malopolska, employing 930.100 workers. There were 707.700 SMEs in Austria, representing 99.7% of all Austrian companies. They employ 67.2% of the Austrian workforce (all data: ÖNACE 2010). Most of them are companies with 0 or 1 employee. 1080 companies with more than 250 employees represent 0.4% of the corporate landscape in Austria.

Vienna Region, Austria (B)

The Republic of Austria is a Central European country, with a population of 8.383 million inhabitants (1st quarter 2011) and an area of 83.872 km². As a federal republic, Austria is divided into nine federal provinces which share legislative, executive and financial tasks with the federal government. Austria is among the richest countries in the world, with a per capita GDP of 42.400 € (2011) and a high standard of living, being ranked number 19 in the global Human Development Index 2011. The service sector generates the vast majority of Austria’s GDP. On a sector level the GPD is divided into 69.1% industry, like iron and steel works, chemical plants and oil corporations employing thousands of people, most industrial and commercial enterprises in Austria are relatively small. Among the most well-known Austrian companies are Red Bull, KTM, Bösendorfer, Voestalpine AG, Swarovski, Wienerberger, Glock, Magna Steyr, Fischer, AT&S, Semperit, Rosenbauer, Palffinger, RHI and Mayr-Melnhof.

Trade with other EU countries accounts for almost 66% of Austrian imports and exports. Expanding trade and investment in the emerging markets of central and Eastern Europe is a major element of Austrian economic activity. Trade with these countries accounts for almost 14% of Austrian imports and exports. Austrian firms have sizable investments in these countries and continue to move labour-intensiv, low-tech production to them.

There are 307.700 SMEs in Austria, representing 99.7% of all Austrian companies. They employ 67.2% of the Austrian workforce (all data: ÖNACE 2010). Most of them are companies with 0 or 1 employee. 1080 companies with more than 250 employees represent 0.4% of the corporate landscape in Austria.

Vienna’s capital Vienna is the largest city in the country with a population of about 1.7 million inhabitants. It was ranked the fifth richest NUTS-II region within Europe with a GDP reaching 38.632 € per capita as well as the number one city in the Mercer’s 2012 Quality of Living ranking. Vienna has grown into a financial and consulting centre and has established itself as the door to Eastern Europe within the last decade. Viennese law firms and banks are among the leading corporations in business with the new EU member states.

Vysocina Region, Czech Republic (C)

The Vysocina Region is situated in the centre of the Czech Republic, neighbouring the Jihocesky, Stredocesky, Pardubicky and Jihomoravsky Regions. Together with the last one, for the purpose of regional development support, Vysocina forms the NUTS II area (Jihovychod). It differs from the neighbouring regions for a dissected territory, higher altitude and low residential density. The region’s disintegrated residential structure has to do with the fact that inhabitants tend to move away from smaller municipalities and that young and qualified inhabitants leave. With its area of 6.786 km² (as of 1 January 2007) the region ranks among those with an above-average size; only 4 regions of the Czech Republic have a larger area. As for administrative breakdown, the territory of the Vysocina Region comprises 5 districts, 15 administrative districts of municipalities with extended powers and 26 administrative districts of municipalities with authorized municipal office. The basic self-governing unit is a municipality; which are 704 in the region. The average population per municipality amounts to 725 inhabitants and is the lowest of the whole Czech Republic. The highest number of municipalities comprises those with population under 500. There are 34 municipalities with the status of town in the region, and the number, in relation to the region’s area, falls slightly below the national average. As of 1 January 2011, the region’s population was 514.569; it is the fourth smallest among all the regions of the Czech Republic. In 2011 the Vysocina Region had an annual GDP of 153.760 million CZK (6.150 € million) and 6% unemployment, both of these values have grown since previous years. The number of enterprises has also been growing coming to 106.316 economic entities by September 2012; in comparison with other Czech regions, Vysocina has the smallest number of enterprises per inhabitant.

The majority of 81.563 enterprises in Vysocina are categorized as SMEs, with a large majority of microenterprises (with 0 – 9 employees). Besides, most of them are represented by self-employed people with no employees.
In today’s world, information technology has become a firmly entrenched part of everyday business. It accompanies all business workflows, from simple to complete processes. Even the smallest one-person company uses a computer, if only to write up an invoice. In any case, the importance of IT is evident as soon as the technology malfunctions and the computer will not work. When this happens, the one-person company may fall back on the neighbour’s computer and thus has, without even being aware of it, applied IT management methods successfully and created a fall-back plan (“business continuity plan”).

This simple example illustrates one possible meaning of IT management. However, it only scrapes the surface of a more complex issue. Those who own or work for SMEs should ask themselves: what aspects does IT Service Management include and what does it mean for me as an employee or owner of an SME?

**ITSM – What is behind it?**

IT Service Management (ITSM) is more than just a management tool. To understand and use it correctly, it is important to comprehend ITSM as an all-inclusive concept, internalise it and integrate it into everyday work. We might compare it to the process of learning how to drive a car: at the beginning, concentrating on traffic and learning the controls of the vehicle demands great deal of attention. After a while, the driver has memorised all of the motion sequences and remembers to look around; he or she carries out these actions without having to think about it. In practice, those responsible for IT frequently spend their time on maintenance and provisioning tasks. That ties up financial and personnel resources. The objective is to use ITSM to quickly attain small successes which together enable reliable, target and cost-effective provisioning of IT. Resources that are freed up can be used for new innovations.

Large companies are increasingly learning that the resource of information is one of the most important strategic goods for setting oneself apart from competitors. Companies without an information management plan will have difficulties in the market in the long term. The success of all strategic and operational initiatives stands and falls with having the right information at the right time. This principle does not only apply to large companies; SMEs can also benefit from good information management. The
basis for collecting, analysing, producing and distributing relevant information is the quality of information technology and IT services.

The service philosophy is the greatest difference between ITSM and classic IT management. When talking about ITSM, we do not talk primarily about bits, bytes, megahertz and gigaflops. Technical jargon confuses the majority of employees. ITSM, on the other hand, tries to connect business processes with information technology by defining IT-based services that support the operational business process.

A critical factor for ITSM is that IT services (such as saving documents or creating invoices) are viewed as business process-critical and thus require enough investment to provide optimal support to the business process without wasting resources (known as IT: business alignment, see below).

The challenge for each SME is to always bring business processes and IT into alignment and to define IT services that reflect an optimum relationship between the costs, benefits and risks. In ITSM, this is attained by user-oriented service definitions.

The foremost goal of ITSM is to align IT services and the associated technologies (hardware/software) to the business process and to guarantee the best possible support of financial processes by the IT organisation. IT Service Management describes the conversion of the information technology to customer and service orientation. Conversely, innovative information technologies can affect the business model; new technologies are reviewed continually. Things that seem "optimal" today can already be out of date tomorrow.

