

# CHALLENGES IN ENABLING SIAM STRATEGY IN THE NORDICS

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Despite the widespread knowledge about SIAM in the Nordics, the benefits of SIAM strategy are not utilised to its full extent. Hence, IT Service Management Forum Finland ry SIAM SIG members were keen to identify what challenges enabling SIAM strategy companies in the Nordics face and supported the current research. Therefore, in this thesis, the author has conducted qualitative research through seven semi-structured interviews with Nordic SIAM professionals. The SIAM literature by Scopism was used as a basis to form a theoretical framework in this thesis.

Additionally, the second research question helped to identify what ways of working might lead to avoiding challenges in SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics based on the interviewees' professional experience. The interviewees were SIAM professionals from different industries across the Nordics, whose contacts were shared by IT Service Management Forum Finland ry SIAM SIG members.

Furthermore, the data gathered during this research was analysed based on a thematic analysis approach. As a result, five main themes and four additional categories were identified. Therefore, as the main challenges faced by the interviewees while enabling SIAM strategy in the Nordics, the author outlined *the lack of value synergy*, *the lack of SIAM Awareness in the Nordics* and *the low maturity* themes. In addition to low maturity, the low ITIL and SIAM maturity and the low service providers' maturity categories were outlined.

While answering the second research question, the interviewed SIAM professionals suggested specific approaches that could lead to a successful SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics. Therefore, the author shaped these themes as *trust and transparency* and *top management attention*. Additionally, the trust and transparency theme had two more categories that could help to address SIAM strategy enablement challenges. The author named these categories the "Rules of the Club" and the "Single Source of Truth".

**Keywords** SIAM, challenges, ecosystem, maturity, awareness, Nordics, value, trust, transparency, top management

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Networking and getting new contacts were among my goals while aiming for a master's degree in Business Administration in Finland. In a Nordic country such as Finland, it is incredibly challenging for a foreigner to get new connections that would allow one to grow professionally and keep motivated to reach new heights. Therefore, I want to express my gratitude to IT Service Management Forum Finland ry and especially to Anjuska Kyllönen, who supported my interest in SIAM topic and made it possible to study and research SIAM as my thesis topic.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BoK	Book of Knowledge
CMMI	Capability Maturity Model Integration
CSI	Continual Service Improvement
COBIT	Control Objectives for Information and Related Technologies framework by ISACA
ETSI	External Tower Service Integrator
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IaaS	Infrastructure as a Service
IT	Information Technology
ITIL	Information Technology Infrastructure Library
ITSM	Information Technology Service Management
itSMF	IT Service Management Forum
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
OBASHI	Ownership, Business processes, Applications, Systems, Hardware, and Infrastructure framework
PaaS	Platform as a Service
SaaS	Software as a Service
SIAM	Service Integration and Management
SIAM SIG	Service Integration and Management Special Interest Group founded in 2016 by itSMF
SLA	Service Level Agreement

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitalisation of the past decade has made it possible for businesses to perform purely in digital spaces. The complexity of companies juggling suppliers for different services has not decreased. On the contrary, digitalisation makes it more complicated in some cases. Therefore, to handle the complexity of multiple supplied services governance of an organisation, the service integration and management (SIAM) methodology was introduced. The main focus of SIAM methodology is a single customer and multiple suppliers' ecosystems. This methodology provides steering components such as governance, management, integration and others to maximise the value customers obtain from their service providers (Scopism 2020, 12).

Another well-known framework for managing services is the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). ITIL has a set of best practices for managing Information Technology (IT) services and improving the support and service levels of the organisation's IT department (IBM 2023). Moreover, swift digitalisation has an impact not only on companies and organisations but on methodologies, too. As business digitalisation has become a new norm for some companies and has been commonplace for others for a certain period of time, the ITIL framework has developed, too. In particular, the ITIL4 framework was transformed to serve the digital transformation needs. (Axelos 2023.)

In this chapter, the author presents her motivation, purpose and thesis research objectives. Additionally, the research questions and used literature are introduced. Lastly, the schedule, required resources and thesis structure are presented.

## 1.1 Motivation and Background

The idea of this thesis research was proposed by IT Service Management Forum (itSMF) SIAM Special Interest Group (SIG) board members. The itSMF is a non-profit association whose goal is to share information, promote cooperation and conduct research in the area of service management (itSMF 2023). The fundamental motivation behind the proposed research was that despite the widely spread knowledge about SIAM strategy among companies who are

members of itSMF and others, the practical part of enabling SIAM strategy within these companies tends to fail. Therefore, board members have expressed the need for this study and suggested researching possible challenges in enabling SIAM strategy in the Nordics.

Additionally, the author's personal experience and the Digital Business Management degree the author aimed to achieve supported the requested study. To highlight personal interest, the author was interested in SIAM as the phenomenon of uniting companies, organisations and employees to serve the common purpose for a customer organisation while not tying a particular person to an existing system, instead creating a working mechanism that is not dependent on a specific person.

## 1.2 Purpose, Research Objectives and Research Questions

The purpose of this thesis was raised from a business challenge certain Nordics companies face based on itSMF observations. The itSMF SIAM SIG members noticed that even after obtaining SIAM strategy knowledge or gaining SIAM Foundation certification, SIAM strategy failed to be successfully implemented within certain companies. Hence, the itSMF organisation was questioning the obstacles in the actual practice of specific companies within the Nordics while enabling SIAM strategy. Therefore, the *purpose of the thesis was to identify challenges arising while enabling SIAM strategy in selected companies in the Nordics.*

This thesis had multiple objectives. Firstly, the author aimed to get a more profound professional knowledge of SIAM and its use within the Nordics. By interviewing SIAM professionals within the Nordics, the author increased her chances to expand her professional network, which could lead to her future career growth within digital business management. Secondly, the itSMF organisation wanted to identify Nordic companies' challenges while enabling the SIAM strategy. By obtaining this information, itSMF can spread knowledge of the reasons behind these obstacles and suggest improvements to the SIAM community within the Nordics.



Additionally, suppose itSMF finds the observations and recommendations valuable. In that case, they can be shared with companies providing professional SIAM Foundation certifications, such as EXIN, Axelos, and Scopism, for future development and improvement of SIAM Foundation theory materials. Based on the business challenges mentioned above, as well as defined objectives, the main research questions were:

1. What are the key challenges companies in the Nordics face in enabling SIAM strategy? (RQ1)
2. What ways of working might lead to a successful SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics? (RQ2)

### 1.3 Literature and Data Review

The SIAM and ITIL frameworks are vital elements to be described in the theoretical framework as they create a basis for understanding SIAM strategy implementation and possible obstacles companies face while enabling it. Therefore, this thesis' critical sources related to SIAM and ITIL methodologies were professional literature provided by Scopism and EXIN. These companies were chosen as they are the leading IT professional material providers of the most relevant and practically tested knowledge of SIAM and ITIL methodology use.

Scopism is a private limited company based in the UK whose main aim is to provide support to IT management professionals. Moreover, Scopism is the author of the SIAM Foundation Body of Knowledge (SIAM Foundation BoK) and SIAM Professional Body of Knowledge (SIAM Profesional BoK). During the thesis research process, the books mentioned above were the most recent, the primary content related to SIAM methodology, offering standard SIAM terms to IT professionals. At the same time, the SIAM™ is a registered trademark of EXIN (Scopism 2020, 1).

EXIN provides professional training based on Scopism's SIAM Foundation BoK and SIAM Professional BoK, among many other IT professional training. After completing this training and passing SIAM-related tests, IT professionals are

recognised as SIAM experts. Therefore, itSMF SIAM SIG and the thesis author found Scopisms and EXIN-provided materials and publications as the most relevant and professional literature containing knowledge about SIAM methodology.

Additionally, professional articles by SIAM consulting companies such as Exalate, MacKenzie, Sofigate, Syamic, Karer Consulting, and 4me were used to present the relevant data from service integration practice. The companies mentioned above complied with Scopism, EXIN, and ITIL trademarks and provided materials while educating ITIL and SIAM experts. As these consulting companies were “in the field,” their articles brought visibility and relevance towards the benefits and challenges organisations face while implementing the SIAM strategy.

Notably, the thesis author conducted qualitative data collection in semi-structured interviews where the author interviewed seven SIAM experts from different industries across the Nordics. Along with qualitative data collection, a survey conducted by itSMF SIAM SIG in 2016 and research reported by Virri in 2016 were used to discuss these research findings.

#### 1.4 Schedule and Required Resources

The members of itSMF SIAM SIG proposed the topic for this thesis with the provided deadline. The first meeting between members of itSMF SIAM SIG and the author was held in mid-May of 2023, whereas it was requested to present the study outcome in Autumn 2023. Therefore, the schedule and timeline were tight, which added a quality-related limitation to this study. The thesis process started in May 2023. The author presented the topic, drafted the thesis plan and submitted it for the Principal Lecturer of Lapland University of Applied Sciences review.

Meanwhile, the author requested contacts of interviewees from itSMF members. During June, the author drafted interview questions, shared them with the itSMF SIAM SIG members, and scheduled interviews. During July, the author prepared the theoretical part of the thesis, and a supervisor's reviews were agreed upon.

During August and the first half of September, interviews were held, and the analysis began. In September, the author completed data analysis. During October, findings, discussion and conclusions chapters were drawn. In November, research findings were presented to the itSMF SIAM SIG members.

Conducting this thesis was highly dependent on the cooperation of the members of itSMF, the author, the supervisor and the interviewees' availability. The itSMF SIAM SIG members agreed to allocate resources in the form of time of itSMF members dedicated to supporting this study. Members of itSMF shared contacts of interviewees, shared access to internal information, and provided SIAM expert knowledge, which helped the author conduct this thesis research.

Other resources needed to write this thesis were the author's time, reliable equipment, internet connection, and access to libraries and business literature. As the author obtained permission to record interviews, voice-to-text software was used, too. The Grammarly service was used for proofreading in the final stages of the thesis report writing.

## 1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters, followed by a bibliography and appendices. The first chapter explains the motivations and background of the selected thesis topic, the purpose, the research objectives, the literature and the used data for the thesis. Additionally, the first chapter contains the schedule and required resources for this research. The second chapter presents the theoretical framework - the SIAM framework's structures, stages, benefits, and challenges necessary for the research. Then, the third chapter demonstrates the research design, approach, methods, process and data analysis. Next, the author presents the findings of seven interviews in chapter four. The fifth chapter demonstrates a discussion of the findings. Finally, the sixth chapter presents the research conclusions, summarising the theoretical and practical implications of the research. Also, it outlines the evaluation of the results and the recommendations for future research.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the author describes at a high level why organisations choose SIAM strategy, what drivers are being sought after while enabling SIAM strategy and what elements SIAM strategy consists of. To analyse the challenges SIAM strategy brings, the thesis author introduces the SIAM concept and its importance. Further, the key governance players are defined and described. As the SIAM ecosystem is repeatedly mentioned in the second chapter, one of the subchapters outlined represents the business ecosystem and its meaning in the SIAM context. Next, to get the depth of SIAM strategy understanding, SIAM structures and stages of enablement are presented and described. Furthermore, the SIAM benefits and challenges are introduced. Lastly, the chapter is finalised by presenting past findings regarding challenges within SIAM.

### 2.1 Why SIAM?

Historically, services provided by organisations were sourced internally. With rapid digitalisation, such sourcing models no longer fulfil customers' needs. Hence, there was an urge to get services provided externally by multiple providers in particular cases. Even though organisations have been using multiple provider-sourced services for a while, there was no common name until the UK public sector was mentioned in the ITIL methodology. The key idea behind SIAM is to provide levers for a customer organisation to obtain control and streamline services sourced via multiple providers to deliver a seamless end-to-end provision of services. (Scopism 2020, 29, Syamic 2022.)

There are several drivers for implementing SIAM mentioned in the literature. Accordingly, to categorise these drivers, SIAM methodology suggests these categories of SIAM implementation drivers: Service satisfaction, service and sourcing landscape, operational efficiencies, external drivers, and commercial drivers. To elaborate on possible reasoning for SIAM implementation, below are a few drivers highlighted in 2022 by Syamic, a consulting and training services company that helps organisations realise their SIAM capabilities. Firstly, disaggregation – more and more customers are switching from a one-provider

approach to a multiple-provider model. Secondly, there is low satisfaction among customers within the delivery of services. More confusion among service providers happens as more players appear within service delivery. Hence, better collaboration is needed to provide a satisfactory level of service. Thirdly, customer organisations are interested in business value demonstration as IT services sometimes seem to be observed as siloed by end users. Hence, SIAM offers mechanisms to change this situation and allows IT to be seen as a team player in the whole ecosystem, not the siloed department. (Scopism 2020, 43, Syamic 2022.)

Furthermore, gaps in the sourcing landscape must be addressed due to multiple players. SIAM assists in aligning contracts between service providers and eliminating these gaps. When on-demand services such as Platform as a Service (PaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS) are becoming sought-after, flexibility becomes another crucial driver for SIAM implementation. Lastly, there are plenty of external drivers, such as legislation or the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impact the need for skilled resources, clarity over the multi-provider sourced services responsibilities and control elements to manage them. It can be concluded that all these and many more drivers motivate organisations to implement SIAM strategy within their organisation and ecosystem. (Syamic 2022.)

## 2.2 What is SIAM?

SIAM can be described as a methodology helping customers manage their multiple providers' sourced environment, but it is more than just a provider management methodology. SIAM methodology provides inputs towards customer organisation practices, processes, functions, roles and structural elements. Furthermore, the SIAM ecosystem comprises three layers: customer organisation, service integrator and service provider(s). (ITSM Academy 2021, Scopism 2020, 13, 4me 2023.)

