BEST PRACTICE

BiSL® Next

A FRAMEWORK FOR BUSINESS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Improving business performance through better use of information and technology

Van Haren PUBLISHING

bisl business information services library

Other publications by Van Haren Publishing

Van Haren Publishing (VHP) specializes in titles on Best Practices, methods and standards within four domains:

- IT and IT Management
- Architecture (Enterprise and IT)
- Business Management and
- Project Management

Van Haren Publishing offers a wide collection of whitepapers, templates, free e-books, trainer materials etc. in the **Van Haren Publishing Knowledge Base**: www.vanharen.net for more details.

Van Haren Publishing is also publishing on behalf of leading organizations and companies: ASLBiSL Foundation, BRMI, CA, Centre Henri Tudor, Gaming Works, IACCM, IAOP, Innovation Value Institute, IPMA-NL, ITSqc, NAF, KNVI, PMI-NL, PON, The Open Group, The SOX Institute.

Topics are (per domain):

IT and IT Management

ABC of ICT
ASL®
CATS CM®
CMMI®
COBIT®
e-CF
ISO 20000
ISO 27001/27002
ISPL
IT4IT®
IT-CMF™
IT Service CMM
ITIL®
MOF
MSF
SABSA
SIAM

Enterprise Architecture

ArchiMate®
GEA®
Novius Architectuur Methode
TOGAF®

Business Management

BABOK® Guide
BiSL® and BiSL® Next
BRMBOK™
BTF
EFQM
eSCM
IACCM
ISA-95
ISO 9000/9001
OPBOK
SixSigma
SOX
SqEME®

Project Management

A4-Projectmanagement
DSDM/Atern
ICB / NCB
ISO 21500
MINCE®
M_o_R®
MSP®
P3O®
PMBOK® Guide
PRINCE2®

For the latest information on VHP publications, visit our website: www.vanharen.net.

BiSL® Next - A Framework for Business Information Management

Improving business performance through better use of information and technology

Brian Johnson

Lucille van der Hagen
Gerard Wijers
Walter Zondervan

Van Haren PUBLISHING

Colophon

Title:	BiSL® Next - A Framework for Business Information Management
Subtitle:	Improving business performance through better use of information and technology
Series:	Best Practice
Authors:	Brian Johnson, Lucille van der Hagen, Gerard Wijers, Walter Zondervan
Reviewers:	Yvette Backer (Yvelutie) Pieter Frijns (Ministry BZK) Olafur J. Gunnarsson (REMA TIP TOP North America) Steven de Haes (University of Antwerp, ISACA) Frans Haverkamp (Former CIO UWV) Hans van Herwaarden (Nyenrode) Maarten Hillenaar (SIG) Jasper Maas (Capgemini Academy) Machteld Meijer (APMG) Richard Pharro (APMG) Jan Ploeg (i-Interim Rijk) Mark Smalley (ASL BiSL Foundation) Wilbert Teunissen (Sogeti) Jan de Vries (Naboek) Maarten Looijen (Institute for Advanced ICT Studies)
Text editor:	Steve Newton - Galatea
Publisher:	Van Haren Publishing, Zaltbommel, www.vanharen.net
DTP & cover design:	Coco Bookmedia, Amersfoort - NL
Cartoons:	Djanko, www.djanko.nl
NUR code:	801, 982
ISBN Hard copy:	978 94 018 0039 6
ISBN eBook (pdf):	978 94 018 0611 4
Edition:	First edition, first impression, February 2017
Copyright:	© ASL BiSL Foundation, Van Haren Publishing, 2017

Foreword

This is AGILE, is everything else SENILE?

BiSL Next… *'Next what?'* I hear you ask.

Well, it is the next generation of guidance for business managers and business information managers; and unlike other good practice frameworks, it does not simply plug in the 'AGILE' word and hope that you don't notice that nothing has changed.

It is the first good practice framework to reference the Marx brothers, Einstein, Monty Python, Oscar Wilde and myriad other figures that you would not expect to see in a book that is written for business service owners and business information managers.

