ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model

Version 1

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About this document

This document introduces the ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model (ITIL PBM), outlining its purpose, structure, and the standardized measurement approach used for benchmarking digital technology management.

It is intended for **Enterprises** seeking to assess and improve their performance in managing digital products and services, as well as for PeopleCert's **Accredited Consulting Partners** (ACPs) supporting organizations in conducting ITIL PBM or ITIL MM assessments.

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ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model

Purpose

The ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model (ITIL PBM) provides a structured way for organizations to assess how effectively they use and manage digital technology, using a limited set of benchmark-ready metrics to compare performance against industry peers.

Business Value

The ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model helps organizations:

- Understand how effectively digital technology enables and supports business objectives
- Strengthen business-IT alignment, resilience, agility, and operational effectiveness
- Support strategic decision-making with consistent, industry-aligned data
- Prioritize improvements based on comparable evidence

Key features

The ITIL Performance Benchmarking Model:

01 Is built on the ITIL objectives cascade, linking strategic business needs to measurable outcomes

02 Uses a focused set of 12 key metrics covering all four strategic areas (slide 7)

03 Provides clear metric definitions, standardized measurement instructions, and guidance for interpreting results

04 Ensures cross-enterprise consistency through specific measurement rules, enabling reliable and meaningful benchmarking

05 Can be applied as an internal self-assessment or delivered as an independent assessment by PeopleCert's Accredited Consulting Partners (ACPs)

Why ITIL PBM?

B R I G H T

Business-aligned	Relevant	Integrated	Global	Holistic	Transparent
Focuses on metrics for business outcomes connected with digital technology	Built on consistently measurable metrics relevant for different organizations	Powered by ITIL practice guides and designed to work seamlessly with the ITIL Maturity Model	Developed as part of ITIL, trusted by enterprises and professionals across the globe	Covers four strategic focus areas, combining objective and perception-based metrics	Provides clearly defined metrics with transparent measurement rules and analysis guidelines

Metrics for Benchmarking

ITIL®

Measurement framework

Strategic focus area	Key metrics	↕			
Business alignment and integration	▪ Management satisfaction with how digital technology enables the business	↑	?	?	?
	▪ Digital value realisation	↑	?	?	?
	▪ Digital workplace satisfaction score	↑	?	?	?
	▪ SLA compliance rate	↑	?	?	?
Organizational agility	▪ Management satisfaction with solution delivery	↑	?	?	?
	▪ On-time project delivery	↑	?	?	?
	▪ On-budget project delivery	↑	?	?	?
Organizational resilience	▪ Incident rate	↓	+	?	?
	▪ On-time incident resolution	↑	?	?	?
Operational excellence	▪ Digital cost per user	↓	?	?	+
	▪ % Allocated digital cost	↑	?	?	?
	▪ Management satisfaction with digital cost transparency	↑	?	?	?

↕ indicates whether high performance means higher (↑) or lower (↓) values of the corresponding metric
indicates whether the metric values are industry-specific (? means this is to be established through data collection and analysis)
indicates whether the metric values are company size-specific (? means this is to be established through data collection and analysis)
indicates whether the metric values are region-specific (? means this is to be established through data collection and analysis)

1. Digital technology as a business enabler

Definition

Management satisfaction with how digital technology enables the business measures senior and middle managers' perception of how effectively digital technology support enterprise goals and business performance.

Measurement

Calculate the value as the average rating provided by managers in a survey measuring their perception of how effectively digital technology enables the business.

Include members of the executive team, business unit heads, and other stakeholders who regularly interact with IT teams and rely on digital capabilities in their work.

For benchmarking purposes, responses should be collected using a 1-5 satisfaction scale, where 1 indicates very low satisfaction and 5 indicates very high satisfaction. Please use question 1 in the Management survey template as an example.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate stronger management confidence in IT's role as a strategic business enabler. If your results are lower than expected, further analysis is required to understand the underlying reasons.

For diagnostic purposes, it is recommended to include an open-text field in the survey so that participants can provide specific details about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If a respondent provides a low rating without sufficient explanation, consider conducting a follow-up face-to-face interview to clarify their perspective and gather meaningful insights.

The information collected through the survey and interviews should then be used to perform a deeper analysis of the factors affecting satisfaction and to generate targeted improvement ideas.

