# UFI ICT Award 2014:

## "What have you done to prepare your IT team to the future?"


IFEMA's IT management team.

***Content:***



## Introduction

IFEMA is the Madrid Trade Fair Institution. Its 30 years' experience organising trade fairs positions it as the leading operator in Spain and one of the most important in Europe. Its activity focuses on organising commercial events relating to the different sectors of the economy and managing its spaces and infrastructure for activities of all kinds: from fairs organised by third parties to conventions, congresses and all types of meetings and events. Its main commitments include creating wealth and development for the region, and promoting the image of Madrid in Spain and abroad.

Over recent years, IT has acquired the capacity to anticipate the technological needs of the company and meet the new challenges of a dynamic market.

We began with a traditional IT department, with proprietary solutions, services offered by in-house personnel, with scanty documentation and methodology. We have evolved thanks to more reliance on supervised outsourcing, giving us greater capacity and flexibility, adopting market standards and following methodologies, and ongoing training of the team in management, learning new tools and a focus on business.

This process involves working continuously to improve and keep in step with the positioning and maturity of the market.

***"Over the last few years, IT has acquired the capacity to anticipate the technological needs of the company."***

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Evolving our architecture of applications and systems, migrating products and technologies which follow market standards.

## Objectives of the restructuring of our IT department

The main objectives are:

**1. To anticipate the technological needs of the company** defining the parameters for effective management of all IT assets (technology, processes, HR, financial resources),

**2. Continuous adaptation** to the new challenges of a dynamic market, supported by the evolution of technology, with a direct impact on marketing and customer sales channels.

**3. Orientation of the outsourcing strategy** to ensure the optimum combination of IT services compatible with company objectives.

**4. Orientation to market standards** in areas where this is advisable. This lets us focus our efforts on the elements that make a real difference to the company.

**5. Application of agile methodologies** and rigorous documentation, enabling us to organise and speed up our work.

**6. Automating processes** and integrating systems to achieve online updates permitting a better, reliable and effective response to the customer, avoiding the internal costs of manual treatments.

**7. Defining, applying and maintaining the different architectures** (development and operation) an organisation needs to keep its information at an optimal level to contribute to company objectives.

**8. Definition and establishment of procedures and technologies in Information Security and compliance in Data Protection regulations.**

**9. Quality in the projects** we undertake, optimising the results beyond the short term, ensuring the solution is suitable and can be maintained.

**10. Good knowledge management**, providing the value required in this area, which is often closely linked to the company. Professionalising this job, facilitating access and sharing, carrying out the essential, complex task of transferring it to service providers while balancing the costs this represents.

**11. Defining budgets according to variability** and adjustments to the costs of IT services, achieving better management while facilitating decision-making at times when a great capacity of orientation to results and cost reduction has been essential.

**12. Auditing** and scheduling monitoring to ensure compliance with policies and legislation affecting IT.




Keeping up to date with technological innovations in order to be future-ready.

*An IT organisation can be analysed based on a block model, reflecting every aspect of an IT department (Quint block model):*

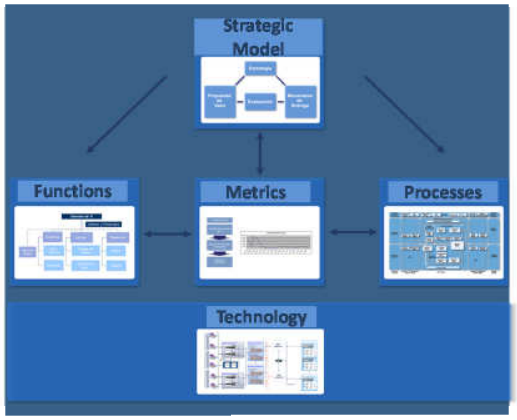
1. ***Strategic Model.***
2. ***Functions Model.***
3. ***Processes and Metrics Model.***
4. ***Technology Model.***

