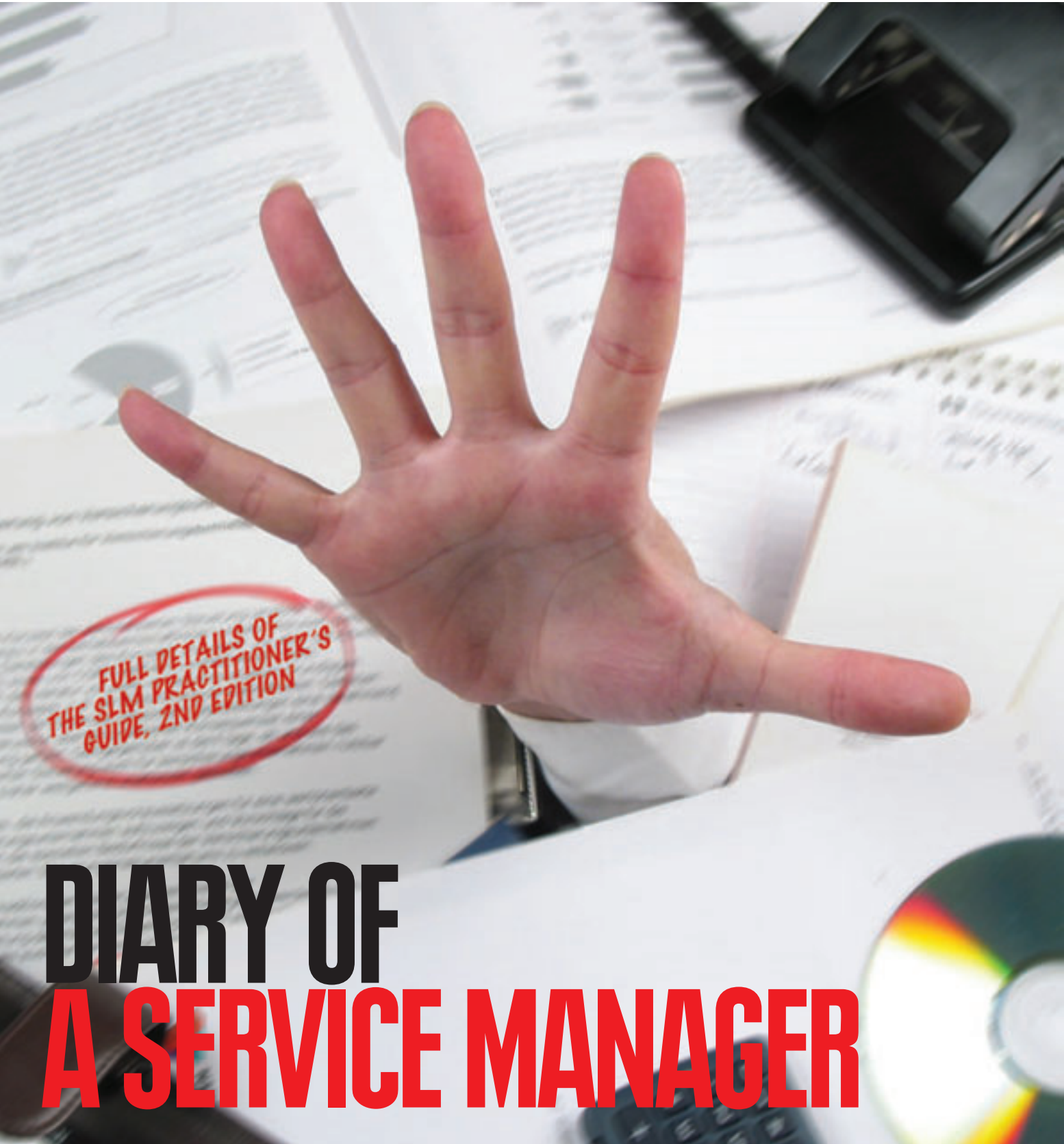


# SERVICE TALK

THE JOURNAL OF THE IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT FORUM



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## DIARY OF A SERVICE MANAGER

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There is a widespread, and largely credible, series of arguments that the activities carried out by humanity in its pursuit of its daily life are rapidly changing the global climate, to the detriment of habitation and the planetary environment.