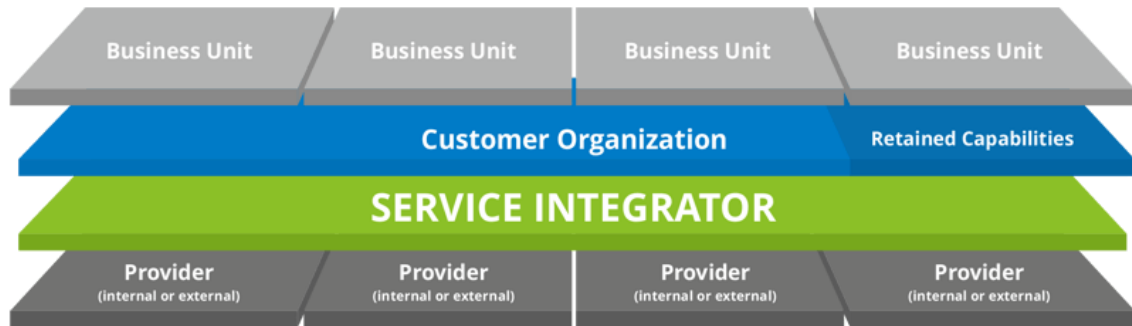


Figure 1. SIAM ecosystem diagram (4me 2023)

Figure 1 demonstrates the logic of the SIAM layers. First, the top of Figure 1 locates Business Units considered service consumers. The next level is customer organisation, which is the crucial element of the SIAM ecosystem as it is the one making the transition of its operation model towards SIAM. Even though customer organisation has service providers, customer organisation still has specific functions kept in-house. Customers might be responsible within these functions, for example, for corporate governance, architectural and strategic activities. Hence, in the SIAM ecosystem, these functions are called retained capabilities. (Scopism 2020, 16, 4me 2023.)

The next layer in Figure 1 is the service integrator layer. The layer is responsible for the customer's end-to-end performance management. In other terms, the service integrator party is accountable for the performance of other providers. The last but not less valuable layer demonstrated in Figure 1 is the service provider. As mentioned previously, a single customer organisation usually has multiple service providers, which might be internal or external. Additionally, service providers are categorised based on business value levels – strategic, tactical and commodity service providers. Each of the mentioned layers brings its own value to an end consumer of the SIAM ecosystem. (Scopism 2020, 16-18, 4me 2023.)

Each level of SIAM methodology demonstrated in Figure 1 delivers its purpose. The customer organisation is responsible for strategy and defining the value of SIAM for all participants. The integrator acts as a lever to ensure providers deliver

value to the customer organisation. The provider is responsible for the actual “run” part, such as operations, support, and development. Accordingly, all members of SIAM layers must act as a single ecosystem to deliver value to service consumers. (Scopism 2020, 16, 4me 2023.)

### 2.3 SIAM Key Roles

By implementing SIAM, organisations usually seek a smooth end-to-end service provided to a customer organisation. The end-to-end process is a vital driver in SIAM enablement. By increasing the number of players within the ecosystem, individual players tend to focus on their own benefits, and as an outcome, a silo can be created. At the same time, in a siloed approach, service providers, for example, may try to stay on “the surface” and fulfil mainly their contractual agreements only, let alone avoid any extra step for innovation or even a critical situation resolution. Hence, to ensure that service providers are not siloed, the outstanding role compared to other methodologies is a service integrator role. Figure 2. demonstrates three leading roles SIAM has and their functions. (Exalate 2021, Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 59, 75, 82, Sofigate 2021.)

SIAM Governance Roles	
The Customer Organization	This is the customer to whom the services are being provided. Hence, they make the strategic decisions - what nature of services will be outsourced.
The Service Providers	This includes all the internal and external parties delivering services to the customer organization.
The Service Integrator	The role is a strong, competent voice that can negotiate with suppliers. It can be a person, team, department, or external partner. It is tasked with service delivery and collaborative cooperation among service providers.

Figure 2. SIAM Governance Roles (Exalate 2021)

Figure 2 demonstrates SIAM governance's vital role in the customer organisation as its operational model is being transformed into the SIAM model. The service provider's role is crucial as vendors for customer service provision are selected.

Service providers can be internal and external, depending on the retained capabilities of the customer organisation as well as the service provision model chosen by the customer organisation. Notably, there are different approaches to how providers are controlled and managed. (Exalate 2021.)

Firstly, customer organisations must clearly understand if they select a few leading providers covering most of their services and then less valuable additional providers or 3<sup>rd</sup> parties or approaching service provision some other way. Then, the customer organisation must establish the governance and service provision management level. For example, the Practical Guide for Management suggests that service providers can be integrated or coordinated. Here, integrated service providers are more prominent in the customer organisation. In contrast, coordinated providers are usually less valuable as they deliver low-volume, small-scale services and are commonly validated against contractual service provision only. (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 121.)

For instance, the highlighted distinction of SIAM from other methodologies is a third role demonstrated in Figure 2 –the service integrator role. As the complexity of service providers increases, customer organisation needs additional resources to handle multi-complex system. Hence, SIAM outlines the service integrator's role. Typically, it is crucial to know what level of governance the customer organisation is keeping so the service integrator can leverage accordingly. For example, the Practical Guide for Management accentuates that the typical allocation of resources is as follows – 10% of coaching, 10% of validation and 80% of management and operation. Therefore, customer and service integrator organisations must outline who is taking the validating role and who is taking the coaching role. Whereas management and operation usually are the service provider's responsibility. (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 121-123.)

Besides the role names, Figure 2 demonstrates descriptions of the customer organisation, the service provider and the service integrator. At the same time, these descriptions imply that each role represents a certain governance level within end-to-end services. As shown in Figure 2, the customer organisation represents the strategic level of governance. The customer makes the most



strategic decisions within the SIAM ecosystem. The service provider makes the most tactical decisions while delivering end-to-end services. The service integrator represents the organisational part where it negotiates, collaborates, and cooperates with suppliers and the customer organisation. Even though the traditional governance approach divides key SIAM players into strategic, operational and tactical levels, such a complex structure as a multisource service provider environment needs a more delicate approach. (Exalate 2021.) Hence, the author describes business ecosystems in the SIAM context in the following subchapter.

## 2.4 Business Ecosystems

It is essential to clarify what the 'SIAM ecosystem' means, as it is often mentioned in SIAM methodology. Initially, the term 'ecosystem' was referred to in biology, highlighting that one species' existence is dependent or co-dependent on another one's existence. Eventually, the same dependencies happened in business. The business ecosystem definition means multiple service providers are serving the customer organisation. Providers become dependent on each other and, hence, must rely on each other. (Adner, Oxley & Silverman 2013, x-xi.)

Furthermore, scholars recognise specific patterns in studies and research of business ecosystems. For example, to achieve a thriving ecosystem, members of the same ecosystem should have aligned processes, activities and roles. By attaining that, members' strategies align and bring innovative elements, "outside-of-the-box" thinking, and trustworthiness throughout the ecosystem. To accomplish that, the ecosystem should be adequately managed, and the movement of data and information interconnected. (Gomes, de Faria, Borini, Flechas Chaparro, dos Santos, & Gurgel Amaral 2021, 801.)

In the context of SIAM methodology, the SIAM ecosystem highlights that SIAM layers become reliant on or should pay attention to each other's functions, roles, structural elements and processes to cohabit successfully. The service integrator's role is to create a collaborative environment where service providers interact. It can be achieved by developing an ecosystem driven by a collaborative

culture where process forums are established, information is shared among different players, and compliance is managed. (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 76.)

On the contrary, all members of the SIAM ecosystem cannot align all processes and follow the same process; that would be unrealistic to achieve. However, for a smoother integration, members of SIAM layers should follow agreements on joint use of functions, for example. (Scopism 2020, 20-23.) A common term for this set of rules is “rules of club”. These rules are standard for all ecosystem players; sometimes, an agreement listing these rules is signed officially. Such agreements may include commitment among ecosystem players to put customers’ needs first, be transparent, and encourage effective cooperation. (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 76-77.)

Consequently, the SIAM methodology is relevant to complex ecosystems, whereas the industry and organisation size are irrelevant. The annual SIAM survey conducted across 31 countries by Scopism showed that only 49% of the respondents were from the IT industry. (EXIN 2023 & Scopism 2022.)

## 2.5 SIAM Structures

There are common SIAM structures businesses use. In some cases, these SIAM structures are called “SIAM models”. There are four main ones - internally sourced service integrator, externally sourced service integrator, hybrid service integrator or a lead supplier as a service integrator. (Scopism 2019, 17.) In the following subchapters, these structures are described.

### 2.5.1 Internally Sourced Service Integrator

The internally sourced service integrator model shows that the customer organisation takes care of the service integrator role by dedicating its own resources to this role. The main challenge faced in this model is that the customer role and service integrator’s role must be separate entities. If these entities blend, then such SIAM structure has little value. (Scopism 2020, 93.)

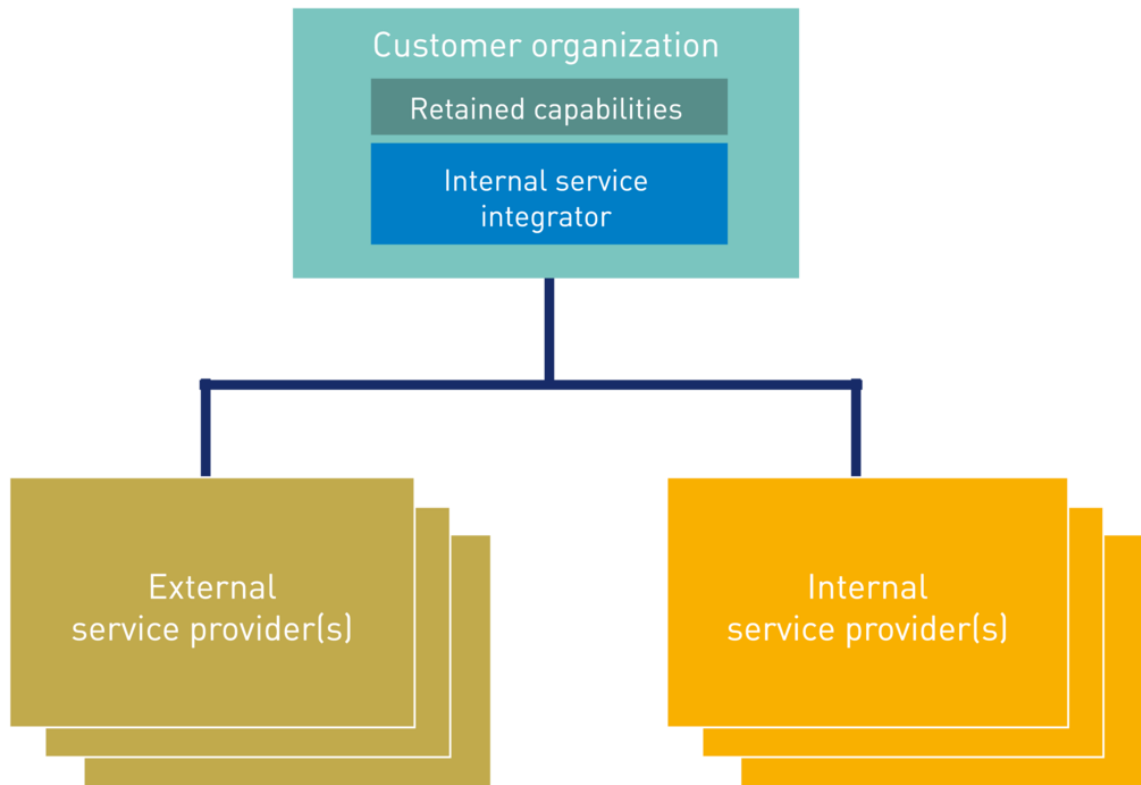


Figure 3. Internally sourced service integrator (Karer Consulting AG 2023)

Figure 3 shows that if the service integrator is within the customer organisation entity, it is significant that the customer organisation contain its own retained capabilities, such as strategy setting and governance tasks. However, within the internally sourced model, an internal service integrator must obtain enough reliability among providers and other “in-house” employees to be treated as an independent service integrator entity and not the extension of the customer layer. (Scopism 2020, 94.)

Another significant challenge is that internal service integrators should consider the equity of attention it show to internal and external service providers. If the service integrator and provider are internal, they may have closer relationships and better collaboration than external providers. In such cases, an external provider might feel like an outsider and not engage with the SIAM ecosystem to the full extent. (Scopism 2020, 94-96.)

Usually, by choosing an internally sourced service integrator model, the customer hopes to grow the needed skills of their resources internally and become more

advanced in SIAM Strategy. Moreover, the customer retains more control over the SIAM ecosystem in such a structure. In most cases, a customer organisation has a limited timeline or budget to get an external service integrator, hence appointing an internally sourced service integrator. (Scopism 2020, 94.)

### 2.5.2 Externally Sourced Service Integrator

An externally sourced service provider model is usually well-planned. Moreover, in such a model, a customer's intended decision is to build a trusting relationship with an external party to serve as an external service integrator. (Scopism 2020, 89.)

As demonstrated in Figure 4, an externally sourced service integrator is an external company that a customer organisation appoints to perform the service integrator's tasks. It is essential that the external service integrator is not treated as a service provider. Often, service provided by an external service integrator is called "SIAM as a Service". (O'Reilly Media, Inc. 2023, Scopism 2020, 89.)