Instead of being another well-meaning but ultimately heavy duty and resource intensive process framework, BiSL next is a consideration of the business and market forces that determine the need and value of business services that are in the modern day, either entirely digital or intrinsically and inextricably supported by digital services.

Where you need process, it is identified as a capability which can be Agile, or (if you must….) heavy duty, perhaps where your enterprise needs the security of, well, security and you need to consider the value of more intensive processes.

Besides the operational information processes that most enterprises need to streamline, the focus of BiSL in this book is the Governance and Strategic oversight that the enterprise needs to ensure that existing IT dependent business services are improved rapidly and effectively and that new services are brought to market more efficiently.

Alongside BiSL Next, everything in the good practice market looks old fashioned; there are no pages and pages of procedures that are either not appropriate to

your enterprise or way too cumbersome. There are no 'new' process models that are 0.00001% different to every other process model you ever saw. And no wheels are reinvented; if you need advice covered by another good practice, for example ITIL, or COBIT or TOGAF or even the UN, then you are told where to find it and how to use it (and IT….).

This is guidance for the 21st century; use your head and use the guidance to help your enterprise.

Maarten Hillenaar
Former CIO Dutch Government
Principal Consultant SIG
Smart City Lead The Hague

Reading tips

The power of this book is the reflective nature. That's why, besides the usual instructive text, you will find some other elements in this book. Quotes and cartoons will appear throughout the book, supporting our message that business information management is crucial for your business, and drawing attention to other important topics. Also anagrams are used, illustrating that joining up things in the wrong way can have entirely different results.

The first two chapters are of special interest to business managers who want to learn more about the importance of business information management and how BiSL can help in achieving business goals.

For a better understanding of the various terms, please take note of the list of Terms and Definitions in Appendix A.

Alongside this book there are additional white papers that can be downloaded for free from the website of ASL BiSL Foundation, www.aslbislfoundation.org. These give introductions to various topics, like complementary frameworks, Business Change Management, Knowledge Management et cetera. Here's a list of the white papers:

- White paper 'Business Change Management'
- White paper 'Complementary Frameworks'
- White paper 'Basic Principles of Business Service Design'
- White paper 'Knowledge Management'
- White paper 'ToR for Structural bodies for managing information services development'
- White paper 'Example risk management framework'
- White paper 'Estimation techniques'
- White paper 'Example contractual clauses'
- White paper 'From BiSL to BiSL Next'

Drivers

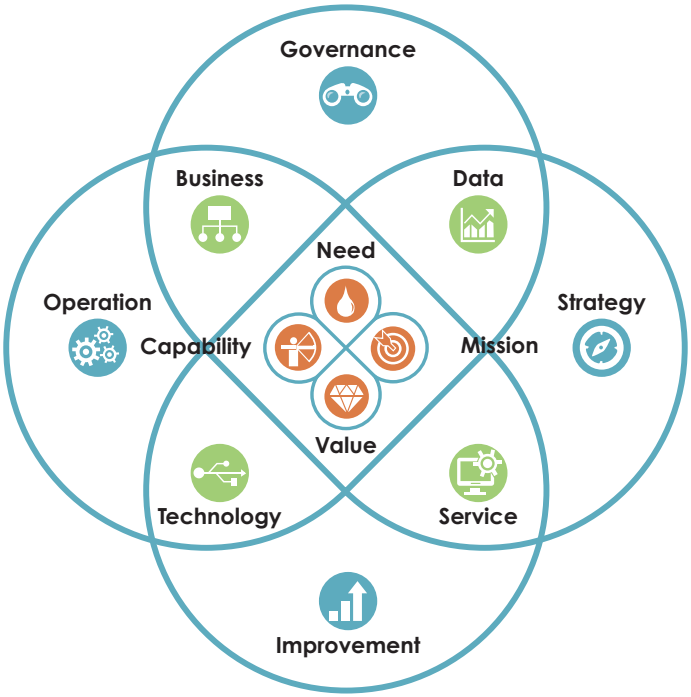
- Need
- Value
- Mission
- Capability

Perspectives

- Business
- Data
- Service
- Technology

Domains

- Governance
- Strategy
- Improvement
- Operation



Preface

Headaches...
These are some of the questions that you as a business information manager may have in mind:

