

GLOSSARY



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adaptive system

A system in which the behaviour of agents changes and they self-organize in response to events.

AIOps

The application of machine learning and big data to IT operations to receive continuous insights which provide continuous fixes and improvements via automation. Also referred to as 'artificial intelligence for IT operations' or 'algorithmic IT operations'.

artificial intelligence

Highly advanced automation that demonstrates capabilities of general reasoning, learning, and human-like intelligence; a branch of computer science and engineering focused on simulating intelligent behaviour in computer systems.

band of visibility

Activities and resources within a service relationship that are visible to both the service provider and the service consumer.

big data

The use of very large volumes of structured and unstructured data from a variety of sources to gain new insights.

blockchain

An open, distributed ledger that can record transactions between two parties efficiently and in a verifiable and permanent way.

business analysis

The practice of analysing a business or some element of a business, defining its needs and recommending solutions to address these needs and/or solve a business problem, and create value for stakeholders. Business analysis enables an organization to communicate its needs in a meaningful way, express the rationale for change, and design and describe solutions that enable value creation in alignment with the organization's objectives.

business case

A justification for the expenditure of organizational resources, providing information about costs, benefits, options, risks, and issues.

collaboration

Working with others to achieve common shared goals.

complex system

A system in which agents' interactions are dynamic and often unpredictable.

complexity thinking

A systems thinking approach based on the recognition and understanding of the various levels of complexity inherent in the systems and the context in which they operate.

compliance

Both the act and result of ensuring that a standard or set of guidelines is followed, or that proper, consistent accounting or other practices are being employed.

continuous delivery

An approach to software development in which software can be released to production at any time. Frequent deployments are possible, but deployment decisions are taken case by case, usually because organizations prefer a slower rate of deployment.

continuous deployment

An approach to software development in which changes go through the pipeline and are automatically put into the production environment, enabling multiple production deployments per day. Continuous deployment relies on continuous delivery.

continuous integration

An approach to integrating, building, and testing code within the software development environment.

control

The means of managing a risk, ensuring that a business objective is achieved, or that a process is followed.

cooperation

Working with others to achieve your own goals.

cultural fit

The ability of an employee or a team to work comfortably in an environment that corresponds with their own beliefs, values, and needs.

culture

A set of values that is shared by a group of people, including expectations about how people should behave and their ideas, beliefs, and practices.

customer experience (CX)

The sum of functional and emotional interactions with a service and service provider as perceived by a customer.

customer journey

The complete end-to-end experience that service customers have with one or more service providers and/or their products through touchpoints and service interactions.

customer orientation

An approach to sales and customer relations in which staff focus on helping customers to meet their long-term needs and wants.

cycle time

The amount of time required to complete a discrete unit of work, converting inputs into outputs.

data

Information that has been translated into a form that is efficient for movement or processing.

design thinking

A practical and human-centred approach used by product and service designers to solve complex problems and find practical and creative solutions that meet the needs of an organization and its customers.

digital transformation

The use of digital technology to enable a significant improvement in the realization of an organization's objectives that could not feasibly have been achieved by non-digital means.

double-loop learning

A form of learning that takes place when examining the purpose and function of work being done, without taking the existing organizational structure for granted. Also known as 'reframing'.

early-life support (ELS)

A period of time associated with the release of service components to users, when additional resources are allocated to user support and service operations. Early-life support can also be applied to the onboarding or offboarding of users from a service.

emotional intelligence

The ability to understand the way people feel and react, and to use this skill to make good judgements and to avoid or solve conflicts.

epic

A high-level definition of a requirement that has not yet been sufficiently refined or understood. Eventually an epic will be refined or broken down into several user stories and requirements.

gap analysis

An activity that compares two sets of data and identifies the differences; for example, comparing a set of requirements with the actual delivery, or the current state of an organization with a target future state.

governance

The means by which an organization is directed and controlled.

improvement

A deliberately introduced change that results in increased value for one or more stakeholders.

indicator

A metric that is used to assess and manage something.

integration of duties

Having a task that is prone to fraud or error performed by one person because other controls have been applied. This serves as an alternative to separation (or segregation) of duties.

intelligent disobedience

Deliberately disobeying or disregarding rules in order to avoid a dangerous situation, or 'doing the right thing'.

ITIL continual improvement model

A model which provides organizations with a structured approach to implementing improvements.

ITIL guiding principles

Recommendations that can guide an organization in all circumstances, regardless of changes in its goals, strategies, type of work, or management structure.

ITIL service value chain

An operating model for service providers that covers all the key activities required to effectively manage products and services.

ITIL service value chain activity

A step of the value chain that an organization takes in the creation of value.

Kanban

A method for visualizing work, identifying potential blockages and resource conflicts, and managing work in progress.

lead time

The time taken to complete the execution of a process, usually measured from a specific perspective (e.g. that of the customer).