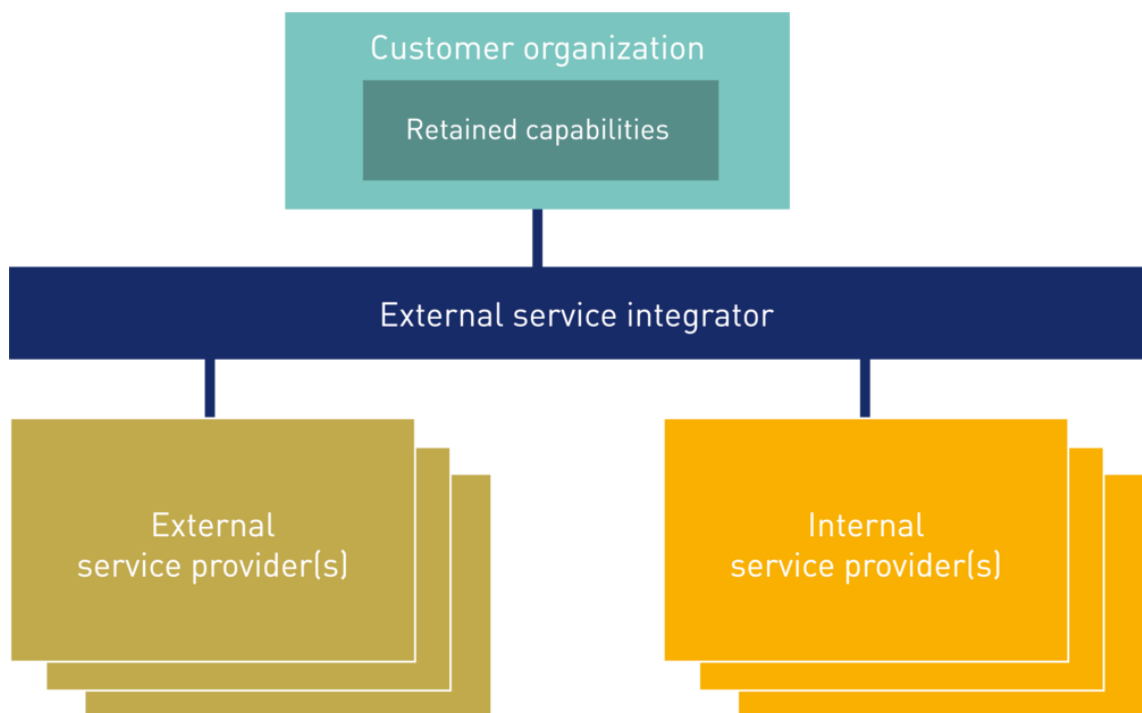


Figure 4. Externally sourced service integrator (Karer Consulting AG 2023)

An externally sourced service integrator model shows that an external party appointed as a service integrator provides SIAM services only. In some cases, customer organisation realises they do not have the internal capabilities to set up an internal service integrator. Hence, they build strong trust relationships with an external partner to serve as their service integrator. One of this model's disadvantages is that customers will strongly rely on external service integrators within this structure. (Scopism 2020, 91-92.)

### 2.5.3 Hybrid Service Integrator

A hybrid service integrator is a blend of internally and externally sourced service integrator models. The “SIAM as a Service” understanding among SIAM ecosystem parties exists in this model. However, in-house and externally sourced parties compile a single SIAM service team. Usually, the customer chooses a hybrid model when planning to have an internal service provider and obtain internal SIAM resources in the long run, but existing resources are not enough. Hence, the SIAM team hires external resources with the needed knowledge and expertise to fill this gap. (Scopism 2020, 98.)

In most cases, the hybrid model is a temporary solution to let in-house employees gain needed knowledge before switching to an internally sourced service integrator structure. This model's disadvantages include a misconception that customer organisations may feel they are not skilled enough and continue the hybrid approach, even though internal employees have reached wished SIAM expertise. As a result, externally hired resources are fulfilling their tasks when internal employees are already skilled enough and capable of performing the same functions. Eventually, external and internal personnel perform double work. This way, the hybrid model brings more harm than good. Moreover, there is a noticed pattern where the customer organisation is unwilling to let go of the control they had during the hybrid model. Hence, they are not switching to another more beneficial model for their current situation. (Scopism 2020, 99.)

#### 2.5.4 Lead Supplier as Service Integrator

The fourth possible SIAM model described in SIAM methodology is a lead supplier acting as a service integrator. Before SIAM BoK, this model was called an External Tower Service Integrator (ETSI). Usually, this model occurs when one of the existing providers bids for a service integrator's role or the opposite – the existing service integrator becomes a service provider (O'Reilly Media, Inc. 2023, Scopism 2020, 100.)

This model may appear when an existing service integrator has enough knowledge to become a service provider or when an existing service provider wishes to develop relationships with the customer organisation and step in as a service integrator. Despite the positive side of collaboration and evolving relationships between involved SIAM layers, it is crucial that the lead supplier keeps its role as a service integrator and does not become a "prime vendor". The "prime vendor" term refers to a structure where one vendor has contractual agreements with the rest of the providers of the same customer organisation. On the contrary, customer organisations keep contractual agreements with all suppliers in the lead supplier as a service integrator model. The customer signs an additional agreement with the lead supplier, acting as a service integrator. (O'Reilly Media, Inc. 2023, Scopism 2020, 100.)

#### 2.6 Stages of SIAM

When an organisation decides to implement SIAM strategy within their operational model, there is a roadmap SIAM methodology recommends using. The SIAM roadmap consists of four stages: Discovery & Strategy; Plan & Build; Implement; Run & Improve. (Scopism 2020, 57.)

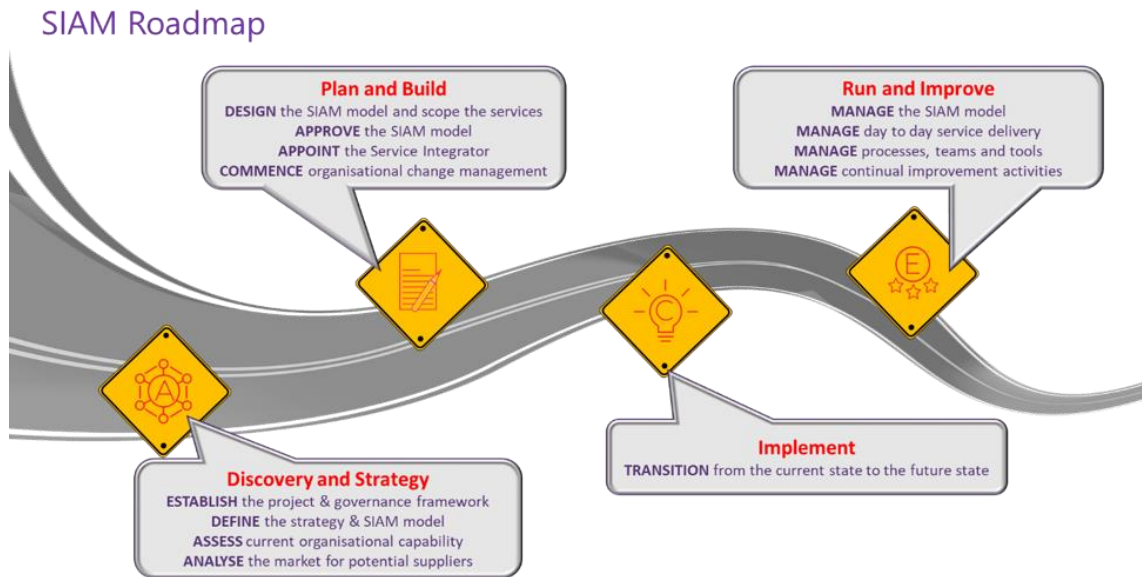


Figure 5. SIAM Roadmap (Scopism 2023)

Figure 5 demonstrates the tasks or so-called outputs each SIAM roadmap stage includes. First, even before a Discovery & Strategy stage, an organisation must realise that they want to adopt the SIAM model - this can be called stage zero. During the Discovery & Strategy stage, tasks such as strategic objectives must be defined, a high-level governance framework must be established, an understanding of the current organisation's maturity level must be identified, and the organisation's capability as well as an analysis of the market must be performed. (Scopism 2019, 24.)

After the first cornerstone has been established and the organisation realises its current situation and key strategic objectives, it moves to the Plan & Build stage. During this stage, the organisation plans and outlines the key elements shaping its SIAM model. Among many other tasks, this stage includes the scope of services, processes, roles and responsibilities, performance management and reporting framework, selecting SIAM structure, as well as appointing service providers and the service integrator. (Scopism 2019, 24.)

The second stage of the SIAM Roadmap is followed by the Implementation stage, as shown in Figure 5. The Implementation stage is a stage of transition where the current operational model is being changed into a desirable SIAM model. The

output of this stage should be an operating SIAM model with suitable contracts and agreements among all SIAM Ecosystem players. (Scopism 2019, 25.)

The last stage of the SIAM Roadmap is the Run & Improve stage. As described in Figure 5, this stage is about managing the tasks and jobs performed during previous stages. The additional layer of complexity comes with this stage as continual improvement must be proposed besides just “running the business”. During the Run & Improve stage, the SIAM model must be adjusted to the organisation’s needs as well as be flexible to all SIAM Ecosystem members. (Scopism 2019, 25.)

## 2.7 Benefits of SIAM

When approaching the SIAM model, an organisation usually seeks the benefits this model brings. Especially if an organisation is keen to stay competitive in the current digital age, it looks into elements such as costs versus value, service quality and flexibility. As shown in Figure 6. implementing the SIAM model allows for increased accountability. (Exalate 2021.)



Figure 6. Benefits of SIAM adapted from Exalate (2021)



The SIAM model supports the rise of accountability by clearly communicating the customer's needs to the SIAM Ecosystem; hence, service providers are knowledgeable of customer expectations. Then, one of the key benefits organisations seek is costs compared to the value these costs bring to the organisation. Customer organisation is reducing their service provider management costs as the management of providers is performed by service integration within SIAM. (Exalate 2021.)

Risk management is another crucial benefit customer organisation obtains from implementing the SIAM model. The SIAM model enables risk management in the SIAM ecosystem by having a threshold for accepting new service providers and controlling current ones regarding their risk management. Another SIAM's not commonly known benefit is flexibility towards service providers. SIAM has levers allowing customer organisations to avoid attachment to a single service provider. The SIAM model makes it possible partially due to market analysis in the first stages and then provides access to increased expertise by selecting new providers with less costly services. An organisation is establishing competent change management by avoiding attachment to a single provider and frequent market research. (Exalate 2021.)

Service integrator allows the customer organisation to obtain needed governance and control by representing and communicating customer's needs to service providers. IT management service quality is improving by providing end-to-end service quality. (Exalate 2021.)

## 2.8 Challenges of SIAM

Even though SIAM exists to simplify the delivery of services sourced by a multi-provider structure to the customer, it comes with challenges and risks (Scopism 2020, 201). Table 1. shows the challenges companies may face during SIAM stages where they could appear and the key risks particular challenge brings. The following subchapters elaborate on each of the challenges presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Challenges and associated key risks of SIAM adapted from Scopism (2020, 201-216)

<b>Nr.</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Key risks</b>	<b>SIAM Stage</b>
1.	Building a business case	No shared strategic understanding across SIAM layers	1. Discovery&Strategy
2.	Level of control and ownership	Micromanagement, lack of accountability	1. Discovery&Strategy 2. Plan&Build
3.	Commercial challenges	Unfair commercial decisions among SIAM layers	1. Discovery&Strategy 2. Plan&Build 4. Run & Improve
4.	Security	No access to the key data by SIAM layers	2. Plan&Build
5.	Cultural fit and behaviours	No collaboration across SIAM layers	2. Plan&Build 4. Run&Improve
6.	Measuring success	Lack of end-to-end performance management	4. Run&Improve

### 2.8.1 Building a Business Case

The first challenge mentioned in Table 1 is explained by SIAM methodology as a non-defined business case by the customer organisation. In this context, organisations must identify what they are doing and why they are doing it. By clearly understanding their business case, they can communicate it further within the SIAM ecosystem. Then, the strategic objectives among all SIAM ecosystem layers can be shared. The business case must be outlined before SIAM enablement. Therefore, if the company is confident about SIAM implementation, first, it should define its business case with a clear strategic view and only then consider SIAM implementation. The reasoning behind this is that SIAM gives a model or, simply, it is a tool that helps to reach defined goals. However, if these goals in a business case are not defined originally, there will undoubtedly be little to no benefit from using this methodology. (Scopism 2020, 202.)

To outline the business case, the customer organisation should formulate at least one of the drivers mentioned in Chapter 2.1. (Service satisfaction, service and sourcing landscape, operational efficiencies, external drivers or commercial drivers) as a reason for their business case. Additionally, a customer organisation must communicate the benefits they want to gain by enabling the SIAM model. These benefits may be related to mitigating risks associated with service procurement, improving services, improving the quality of services or enhancing the added value from IT overall. (Scopism 2020, 202.)

The business case challenge primarily affects the customer organisation, and as shown in Table 1, it starts at the beginning of the SIAM roadmap, at the Discovery&Strategy stage. As a result of a missing business case, there are certain risks this situation brings to all ecosystem players in the long run. For example, threats include no clear vision among SIAM players behind the SIAM enablement, hence no commitment from providers towards service integrator or customer due to lack of reasoning behind. Similarly, another crucial risk a customer might face is not dedicating enough resources to the SIAM transition, as there is no clear view of the meaning of this process associated with this challenge. As SIAM methodology was built on experience from UK government service provision, it also presents several ways to address risks related to this challenge. (Scopism 2020, 202-204.)

Moreover, the SIAM methodology outlines several risk mitigation paths to eliminate the abovementioned risks. Firstly, an organisation's business case must be defined by knowledgeable employees. Secondly, SIAM transformation must be interconnected with the organisation's strategic objectives. Thirdly, all the expected benefits of SIAM implementation must be documented. Additionally, analysing current providers' landscape, utilising benchmarking or data to see what possible providers fit customer organisation culturally, and reviewing existing providers' contracts. (Scopism 2020, 204.)

### 2.8.2 Level of Control and Ownership

The second challenge in Table 1 is the level of control and ownership of mechanisms such as processes, instruments, information and many others. During stage 1, the customer should outline the level of control it is willing to delegate and the level of ownership it wants to keep regarding strategic, operational, and tactical objectives across the SIAM ecosystem. The most common way to achieve it is by building trust across key SIAM players (customer, service integrator and key providers). That must be defined during the second stage of the SIAM roadmap enablement. (Scopism 2020, 205-206.)

The deficiency of trust may end up with the repetition of the same tasks and roles among different players, consequently eliminating the original value of SIAM enablement. Additionally, when providers do not clearly understand the level of control or ownership, that may result in the absence of collaboration, which is usually the negative outcome of the second risk mentioned in Table 1. Consequently, when the customer is not satisfied with the providers' services, the customer tends to micromanage to improve the end-to-end service levels. At the same time, a micro-management approach is again a duplication of the tasks that incur additional costs. (Scopism 2020, 205-206.)