- What is our enterprise strategy with regard to IT?
- Where is our operating model?
- Who can advise about Security?
- Do I have sufficient information about how IT services are provided?
- How much time do I have to think about the transformative impact of major changes?
- How do users perceive their experience of data-driven services (their user experience, U X)?
- Has risk assessment of the proposals taken place?
- Who is in charge of the programme of change?
- Will the change mean a change in business direction?
- What support processes will be affected?
- What is a cloud and where can I buy a couple?
- Will there be a change to my information needs?
- What new capabilities are required from the IT information processing services?
- Can the current IT infrastructure deliver what is required, or must I instigate technical IT changes with the CIO?
- What the hell is Agile?
- Can I insulate myself from IT failure?
- If not, how can I avoid IT failure?
- And please explain to me what is a TOGAF®, a BiSL® Next, an ITIL®, a COBIT® and why I should care if IT is for IT?

Before exploring BiSL®, it is worthwhile thinking about the ever-present need to 'align' business with IT. Enterprises are tired of hearing about 'alignment' or 'integration' and do not wish to see endless IT process models telling them how this framework or that model will solve all of their problems and at the same time establish peace on earth, goodwill to all men and as a by-product, eradicate poverty. Business wants transformative improvement from IT.

For this reason, BiSL is meant to impact behavior rather than to be another process model in the long row of already existing process models.

The crucial issue is ensuring that a model exists that reflects good practices which is easy to explain, will have benefit if used correctly (i.e. not used as a big stick) and promotes behavior that has a beneficial impact on the way the enterprise operates.

Success in the 21st century depends on IT. And will success be a result of outsourcing (and retaining a business function to manage the business/IT interface) or will you be able to do everything 'in house'?

You will continue to need IT, and IT deficiencies can stop your business operating effectively. And in times of change, you must still operate using

services that may have been designed ten or twenty years ago; the need to run your business day-to-day often depends on managing small scale changes that often get in the way of long term thinking. How many business services can you identify that are not either entirely dependent on IT or at the very least, IT-driven?

The key issues for effective business information management are:

- Portfolio and programme management in line with your enterprise strategy;
- Designing information services that meet business needs;
- Organizing your digital information needs;
- Selecting appropriate technical (technology….) infrastructure;
- If you can't *'do it yourself'* finding people you can trust.

Expertise to help you is available from many sources (details of the ten zillion frameworks and standards) that are available can be found at White paper 'Complementary frameworks'. Your next step is to understand in more depth the changes that you will have to deal with.

Business thinking and IT thinking are often separated by a large gap in both understanding and possibilities regarding use. This is represented in Figure 1. Consider this figure for a moment; business and IT have different perspectives on topics such as Governance, Strategy, Improvement, or Operation. And yet their perspectives are expected to meet in the middle (as if by magic….). Many frameworks exist that focus on specific IT issues, very few on specific business information issues. Consider also that there are many degrees of separation possible; the further apart 'business' is from 'IT' the harder it is to understand the needs of the other and even to communicate effectively. Google, AirBnB or Uber might be best represented by the pyramid shown on the right of Figure 1, whereas enterprises that are long standing (or government bodies) are better represented by the center pyramids. But let's be honest, most enterprises are not like Google, Uber, or AirBnB.

Figure 1 also represents a single customer being fully in line with a single service supplier; multiply the impact of that scenario by numerous information partners, multiple lines of business and multiple IT service suppliers and it is obvious that 'business – IT alignment' is complicated.

