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Whitepaper: From Demand To Fulfilment

How a technology team can use a Context Specific Solution Strategy to offer a balanced responsive / cost offering in a corporate company.



RECONNAISSANCE





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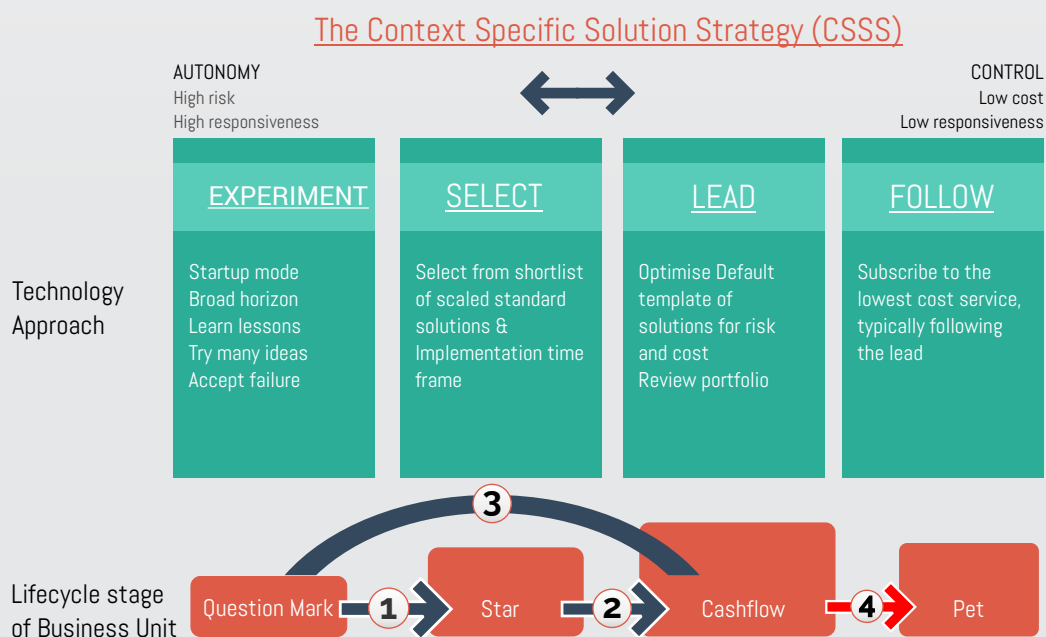
| **EXECUTIVE** SUMMARY



In many cases, the benefits sought in mergers and acquisitions are market scale and reduced cost. Post-merger, the new entity still has at least two fundamentally distinct groups of people and ways of working and each of them will have different opinions on how to achieve that benefit. While solutions like common endpoint computing and network infrastructure are readily appreciated, can we achieve additional implied cost savings by centralising all support functions and applications to one common platform?

If the technology strategy is to centralise everything, that can reduce responsiveness to individual Business Units (BU); however, if services are managed regionally, that can raise costs and risks. Further complications arise on how to fund, decide and scope projects. Lastly, keeping pace with technology trends and the changing business environment means that whatever the solution, it is now obsolete. The end outcome often is that central standards are unevenly applied and the list of “Shadow IT” solutions keeps growing, as the reputation of Central IT gets lower.

In optimising the solution roadmap for a corporate company, the debate can be highly challenging because of hundreds of different offices, factories, dozens of Lines of Business and geographical locations. This debate does not have to focus on local vs global, BU vs technology function, or risk vs cost. Nor does the solution have to be decided by caving in or splitting the difference. A Context-Specific Solution Strategy (CSSS) helps orient leaders across departments on the criteria to select the correct cost and responsiveness profile for a given BU.





A first analysis of CSSS can help demonstrate the alignment and awareness of the current corporate business strategy, so it responds to the first issue mentioned in the chapter “Balancing Cost and Responsiveness”. However, there needs to be a high organisational maturity to deploy the CSSS across the organisation – such as committing to principles around shared outcomes and transparency.

We believe that CSSS can be successfully deployed based on the foundations of a formulative digital and data strategy and the capability to experiment, since they provide the primary guide rails along which we can make an optimised cost and responsiveness offering to BUs. To negotiate that offering, sufficiently empowered decision makers from both the technology function and BU need to work together on shared outcomes and a mutual understanding of the cost and impact on the business.

The benefits of deploying CSSS are significant – a joint planning on roadmaps that demonstrate alignment and consistency in approach means that we can achieve expectations and clarity on delivery, cost, risk and outcomes. This activity helps prevent the Business Unit and Central IT from playing cat and mouse around “Shadow IT” and knee-jerk responses to last-minute requests.

To help understand how this strategy could be applied to your company, Baxter Thompson Associates can offer advisory, interim management, collective team-based discovery and change, and training specifically in Portfolio Management. For more information, please contact Jon Baxter at info@baxterthompson.com.

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- **Steve Gibb**, Head of Global Service Management
- **Wayne Smith**, Director in IT and Information Security

For this whitepaper to be more readable, all ideas expressed are cited from the collective group “the contributors”, including myself, the author, **Jon Baxter**, Founder.

| INTRODUCTION



In many cases, the benefits sought in mergers and acquisitions are market scale and reduced cost. Post-merger, the new entity still has at least two fundamentally distinct groups of people and ways of working and each of them will have different opinions on how to achieve that benefit. While solutions like common endpoint computing and network infrastructure are readily appreciated, can we achieve additional implied cost savings by centralising all support functions and applications to one common platform?

If the technology strategy is to centralise everything, that can reduce responsiveness to individual Business Units (BU); however, if services are managed regionally, that can raise costs and risks. Further complications arise on how to fund, decide and scope projects. Lastly, keeping pace with technology trends and the changing business environment means that whatever the solution, it is now obsolete. The end outcome often is that central standards are unevenly applied and the list of shadow IT solutions keeps growing, as the reputation of central IT gets lower.

