

## 9 Application Management

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A key issue that has existed for some time is the problem of moving application developers and IT Service Management closer together. The lack of Service Management considerations within all phases of the application lifecycle has been seriously deficient for some time. Applications need to be deployed with Service Management requirements included, i.e. designed and built for operability, availability, reliability, maintainability, performance and manageability, and to be tested for compliance to specification.

To fully understand Application Management, it is necessary to compare it with Service Management and Application Development:

- **Application Management** is the superset which describes the overall handling, or management, of the application as it goes through its entire lifecycle (see Figure 9)
- **Application Development** is concerned with the activities needed to plan, design, and build an application that can ultimately be used by some part of the organisation to address a business requirement
- **Service Management** focuses on the activities that are involved with the Release, delivery, support and optimisation of the application. The main objective is to ensure that the application once built and deployed can meet the service level that has been defined for it.

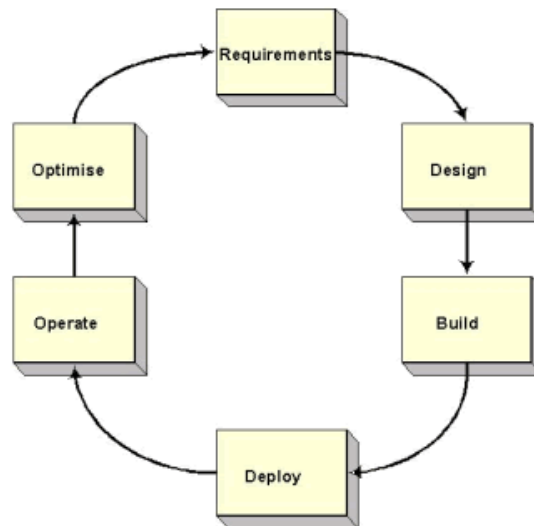


Figure 9: The Application Lifecycle

It is essential that the requirements of all areas of the business and Service Management are considered at each stage of the application lifecycle. Having IT and the business jointly develop their strategies, as a mutual effort, needs to be a precursor to beginning any Application Development or deployment project. This ensures that IT and the business agree to objectives that are clear, concise and achievable. Once an organisation has a common understanding of the alignment between business and IT, it faces a new problem, ensuring that the increasing number of applications are appropriately documented. A method for managing a complex applications environment is through the use of an application portfolio, which provides a mechanism for viewing and evaluating the entire suite of applications in the business enterprise.

Organisations need to assess their ability to build, maintain, and operate the IT services needed by the business. A readiness assessment provides a structured mechanism for determining an organisation's capabilities and state of readiness for delivering a new or revised application to support business drivers. The information obtained from an assessment can be used to determine the delivery strategy for an application, IT service, or ICT system. The delivery strategy is the approach to move an organisation from a known state, based on the readiness assessment, to a desired state, as determined by the business drivers.

Application Management sees Application Development and all areas of Service Management as interrelated parts of a whole, which need to be aligned. The implication of this is that Application Development, Service Management and ICT IM units need to co-operate closely to ensure that every phase in the lifecycle dedicates the appropriate attention to service creation, delivery and operational aspects. The emphasis must be on the importance of dealing early in the lifecycle with those issues as this can have a large impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery and operation.

For each application lifecycle phase a management checklist can be developed to ensure appropriate Service Management aspects are fully considered and addressed, identifying the key Application Management roles that need representation to ensure that activities are completed comprehensively.

Within each phase of the application lifecycle, and likewise for the service lifecycle, each of the key Application Management roles has very specific goals to meet. It is crucial that organisations find some way of measuring progress and performance with respect to achieving these goals. To be effective, measurements and metrics must be woven through the complete organisation, touching the strategic as well as the tactical and operational levels.

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