This metric should be analysed alongside related indicators such as Digital Value Realisation, Digital Workplace Satisfaction Score, and SLA Compliance Rate to gain a comprehensive view of business-IT alignment.

2. Digital value realisation

Definition

Digital value realization measures the percentage of digital-technology initiatives that achieved the value or benefits defined in their approved business cases, whether expressed as financial or other formally defined criteria.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Projects with the targets met) / (Total num of projects)

In the numerator, include all completed digital-technology-related projects that achieved the value targets defined in their approved business cases or equivalent value definitions, based on confirmed actual results.

In the denominator, include all digital-technology-related projects completed within the selected assessment period (12-24 months).

This metric applies to large-scale digital-technology initiatives, regardless of the delivery model. If an organization does not use traditional projects, it should use equivalents such as major product enhancements, epics, quarterly commitments, or other formally approved initiatives intended to deliver measurable business value.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate stronger performance. If results are lower than anticipated, further investigation is needed.

Useful actions include reviewing business cases, financial models, benefit-realization plans, and post-implementation reviews to understand why the expected value was not achieved. Some common contributing factors may include:

- Weak alignment between project scope and expected outcomes
- Delays, budget overruns, or quality issues reducing the realized value
- Lack of ownership or follow-through on benefit realization
- Insufficient change management reducing adoption of new capabilities

If outcomes are unclear or inconsistently reported, it may be necessary to strengthen processes for business-case development, financial tracking, and post-implementation evaluation. This metric should be analysed alongside related indicators such as On-time project delivery, On-budget project delivery, and Management satisfaction with solution delivery to gain a comprehensive view of digital-technology project performance.

3. Digital workplace satisfaction score

Definition

Digital workplace satisfaction score measures how satisfied employees are with the digital products and services they use to perform their work.

Measurement

Calculate the value as the average rating provided by users in a survey measuring their perception of digital products and services they use in their work.

Include all employees of your organization who have access to its digital products and services.

For benchmarking purposes, responses should be collected using a 1-5 satisfaction scale, where 1 indicates very low satisfaction and 5 indicates very high satisfaction. Please use question 1 in the User survey template as an example.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate better performance. If your results are lower than expected, further analysis is required to understand the underlying reasons.

For diagnostic purposes, it is recommended to include an open-text field in the survey so that participants can provide specific details about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If a respondent provides a low rating without sufficient explanation, consider conducting a follow-up face-to-face interview to clarify their perspective and gather meaningful insights.

Another valuable source of additional insights is **DEX tools**, which can collect both technical telemetry and user-activity data (such as device performance, application behaviour, usage patterns, and friction points) helping to identify the underlying factors that shape employees' digital experience.

The collected information should then be used to perform a deeper analysis of the factors affecting user satisfaction and to generate targeted improvement ideas.

4. SLA compliance rate

Definition

SLA compliance rate measures the percentage of digital services that meet the service-level targets agreed with their customers.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Services meeting SLAs) / (Total num of services)

In the numerator, include the number of services that met their agreed service-level targets during the assessment period. Do not include services without agreed SLAs.

In the denominator, include the total number of services provided to service customers. If no services are formally defined, the metric value should be recorded as 0.

For benchmarking purposes, it is recommended to select a period of normal business activity to avoid local spikes that may not reflect typical performance, or to calculate an average across two to three consecutive periods.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate stronger performance.

If your results are lower than expected, review the individual services that failed to meet their SLA targets to identify performance gaps [14]. Examine their historical performance to determine whether the issue is a one-off deviation or a recurring, systemic problem. Work with the respective service owners to ensure that appropriate corrective or preventive actions are considered for implementation. It is also recommended to conduct interviews with the customers and users of these services to better understand the business impact and gather their perspectives on potential or ongoing improvements.

If the metric value is 100%, review the Management satisfaction with how IT enables the business metric or conduct a dedicated survey to ensure that full SLA compliance is not the result of service-level targets being set too low to meet actual business needs.

5. Solution delivery and innovations

Definition

Management satisfaction with solution delivery reflects how management perceives the organization's effectiveness in delivering new digital solutions and enabling innovation.

Measurement

Calculate the value as the average rating provided by managers in a survey measuring their perception of how effectively the organization is delivering new digital solutions.

Include members of the executive team, business unit heads, and other stakeholders who regularly interact with IT teams and rely on digital capabilities in their work.

