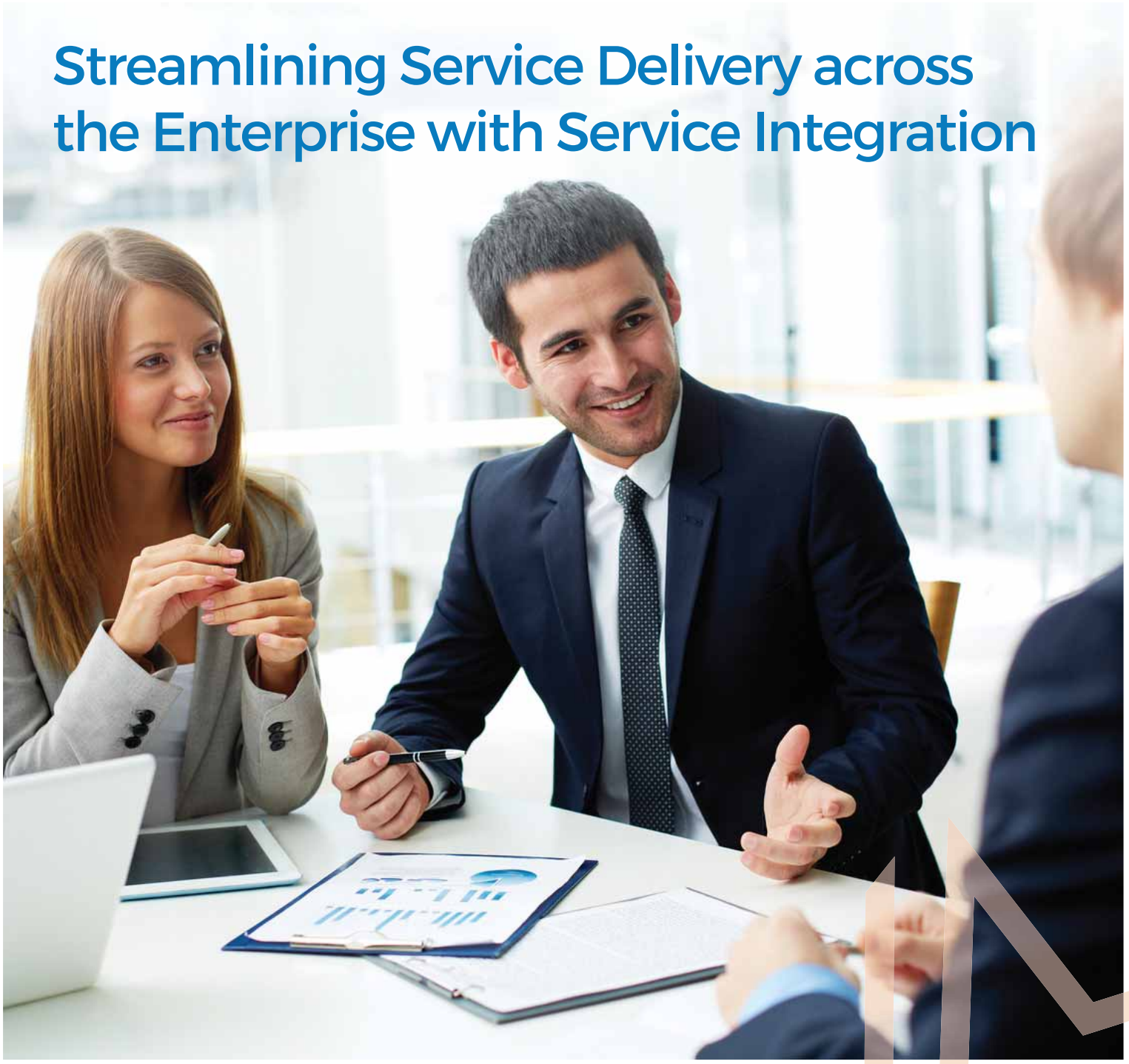
ALCOR
ENABLING CLOUD

White Paper

Streamlining Service Delivery across the Enterprise with Service Integration



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INTRODUCTION

Enterprise IT architecture has evolved from the earlier monolithic, single supplier models to a best-of-breed approach in order to address the specific IT needs of specific business services. The struggle for enterprises is that as they consume IT and business services from multiple sources it becomes much more complex to manage them and ultimately align them in the interest of achieving the business goals.

