

Checklist: Service Definition

Definition

A service definition specifies the service properties, in particular the offered functionality and the guaranteed service levels. Service definitions also describe how the organization's resources are used in order to provide the service. A service can be provided using one or several other (internal or external) supporting services.

Typical contents

Note: Some service properties may not need to be described for particular services (for example, if a service is not customer-facing, there may be no need to deal with complaints).

1 Service name and identifier

→ *This should include a version or release identifier to specify which release of a service is defined in the service definition document. Typically, services evolve over time, so there might be a service definition for the currently active release of a service, and another one for the next release.*

2 Service owner

→ *The service owner is the individual with ultimate responsibility for supplying the service as defined in the service definition.*

3 Service type

→ *This section specifies the service type (i.e. customer service vs. supporting service; for a supporting service, it should be stated whether the service is provided with internal resources or by an external party).*

4 Service status

→ *The current service status (e.g., "projected", "under development", "activated", "retired").*

5 Service description

5.1 Short description

5.2 Value proposition

→ *Provide a description of how the service creates value for its customers.*

5.3 Utility

→ *A description of the desired service outcomes in terms of utility (functionality offered by the service), for example by stating the business processes or activities supported by the service.*

→ *The functionality offered by the service should be described on a somewhat high level of detail in the language of the service customer. Example: “Field staff can access enterprise applications xxx and yyy without being constrained by location or time”. More detailed specifications may need to be created during the service design stage, especially if software applications are to be developed for providing the service.*

5.4 Warranty

→ *A description of the desired service outcome in terms of warranty (guaranteed service quality or service levels). This relates in particular to*

- *Service availability*
- *Service capacity/ performance*
- *Service continuity in the case of disaster events.*

→ *The section on service availability will typically contain the following information:*

- *Service times*
 - *Times when the service is required to be available*
 - *Times when the service may be interrupted, for example for planned maintenance work.*
- *Availability target (e.g. “99.9%)”*
- *Definition of how availability will be calculated (a service may be unavailable, for example, in certain locations only, so an exact definition of unavailability is needed to make sure all parties involved have a common understanding)*
- *Rules for the implementation of emergency changes (a description of the circumstances under which emergency changes are permitted; this is required as the implementation of emergency changes may lead to unplanned service interruptions).*

- *Depending on the nature of the service, the section on service capacity/performance should specify*
 - *Required service capacity (lower/upper limits including daily, weekly or seasonal variations), for example in terms of*
 - *Numbers and types of transactions*
 - *Numbers and types of users*
 - *Amount of available storage space.*
 - *Required service performance, e.g. in terms of response times*
 - *Service scalability (allowed medium and long-term increase in workload and service utilization).*
- *The section on service continuity in the case of disaster events should specify*
 - *Types of disaster events covered*
 - *Time within which an interim operational mode must be established, including a description of the interim operational mode and its limitations*
 - *Time within which normal service operation must be restored.*

5.5 Service interface

- *A description of how customers and users interact with the service. This can be presented, for example, in textual form or as flowcharts depicting the “customer journey”.*
- *If the service has a technical interface, any mandated technical standards must be specified.*

5.6 Customer/ user duties

- *This section should state any duties to be observed by the customer and the service users, for example security guidelines to be observed when using the service. If applicable, relevant security policies should be referenced from here.*

5.7 Customer/ user support

- *If customer/ user support is provided as part of the service, at least the following aspects should be described:*
 - *Nature of support being provided (also state if support is provided remotely or on site)*
 - *Types of users that are supported (for example, in terms of user roles, technical skills or languages)*

- *Types of infrastructure to be supported*
- *Hours of operation.*
- *Furthermore, rules should be specified for the handling of service interruptions (incidents) and service requests, including*
 - *Procedures for raising incidents or service requests*
 - *Definitions of incident and service request priorities (these should include a definition of what constitutes a high-impact or “major” incident; definitions should be in line with those used in the incident and service request resolution processes)*
 - *Response and resolution times (as a function of incident or service request priority)*
 - *Escalation hierarchy*
 - *Rules for communicating planned or unplanned service outages.*

5.8 Reporting and communication

- *It must be specified how customer and service provider communicate, for example by specifying*
 - *Rules for measuring customer satisfaction (e.g. by carrying out regular customer satisfaction surveys)*
 - *Intervals of service review meetings with the customer*
 - *Rules for submitting complaints and compliments (e.g. details to be included in formal complaints, rules for assigning priorities, agreed response times, escalation hierarchy)*
 - *Contents and intervals of service reports to be produced by the service provider.*

5.9 Service locations

- *If the service is offered in a number of different locations, the locations should be stated here.*

5.10 Service variations and packages

- *If the service is offered in a number of variations, the differences between the variations should be stated here.*
- *If the service is offered in combination with other services, the various packages on offer should be described here.*

6 Charging scheme

- *If there is a charge for using the service, describe the scheme used for calculating the charges.*

7 Dependency on supporting services

→ *If the service depends on other (supporting) services, the dependencies should be specified here.*

8 Limitations to service scope

→ *For some services, it may be helpful to explicitly describe which outcomes or features are not supported, especially if the service portfolio contains a number of similar services.*

9 Security and compliance

→ *This section should provide an overview of any relevant security and compliance aspects and how they are addressed in the context of the service, for instance by stating*

- *What critical data are processed by the service and how are they protected*
- *How access is restricted to authorized service users*
- *What legal obligations or enterprise policies are relevant and how compliance is ensured.*

10 Service changes

→ *If the service defined in this document is a modified or enhanced version of a previous release, the differences to the previous release should be described.*

11 References to other related information

→ *This section may include references to other relevant information, for example the definitions of related services.*

12 Notes and additional information

13 Document control information

→ *As service definitions are controlled documents, they must contain document control information, as in the following example:*

Document information

Document name	...
Status	...
Storage location	...
Author(s)	...
Version number	...

Version date	...
Authorized by	...
Authorization date	...
Distribution list	...

Version history

Version	Date	Status	Author(s)	Modifications
...
...

Status values and lifecycle

Please refer to the lifecycle diagram for the service definition in the YaSM process model.

Notes

- For each service definition, there will typically be a corresponding item in the service portfolio.
- For customer services, service definitions describe the service properties which are independent of specific customers using the services. This is especially important in cases where several customers may sign up to a particular service. Service definitions are typically attached to customer service agreements, which provide a means for the service provider and the customer to enter into a binding contract.
- In the case of supporting services, service definitions describe the service properties which are independent of the internal or external parties providing the services. This is especially important in cases where several parties provide a particular supporting service. Service definitions are typically attached to operational service agreements and external service agreements, which provide a means for the service provider and an internal or external supplier of supporting services to enter into a binding contract.
- Some organizations use dedicated applications instead of a set of documents to manage their service definitions.