This book addresses many of the issues associated with IT that the business manager may have to deal with in an environment of rapid and strategic business change when past practices may have to be ditched. The book also considers the issue of transformative, strategic change arising from innovation, not just problems. After all, IT is part of the fabric of business unless you are selling fruit from a market stall and even then you may have a website, take credit cards for payment, or buy an electronic cash register…

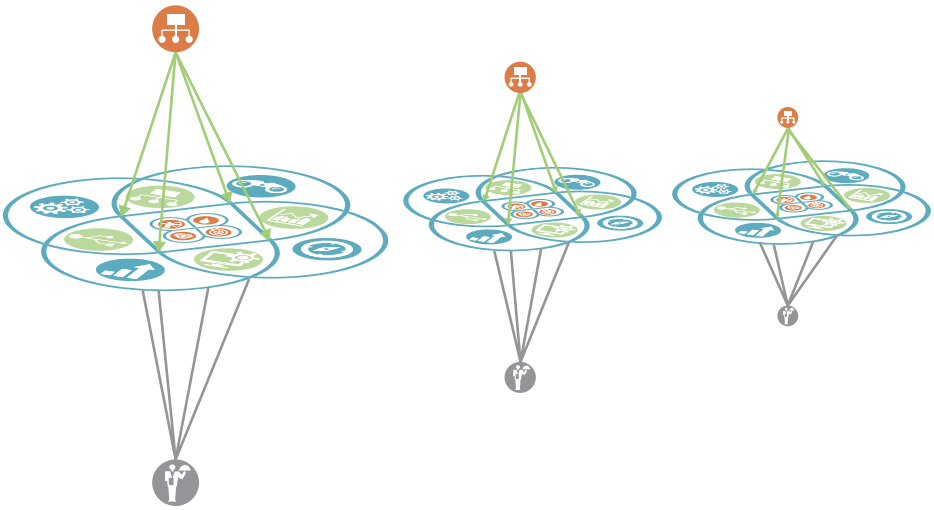
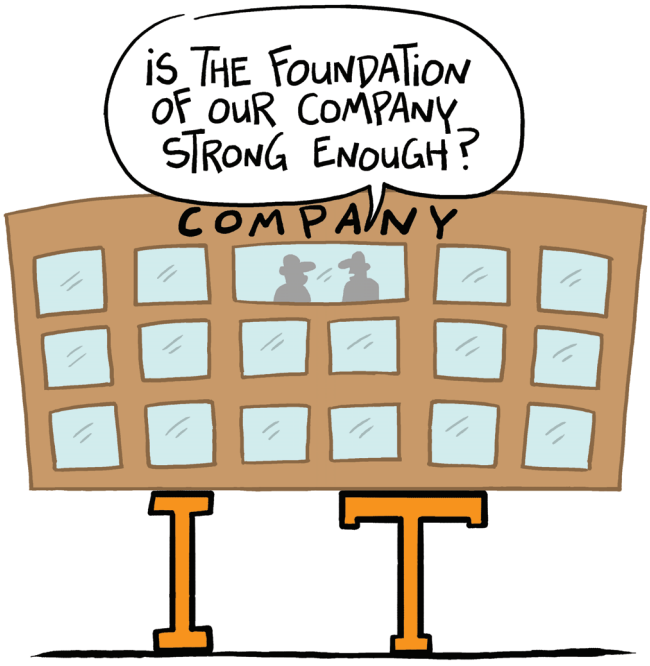


Figure 1 Why business and IT need to be in alliance

The purpose is to help you to manage business information and technology securely and efficiently, control IT and to integrate it within your business, precisely when you may feel you have other things on your mind.

Those familiar with BiSL will find all of the good practices they already use, though some are renamed (to simplify diagrams) some relationships changed to improve the logical use of the practices and some new material added. The major difference



is a change in focus; BiSL in the past mainly focused on operational good practices with regard to business information management, with the result that executives were either unaware of the guidance or unaware that they should be taking notice of BiSL. More information about the changes from BiSL to BiSL Next, can be found in the white paper 'From BiSL to BiSL Next'.