This whitepaper synthesised the findings from the nine questions, listed in the appendix, posed to fourteen technology executives and research carried out by the author, Jon Baxter, to give some innovative ideas, practical tips and finally, some alternative perspectives on this problem.

This whitepaper is aimed at corporate technology directors; however, those implicated in the domains below can also draw inspiration. These are:

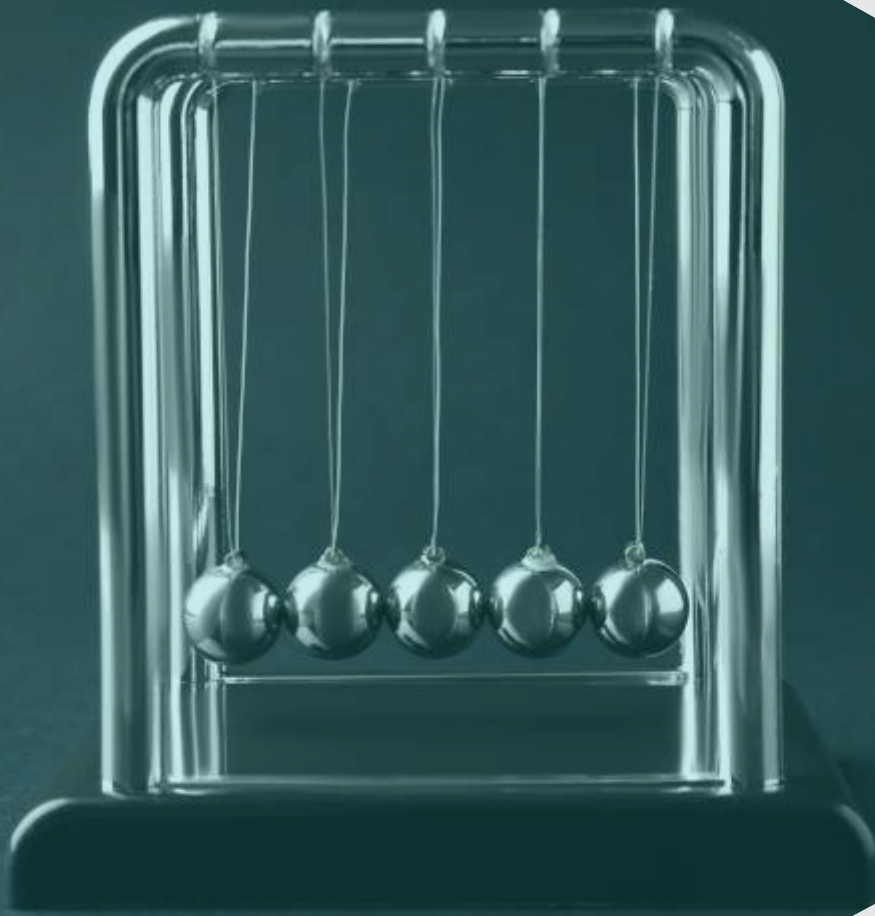
- Strategy
- Demand Management
- Portfolio Management
- Governance
- Digital Transformation
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Benefits Realisation.

We've used the Mergers and Acquisitions scenario to illustrate the issues corporate companies face in balancing responsiveness and cost to their portfolio business units or lines of business.



As a result of interviewing the people on the previous page, conducting analysis and experience-based research, this whitepaper defines the problem in “Balancing Cost and Responsiveness”. Then it looks at the principles of how we can navigate these specific challenges. We introduce the Context Specific Solution Strategy and then we offer some implementation considerations.

| **BALANCING COST** AND RESPONSIVENESS





We know we have a problem whenever the conversation at a leadership level turns to fulfilling business requirements through replacing or adopting a technology solution. Often, the conversation crystallises into a debate on local needs vs global constraints, Business Unit vision vs technology standard, or delivery lead-time vs cost.

Where Business Units are fully autonomous and make their own decisions, this is not so much a problem since the BU is accountable for the success or failure of the outcome. However, most corporates operate on a federated or centralised organisation structure, where policy and standards are decided centrally and enacted through the rest of the organisation where risks, costs, and outcomes often become very diffuse and unaccountable.

Yet those same corporates also acquire, merge, and divest Business Units all of whom have diverse cultures, needs, sizes and growth trajectories. This diversity makes it difficult for “middle” managers to enact those policies and keep the competitive advantage that made the acquisition or merger such a strong proposition. In negotiating a balance between these competing discussion points, BU managers and technology managers often make inconsistent decisions on this, splitting the difference, compromising or caving into one party. Otherwise, Central IT force the adoption of one solution at the expense of the business growth opportunity, a win-lose outcome.

Indeed, in trying to enforce one standard, we often find Business Units striving to take back control and meet their business objectives by creating their own set of “Shadow IT” solutions under the radar of Central IT. This activity poses its own risks and increased costs and defeats the original objective of having one standard.

Conflicting Requirements between Business Units and Central IT Functions

Decentralised

Higher Cost
Risky but Responsive
Autonomy

Custom built
Locally sourced & supported
Little oversight
Unique workflow and integrations



Centralised

Lower Cost
Safer but slower
Control

Off the shelf
Procured at scale and supported globally
Extended governance
Standard workflows and integrations

So, replacing or acquiring a business or a technology solution often means that we find ourselves pivoting ourselves towards one end of the pendulum on a case-by-case basis or adopting a specific position, such as a “one size fits all” approach for providing technology solutions.

When we talked about the challenges in our roles, the most common issues that increase costs that we identified were:

- Poorly defined, communicated, or misaligned business strategy
- Staff recruitment, retention, and training
- Legacy technology and poor platform architecture
- Supplier competence.

Similarly, when we discussed those blockers to responsiveness, they revolved around bureaucracy due to:

- Industry legislation and audit controls
- Controls applied to managing data security risks
- Scale and complexity of the business
- Centralised planning and governance processes.