Improved change management – Never change a running system! Truly?

We are all familiar with the situation: soon after a new computer or software program is purchased, it no longer works the way it should. ITSM processes help SMEs identify these kinds of problems before they occur and eliminate them directly.

Better sourcing options – Focus on the core business.

Improved sourcing options based on a transparent IT enable the concentration on core competencies. An SME cannot and should not deal with all IT questions on its own, as comprehensive management ties up too many.

IT meets Business – Aligning the business and IT strategy.

Precisely for SMEs, planning ahead is important. Therefore, the IT landscape should be structured so that it can respond flexibly to changing requirements of the business processes. The objective is to integrate and align IT so that it provides optimum support to business objectives.

Compliance – Legal assurance for decision makers.

SMEs are subject to an increasing number of legal regulations related to data and IT (e.g. Data Protection act); when granting credit, a company’s IT landscape also plays an increasingly important role (see Basel II). If SMEs follow the ITSM philosophy, they will be in conformity with many of these regulations and be able to recognize the corresponding gaps.

IT Monitoring – You can’t manage what you can’t measure.

For SMEs it is important to define corresponding performance indicators and operating figures (known as Key Performance Indicators – KPI) to verify the quality of IT services and take appropriate measures.

Continual Service Improvement – Getting better each day.

Introducing an IT optimisation process (Continual Service Improvement), business process changes and new technologies are reviewed continually. Things that seem “optimal” today can already be out of date tomorrow.

Frameworks and standards

Today, a variety of frameworks and standards addressing or related to ITSM are available. The following list contains some of the most relevant in alphabetical order.

- Australian Standard for Governance of IT (AS8015)
- Business Information Services Library (BiSL)
- Calder-Moir IT Governance Framework
- Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI)
- Control Objectives in IT & related Technology (CobiT)
- Enhanced Telecom Operations Map (eTOM)
- ISO 9000, 20000 & 27001
- IT Balance Scorecard
- IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL)
- IT Service Capability Model (ITS-CMM)
- Microsoft Operations Framework (MOF)
- Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBoK)
- Projects in Controlled Environments (Prince2)
- The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOSAF)
- Zachman Framework
- And many others...
COBIT is the most holistic internationally recognized framework aimed at achieving organisational information technology goals and objectives, developed and maintained since 1996 by the IT Governance Institute – an organisation tightly cooperating with Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA).

Being a model of IT governance and information systems audit and control, COBIT is designed to provide effectiveness and efficiency while mitigating the risks connected with the use of IT based solutions. The framework is fully process-oriented and measurement driven. Its structure provides definition and measurement tools for assessing IT related organizational control objectives. COBIT evolved as a set of good practices which confirmed its business applicability. In the current version COBIT 5 (published in 2012) ISACA has merged the topics strategic alignment (previously COBIT 4.1), Risk (RiskIT) and Value (ValueIT). Furthermore, the mapping to the “other” frameworks like ITIL has been extended.

Despite of the crucial role that SMEs play in the economy, they have to tackle a number of development barriers that are present in the market. SMEs have to cope with the difficulties in obtaining credits and capital, the lack of which reduces their access to new technologies. It is also evident that SMEs are neglected as far as the systematic approach to IT management is concerned. For this reason support for SMEs is one of the European Commission’s priorities for economic growth, job creation and economic and social cohesion.

There are three categories of enterprises classified as SMEs under EU regulations. The categories are defined with reference to staff headcount and either a turnover or a balance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Balance Sheet Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium sized</td>
<td>&lt; 250</td>
<td>&lt; € 50 Million</td>
<td>&lt; € 43 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
<td>&lt; € 10 Million</td>
<td>&lt; € 10 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>&lt; 10</td>
<td>&lt; € 2 Million</td>
<td>&lt; € 2 Million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IT support in Central European SMEs is considered to play a major role in their further business success and strategic development. To find out the way how SMEs utilize IT in different Central–Europe-Regions, the INNOTRAIN IT project conducted a survey in six different European regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Czech Rep.</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
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<td>31</td>
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However, the response rate differs in the degree of their recognition. That means: It is not surprising that the topic of security and compliance reached the highest ratio due to the fact that security issues are frequently raised in media and professional press. Also, for the same reasons (popularity in professional press), the position of virtualization is also explainable. It is, however, interesting to see that ITSM is a familiar concept to 61% companies, as in the case of both popular areas such as the security and compliance and future critical sourcing methods they need (virtualization) the fundamental knowledge and skills in ITSM are essential. A very high awareness level of security/compliance, virtualization and ITSM is confirmed also in the rate of planned projects (Figure 4).

By asking SMEs how many of them are already applying ITSM, we could see a big gap between those who are familiar to the concept of ITSM (61%) and those who apply it in day to day business (15.8%).

Accordingly, we included a section in our survey where SMEs were asked:

- To what degree are technological trends important to IT strategic planning?
- Which are the trends and are there any on-going or planned projects in the organisations in relationship to them?

As it is indicated in Figure 2 – The importance of technological trends for IT-strategy planning – below, a majority of SMEs, especially in “old” EU countries (Austria and Germany), but also in Poland, perceives technological trends as having a very high or high impact on their IT strategy.

When analysing particular trends (Figure 3) in a second step, it is interesting to observe that SMEs are quite familiar with many important trends, as in almost all cases the answer “Yes – I know this trend” accounts for more than 50% of the respondents and in one case reaches 70% of responses.

Economist Joseph Schumpeter, who contributed greatly to the study of innovation, argued that industries must incessantly revolutionize the economic structure from within, that is innovate with better or more effective processes and products, such as the shift from the craft shop to factory. He asserted that “creative destruction is the essential fact about capitalism”. In addition, entrepreneurs continuously look for better ways to satisfy their consumer base with improved quality, durability, service, and price which come to fruition in innovation with advanced technologies and organisational strategies. Therefore it was interesting to know, how the Central European SMEs were aware of the innovation potential of Information Technologies.

