

UW IT Service Management Board
Recommendations for
Services, Assessment, and Board Effectiveness

March 26, 2018

Summary of SMB Activities 2016-2017

The overarching theme for the IT Service Management Board during the 2016-17 year was to consider whether UW-IT's Strategy on a Page framework (SoaPs) might provide a good vehicle for producing external assessments of the services that UW-IT offers to the campus. The Charter of the Service Management Board¹ includes these two responsibilities:

- Conduct an annual review of the UW-IT Service Catalog and make recommendations to the IT Service Investment Board for adding, changing, and removing services and for any associated recommended changes in investment levels.
- Review major UW-IT services and make recommendations to the Vice President for UW-IT and CIO for service life-cycle improvements, including changes and enhancements to service design, delivery, and operations that will improve the value of the service to the University community.

The Annual Service Assessments (ASAs) that UW-IT was using when the Service Management Board was formed several years ago did have some value, but did not prove to be a satisfactory mechanism for the Service Management Board (SMB) to understand enough about the services to render a good evaluation. With well over 100 services, and the fact that ASAs had a great deal of variance in the level of detail they provided, it was daunting to consider having a sustainable annual evaluation of the value offered by those services.

In 2013, the SMB, at the request of Kelli Trosvig, VP for UW-IT and CIO, produced a "top five list" of new IT services or changes to existing services that would have significant impact at the University of Washington². In order to create capacity for UW-IT to offer those new services, Trosvig then asked the SMB to recommend a set of services that should be retired from the UW-IT Service Catalog³. The SMB used the ASAs available at the time to help evaluate a subset of UW-IT Services, to make the retirement recommendations. But the ASAs proved a cumbersome tool, and the volume of services made annual evaluations impractical.

Are SoaPs an effective tool to provide customer-oriented feedback on UW-IT's services?

In Autumn, 2016, UW-IT initiated a new Strategy Management practice, using a framework that utilized a concise overview of service strategy, including vision, strategic drivers, intended

¹ [SMB Charter, Autumn, 2012](#)

² [SMB Top Five Report](#), February 26, 2013

³ [Services to Retire, Remove, or Review for Change from the UW-IT Service Catalog, SMB](#), December 9, 2013

outcomes, and initiatives to achieve those outcomes. The primary artifact in that framework is known as a “Strategy on a Page” (SoaP).

The Board reviewed a set of UW-IT’s Strategy-on-a-Page documents (SoaPs), representing a mix of levels in UW-IT’s Strategy Management framework⁴. Some were Service Category SoaPs (Level 1), and some were Business Service SoaPs (Level 2):

Service Categories (Level 1):

- Teaching & Learning, Phil Reid
- Collaboration, Erik Lundberg

Business Services (Level 2):

- Data & Analytics, Anja Canfield-Budde
- Software Licensing, Karalee Woody
- Customer Support Management, Karalee Woody
- Computing & Storage, Scott Hansen
- Service Management, Mary Mulvihill

The consensus of Board members is that SoaPs do provide a good basis for understanding the strategic direction of UW-IT’s services, and would be an effective framework for giving actionable feedback to UW-IT on gaps or needed changes in services offered to the campus. The Business Service SoaPs, which number around two-to-three dozen, represent a practical level for this type of assessment. We note, however, that the SoaPs as currently framed are oriented primarily toward “change”, and do not include any real insight into the current state or scope of UW-IT services. Therefore, a comprehensive evaluation of services cannot be performed with SoaPs alone. The presentations to the Board at each meeting were helpful in providing a more holistic view of the services being reviewed, but ideally, this would be distilled in some concise, standardized template, as easy to “consume” as the SoaPs are for strategy.

Some suggestions for improvements on SoaPs and the service review process:

1. SoaPs could be improved by assigning date ranges to Current, Planned, and Future initiatives.
2. SoaPs could be improved by including or augmenting with a high-level description of the services and some basic metrics (customer description, # of customers, costs, trends, etc.)
3. Future use of SoaPs in SMB could be improved by showing where strategies have changed since the last time SMB reviewed the same topic.
4. SMB members did not necessarily have expertise on the services being reviewed, so bringing subject matter experts (SMEs) into the review is critical.

