How do you get your metrics?
What makes the Northcraft Metrics Catalog Better?
Metrics

Industry Publications: The starting point (and continuing research) for our suite of IT Business Intelligence applications were (and are) industry publications, such as: *Metrics for IT Service Management*, *Measuring ITIL* and, more recently, *The Definitive Guide to IT Service Metrics*. We think it's important to ensure that we stay current with knowledge from industry luminaries that help us maintain a robust metrics catalog which covers 80% of our customer's potential requirements.

Customer input: So, the industry publications will get you to a certain point, but each customer has their own needs for measurement. This could depend on their vertical, industry, size, business model or many other factors. The bottom line is that there is value in exploring what's important to each of our customers in every engagement… and updating our catalog with those new metrics (in each new version) that we believe provide value right out of the box.

External: An external metric is one that is less subject to biased influence. It is very difficult to remove bias from numbers, so this increases our development effort. Of course, an unbiased number in the hands of a biased individual can be used against its designed purpose! Still, there are certain fields that should be used in the composition of a metric because they are less able to be manipulated than others. For example, nearly every enterprise

application (Salesforce.com, Remedy, PeopleSoft, etc…) has a "last modified date" field that can't easily be edited by a user entering in data through normal means. So, a metric that includes the usage of this field will have a higher degree of externality.

Pre-Built: As we've noted in our research material before about CSI, there is a chicken and egg phenomenon with any such initiative. If a project begins with requirements gathering, wouldn't it be best to start with metrics that can positively be calculated for a specific platform? To the point, wouldn't you like to know that Average approval time can simply be calculated for BMC Remedy IT Service Management, but not necessarily for CA Service Desk Manager? Metrics are heavily affected by the application's data model!

Proper Context: Average Resolution Time is probably one of the most universally leveraged metrics in IT Service & Operations Management. But, how important is it? Well, that depends on what's being resolved! If, for example, your team resolves Microsoft Excel 2013 functionality issues in a rapid manner… does management care? Maybe not. However, IT executives absolutely will care about average resolution time for Incidents on enterprise applications that are tied to critical business services.

Proper field definition: Spending as much time as we have in the data models of the major ITSM applications, we've learned that there is quite a bit of complexity in the data model (and applications). Does the individual who creates your reports really know what the field "Last Resolved Date" means? vs. "Closed time"? Do they know when the workflow from the ITSM application fires to automatically fill out these fields? Do they know how business time interacts with these fields? And Daylight Savings time? It's a full time job keeping up with these things!

Specific: Measure one thing in each metric. This is a simple one. Measuring more than one thing changes the meaning of what you are measuring.

Business-Oriented: Metrics are being used more often for business justification of new projects, capital expenditures and strategic IT planning. This is a helpful trend for products like ours. So, it's always helpful to keep in mind what the business needs from IT. ITIL V3 certainly helped by furthering the use of business services in the Configuration Management System. So, metrics should include a focus on critical business services as a starting point for more business-oriented metrics. Examples: What's the average approval time for changes against my Configuration Items that run our manufacturing application? What's the Mean time between incidents for my web storefront service?

Objectivity/Subjectivity: Customer Satisfaction metrics have become more objective thanks to ITSM survey products on the market, but you should still beware when creating metrics that rely solely on the input of others.

Random Business People That are Now Smarter due to using Northcraft

Founders Background : We'd be remiss if we didn't mention the role of our owners…

John Cullom, the CEO & founder of Northcraft Analytics has a long history of business intelligence experience beginning with SAS programming as a financial analyst with American Airlines, developing Oracle & Microsoft business intelligence solutions with Ernst & Young, Seabury Group and The OBC Group. John received a full scholarship to Cornell University for his Master's in Business Administration with a focus in financial engineering.

Lee Cullom, President and Co-founder of Northcraft Analytics, began his software career with Oracle in 1996, learning first-hand about relational and multidimensional databases (from the IRI Express acquisition). Lee began his career focus in IT Service Management for Remedy Corporation in 1999, through the Peregrine acquisition in 2001, BMC Acquisition in 2002, BMC channel in 2006 and CA Technologies before joining Northcraft Analytics full time in 2011.