The SIAM methodology outlines several mitigation steps to minimise the control and ownership challenge. Similarly to the first challenge in Table 1, defining a shared understanding of SIAM strategy across all SIAM players and choosing a suitable SIAM model throughout the first two stages of the SIAM roadmap definition may help avoid this challenge. Another vital element to eliminate the second challenge is the level of customer's understanding and defining the distinction between governance and operational management. Specifically, customer must let go of control and delegate specific tasks to service integrator and service providers to gain strategic benefits of SIAM implementation. The most challenging yet powerful path a customer should consider avoiding the second challenge is establishing trustful relationships and mechanisms supporting collaboration and communication. (Scopism 2020, 205-207.)

### 2.8.3 Commercial Challenges

The third challenge of SIAM enablement mentioned in Table 1 has a commercial aspect. This challenge is linked to the above-described first and second challenges. The commercial challenge appears if the customer organisation does not understand its business case and reasoning why it needs SIAM during the Discovery & Strategy stage. When a customer organisation competes with service integrators and providers regarding control and ownership within the second stage of SIAM roadmap implementation, it leads to a situation in which all three parties experience commercial loss. (Scopism 2020, 208.)

Moreover, by experiencing this challenge, the customer encounters commercial loss as it is trying to control every step, which leads to implementing a micromanagement strategy. Such a strategy is causing role duplication and ruining trustworthy relationships with service integration and service providers. Hence, the service integrator experiences that the customer occupies their role, and the service integrator tends to underperform. At the same time, the service provider is unaware of SIAM enablement objectives and lacks collaboration with the rest of the SIAM ecosystem players. In the end, the end user of the customer organisation is getting the most harm, leading to the customer organisation's commercial challenges. Commercial loss becomes the most evident during the last Run & Improve stage of SIAM roadmap implementation without addressing these aspects promptly. (Scopism 2020, 208.)

### 2.8.4 Security

The fourth challenge shown in Table 1 is a security challenge. Among other definitions, the word “security” can be described as “freedom from risk and the threat of change for the worse” or “the protection of information against being stolen or used wrongly or illegally” (Cambridge Dictionary. 2023). Accordingly, SIAM methodology considers the security challenges within the aspect of safely sharing information and data across several SIAM ecosystem players. Security aspect exists throughout the whole SIAM ecosystem. Primarily, the customer organisation must clearly communicate among all players what information

exists, where it is located, and how and by whom it is managed. (Scopism 2020, 211.)

The customer organisation owns the information, data, and security, yet regulations such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) demand that all parties comply with data security. Hence, this challenge significantly impacts all SIAM ecosystem players if security-associated risks are not addressed during the Plan & Build stage. Firstly, lack of data security may lead to security breaches, data leakage and lack of data segregation. Secondly, security challenge addresses such risks as the absence of documentation or even knowledge of internal roles, responsibilities, access management, data flows, processes, and legal and regulatory obligations. As a result, it may lead to severe legal, financial and reputational losses for all involved parties. (Scopism 2020, 211-212.)

SIAM methodology has suggestions for mitigation steps of these security risks. Firstly, a security strategy must be set and communicated throughout the whole SIAM ecosystem. Secondly, utilising other practices and methodologies to identify data flows, processes, and information assets. For example, COBIT and OBASHI may assist in identifying data flows related to security. (International Data Flows Ltd. 2023, ISACA 2023, Scopism 2020, 212.)

Similarly, ITIL practice may bring visibility towards process flows, duties segregation, and responsibilities duplication. ITIL practice highlights the need for onboarding and offboarding processes of service providers and establishing multiconnected, however, separate IT processes, such as incident management, asset management, and configuration management. In the later stages of the SIAM roadmap, implementing change management and major incident management helps to get visibility on data handling and its security. (IBM 2023, Scopism 2020, 212.)

Lastly, to mitigate the security risk, a customer organisation must establish openminded relationships where each party is encouraged to spot a security issue and have a mechanism to report it. Hence, collaborative relationships, trust and knowledge may be crucial in mitigating security risks. (Scopism 2020, 212.)

### 2.8.5 Cultural Fit and Behaviours

The fifth challenge SIAM methodology outlines is the cultural fit and behaviours. Initially, members of the SIAM ecosystem are individual organisations with different company cultures. In some cases, service providers who have to interact and even collaborate initially might be the main competitors to each other. Therefore, each organisation involved in SIAM roadmap implementation has a specific pattern of behaviours, which they are unwilling to let go of or tend to return to during transformation patterns. This challenge must be addressed to support SIAM parties' collaboration. As shown in Table 1, if this challenge is not addressed during the Plan & Build stage, it may bring essential risks during the Run & Improve stage. Threats that might be comprehended in cultural fit and behaviour challenge include the siloed behaviour among service providers, no trust towards service integrator, and lack of SIAM benefits visibility for the customer organisation. (Scopism 2020, 213.)

Cultural fit and behaviours challenge includes particular behaviour where the service provider tends to ignore the service integrator and communicates directly to the customer by avoiding the service integrator entirely. The service provider might feel that it is disclosing the contractual agreements signed between customer and provider organisations to a third party represented by the service integrator. If two service providers tend to serve the same customer, but in the market, they are competitors, then they tend to avoid collaboration as they restrain from sharing their own know-how with a competitor. Such behaviour eliminates fruitful collaboration, adds frustration and may lead to end-user dissatisfaction. This way, the value SIAM should bring to the customer organisation is not delivered. (Scopism 2020, 214.)

When customer organisation tends to micromanage and keep control of all SIAM ecosystem elements, dictatorial tones or ways of working from customer or service integrator organisations tend to occur. This approach does not encourage the rest of the SIAM ecosystem members to be involved in knowledge exchange or information sharing; hence, providers accomplish contractually defined services only and tend to avoid engagement. Therefore, the customer

organisation plays a significant role in addressing cultural fit and behaviour challenge. (Scopism 2020, 214.)

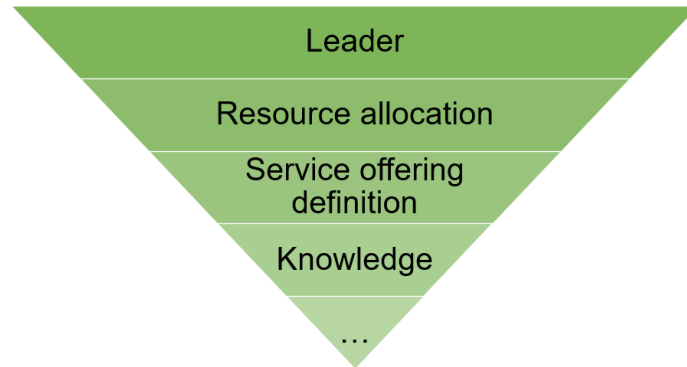


Figure 7. Ecosystem orchestration adapted from Gomes et al. (2021, 802)

Previous studies show that scholars define specific ecosystem management approaches. As an example, there are two known ways to manage an ecosystem. The first is ecosystem orchestration, as demonstrated in Figure 7. It suggests that the ecosystem leader decides on resource allocation, defines service offerings, and shares knowledge across ecosystem players. (Gomes et al. 2021, 802.)

The second approach is ecosystem governance. As shown in Figure 8, the ecosystem leader is not a managerial party. Conversely, a leader is one delegating and empowering other ecosystem members to manage and make decisions to communicate strategy. (Gomes et al. 2021, 802.)

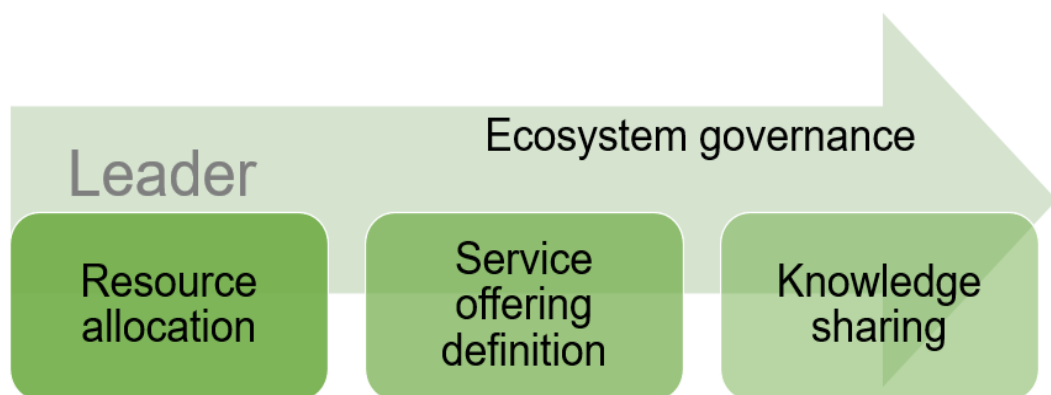


Figure 8. Ecosystem governance adapted from Gomes et al. (2021, 802)



To orchestrate such a giant mechanism, the customer organisation must outline rules throughout the ecosystem that must be obeyed. These include but are not limited to processes, communication, and knowledge sharing. However, both ecosystem management approaches do not exclude the need for contractual agreements between ecosystem members. (Gomes et al. 2021, 802.)

SIAM methodology suggests that a customer organisation must play a significant role in “setting the tone” of collaboration to address cultural fit and behaviour risk. This can be achieved by acknowledging the cultural challenge and then building and setting mechanisms rewarding collaborative behaviours. By initiating structural elements like decision boards, discussion forums, and other working groups, a customer organisation creates a space to address the cultural behaviour challenge openly. Even using documentation such as collaboration agreements may positively address this challenge. (Scopism 2020, 215.)

#### 2.8.6 Measuring Success

The last challenge outlined by SIAM and demonstrated in Table 1 is the challenge of how we measure success. As a known Peter Drucker’s phrase states, “If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it” (MacKenzie, G. 2023). SIAM seconds this thought as it is challenging to get a grip on something that is not defined. Primarily, this challenge affects customer organisation during the Run & Improve stage when all processes are running. However, the desired value is not visible. This challenge usually includes reporting related risks. For example, there might be no reporting set or inaccurate data is reported. At the same time, reporting too much or too detailed information might cause risks of wasting resources. All these risks lead to a lack of end-to-end service measurement. (Scopism 2020, 216.)

An unwanted behaviour, especially among service providers, is known as the “watermelon effect”. This effect refers to a situation when a service provider reports positive SLAs in green colour, stating that they have delivered service levels within the contractual agreement. However, if such reporting is being broken down or the timeline is adjusted slightly, then there is an underperformance behind these statistics. Usually, such underperformance in

reporting is marked as red. Hence, the results demonstrated in green colour initially, in reality, are not satisfactory and should be kept in red. Thus, the colours of reported statistics represented the green visible outside, and the red hidden is called the “watermelon effect”. (Kallio, 2023.)

This challenge can be mitigated by utilising different reporting approaches or methods. Directly communicating who needs the report, what needs to be reported, how often, etc., may seem dictatory at first. On the contrary, if an explicit value is communicated to a particular stakeholder(s), it brings a value that was sought after in the first place. The same applies to a regular reporting review – if the report no longer fits the purpose, it should be dismissed. For this to happen, employees who are responsible for reporting must be empowered to suggest reports for review or even dismiss irrelevant reporting. This leads to “general rules” mentioned in previous subchapters, meaning that a customer organisation must establish a set of rules defining reporting and performance management. (Scopism 2020, 216.)

## 2.9 Past Findings Regarding Challenges within SIAM

The itSMF SIAM SIG provided the author of this thesis access to past studies conducted by itSMF SIAM SIG and research findings outlined for itSMF SIAM SIG by scholars. Notably, the past research has been performed before Scopism BoK was published. Hence, the SIAM methodology structure differs from the one outlined in this thesis's theoretical chapter. The following subchapters highlight past research findings relevant to current thesis research.

### 2.9.1 itSMF SIAM SIG Survey

The key elements highlighted in past studies bringing value to current research were the findings from the itSMF SIAM SIG “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study” survey conducted in 2016. Members of itSMF SIAM SIG conducted the study online. During this survey, qualitative and quantitative questions were asked to understand the knowledge of SIAM among survey respondents. (SIAM SIG 2016,

7-19.) Figure 9 demonstrates the background of the survey respondents conducted in 2016 by itSMF SIAM SIG.

Figure 9 shows that most respondents (42%) had managerial roles in IT departments. The majority of respondents were service providers or consultancy companies. Most respondents (42%) were from large (over 5000 employee count) companies. (Virri 2016, 10.)

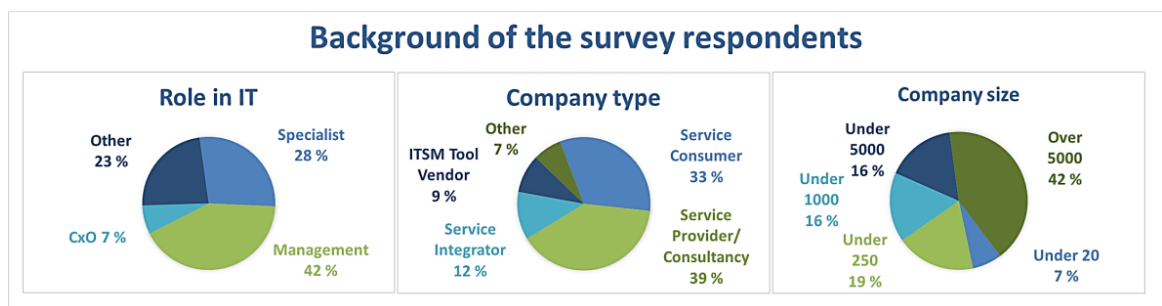


Figure 9. An illustration of the stakeholders that participated in the SIAM survey for itSMF members (Virri 2016, 10)

One of the findings outlined during the “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study” conducted in 2016 relevant to current research was the answer to the question, “If implementing SIAM, what would be TWO biggest challenges in your organisation?”. The respondents answering this question were categorised into two groups – answers provided by all respondents and answers provided by service consumers. (SIAM SIG 2016, 17.) In the context of this thesis, the service consumer term is the same as the customer organisation mentioned in the theoretical framework, as it is the organisation going through a transformation to enable the SIAM Strategy.

