Introduction

Service catalogues are one of those service desk terms we've all heard of—many of us probably know what a service catalogue is—but some of us do not have the time, resources, or a clear idea of how to create and manage an effective service catalogue.

A service catalogue is a fundamental part of service delivery because it documents every service IT provides and builds agreements with your customers (service level agreements) based on how these services are delivered. Many of us probably have a very clear idea of the services we provide but have not clearly documented and defined these services.

This guide provides:

- Key insight into how to create a service catalogue

- Clear guidance on defining a service catalogue

- An easy to use service catalogue template to help you start realising business and customer benefits

7 Steps to Defining and Designing an Effective Service Catalogue

Authored by: **Kovenco** and **Manjit Paul** *Service Management Consultant , US, UK & Canada*

About the Author: Manjit Paul is a freelance writer and Service Management & Technologist, Member of the IT Service Management Forum UK and Canada and Project Management Institute he regularly contributes to articles commissioned by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) in the UK. An active member of ISACA and Non-Executive Director of Save the Children Charity, UK he continues to contribute to articles that help organizations become high performance businesses.

Catalogue

• An easy to use service catalogue template to help you start realise business and customer benefits

A service catalogue lists the IT services an organisation provides to its employees or customers. But it does more than that. It helps IT engage with its customers and build and maintain those relationships. It helps to establish boundaries and to set expectations. You can say "no" if a request is beyond the remit of the services outlined in the service catalogue. It helps to transform IT to a service lead organisation. It also helps IT to find solutions, contribute to the bottom line and to demonstrate business value.

Each service within the catalogue should include the following:

- A description of the service
- Timeframes or service level agreements (SLAs) for fulfilling the service
- Who is entitled to request/view the service
- Costs (if any)
- How to fulfill and deliver the service

A service catalogue lists the services IT provides. Often, these are grouped by type and are searchable, which is very important if the service catalogue contains a significant number of entries. Each service will also have a description and additional details.

A service catalogue has two specific audiences: customers and the business.

Customers: The service catalogue lists, in an easily understandable way, all of the services currently available to customers and services in scope for the future. For the customer view, it's important to stand in your customers' shoes and to understand their perspective. It's also important to write in business language. No techy speak please.

Business: A service catalogue allows the business to carefully define and select available services and to ensure the correct processes and procedures are in place to deliver the services. It provides the basis for managing and monitoring the service delivery aligned directly to the business to help IT be a successful business partner.

Definition. What's the purpose?
What does a service catalogue contain?
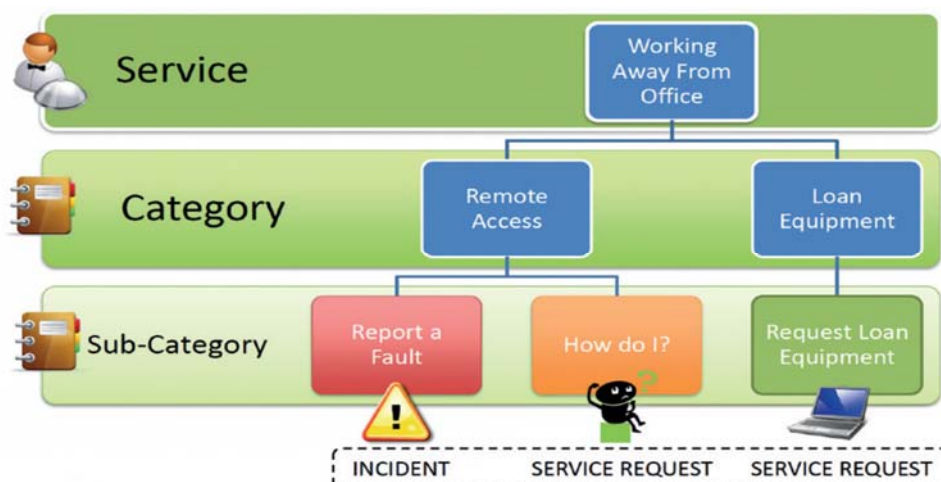
The Steps for Creating a Service Catalogue

1 Initiation

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The service level manager (for this guide, the person or persons responsible for delivering services) should Instigate an awareness programme by selecting relevant individuals throughout IT to help create the service catalogue. It is crucial that the service level manager achieves 'buy-in' not only from senior staff but also from those responsible for the delivery of each service.

Achieving 'buy-in' can be done in a number of ways: meetings with team leaders, group emails, memos, focus groups, etc. The goal is to gain support from key stakeholders and have the benefits of the service catalogue understood by all relevant teams.