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To get an understanding about the question whether ITSM is able to innovate the business of SMEs in the sense of Schumpeter’s definition, we have developed a 4 levels model of innovations:

- Methodological innovation level (aka the company already employed ITSM-methods)
- IT-Services on an infrastructure level (aka the company did significant infrastructure changes)
- Business process level (aka the company uses new IT services to change its business processes)
- Product level (aka the company uses IT Services to change the nature of their products)

After analysing our two different samples – the one who never used ITSM methods and the others who applied it over a longer time – we came to the following results:

- FIRST: SMEs which introduced ITSM methods successfully were able to implement them on a technological and infrastructure near level.
- SECOND: SMEs which introduced IT-Infrastructure near Service methods were 58 % more efficient

These results strengthen the hypothesis that those SMEs which are able to save massive IT resources are not the same ones that invest further to innovate their business processes or products. Summing up, below can be found a visual representation of IT-service driven innovations in SMEs based on our innovation spiral (Figure 6):

What we can see is that there are still two major barriers that have to be overcome by a successful implementation of ITSM methods in SMEs. The first barrier addresses the ITSM methods themselves. If around 60 % of the SMEs know ITSM methods and only 15 % already apply them, but 35% of all SMEs are willing to run an ITSM implementation project, there seems to be a major barrier for the lock in into the domain. More concretely, we have identified two major hurdles that describe this barrier:

- The already existing methods are too complex. From this we concluded that the INNOTRAIN IT method has to be a simplified ITSM method to foster the ability of SMEs to implement it.
- The existing ITSM methods do not offer a step by step implementation. In other words: No em-bedded “how to do” procedure is available. The INNOTRAIN IT innovation method therefore took a cookbook approach offering SMEs guidance through the successful implementation of ITSM.

The second barrier we realized was on the interface between IT-Service Management which was designed for cost savings only, and a second IT-Service Management approach for the fostering of process and product innovation. This barrier mainly is caused by two different phenomena:

- SMEs use ITSM as a cost saving method because they see the IT function in general as a cost and not a profit oriented function.
- There is a diffuse and low developed knowledge available about the impact of IT to SME’s business effectiveness.

In empirical reality both points of course can be assumed to be interconnected. While the reasons for this are explained in the following chapter, we shortly should stress the interconnectedness For INNOTRAIN IT this led to the requirement to find a method that empowers both business and IT-responsible actors within SMEs to get a common understanding about the business impact of IT in general and especially of IT services. In a further step, this insight led to our modelling method embedded in face to face trainings. These trainings foster SMEs to model and simulate their business on different layers (strategic level, process level, organisational level and IT-system level) and to think strategically about the interdependencies between these levels. That means, for example, that we train our trainees how to simulate the break-down of one or the other business object on different levels (remember Schumpeter’s creative destruction) to get an understanding about the interdependencies between business strategy, business processes and IT-services. After realising the consequences, INNOTRAIN IT guides SMEs to the development of new business processes supported by IT-Services and shows the trainees how to even change the quality of products by utilizing new IT-Services.
During the last chapter we have seen that while ITSM is a standing operating procedure in many large enterprises, there is much more potential for its use in SMEs. But how exactly could that potential unfold? The following paragraphs are listing important drivers for the implementation of ITSM in SMEs:

**Cost transparency and cost reduction**

Through the implementation of ITSM, SMEs will get to know the structure of their IT in depth. They can move one from allocating a budget on a yearly basis which must cover all costs arising over the year to performance and service related budgets. Many unnecessary costs incurred in IT departments are based on poor coordination and organisation of processes. With the introduction and consistent implementation of ITSM it is possible to reduce costs in the medium-term. A way to achieve this would be to focus on the core tasks of the IT department and to outsource non business-relevant functions to save costs, e.g. printer management. However, this is only possible if the internal service costs are transparent and can be compared to the real cost of outsourcing.

**Enhancement of business service quality and development of new products**

The alignment of IT with the business strategy and goals is especially important. Thus, business improvement projects could also be an external driver of IT service management. Companies using IT Service Management tend to be also characterized as more innovative and flexible, thus possibly providing more IT based innovations on process and product- or service levels. Also the development of new products might influence the IT department of an SME to focus on ITSM.
Within the last decade IT Service Management has developed into a discipline with internationally recognized frameworks and standards. Yet a thorough literature study focused on SMEs showed that there is little evidence to suggest that the basic IT problems that trouble SMEs have been resolved, which supports our contention that new approaches are needed. Nonetheless ITSM as a discipline developed basic principles which can be well applied to SMEs.

As an example of those considered for the INNOTRAIN IT method the following can be mentioned:

- Workload reduction
  - Workload Reduction can be achieved by selective outsourcing. Additionally, the standardization and optimization of IT processes reduces the need for resources. Patterns like a service-desk or a configuration management database can reduce efforts with operational activities. This driver appeals mainly to under-staffed IT departments.

- Compliance & reduction of risks
  - IT has an impact on several value creating business processes of a company. An IT failure has repercussions on entire departments and ultimately on the income situation of the company. This can lead in extreme cases even to bankruptcy. In the strict application of IT Service Management best practices many managers see a reduction of the risk of a total IT failure.
    - Creation of awareness in the target group CEO and CIO
    - Simplification – where possible
    - Alignment with existing frameworks
    - Creation of a possible implementation path

Furthermore, through defined processes and procedures as well as a comprehensive documentation ITSM provides a significantly better transparency through IT. This has a positive effect on the observance of regulations and laws like Basel II or SOX. Furthermore, requirements of customers or partners like financial institutions can be fulfilled and proven. This may have positive impact on the rating of the company.

Based on the insights above the INNOTRAIN IT consortium defined different principles and goals to address the barriers and to force the drivers.

- Creation of awareness in the target group CEO and CIO
- Simplification – where possible
- Alignment with existing frameworks
- Creation of a possible implementation path

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- IT Service Management is concerned with delivering and supporting IT services that are appropriate to the business requirements.
- IT Service Management is first and foremost a management task, thus needs to be anchored at top management level.
- IT is an enabler for business objectives, thus investments in IT and services need to be aligned with the business strategy.
- IT Service Management enables the provision of more customer-focused IT services and agreements about service quality improve transparency and accountability.
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- Definition of e.g. processes, service level catalogues, responsibilities improve the transparency and communication within the IT organisation.
- The definition of a single point of entry, like a Service Desk, helps to make resources available while keeping the quality standard high.
- The introduction of evaluation methods and tools improves the performance monitoring and helps reducing costs.
As part of the development processes, different sources like the case studies and the survey have been taken into account during the INNOTRAIN IT project. The focus group IT Leads, ITSM Experts, etc. turned out as a most valuable information source. Iterative discussion and the left over “best practices” gave us a starting point for our own simplified ITSM method.

In order to address the drivers and tackle the barriers (remember the last chapter!) we had to develop an ITSM method that should be simple enough to be accepted by SMEs, but yet universal enough to support their business. Since ITIL and COBIT are proven frameworks in large enterprises we had a look at their processes and controlled objectives and chose a “best of breed” approach from the two frameworks. The INNOTRAIN IT method does not serve as an ad hoc approach guarantees flexibility for SMEs to migrate to a larger framework when their companies grow and need more rigor to manage their IT services.