But we also included more nuanced challenges that lead to a misaligned cost/responsiveness position, such as:

- A lack of people engagement
- A poor understanding of “transformation” and “digital”
- A clash of internal cultures and agendas
- A lack of cost transparency and effective recharging mechanisms
- Technologists solving non-critical business requirements
- Intensive business case analysis and then no benefits accountability.

So, if we can fix some of these challenges, can we better position ourselves on the pendulum of costs and responsiveness? Can we navigate better these complex challenges? Instead of a “win-lose” outcome, can we have a “win-win” effect, where Business Units don’t feel the need to create their own “Shadow IT” because we have optimised responsiveness and cost?



PRINCIPLES CAN HELP US NAVIGATE COMPLEX PROBLEMS





The problem statement of mergers and acquisitions illustrates the challenges in the previous section highlighted by us. There are quite a few studies on how badly or well realising the benefits of mergers and acquisitions have gone. Still, if we were to step back and understand the real problem to solve (degree of control and accountability), the steps to realising the benefits of an acquisition would be easier to define. So, to help us navigate this complex problem and find the right balance, we need a set of principles. Our discussions distilled five principles that offer guidance and criteria for selecting paths towards our goals. To illustrate these, we also included some practical examples:

- Focus on business outcomes
- Be user-centric
- Always consider the impact on the whole lifecycle
- Be transparent
- Be flexible and offer a choice

Focus on business outcomes

A set of business outcomes are the cornerstones of strategy and help with clarity and alignment. An example of a business outcome is: "To reduce A&E waiting times from 4 hours to 30 minutes". The discussion can then become "how can technology help achieve the outcome?". Whatever the result, the solution is an enabling outcome wholly owned by the technology function – however, in collaborative cultures, both the technology function and BU can jointly share the business and technology outcome, which helps put "skin in the game".

Be user-centric

To derive requirements, we can use example questions such as "Why did you choose that product instead of this?", "Walk me through how you solve this problem?", "Help me understand what's stopping you from achieving your goals?". There are several benefits of user-centricity: One is that the questions aren't like "please tell me your requirements?" and they will give simple knee-jerk responses. The second is that understanding the context takes time; given that time is in



such short supply. If more effort is front-loaded in the design phase, it pays dividends as it will reduce the risk of failure later. So, the final benefit is that it is better to get that failure sooner by testing a prototype on which we've spent less money. We can validate our assumptions and whether it solves their problem.

Always consider the impact on the whole lifecycle

The long-term view. Apparently, sixty thousand companies are still using AS400 / IBM Power series computers, a pre-internet mainframe. That's thirty years worth investing in the same code base and architecture. With periodic upgrades, how long will the corporate be running its SAP or Oracle ERP system? Most company investment cycles span one to five years at most and can often outlast our role at the company. If such systems are part of the structural fabric of the corporate, what would the business case look like if it took a generational lifespan view?

The short-term view. Firstly, we should not set project completion on delivery of the technical feature but on achieving the business outcome. Secondly, during a project, we should not be tempted to account for unforeseen delays and cost overruns by poaching money from the user training and service handover budget. As a result, we're more likely to achieve the business outcome. Lastly, we can design our solution so that it is easy to decommission – say, to move data from one cloud provider to another or to ensure that service contracts don't lock us in for extended periods.

Be transparent

If we cannot cross-charge technology costs to client BUs, then we can create an estimate of technology costs based on the size of the client BU. This estimate helps put in context the relative return on investment for a new project sponsored by the client and it helps prioritise efforts with, say, one BU versus another. The sponsor can be made accountable for the benefit if there is sufficient ROI.

We can go outside the normal project portfolio review process and conduct spot



checks with project managers to make sure that the status reporting does not have “watermelons” – green status on the outside and red status on the inside.

Be flexible and offer a choice

Having two solutions that do the same thing at face value seems to be double the complexity and cost; however, if our company acquires ten different BUs with ten other solutions over a decade, two solutions suddenly look extremely attractive. When deploying Finance or CRM solutions, despite having a standard template, solutions often get significantly customised based on region or even rewritten to accommodate an optimised business practice. So, whilst we started with one “off the shelf” code base, we could end up with a patchwork of customisations that follow our organisation’s deployment pattern, inevitably incurring additional support costs and risks as time goes by.

So to balance the cost/responsiveness position today, we could go as far as to start by offering two standards. As well as aiming towards a “best in class” ERP solution to “grow into” to achieve economies of scale across the whole company, we could also offer the one system that already has the most common deployment within the company.

Lastly, as one of us noted, fire engines don’t visit houses sequentially, checking if a fire exists. We can offer both a choice of when a BU is onboarded and if they are onboarded to the solution. Most importantly, the conversation needs to focus on the benefits and costs to the BU and the company at large with the stakeholders. They are not decided in isolation.



