



White Paper Grab@Pizza

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Use Grab@Pizza to get IT aligned with the business



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Introduction - *get IT aligned with the business*

“So, I’ve got my staff ITIL certified and internal processes well organized, what’s next?” This could be the reaction of an IT Manager after a lengthy phase of “Implementing an ITSM methodology”. The best questions to be asked to this IT Manager now is: “and after all this work... is your customer more satisfied now?” and “Is the organization getting the value they expected from the ITIL investment?” The reason for asking these questions is that despite the millions of ITIL certified people in the world, poor customer service still scores as the number 1 issue in our worldwide surveys. Also, studies show that 70 to 80% of ITIL initiatives don’t deliver the expected value. With the increasing importance of IT to all businesses this is no longer acceptable. ITSM must be aligned with the business needs, indeed some talk about Business and IT integration!

The alignment of business processes with IT Service Management is usually not on the action list of project managers for implementation projects. In the new ITIL Service Strategy book the author, David Cannon, stresses the need to ensure ITSM can demonstrate value in support of the business processes. Education of IT staff can now sometimes be found on this action list. The question is how can we now ensure that our training interventions overcome these key issues? “Do we choose the right type of training?” - Training interventions should include some kind of ‘experiential learning’ such as business simulations. Learning by experiencing is most effective form of learning. A participant was heard saying afterwards: “I will start communicating with the customer and start looking at my work with the perspective of the business more often.” In a business simulation the facilitator can play the role of customer and confront the team when he or she sees undesirable, non-customer focused behavior or lack of focus on achieving business goals. This helps change the attitude and behavior of IT people. Putting most of the IT staff through the same experience will also help take a first step in changing the culture of the organization.

The Apollo13 ITSM case experience is well known product in this range. The alignment with business processes is not the main objective in this simulation. The Grab@Pizza simulation focuses on achieving business strategic goals and demands. In this simulation the teams must engage and align and finally integrate with business strategy and decision making and demonstrate strategy achievement. Many people, having already played a business simulation such as Apollo 13, find they are now confronted at a higher level. They learn to change their relationship, communication and focus if they are to be successful. An internally focused attitude and culture will not succeed in Grab@Pizza. An additional benefit in this simulation is that business managers can play alongside IT managers in the simulation. They will both gain a better perception and understanding of the needs of the other.

In this white paper I will discuss reasons why Grab@Pizza should be used and some options for applying it to your training interventions. I will explain how it will help change attitude and behavior in relation to



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the key issues mentioned above and how it will help you capture concrete improvement actions you can take away and apply.

Why a business simulation?

Always make sure to establish the *very good reason* to do a business simulation. The articles and blogs on the GamingWorks website have already given a lot of attention to this topic. A practical approach to answering the question “why a business simulation game?” is given in the 8 fields model. This model provides an opportunity to find out what type of intervention is needed to achieve the goals and address the problems of the business. To enhance the ability to transfer skills a business simulation is often the right choice. People practice, sometime under high pressure, the competences needed to improve their own day-to-day operations. People are taken out of their comfort zones into a situation that is new for all participants. In a simulation people see, feel and experience the success and the fail factors of applying ITSM best practices.

Why Grab@Pizza

Grab@Pizza is a business simulation that zooms in on the issues that get overlooked on a daily and global scale. Where Apollo13 makes organizations aware that internal processes should be organized perfectly and the use of a best practice framework such as ITIL helps, Grab@Pizza takes it a step further. The latest update of ITIL has cleared up how strategy of an IT organization can be organized in order to get started or improve the integration between business and IT processes. One new key focus area in ITIL is Business Relationship Management and the need to engage with the business. However no formal ITIL training courses leading up to certificates teach *how* to do this. In Grab@Pizza the teams must engage with the business and agree strategic priorities, align investment decisions and priorities and use measures to steer on value, costs and risks to the business. This simulation helps raise the maturity of the IT organization. Shift from internal focus to external focus, shifting from technology focus to business focus, shifting from ad hoc and reactive to pro-active.

One of the core messages in ITSM is that strategy is crucial for the success of the business that IT supports. However, there has been confusion over the first version of the strategy book and many ITIL attendees have difficulties with the concepts and material for service strategy. Participants of Grab@Pizza learn how to put strategy and the ITIL principle of People, Process, Product and Partner (the four “P’s”) into practice in order to create a High Performing IT department. Performance, the 5th “P”, can only be achieved if the business is satisfied that their needs are being fulfilled. Or, better yet, they can start doing things they hadn’t even imagined yet!

In the Grab@Pizza business and IT alignment simulation, the participants run the IT department of one of the World’s largest Pizza Companies. The task of this team is to support the business with excellent IT products and services. The market is highly competitive which forces the Business to design new



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products, develop marketing and sales initiatives. The team should develop operating excellence with a fast, low cost, high quality order and delivery process. IT plays an important role in enabling the business to achieve its strategic aims. One of the business aims is to air an advertisement campaign during the Super Bowl in the last round of the game.

The challenge is to align IT with business demands and organize IT capabilities in such a way that the Business can achieve its targets. These are lowering operational costs, increasing revenue and market share, and increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

As opposed to the Apollo game, in Grab@Pizza it is not the details of the activities in the processes that matter the most. Participants should discover that success lies in understanding and communication with the business. It could be described as a more “high level game”. Although it is also a simulation in which change and release management play an important role. Stressing the need for managing these processes well can be a reason to use it.

How can Grab@Pizza be used successfully?