Key goals were:
- Provision of a ‘cookbook’ about ITSM explaining the different patterns
- Modularization and simplification of common patterns of various ITSM frameworks and methods
- Definition of a possible implementation process and explanation of the “best of breed” approach to select, adapt and adopt existing frameworks
- Delivery of ITSM training approach tailored for SMEs

The INNOTRAIN IT simplified ITSM method contains different modules, covering a specific topic and containing methods, processes, patterns and guides as well as references to the more detailed frameworks. As part of the IT Service Management Guide (“cookbook”) – online available – each module is described in detail. To get a better overview the modules are structured in different levels (see figure). Modules in the horizontal levels describe the coordination (strategic and tactical) and the operation of IT. The vertical areas contain modules which are related to the IT coordination as well as to IT operation.

Following, we list the main elements:

**Level I: strategic planning**
- Business IT Alignment Strategy: describes how IT goals derived from the company’s business strategy are supporting business goals. Technological and operational aspects are more or less excluded as the alignment takes place on the highest level. Target audience is the top and middle management, as well as the internal IT.
- IT Strategy: follows the alignment strategy and derives success factors, strategic goals, cause-and-effects relationships, operational goals, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Goal Indicators (KGI) and defines the actions for the operational implementation of the strategy. Target audience is the middle management as well as all employees of the internal IT.
- IT Service Agreement/Definition: as IT supports the business activities via services this module defines the business services necessary as well as the efforts provided by the IT to reach the service levels mutually agreed. Thus this module contains all relevant functions and standards for the definition and agreement of services. Target audience are all employees who work in the definition, implementation and provision of services, both on the business and on the IT side.
- IT enabled Innovation Management: this module serves as interface between IT service management and innovation management. The later developed innovation method will complement the IT service management using this module.

**Level II: service operations**
- Service and Infrastructure Operations: this module covers the daily operations of each IT department. Included are patterns like the service desk, incident and problem management and the management of the configuration (“knowledge of the landscape”).
- Systems and outsourced Service Management: aims to ensure the availability and capacity of internal systems as well as of outsourced systems and services. Checks are executed on a regular basis and actions are performed based on results to ensure system availability. In addition, the management of the capacity aims to guarantee that IT capacity meets current and future business requirements in a cost-effective manner.
- IT Procurement: many small companies have outsourced their infrastructure. Though, even then, the service and hardware have to be purchased and contracted. This module describes the phases of the procurement of IT products as well as IT services like specifications, searching and selecting of provider and contracting.
- Security and Environment: the goal of this module is to ensure the security of company’s IT. In addition to potential attackers, the IT environment should be prevented from physical influences (e.g. heat, water etc.) as well as technical failures (hardware defect, blackout etc.).

**Vertical levels:**
- Monitoring, Improvement & Change
- Strategy & Roadmap
- Business IT Alignment Strategy
- IT Strategy
- Control & Audit
- Compliance
- Change Management
- IT Project Management
- Service and Infrastructure Operation
- IT Service Management
- IT enabled Innovation Management
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Change Management & Improvement
- Systems and outsourced Services Management
- IT Procurement
- Security and Environment
Change Management: the goal of Change Management is to ensure that regular approaches and procedures are used for well-organised and prompt handling of all changes to controlled IT infrastructure, in order to decrease the impact on related services. To make controlled changes means to evaluate dependencies, plan and schedule the change and make it public.

Continuous Service Improvement: means on-going systematic checking of all available services to improve, for example, the service quality and performance.

IT Project Management: aims to ensure the visibility of project management, as activities in IT are very much project-based. Within this module IT projects are coordinated, prioritised, planned, budgeted, executed and evaluated.

The introduction of ITSM in a company is treated by most frameworks only marginally. However, this information is essential for SMEs. Therefore, INNOTRAIN IT addresses this topic explicitly as part of the ITSM Guide.

IT Service Management can be introduced in companies in different ways. Depending on the maturity and experience in the company, different processes can have the priority. In addition to incident management, change management is frequently the first step of an ITSM implementation. The change management scheme should be developed at the earliest stage possible, as it is the core of continuous service improvement.

The modular design of the simplified ITSM method allows introducing relevant modules step-by-step. This approach has been combined with a prioritising modules that are mandatory for all companies have been marked as ‘basic modules’ (visualised dark grey) while modules where the need depends on the requirements of the specific company have been marked as ‘optional’. The mandatory modules provide the basis for a successful use of ITSM. The optional modules supplement them. To exploit completely the added value that can be provided by using ITSM, all modules should be introduced. The selection of modules depends to a great extent on the company’s facets, the strategy and requirements. The process shown in our graph shows an example of a blueprint of an introductory path.

As mentioned earlier, the defined steps reflect all basic modules. These have been arranged into a sequence according to their dependencies and are expanded by adding relevant activities.

ITSM implementation is not only a technical, but primarily an organisational change process, that sometimes can meet resistance. People in organisations have to change this behaviour, because they are those who decide whether or not ITSM introduction is successful.

To make IT-departments more efficient and innovative, it is necessary to increase the awareness of CEOs and CIOs about the benefits of ITSM. Therefore the starting point of the INNOTRAIN IT training sessions was to address CEOs of small companies and IT-decision makers of medium sized companies based on their everyday life challenges they want to solve with IT. Those are often external drivers, like new compliance requirements or the need for cost efficiency of web based business services (e.g. sales activities via a web shop, new technological trends like cloud computing) as well as internal drivers like risk reduction through efficient and reliable back-up and computer administration routines, cost reduction of printer maintaining costs or else. The pre-training communication phase in the project was focused on gaining SMEs’ interest for ITSM by helping them to solve their special business and technological issues.

The INNOTRAIN IT training approach was totally different than existing trainings based on the established frameworks like ITIL or CoBiT. In these trainings participants are normally trained in the ITIL vocabulary and mostly in service delivery processes. Thereby however, participants tend in our opinion to miss the basic and essential ITIL philosophy: the alignment between business and IT strategy. The INNOTRAIN IT approach addresses these weaknesses. We not only trained IT staff, but also IT-affine CEOs of SMEs, starting with a solution for their special problems based on a case study that was explored and documented by the research project partners at the beginning of the project.

This case study training approach is supported by a downsimplified and less complex ITSM method for SMEs that includes only the most effective parts of the three major frameworks (ITIL, CoBiT and ValiT). The solutions which are presented during the trainings in the form of case studies are modelled by using a web based modelling tool. Thereby, no expenses for hardware or software were necessary. The trainees only needed an internet connection and a web browser. Once they had internalized the ITSM philosophy, they could go on a suggested innovation path and find other service solutions on their own that helped them to improve their business.