| **CONTEXT-SPECIFIC** SOLUTION STRATEGY

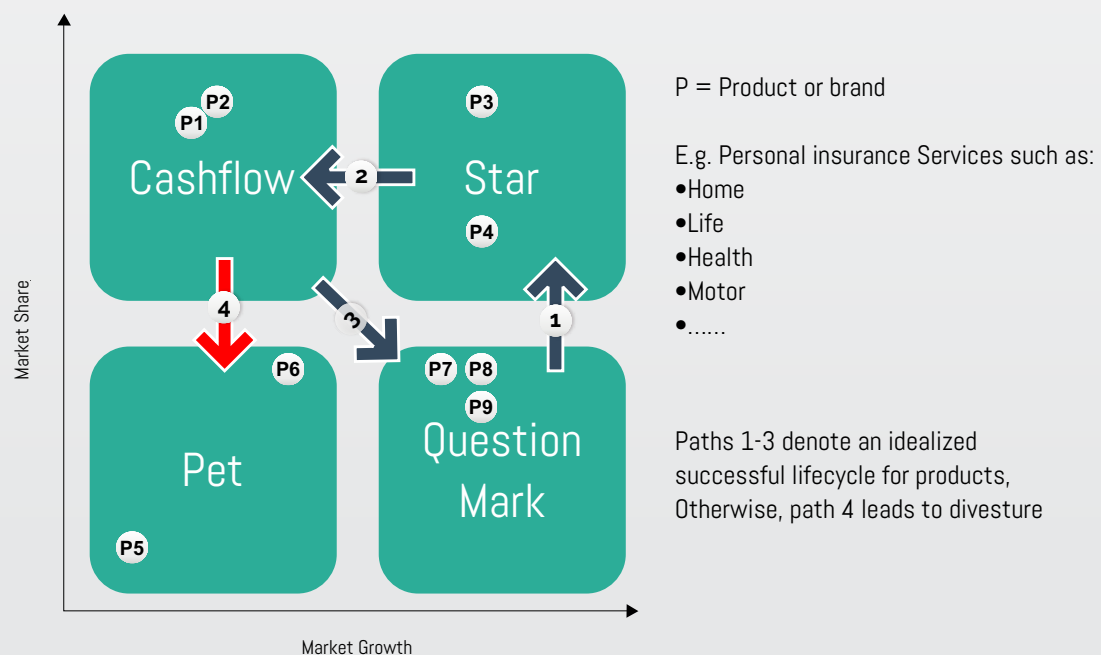




How can we reduce the need for Shadow IT and gain a win-win outcome for both business sponsors and technology providers? What approach do we use to make choices happen for BUs in a coordinated and planned manner? Inspired by the “BCG Matrix”, a poster child for strategy at business school, we suggest it is applied to our conversation on balancing cost and responsiveness. The other framework to consider is the “Cynefin” Framework.

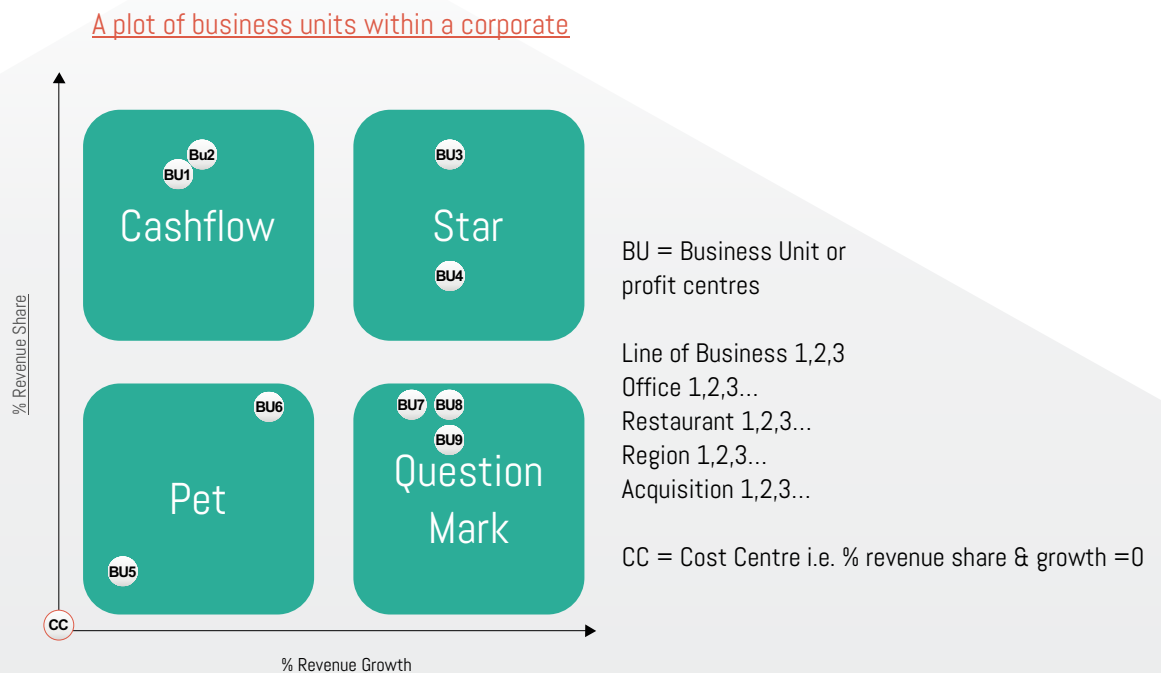
The “BCG Matrix” splits the relative market growth of products against their market share in a company’s portfolio into four quadrants of “Dog” (or “Pet” in more current terminology), “Cash Cow”, “Star” and “Question mark”. Once we’ve plotted their growth and market share on a chart, we can then ascertain what trait the product has and thus derive a set of follow-on strategies to maximise shareholder value, such as “Build”, “Hold”, “Divest”, or “Harvest”.

A typical illustration of the BCG matrix

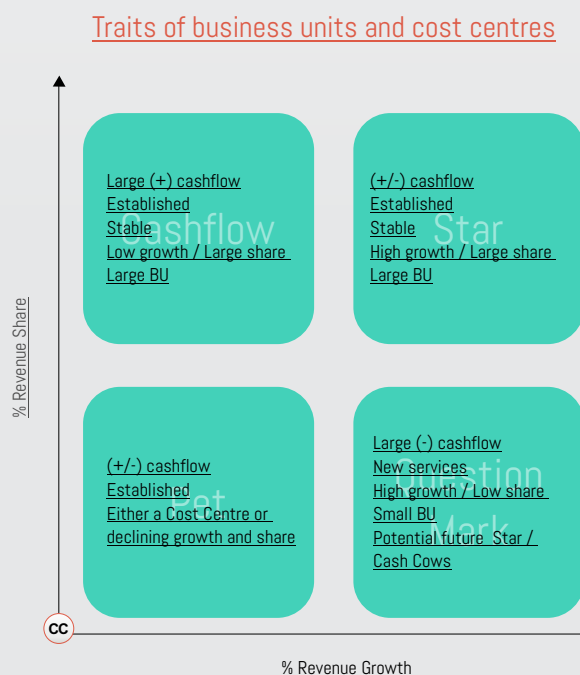




We can apply the same framework to Business Units and Cost Centres using similar indices for the relative performance of BUs within the corporate company, as shown in the following diagram:



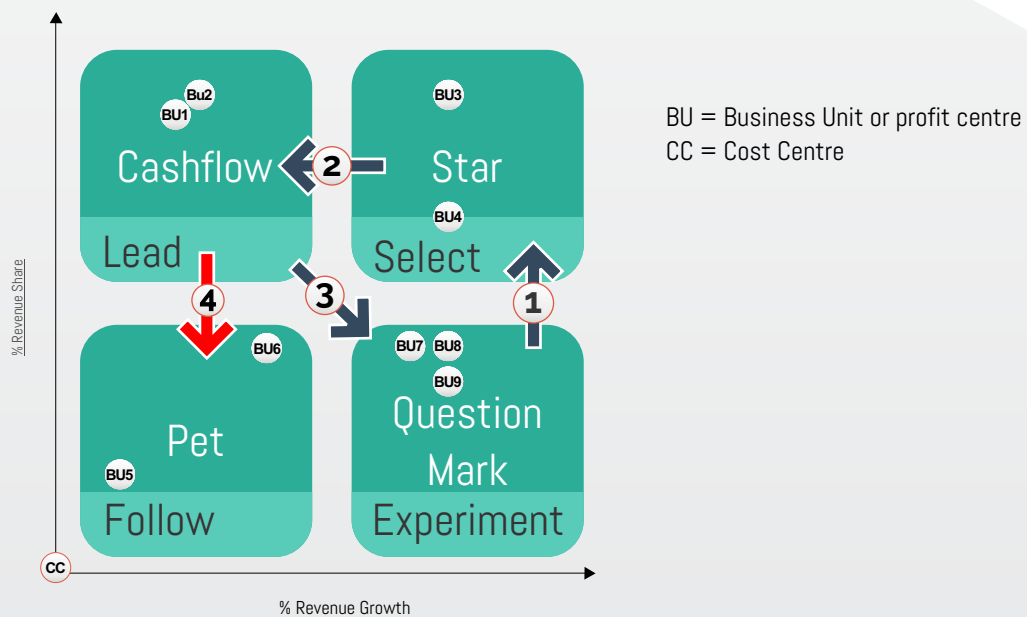
Once we've established their relative performance, we need to understand what traits these Business Units typically have. The following diagram gives examples:





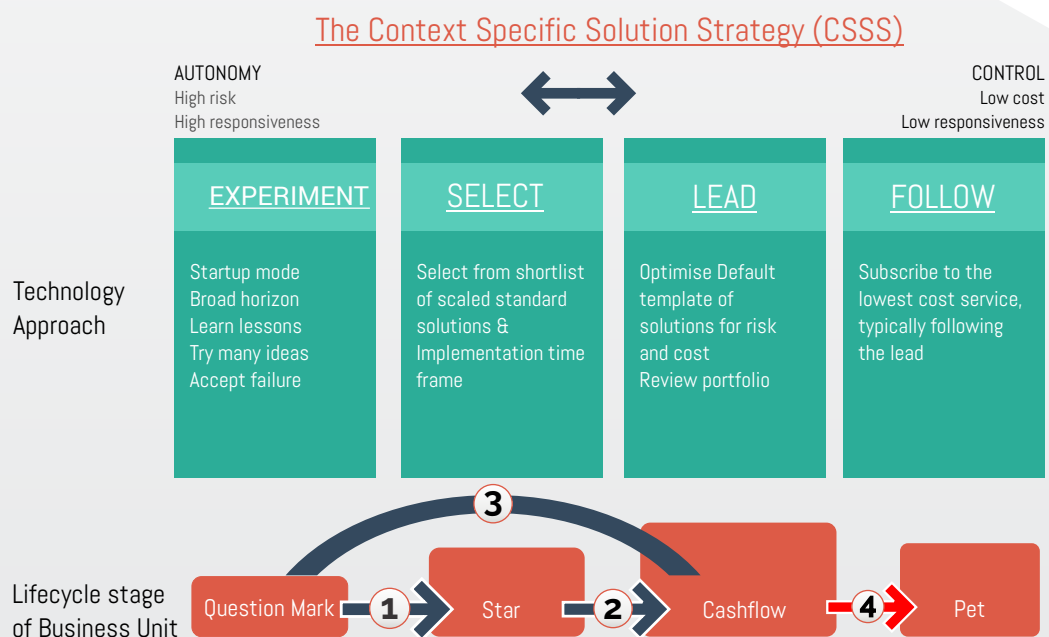
The point is this: strategy is context-specific, and if we were to apply the same principle to BUs in a large corporate business, then each BU within it could be a “Pet”, “Cash Cow”, “Star” or “Question Mark”. Therefore, we can apply for each BU one of four technology strategies, “Experiment”, “Select”, “Lead” and “Follow”, as described in the diagram below:

Four enabling technology strategies for the business unit





How could we agree on an enabling technology strategy with a BU? The pendulum often swings between cost and responsiveness and resorts to discussions around “their way” or “our way”, or who controls standards and policy. Since a common denominator of costs and responsiveness is around which standard or the lack of them, let’s suppose there could be more than one standard depending on where the BU or acquisition is in its business lifecycle. As the BU grows, so too does its position in the matrix and the choices available to it change. The following diagram illustrates this:





Benefits

Why would we want to consider this approach to defining our standards, roadmaps, and solution portfolio?