Service Integration and Management has emerged as an effective way to manage multiple internal and external IT and business suppliers to ensure continued service delivery at the expected standard. This paper will introduce the concept of SIAM and also present an overview of ServiceNow's SIAM solution.

Complexity and Challenges for Enterprises dealing with multiple service providers

Business services within enterprises are dependent on IT-enabled business systems for smooth operations and for the achievement of their business objectives. Given the different, specific needs of different business units and departments, enterprises now typically follow a "best of breed" approach to

provisioning the infrastructure required for ensuring service delivery. This has led to complex multi-vendor environments across the enterprise. The situation is complicated further as enterprises start to rely more heavily on the cloud for addressing some of the IT infrastructure needs. This combination of the public cloud, private cloud, legacy internal IT systems, external business service providers and even emerging technology trends like enterprise mobility comes together to significantly complicate the effort of managing disparate systems. This complexity presents several challenges for the enterprise:

Greater Expense of "staying on": Rita Gunther McGrath of Columbia Business School in her book "The End of Competitive Advantage: How to Keep Your Strategy Moving as Fast as Your Business" reported that due to increased complexity companies were being forced to spend as much as 80 – 90% of their IT budgets just to "keep the lights on". This leaves little for innovation, growth or strategic investments.

Incompatibility among systems: Different business systems follow their own methods and standards and this leads to difficulties in bringing them together for a common purpose. Creating custom point to point integration between these systems is time-consuming, effort intensive and ultimately expensive.

Differing vendor service levels and standards: In the outsourcing context, there is the reference to "the Watermelon Effect"[1]. This situation arises when each vendor has their own standards and negotiates SLAs based on those standards. The net impact is that though each vendor shows that they are meeting their charter, the business sees disappointing or declining standards of support from the IT systems.

Inability to fix accountability when issues occur: Multiple systems from multiple vendors can lead to situations where responsibility for issues are hard to nail down as vendors aim to shift responsibility to other systems in the eco-system. This can potentially cause delays in resolution.

Silos of information: Enterprises are operating in scenarios of heightened competition and demanding customers. The need is to react very fast to changes in the market dynamics or even to proactively anticipate an upcoming change and prepare for it. In this situation, they have to be extremely agile in their decision making. Data stored and processed in different business systems across the enterprise will lead to silos of information. The insights that could be derived from this data, when taken together may not be available when taken individually. Apart from adversely impacting the business agility of the enterprise, this could also lead to opportunity loss because of an inability to take a unified view of the data.

More complexity in vendor management: Multiple vendors, each with a

smaller piece of the overall pie increases the complexity of managing them as all efforts related to procurement, contract negotiation, maintenance agreements and compliance issues are duplicated. This also adversely impacts the ability to get cost and service benefits from scale.

Slow to adapt to technology changes: Having to manage multiple systems reduces the flexibility to change. IT systems are always evolving and there is also a drive among organizations to adapt to disruptive technologies like the Cloud and Enterprise Mobility. In such a scenario, adapting to change becomes a more complex exercise, involving a lot of coordination among vendors and among systems.

More potential security loopholes / gaps: Security is a growing concern for organizations and multiple IT & business systems bring with them multiple points of potential failure and their own vulnerabilities. Providing adequate protection across these systems as well as tracking and reporting on them for compliance purposes becomes a highly effort intensive and time-consuming task as the systems add up.

Harder to plan for the long term: With so many moving parts it becomes harder for the enterprise to plan for the long term as there are so many more factors to be considered with respect to each business or IT system and each vendor and service provider.

A Standard Definition of "Service Integration and Management"

A definition provided by Wikipedia is quoted most often while trying to describe Service Integration and Management. "Service Integration and Management (SIAM) is an approach to managing multiple suppliers of services (business services as well as information technology services) and integrating them to provide a single business-facing IT organisation. It aims at seamlessly integrating interdependent services from various internal and external service providers into end-to-end services in order to meet business requirements."[2]

This definition captures that the approach is oriented around managing not only the IT systems and services consumed by the enterprise in a multi-vendor environment but also the business services. This is an important inclusion given that enterprises outsource important business functions for eg. legal, compliance, and auditing, and also because the delivery and consumption of these services are often enabled by IT systems.

There is also a clear focus on how these services come together with the single purpose of helping the enterprise achieve business objectives. To that extent

the point is that the delivery of the services or the IT systems enabling that delivery is not important – what is important is the role they play in achieving business goals.