While there is still clearly a diversity of views about the agenda which is being pursued by organisations founded on this notion (discussed in *The Green Agenda*), it is nevertheless clear that climate change is an issue that all organisations have to consider and respond to. Organisations around the world – from governments to stakeholders and customers – are under increasing pressure to take steps that will help reverse the damaging effect that humanity may be having upon the environment.

IT, in particular, is under significant pressure to make a substantial contribution towards a greener planet. Of course, saving the environment has a cost. Any organisation that is going to invest in something unlikely to benefit its shareholders in the next quarter must have a more immediate pay-off. This article takes a closer look at how one organisation – the John Lewis Partnership (JLP) in the UK – has addressed the challenge of greening its IT. The fact that JLP is still a partnership, in which all the staff have an involvement in and expectation of their employer, means that Gary Hird's approach to greening IT – which is set out below – is one that reflects a wide sense of what is acceptable.

"Green IT matters because, increasingly, businesses want and need to be demonstrably 'green'. The motivation for doing so may differ from company to company, industry to industry, country to country, but the basic need is the same. So organisations rightly expect IT to green itself, because IT is directly responsible for a substantial carbon footprint and many opportunities exist to reduce this. And our businesses are also starting to realise that they can make good use of IT's help in greening other parts of the organisation or, at the very least, in helping to monitor and measure the size of the problem.

"When it comes to an IT department putting its own house in order, there are plenty of quick wins which are easy to action and reasonably straightforward to make a case for. As an example, for decades we've collectively cooled our data centres to a particular temperature (20 degrees Celsius, typically) and never seriously questioned the reason why. However, computer hardware has moved on, no longer needing such a precisely maintained operating environment, and this is an unnecessary waste of energy. By reaching for the thermostat and turning it up a little (at JLP we're now up to between 24 and 25 degrees, and have seen no operational problems as a result), we can see significant cost and carbon footprint savings.

"How about reviewing the computer hardware we buy as corporates? How does the standard model we buy stack up against green standards such as Energy Star or EPEAT? Suppose we know that next month we need to buy 100 new desktop

computers (first, of course, be sure to robustly challenge the 'need' at every opportunity – there's a lot of locked-in carbon in a new computer and a lot of kit in our industry that is replaced too early). How long will a more energy-efficient desktop model need to be operated to make it worth paying the small extra sum for such credentials at the point of purchase? If the sums work, shouldn't we be mandating that this greener model becomes part of our organisations' standard procurement policy and practice? This is an example of how success in Green IT can often result from challenging our ingrained mentality of "it's the way we've always done things".

"Beyond the quick wins are the actions which need a little more thought and effort. Yet eminently actionable they remain. So, if you haven't already done so, consolidate all those servers – in fact, go further and consolidate your data centres too! Power down those workstations automatically at night, and watch your electricity bill reduce. Tackle the 'print mountain' at your offices – whether through simple technology changes or through ways of working changes. Adopt a mantra of "if it moves, virtualise it!", and be sure to apply that to your server estate, your networked storage, your applications and perhaps even your desktops (but tread carefully with desktop alternatives – there's a green prize down the line, but not necessarily immediately, and user acceptance of thin client devices is crucial to success). And take a look at how your company disposes of its end-of-life IT – what opportunities exist to recycle or reuse?

# Grasping Green IT in

AUTHORS ALAN CALDER, GARY HIRD AND GEORGE SPAFFORD  
DESCRIBE SOME OF THE ISSUES FACING ORGANISATIONS AS  
THEY ADOPT A MORE GREEN APPROACH TO IT.



Seek help where you can – from suppliers, from colleagues, from organisations like IT Governance or itsMF UK's Sustainable IT Service Management Special Interest Group – but be sure also to offer IT's help to the departments and divisions across your business that are all looking for ways to reduce their carbon emissions. It might be something as simple as a videoconferencing setup to reduce travel time for meetings, or it might be a transport optimisation application that takes thousands of food miles out of the supply chain. This is where the real Green IT prize is to be found in the coming decade. There has seldom been a better opportunity for IT departments to take the initiative and help to address what is a very real business need. "

Of course, IT is critical to organisations of all sorts around the planet. George Spafford knows this and, in his approach to ITIL – the most widely accepted framework for the management of IT service – recognises the key role that Green IT has to play. George Spafford says:

"IT is under unrelenting pressure to improve the manner in which it supports the business. ITIL is an excellent source of guidance on the use of IT Service Management (ITSM) to improve effectiveness and efficiency. At its core, ITSM is concerned with providing services that meet the needs of the business. This approach lends itself to help address one of the concerns facing organisations today – sustainability.