- It provides control in some scenarios and autonomy in others, reducing the need for “Shadow IT” by moving the conversation on solution adoption away from “your way” vs “my way”, “Local vs Global”, “standard” vs “non-standard”.
- It offers choices based on Business Unit performance, lifecycle stage, responsiveness needs and cost of the solution.
- It allows us to set expectations with business sponsors in exchange for the freedom to choose or adopt the standard solution as they share the respective risk and reward of the solution
- It forces leaders to think longer than a 1-year budget cycle into much longer timeframes considering the whole lifecycle of business requirements through business growth and decline. As a result, it can inform technology roadmaps, the relative maturity of solutions and the best fit for deployment.
- As part of the overall strategy, this approach crystallises experimentation in the “Experiment” approach above. Thus, this exercise can be turned from an ad-hoc, unfunded or reactive last-minute gap filler to a recognised competency and centre of excellence.
- Growing, smaller Business Units that source much of the non-standard demand as part of their growth can validate/reject solutions based on their needs and timescale.
- Experiments that occur in smaller Business Units where the risk of a failed experiment has far less impact than in a larger BU.
- Successful trials can be deployed at a much larger scale and offered as a choice to the rest of the business when, say, it becomes time for selecting a new solution in a new office, factory or restaurant buildout where the solution can become the accepted standard.



| **SOME IMPLEMENTATION** GUIDELINES





We offer some points for consideration in order of importance as part of deploying a Context-Specific Solution Strategy:

Suggested First Steps for CSSS

1. Find the revenue (sales) for all Business Units and calculate the rolling average revenue growth over three years. If need be, decide the criteria of what defines a BU.
2. Work out the relative revenue and growth for each BU and plot them on the matrix
3. Determine the quadrant in which each BU resides.
4. Referencing the digital strategy, data strategy, the existing backlog of projects and unfulfilled demand, allocate existing enabling technologies, projects and demand to each quadrant
5. Review the balance of business units and enabling technologies
 - a. Are too many BUs in one quadrant?
 - b. Where is the demand coming from? Is it justified, given their position in the matrix?
 - c. Is sufficient planned experimentation commensurate with the business environment and growth plans – is it allocated to suitable business units?
 - d. Are “Cash Cows” paying their fair share?
 - e. Which technologies / Business units are not a good fit and need to be adjusted?
6. Present your findings to the executive leadership team. Suggest that these findings are the result of the Context Specific Solution Strategy. If they are engaged in the conversation and want to act, you can open the debate to the requirements of making it work in practice based on the following points below.



Corporate Business Strategy

First point: What is the corporate business strategy and current Technology Strategy? Is there a general awareness and acceptance of both? How aligned are they in fulfilling business outcomes? Do the individual Business Units recognise their position and contribution to the corporate strategy?

Second point: If, as a result of doing the analysis above, there are too many BUs in one quadrant, then this will raise important questions about the mergers and acquisition strategy. Is it performing to the expected corporate business strategy?

Culture

Culture is a crucial test for whether the organisation can succeed in agreeing to and deploying a strategy. If, say, the power dynamic between Business Units and Technology Teams is “Command and Control”, the ability to have a transparent conversation will be handicapped by deference to the most important person in the room. Any decisions made in that room may then be ignored or opposed by the most important person sitting in the next room and so on, meaning there is no progress. Thus, not only does the instigator have to get commitment to the strategy but also outline the principles and values by which people and teams share information, make decisions and act. So we recommend a pilot study where all parties are willing to be held to account for those values and principles. This activity can then be used as a case study to the rest of the business, where culture is underlined as a key success factor.

Digital Transformation

We need to be clear on the role of Digital Transformation and the Context Specific Solution Strategy. Digital Transformation includes as highlights:

- A new way of thinking, such as a focus on user experience and outcomes
- Delivering a common digital platform on which new services are hosted and developed
- An agile / scrum methodology implementation (acknowledging some tenets of the legacy waterfall approach for specific programmes), a recruitment drive and a cultural change



A Context-Specific Solution Strategy can be an enabler for and a benefactor of Digital Transformation. Primary considerations will be which digital platform, use cases and Business Units. A shared digital platform can provide BUs with lower onboarding and training costs and faster customisation at lower risk if well planned and executed. This opportunity gets us closer to further reducing the number of applications on our estate and remaining responsive. An example is extending PowerApps as part of the MS Teams / SharePoint deployment into a recognised capability, where easily accessed features within an established ecosystem can negate the need for external SAAS solutions.

Further, Digital Transformation lasts years, maybe a whole lifecycle in a company from “Question Mark” to “Cash Cow”. So, finding the best implementation approach for both the strategy and transformation can start with BUs in the Experimentation box following a particular set of technology solutions and then migrate those practices and solutions that succeed team by team, rather than a wholesale approach across the organisation at the same time.

Data / Business Intelligence Strategy

This strategy is a crucial cornerstone, tightly coupled with Digital Transformation. We need to set a plan that defines how to enable easy solution integration, data control and reporting can be achieved. We also need to determine the minimum data requirements so that corporate reporting can be accurate and real-time.

Expectations

To enable transparency, BU's and the technology function need to understand what they get for their money. To illustrate this, in the UK, we pay a council tax. Typically, once a year, councils issue their estimated costs for the next year and send a flyer with a high-level breakdown of the costs for each of the services provided, and how those costs are then allocated to each household. That level of transparency, per BU, can help enable a conversation with sponsors around “value for money” and where the pain points are for their organisation.

However, this value-for-money conversation doesn't necessarily need to focus



only on delivery from the technology function alone. We can also consider additional costs for making exceptions for the BU, testing, training and adoption.

"Power Couple"

The process of achieving alignment is a negotiation between many BUs and the centralised technology function. If left to one person in the technology function, this negotiation on the expectations and the future technology roadmap won't happen simply because of the workload. As already mentioned, business outcomes can be shared. Where the conditions are right, a representative from the technology function and the BU can work together to achieve shared outcomes. Neither party are an "order taker" but has the strategic mindset to refine the best approach together on how to deliver them. Together, they combine the resources needed for experimentation, creating the business case, seeking approval, and governing the project delivery to ensure it fulfils the outcomes.

In large corporates, alignment and awareness go hand in hand. By virtue of the number of stakeholders to contend with, the necessary information for alignment becomes diffuse. The amount of communication is whatever it takes to get the exact "lightbulb" moment of insight from one person transferred to another person. Mass email notices are woefully inadequate. Face-to-face dialogue is much better and that takes time. A key recommendation is to devote enough skills, time and resources in the form of a funded shared competency.

