
SHIFTING LEFT

This one page looks at IT Service Management (ITSM) and how small changes to the left in terms of engagement and activity can improve overall service efficiency.

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The term shift left has been present in the market place in one form or another for a number of years but regardless of its use. Shift Left conveys the same simple message and that is the benefit of focusing activity and engagement as early (or far to the left) in the appropriate lifecycle as possible.

Across the board, suppliers and organizations are looking closely at their interaction with external and internal customers to wherever practicable ensure that as much of the work commonly completed by first line staff is moved into the customer domain

Simply put. ‘The further activity can be pushed to the left the greater the saving’

Examples of this can be seen in on-line booking systems that negate the need for customer contact, or the latest voice pattern security authentication tool used by Revenue and Customs that allows lengthy customer security checks to be pre- vetted, thus reducing the overall call time.

Helping customers to help themselves. To support Shift Left, increasing attention is being given to the level and quality of Knowledge being provided to the customer as this in turn drives education and collaboration which in turn empowers the customer to where possible help themselves. For example, by providing the customer with the relevant information to ensure that they understand the difference between a new feature in the application that they are using and an actual fault or issue. Or to understand the difference between a request or an issue they are experiencing.

Knowing the customer. In many cases contractual obligations will exist but there is always a balance to be struck between what is appropriate and reasonable for the customer to do and what should remain firmly within the scope of the supplier. So, although there are common principles and methods for shifting left all customers are different, and care needs to be taken to understand what value the service is providing to the customer and to ensure that it's not compromised.

Scope. In addition to customer specific ways of working there are also some basic Shift Left principles that will help optimize service efficiency across the Service Lifecycle.

- **Service Strategy** – With forethought, Shift Left thinking can positively influence decisions regarding technology landscape, service interaction and security that benefit both the supplier and the customer
- **Service Design** – During Service Design appropriate choices can be formalised to drive through Shift Left benefits.
- **Service Transition** – Service on-boarding and transition is an ideal opportunity for Knowledge transfer and training that can lay the foundation for a Shift Left optimised service
- **Service Operation** – this is where many of the small yet important changes that Shift Left optimization provides start to bring real returns.
- **Continual Service Improvement** – There is always room for further improvement

Small Changes. In many cases applying Shift Left consists of a small changes in the way we work and the tools employed that can be deployed as part of Service Design or rolled into Service via Continual Service Improvement (CSI). For further reading please check out the other One Pagers in this series