Q: How can you show business and IT management the value of BRM? How do you measure value?

A: A lot of the value, is around soft metrics. Surveys provide qualitative metrics back. If hard metrics are required, aligning the BRM to specific projects and holding the BRM equally accountable for the success of technology related components of those initiatives may allow for hard metrics.

Q: You mentioned SMAC - can you please remind me what this stands for?

A: Social, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud

Q: What are the largest threats to the BRM function?

A: There are a number of them. Often the internal IT team may already have a direct relationship with the business. As the BRM, you are the primary point of contact. When you work with your IT colleagues, they may feel you've moved too far over to the business side. When you're working with your business colleagues, they may feel you're too far on the IT side. It's an evolution within your organization that IT needs to get in lock step with the organization and for both areas to understand the BRM is working towards the goals of the business.

Q: With all your brands, you have the opportunity to pilot certain BRM ideas that can show proof of concept/value and then roll out. Correct? Can you advise others on the call with how to start showing value in a BRM-type role? Where should they start?

A: I wouldn't say all. I will say there is a great number of technology concepts you can lead with once proving yourself. Build relationships and really get to know the business, say hi, ask the business what their pain points are, make yourself visible. Be valuable.

Q: To what degree is your role consistent with the ITIL-defined BRM role?

A: It's very consistent, but a bit more enhanced. When mentioned in ITIL, the BRM is in Service Management, and looking at your internal business partners as accounts. While valid, understand you cannot take any of these disciplines or frameworks word for word. You have to tailor them to your organization. At the end of the day, they are frameworks. We cannot limit our roles to only the ITIL definition of a BRM.

Q: Do you have a couple of BRM frameworks or models that we can leverage for LA County? We are new to BRM and would like to propose a BRM model that suits our IT environment. Our customers are the other 40+ County departments.

A: You've got to take stock of your organization, because it's not a one size fits all. It's up to you to align. Do you want functional BRMs that all report to specific agencies or another design? You will need to tailor it to your specific organization.

Q: What qualifies the ROLE of BRM? How it differs from Service delivery Manager

A: It's about being personable. I would rather have someone who has very strong soft skills over high quality tech skills. Someone who can interact with the account and business, someone who can be a social butterfly. Your Service delivery manager, lives with your infrastructure teams, and this isn't universal across all organizations, but this is the general design. SDM is focused on delivering core metrics (SLAs etc). You as the BRM act as a mini-CIO or a member of the Office of CIOs. This implies that all technology including shadow IT organizations are your accountability and on your watch.

Q: I am new in BRM, and it is a new role in the organization I work. How best can I make myself/role visible?

A: You've got to look at you the BRM as your own brand. Market your brand. Traditionally, technology departments have sat at the back of the house. One of the things that the BRM role brings to the table is self-promotion or promotion of your area. As you start to gain wins in your portfolio, share that! Share your successes, and the question of "what can you do for me?" is already answered. Some evolution has to happen with your relationships and getting strategically aligned with the business is important. Once this happens, you can build yourself up around your portfolio of wins.

Q: Are there BRM software tools you can recommend? Also, what's the difference between CRM and BRM? Thanks, Eileen. LA County.

A: No. (pause for laughter) – Tools can help enable. Digital work spaces etc can aid, but I will not endorse any specific products. It comes down to how you track information and manage your supply and demand then how you push and pull technology to lead the business. You don't want to keep introducing tools and software if they aren't needed.

The difference between a BRM and CRM? I would need clarity on your acronym CRM (pitfall topic). Is the C for Client or Customer or Consumer Relationship Management. Client is often a person receiving services generally in professional services like financial institution. Customers can be business to business types of relationships. Consumers are typically are individuals consuming products from retailers.

Q: How often should BRMs be surveying its business customers? (Is monthly too often / or is quarterly better received?) Thank you for the great presentation!

A: Get a pulse for your organization, semi-annual is great, quarterly is best for new/start-up organizations, I would not do it too frequently, or go crazy with it. Make sure you target your message to the business unit(s) you're working with.

Q: Is there or should there be a difference in your BRM efforts dependent on the levels of interaction? E.G. Business Consultation versus Management Consultation

A: Yes, absolutely. I wouldn't just say level, I would say area of interest. A grid I use has a list of stakeholders and their Top 5 areas of interest where technology plays a role. Example: sales, here are there top 5, marketing here are their top 5...etc. As you engage in conversation you're always hitting on those pillars of interest. If you create a pillar of interest for your business departments, it's better preparation. Keeping the 5Ps in the forefront will only enhance your success. Prior planning prevents poor performance.

Q: How would you recommend leveraging COBIT best practices for BRM?

A: Thank you for reminding me to look into that, I haven't used COBIT, I unable to speak on how to bridge the two.

Q: There is a BRM group on LinkedIn to get this info for that last question. Professional Business Relationship Managers

A: Yes there are two groups that are on my profile, great conversations happen there.
1. Business Relationship Management
2. Professional Business Relationship Management

Q: How much do you end involved in operational escalations?

A: Part of the great thing about being the BRM is that you're the primary point of contact, some of the bad things about being a BRM is that you're the primary point of contact. If the GM calls with a blue screen of death, I'm not going to say call the service desk, I will personally help with that escalation. Initially, I would be involved in a lot of the escalations, to get myself out there and market myself. I am not trying to replace the service desk or be an alternative. My focus is to build a strong relationship. As the relationships evolve you'll experience less operational request for assistance.

Q: I found the BRM Maturity chart very informative and thought provoking. Is that copyright protected, or available for re-use?

A: That is copyright protected by Leading Edge Forum

Q: What is your BRM approach to establishing or improving Service Level Agreements?

A: Today, while we're a bit more mature, improving SLAs is looking at where we are now and how we improve. Does it make sense to improve, what are the associated costs etc...? I take a PMI approach to it, looking at the triple constraint, and then present it to the business, rev down, keep the status quo, or rev up?