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Case study

Implementing an IT service information management framework: The case of COTEMAR

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ABSTRACT

It is evident that organizations are demanding more efficient information management technologies in order to offer high quality services for both internal and external clients. Firms pursue the implementation of processes aligned to their strategic and operational objectives and, to achieve these goals, they usually introduce various frameworks and approaches to information technology service management, such as Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) or Control Objectives for Information and Related Technologies (COBIT). However, once incorporated, it is essential to have mechanisms that guarantee performance efficiency. One of such mechanism is the Service Management Office (SMO). The case analysis presented here describes the lessons learned from its implementation in COTEMAR. The results provide useful insights for firms interested in integrating SMO within IT service management practices.

1. Introduction

The increasing use of information management technologies within firms has resulted in IT usage-dependant organizations seeking to have increasingly efficient and innovative technological services and solutions. Organizations recognize that Information Technology (IT) services are strategic assets to support information and services management. However, the reality is often that these services are overlooked or not addressed at all, with the strategic importance they entail. Those which do attach importance to this issue, through the implementation of best practices or frameworks for IT services, such as *Information Technology Infrastructure Library* (ITIL), have found that one of the key factors to guarantee success is having suitable processes, not only for the implementation but also for follow up and maintenance (Neničková, 2011). According to Kooper, Maes, and Roos Lindgreen (2011), the foundations and the current application of IT governance suffers from serious limitations. This paper analyzes one of these limitations.

The literature points out the importance of implementing an IT service information management framework to support and monitor IT services performance (Cannon, 2011, chap. 6; Roller, 2009). Service Management Office (SMO) is presented as a mechanism based on the ITIL framework for delivering quality IT services to users at both tactical and strategic levels. Indeed, the literature concludes that it is advisable to implement tools to monitor the fulfillment of IT service management objectives. SMO is an IT governance mechanism, which defines, monitors and audits processes that are in operation or in transition. SMO is responsible for guaranteeing compliance with the "*end-to-end*" service strategy, and it achieves this by designing a service that delivers business value through supervising the governance of processes, frameworks, methodologies and IT standards as well as their relation with the business (Cannon, 2011; Roller, 2009).

2. Company background

COTEMAR is a Mexican company founded in 1979 with its headquarters in Monterrey (Nuevo Leon, Mexico). Although it has partners in Europe and the United States, 100% of the company's operations are conducted in Ciudad del Carmen (Campeche, Mexico). Although Cotemar offers different services (maintenance and rehabilitation of platforms and process centers in offshore facilities; operations of semi-submersible platforms; integral food and lodging service; and support for vessels for specialized transportation services), the company's main source of revenue comes from the construction and maintenance of offshore oil platforms and "flotels" (floating hotels). It has over 7000 employees, serves over 1100 users and has incomes of about 600 million USD a month.

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