As demonstrated in Figure 10, “unclear goals and responsibilities” and “lack of internal SIAM capabilities/skills” responses got the majority of responses from all respondents. (SIAM SIG 2016, 17.)



Figure 10. All respondents' responses to the question "If implementing SIAM, what would be TWO biggest challenges in your organisation?" (SIAM SIG 2016, 17)

However, when data was categorised by the roles according to SIAM methodology, in the service consumer's opinion, Figure 11 shows that besides the "lack of internal SIAM capabilities/skills" response, an equal amount of service consumers answered that the "insufficient SIAM maturity within service providers" was a significant challenge in implementing SIAM (SIAM SIG 2016, 17.)



Figure 11. Service consumers' responses to the question, "If implementing SIAM, what would be TWO biggest challenges in your organisation?" (SIAM SIG 2016, 17)

The highlights of the SIAM SIG survey conducted in 2016 were that 74% of respondents saw SIAM as a best practice for managing multiple service providers. 58% of respondents have implemented, were in the process of implementation or had plans to enable SIAM within their organisation. 88% of those organisations who adopted SIAM stated that the SIAM strategy has met their expectations. Lastly, the expectations for upcoming organisational change after adopting SIAM were – increased IT operations transparency and vendor management simplification. Both answers got the majority of responses from the service consumers and all respondents. (SIAM SIG 2016, 15-19.)

### 2.9.2 Virri's Research Findings

The “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study” survey conducted by itSMF SIAM SIG members in 2016 needed more analysis and insights from actual Finnish companies. Hence, Virri conducted research based on the data collected during the “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study”. Additionally, to better understand the SIAM implementation topic in Finland, Virri interviewed respondents from four Finnish case companies. (Virri 2016, 2-10.)

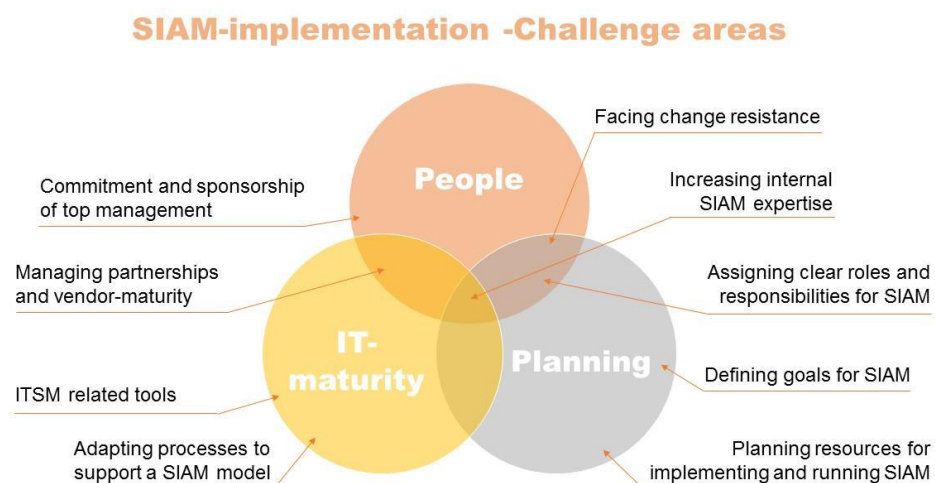


Figure 12. Pain points found in the current state analysis in relation to three challenge areas (Virri 2016, 16)

The highlight from Virri's research relevant to the current thesis is shown in Figure 12. After analysis of the study conducted by itSMF SIAM SIG members in 2016, Virri highlighted the most challenging areas of SIAM implementation. These were as follows: Commitment and sponsorship of top management, managing partnerships and vendor-maturity, ITSM-related tools, adapting processes to support a SIAM model, facing change resistance, increasing internal SIAM expertise, assigning clear roles and responsibilities for SIAM, defining goals for SIAM, planning resources for implementing and running SIAM. Additionally, Virri categorised these challenges into three focus areas – people, IT-maturity and planning. Figure 12 demonstrates that some of these challenges overlapped in the abovementioned categories. (Virri 2016, 15-16.)

Finally, Virri has drawn a list of recommendations for addressing the above-mentioned challenges. Such suggestions included raising IT maturity for adapting SIAM, planning SIAM enablement, preparing IT tools and solutions for SIAM implementation, and identifying key performance indicators to evaluate SIAM running. (Virri 2016, 58-63.)

### 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The scientific methods allow systematic overviewing of what the researcher observes. The theoretical background must be built to gain knowledge of what concepts and their combinations assist the researcher the most. Hence, research design allows researchers to define research methods and approaches that best suit data analysis. (Abbott & McKinney 2012, 21, 35.) This chapter demonstrates the research design, including the research approach, methods, process and data analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The thesis is based on the qualitative research. The attractiveness of a qualitative research approach is the possibility of conducting in-depth studies about the topics the author favours. Qualitative research has its benefits compared to other research approaches, as it does not necessarily need established limited conditions, among others. Unlike quantitative analysis, it does not limit research to a certain number of respondents, where a sufficient response rate is a must. (Yin 2016, 6.)

Despite its appearing simplicity, the qualitative research approach is rather challenging when it comes to the demonstration of the research results. The results of the qualitative approach are more challenging to determine as it is less structured than the quantitative method, and it may lay in different topics due to respondents' diverse backgrounds and experiences. The decisive element the qualitative approach must highlight is the background of interviewees and bringing transparency and adherence to evidence. Another significant aspect commonly used to present qualitative research results is displaying data using graphical, tabular or other visual forms to narrow the broad scope of the qualitative research approach for its reader. (Yin 2016, 249, 257-263.)

The thesis utilises an abductive research approach. The reasoning behind this choice was that the abductive research approach has an iterative research design, allowing it to return to a previous research phase (preparation, interview,

data analysis, reporting) during the qualitative research lifecycle. Moreover, an abductive approach contains a combination of inductive and deductive elements that allows the study of existing literature relevant to the research and then leaves a space to encounter an empirical phenomenon that is not yet addressed by the existing literature. (Brinkmann 2013, 46-47, Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill & Bristow 2019, 155-158.)

### 3.2 Research Methods

The use of scientific methods supports the research process. They allow for building a methodological approach towards defining the study, collecting and analysing data. The qualitative interview is a suitable method to manage the nuances of a social world. (Brinkmann 2013, 48.)

The data collection of this thesis was based on SIAM literature review and semi-structured interviews with SIAM experts. The author reviewed relevant literature to familiarise with the SIAM enablement challenges described in the existing literature and form the theoretical framework for future analysis. Getting familiar with the theory allowed the author to obtain knowledge regarding the SIAM Strategy and to prepare to discuss it with SIAM professionals during interviews. The primary source of information was the Service Integration and Management Foundation Body of Knowledge by Scopism, along with relevant literature, articles, practical guides and surveys.

For this research, data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews. The author interviewed seven SIAM experts across the Nordics from different industries, such as manufacturing, banking, consulting, logistics, and aviation. The author of this thesis was the interviewer. The interviewees were selected within itSMF professional network by itSMF SIAM SIG members. The important part of the criteria was that the chosen interviewees had expertise in SIAM and IT and represented a Nordic company.

Interviews were conducted via an online platform, Microsoft Teams. The interviews were recorded with participants' permission, and voice-to-text functions were used for ease of data analysis. Interviews were between 60 and



90 minutes long. Interview questions were drafted in English by the author of this thesis, reviewed together with SIAM SIG members, and then adjusted according to the knowledge and SIAM expertise of the SIAM SIG members. The interview script form can be found in Appendix 1. The questions were semi-structured. The semi-structured interview is sufficiently structured to address research questions while allowing enough space for interviewees to share their experiences with the research questions (Galletta 2013, 24).

Table 2. Participants interviewed

Identifier	Role	ITIL certified	SIAM certified	SIAM role	SIAM Roadmap stage	SIAM structure
I1	SIAM Service Manager	+	+	Service Integrator	4	Hybrid
I2	Head of End User and Workplace Services, SIAM reports to I2	+	-	Customer& Service Integrator	4	A mix of hybrid and Lead supplier service integrator
I3	Head of Enterprise Service Management	-	-	Customer& Service Integrator	4	Hybrid
I4	SIAM Consultant	+	+	Consultant	1	Internal
I5	IT SIAM Lead manager	-	-	Customer	2	Internal
I6	Head of Service Management office	+	-	Internal provider	Not defined	Hybrid
I7	Head of SIAM function	+	-	Customer& Service Integrator	4	Hybrid

Table 2 demonstrates the role of an interviewee within their current position and if they are certified ITIL or SIAM experts. In some cases, interviewees had plenty of experience within SIAM, even without certification. Hence, their responses were weighted by years of experience even though they were not certified. Table

2 specifies the SIAM role the interviewee represented, the SIAM Roadmap stage they are in and the SIAM structure according to the SIAM Strategy they chose. The identifier of interviewees mentioned in Table 2 was used in the Findings and Discussion chapters to refer to a particular interviewee.

### 3.3 Research Process

A research process is usually done in four steps: preparation, interviewing, analysis and reporting (Brinkmann 2013, 46). The research process began in June 2023. The relevant literature was reviewed, and interview questions were drafted during the preparation step. Before conducting interviews, the itSMF SIAM SIG members reviewed the interview questions and added their valuable input. The interviews were held during August and September 2023. The data obtained during interviews was analysed in September 2023. The last step of the research process – the report was prepared in October and finalised in November 2023.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The recording of interviews allowed the author to obtain the script of each interview. This way, the gathered data was analysed thoroughly. The author selected a thematic analysis approach. The reasoning behind this choice was that the thematic analysis approach has enough flexibility for a researcher to stay along with the theoretical framework and look for new patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke 2013).

The selected abductive approach supported the research. The author analysed interview scripts by searching for similar patterns as thematic analysis suggests. After the last interview was held in September 2023, and all interviews were transcribed, the author outlined codes to identify a significant section of each text relevant to research questions. During this process, the author outlined 28 applicable codes. As a final step, as per the thematic analysis approach, the author defined five themes and four categories, answering two research questions of the thesis.

## 4 FINDINGS

The fourth chapter demonstrates the findings from seven semi-structured interviews answering the research questions. The key results, along with identified themes, are presented below. Figure 13 illustrates the findings the author outlined in answering the research questions.

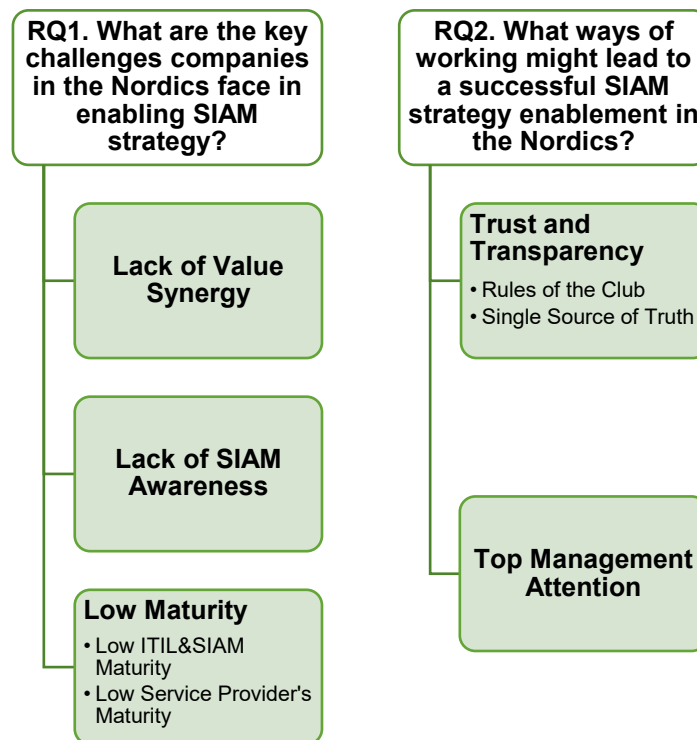


Figure 13. Findings concerning research questions

A summary of interviewed companies' SIAM characteristics is presented in Table 2 to understand the advancement regarding SIAM Strategy Roadmap stages and chosen SIAM Structures by represented companies. In this chapter, the interviewees' identifier numbers shown in Table 2 are used to reference a particular interviewee.

### 4.1 Challenges Companies in the Nordics Face in Enabling SIAM Strategy

Three themes were identified answering the first research question (RQ1): What are the key challenges companies in the Nordics face in enabling SIAM strategy? These themes are a *lack of value synergy* across the SIAM Ecosystem, a *lack of*

*SIAM awareness* in the Nordics and a *low maturity* in the Nordics. These themes are elaborated in the following subchapters theme by theme.

#### 4.1.1 Lack of Value Synergy

While conducting and analysing the data, the author noted that the lack of value topic occurred often and outlined the *lack of value synergy* theme. At first sight, it looked like it was concerning customer organisations only. Two codes were created at first: *value* and *business value*. However, the author later noticed that the same pattern was occurring with service providers and service integrators and one more code *no strategical view* was created.

The synergy here refers to value creation as a combination of two-way efforts. In SIAM structures, in particular, it can even be seen as a three-way effort– from customer organisation, service integrator and service providers. Firstly, the lack of value synergy here refers to customer organisations often chasing service providers to fulfil basic contractual agreements. For example, I2 stressed that fulfilling contractual agreements is a bare minimum for a service provider to deliver services customer organisation is buying from them: “*Customers thinking so that filling the contract is a minimum requirement*” (I2). As a customer organisation, I2 highlighted that value is the vital element they expect from service providers: “*We are wanting more value out of it [contractual agreement with a service provider]. We want more, we want continuous improvements, we want innovations we want stuff like that and filling your contract is your absolute minimum and in order to get into that space where you get more than what you are buying*” (I2). I2 stated that in the eyes of a customer organisation, the delivery of contractually agreed services is a minimum, and innovation is an expectation.