***Standardisation and Outsourcing as strategic keys for evolution.***

# Measures to reach these objectives

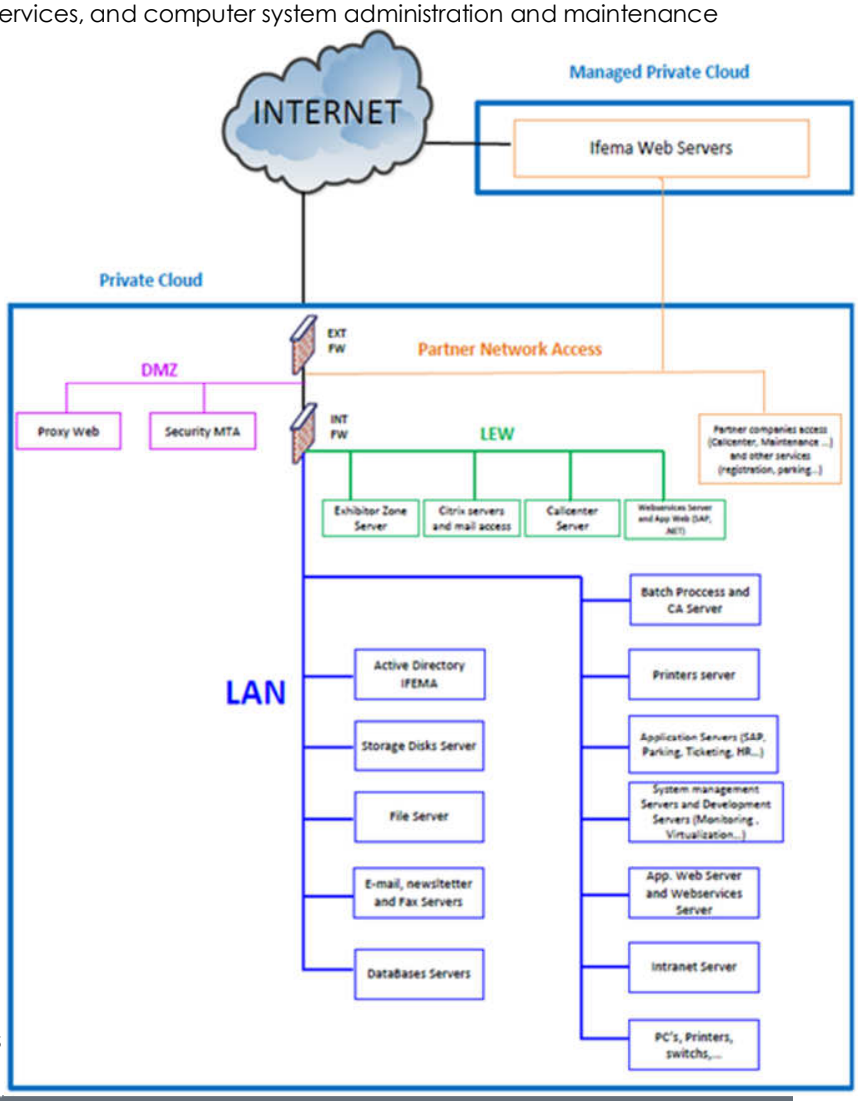
These actions and changes have always been led from within the organisation itself, while seeking support from the most important companies in the sector as needed for each case.

The main actions taken over recent years in each component to achieve the goals set are:




## 1. Strategic Actions

- **Strategic consultancy** to evaluate the most important IT management ratios and the recommended actions.
- **Introduction of standardised commercial products**: SAP (various modules), HR package, UCM knowledge management, Bentley's GIS system, access control systems, etc.
- **Outsourcing services**: mainly adaptive and corrective maintenance of applications, cloud hosting services, and computer system administration and maintenance services.




- ✓ Definition of an SLA system to apply to outsourcing contracts.
- ✓ Strict hiring procedures designed to ensure maximum service, quality, guarantees and the best price.
- ✓ Documentation and procedure for IT applications and processes to ensure an efficient service and good knowledge transfer.

- **Focus on automating tasks** as a key element in the efficiency and quality of the services offered by the institution.
- **Creation of the management body CAI** (IT Analysis Committee) with the active participation of the departments using the services, intended to ensure business and IT are strategically aligned, and consisting of the top management of the different areas .It has become the Steering Committee for IT matters, the forum were decisions are discussed and taken.

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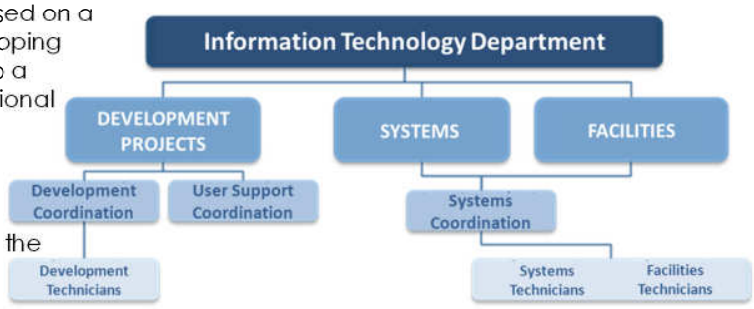
*Evolution from a horizontal function-based organisation to an organisation oriented to processes and services.*

