



Reader ROI

- Information management shared services can benefit life sciences businesses by improving decision making by increasing organizational responsiveness and enabling the identification of business opportunities, resulting in better decisions in operations and investments.
- Avoiding the pitfalls of silo'ed information repository investments will further enable organizational collaboration, facilitate the sharing of information, and enhance coordination between partners and joint ventures.
- Life science enterprises can leverage IM shared services to enhance risk management efforts such as reducing exposure to litigation, improving regulatory compliance, and accelerating disaster recovery.
- IM shared services also increase productivity, improve IT efficiency and effectiveness, and provide a solid information foundation across the entire organization.

Information Management (IM) Business Drivers

Investing in IM can drive value to the business in many ways.

Information Management Shared Services Framework

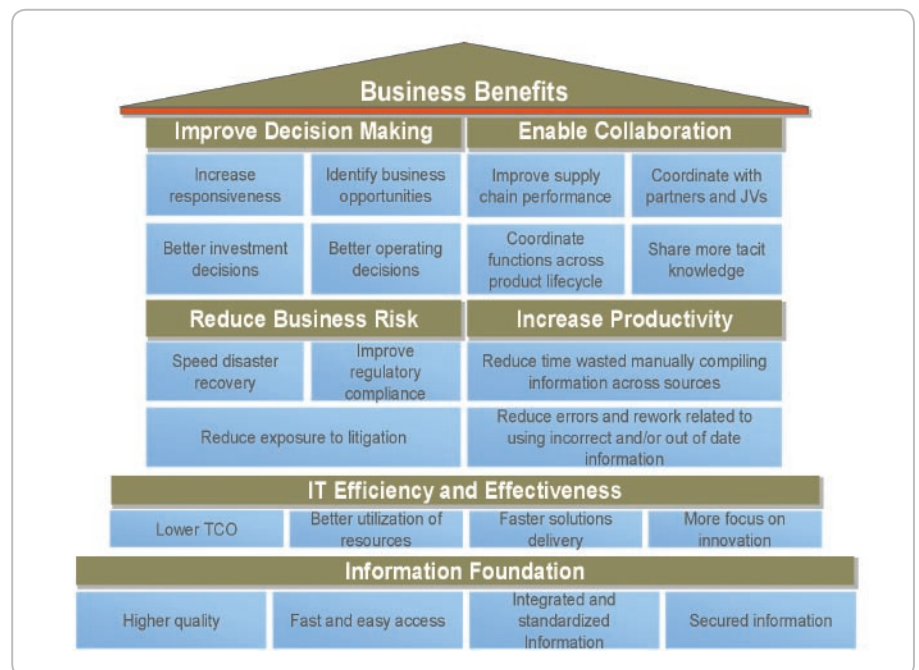
Many life sciences firms are grappling with the challenge of how to stop the proliferation of silo'ed investments in information repositories and information management systems that should be managed as shared assets for the enterprise. Often, corporate IT is charged with the task of identifying and providing to the business units shared technology services for information management (e.g., document management, enterprise search/taxonomy management, data warehouse/business intelligence, etc.), but is unable to execute on this. To improve the chances for success, it is critical to

- Articulate the vision, value proposition, and business case for investing in shared technology services
- Define the service delivery model for interacting with business and/or aligned IT customers, manage expectations, and report on performance against metrics
- Define the governance and organizational models for managing shared services
- Develop a roadmap for reaching desired levels of maturity on organization, process, and technology dimensions to realize the vision
- Identify early adopters, or pilot implementations, that are suitable for nascent shared service organizations.

This paper discusses the approach and introduces the framework for holistically identifying all the interrelated initiatives that must be pursued to mature capabilities for supporting information management (IM) shared services.