Grab@Pizza is not an alternative for Apollo13; it is designed to achieve different objectives. Therefore, after having established the *very good reason* to intervene with a business simulation, find the match with objectives that can be achieved through Grab@Pizza. These are:

- How to translate business requirements into the required IT services
- How to prioritize IT investments and workload? Investments in maintenance & support and innovation & development.
- How to deliver agreed IT services with limited resources? Limited in terms of budget and employees.
- How to minimize your IT costs by optimizing people, processes and supporting technology?
- How to plan application development activities and prioritize projects/changes.
- How to minimize potential business risks threats to continuity caused by poor availability, capacity and security of the IT services.
- How to realize and demonstrate business value.

I will discuss two main options for applying Grab@Pizza as part of the necessary training in awareness and improvement campaigns. These are the single day workshop, including the option to include a strategy workshop, and the simulation as part of multi-day training.



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Grab@Pizza in a single-day workshop

Kaspersky Lab Moscow: “Business Relationships!” A single day workshop for mixed audience: IT - and business managers. Focus of the day was on the interface between both groups. First half of the day: IT –managers play the simulation and the business managers as auditors! This is followed by a long discussion on audit reports. Second half of the day: business managers are made responsible for the implementation of the improvements they suggested. IT was now auditing. This helped with solving real world issues. Customer is really satisfied: better communications and understanding of both sides of the spectrum (IT and business).

One practical approach is to plan the simulation as a one day event. Start the day with a short introduction to explain how it fits in with other initiatives to improve quality. It can be a good idea to quickly refresh some IT Service Management theory. Make this an interactive session. Present the objectives and ask each individual participant what his or her specific objective or expectation is.

At the end of the day revisit the objectives set out in the introduction and ask each individual to review their daily work in terms of work methods, behavior and related matters. Use these categories:

- What should we start with?
- What should we stop?
- What should we continue with?
- What should we improve

The answers to these questions are critical for the success of all your improvement efforts. This is where business simulations add value as the start of a consultancy effort.



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KPN Netherlands: “Awareness of the Business in Operations!” A single day workshop for IT – managers and their operational engineers. Over 200 people had to be trained. Raising business awareness in IT was a major issue for this organization. Other key questions: “How do I change my process, my daily work and what are my responsibilities in achieving the goals of the company I work for?”

The introduction was based on an analogy to explain the benefits of ITIL and addressing some major theoretical issues. During the delivery of the simulations, totally ignoring the CEO was something that occurred more than once. A typical quote: “who is the business and what is the importance of delivering these services in time for the Super Bowl?” One of the roles that was heard saying this was the change manager. During the game it dawned on the person in this role that the business is crucial for success in change management.

A typical change management dilemma that came to surface was a prioritization issue: “Am I going to solve the IT problem now or should I first fulfill the demand of the business?” If this is addressed too mechanically (solving the “change calendar puzzle”) then the customer is likely to be at risk no matter what priority is chosen. What really matters here is, do the participants understand they have to talk to the business and explain options and advise them!

All participants filled out a form with questions regarding start-stop-continue-improve and this gave valuable information for further success in the ITIL-based service improvements. It told them how their process, daily work and responsibilities were (going to be) impacted.

Grab@Pizza as part of multi-day training

Another way of applying Grab@Pizza is to deliver it as part of a regular training, such as the ISO/IEC 20000 module Management and Improvement of ITMS processes or the ITIL Intermediate Modules Managing Across the Lifecycle or Service Strategy. This is especially useful if certification is also part of the objectives of your quality improvement project. The reason for building Grab@Pizza into such a training course is that these are more about process management than about actually performing the activities in the processes themselves. Grab@Pizza is ideal for addressing topics such as modeling and the planning of processes.

An effective way of building the simulation into these training interventions is to define goals for main processes on first day in line with the theory to be covered and then start the simulation. All other exercises normally used in the MALC or ISO20k course could be dropped. On the second day of the course, review goals of processes and continue with the simulation. On the third day you should focus on measurement and relate this to achieving targets in the game, again aligned to the theory to be covered.



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A Strategy session with Grab@Pizza

For many organizations working with an IT Strategy is a new phenomenon or one that is left for some individuals. Strategy should be the driving force for all people involved in IT Service Management. This message can be conveyed with Grab@Pizza. In this case start after the introductions with an additional short workshop with strategy making. Discuss the case and the main target and ask every role to first come up with aspects of strategy for their own role. After this, let the Demand Manager (with the support of Service Level Management) prioritize all mentioned items and come up with a brief (and powerful) strategy for the Grab@Pizza IT organization. Make sure the CEO is involved in such a way that strategy needs from the business are included or, at least, known.

This strategic approach should show how IT decisions influence the profitability of the business operations. Actions in every role in IT can affect the outcomes received in the business. Participants can act in top level leadership roles. They can experience all factors in the whole chain of service delivery that are normally encountered by leaders and managers in both the business and IT.

How does it help the customer/IT organization?

The use of Grab@Pizza can have a high impact if an intake at the beginning is conducted. The *very good reason* should be clear to both facilitator and customer. Use it as the basis of your introduction and revisit it at the end of the simulation: "What are you going to do differently?" To ensure real business & IT alignment gains you should also define and agree with delegates and managers how transfer is to occur? How will we transfer the captured learning points and improvement suggestions into the working environment? Ensuring this transfer is performed will start helping to reduce the amount of ITSM improvement initiatives that fail to achieve the desired value and help us to start breaking down the 'Customer and service focus' issues facing many organizations. As stated in the beginning, IT is becoming increasingly critical to all business operations. ITSM is becoming a strategic asset. Let's start managing strategically.