

ITIL® SERVICE DESIGN: FROM 4PS TO FOUR DIMENSIONS



Be it smart devices, electric vehicles, or mobile apps, appeal for today's products and services has a lot to do with look and feel, in as much as functionality is the essential reason for their creation. Each unveiling of a product concept or launch is now met with social media critics looking at all dimensions:

- What's under the hood
- What the were designers thinking
- Whether it's worth buying
- How it compares with competitor products
- And so on...

[Examples](#) of poor product design are plentiful, and the danger of a company going under from its effects is real. CX/UX has become a critical ingredient that is unmissable in ensuring products and services deliver desired value by not only considering functionality from a technical perspective, but also a humanely one.

When it comes to [product and service design](#), it is crucial that all stakeholders involved understand that we are not just looking at the solution itself but also everything else that will manage the quality of the service in a way that meets the needs of the customers and the service provider. Modern approaches such as [design thinking](#) and [human centered design](#) have empathy at their core, resulting in product and service blueprints that have gone through several iterations, exploring multiple possibilities in order to create the best possible outcomes for customers.

Service Design Package

The service design package (SDP) is a concept introduced in ITIL® v3 that refers to documentation defining all aspects of [an IT service](#) and its requirements through each stage of its lifecycle.

The aim of the SDP is to ensure all aspects of the service have been considered and documented. And its purpose is to provide a clear statement of 'what good looks like' to designers and similar consumers.

(Explore our multi-part [ITIL v3 Guide](#).)

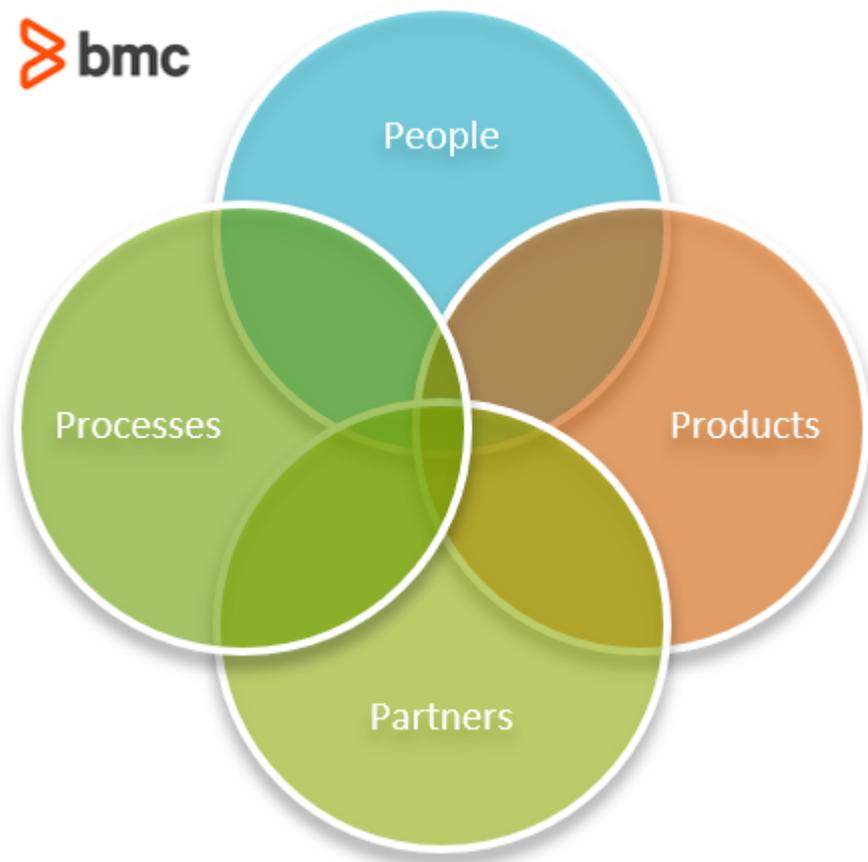
Because [agile approaches](#) to product design are mainstream these days, the SDP is no longer a standard rigid suite of many documents that cannot incorporate change once development of the service has started. Instead, the SDP is now represented by epics, user stories, product vision, solution architecture, wireframes, and other artefacts that capture evolving consumer sentiments and [product team](#) understanding.

The definition of an SDP requires a holistic view, since input from different stakeholders involved in the life of the product or service is critical in ensuring its successful development, deployment, adoption and support. This holistic perspective is what brings us to the concept of the 4 Ps of service design.

