

# ITIL® Poster Series #5

## The Difference Between BRM and SLM

**Business Relationship Management (BRM)** and **Service Level Management (SLM)** both involve regular interaction with customers, and are concerned with the ongoing review and management of service and service quality. But each has a different purpose, and the nature of the interface with the customer differs in content and responsibility.

There are many connections and similarities between **BRM**, **SLM** and other service management processes, and the roles are often combined. But as you can see, there are distinct differences in the activities for the processes, and there needs to be a clear understanding that when carrying out business relationship management, an individual needs to be aware of when they are working on a strategic business relationship, and when they are working tactically.

### The Purpose of BRM

- To establish and maintain a business relationship between the service provider and the customer
- To understand the customer and its business needs
- To identify customer needs and ensure that the service provider is able to meet these needs

### The Purpose of SLM

- To negotiate service level agreements (warranty terms) with customers and ensure that these can be satisfied

Here we can see how the purpose of **BRM** and **SLM** differs. **SLM** is focussed on negotiating SLAs, and then monitoring and reporting against these. **BRM** takes a more strategic approach, building a long-term relationship with the business, to better understand its requirements, and to feed these into the service provider's strategy to satisfy both the current and future business needs.

### The Focus of BRM

- Strategic and tactical
  - The overall service provider/ customer relationship
  - Which services the service provider will deliver to meet customer needs

### The Focus of SLM

- Tactical and operational
  - Reaching agreement on the level of service that will be delivered for new and existing services
  - Ensuring the service provider is able to meet those agreements

The focus of **BRM** is both strategic and tactical, managing the relationship with the customer, and understanding how the services provided enable the business to achieve its objectives. **SLM** is more focussed on operational outcomes – ensuring that agreed service levels are met.

### Primary Measures of BRM

- Customer Satisfaction
  - Would customers recommend the service to other (potential) customers?

### Primary Measures of SLM

- Achieving agreed levels of service
  - Indirectly leads to customer satisfaction

Although both **BRM** and **SLM** are measured in terms of customer satisfaction, **BRM's** aim is to satisfy customers so as to retain and grow the relationship, and possibly to expand into other business areas. **SLM** wants to ensure that targets agreed are not breached.