Now that IT is the business-driver for most enterprises, executive surveillance of BIM is a hot topic and the focus of BiSL has been altered to promote executive understanding. Whilst operational guidance remains vital, executive governance and oversight is crucial to expanding the scope and benefits of managing business information more robustly. This should be in place first before elaborating operational details.

Contents

Introduction

CONTENT AND CONTEXT

Focusing on business information management (BIM) provides you with the opportunity to:

- Govern business information management;
- Concentrate on transformative data-driven services;
- Be strategic with regard to the information needs of the enterprise and networked enterprises and to direct data and information services design accordingly;
- Address the development of business services that depend on information by directing the development of digital business services by directing information needs throughout services development using programme and project good practice;
- Ensure the required operational functionality will be delivered through the use of specific frameworks to address information and data management, functionality, software and infrastructure support.

THE BiSL NEXT FRAMEWORK

The BiSL Next model is an entirely fresh update of the original material; the business information services focus has been shifted from the operational functions to a focus on the Mission and Capabilities of the modern enterprise. The original BiSL comprised a library of documents and this book and the new model now form the basis of the revisions to the framework. The redefined model is mapped to the original model, which we will call BiSL1 in this book. Please refer to the website of ASL BiSL Foundation, www.aslbislfoundation.org. The redefinition was necessary to simplify understanding and to emphasize strategic issues as well as to expand the coverage in order to encompass issues that have emerged in the past decade.

From this point onwards, when mentioning BiSL, we are referring to the new version of BiSL.

Men have become the tools of their tools

Henry David Thoreau

BiSL must be largely applicable irrespective of specific industry sector or political institution. Thus the guidance is abstract in some areas because the actual interpretation of its use is much more important than simply copying the guidance and assuming it applies in exactly the same way to every enterprise; the widely spread assumption that process model 'x' from guidance 'y' can be copied and pasted without application of a single iota of thought has become largely discredited.

BiSL1 is currently supported by good practices including examples of forms, ways of working and templates. These good practices are derived from how enterprises have put the BiSL1 framework into operational practice and are available on the ASL BiSL Foundation website, www.aslbislfoundation.org. Where appropriate these good practices are or will be updated.

The framework needs to be useful and applicable in any situation and enterprise. Therefore these BiSL good practices are recommended rather than mandated. It will be up to each enterprise to decide on what is mandatory and what might be desirable or even superfluous and such decisions will depend on many things including enterprise culture and goals.

Purpose of this book

We exist in a digital economy and most of the information we use is digital. Digital information is the currency with which business is transacted within enterprises and exchanged between enterprises. The Information we have available influences our actions and thus the requirements for this information become increasingly stringent: information must be accurate, timely, complete, etc. The result is that standards for the functionality and quality of the information processing systems are similarly stringent. Information systems comprise both manual, non-automated and automated processes and numerous supporting IT components that together result in a business information service being provided.

*An **information service** is a service that provides any party with the necessary information for its activities. Information services comprise three components: functionality, data and technology.*

*A **business information service** is a service that provides the business with the necessary information for delivering business services to their customers.*

*A **business service** is a service provided by the enterprise to its customers and other stakeholders, which comprises one or more products and/or services.*

DATA DRIVEN SERVICE

SERVER INACTIVE, DAD

At the same time, enterprises must deal with unprecedented levels of change in the way in which they conduct their business. Often these changes are enabled by IT, and IT is nearly always affected by business change. IT is far too easy to change at one level and far too complex at another, and some business managers contend that IT inhibits change. IT is also 'multi-modal', with large mainframes, cloud services and different development methods all frequently used in the same enterprise.

The purpose of this book is to provide a summary of the responsibilities of BIM in the digital age. In doing so it provides a guide to all those involved with BIM, whether it be set up, execution, improvement or the transformation of the enterprise into a digitally focused business.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The primary target audience for this book is business information management. This broad coverage includes all the roles responsible for governing, defining, improving and supporting the use of business information services, f.i. CIOs, information managers, business information managers and supporting roles at the operational level.