On the other hand, if a service provider does not understand the value they have to deliver to a customer organisation, there is also friction in service provision. For instance, I6 gave an example from a SIAM service provider’s point of view: “*Well, if you take a SIAM service provider, an external service provider, when it comes especially in execution when they have to deal with other partners of our company, those resources are still seen as somebody coming from their*

*competitor companies”(I6). I4 seconded the same opinion “if they don't see a purpose with Siam then it's a struggle” (I4). I6 outlined that if service provider does not understand the delivered value it tends to withdraw: “it's coming from our supplier, that motivation is not high enough because the teams may not know why this is needed and what benefit it brings to our organization” (I6). Therefore, it is essential to have a synergy within value delivery during SIAM enablement.*

However, to stop the blame culture where service providers tend to withdraw from the SIAM transformation, customer organisations understand that the value creation pressure should not be on service providers only. I2 explained: *“If you want to have a good value out of your supplier and service provider, you [customer] should be quite aligned on the target level of what we want to achieve. And I give a bit of a sort of contrary examples, but people tend to put quite a lot of focus on SLAs and KPIs. I'm not against those obviously, but it tends to lead into situations that you are managing those SLAs, but you are not managing the outcome what you want to achieve (value)” (I2). With this example, I2 highlighted that despite the statement at the beginning of this section that the customer is chasing service providers to deliver contractually agreed services, it is vital for the customer organisation to outline the value they seek with SIAM Strategy enablement.*

The service integrator has a unique role along with the customer. *“What we are aiming for is to have a service integration team, which works based on our [customer's] benefits, meaning our organization benefits and our priorities. If you have it with the supplier [separately], then you're talking about two different companies thinking about two different priorities. And this service integration team has to somehow manage both. It's not about suppliers alone. It's also within our [customer] organization” (I6). I6 pointed out that besides the customer business requirements statement and provider's service provision, the role of the service integrator is crucial in the SIAM Ecosystem. If they do not understand the value the customer organisation tries to achieve with SIAM transformation, it creates challenges for all SIAM Ecosystem parties.*

At the same time, a strategic view must be present in the SIAM Ecosystem to capture the business value, especially in complex multicultural environments. I2 highlighted that SIAM ecosystem players have no shared value creation perception due to a lack of strategical view: *“I don't think people always understand the impact my work to other people's work”* (I2). Additionally, I2 gave a lengthy example where a service provider failed to deliver inventory. However, I2, as a customer organisation, was questioning, *“Is that you are focusing [on] that mistake bit, or are you focusing on where you create more value?”* (I2). It is essential to look into mistakes and deliver within contractual terms. The strategic value delivery mind must be the priority during SIAM enablement.

The lack of value synergy theme outlined here reflects the challenge of understanding what value each SIAM player – customer organisation, service integrator and service provider brings towards a common goal.

#### 4.1.2 Lack of SIAM Awareness in the Nordics

The second theme, *the lack of SIAM awareness in the Nordics*, was outlined easily. The author created codes such as *SIAM awareness, SIAM understanding, Nordics, misconception, and lack of SIAM knowledge*, as most interviewees made it clear that lack of awareness was a challenging area.

The *lack of SIAM awareness* means the absence of knowledge about the SIAM theory and the benefits SIAM Strategy brings: *“I can say that more than half of the people don't understand the correct definition of SIAM and the correct envisage, the benefits of this”* (I1). I4 seconded the same opinion: *“In general, SIAM is not really known [...] in Denmark, and there are not that many companies that have ever heard about SIAM. [...] lack of knowledge that we are seeing”* (I4). I5 and I3 supported the same opinion: *“I think it [SIAM] is an interesting topic to say, but it is so new in Finland also in the whole IT that people doesn't really know that what is it and what is about”* (I5), *“it appears that they're really not as knowledgeable as they lead to believe”* (I3).

The second layer of *the lack of SIAM awareness* is a misconception of SIAM. For example, I1 pointed out that often, SIAM ecosystem players think that SIAM is an

extension of Project Management: *“When I talk about SIAM with other people, somebody will come and say that it is an extension of a project management”* (I1). I4 seconded the opinion about misconception, however, with supplier management in their case: *“That’s one of the challenges that people don’t understand SIAM, and if they have heard about SIAM, some people think that SIAM is just an advanced supplier management”* (I4). I5 explained that the lack of understanding and misconception of SIAM was in their organisation, too: *“the knowledge that what is SIAM has started. At first hand, people didn’t know even what are, where, in which word SIAM comes from. Is it the service integration architect and management? Someone says that we didn’t know what SIAM is”* (I5).

I7 pointed out that a lack of knowledge or misconception of SIAM may appear from employees' professional backgrounds. *“It is quite different within the IT organization. It’s not easy for others to understand what the SIAM is because, like the other teams working directly with technologies, they are improving in installing technologies like on the infra site or directly developing applications. SIAM function does not directly work with technologies. It’s not directly developing applications”* (I7). Hence, I7 saw it as a challenge in SIAM enablement and tried to address it in their organisation: *“But we [SIAM team] are giving the input and guidance for different IT teams how to work with basic processes if you have issues within your services. We are able to report through this incident and problems and so forth”* (I7). The above example outlined the lack of SIAM understanding as a valid challenge while enabling SIAM Strategy.

The lack of SIAM understanding cannot brighten up the benefits it is meant to bring during SIAM enablement. Here, I4 stated that it is counterproductive: *“that lack of knowledge on what SIAM is, something that it does in general and be counterproductive, and then we also see it in my current project that [...] other parts of the organization really don’t know what SIAM is, and that’s a challenge which I think we have tried to address”* (I4). I6 highlighted that in their case, SIAM benefits are not used to the full extent in their organisation due to a lack of knowledge. I6, in particular, emphasised that the middle management loses the most from lack of SIAM benefits knowledge: *“The middle manager should be*

*aware of the benefits of SIAM or understanding of what SIAM is and how that could help towards the organization” (16).*

#### 4.1.3 Low Maturity

The *low maturity* theme was evident from the very beginning, but it was challenging to identify a commonality of maturity mentioned by interviewees. The *low ITIL and SIAM maturity* and the *low service providers’ maturity* categories are described below. The codes such as *maturity*, *ITIL maturity*, *SIAM maturity*, and *service provider’s maturity* were outlined to determine the data segments related to this theme.

##### 4.1.3.1 Low ITIL and SIAM Maturity

Some interviewees highlighted that organisations must look into *ITIL maturity*, to begin with SIAM enablement. For example, I3 stressed that low maturity in ITIL is a more significant issue than low SIAM maturity: *“That has caused a lot of issues first with the integration and also then with the processes and people who are not confident in their especially the ITIL skills and I'd say that you need to know ITIL before you can really do SIAM and the issue is that there is a huge gap in the ITIL maturity. So it's not as much the SIAM maturity, it's the ITIL maturity” (13).*

On the other hand, interviewees also identified a lack of SIAM maturity as a challenge. In particular, when asked about SIAM KPIs in their organisation, I1 mentioned that their SIAM Roadmap is not mature enough to have CSIs associated with the last SIAM Roadmap stage: *“We renamed it as a SIAM KPIs because they [customer] felt that we are not mature enough to have the continual improvement” (11).* Additionally, when asked about SIAM Roadmap stage, I6 mentioned that the SIAM maturity is not consistent: *“We have some processes running in SIAM, but not all the process. But our maturity varies from you know all these processes. It's not like on the same level” (16).* On top of that, I3 highlighted the SIAM maturity challenge when asked about their SIAM structure: *“I'd say that the external service provider has to show that it's more capable or at*



*least as capable as the internal service integrator, and right now we're just seeing a lot of problems because of the different maturity levels” (I3).*

Similarly, the I2 seconded the same opinion. When asked about SIAM KPIs, I2 mentioned that their organisation does not have SIAM KPIs in particular. However, I2 illustrated their SIAM maturity by comparing it to the CMMI scale: *“[SIAM] it’s running, but just maturity is not high. If I was using some sort of a maturity scale, for example, CMMI, which is sort of a process maturity methodology. I’d say that a reasonable target for a company like us is to be somewhere like 3 out of 5 in [CMMI] maturity. Currently, we are maybe 2 minus out of five” (I2).* The interviewees expressed that *low ITIL and SIAM maturity* is challenging SIAM transformation within the Nordics.

#### 4.1.3.2 Low Service Providers’ Maturity

*The low service providers’ maturity* category was the least evident category within a *low maturity* theme. After data analysis, the author noted that almost all interviewees commented on the complexity of SIAM enablement due to the complexity of SIAM processes in a particular organisation. When the author was looking for a pattern, the maturity of the service providers category was shaped. Code words such as *service provider’s maturity, service provider experience, and industry complexity* were created.

Firstly, when asked about the SIAM Structure, I2 gave an example that if an organisation is about to choose a lead supplier service integration model, there is a challenge in unified maturity level across the suppliers: *“When everybody has been able to choose their own suppliers, if we are now building the concept that you have, for example, a partner who is your leading supplier and if you have lots of different suppliers then everybody you kind of firm it’s a bit difficult to have SIAM mechanism because everybody’s contractors are completely different and the SLAs and all that [...] the maturity in that sense has not been that high” (I2).*

I3 emphasised that low SIAM maturity is typical for organisations that aim to act as an external service integrator, too: *“In Denmark, at least the application of SIAM is not something that many companies are using, especially the external*

*service integrator” (I3). Similarly, while answering about the SIAM Structure, I3 identified the challenge of service providers’ maturity: “one of the largest issues we’ve seen with SIAM, especially when we are using the external service integrator [structure]. The parties that are integrating, there is a huge difference in the maturity level process-wise or practice-wise from service providers to service provider” (I3).*

On top of that, I3 elaborated on the particular issue different service providers’ maturity level challenge is raising: *“And that definitely does make it difficult because you can have a service provider that is very mature but is using a tool that doesn’t support as many functionalities or areas in ITIL. And you can have another service provider who has the best of breed product, but they are very immature, and so they have tailored a lot of things quite far away from the common ITIL terminology” (I3).*

While answering a question about SIAM KPIs, I3 noted that even if such metrics exist, they are highly dependent on the service provider’s maturity: *“I’ll put it [SIAM KPIs] in progress and then the metrics start scrolling up because even though nobody’s working at it, it looks as if it’s in progress, but it’s not. It’s just been redelegated, and that comes back to the different level of maturity across the different service providers. So, we’re still struggling with issues such as that where the different processes are not aligned even though you’ve had meetings where you say, OK, this will happen. Then you do this, and then you do that and so forth and then when you come back, they have just done how they usually do because they are not ‘plug and play’ ready for SIAM for going into SIAM role” (I3).*

Lastly, I3 emphasised that working in a SIAM environment is a novelty for some service providers: *“It appears to be very new for the people working at the service providers to be working in a SIAM environment” (I3).* I3 assumed that it might be related to the geographical location of the service providers: *“I would say that the service providers that we currently have [...] the two largest ones they are both Danish, and that could be a reason, I don’t know, but its SIAM is not mature” (I3).* Another assumption I3 expressed was that the low maturity of service providers might be related to external pressure for service providers to have SIAM service

in their portfolio. Thus, even if the service provider's portfolio lacks SIAM services originally, the market conditions dictate to have it: *"A lot of service providers do have slide decks where they say 'oh we can do SIAM' because they have to have that on the shelf. But in reality, they have no experience or very little experience in doing it"* (I3).

The empirical data showed that the service providers' maturity is seen as a big challenge in SIAM enablement: *"huge gap in maturity level and that's perhaps why this is so present for because it is the largest issue that we see"* (I3).

#### 4.2 Ways of Working for a Successful SIAM Strategy Enablement in the Nordics

The author identified two themes: *trust and transparency* and *top management attention*, answering the second research question (RQ2): What ways of working might lead to a successful SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics? Interviewees often mentioned trust and transparency as the main building blocks for successful SIAM enablement. The author outlined the *trust and transparency* theme by using codes such as *transparency, trust, and a single source of truth*. Additionally, *the rules of the club* and *the single source of truth* categories were observed within the *trust and transparency* theme. Thus, codes *the rules of the club, a single source of truth, reliable data, and rules* were created.

##### 4.2.1 Trust and Transparency

While answering the question about challenges I1 company was facing during the SIAM enablement, the interviewee specified that there was friction between the service integrator and the service provider layers. To address that problem, they tried to build *trust* among SIAM ecosystem players and be *transparent* about the common value they are trying to deliver to a customer organisation. I1 gave an example where there was no trust towards service integrators as they were considered independent 3rd party: *"Imagine a condition like a Finnish company taking the services of a German company and an Indian person writes to both of them. People just declined it. So there that is the constraint. Once we break that, we explain to them and onboard them, establish the trust and give them the rules*

*of the game. [...] to improve these constraints [the] key role in your speech here is that the other party also need to gain trust and some knowledge of the SIAM and the whole ecosystem” (I1).*

While I2 was clarifying the importance of value creation, they specified that to achieve value creation, trust is needed: *“Trust is something that you try to create. [...] You need to have a quite trust that you are going the same direction” (I2).* I2 elaborated that trust creation is an essential action from the customer’s side to build a trustworthy SIAM ecosystem: *“One real thing is that to create the trust, I am [as a customer] working with my supplier so that they are able to invest in a relationship” (I2).*

I3 explained that originally, lack of transparency was their challenge for a successful SIAM enablement: *“Prior to that, we had [...] very limited transparency in terms of what was actually happening [...] we couldn’t get a clear answer, and it was sort of in the haze. [...] It was a matter of getting into control of what is actually going on, and that’s why we implemented the SIAM role and applied it. [...] One of the other things that we’ve also achieved is that once you get the transparency, you also become aware of the maturity of the different players” (I3).*

I1 outlined that to build trust, transparency has to be to the full extent and illustrated with this example: *“the perception of the suppliers that need to be the exact. [...] I say like very transparently ‘do what I say and say what I do’ that’s it.” (I1)* At the same time, it is acceptable when either of SIAM ecosystem parties makes a mistake, the important part is to stay honest and transparent about it: *“Even if something is wrong I go and tell it is wrong because we did not looked into it because everybody makes mistakes” (I1).* And such transparency leads to a building trust among all SIAM Ecosystem players: *“the suppliers trust is gained imminently. The trust is gained. Once you gain the trust automatically the [SIAM] benefit will start flowing” (I1).*

While answering a question about SIAM Structure, I1 mentioned that the SIAM structure model the company chose also requires an establishment of a trust to a certain extent: *“Trust has to be there because these guys are transparent and they’re representing the customer in the true sense, not in the other sense” (I1).*

Moreover, I2 seconded the same opinion: *“I know that in some other companies, they had this sort of really lead supplier model and then you have kind of a given that lead supplier is really having a customer’s voice that can work as well, but you need to do then quite a lot work too, and you need to trust that your lead supply quite a lot”* (I2).