# Measures to reach these objectives

## 2. Functions Model

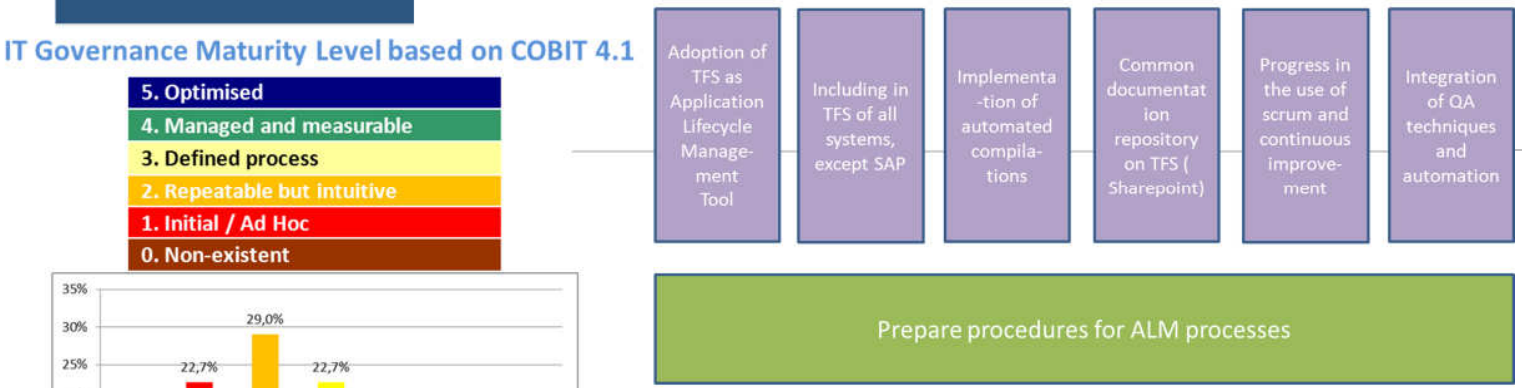
- **Evolution from an horizontal IT management model** based on a structure of teams developing different technologies, to a structure based on functional aspects (the present organisation) strongly oriented to business and the services the IT department provides for the organisation.




- **Continuous integration** of technological advances

## 3. Processes and Metrics Model

- At present we are following **ITIL best practices** for organising IT services, with special attention to incident management and change management processes, and the portfolio of services.
- Use of **Agile SCRUM methodology**. We can highlight the very positive impact of short, functional development cycles, and daily and retrospective monitoring mechanisms. Having a backlog for each application has also helped us make great progress in prioritising and **optimising developments.**
- **Introducing TFS** (Team Foundation Server by Microsoft) for application lifecycle management (ALM): incorporating sources (whether internal or external), change management. This is the roadmap we are following:







- **Introduction of a collaborative portal for project management** in SHAREPOINT (Microsoft) which manages knowledge and the documentation of all the projects.
- This has brought us to a **medium maturity level** (Cobit IT governance methodology) in the formalisation of our processes.

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*Towards leveraging the Cloud: first step to Virtualising infrastructures*

# Measures to reach these objectives

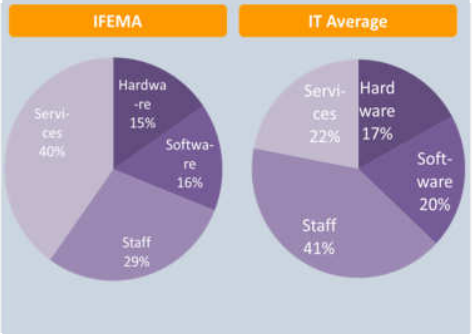
## 4. Technology Model

- **Virtualising infrastructure** and cost variabilisation with cloud solutions and services.
- **Formalising a consistent Business Architecture**: Defining, applying and maintaining the different architectures (development and operation) an organisation needs to keep its information at an optimal level to contribute to company objectives.
- **Automating and integrating applications** using webservices (Enterprise Application Integration).

# Specific challenges faced

- **Choosing the right applications / systems / tools** and standards to implement, leaving aside fads, with the right fit for our needs.
- **Maturity of the outsourcing market.** Finding quality outsourcing to suit our needs was no easy task. The keys to finding the required quality were:
  - Determining a **balance between the expertise** which must remain inside the organisation and what the outsourcing provider must contribute. Taking into account the cost involved
  - **Outsourcing management** adds significant complexity to the work of the internal IT team: controlling and monitoring the contract, defining and organising the services, specifying and tracking the targets, measuring service levels and controlling invoicing.
- **Updating the skillset of IT personnel.** We have gone from specialist programmers to highly qualified IT personnel, involved in the processes of good IT governance, mostly generalists although with expertise in certain products and technologies, and above all, with full knowledge of the functional part of the business.
- **Maintaining the number of employees**. This requires ongoing training and focusing on the tasks with the greatest added value for the company.
- **Balancing fixed and variable costs**, positioning ourselves with ratio values comparable with those of the market and guaranteeing flexibility for meeting business needs have been the major challenges.