The Year in Review

At the last meeting of the year, the Board reviewed the meetings of the past year, and had a robust and frank discussion, covering the services that had been reviewed, the value of SoaPs as a service assessment tool, and on the value of the Board itself. Several aspects of the years’ activities were quite positive:

⁴ Detailed summary of those service reviews is available here: [Summary of 2016-2017 SMB Meetings](#), and in the [Appendix](#).

- Good breadth and depth of information
- The SoaP format/structure helped
- IT service owners found the feedback they received from SMB to be helpful

There were also a number of recommendations for how things could be improved for the business of the Board, including:

- Improve representation; the Board is too small and it takes too long to get UW-wide input; the SMEs helped, but need more
- Improve business representation; too high a proportion of IT members
- Business capabilities should still be developed to identify gaps in IT services
- Post agendas and meeting materials
- Offer an option to join remotely
- Make clear how SMB work interfaces with other groups such as TRF

Feedback from SMB Members

Tim Rhoades, as Chair, interviewed most of the board members at the conclusion of the years' meetings and these discussions revealed some common themes:

- General feeling that it was hard to feel like they were an appropriate “representative” of their peers at the UW. They felt their advocacy was often specific to their organization.
- It was difficult to work in the time to do a thorough enough review to add real value to the reviews.
- It is difficult to make all the meetings and if one is missed, that contribution to the “common voice” of the review will be missing.
- In-person attendance requirement did not allow for the level of flexibility that might make mandatory attendance more feasible.
- When we are covering a set of services that I do not understand or consume, it's hard to be helpful.
- Having SME's was a positive step, but coordinating their participation was challenging. Also, if they are there, why am I there?
- Facilitated meetings, particularly the manner of the last meeting was highly valuable.
- Direct participation of the Business Service Owner lent an air of authority to the discussions when they were present.
- Meetings were highly informative and well thought out.
- Process felt pretty slow for the level of review needed.
- Concerned there is not enough campus representation to really get a sense of how things might work best across the full group of schools/offices.
- Current format (2 hour meetings, 2 years of service) argues for need to change the decision timeline to get the right kind of input.
- The presentations and discussions were GREAT—well thought out, well presented.

- Could feel like a specific conclusion was being solicited as opposed to it being open ended.

Specific Recommendations

Three top priority recommendations were identified during the post-review of the specific services that were reviewed during the year (business/IT votes in parentheses):

1. **Different pricing/funding to spread adoption of UW Connect** (6/0)
2. **Different funding model for software licensing service** (3/0)
3. **Help units plan transition from local to shared infrastructure** (2/4)

Common Themes. Across all of the SMB recommendations that were identified, there appears to be a strong desire from units around the UW for **shared services and infrastructure**. This suggests that the era of convincing people to use shared services is ending; rather, it is time to get highly effective at providing them.

Across multiple SMB priorities, some common challenges were identified for UW-IT to address, in order to offer highly effective shared services:

- **Transparency and communication** around how funding for shared services is used and how it benefits the customer (UW Connect, software licensing)
- **Customer voice and governance** in directing priorities and changes in shared services (UW Connect, software licensing, Admissions data)
- **Increased guidance and communication** around how to best use available services (software licensing, shared infrastructure, collaboration across platforms/services, collaboration needs, compliance needs)

Specific Service Recommendations. During the discussions of the SoaPs presented during the year, and during the wrap-up discussions in June, the SMB also developed 30 specific recommendations about services, which are listed in the Appendix.