In case the trainees were implementing innovations in their organisation, INNOTRAIN IT offered a second training module at a later phase of their business transformation. The second training delivered the participants fundamental know-how and social skills for organisational change. In the state of the training technology, this component is mostly totally underestimated and not part of the existing ITSM framework trainings. But every change of business and IT services leads to the situation that employees are confronted with a change of their individual working situation. Therefore, the second training module was very valuable for the participants to implement IT service management methods and innovations successfully in their organisation.

The INNOTRAIN IT training process consisted of face-to-face trainings and online training modules. The face-to-face trainings were divided in a basic ITSM Case Training and a Change Management and Innovation Training. The training process has been organised as follows: the training process started with marketing measures in order to raise interest of participants for the trainings. Secondly, the participants registered themselves online for the first face-to-face ITSM Case Training. Thirdly, the participants attended the face-to-face training. Fourthly, after the seminar the participants got access to the INNOTRAIN IT Online Training Platform. They could then run different Online Training Modules and use the web based modelling tool on the platform for modelling their IT processes. After this phase a special second face-to-face training was offered to teach the aspects of change and innovation management.
The trainings were accompanied by community services on the INNOTRAIN IT training platform and customer relationship management activities. The following picture illustrates the INNOTRAIN IT training process.

The face-to-face ITSM Case trainings had the following topics: provisioning of IT, printer management, web shop and help desk. They included the phases welcome, presentation of the case study, ITSM method, ITSM process modelling, and lessons learned.

The structure of the training was based on four principles:

- Case study based learning
- Simplified ITSM method
- Exchange of collective experiences in a group situation of similar experts (peer-to-peer approach)
- Usage of an interactive web based learning platform

The online training comprises the modules “Innovation with ITSM”, “ITSM Introduction and Philosophy”, “ITSM Process Modelling”, “ITSM Implementation”, “Organisational Implementation and Innovation”.


Knowledge needs to be available anytime and everywhere nowadays. Professionals and scholars need and want to be able to access the answer to specific questions at any point in time they choose.

Thus, when aiming to train professionals in SMEs in Central Europe, an online knowledge distribution platform must provide:

- a single-point of access to the knowledge the training programme offers;
- easily accessible content, well-structured and clearly presented;
- a multi-language display catering to the specific needs of each of the regions, all united in one single space;
- an interactive environment, where the professionals can consume knowledge, interact with others and have a working space to design and solve their problems.

The INNOTRAIN IT platform – available at www.innotrain-it.eu – is the online training support for IT Service Management in SMEs as developed by the project consortium.
It aims to fulfil the criteria described above by providing bundles of services which are:

- Training services
- Information services
- Knowledge-transfer services
- IT Service Management and Innovation services
- Communication services.

The pre-defined training path provides a logical guideline for understanding ITSM and Change Management.

- Train-the-trainer is designed for current and future ITSM trainers, the contents provided aim to develop:
  - general skills on how to be a trainer for professionals;
  - knowledge that should be conveyed for SMEs in ITSM.

The platform was equipped with a transnational training calendar, giving visitors an overview of the events organised, with all details for each event and the opportunity to register to participate. The trainer is then able to keep in touch with the trainees via email and provide them with materials, updates and relevant information. During the training the platform is used to acquaint trainees with typical ITSM scenarios and to allow them to access to the modelling toolkit. After the event itself the trainee can follow the online trainings and be engaged in experience reports, moderated by the trainers on the platform.

Online trainings strive to support SMEs professionals in their daily IT Service Management pursuits by:

- providing an online training path with multi-media materials, exercises and assessments for deepening the understanding of the ITSM topic; giving access to the modelling environment,
- which enables the professionals to design and solve their individual problems in a do-it-yourself manner.

The platform was deemed as very important. Thus interested parties can deploy the portal and its contents in one or more languages and easily customise their offer to the local needs of SMEs.

Another objective of the INNOTRAIN IT project was to enhance the transnational exchange about methods, best practices and tools to design and operate IT Services successfully and to strengthen transnational and regional innovation capabilities. Therefore the communication features of the INNOTRAIN IT training platform were deemed as very important.

The platform was equipped with a transnational training calendar, technological meeting support (e.g. NetViewer, Skype etc.) and a mailing list which allows the partners deemed it especially interesting when considering sustainability aspects of the project. Using Java and Javascript the portal is implemented in two programming languages which are largely available in any of the participating regions. Thus interested parties can deploy the portal and its contents in one or more languages and easily customise their offer to the local needs of SMEs.

In preparation for the implementation of the INNOTRAIN IT portal one of the main considerations was that after the project lifetime deploying the portal should be easy for anyone who wishes to do so. Thus they can be also external partners, only responsible for a specific task.

On a technology level the open source CMS technology LifeRay® was used. As no costs incur for the usage the partners deemed it especially interesting considering sustainability aspects of the project. Using Java and Javascript the portal is implemented in two programming languages which are largely available in any of the participating regions. Thus interested parties can deploy the portal and its contents in one or more languages and easily customise their offer to the local needs of SMEs.

In conclusion, the INNOTRAIN IT portal is designed for current and future ITSM trainers, the contents provided aim to develop general skills on how to be a trainer for professionals; knowledge that should be conveyed for SMEs in ITSM.

Assuming that professionals will keep revisiting an online platform only if the news and topics delivered are up-to-date and relevant for their business environment, the INNOTRAIN IT platform provides independent and neutral information on developments of different topics of interest, like e.g. compliance, supply chains, e-Procurement, and IT-Standards for SMEs, allowing the access to information either on a transnational or on a regional level, depending on the interest group addressed. Upcoming events, conferences and online publications can also be displayed and disseminated.

“Knowledge transfer” is defined by the researchers Argote and Ingram as “the process through which one unit (e.g. group, department or division) is affected by the experience of another one”. Thus, besides the training services, which represent a separate chapter, the INNOTRAIN IT portal provides these services, considered especially important as they help bridge regional knowledge discrepancies in the uptake and successful implementation of ITSM in different regions of Central Europe. Thus Best Practice cases, experience reports on pilot projects, eBooks, a WIKI, and a Forum are available on the portal. Furthermore handbooks, for the use of the portal itself as well as the modelling environment, are at the disposition of the users.

Gearing towards sustainability: role concept and technology

In preparation for the implementation of the INNOTRAIN IT portal one of the main considerations was that after the project lifetime deploying the portal should be easy for anyone who wishes to do so. Thus the consortium identified two key features sustaining this goal (a) the portal usability and (b) the technology.

The usability ensured an appealing design and easy to navigate information, but also by the implementation of a thorough role concept, which gives the region the control over the content displayed in their language. The overall approval of transnational contents lies with the project leader. Trainers can manage their trainings independent of other content.
A CUSTOMIZED ADOIT LIBRARY

Chapter 3.5

Excursus: domain specific engineering

The strategic alignment of IT and Business is a fundamental concept within the INNOTRAIN IT method. Therefore, it is useful to choose a perspective through the whole company — starting with the business and IT strategy, via business processes and supporting IT services to the IT itself with applications, systems and services processes. The following image shows an overview of the relevant model types, their hierarchical order and relationship within the company.