This definition also identifies how Service Integration and Management (SIAM) is concerned with the governance of internal as well as external suppliers, say for eg. cloud service providers and it implies that the approach would entail coordinating a mix of people, processes, technology, data, and even contracts across all suppliers with the end objective of ensuring efficient and effective delivery of services designed to further the achievement of business goals.

From this definition, another clear distinction seems to emerge. There are two separate, but interrelated management needs. First, to manage the various suppliers or vendors and the process of procuring, and maintaining services from them, and second, to ensure the required levels of service. The latter is usually addressed through ITSM. As a practice SIAM can either be addressed through specially designated in-house teams or often, by outsourced vendors who operate at arms-length from the technology suppliers.

Implementing SIAM to Streamline Service Delivery across the Enterprise

We can use the "Standard Definition" mentioned above as the base for examining SIAM implementation better. As mentioned, SIAM is achieved by skilled workforces who combine processes and tools.

It is also pertinent to point out that as this is an approach, rather than a tool set or a standard, vendors have their own ways of implementing SIAM. This section addresses some generally accepted concepts that come together in a SIAM model.

First, it is important to clearly define all the services that will fall under the ambit of this governance approach. This includes specifying the clear scope of each service and also areas of responsibility.

Then it is necessary to determine priorities from among the defined services – not all services are critical and some may not be used all the time. This helps determine those services that will need the extra attention.

As mentioned previously, some services may not be consumed all the time and in such cases. To address such scenarios, it is then important to define usage and performance needs. This will also help ensure that costs are incurred only for the services that are actually consumed.

The people who will be responsible for delivering SIAM need a specific set of skills, that may be different from those they needed earlier. There is a need to determine what these skills could be and to fill any gaps that may be visible.

In an integrated environment, interoperability is critical so SIAM models generally promote the adoption of standards that are more open or widely accepted.

The interoperability extends to being able to put together workflows and management frameworks that work across the IT systems.

The objective is to be able to promote the capture of a unified view of performance, service levels, and billing.

As has been mentioned earlier in this paper, ITSM forms the basis for implementing the management of the service levels in SIAM.

• In the ideal scenario, all the vendors and suppliers in the eco-system subscribe to the same ITSM philosophy, and hence use the same sets of tools and practices. In this scenario, the integration can be achieved faster and more easily.

• In scenarios where the suppliers have different ITSM tools and / or processes, the need may arise for custom integration across these service management tool sets. This is expensive and time-consuming in most cases.

• A hybrid approach is sometimes followed in cases where the service being delivered is or a lower priority. In such instances, the lower priority services are managed through their own tools and a record is manually maintained in the chosen tool of record for the larger set of higher priority services.

After the service management tools have been fixed and after taking the earlier mentioned factors into consideration the process that is generally followed is:

Defining the Service Management Architecture: How is the entire system organized, how do the interlocking parts (the services) fit with each other, the dependencies, and how these linkages define the approaches that will have to be taken to address growth and scale needs.

Drawing Service Maps: Charting the workflow of each service as well as the service components associated with service delivery like the criticality of the service, and the support contracts and SLAs that govern the service. This information will help the team providing the SIAM to understand the conditions that govern each specific service.

Creating a team: The functional team that will have to be built for SIAM will be determined by the size, scale and scope of the effort, the overall service levels to be committed and the sheer complexity of the IT environment being taken over for management.

Contracts: The need is to move beyond Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to Service Integration Agreements (SIAs) or Operating Level Agreements (OLAs). These contracts can define what will ultimately matter in the overall service delivery – issues like performance, up-time, availability and usability.

Governance Mandate: A system of reviews has to be put into place with very clearly performance and compliance goals defined and a transparent governance structure has to be put into place to conduct the audits and reviews, assign responsibility for slippages and in the end ensure overall service delivery up to the needed standards.

Organizations that implement SIAM and hence effectively integrate services across multiple systems benefit from:

- Better management of suppliers leading to a better standard of service and lower costs.
- More efficient and effective service delivery across the IT organization.
- More predictable levels of service.
- Great flexibility and improved agility, especially when making changes.

The end-game is clearly using the integrated service delivery infrastructure to better deliver services that are designed to help the achievement of business goals.