Subject Matter Experts. Having SMB members bring subject matter experts (SMEs) to the service assessments was not as effective as we had hoped. The relevant SMEs often did not really exist in members' units. Some specific suggestions for engaging SMEs include:

- Clarify the purpose of attending for SMEs
- In very decentralized schools, getting SMEs to attend is a challenge
- Include the SMEs more actively in the meetings; encourage them to speak
- Enable remote or asynchronous participation by SMEs
- Give people more lead time to understand the topic and recruit the right SMEs
- Involve other advisory boards with relevant knowledge

Meetings. Several suggestions for improving Board meetings were made:

- Continue with facilitated meetings

- Make as much legwork as possible happen in advance of each meeting
- Enable SMB to also discuss what IT should do less of; review underutilized services

Looking Forward

The UW IT Service Management Board (SMB) is at a crossroads in its IT governance role. The Board must evolve in order to sustain its advisory role in the very broad array of services offered by UW-IT. The evolution should also encompass the IT enterprise outside of UW-IT and its coordination with UW-IT services. The SMB has learned that knowing the business of the UW and how it could and should be supported by IT services – in a comprehensive, enterprise-wide perspective – is fundamental to fulfilling its role effectively.

Last year the Board began evaluating UW-IT Strategies on a Page (SoaPs) to explore the possibility of using them as a tool in the Board's service assessment role. Service owners are a valuable source of business requirements and business trends since this is a key element of providing their services. Two issues with this approach are 1) service owners may consider business requirements through the lens of the service they offer, and 2) since business needs should drive the services there may be gaps that are not identified by simply reviewing existing services. Consequently, SMB also brought in subject matter experts (SMEs) recommended by Board members to assist in the review process. While more effective than previous attempts, the Board felt that:

- it was hard to find SMEs who could attend the specific meetings in question,
- it was hard for SMEs who did attend to gain full context for their role, and
- ten two-hour meetings per year is simply not enough time to consider business requirements and meet the charge of a useful review of all IT services.

The conclusion of this year's work was that SMB needs to find a way to scale-up.

Recommendations for the future of the Service Management Board:

1. **Scale up participation by launching a Customer Advisory Board (CAB) for each of the seven UW-IT service categories.** Establishing CABs that reflect customer personae or business capability may be an even better choice since there is so much customer/functional overlap within the seven categories. Some customer focused groups may already exist today that should be leveraged. Groups such as the Administrator's Forum, the Advisors Group, and Board of Deans were noted, but it may be best for these groups to be used by the CABs rather than actually becoming a CAB. CABs would identify business needs, gaps, and broad priorities and their work will be coordinated with SMB reviews. Consideration should also be given to student input, through student governance groups (ASUW and GPSS). CABs should use all existing resources such as UW-IT customer surveys in performing this role.
2. **Increase the analysis and documentation of business capability mapping, providing a deeper level of detail in each business capability of the UW.** This

activity could be pursued by the CABs under direction of the SMB. The work of understanding the technology needs of UW and sustaining that understanding over time is a huge undertaking, but provides a basis for more than just the work of SMB; funding this effort in the TRF bundle should be explored. Existing efforts such as TAP should be cataloged and coordination should be pursued.

3. **SMB should have a more direct role in advising the TRF bundle.** SMB can make recommendations for adding and retiring services in the TRF based on business requirements analysis and service reviews.
4. **Provide administrative support for SMB and CABs and offer a common set of tools for requirements gathering, gap analysis, and customer engagement.** The customer engagement should include communication about the SMB work and service roadmaps. Tools such as UserVoice should be considered. In addition, ServiceNow capabilities for ITIL Business Relationship Management should be considered.
5. **Expand coordination with other IT-oriented groups and groups associated with specific customer types.** Examples include the Computing Directors Group, Service Investment Board, PASS Council, and the Health Sciences IT Partners Group⁵.
6. Amend the SMB Charter to reflect these recommendations.

⁵ The Health Sciences IT Partners Group includes representatives from Health Sciences Center for Shared Services, and the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Social Work, and Dentistry, as well as a number of health science departments.

Appendix: Observations and Recommendations about Specific Services and Business Services

After reviewing the specific Strategy on a Page documents (SoaPs) throughout the past year, the Strategy Management Board makes the following 30 observations and recommendations for the Service Categories and Business Services that were reviewed.