The gathered and documented information, IT services and infrastructure elements is an important step of the IT service management implementation path. Unfortunately, SMEs usually do not use modelling solutions to represent their company with processes and relevant infrastructure elements. Accordingly, the project INNOTRAIN IT tries to reduce the entry barrier with the provision of customized tools tailored to the needs of SMEs. The software is a fundamental part of the concept to increase the awareness on ITSM in small and medium-sized enterprises. The already existing and established tool ADOit® from BOC Group has been chosen as starting point and basis for the customization.

ADOit® is a software tool for the strategic, tactical and operational management of the entire IT of an enterprise. It enables the collaboration of IT architects, application owners and IT management as well as business process owners. The two main applications are the enterprise architecture and IT service management. The functionality of ADOit® can be structured in six core competences:

- acquisition: automated capturing and presentation of existing IT infrastructure;
- modelling: design and optimization of IT services, infrastructure, processes etc;
- analysis: identification of interdependencies between processes, infrastructure and architecture of IT;
- simulation: execution of worst case/best case scenarios;
- evaluation: monitoring of indicators or performance;
- documentation: automated generation of documentation in different formats.

ADOit® can, therefore, be assumed as a visual configuration management database, which can easily be used by non-IT personnel, but provides — if required — a lot of additional functionalities.

Customization of ADOit

“A study about language is spoken in language”.

Discussions about language require a further semantic level: a meta-language. The investigation of models is very similar and requires a meta-model. The meta-model can be assumed as a model of a modelling language. This behaviour is recursive and accordingly the subsequent logical level is a meta-meta-model (and so on). In other words, on the one hand a high-level model of multiple modelling languages can be defined. On the other hand, several modelling languages — which all have certain similarities — can be derived from a meta-model.

The current meta-model of ADOit is specific for the representation of the IT in the context of the whole company. The developers have implemented as many requirements of potential users as possible. In addition, the specific requirements of relevant frame-
works like CDBIT, ITIL and TOGAF as reference models have been considered and implemented. By covering such a wide range of requirements, the current meta-model is extremely powerful, but at the same time very complex – too complex for SMEs!

Based on the results of the previous research the primary goal was to reduce the complexity of the tool. However, the requirements from the following sources were considered necessary for the adaption of the existing meta-model:

- modelling experience from case studies about ITSM and innovation in SMEs;
- simplified INNOTRAIN ITSM method;
- a focus group containing IT (service) management and process experts as well as SMEs.

Listing each request and the related adjustment is beyond the scope of this document. Accordingly, only the used approaches to adapt the meta-model are mentioned:

- elimination of complete model types (e.g. projects, software architecture, etc.);
- merge of multiple model types to one model type (e.g. Process Architecture + IT Service Architecture = IT Service Business Process Architecture);
- elimination of objects within a model as well as the elimination of compulsive relations;
- extension of a complete model type to allow SMEs to model business processes in detail.

The result of these adjustments is a customized meta-model for ITSM in SMEs. Since the meta-model provides now less features, the degree of complexity has decreased significantly and therefore it is more suitable for the application in small and medium-sized enterprises.

The resulting customized modelling environment has been utilized during several stages of our project: case studies, pilot projects, creation of innovation scenarios and interregional trainings. The modelling environment has also been included into the online portal to provide SMEs with a free tool after they get in touch with it as part of the trainings. Our experience show that the simplified ITSM method in combination with the customized modelling tool provide valuable methods and tools that can be applied in most SMEs.
Jochen Rummel is an expert in IT Service Management. At Bechtle GmbH & Co. KG – IT Systemhaus Neckarsulm in Baden-Württemberg he is responsible for the Competence Center Project- and Service Management. Jochen took part in an INNOTRAIN IT training session himself in September 2012 and started to use INNOTRAIN IT’s material for his own work as a consultant afterwards.

Chapter 3.6

INNOTRAIN: One key problem that we see in the field of IT Service Management is that many SMEs do not identify IT as an important component of strategic decisions – as something they can become more competitive with. Quite the contrary, IT infrastructure is something that often has been developed in the early stages of an enterprise and now simply has to run and run and run. Is that an experience you also made during your work?

J. RUMMEL: A lot of our customers come from the Baden-Württemberg region, in southwest Germany – a region where INNOTRAIN IT is also very active in. SMEs here are a special phenomenon on their own. They are founded on the basis of do-it-yourself inventory. This is what made them successful, an economic driving force. It doesn’t matter if it is your bakery around the corner or a middle-sized enterprise – they all have the need for IT, because a good IT allows them to react fast and to standardize their processes. The mobile market with smart phones and other devices has intensified that pressure for a modern IT infrastructure.

Does that mean the need for IT Service Management is cross-sectoral?

Absolutely!

What about the actual implementation of IT Service Management? Does the technology-orientation of companies make a difference?

I think all companies are quite technology-oriented nowadays. My experience is that the need for IT Service Management is dependent on external standardization. The bigger the role of external norms and external control is in a company, like state regulation or external audits, the bigger is also the need for IT Service Management. Because good IT Service Management helps to regulate and to document. Whether it is an engineering company or something completely different doesn’t matter too much.

Your company Bechtle AG has entered a lot of markets successfully. Is there something typical for Baden-Württemberg or for other regions in which INNOTRAIN IT is active in?

Good question. In general I would say that knowledge diffusion helps a lot in IT Service Management. If there is a regional culture of communication between different parts of one and the same enterprise, for example between different production plants in a region, it makes it a lot easier. But it is not only the exchange of best practice that helps. Real collaboration makes sense as well – just think of two different operational divisions in large companies backing up each other. Of course INNOTRAIN IT works on that topic.

Although you are an expert in IT Service Management yourself you took part in an INNOTRAIN IT training session. What was your impression?

I liked it a lot! Your approach is to simplify things in a very structured, clever and efficient way. INNOTRAIN IT shows SMEs what the essentials are. By the way, we even use material that INNOTRAIN IT has produced during your work is especially helpful for beginners in IT Service Management.

Thanks a lot!

Talking external expertise, subcontracting services – is that part of good IT Service Management?

It is not a must-have. The real must-have is some kind of strategy, which determines why you are doing what. Part of the strategy should always be a clearly defined operator model. And the overarching goal always has to be usability. Employees who are not IT experts themselves but have their knowledge in other fields should get help with IT and not problems. During the last year I have learned that INNOTRAIN IT has helped many SMEs to develop themselves in that direction. However, there is still a lot of work to be done in that regard!