Most interviewees mentioned trust and transparency as a way to implement a successful SIAM strategy. Additionally, some experts specified particular approaches how to achieve that. The author classified these approaches as *the rules of the club* and the *single source of truth* categories.

#### 4.2.1.1 The Rules of The Club

As one of the approaches to creating suitable conditions for trustworthy relationship across the SIAM ecosystem, *the rules of the club* category was outlined. The club rules refer to a set of common, reliable rules applicable to each SIAM Ecosystem player. I1 suggested to introduce “the rules of the club”. *“See, my first slide goes as trust is my first element, and the second slide goes as the rules of the club. The moment these guys see the rules of the club, they say that half the battle is done. These guys are coming up with something concrete, and they are defining who is going to do what and what are the rules that they are going to follow. So there is what happens without them knowing they started trusting me”* (I1).

Both I2 and I3 seconded the same opinion that for the SIAM Ecosystem to work successfully, common rules are needed: *“You need to have some sort of house rules and ground rules [...] and the SIAM is the mechanism to make the suppliers to work together”* (I2). *“Only made very few alterations to some processes so we try to be very much walking the thin line of doing things by the book because it’s been the hub. It all means that everyone needs to be able to mirror themselves and so forth and don’t deviate too much because otherwise, we don’t have to translate everything to everyone. [...] You need to define processes that both sides are agreeing upon, and that’s what we’re subject to. [...] You can’t just black box a lot of things you need to. I mean, you need to have the clarity on a very deep level”* (I3). I7 shared the same view on the importance of having common

rules: “*You should talk about the corporation’s common rules and a common way of working*” (I7).

The interviewees I1, I2, I3 and I7 applied the upon-agreed *rules of the club* across their SIAM Ecosystem. In their cases, this was a first step towards a successful SIAM transformation.

#### 4.2.1.2 Single Source of Truth

One more pattern identified to bring another dimension to transparency is the “single source of truth”. There is a typical behaviour that service providers fall into, especially within IT functions. This behaviour is called the “watermelon” effect (explained in 2.8.6). Several interviewees mentioned a “single source of truth” as a transparency element among SIAM ecosystem players to avoid such reporting. “*I say call it a trust. [...] the ITSM processes that need to be aligned among the suppliers and the customer’s or a common ITSM processes and then an integrated tool which is one single source of truth*” (I1). “*We are trying to cope with it by enforcing [customer platform] as a single source of truth. [...] We did get a lot of insight and transparency in that respect, and also for the reporting, the watermelon reporting with, as you may be familiar with, we saw a lot of that prior to the change into SIAM. Now, it is a lot more transparent what I mean and how things are actually performing. [...] it’s still a journey, but now we know that we’re looking at the same data*” (I3).

I7 confirmed that tools such as dashboards can act as a single source of truth: “*metrics reports directly coming from the service. [We are] using dashboards for that*” (I7). There is a shared belief among interviewees that a *single source of truth* helps to align ITSM processes among SIAM players. Additionally, interviewees believe it increases the trustworthiness and transparency of the data each player can check from one source. Such a way of working across the SIAM ecosystem eliminates challenges in SIAM strategy enablement.

#### 4.2.2 Top Management Attention

Top management attention was the last theme identified to answer the second research question (RQ2). *Top management, attention, senior management, IT management, upper management, and management* codes were created to outline this theme. The interviewees emphasised that the SIAM enablement will not succeed without proper top management's attention. Top management means the employees taking managerial or C-suite positions in the IT department.

I1 highlighted that customer's senior managers must participate during onboarding so there is a clear understanding of the importance of SIAM enablement across the SIAM Ecosystem: *"need to be made very clear to the suppliers of course that in coordination with the customer [they] see the customer's senior managers in first meetings, onboarding first meetings or introduction meeting, the customer senior management used to sit the first time [...] this is the one thing which I would say that gave us this kind of success"* (I1). I4 elaborated that C-suite management attention is crucial for smooth communication regarding SIAM Strategy enablement: *"It's good if a knowledge manager or an OCM agent can do some communications. It's much better if it's the CIO or the CTO or someone on that level who will do the communication. [...] I wish there were more support from upper management, at least in the IT or technology organizations"* (I4).

I6 seconded a similar opinion: *"One thing which I can emphasize is to get the right attention before we get into SIAM [...] I mean that alignment should come from your management team with your business teams, meaning stakeholders within the organization. If a supplier or suppliers are involved in that process, get their alignment as well before you start those initiatives. So it should work in a way that you get your management's attention"* (I6). To ensure successful SIAM transformation, managerial employees should participate actively in SIAM Strategy enablement alignment across the SIAM Ecosystem.

On the other hand, I7 emphasised that it is vital to show the value SIAM can bring to get IT management's attention: *"[...] SIAM function is building up the trust, and then you have to kind of build up the trust against IT management. Also, [it is] important to IT management to trust that OK we have a function who are always taking care of these issues - notice them in the operations caused by IT, taking them, solving them, providing the SLAs and so forth and ensure that issues are corrected"* (I7). Showing that the SIAM function is systematically taking care of issues IT management is aware of leads to building trust towards SIAM. Eventually, it led to a natural advocating of SIAM by IT management.

At the same time, for a smooth SIAM transformation, the senior management should understand the importance of it so that it could be communicated further: *"Of course, our management is in the big hand on how they prioritize those issues. That is the sign [of] something important that we should [be] pushing there more and then prioritize more of people there"* (I5). Based on the interviewees' experience, the empirical data showed that getting top management's attention made SIAM enablement smoother in their organisations.



## 5 DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the research findings in relation to the theoretical SIAM framework. The outlined themes are compared with SIAM challenges named by Scopism, the results of itSMF SIAM SIG “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study” survey conducted in 2016, and Virri’s research findings (2016).

### 5.1 Research Findings for RQ1 and SIAM Methodology

This subchapter compares the *lack of value synergy*, the *lack of SIAM awareness*, and *low maturity* themes answering RQ1 with the theoretical SIAM framework demonstrated in Chapter 2.

#### 5.1.1 Lack of Value Synergy

The first identified theme, *the lack of value synergy*, highlighted challenges such as providers not fulfilling their contractual agreements and the absence of strategic perception among SIAM Ecosystem players. Additionally, interviewees emphasised that a customer and a service integrator play core roles in aligning value aspects. Based on the findings of this research, *the lack of value synergy* theme can be compared to the first three challenges of SIAM. These challenges are building a business case, level of ownership and commercial challenge. (Scopism 2020, 201-210.)

As shown in Table 3, such risks as missing value, having unclear drivers for transformation and unclear expectations from SIAM are associated with the first SIAM challenge identified by Scopism. Similarly, while analysing the research data, *the lack of value synergy* theme outlined that the risks mentioned above are valid challenges named by the interviewees.

However, *the lack of value synergy* theme is broader than just the Building a business case challenge. The lack of strategic view across the SIAM ecosystem mentioned by I2 seconded a lack of strategic direction for service integrator risk associated with the level of control and ownership challenge.

Table 3. Lack of value synergy theme and possible risks occurring during 1st-3rd SIAM challenges adapted from Scopism (2020, 201-210)

Lack of Value Synergy		
1. Building a business case	2. Level of control and ownership	3. Commercial challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Missing Value</li> <li>•Unclear drivers for transformation</li> <li>•Unclear expectations from SIAM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Not enough strategic direction for service integrator</li> <li>•Lack of understanding of control level by a service integrator</li> <li>•Lack of understanding of control level by a provider</li> <li>•Roles duplication</li> <li>•Lack of delegation to the service integrator</li> <li>•Customer's hyper control</li> <li>•Micromanaging</li> <li>•Lack of accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Unrealistic targets and SLAs so that service providers withdraw from the ecosystem</li> <li>•Lack of support for provider's incentives</li> <li>•Customer does not feel value vs costs</li> <li>•Blame culture</li> <li>•Lack of Service integrator empowerment</li> <li>•No E2E service</li> </ul>

Additionally, the friction of service provision named by I4 and I6 can be related to service providers' withdrawal from SIAM transformation, named by Scopism as one of the risks of Commercial challenge risks. At the same time, the friction of service provision can also be associated with a lack of accountability, as part of the second challenge mentioned in Table 3. This way, it can be stated that the research findings outlined as *the lack of value synergy* corresponds to the first three SIAM challenges named by Scopism.

Additionally, results of the itSMF SIAM SIG "SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study" survey conducted in 2016 showed that "unclear goals or responsibilities" was the second most common answer to the question "If implementing SIAM, what would be the two biggest challenges in your organisation". Even though this option does not state that it is value-related, it can be implied as a lack of value and strategic direction to bring clarity towards expected deliverables. (SIAM SIG 2016, 17.) At the same time, Virri's "assigning clear roles and responsibilities for SIAM" and "defining goals for SIAM" challenges outlined under the "Planning" theme have similarities to the *lack of value synergy* theme (Virri 2016, 16).

Moreover, the ecosystem development model described by Haimi & Huovinen refers to value maximisation as one of the main objectives of ecosystem management. They emphasise that the traditional governance model with strategic, tactical and operational levels is simple and effective in value communication. (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 75-76.) Therefore, the *lack of value synergy* theme defined during this research as one of the challenges for SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics was not directly named as such before. However, there are similarities to challenges named by Scopism, the ecosystem development model, the SIAM SIG Survey and Virri's findings.

#### 5.1.2 Lack of SIAM Awareness in the Nordics

The *lack of SIAM Awareness in the Nordics* theme was evident throughout the interviews. The interviewees kept highlighting the fact that there is a misconception of what SIAM is. Moreover, there is a vague understanding of the SIAM concept or its benefits overall. Additionally, there were perceptions that professionals with IT backgrounds have a better SIAM awareness than workers from other industries. In a few interviews, Finland and Denmark were mentioned in particular. Hence, the outlined theme has a Nordic accent to it. When the author looked for similarities in SIAM theory, there was no direct challenge related to a lack of SIAM Awareness. However, before this research began, one of the SIAM SIG board members had an assumption that challenges arising from SIAM enablement in the Nordics may occur due to a lack of SIAM knowledge. The empirical data supported the same opinion.

The SIAM Professional BoK addresses the practicalities of SIAM roadmap establishment. Hence, the *awareness* term can be noticed in the context of handling organisational change, particularly within the ADKAR model or as part of awareness campaigns (Scopism 2019, 239-243, 326-327). On the other hand, the SIAM Foundation BoK does address the lack of SIAM Awareness as a challenge. Correspondingly, in subchapter 2.7 of this thesis, the author described the SIAM strategy's benefits by reviewing Exalate articles. However, the awareness of SIAM was not raised as a risk or challenge by Exalate as well.

Contrary to Virri's outlined findings (2016), the *lack of SIAM awareness* theme can be associated with the "Increasing internal SIAM expertise" challenge. However, there was no elaboration on this challenge in Virri's research. (Virri 2016, 16). For comparison, the author reviewed Global SIAM surveys conducted during 2020-2022 by Scopism. The Global SIAM Survey 2021 had *awareness* mentioned within the last "other comments" section as a free text by survey respondents. One of the responses stated, "Customers, especially larger banking, financial services and insurance corporates, lack *awareness* regarding the benefits of SIAM adoption" (Scopism 2021, 60). This statement supports the empirical data collected for this thesis. However, the Global SIAM Survey 2021 showed that this opinion took minor attention. Therefore, the author concluded that the lack of SIAM awareness is a valid challenge, especially within the Nordics. However, this challenge was not addressed within the Scopism literature mentioned in chapter 2 of this thesis.

### 5.1.3 Low Maturity vs SIAM methodology

The *low maturity* theme was outlined while analysing research data, as almost all interviewees agreed that *low maturity* is a significant challenge while enabling SIAM Strategy in the Nordics. In particular cases, for example, I3 highlighted that ITIL maturity is more relevant than SIAM maturity without ITIL fundamentals alone. SIAM methodology acknowledges the use of ITIL as a management framework. ITIL is mentioned as one of the standard practices for maturity assessment along with COBIT and other frameworks (Scopism 2020, 104, 114-115). At the same time, the recommendations drawn by Virri after analysing itSMF SIAM SIG "SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study" survey stated that raising the organisation's IT maturity might help in adapting SIAM (Virri 2016, 58).

On the other hand, some interviewees did not distinguish ITIL maturity from SIAM maturity but instead combined them as *the* maturity. Maturity is a familiar term in SIAM methodology, e.g., in the Global SIAM Survey 2022 carried out by Scopism, one of the survey questions had a question: "What challenges do your customer typically face?". Maturity was associated with the minor "other" answer option back then. The "other" option scored 4% among respondents only, and maturity

was associated with a “Low process and organisational maturity” answer among three additional answer options within the “other” choice. (Scopism 2022, 60.)

Despite scoring such low attention at the Global SIAM Survey 2020, the term maturity term is widespread across SIAM Foundation BoK. The SIAM theory emphasises that it is crucial to have sufficient maturity to fulfil the SIAM ecosystem roles. It is a vital element within the SIAM roadmap stages and one of the factors while deciding what SIAM structure the customer organisation will choose. Maturity is essential for a customer’s understanding of their own service management capabilities. (Scopism 2020, 14,48,57-103.)