Experimentation

Pool resources across the business and technology teams. How does one test a vast array of ideas, design, and build solutions to adopt innovative technology trends, laws, and the changing fortunes of BUs? It's our experience that there are often small-siloed teams, either in the business or technology team, who do this process independently and come up with "the answer". This activity then overlooks some fundamental assumptions. Since the pace of change is faster than either technology function or the BU can keep up independently, they have a better chance if they pool resources across the different teams.



Focus key contributor's time. Sufficiently knowledgeable people about the business and technology are typically vital people. Backfilling, secondments to a "skunk works" project or even a separate location isolated from everyday issues can help drive solution design and critical project milestones much quicker.

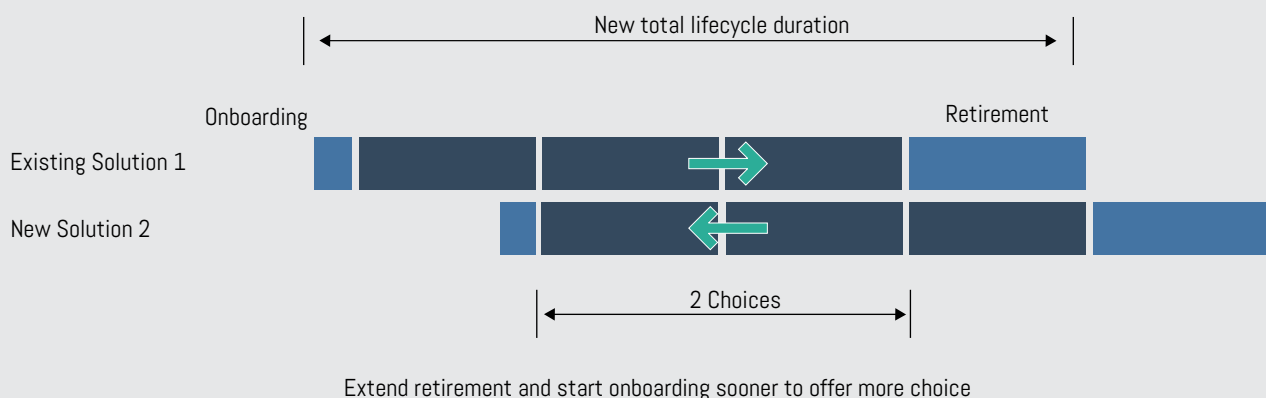
Allocation of experimentation costs. Should the corporate leadership team endorse the Context Specific Solution Strategy, then as part of that, the cost-recharging policy can also be set. Part of that policy would need to include offsetting the experimentation costs. These are typically operational expenses since prototypes and feasibility studies cannot be considered assets. There is a problem, however, that typically the profit share and size of the "Question Mark" BUs would be unable to fund such expenses. A solution then is for the "Cash Cow" BU to fund these expenses with surplus cash flow to "Question Mark" Bus.

Project Governance. Not all "Question Mark" BU candidates must test all solutions. Since there will be many solutions to try for different services, one BU may want to focus on a specific capability. In addition, some BUs could test competing solutions for the same outcome, where cross-functional teams could present their findings in a Dragon's Den style. Those BUs with a successful track record for delivering successful projects can get more funding.

Choice – where to start with Business Units

If we are considering the whole lifecycle, the easiest way to start offering two solutions is to implement one sooner and delay the retirement of the other. An example is keeping both MS Teams and Zoom so that there is an overlapping period, where some BUs who work in more remote areas can benefit from the better video compression of Zoom, and other BUs can benefit from the integrated team working functionality of MS Teams.