Maybe the biggest challenge during INNOTRAIN IT was to show SMEs at all that IT Service Management is a field that matters. How do you explain the use of IT Service Management to your customers?

Well, constant dripping wears away the stone. But we know that problem! It is a success for us when we can convince enterprises that IT today has become a production factor. It doesn’t matter if it is your bakery around the corner or a middle-sized enterprise – they all have the need for IT, because a good IT allows them to react fast and to standardize their processes. The mobile market with smart phones and other devices has intensified that pressure for a modern IT infrastructure.

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Thanks a lot!
VRVis is Austria’s leading research company in the field of Visual Computing. Together with the Institute of Computer Graphics and Algorithms at the Vienna University of Technology (TU) and the Visualization Commission of the Austrian Academy of Science VRVis forms one of the largest computer graphics research groups in Europe. VRVis was also generously available for an extensive case study conducted within INNOTRAIN IT. Out interviewee Georg Stonawski is VRVis’ CEO.

INNOTRAIN: At the time you founded your company, has ITSM already been a topic for you?

G. STONAWSKI: As we are a spinoff of the University of Technology in Vienna we were lucky to have a very experienced system administrator at our side from the very start. Since its foundation in 2000 VRVis has grown at a steady annual rate of 10–15% and that way it has kept developing its ITSM strategy continuously. By now the company employs a total of 60 people. In the beginning the system administrator has been employed only part time, now there are two and a half full time employees.

Concerning ITSM we must discern between two quite different areas at VRVis: an office area which is similar to that of most other SMEs and a research area. The research area is very important because it takes over the development of the graphic component for many other IT companies.
An interview with
Jerzy Charuza, Open Horizon, Krakow, Poland

Jerzy Charuza is vice president of Open Horizon, a company operating a web-based educational platform and producing educational films and multimedia materials. Jerzy has broad experience in realization of multimedia projects, film production, and broadcasting of large events and conferences. He was technical director of RMF FM, the largest private radio station in Poland. He was president of SCENA FM, a subsidiary of RMF FM responsible for the organisation of large promotional events. He was also president of Stage Art, a company producing video material for major Polish public and private TV channels. Jerzy is a frequent technology consultant and he served as technology expert during the process of strategy formulation for the Malopolska region.

INNOTRAIN: What are the main benefits for your company from the implementation of ITSM?

J. CHARUZA: The major benefit of using ITSM methodology is an increased awareness of our resources as well as better fine tuning of the offer directed to our customers. The elaborated model helped us to understand who we are and to structure our resources, processes as well as our technological and organisational infrastructure. With respect to strategy definition, we realized that it is necessary to focus more on corporate customers while maintaining our offer for individual customers, which is now being proved by the practice. This direction has been revealed during the modelling and strategy formulation process. Also, visualization of organisational and competency-like dependencies was an important direct outcome of the project. As a result, at the moment a new employee may take over organisational functions without any major obstacles.

Can you describe your personal implementation path for ITSM?

While implementing the ITSM philosophy in our company, we realized that we were unable to complete the project on our own. Consequently, we had to collaborate with academic experts on a regular basis in order to discuss with them our organisational problems. For instance, most likely in about half a year we will exploit a large number of different subsystems. We think that the proper approach was to introduce the change in an evolutionary manner.

An example of such model of cooperation was a number of sessions during which our employees were describing the company related reality and academic experts were applying the modelling tools. Such cooperation needs to be flexible, as it should consider significant growth in the number of users. The INNOTRAIN IT method allowed us to visualize company’s structure and complex dependencies among various organisational positions which, in turn, helped employees to understand their roles in the company.

What kind of new insights did you gain at the INNOTRAIN IT training?

I learned that IT is a kind of resource which adapts really well to the e-learning platform we are running. For instance, in the past year our IT infrastructure has grown significantly which forced us to change the database backup technology. We had to rapidly extend our hardware by two levels. At the moment our database is replicated in real-time and backup is being performed after each transaction and not on an overnight basis as it was done previously. This change has been enforced in the fall 2012. When diagnosing this problem and working out the solution we highly benefited from the organisational documentation created in the ADOit modelling tool which we were introduced to during the INNOTRAIN IT training.

So you didn’t use modelling tools before the training?

We have not been using modelling tools beforehand. Organisational management and project design were performed intuitively and informally. We were aware that we had some resources but we focused more on financial simulation and modelling. In fact, our organisation arose spontaneously.

You worked together with researchers on this project. What was your experience and can you imagine continuing your cooperation with research institutions in the future?

Being primarily a practitioner I found it very useful to learn from the perspective of experts in modelling and management theory. However, I think that theoreticians also benefited from this cooperation. I believe that the feedback from the practice is very useful for academia. Such cooperation helps to achieve the synergy effect, beneficial for both theory and practice. We all operate in fast changing technology and reality. Therefore, mutual interactions are necessary. I remember my academic experience 20 years ago when the distance between academia and business was enormous. Over the last 20 years the situation changed for the better.

In general, thinking about the results of the INNOTRAIN IT project, I experienced the online learning platform as really valuable because it enables an exchange of experience between academia and business. Such solutions are not frequent in Poland. This is especially important for Polish SMEs who tend to run their businesses in an ad-hoc manner and use neither planning nor modelling. Yet, modelling helps us to avoid unnecessary risk, such as buying an expensive server which is in fact not needed. Talking about the academia-business cooperation, I must admit that the situation is improving in Poland and there are more and more organisations dealing with technology transfer. However, such cooperation is easier for technical universities as they are able to sell know-how and patents. Nonetheless, I think that the cooperation should be also fostered in the field of organisational and management theory. I am convinced that it will raise interest on the side of business practice.

Thank you very much for this interview!
Making the alignment between business and IT understandable to SMEs is half the way to success. During its training sessions our project tried to train good service management practices based on the example of a fast growing car mechanical shop, called Charly’s Do It Yourself Car Service, where business and IT were both forced to make IT-Service based business decisions. Thereby, participants learned to estimate the consequences for alternative IT-Services usage to different business dimensions, like business continuity, business process costs or even product quality. During one of our trainings one company, like all others in our training sessions, started to model its IT infrastructure. The necessity to develop a basic understanding for the interdependencies between IT-Infrastructure (compute, networks, applications), IT-Service Processes and business processes. In doing so, it got obvious that the main production processes of this company were running on a single central infrastructure element which was not insured against failure. The failure of this very element would have caused an existential damage for the company in the form of a significant loss of production time. As a result of our training, this company purchased a second communication network element in the same week and mirrored the critical infrastructure to secure business continuity.