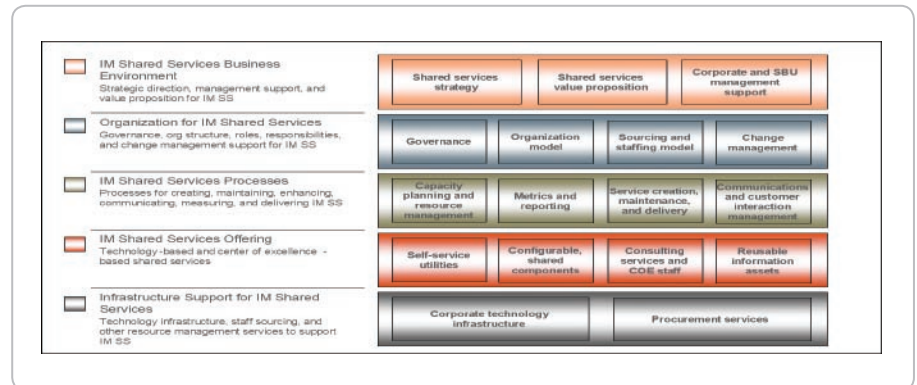
Business benefits of IM shared services

The motivation for investing in building IM shared services for firms comes from a broad range of benefits to business operations and information technology operations. The figure below shows the "house" of business benefits built on the foundation of IT benefits that come from IM shared services.



Introducing the IM shared services framework

Before building out IM shared services, program sponsors need to consider a complementary set of capabilities that must be in place to ensure an effective IM shared services program. The figure on the next page shows the EMC® Consulting IM shared services framework with capabilities identified in each of the five layers that reinforce one another in driving the success of an IM shared services program. Following the framework is a discussion of each of the layers and the key points regarding the components in each layer.



IM shared services business environment

Support for IM shared services must start at the top, beginning with clear support from corporate and strategic business unit leaders. A way to begin is by aligning the key agile architecture principles with the corporate and business unit strategy. At one leading global life sciences company, the CIO established a vision for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of IT across the enterprise that was centered on building a common core of technology services. Business units, or aligned IT groups, were expected to shift “common” IT services (e.g., enterprise HR, Finance, and Inventory Management) to the corporate center along with the redundant support costs for maintaining existing application silos. The message was clear that IT assets must be aligned with core business processes and that asset reuse or sharing was paramount.

What made this life sciences company successful was that top management explicitly drew a link between the need to support IM shared services and the corporate and divisional business strategies. The value proposition to business leaders was clear in terms of the business case for investing in building the shared capability and how it would help them in achieving their goals. The alignment between IM shared services strategy, business strategy, and clear value proposition sets the stage for incentives and metrics tied to specific IM shared services objectives (e.g., percent of divisional spend on core vs. strategic IT assets).

Organization for IM shared services

The organization layer is critical for enabling the development and delivery of IM shared services. From the initial scope definition of IM shared services in the enterprise to ongoing lifecycle management of the shared IM assets, the IM organization manages key functions related to managing demand for IM shared services, funding development and maintenance of IM shared services, building the services themselves, and delivering them to internal customers in the enterprise. The governance model for IM shared services will address much of this with the service delivery capabilities being provided by center of excellence resources playing particular roles in gathering business requirements, designing the technical solutions, defining the information standards, and providing consulting services to aligned IT groups seeking to incorporate IM shared services and/or components in their divisional applications.

The critical success factors in the organization layer are that these roles and responsibilities be clearly defined and adequately funded allowing staffing sufficient to ensure acceptable service levels. There are two main pitfalls that firms run into in building out their IM shared services. First, they starve their IM shared services organization of funding for headcount so that service expectations cannot be met. The result is that business aligned IT groups, who are taking a risk in sourcing services from the corporate IM services group, will be disappointed and thus will resist further adoption of

IM shared services. Second, they do not adequately prepare for the change management challenges to both the new shared services organization and the aligned IT groups expected to consume the shared services. Time and resources must be allotted for communications and training efforts to have their effect so that shared services staff that may be new to their roles, have time to absorb what is expected of them. Aligned IT groups need time to accept the implication that they no longer have carte blanche in selecting application components and setting local information standards. Moving too quickly can result in confusion and resistance since the value proposition for adopting IM shared services may take time to be communicated and understood.