The key stakeholders must be aware of the service level manager's intentions and the desired results. Scheduling of follow-up meetings should be discussed and timetabling should feed into the project plan. Discussing this now and explaining the process requirements gives everyone a level playing field from which to start the process.

By arranging follow-up meetings and developing the project plan in tandem with key stakeholders, the service level manager will have a good indication of how healthy the level of 'buy in' is.

If the level of buy in is not as expected, set up individual meetings with stakeholders to resolve issues and revisit why the service catalogue is crucial to the service level management process and how this feeds into the overall business strategy.

Start simple, and keep it simple—small moves.

2 The Highest Level

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When developing a service catalogue, it is crucial to sit down and discuss exactly what services IT is capable of providing, what it currently provides and what is in scope for the future. Nothing should be left to chance. This high level summary will be the foundation of the 'customer' version of the service catalogue. It is important to consider *everything*, from the big services like keeping the lights on to something like events that are optional but require IT support.

The service level manager should sit down and speak with team leaders and managers in first, second and third line support. This may extend to colleagues in technical support, network and desktop systems and database and analyst teams.

Group services into service categories such as:

- Email
- Applications
- Working away from the office
- Files and data
- Permissions and user accounts
- Hardware and equipment
- Meeting room resources
- Technical systems, such as server maintenance, backups, environmental management.

When documenting the categories, it is important to use names customers will understand. Don't be tempted to refer to services by project names or use IT terminology. The service catalogue must be understood by *everyone*.

For simplicity and ease of understanding, dedicate one page of the service catalogue to each service category.

3 Defining Services

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Once the service level manager has a list of service categories (and each is allocated a page of the service catalogue) he/she will need to define what types of support are available within each category. This should be based upon the types of support provided to customers.

Set up a workshop with small groups of customers to obtain a realistic view of required support per service. One workshop per service category will suffice. This will also allow you to monitor and control customer expectations, pre-empting and resolving any concerns.

It's very important to engage with customers from the start and to capture their requirements. Think about the customers' experience with IT and keep this top-of-mind. You need feedback.

For example, the types of support the workshop group may expect from an email service, could be:
• Email service
• Mailing list creation
• Anti-spam
• Web mail
• Virus protection
• Setting up new accounts

All of this should be added to the initial service catalogue draft in preparation for technical discussions with relevant IT teams.

At this stage, it is also important to work out how these services map back to the customer. Is there a logical path between the customer who identified the request and the actual support offered? If not, does the support fit somewhere else? Producing a document that lists which customers identified which support will be useful when maintaining expectations and also when feeding back (should the level of support not meet customer expectation).

Workshops are a great way to quickly and accurately extract information. Most importantly, it's a way to gain consensus from service users. Prior to the workshop, clearly outline the session objectives and share these with all attendees. This will help the group stay focused.

Workshops are also useful for 'getting the message out' about the service catalogue and will be invaluable once it comes to internally marketing the customer document. (Step 6)

Ultimately, IT should aim to be seen as a valued service department. In order to do that, it must align with and across the business. It must engage with the business and understand the customers' perspective.

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Service Owner and Levels of Support

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At this stage, it is important to establish who is supporting the service and the teams responsible for providing the support, and reference this against a list of supported services. An example is shown here:

In our example, if we focus on the 'Email Service,' mail management might be your supporting service. You would need to include the name of the IT service owner who manages the service.

Against the service, identify the first, second and third levels of support, and list the types of support provided. In terms of the 'Email Service,' this would be:

First Level: The Service Desk
- Call management
- Mail lists
- Passwords
- Account set up

Second Level: systems operator

- Mail server management
- Administration of accounts

It is also important to include the availability of each support, such as 08.00 to 17.30 Monday through Friday.

The 'technical' version of the service catalogue should be developed to include all operational level agreements (OLAs) in place, underpinning contracts (UCs) in place, service owner and escalation paths.

To enable version control, it is important to specify the date the service catalogue was issued, and the date it was last updated.

If there is an associated cost for a particular service, add in an additional row for 'charges.' This helps establish appropriate pricing based on the level of service being delivered. Examples of this are included in the sample service catalogue found at the end of this guide.

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Continual Service Improvement (CSI)

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Once the supporting services and the levels of support have been considered, it is important to review them with the IT teams that actually deliver the support. This will be on-going throughout the service catalogue lifecycle as new services are delivered or retired.

Retiring a service will be decided by the support services involved, but the decision process will be facilitated by the service level manager. This may require the initiation of talks between the customer and the service provider, outlining the initial requirements and why they cannot be met.