Choice and Lifecycle Extension

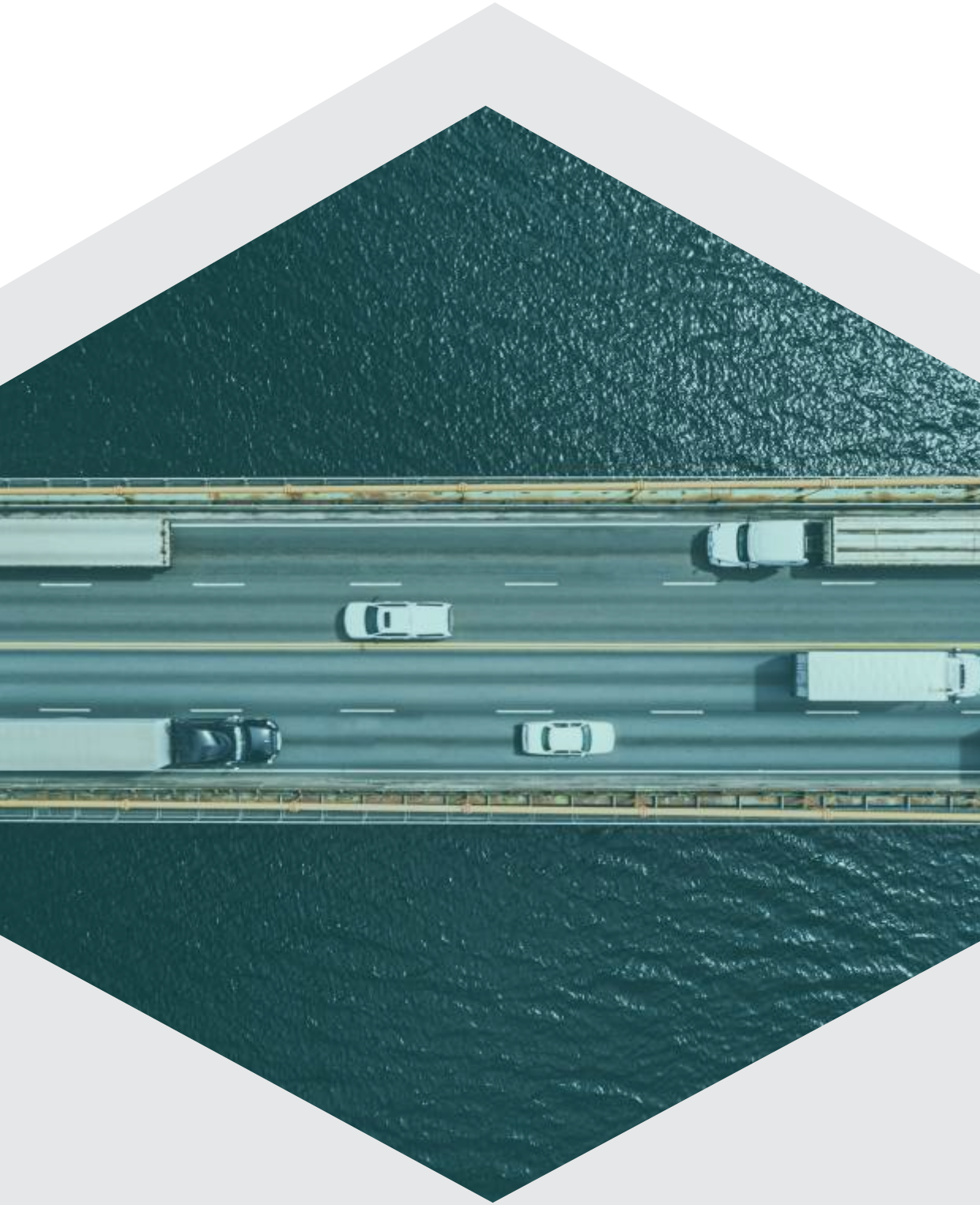




Dealing with exceptions

The decision to acquire or maintain a company sometimes goes beyond the simple analysis of its position on a BCG Matrix. If, say, the BU was a “Pet”, would the technology strategy be the equivalent enabler? What if the leadership’s long-term outlook for the “Pet” BU is that it needs to become a “Star”, and technology is seen as a critical enabler to make that happen, thus requiring a different, more expensive approach? Then the leadership must be willing to take the risk and invest on balance with everything else it has in its portfolio. The point of the analysis is it enables a very worthwhile conversation. People understand the impact of the decision and the resulting expectations.

| Conclusions



In optimising the solution roadmap for a corporate company, the debate can be highly challenging because of hundreds of different offices, factories, dozens of Lines of Business and geographical locations. This debate does not have to focus on local vs global, BU vs technology function, or risk vs cost. Nor does the solution have to be decided by caving in or splitting the difference. A Context-Specific Solution Strategy (CSSS) helps orient leaders across departments on the criteria to select the correct cost and responsiveness profile for a given Business Unit.

A first analysis of CSSS can help demonstrate the alignment and awareness of the current corporate business strategy, so it responds to the first issue mentioned in the chapter “Balancing Cost and Responsiveness”. However, there needs to be a high organisational maturity to deploy the CSSS across the organisation – such as committing to principles around shared outcomes and transparency.

We believe that CSSS can be successfully deployed based on the foundations of a formulative digital and data strategy and the capability to experiment, since they provide the primary guide rails along which we can make an optimised cost and responsiveness offering to BUs. To negotiate that offering, sufficiently empowered decision makers from both the technology function and BU need to work together on shared outcomes and a mutual understanding of the cost and impact on the business.

The benefits of deploying CSSS are significant – a joint planning on roadmaps that demonstrate alignment and consistency in approach means that we can achieve expectations and clarity on delivery, cost, risk and outcomes. This activity helps prevent the Business Unit and Central IT from playing cat and mouse around “Shadow IT” and knee-jerk responses to last-minute requests.

To help understand how this strategy could be applied to your company, Baxter Thompson Associates can offer advisory, interim management, collective team-based discovery and change, and training specifically in:

- Strategy
- Demand Management
- Portfolio Management
- Governance
- Digital Transformation
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Benefits Realisation.

For more information, please contact Jon Baxter at info@baxterthompson.com.

| **About – Us**





ABOUT JON BAXTER

Jon has been leading change in the UK for Strategic Partnering for the past eight years since recognising the gap between where most organisations currently are and where they want to be. Since then, he created the proprietary Reconnaissance for IT Framework that helps organisations close the gap. He has led the Strategic IT Partner Forum, a biannual Conference in the UK.

ABOUT BAXTER THOMPSON ASSOCIATES

Formed in 2009, Baxter Thompson Associates has always specialised in Digital / Information Technology Transformation Services. We bring together a blend of experienced interim managers and consultants who have delivered tangible results in roles such as Portfolio Management, Product Management, Enterprise Architecture, Business Relationship Managers, Service Delivery and Project Delivery.

ABOUT RECONNAISSANCE FOR IT®

The Reconnaissance for IT Framework helps organisations break down silos, create clarity on strategy, drive increased return on investment, improve decision making and significantly increase chances of transformation success. It consists of models, diagnostics, workshops, surveys and a database of articles leveraged by Baxter Thompson Associates and its clients to make change happen.

ABOUT SDBP® Foundation and Practitioner Certificates

SDBP stands for Strategic Digital Business Partner. It is a way of analysing, communicating, and planning across teams to plan better technology and business outcomes. It revolves around five competencies that are trained online with live coaching, interactive forums and story-based exams, the completion of which leads to two certificates.

| **Appendix** – Interview Questions





1. What technology projects are receiving top priority at the moment?
2. How has the technology agenda with business sponsors been set?
3. How do you cater for similar requests on the same service / process such as end point computing, invoicing or document management from different stakeholders e.g., localisation, franchise owners, or different regions / business units
4. How confident are you that the solution your IT function provides meets the real need of the requester - why?
Briefly list the activities, meetings and tools you use to manage your portfolio of projects
5. What criteria do you use to select projects?
6. What best practices have you picked up because of managing a portfolio of requirements / projects?
7. Where do you think the bottlenecks are in managing demand through to delivery
8. What are your thoughts on removing those bottlenecks



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