The second target audience is the people responsible for, or involved with, the business processes. These are the roles that are intended to be supported by BIM and they will communicate extensively within the BIM environment. Examples are the business manager, business process owner and business architect.

The third target audience is the IT service suppliers and the professionals who can redeploy skills such as ITIL® and PRINCE2® into BIM, suppliers of hardware and software, service managers *etc*. The skills of handling incidents and problems, for example, can be transferred in order to focus on data-driven services rather than on the IT infrastructure that supports their delivery.

This book is also useful for consultants who are involved with the set up or professionalization of business information management and for IS/IT auditors and students of business informatics or BIM.

1. WHY DO I NEED BIM?

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The capabilities associated with managing the digital information assets of an enterprise, or government body are many and diverse. Increasingly, however, enterprises take the view that information is an asset of the enterprise; information should not be treated differently to the financial resources, capital equipment and building/estate assets of the enterprise. Digital assets, properly deployed and employed, create additional value with a measurable and demonstrable return on investment. Forward-thinking enterprises take this view a step further, considering information as a strategic asset that can be exercised as a competitive advantage in the markets they serve.

There is a significant difference between the terms 'data' and 'information'. Superficially, information results from the processing of raw data. However, the specific issue is getting the correct information to the right person on a timely basis and in a usable form. Thus, perhaps the most critical issues facing information managers is requirements definition, and aligning the focus of the information services with the enterprise goals. And requirements definition means becoming involved in the process of designing a business service, digital, IT-driven or not. Leaving things to a semi-random, non-coordinated approach leads to an *ad hoc* culture of requirements definition.

And of course, *ad hoc* requirements may result in a fragmented set of information services and data sets (often known as islands of automation). Islands of automation are usually a result of multiple organizational units operating without a central coordinating unit. Data is often then incompatible, contains duplicate or inconsistent information, and omits critical components of information.

Digitization
Digitization is often beyond the traditional borders of IT and data. A number of enterprises include the management of telephones and other voice communications systems, intellectual property and other knowledge assets as part of the information ecosystem. And legislative issues can also drive the digitization of information; for example, in the USA medical prescriptions must be communicated electronically between the prescribing physician and the issuing pharmacist. Why? The government wants to reduce the risk of issuing the wrong prescription, whilst the widespread practice of prescribing pain killers is considered a major problem and moving to electronic information with its intrinsic capability of tracking prescriptions more accurately is seen as a tool that can provide information to change healthcare for the better.

The scope of the information management organization or unit will inevitably vary between enterprises. Quite often it will include the origination or acquisition of data, whether it arises in digital or other form, secure storage, processing to create (often) more valuable data and reports *via* applications, and the transmission of the data or resulting reports.

1.2 WHAT IS BIM?

Information management in general is considered to be the collection and management of information from one or more sources and the distribution of that information to one or more sources. In this book, the scope also includes technology (increasingly difficult to separate from information and data gathering) and the construction and operation of software applications that process data.

A short definition of information management is: the management of the information services comprising functionality, data and technology.

Business information management (BIM) is the management domain responsible for all of the tasks and activities that are aimed at governing, defining, improving and supporting the use of information services needed for running the business and reaching the enterprise goals.

Don't look back, something might be gaining on you.

Satchel Paige

Most often, IT is the delivery mechanism of how business information is captured, processed and stored; using IT means that information services based on IT need

to be designed with the user of the data in mind. BIM then, is wide ranging and its implementation will vary, possibly covering an enormous spectrum of scope, from enterprise to enterprise.

IT may be the foundation of modern enterprises, but it is not necessarily the reason for being in business; an enterprise serves customers (no matter if these are government or private sector) and managing information services requires that strategic, tactical and operational staff fully understand all aspects of business information capture, processing, retrieval, securing and management. Services designed and built *within* technology environments *for* technology environments are therefore not business information services.

BiSL is primarily focused on information driven business services, (perhaps an even better description is data-driven business services, since business information management should clearly be responsible for information and data….), and given the ubiquity of IT this really means that a good practice should be adopted that supports the entirety of the business services provided today.