Teaching & Learning (*Service Category*): Common Admissions Data Source

1. The Admissions Modernization efforts so far have been largely focused on Undergraduate Admissions; graduate and professional admissions data remains siloed from undergraduate data
2. The UW needs to be able to report accurately and consistently on admissions across all programs, and needs access to reliable data for strategic decision-making around recruiting and admissions
3. One approach -- which would also help more broadly -- could be for the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) to have an advisory board to help prioritize domains of business data for integration

Collaboration (*Service Category*): Selecting Collaboration Services

4. UW-IT should develop a repeatable method for service assessment to help it better describe its own services and enable units to pick the best ones for their own needs

Collaboration (*Service Category*): Collaboration Across Platforms/Devices

5. Units are experiencing more users with more devices located in more countries, with resulting confusion about UW and external collaboration services
6. More guidance and communication is needed, in the form of guides and roadmaps
7. Younger faculty in particular come to the UW with multiple devices and expect to be able to use them all seamlessly
8. Small schools in particular have a unique set of challenges in providing enough guidance (from a small IT team) to a diverse and global user base

Data & Analytics (*Business Service*):

- No specific recommendations, but note that recommendation (2) can be generalized to data and analytics services more broadly, and (3) is a specific suggestion regarding the EDW service.

Software Licensing (*Business Service*):

9. Software licensing should be a more collaborative effort; there continue to be lost opportunities due to separate licensing

10. For example, Adobe licensing is an ongoing pain point for units
11. Even just a registry of past purchases by other units would be helpful
12. The model for software licensing would need to respond to needs for software that is not used by all, but rather by part of the community, and still cover administrative overhead
13. Communication and culture change is needed to help units know what is available; understand the benefits of paying more for centrally licensed software; see what the administrative is for; and perceive central IT as a trusted broker
14. Potentially this service should be located elsewhere than in UW-IT; for example, it could be considered a procurement function, and could extend beyond software to hardware
15. See the past proposals made to change the funding model for software licensing

Customer Support Management (*Business Services*):

- No specific recommendations

Computing & Storage (*Business Service*): Local to Shared Infrastructure

16. Units have drivers to reduce their IT costs and simplify their IT operations by using shared infrastructure services
17. However, it is a complex transition for units, in which they need expert help -- at a level of expertise and pace of change that varies by unit
18. Funding is also an obstacle; units can't always recover their full cost savings when they switch to shared services (because they still have the same headcount), and providing more consultation to units will increase the cost of shared services
19. The UW overall can benefit from enabling units to use their IT positions differently (less deeply technical, more business-oriented staff)
20. The UW can also reduce risk by more quickly eliminating non-enterprise or non-compliant infrastructure and the risk of staff turnover in units

Service Management (*Business Service*): UW Connect

21. Based on UW initiatives such as the Husky Experience, there is a need for more unified customer experience at the UW, which UW Connect can enable
22. UW Connect is a potential data mine for identifying service problems to address around the UW
23. Because UW Connect has high "common good" value for the UW, its adoption should not rely solely on the ability of each unit to pay its share of the service; units already have significant costs to transition from other existing tools
24. However, more analysis is needed before proposing UW Connect for all types of non-IT service management -- for example, some units need to be able to link service requests to assets (such as equipment)
25. The service also needs more visible customer governance -- a place for the customer voice, such as a Customer Advisory Board
26. In this regard, UW Connect can be a pilot for governance of shared services

Enterprise Risk⁶ (Service Category): Selecting Services for Compliance

27. Units need help with vetting potential tools for compliance -- for example, what are the compliance risks of using Slack in a student support environment?
28. Units face an increasing number of state requirements and increasing risk of audit problems
29. Although there is a CISO guide that is helpful, it needs to be more visible to become widely used
30. Including possible mandatory training would be helpful

⁶ The SoaP for Enterprise Risk was not presented to the Board. This topic was discussed in the wrap-up meeting in June, 2017.