For benchmarking purposes, responses should be collected using a 1-5 satisfaction scale, where 1 indicates very low satisfaction and 5 indicates very high satisfaction. Please use question 2 in the Management survey template as an example.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate better performance. If your results are lower than expected, further analysis is required to understand the underlying reasons.

For diagnostic purposes, it is recommended to include an open-text field in the survey so that participants can provide specific details about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If a respondent provides a low rating without sufficient explanation, consider conducting a follow-up face-to-face interview to clarify their perspective and gather meaningful insights.

The information collected through the survey and interviews should then be used to perform a deeper analysis of the factors affecting satisfaction and to generate targeted improvement ideas.

6. On-time project delivery

Definition

On-time project delivery measures the percentage of digital-technology-related projects implemented within their agreed delivery timelines.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Projects delivered on time) / (Total num of projects)

In the numerator, include the number of digital-technology-related projects that were implemented within their agreed delivery timelines.

In the denominator, include all digital-technology-related projects completed within the selected assessment period (12-24 months).

This metric applies to large-scale digital-technology initiatives, regardless of the delivery model. If an organization does not use traditional projects, it should use equivalents such as major product enhancements, epics, quarterly commitments, or other formally approved initiatives intended to deliver measurable business value.

Analysis

For this metric, a higher value indicates better performance. If results are lower than anticipated, further investigation is needed to identify the reasons for the low performance. The most common reasons are listed below.

- Insufficient delivery capacity, caused by understaffing, skill gaps, or a lack of arrangements with external providers
- Unrealistic planning, shifting priorities, and repeating conflicts with ongoing operational work
- Scope creep and uncontrolled requirement changes without corresponding adjustments to timelines, resources, or priorities
- Weak project management capabilities [21]
- Inflexible project management approaches applied to innovative or uncertain work

Please refer to the PRINCE2 project management methodology for improvement ideas [20].

7. On-budget project delivery

Definition

On-budget project delivery measures the percentage of digital-technology-related projects implemented within their agreed budgets.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Projects delivered on budget) / (Total num of projects)

In the numerator, include the number of digital-technology-related projects that were implemented within their agreed budgets.

In the denominator, include all digital-technology-related projects completed within the selected assessment period (12-24 months).

This metric applies to large-scale digital-technology initiatives, regardless of the delivery model. If an organization does not use traditional projects, it should use equivalents such as major product enhancements, epics, quarterly commitments, or other formally approved initiatives intended to deliver measurable business value.

Analysis

For this metric, a higher value indicates better performance. If results are lower than anticipated, further investigation is needed to identify the reasons for the low performance. The most common reasons are listed below.

- Scope creep and uncontrolled requirement changes without corresponding adjustments to budgets
- Inaccurate cost estimates caused by unclear requirements, limited historical data, or skill gaps
- Insufficient technical expertise for designing and delivering the solution, leading to inefficiencies and costly rework
- Unrealistic budgets driven by cost-cutting pressure
- Weak project management capabilities, especially in resource, risk, and finance management areas [21]

Please refer to the PRINCE2 project management methodology for improvement ideas [20].

8. Incident rate

Definition

Incident rate is the number of incidents per user per month. This metric is used to evaluate the overall operational stability of an organization's digital products and services.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Number of incidents a month) / (Number of users)

In the numerator, please use the number of incidents in one fully completed month. It is important to count **incidents only**, excluding service requests or any other types of requests.

In the denominator, please use the average number of IT users for the same month. Only employees who are granted access to the company's IT services should be included.

For benchmarking purposes, it's recommended to select a month of normal business activity to avoid local spikes that do not reflect the company's typical performance, or to calculate an average across two to three consecutive periods.

Analysis

For this metric, a lower value indicates better performance. Although values vary across industries, typical figures range from around 1.0 (for organizations with less intensive use of digital technology) to around 2.5 (for organizations with high digital reliance).

If your numbers are higher, it may be necessary to investigate the possible reasons for the increased volume of incidents. Some common reasons are listed below.