Where does business information arise? Depending on your way of working, information appears via surveys, it comes from internal records, social media, articles, books, references and search engines, or through customers purchasing services or products, or communicating with government departments or agencies; depending on the source and what you do with it, the information is used to guide planning to create revenue or perhaps to provide government services.

Information arises in all sorts of ways, via the Internet of Things, from customers, information and supply chain partners, even from social media friends. Published sources may be the web, blogs, newspapers, magazines, databases, government statistics, directories, technical manuals, and many, many more. Information is often defined by context rather than by content, which is why many information specialists claim that information becomes knowledge because you know what to do with it.

Business information services produce and use 'business information' to achieve business goals. And business goals differ from one market sector to another, and are markedly different between government and private sector enterprises.

Business analysts usually agree that there are two primary sources of business information: external and internal. External information is publicly available, and can be used (with specific reservations depending on information rights such as copyright and trademarks) by any enterprise. Internal information usually comprises data created for the particular use of the enterprise in which it is processed, or for sharing within their exclusive chain of information partners.

Why does the world need another good practice framework? Because reliance on a single framework, good practice or standard fails to address the entirety of managing information and data capture, security, retrieval, processing and outcomes. The perspectives of IT and the enterprise need to be rationalized and often interpreted to ensure business outcomes. We will discuss good practices that are part of BIM such as governance, security and risk management, knowledge and data management and budgeting, but BIM is not the key good practice for these disciplines and you might find other frameworks which deliver more specific practical guidance.

This book does not discuss Gateway™, ITIL®, COBIT®, TOGAF®, portfolio, programme or project management, or risk management good practices in any detail; these should be referenced from other books published, for example, by The Stationery Office under the SWIRL logo, owned by AXELOS. Where these good practices are referred to, it is as a reminder to source the information from the appropriate guide; some information is provided that will be of value in placing BiSL into context as far as enterprise good practice is concerned. A white paper is provided at www.aslbislfoundation.org (White paper 'Complementary frameworks') for those wishing to gain an overview of some of the most useful complementary good practices.

DATA DRIVEN SERVICE

AN ADDICTIVE SERVER

1.3 WHAT IS BiSL?

What then is BiSL about? BiSL is an abbreviation of Business Information Services Library. It is a vendor independent public domain library for the implementation of business information management. The library consists of publications describing the process framework for business information management and a large number

of best practices, white papers, articles and presentations. This book describes the next generation of the framework for business information management.

BIM is about the governance, strategy, improvement and operation of information services from a business perspective. The BiSL framework describes the activities which are necessary to establish many of the responsibilities of BIM. The relationships between these activities are described from a conceptual perspective and examples used to illustrate their practical application. **De Wit and Meyer** demonstrated that enterprise capabilities should be developed around a holistic system of management structures, management processes and people aspects; BiSL provides such a system for the management of information services.

BiSL was created to provide a tool for the information management aspects of IT-driven business services. Previous incarnations of BiSL covered 'automated' and 'non- automated' information supply. But in modern times how much information is not automated? Even procedure manuals are automated, though who is responsible for creating them and ensuring they exist and help users of information services may not always be clear. Consider also the issue of structured and unstructured data. Enormous volumes of data exist 'somewhere' and most of this is unstructured and difficult to identify or search, one of the principal reasons that data is so important to BIM.

The BiSL model is simple and can be explained fairly easy because it comprises twelve closely related elements:

- Four activity domains (Governance, Strategy, Improvement and Operation);
- Four perspectives on business information services (Business, Data, Services and Technology);
- Four drivers (Need, Value, Mission and Capability).

BiSL will assist you in thinking about managing data, information and knowledge, including unstructured data such as that on social networks or data recorded by information chain partners.

In reality things are not predictable and neither are they completely controllable. In the world of constant change, BiSL is a useful means to define activities and drivers, and act as an *aide memoire* to structure the aspects of business information management that should be controlled.

Keep in mind that BiSL is guidance. If you like it, use it; if you have better ideas then please let us know!