The 4 Ps of Service Design

In ITIL v3, we were introduced to the concept of 4 Ps of Service Design—that is:

- People
- Products
- Partners
- Processes

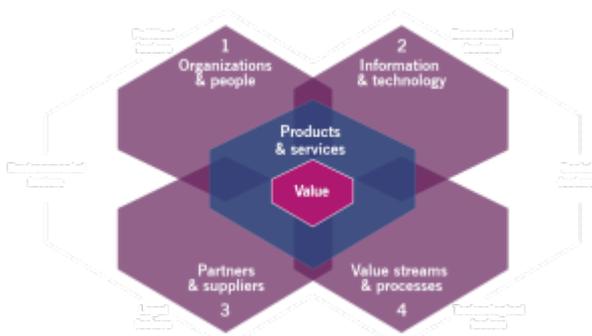


4Ps become 4 Dimensions

Successful service management could only be achieved through effective and efficient use of 4 Ps to ensure the resultant products and services have the greatest impact or benefit to the business. With the update to [ITIL 4](#), the 4 Ps have been reworked into the four dimensions of service management i.e.

- People Organization and people
- Products Information and technology
- Partners Partners and suppliers
- Processes Value streams and processes

The four dimensions of service management



According to the ITIL 4 Service Design [practice guide](#), for an SDP to be effective, it should address all four dimensions of the service and be focused on customer and user experience. Some of the information to be captured for each dimension in the SDP includes:

- **Organizations and people:** operating model and support matrix, training needs
- **Information and technology:** tooling, monitoring, data management, and vulnerability
- **Partners and suppliers:** appropriate contracts, service integration, critical success factors
- **Value streams and processes:** critical path analysis of IT service, expedited processes

To ensure that the holistic approach covers not just the design, but also the development of the product and service, service design orchestration comes into view. This ensures all resources required to achieve the outcome, including suppliers, information, technology, people, processes, and operating models, are considered when designing and transitioning products and solutions that meet business and customer needs.

(Learn more in our multi-part [ITIL 4 Guide](#).)

Four Dimensions considerations in Service Design

Let's look briefly at each service design dimension.

Organizations & people

People are central to the successful design of any service. A good relationship between a [service provider](#) and its customers relies on an empathetic understanding of customer needs and experience and translating that into a practical design that can adapt to changes.

Without understanding customer outcomes or the value they want to achieve from the service, there is a huge chance that the designed service will fail to satisfy their needs, resulting in wasted resources and opportunities for the organization involved. The team involved in designing the service have to be properly structured, trained, and equipped to ensure that the requirements from the customers are actualized.

Information & technology

In pursuit of the balance between functionality, performance, and cost, choosing the right technology cannot be overstated. While the main driver of product and service designs will be the features that come from the customers' requirements, it has to be underpinned by the appropriate environment, infrastructure, applications, interfaces, and data sources that will make the service work.

And how these are put together like a jigsaw will depend on the choice of architecture that will drive the technology design activities.

Partners & suppliers

Third party providers have become essential to today's service delivery landscape particularly in this age of [outsourcing](#), [managed services](#), and [cloud computing](#). A service provider will usually work with agreed partners and vendors to translate customer requirements into working designs, and the contracts or agreements will usually specify terms, conditions and targets that will support the service levels agreed with the customer.

Whatever the partnership or engagement approach with the vendor, it is essential that a good working relationship is established as the service provider will struggle to develop quality product

designs without the help of a partner who is in tune with the needs of the organization and customers.

Value streams & processes

Service design is captured as one of the core steps within the value stream that results in the creation of a new or modified service. Holistic thinking will ensure that all dependencies to the value stream including processes are comprehensively addressed. Processes involved in service design include service design planning and service design coordination. The latter addresses the actual service design activities including:

- Identifying applicable design model
- Planning design activities, resources, and capabilities
- Executing on the design
- Finally, reviewing the service design

Summing up the 4Ps

The design of any product or service must consider all the elements required for the service to be delivered and managed in the way that delivers peak customer experience and will result in value for the money spent.

Any service provider worth their salt has to be cognizant of the four dimensions while using an integrated approach to deliver the desired business outcomes and planned results in a quality and cost-effective manner. So whether it's an app, a cloud service or connectivity, a holistic approach that covers all bases is the only way to design right.

Related reading

- [BMC Service Management Blog](#)
- [People, Process, Technology \(and Partners\): An Introduction](#)
- [Top ITSM Metrics & KPIs: Measuring for Success, Aiming for Improvement](#)
- [ITSM vs BRM vs Agile: How Service, Business Relationship & Product Management Work Together](#)
- [The Top Service Management \(ITSM\) Trends Today](#)
- [What Is AISM? AI Service Management Explained](#)