

# TM FORUM FRAMEWORX CONFORMANCE CERTIFICATION

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## TM Forum Framework Adoption Facilitates Interoperability, Reduces Internal Engineering Costs and Keeps Hewlett Packard on the Short List

### Background

Due to the growth in IP and internet based digital services and the proliferation of those networks, the telecommunications industry has seen a massive convergence of IT and their traditional network infrastructure.

TM Forum has been providing the Telecommunications industry with the de facto standard for business processes, information and application architecture since 1988. Commonly referred to as Framework, this widely adopted model provides a blueprint for efficient and effective business operations.

The itSMF® has been the leading provider of standards and best practices in IT infrastructure management for more than 20 years. Their widely adopted ITIL approach for IT Service Management provides a practical, no-nonsense framework for identifying, planning, delivering and supporting IT services to the business.

These two standards complement each other. This has been proven out and brought to life in HP's recent certification of its OSS Assurance Suite.

HP underwent a Framework Conformance Certification Assessment for its OSS Assurance Suite V1.4 late in 2011 and published a detailed report of the results in November of 2011. HP's suite combines IT industry best practice software with Telco specific offerings. During the assessment, the OSS Assurance Suite was certified against both the Business Process Framework (eTOM) and the Information Framework (SID.)

The OSS Assurance Solution Suite was certified against 20 Aggregate Business Entities (ABEs) which are TM Forum's method for defining and describing things of interest to the business, such as a customer, product, service, or network. The 20 ABE's certified were in the customer, common business, resource and service domains.

The assessment also included a review of the OSS Assurance Suite's conformance to the Business Process Framework and eight level two processes with 50 level 2 and level 3 processes all found in the Assurance Management Domain. Many of these processes incorporate ITIL best practice processes.

An interview with Sigge Andreasson, the CMS Solutions Marketing Manager for Hewlett Packard and Andreas Krichel, the Global Practice Leader for Architecture, provided insight into why HP adopted the standards and what they gained out of the conformance certification assessment they did with TM Forum.

### Why HP Underwent Certification

HP has been a member of the TM Forum for more than 20 years and has been a supporter of the standards and practices just as long. They have always strived to be conformant to Framework and when the conformance certification program was launched in 2010 they were eager to participate.

One of the main reasons that HP decided to undergo a Framework conformance certification assessment was to ensure that the processes for problem and incident diagnostics and resolution automated in their OSS Assurance Solution were automated to best practice.

As Krichel described, "Currently ITIL processes are not described in the same manner as the business processes found in eTOM. As HP is a leader in ITIL as well as in Telco standards, one of our goals was to describe how ITIL processes perfectly fit into eTOM in practice with HP products. This is what our customers wonder about when they request support of ITIL for their Assurance, but have eTOM driven applications. They ask if ITIL will sufficiently support their specific Telco needs. The answer is yes, perfectly, and we are able to provide evidence thanks to the detailed reports published as a result of the TM Forum assessments."

Visit <http://www.tmforum.org/HPOSSAssuranceSolution/12277/home.html> to see the detailed certification report and download a white paper written by HP that discusses in further detail how the two standards are operationalized inside HP's OSS Assurance solution suite.

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## Benefits of Conformance to Frameworks

### Earn Credibility

According to the team at HP, having the Frameworks conformance certification mark has become a de facto requirement. Another benefit is the way in which it engenders trust. Because both parties have adopted the same standards and speak the same language, it's easier to share meaningful testimonials and success stories.

Andreasson claims "These days' 8 or 9 out of 10 customers specify conformance to TM Forum Frameworks and other industry standards in their RFQs. If you can provide a detailed certification report from a recognized third party rather than just checking a box your response is obviously far more credible."

### Get and Stay on the Short List

Another benefit of conforming to standards is that you are investing in something your customers have invested in too. "It's easier to get onto the short list because we conform to the standards. Furthermore, when you demonstrate conformance you find that you gain approval with a variety of audiences inside the customer who all have a vested interest in the same standard" stated Krichel.

### Gain Clarity

TM Forum Frameworks has been designed to provide the industry with a common language and methodology for describing standard business processes, information and applications. Industry suppliers like HP find it much easier to describe their product to customers in terms of a model and structure their customers already understand and have adopted themselves.

Krichel further asserts "because we are a worldwide company, using standards enables us to ensure we speak the same language internally, avoid misunderstandings and can quickly on board new engineers."

### Reduce Internal Engineering Efforts

Not only do suppliers gain clarity in terms of communication with their customers and their own teams, but they can also reduce the time it takes to engineer and develop their products. "We imagine what the scenario would be if we didn't use standards and we estimate that for some components we save up to 40 or 50% on internal engineering and development efforts through the adoption of standards like Frameworks and ITIL" claims Andreasson.

### Improve Interoperability

As Andreasson describes, HP believes that every time they conform to the standards and work to describe their product according to how the industry defines their processes, information and applications that they are bringing value to the whole industry. All the suppliers and customers win since they are moving to greater standardization and industrialization, improving interoperability among partners and reducing integration costs and capital spent on non-reusable customization.

### Reduce Costs and Risks

The primary way HP is able to reduce costs through the adoption of standards is by obtaining re-usable and repeatable performance. They further reduce their project costs because they are more confident of their interoperability and can scope integration efforts more accurately.

### Feed Product Development

Per Krichel, one of the benefits of doing a Frameworks Certification Assessment is that the gap analysis done when conducting a thorough evaluation of how the products conform to the Frameworks reveals opportunities to "shape solutions for those areas that aren't off the shelf."

## The Final Word

One of the common misconceptions that persists concerning the Frameworks Conformance Certification Assessment is that it is just a check list that asks questions about which processes you've adopted or how you define the information that runs through your product or solution.

When Krichel was asked whether or not he agreed with this assessment of how the certification process works he responded with laughter and quickly asserted "I can assure you that it is far more than a check box list. In order to earn the conformance certification mark you must perform a diligent review of your product documentation and deeply understand how your product supports the processes in the eTOM and leverages the business entities and definitions found in the Information Framework. It's not just a matching exercise or a tick list."

Krichel went on to say. "Nobody has approached us with the detailed reports. If I were a customer I would challenge and question my supplier based on the results in these reports. They provide definite insight into the level of conformance in each process or information area. Our hope is that readers will recognize that completing a TMF certification is far more than a marketing exercise."

Andreasson also pointed out that HP has gone even further in their commitment to the standards by ensuring that their solution is automated to produce the standardized Business Metrics that TM Forum maintains for its members and the industry related to problem management.

"HP's Executive scorecard (XS) 9.02 also received its Business Metrics Automation Certification in November 2011 in the problem management category, measuring how well an operator does its customer and service problem resolution. These meta-metrics bring a lot of value to our customers, by providing a snapshot of the operator's performance compared to its peers and providing input to, for example, customer experience initiatives. Gaining insight into your current performance is key to any business transformation initiative" concluded Andreasson.

To learn more about TM Forum Frameworks Conformance Certification Assessments please visit [www.tmforum.org/conformance](http://www.tmforum.org/conformance).

To learn more about Hewlett Packard and its OSS Assurance Suite please visit [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com).

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