IM shared services processes

Once the strategy is in place, the prioritization of IM services for construction clear, and the governance and delivery organizations defined, the firm must focus on building out mature (i.e., repeatable, high-performance) processes for IM shared services. These key processes are:

- **Capacity planning and resource management:** The IM services organization must have an agreed upon process for managing the staff allocations and budget allocations to support ongoing maintenance and new development of IM shared services. This process needs to work hand in hand with the demand management process that is owned by the governance organization and coordinated by the IM shared services leadership.
- **Metrics and reporting:** Service-level agreements should be established between the IM shared services organization and its customers in aligned IT groups across the enterprise. IM shared services leadership and the governance organization need to be regularly updated on the performance of the IM service delivery organization and the utilization of center of excellence resources and the IM shared services and components. These reports feed into the capacity planning and demand management processes and are the basis for changing the levels of required support and investment to maintain service levels.
- **Service creation, maintenance, and delivery:** IM shared services are no different than other IT initiatives in that they must adhere to an agreed software development lifecycle with architecture review and quality checkpoints. Prioritized IM shared services for initial development or major enhancements need to follow this lifecycle and conform to agreed information and application architecture standards for development of applications.
- **Communications and customer interaction management:** As an internal supplier of services to aligned IT groups across the enterprise, the IM shared services group must provide an account management function to coordinate communications with internal customers, manage expectations, convey requirements, and resolve service delivery problems/conflicts. This process has key touch points with the metrics and reporting process for collection of customer satisfaction and service delivery performance metrics. For a new IM services organization, this process can emerge from a concerted change management effort directed at the new organization's internal customers.

IM shared services offering

The IM shared services that the organization provides fall into the categories listed below. It is important to note that these services are not solely technology-based, but include information standards and architecture artifacts that can speed the development efforts of aligned IT groups even if they do not adopt IM shared technology services.

- **Self-service utilities:** These are discrete application components that can be discovered on the network and called to provide certain functionality or return information requested by consuming applications. Examples include employee directory lookup services, data storage/ archival management services, single sign-on/authentication, PDF to HTML document transformation services, and a variety of so-called web services. Ideally, these services require little to no client-facing support by the IM shared services organization.
- **Configurable, shared components:** These are technology services that need to be configured to meet the needs of the consuming application before they are useful. Examples include document workflow services that need to be configured to meet the requirements of a specific business process, reporting dashboards that need to be customized to meet the presentation requirements of specific stakeholder groups, etc. These services may require low to medium levels of client-facing support to ensure that aligned IT groups seeking to incorporate these services can effectively integrate them with their applications. The better designed and documented these services are, the more self-sufficient the internal customers can be at using them.

- **Reusable information assets:** These are useful assets that can speed the design and development activities of aligned IT groups even if they do not subscribe to shared IM technology services. They can include reusable code fragments, data models, application architecture artifacts, information standards, testing best practices, etc. The shared IM group is uniquely positioned to harvest these assets from teams across the enterprise, scrutinize them for potential reusability and conformance with enterprise information and application architecture standards, and to index and store them for easy search and retrieval by development teams.
- **Infrastructure Support for IM Shared Services:** Just as the IM shared services group provides shared services to aligned IT groups, the IM shared services group is an internal customer of the enterprise infrastructure group. Its ability to meet the needs of its customers relies in part on the service levels negotiated with the enterprise infrastructure group to be maintained. These services include server maintenance, network bandwidth, server and application monitoring, etc. Likewise, the IM shared services group may be maintaining a blended team of employees and contractors to provide the necessary flexibility in meeting demand fluctuations beyond base support requirements. Here too the IM shared services group depends on another corporate function to be effective, in this case the sourcing and HR organizations. The leadership of the IM shared services group must clearly communicate its requirements in these technology and human resource areas to be able to meet its commitments to stakeholders in the business.

Conclusion

The first real test of the new IM shared services organization and common platform is when the initial group of aligned IT projects comes online that use IM shared services and/or components. It is vital to select “early adopter” projects that can provide important on-the-job training for the fledgling IM shared services organization, but not overtax the group so that customer satisfaction and service levels fall far below expectations. Some considerations to keep in mind when selecting early adopter projects include:

- The projects should be substantial enough to demonstrate real value to the business of using IM shared services, but not be so complex that they cannot be completed in three to four months.
- There is clear, measurable business value for the projects and a business sponsor who is motivated to support implementation.
- The project will showcase IM shared services that could be in high demand by other aligned IT groups.
- The project should be seen as a learning opportunity with a supportive user group that is motivated and flexible.
- The project should involve a solution whose value can be realized incrementally in a number of releases or as users adopt the solution (i.e., is not an “all or nothing” proposition).



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