If the service is withdrawn, the service provider must back this up with evidence that supports the decision. Ideally, this should be done as early as possible so significant objections can be dealt with immediately. If the objection is considerable, the decision to retired could be overturned. However, by this stage, this would be unlikely as each element of the service would have been thoroughly reviewed. It is the service level manager's responsibility to monitor and report on this process.

6 Two Views of the Service Catalogue

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The Customer View

The customer version will contain all the information relevant to the business. This is the high-level detail and should only show what the service is, not how it works. This document must be marketed to internal customers and laid-out in a style customers are familiar with. It should only provide the key details about the product. Keep it brief and to the point!

It is crucial to make sure the customer version of the service catalogue is marketed across the entire organisation by the implementation of a communication plan. The ways to market the service catalogue are numerous and will depend upon the resources available. Engage with the marketing and communications teams within your organisation and secure their help and support. Ultimately, you want to communicate the benefits the service catalogue brings and the process for adding and removing services.

The Technical View

The technical version should contain all the information relevant to the IT providers supplying the service:

• The service owner
• The end user
• The first level support
• The second level support
• The third level support
• The first, second and third level support availability
• Escalation process and path

7 Review and Change Management

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The last step is to agree with relevant parties a process whereby the service catalogue is reviewed and marketed internally.

The service catalogue should be a 'living' catalogue where services and support levels can be added and removed as required. Alongside the service catalogue should be a detailed plan outlining the Change Management process and who is responsible for each stage.

Just as OLAs and service level agreements (SLAs) are constantly reviewed so too should the service catalogue as each document has a direct bearing on the other.

Sample Service Catalogue

Please note that values for services given are examples only and should NOT be regarded as standard. Each company's service catalogue requirements are different, and therefore, every service catalogue is different.

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Service Description:	Delivery and management of electronic messaging services to and from the company
Services Included:	Mailbox Support (troubleshooting, email aliases, shared mailboxes, etc.) Public Folder Management (structure, security, synchronization) Calendaring (synchronization, availability, shared, security) Distribution List Management (global address list, security) SPAM filtering and Management (security, safety) Mailbox Quota Administration Security Management
Services Excluded:	Local client mailbox management Restoration of mailbox information Assistance with Personal Folder Storage (PST)
Service Options:	Restoration of individual mailbox data at the request of legal requirements.
Service SLA:	Provide availability of 99.9% not including scheduled change outages. Measure availability based on Exchange Server uptime. Process requests to add, delete, or change the name of an email account within 1 – 3 days. Restore service within 2 hours for a Severity 1 outage, within 24 hours for Severity 2 outage, and within 48 hours for a Severity 3 outage.
Default OLA Team:	Infrastructure Team Hardware Support OLA
Service Hours:	24 hours 7 days per week including holidays
Delivery Scope:	Corporate wide. In all countries and locations.
Importance:	Mission Critical
Last Review Date:	01 January 2011
Service Owner:	John Smith, Service Desk Manager
Business Owner:	George Flynn, Chief Information Officer
Business Alignment:	Primary communication tool for day-to-day business continuity.
Outsourced To:	Hardware failure outsourced to Hewlett Packard Support Services

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About Kovenco

Founded in 1990 Kovenco are one of the world's leading organizations providing consulting, technology and outsourcing services with employees; offices and operations in more than 70 cities in 57 countries globally; Kovenco is committed to dealing with some of the world's toughest challenges.

Our three growth platforms include – Kovenco Outsourcing, Kovenco Technology, Kovenco Operations.

Founded by some of the industry's most notable leaders, Kovenco began with simple goals: to make IT Services simpler, putting customers first.

Kovenco is one of the fastest growing IT service management providers with corporate headquarters in UK; EMEA headquarters in Canary Wharf, UK; and a global network of expert partners in US and Canada.

Hear what our customers say about us.

"With Kovenco, we don't just meet expectations, we exceed them."

- Marc-Henri Bagneris, Co-founder, Sigmasys

Project Description

To succeed, RAM Tracking needs to excel. And that means every one of its 50 employees needs to excel too. "Our people are fundamental to our success," comments Chris McClellan, CEO at RAM Tracking. "We need them to be motivated to always deliver their best."

Project Details

Client: RAM TRacking

Status: Completed (Q4) on 30 Dec, 2014

Solution: With Kovenco, RAM Tracking has been able to establish a gamification model across its sales and customer service operations based on apps. "Gamification enables us to tap into the competitive nature of our team, which means we can deliver better outcomes for both the business and its customers,"