| | | Industry s Average |
|---|---|---|
| ICT Budget / Company Income | 3,11% | 2,96% |
| ICT Budget / Nº of Company's Employees | 7.732€ | 11.075€ |
| Nº of ICT Employees / Nº of Company's Employees | 4,6% | 5,8% |

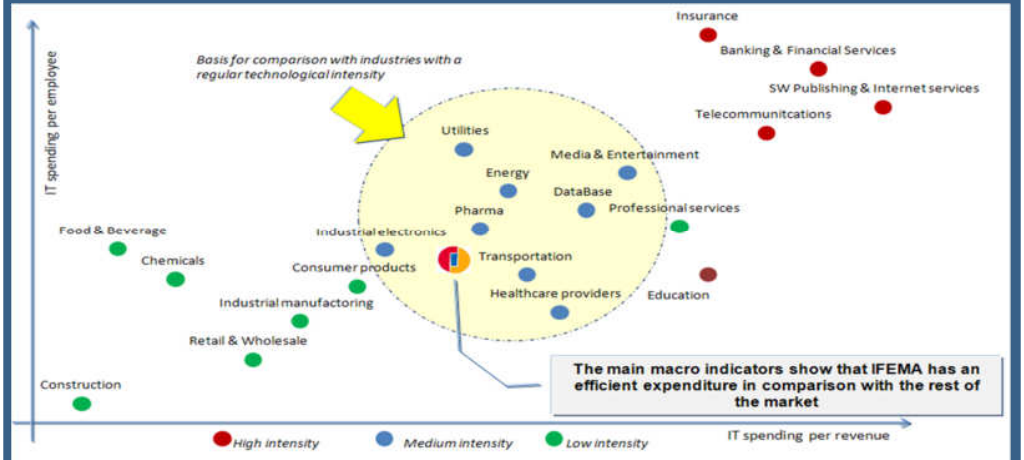



Comparison of ratios and level of outsourcing compared to the average company with a similar intensity of technology use.

## Our Results

The main results achieved are:

- **We are making the company more agile**, reducing time to market.
- The results of the external **audit** carried out in 2013 by the international firm Quint Wellington Redwood indicate that IFEMA's IT **cost ratios** are below market values and therefore its efficiency is high.
- **We have positioned ourselves responding to the needs of the business with new technology** such as developing Apps, mobile web applications, Analytics/Business Intelligence and SAP ERP, Cloud computing, customer portals and an employee intranet portal with Oracle, SAP and Microsoft technology, and with an important EAI architecture, supporting social networks integration.
- **Orientation to outsourcing** with the materialisation of several contracts for developing applications and managing infrastructure and systems, with the important supervision of IFEMA`s IT Team.
- **Formalising procedures:** application development has begun following agile methodologies like SCRUM, and procedures for all stages of ALM are being firmed up with the support of Microsoft technology (Sharepoint and TFS).
- **Great efforts are being made to automate and integrate systems** and processes using EAI technology,.
- **Delivery on-time** of different demands, requested by different areas.
- The work carried out always seeks **compliance with security regulations and is oriented to quality**, with expert support in these areas, as well as in updating the team through training and attending relevant events.




Analysis of "Technological Intensity": the degree to which the trade fair business involves technology.

## Impact on Results

- **Managing more fairs, more customers**, more diverse technology, more applications without the need to increase the workforce, assigning in-house personnel to strategic tasks with greater added value, supported by their knowledge of the business and the existing architectures of IFEMA.
- **Lowering management costs for fairs and congresses** (efficient internal processes) with a suitable technological platform, which also facilitates highly segmented marketing actions.
- **Increasing the capacity to sell spaces and services through the online sales systems** implemented, while reducing internal costs for these tasks.
- **Increasing participation by customers in their own contract processes using web apps** (for example, the Exhibitor Area website).
- **High degree of automation** in our systems, reducing manual intervention and therefore, mistakes.

## Invisible, but essential!!!

In the end, we consider our team to be **Invisible** (we work in the shade, making sure everything works properly) but **essential**!!!

*If **IT** is not working, there is no show, no business…*

And yes, we consider ourselves fit for the future!!!! Ready for the challenges of new technologies, balancing our strategic resources to serve our goals!! We are invisible but essential!!