ServiceNow Introduction

IT Service Management is defined as a combination of people, processes, and tools that are deployed to support the production environment or for delivering other IT services to the organization's internal & external customers. ServiceNow is a leading cloud-based ITSM tool focused on the enterprise.

ServiceNow focuses on the workflows within the enterprise and helps enterprises define, codify and automate these workflows to ensure predictability and scalability on a day to day basis. Enterprises deploying ServiceNow leverage the capabilities of the product in Incident Management, Issue Management, Request Management, Knowledge Management and for Tracking and Reporting.

ServiceNow focuses on a variety of business domains including Financial, Healthcare, Higher Education, Managed Services and various Government sectors.

ServiceNow SIAM overview

Among the ServiceNow product offerings is the Service Integration And Management solution. The stated objective of the solution is to help customers get broad visibility into service provider performance.[3]

ServiceNow provides end-to-end visibility, reporting and accountability for the services delivered by multiple external providers with the objective of driving standards across providers and evaluating their performance. The solutions allow customers to:

- Evaluate service provider performance against contracted requirements and SLAs
- Make is easier to drive adoption of single standards across all service providers
- Make management of the external and internal service providers easier and more effective
- Make it easier to add or remove suppliers as business needs change
- Automate the service delivery management across the service providers

In addition to the, ITIL-espoused-process support ServiceNow has GRC, project management, asset management and IT cost management applications. App Creator allows the creation of custom SIAM apps as well. Recent releases also include vendor performance management capabilities.[4]

Alcor's capabilities in ServiceNow and SIAM

Alcor is a global cloud advisory and implementation services company serving Fortune 500, Government Agencies, and other leading organizations in multiple industry verticals across the Americas, Canada and India. Alcor is a ServiceNow Silver partner and also partners to Mulesoft, Salesforce, FireEye, Microsoft and Bomgar. They advise leading businesses on cloud platforms, architecture, enterprise service management and integrating IT service delivery. They also provide business process consulting to capture,

re-engineer and improve processes that can easily be automated to deliver real value. The Alcor consulting team is derived from a combination of experts in Business strategy, Cloud Technology and Organizational Change Management.

Alcor takes a strategic ITSM implementation approach and focuses on solving the business problems of their clients by leveraging an integrated business process design and technology implementation capability. Alcor's ITSM solutions with ServiceNow leverage a business view of IT services. The objective is to enable the IT support organization to:

- **Quickly resolve or escalate issues and problems**
- **Improve root cause isolation**
- **Provide higher levels of business user satisfaction**

Alcor brings substantial process expertise, ServiceNow experience and depth of organizational governance modeling to build solutions that are effective and provide complete life cycle support for Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management and Configuration Management. Alcor has experience in Automating ServiceNow with external applications like emails, active directories, Adobe, assets, and Amazon Cloud Provision (LABS). This includes real-world experience of having worked with enterprises in the banking and financial services and retail sector where we have helped orchestrate transaction volumes running into the 100's of thousands.

Alcor believes that ITSM integration has to fit with Customer's IT goals and current maturity. They support the Customer's integration initiative not only from a pure technical angle but also from a business process integration perspective by leveraging their team's vast experience as advisor to the businesses. Alcor has supported some of its most extensive integrations with other Enterprise Applications.[5]

Alcor achieves this by leveraging their integrated business process design and technology implementation capability. Their professionals are the top talents in the business with deep personal understanding of the business verticals they service. This allows them to deliver flexible solutions that work in the real world. Their strength lies in delivering solutions that are customized to the specific requirements of their customers including complex integrations with the other systems in the eco-system like Financial and Procurement Management systems.

Get more information about Alcor Solutions and their service management capabilities by writing to **information@alcortech.com**

Conclusion

It is clear that the dependence of organizations on the IT infrastructure that enables service delivery is growing. This eco-system is becoming more complex by the day with multiple vendors and business service providers offering specific, point solutions to critical business needs. The complexity is compounded by the growing adoption of the cloud. If the organization has to reduce the complexity and focus on how best to leverage this complex network of multiple suppliers Service Integration And Management emerges as the most viable approach. This approach allows the organization to focus on the business objectives and benefit from a unified, managed service delivery system.

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Alcor is a technology implementation company focusing on Enterprise and Government technology needs in ITSM, systems integration, web development and mobility space. We provide a strategic ITSM implementation approach to our clients and focus on solving business problems by leveraging an integrated business process design and technology implementation capability.

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