Lean culture

A work environment where trust, respect, curiosity, enquiry, playfulness, and intensity all co-exist to support learning and discovery.

machine learning

An applied form of artificial intelligence, based on the principle of systems responding to data, and adapting their actions and outputs as they are continually exposed to more of it.

management

Coordinated activities to define, control, supervise, and improve something.

measurement

A means of decreasing uncertainty based on one or more observations that are expressed in quantifiable units.

mental model

An explanation of someone's understanding of how something works in the surrounding world.

metric

A measurement or calculation that is monitored or reported for management and improvement.

moment of truth

Any episode in which the customer or user comes into contact with an aspect of the organization and gets an impression of the quality of its service. It is the basis for setting and fulfilling client expectations and ultimately achieving client satisfaction.

multi-sourcing

The use of multiple service providers offering similar (if not the same) services, balancing the risks of relying on a single provider with the overhead of managing work across multiple providers.

net promoter score (NPS)

A metric used to measure customer loyalty; often used as a proxy to measure customer satisfaction.

operating model

A conceptual and/or visual representation of how an organization co-creates value with its customers and other stakeholders, as well as how the organization runs itself.

operation

The routine running and management of an activity, product, service, or other configuration item.

organization

A person or a group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities, and relationships to achieve its objectives.

out-of-the-box services

Services immediately available for use after a service agreement is reached, with little or no need for onboarding and setup.

pattern of business activity (PBA)

A workload profile of one or more business activities. PBAs are used to help the service provider understand and support different levels of service consumer activity.

persona

A fictional yet realistic description of a typical or target customer or user of a service or product.

plan

The value chain activity that ensures a shared understanding of the vision, current status, and improvement direction for all four dimensions and all products and services across an organization.

RACI

A model used to help define roles and responsibilities. RACI stands for responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed.

reframing

See double-loop learning.

report

A detailed communication of information or knowledge about a topic or event.

risk

A possible event that could cause harm or loss or make it more difficult to achieve objectives. Can also be defined as uncertainty of outcome and can be used in the context of measuring the probability of positive outcomes as well as negative outcomes.

role

A role is a set of responsibilities, activities, and authorizations granted to a person or team in a specific context.

service empathy

The ability to recognize, understand, predict, and project the interests, needs, intentions, and experiences of another party, in order to establish, maintain, and improve the service relationship.

service integration and management

The coordination and orchestration of work across all suppliers involved in the development and delivery of products and services.

service interaction

A reciprocal action between a service provider and a service consumer that co-creates value.

service level

One or more metrics that define expected or achieved service quality.

service level agreement (SLA)

A documented agreement between a service provider and a customer that identifies both the services required and the expected level of service.

service management

A set of specialized organizational capabilities for enabling value for customers in the form of services.

service mindset

An important component of the organizational culture that defines an organization's behaviour in service relationships. A service mindset includes the shared values and guiding principles adopted and followed by an organization.

service quality

The totality of a service's characteristics that are relevant to its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs.

service request

A request from a user or a user's authorized representative that initiates a service action which has been agreed as a normal part of service delivery.

service value system (SVS)

A model representing how all the components and activities of an organization work together to facilitate value creation.

service-dominant logic

A mental model of an (economic) exchange in which organizations co-create value by applying their competencies and other resources for the benefit of each other.

single-loop learning

The type of learning that takes place when fixing problems within the present organizational structure so that the system will function better without altering its structure.

site reliability engineering (SRE)

A discipline that incorporates aspects of software engineering and applies them to infrastructure and operations problems with the goal of creating ultra-scalable and highly reliable software systems.

stakeholder

A person or organization that has an interest or involvement in an organization, product, service, practice, or other entity.

strategy

A broad approach or course of action defined by an organization for achieving its objectives.

swarming

A method of managing work in which a variety of specialist resources or stakeholders work on an item until it becomes apparent who is best placed to continue with the work, at which point the others are freed up to move on to other work items.

technical debt

The total rework backlog accumulated by choosing workarounds instead of system solutions that would take longer.

touchpoint

Any event where a service consumer or potential service consumer has an encounter with the service provider and/or its products and resources.

user experience (UX)

The sum of the functional and emotional interactions with a service and service provider as perceived by a user.

user story

A technique in Agile software development that uses natural language to describe desired outcomes and benefits from the point of view of a specific persona (typically the end-user), usually in the form of 'who, what, and why'.

utility

The functionality offered by a product or service to meet a particular need. Utility can be summarized as 'what the service does' and can be used to determine whether a service is 'fit for purpose'. To have utility, a service must either support the performance of the consumer or remove constraints from the consumer. Many services do both.

value

The perceived benefits, usefulness, and importance of something.

value proposition

An explicit promise made by a service provider to its customers that it will deliver a particular bundle of benefits.

value stream

A series of steps an organization undertakes to create and deliver products and services to consumers.

value stream map

A visual representation of a service value stream which shows the flow of work, information, and resources.

value stream mapping

A Lean management technique to visualize the steps needed to convert demand into value, used to identify opportunities to improve.

vision

A defined aspiration of what an organization would like to become in the future.

warranty

Assurance that a product or service will meet agreed requirements. Warranty can be summarized as 'how the service performs' and can be used to determine whether a service is 'fit for use'. Warranty often relates to service levels aligned with the needs of service consumers. This may be based on a formal agreement, or it may be a marketing message or brand image. Warranty typically addresses such areas as the availability of the service, its capacity, levels of security, and continuity. A service may be said to provide acceptable assurance, or 'warranty', if all defined and agreed conditions are met.