The concept of sustainable operations brings a perspective of minimising the impacts of business operations on the environment. There can be a number of reasons for pursuing

For organisations that recognised benefits from some of the Green IT concepts, the movement has quietly transformed from one of Green IT back to an emphasis on the services that IT will provide to the business. Moreover, there is also a base realisation that sustainability requirements need to be considered in the same manner as other requirements relating to service design.

The concept of 'services' and what constitutes them are fundamental concepts that underpin ITIL. When you look at what IT provides to the business, it isn't just an application such as e-mail. To provide the e-mail service, there must be the right combinations of hardware, software, people, processes, facilities, documentation, and so on. It is this hierarchical collection of elements that, when assembled together correctly, actually enable IT to provide a service. Because these various components (what ITIL terms 'configuration items') are assembled with service objectives in mind, not only can we think of them as a system, we must also manage them as a system that provides and creates value for the overall entity.

In the early 1980s, in response to competition from Japan, American manufacturing realised that to improve quality they needed to think in terms of processes and systems. The same is true for IT – process, services and systemic mindsets are mandatory. For IT to improve its ability to enable the business, we need to think about what the business needs and how to fulfill that need.

From a sustainable services perspective, there are at least two dimensions to consider – user

account. In general, it is always better to design a service with requirements factored in from the start than to try and retrofit them later. This is as true for sustainability as anything else.

For example, the Capacity Management process can help with the planning necessary to implement resource configuration items and facilities that are of the appropriate size. The Technical Management and Facilities Management functions can be involved with the design of services and then their ongoing operations.

In closing, ITIL V3 brings with it a unified service lifecycle approach with processes that, when designed and implemented appropriately, will enable organisations to implement and maintain sustainable services. IT can pragmatically borrow from ITIL and the growing body of sustainable computing knowledge to design services that support the organisation's overall environmental plans."

For more in-depth information, consult the books written for IT Governance Publishing by the authors quoted in this article, Alan Calder, Gary Hird and George Spafford:

- **George Spafford's Greening the Data Center identifies high-level improvement opportunities to reduce power consumption in data centers.**
- **The Governance of Green IT identifies how to leverage processes and ITIL V3 to help IT organisations better deal with the pressure to manage the power consumed. It also provides advice on how you can carefully plan ahead to continue to create and protect value for your organisation.**
- **Gary Hird's Green IT in Practice describes how the John Lewis Partnership reduced its IT costs while simultaneously reducing its environmental impact.**
- **Alan Calder's Pocket Guides to The Green Agenda and Compliance for Green IT provide easily digestible underpinning to the more inspiring work of Gary and George.**

All are available from the itsMF UK bookshop. To order your own copies visit [www.itsmf.co.uk](http://www.itsmf.co.uk) ■



ALAN CALDER



GARY HIRD

GEORGE  
SPAFFORD

# tough times

sustainable operations, including concerns about regulatory compliance, obtaining tax credits, increasing brand value, attracting investors, not to mention an altruistic desire to protect the environment for current and future generations of employees, customers and other stakeholders. In addition to benefits, such as the aforementioned, there are true accounting cost savings that these efforts can bring by reducing power consumption, paper consumption, and so on.

When the need to reduce environmental impacts relating to IT came to the forefront of corporate boards and the media in 2008, the term Green IT was bandied about and even over-used. Once the energy costs dropped and concerns over global warming abated, however, a lot of organisations reduced their emphasis on Green IT programmes.

and provider (IT). In other words, the manner in which users will make use of a service must be taken into account. During service design, opportunities to reduce power, paper consumption, travel, defects, and so on, need to be identified and managed in a manner that makes business sense. From the service provider perspective, IT needs to design a service such that its components can be optimised to reduce power and cooling demands, environmental impacts from buildings, etc.

Regardless of the exact methods used, IT must develop and comply with processes, policies and standards that take sustainable service requirements (both initial and ongoing) into