I can remember another company which was inspired by the idea of the INNOTRAIN IT innovation scenarios to sell spare parts for its products over the internet. Elements of our training made it much easier for them to realize that idea: the modelling of dependencies between required service levels for electronic selling, the necessary web shop application architecture and the necessary service support from the IT were concrete steps to business success in this case. Empowered by the examples of INNOTRAIN IT, this company successfully designed and integrated a webshop-service from an external service supplier.

For my colleagues and me at the Electronic Business Institute of Heilbronn University for Applied Science a major lesson learned of the training is this: It is a central success factor to train an SME the implementation plan to consider not only technological but also emotional and communicative aspects of the organisational change. This is what is so great about the training materials developed by INNOTRAIN IT: everyone can relate to it. Whether you are a real estate agent or an expert on ITSM, you can find something new and useful to bring home with you from the trainings.

All in all, I am pleased that so many SMEs in Hungary have been able to discover the simplified ITSM method, and realize how they can use it in their everyday businesses. I am positive that the trainings succeeded in changing some managers’ attitudes about how to run their operations more effectively. What is more, we have decided to integrate the materials developed by INNOTRAIN IT into certain courses at the University of Debrecen, and thus the employees and managers of the future will already have some knowledge of ITSM by the time they enter the labour market.

Lessons learned - Two personal insights

Chapter 4.7

Prof. Dr. Dieter Hertweck – Electronic Business Institute, Heilbronn University of Applied Science, Boden-Württemberg, Germany – ITSM Researcher

Anikó Vágner – University of Debrecen, Észak-Alföld, Hungary – ITSM Trainer

“What have we learned from the INNOTRAIN IT trainings? First of all, that no two trainings are the same. The background of the participants has been extremely diverse: from IT experts to company managers, people attended the training events from various sectors like the service industry, health care and others. This meant that we needed to find common ground with everyone, and this is what is so great about the training materials developed by INNOTRAIN IT – everyone can relate to it. Whether you are a real estate agent or an expert on ITSM, you can find something new and useful to bring home with you from the trainings. While the same material was used each time, it was really important to adapt the training materials to Hungarian reality and the actual needs of participants. Also, we learned that it is impossible to fit all the information on the simplified ITSM method into a single day of training, so we considered this event to be an introduction to the world of ITSM. In Hungary most people had never heard of IT Service Management before, but during the training sessions they could get acquainted with the basics, and try the modelling environment. And this is where our online platform comes in: the online training materials can be accessed any time and any place. Also, the pace of learning is determined by the individual user, and the modelling environment can be used freely even after the trainings.

One thing I did not expect was that one of the best parts of the trainings would come out during the breaks. Vivid discussions developed among participants about what the modelling environment could be useful for, and what ITSM was all about. In these moments I could really see that the participants understood the training material and had been enriched by it.

All in all, I am pleased that so many SMEs in Hungary have been able to discover the simplified ITSM method, and realize how they can use it in their everyday businesses. I am positive that the trainings succeeded in changing some managers’ attitudes about how to run their operations more effectively. What is more, we have decided to integrate the materials developed by INNOTRAIN IT into certain courses at the University of Debrecen, and thus the employees and managers of the future will already have some knowledge of ITSM by the time they enter the labour market.”
A CONCLUDING REMARK: 
ITSM AS ANOTHER BRICK 
FOR COMPETITIVENESS

The longest training sessions that have been held in the INNOTRAIN IT project took one day. During one day of ITSM training, even the best trainer can only teach basic knowledge. However, this basic knowledge serves SMEs as the necessary foundation to turn their IT surrounding into an innovation process:

Good IT infrastructure is not static but adapts itself to the business model!

Proper IT Service Management doesn’t consist of hardware only – it rather connects people with hardware in the form of strategically formulated processes!

Claims like these, which belong to the most important elements of the philosophy behind INNOTRAIN IT, enabled participants to understand the key of the sustainable use of information technologies: It’s an individual challenge, because business IT shouldn’t fit only the pages of a distributor’s catalogue but also the goals of a concrete enterprise and, of course, the individual needs of people working in a company.

In the age of globalization the creation of value in the European economy is more than ever based on knowledge. While traditional ways of production seem to ene, ideas for start-ups as well as successfully changing business models get more and more individualized. We are convinced that choosing a method to handle IT which lives up to the individuality of competitive business enterprises is the right track. Since IT Service Management is such a method we believe that it will be one brick for the future competitiveness of the European economy.

But let us leave ITSM as a method aside and, for one last paragraph, go back to another key determinant of INNOTRAIN IT: with all its heterogeneity the European Union still is a project of regions. The analysis we have conducted shaded light on the profiles of six of them. Thereby, our field of work is just an example of course. This differentiation into regional strongholds of innovation, regionally formulated goals and last but not least regionally diversified culture brings along the chance to learn from each other, it even can serve as an enabler for creativity. Accepting individuality and at the same time diffusing knowledge about best practices is the challenge in making use of these possibilities. After 36 month spent dealing with this problem, we can say with all honesty: what you gain from accepting this challenge is worth never to stop trying!
In the INNOTRAIN IT Central Europe project, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund, twelve partners from six countries have developed a training concept and an online training platform on IT Service Management as part of an international cooperation. The consortium involves the following institutions:

- MFG Public Innovation Agency for ICT and Media, Heilbronn University of Applied Sciences, Beatrix Lang GmbH from Germany
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Cracow University of Economics from Poland
- European Projects and Management Agency and Westmoravian College Trebic from Czech Republic
- Austrian Computer Society and University of Vienna from Austria
- INNOVA Észak-Alföld Regional Development and Innovation Agency Nonprofit Ltd. and University of Debrecen from Hungary
- die Berater from Slovakia

The idea behind the creation of the consortium was to include a university and an agency-type institution from the regions in order to reach the targets of the project (i.e., the SMEs from the production sector, regional catalysts like chambers of commerce and innovation catalysts like universities and research institutions).

The project has been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund with 1.5€ million and has run for a period of 36 months (April 2010 – March 2013).

Coordinated by MFG Public Innovation Agency the project partners have cooperated within the project to foster ITSM and its related innovations in SMEs.

The dissemination and communication work package was led by the Hungarian INNOVA Észak-Alföld, which has ensured the wide project promotion of outputs and results during the lifetime of the project.

The German Heilbronn University led Work Package 3 where the main outputs were an innovation maturity analysis with 24 case studies, the development and AdoIT implementation of a simplified ITSM method for SMEs and the creation of innovation scenarios.

The University of Vienna developed the innovation training environment, based on web technology.

The platform can be reached by the following link: www.innotrain-it.eu

Two pilot projects have also been executed at the University of Cracow and Heilbronn to demonstrate the innovation potential of the INNOTRAIN IT platform.

In Work Package 5 Beatrix Lang GmbH has developed the content for the training and all the regions have implemented face-to-face innovation trainings.