



ITIL: DOCUMENTED COMMON SENSE

IT Web
31 May 2005

The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), a group of publications containing 'best practice solutions' for the management of IT systems, is best described as "documented common sense".

This is according to Charles Osburn, a director of Quintica, the South African representative of Marval Corporation and the distributor of the Marval Service Management (MSM) application based on ITIL. Originally created by the UK government in response to increased dependency on information technology (IT) and the need for process standardisation, ITIL has evolved from a recommended best practice to a global industry "given" for aligning IT services with business requirements.

The underlying standard for ITIL is BS15000

Osburn says people who find ITIL easy to understand are people who use common sense in their business dealings. "There is nothing in ITIL that entrepreneurs would not want to implement in their own businesses."

He says companies regularly "spend millions" on IT infrastructure, but this is a waste of money if they don't understand the business processes and train staff to work within the parameters of these processes - and the systems that support them.

"At present, businesses too often take a 'silo approach'. Departments work primarily for and with themselves. How can people at the beginning of the pipeline do their job properly if they don't have the information from the end of the pipeline?" asks Osburn.

"With ITIL we talk about people, processes and technology. Good people are supported by good, solid, consistent processes. If the process isn't functioning, it should be changed. The process is supported by the technology.

"However good your technology is, it is useless if the process doesn't work properly."

While ITIL has been primarily targeted at users of IT, Osburn believes the largest market for ITIL lies outside of this market.

"ITIL can be applied anywhere," he stresses. "People report errors; they are entered in the system, and this process clarifies where the pressure points are. An analysis can be done within an IT department or it can be done by other businesses in other sectors."



Osburn says that no matter what the industry, it is important for businesses to have an insight into their working methods and business processes.

"The working methods applied in a business should be laid down so that new employees can learn the ropes easily," he says. "Why would a business want to keep reinventing the wheel? By implementing ITIL, it can learn from the mistakes of others. ITIL is a generally available 'best practice'."

EDITORIAL CONTACTS

Quintica

Charles Osburn
(011) 575 4320
charles.osburn@quintica.co.za

HMC Seswa Corporate Communication

Christy McMeekin
(011) 704 6618
christy@hmcswa.co.za