- Ineffective problem management that fails to identify and eliminate the root causes of recurring incidents [10]
- Poor change management, resulting in a high number of incidents when implementing changes [4]
- Insufficient monitoring and observability that fail to detect issues before they impacted users [9], [19]
- Inaccurate or outdated configuration data that leads to incorrect changes, misaligned dependencies, and operational errors [12]
- A lack of attention to capacity [3] or availability management [2]
- Fragile infrastructure [6] or applications [15]
- Inadequate user training on how to use the company's digital products and services [8]

9. On-time incident resolution

Definition

On-time incident resolution measures the percentage of incidents resolved within the resolution times defined in the organization's SLAs, OLAs, or approved process regulations.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Incidents resolved on time) / (Total num of incidents)

In the numerator, include the number of incidents that were successfully resolved during the assessment period within their agreed resolution targets.

In the denominator, include all incidents resolved during the same period.

For benchmarking purposes, it's recommended to select a month of normal business activity to avoid local spikes that do not reflect the company's typical performance, or to calculate an average across two to three consecutive periods.

Analysis

For this metric, a higher value indicates better performance. Some common reasons for low performance are listed below.

- Too many incidents overwhelming support teams (please review the Incident rate metric)
- Poor knowledge management, including inadequate transfer of knowledge when new solutions are delivered [8], [11]
- Insufficient collaboration between development and support teams [18]
- Inaccurate or outdated configuration data leading to incorrect troubleshooting and delayed resolution [12]
- Insufficient internal resources or missing arrangements with external providers
- Resolution targets misaligned with external suppliers' contracts
- Poor process discipline and status hygiene causing extra delays or reporting issues [5]

If the metric value is nearly 100%, review the Management satisfaction with how IT enables the business metric or conduct a dedicated survey to ensure that the compliance is not the result of service-level or process targets being set too low to meet actual business needs.

10. Digital cost per user

Definition

Digital cost per user measures the total annual operational cost of creating, operating, and maintaining the organization's digital products and services, divided by the number of users who have access to them.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Total digital costs) / (Number of users)

In the numerator, include the total operational cost of creating, operating, and maintaining the organization's digital products and services for the last fully completed financial year, covering costs for people, infrastructure, applications, and third-party services. For benchmarking purposes, the amount should be expressed in USD.

In the denominator, include the average number of users for the same period. Only employees who are granted access to the company's digital products and services should be included.

Analysis

Although values vary across industries, in general a lower value indicates better performance. If your results are higher than expected, consider reviewing the following areas:

- IT operating model and sourcing strategy, including the balance between internal and external service provision
- Current enterprise architecture, as legacy systems, custom applications, or overlapping solutions can significantly increase operating costs [1]
- Vendor and contract management, looking for opportunities to renegotiate contracts or consolidate suppliers [16]
- Licensing and subscription management practices, which may reveal unused licenses, overprovisioning, or inefficiencies in cloud subscriptions and consumption [7]
- Capacity and performance management, to identify excess capacity that inflates costs [3]

When prioritising improvements, begin by examining the largest cost items, as optimizations in these areas typically deliver the greatest impact on overall costs. An effective digital cost allocation solution can greatly support cost analysis, making it easier to identify optimization opportunities [13].

11. % Allocated digital cost

Definition

% Allocated digital cost measures the percentage of the total annual operational digital cost that can be reasonably allocated to agreed cost objects using an allocation method approved by the business.

Measurement

Calculate by using the formula below:

Value = (Allocated digital costs) / (Total digital costs)

In the denominator, include the total operational cost of creating, operating, and maintaining the organization's digital products and services for the last fully completed financial year, covering costs for people, infrastructure, applications, and third-party services.

In the numerator, include the amount of digital costs reasonably allocated to agreed cost objects using a business-approved allocation method. Do not include overheads (general administrative costs and other costs that do not have a reasonable allocation method).

If the company doesn't perform the digital cost allocation, the metric value should be recorded as 0.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate better performance. If results are lower than anticipated, further investigation is needed to identify the reasons for the low performance. The most common reasons are listed below.

- Absence of clear cost allocation policies or agreed methodologies [13]
- Weak initial classification of digital costs, making it difficult to apply the appropriate cost models [13]
- Insufficient information about IT assets, preventing the mapping of cost items to the resources and services they support [7]
- Lack of records or understanding of employee effort, hindering the attribution of labour costs to specific cost objects [13]
- Lack of reliable service configuration information, resulting in an inability to trace how components interact, use other resources, and contribute to service delivery [12]
- Low financial literacy among IT managers, leading to inconsistent or inaccurate cost interpretation and weak cost-model ownership [17]
- No request for the digital cost allocation from the business

12. Digital cost transparency

Definition

Management satisfaction with digital cost transparency measures how well business managers understand digital cost information, trust it, and can use it for decision-making.

Measurement

Calculate the value as the average rating provided by managers in a survey measuring their satisfaction with the transparency of digital cost information and its relevance for decision-making. Digital cost is the cost of creating, operating, and maintaining the organization's digital products and services for the last fully completed financial year, covering costs for people, infrastructure, applications, and third-party services.

Include members of the executive team, business unit heads, and other stakeholders who regularly interact with IT teams and rely on digital capabilities in their work.

For benchmarking purposes, responses should be collected using a 1-5 satisfaction scale, where 1 indicates very low satisfaction and 5 indicates very high satisfaction. Please use question 3 in the Management survey template as an example.

Analysis

For this metric, higher values indicate better performance. If your results are lower than expected, further analysis is required to understand the underlying reasons.

For diagnostic purposes, it is recommended to include an open-text field in the survey so that participants can provide specific details about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If a respondent provides a low rating without sufficient explanation, consider conducting a follow-up face-to-face interview to clarify their perspective and gather meaningful insights.

It is also recommended to review the % Allocated Digital Costs metric to understand the extent to which digital costs can be reasonably assigned to cost objects, so they can be analysed and explained in a manner agreed with the business.

The information collected through the survey, interviews, and metric analysis should then be used to identify potential improvements to the service financial management approach and related communications [13].

Survey Examples

Management survey

#	Question	Type	Comments
Q1	Overall, how satisfied are you with the extent to which digital technology enables and supports the achievement of our business objectives? (1 – totally unsatisfied, 5 – highly satisfied)	Rating 1-5	This question should be accompanied by an open-text field allowing participants to provide specific details on what they are satisfied or dissatisfied with.
Q2	How satisfied are you with how effectively our organization delivers new or updated digital solutions that meet your business needs? (1 – totally unsatisfied, 5 – highly satisfied)	Rating 1-5	This question should be accompanied by an open-text field allowing participants to provide specific details on what they are satisfied or dissatisfied with.
Q3	How satisfied are you with the transparency of IT cost information and its relevance for decision-making? (1 – totally unsatisfied, 5 – highly satisfied)	Rating 1-5	This question should be accompanied by an open-text field allowing participants to provide specific details on what they are satisfied or dissatisfied with.

Target audience: Members of the executive team, business unit heads, and other stakeholders who regularly interact with IT or rely on IT-enabled capabilities, such as senior product owners, programme directors, or leaders of major shared functions.

User survey

#	Question	Type	Comments
Q1	Overall, how satisfied are you with the digital products and services you use to perform your work? (1 – totally unsatisfied, 5 – highly satisfied)	Rating 1-5	This question should be accompanied by an open-text field allowing participants to provide specific details on what they are satisfied or dissatisfied with.

Target audience: All employees of the organization who have access to its digital products and services.

Additional Materials

Additional materials (1/2)

1. ITIL® Architecture management practice guide [URL]
2. ITIL® Availability management practice guide [URL]
3. ITIL® Capacity and performance management practice guide [URL]
4. ITIL® Change enablement practice guide [URL]
5. ITIL® Incident management practice guide [URL]
6. ITIL® Infrastructure and platform management practice guide [URL]
7. ITIL® IT asset management practice guide [URL]
8. ITIL® Knowledge management practice guide [URL]
9. ITIL® Monitoring and event management practice guide [URL]
10. ITIL® Problem management practice guide [URL]
11. ITIL® Release management practice guide [URL]
12. ITIL® Service configuration management practice guide [URL]
13. ITIL® Service financial management practice guide [URL]
14. ITIL® Service level management practice guide [URL]
15. ITIL® Software development and management practice guide [URL]

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Additional materials (2/2)

16. ITIL® Supplier management practice guide [URL] 🔒
17. ITIL® Workforce and talent management practice guide [URL] 🔒
18. DevOps, PeopleCert's official training programmes [URL]
19. Observability foundation, PeopleCert's official training [URL]
20. PRINCE2 Project management, PeopleCert's official training programmes [URL]
21. PRINCE2 P3M3 maturity model [URL]

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