The importance of service maturity is explicitly outlined in SIAM Professional BoK by demonstrating several maturity assessment frameworks and measurement practices (Scopism 2019, 299- 301, 338, 361). Moreover, service maturity is one of the cornerstones of approaches for integrating processes across service providers (Scopism 2020, 170-172). I2 and I3 emphasised that the maturity of service providers was a crucial challenge while enabling SIAM in the Nordics.

In addition, the results of the itSMF SIAM SIG “SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study” survey conducted in 2016 supported the opinion about the low service providers’ maturity challenge. The survey result showed that one of the top two answers of service consumers to the question, “If implementing SIAM, what would be TWO biggest challenges in your organisation?” was “insufficient SIAM maturity within service providers” (SIAM SIG 2016, 17). Even though the low service providers' maturity and IT maturity were noted as a challenge in adopting the SIAM Strategy, it was not directly associated with one of the challenges or even possible risks outlined by Scopism before.

## 5.2 Research Findings for RQ2 and SIAM Methodology

In this subchapter, the research findings to the second research question are compared with the theoretical framework demonstrated in chapter two of this thesis. The themes responding to RQ2 are *trust and transparency*, and top management attention.

### 5.2.1 Trust and Transparency

Trust is commonly addressed in SIAM methodology. In particular, trust is relevant in selecting SIAM structure during SIAM Strategy enablement. In case when the customer selects the Lead supplier as a service integrator model or external service integrator model, the trust level towards the service integrator must be at its highest. Otherwise, these models will not serve their purpose to the full extent of these models may bring. (Scopism 2020, 90-101.) The empirical data of this research supported the same shared understanding. For example, I2 emphasised that if a customer organisation selects a lead supplier as a service integrator SIAM model, then trusting that party is the only way to implement this model successfully.

If a customer lacks trust towards a service integrator, I2 stated that it leads to role duplication and micromanagement. These findings are similar to mitigation steps suggested to address the second SIAM Challenge demonstrated in Table 3. In particular, the level of control and ownership (challenge 2) depends on the trust level within the SIAM environment. At the same time, a lack of trust may cause role duplication. Potential risk mitigation of the second challenge suggests that customers should develop trust towards a service integrator to avoid role duplication and release a micro-management approach. Correspondingly, micro-management eventually affects all SIAM ecosystem parties negatively if not eliminated. (Scopism 2020, 205-207.)

Additionally, trustworthy provider management approaches from customer organisations compared to strict contractual agreements may help achieve more value (Scopism 2020, 27-28). Moreover, a trust-based supplier management approach and the trust management cycle are suggested ways of working towards successful SIAM Strategy enablement (Scopism 2019, 380-385). The empirical data collected during this research supported the same opinion. Interviewees stated that investing in trustworthy relationships with a provider is like investing in relationships. By doing that, the SIAM transformation journey becomes a common goal of all SIAM Ecosystem parties.

Another dimension towards trust addressed in SIAM methodology is that trust is vital in agile working methods. The agile approach is advised as an iterative approach towards, for example, requirements discovery and solutions improvement. The agile approach can bring desired results by trusting involved parties that they have self-organizing teams with collaborative ways of working. (Scopism 2019, 454-456, Scopism 2020, 130.)

Additionally, the global digitalisation and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic led remote work and virtual teams to become a commodity in particular industries. Thus, SIAM methodology named trust one of the elements of successful communication components in managing cross-functional teams, especially virtual teams. Therefore, trust is mentioned as collaboration and cooperation's critical success factor in using agile ways of working and managing virtual teams. (Scopism 2019, 247, Scopism 2020, 166, 190.)

On the other hand, the transparency term is less frequent in SIAM Foundation BoK. However, the SIAM Professional BoK emphasises the transparent ways of working as a tool to deliver desired benefits during the SIAM transformation to define strategic value. As a part of establishing governance: "The central tenet of governance is transparency across the decision-making process." (Scopism 2019, 46-48, 122-126, 343.) The research interviewees emphasised that transparent ways of working and trustworthy relationships show the actual maturity of all SIAM ecosystem players during SIAM Strategy enablement.

The lessons learned, demonstrated by Virri (2016), corresponded to the same suggestion. Virri stated that the SIAM model provided transparency and quality, enabled controlling elements and improved other processes within this journey. Additionally, Virri highlighted that transparency improvement can be achieved "by creating a single source of service visibility". (Virri 2016, 48, 56, 63.) The empirical data collected during this research supports the idea of the "single source of truth" and "the rules of the club" approaches. These approaches are described below.

### 5.2.1.1 The Rules of The Club & Single Source of Truth

Transparent decision-making and promoting trust are demonstrated in SIAM Professional BoK as evolving ways of working. As SIAM Professional BoK focuses on a deeper understanding of SIAM and has practical suggestions for implementation practices, it demonstrates particular tools to address specific challenges. For example, the Kanban tool used during agile stand up meetings is presented as a transparency enabler. (Scopism 2019, 217.)

However, to ensure that all participants of agile stand up meetings have aligned the meeting agenda, the ground rules for stand up meeting must be introduced. “The rules” or “rules of the game” are commonly used in professional SIAM literature. For example, Haimi & Huovinen refer to them as “way-of-working” term (Haimi & Huovinen 2018, 15). By setting a particular set of rules, SIAM methodology demonstrates that despite signing a contractual agreement, all SIAM parties’ “ground rules” must be established to achieve a successful SIAM enablement. Another term, “code of conduct”, is usually used in bigger organisations for such a set of rules. (Scopism 2019, 52, 63, 136, 204, 363, 347-352, 368, 412, Scopism 2020, 191.)

Similarly, in particular cases, the interviewees suggested “the rules of the club” approach to building trust and transparency during SIAM strategy enablement. Respondents highlighted that a joint agreement, not a legally signed contract, plays along with a successful SIAM transformation. It allows parties to build and gain trust, hence relying on each SIAM Ecosystem player.

The watermelon effect is typical, especially in service providers' behaviour (Kallio, 2023). The empirical data showed this is a known challenge during SIAM Strategy enablement. The SIAM methodology also acknowledges such behaviour and names it “gaming the system” (Scopism 2019, 414).

Another way to establish transparency during SIAM strategy enablement suggested by interviewees was a “single source of truth” approach. SIAM Professional BoK widely uses the “single source of truth” term. One particular example introduced by SIAM literature is the use of the Service Desk as a single



source of truth. The Service Desk serves as a commonly agreed reliable data point for all SIAM transformation parties. Therefore, using a single data point leads to a proper governance model serving reliable reporting for SIAM Strategy enablement. (Scopism 2019, 160-163, 205-231, 357.) Similarly, Virri's research highlighted that in one of the cases, the single source tools led SIAM ecosystem players to a "clear and traceable" performance of an IT organisation (Virri 2016, 41-56).

The empirical data showed that interviewed companies used a single system or single point of contact as the unique point of identifying the trustworthiness of the data. For example, I3, in particular, emphasised that their, as a customer of the SIAM ecosystem, platform served as a single source of truth for all major players of their SIAM Ecosystem. This way, transparency and a trustworthy approach were established so that all parties rely on the same data. An additional benefit of such an approach is that using a "single source of truth" within the SIAM Ecosystem can help to avoid the watermelon effect.

### 5.2.2 Top Management Attention

In one way or another, the importance of top management's attention appears in SIAM literature and related survey responses. Firstly, the SIAM Professional BoK accentuates that the executives' commitment is required to achieve successful SIAM transformation measurements. (Scopism 2019, 143, 226, 320.) Secondly, while analysing the results of the itSMF SIAM SIG "SIAM in Finland – SIAM SIG Study" survey conducted in 2016, Virri outlined that the second favourable answer to the question "Who should be the business owners in your organisation to drive and manage the SIAM adoption?" was a "Top management". Additionally, the commitment of top management was identified by Virri as one of the challenges selected case companies face during SIAM implementation. Therefore, Virri concluded that "the sponsorship of top management must be assured to proceed with an implementation". (Virri 2016, 59, Appendix 2.)

Likewise, the empirical findings of the research emphasised that top management attention is a vital element for a successful SIAM enablement,

especially in the Nordics. Interviewees highlighted that even with a well-thought communication plan, but without top management commitment, SIAM transformation may fail. Some respondents stressed that in the Nordics, it is crucial that C-suite management understand the benefits of SIAM and communicate those down the organisational hierarchy. This opinion is similar to one of the respondents' comments while answering the Global SIAM Survey 2022 that "SIAM engagements need to be focused at the executive level with senior leaders" (Scopism 2022, 64).

The Global SIAM Survey 2022 marked top management attention as one of the "other" answer options. Whereas interviewees of the research stressed that in some cases, for example, when the IT organisation's budget is being reduced, and IT top management cannot clearly understand and communicate the benefits of SIAM Strategy enablement, the focus goes elsewhere, leaving SIAM transformation underbudgeted. Interviewees stressed that even in organisations with less traditional hierarchical approaches, where from first sight it seems that the democratic approach is dominant, like Finland, even in these cases, the top management attention is crucial. One of the respondents highlighted, "*One thing which I can emphasize is to get the right attention before we get into SIAM*" (16). Another respondent confirmed that without the proper top management attention, the SIAM transformation might become a "side project" without the required focus.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the author presents the evaluation of the results – reliability, validity and the limitations that appeared during the research. The theoretical and practical implications of the findings are demonstrated. Finally, the conclusions and the recommendations for further research are described.

### 6.1 Evaluation of the Results: Reliability, Validity and Limitations

Any research must be reliable, scientifically relevant and valid. Validity can be measured by several factors, such as face validity, content validity, concurrent validity, construct validity and predictive validity. At the same time, reliability measures the extent of the research concept evaluation. (Abbott & McKinney 2012, 81.) In this thesis, the research's construct validity increased by documenting evidence during data collection.

More general characteristics, such as internal validity and external validity, can be used. In particular, external validity shows if and how research findings can be generalised. Thus, to support the external validity aspect, research findings were reviewed as a subject for the possibility of analytical generalisation. (Abbott & McKinney 2012, 82.) Additionally, to support internal consistency measures of reliability in this thesis, the data segments identified as meaningful to the research questions were weighted for their extent of correlation to challenges specified in SIAM methodology, and common themes outlined among pieces of collected data.

One of the aspects supporting external validity was analysing previous research literature related to the research problem and defining research questions. In addition, the form and style of interview questions were used to avoid unintentionally leading an interviewee to a specific answer. The open-ended questions format was thought through delicately to support the external validity of this research.

Additionally, as the author has personal professional experience within the SIAM, she withheld personal bias from affecting the data analysis and the research

results. Therefore, the author pursued reliability and validity aspects during the research process. However, it is essential to highlight that due to time constraints, there are limitations to this study.

The major limitation of this study was a lack of in-depth analysis of other than Scopism-relevant literature. This was known at the beginning and accepted by the commissioner's organisation. An additional constraint due to the selected timeline was that there was no time to pick a more comprehensive selection of contacts based on SIAM Ecosystem roles. Most interviewees represented the customer organisations. There was one service provider interviewee only. Unfortunately, after the interviews were scheduled, one of the interviewees representing the service integrator's role tried to charge the thesis author. Hence, after consideration with the commissioner and the thesis supervisor, it was agreed to eliminate this interviewee from the research.

## 6.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Initially, the commissioner organisation was interested in identifying challenges that companies face in the Nordics while enabling SIAM strategy to obtain visibility from practical experience. The challenges identified could be further analysed, and additional SIAM materials developed. The author presented the findings of this research to itSMF SIAM SIG members as the SIAM research project of 2023. Thus, outlined themes of research findings may help itSMF SIAM SIG to look at identified areas of improvement of SIAM strategy enablement in the Nordics and initiate further research or development of additional educational materials for the Nordics itSMF SIAM community.

Furthermore, during the data analysis stage, the Scopism community showed interest in demonstrating the research findings in one of the upcoming Scopism webinars in 2024. Moreover, during the interview rounds, the Danish SIAM community asked the author to hold a presentation for members of the Danish SIAM community to share the findings and insights gathered during this research.

The outcome of this research has practical implications, too. The itSMF SIAM SIG may distribute this research as additional material for the Nordic-based

companies interested in SIAM Strategy enablement or those facing challenges in SIAM Strategy enablement and lacking academic materials for it. Additionally, the answer to the second research question may be used as advice from SIAM professionals in overcoming SIAM strategy enablement challenges. If similar inquiries arise, the author has permitted the commissioner to share these findings with interested companies. Thus, this thesis may serve an educational purpose across companies to better understand what SIAM challenges are common to other Nordic companies.

### 6.3 Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

With this research, the author aimed to answer two research questions. Firstly, what are the key challenges companies in the Nordics face in enabling SIAM strategy? (RQ1). The results gave a fair view of what challenges companies in the Nordics face. The author outlined three themes identified as the main challenges based on the research data. These themes are *the lack of value synergy*, *the lack of SIAM awareness in the Nordics* and *low maturity*. Additionally, the author outlined two categories within the low maturity theme. These categories are the ITIL and SIAM maturity and service providers' maturity.

Secondly, while answering the second research question, the author sought to identify ways to help Nordic companies avoid challenges during SIAM enablement (RQ2). The results showed two themes as the vital success approaches – *trust and transparency* and *top management attention*. In addition to the trust and transparency theme, the author identified “the rules of the club” and the “single source of truth” categories.

Thirdly, the author fulfilled both objectives defined in the introduction of this thesis. First, the author gained profound knowledge regarding the SIAM strategy and its application in the Nordics. Secondly, the author expanded her professional network within Nordics because of active SIAM SIG members' involvement in supporting this research.

In this thesis, the author primarily reviewed SIAM strategy enablement through the SIAM methodology provided by Scopism. Therefore, compared to SIAM

challenges, the findings regarding RQ1 support the first three challenges described in SIAM Found BoK. Correspondingly, the first identified theme – lack of value synergy – overlaps with building a business case, level of control and ownership and commercial challenges identified in SIAM theory. Partially, the other two themes – lack of SIAM awareness and low maturity- outlined by the author correspond to Virri's findings (2016). Even though the second, *lack of SIAM awareness in the Nordics* theme seems to be self-evident, it is not addressed by the above-reviewed SIAM literature to its full extent. Therefore, the author concluded that the lack of SIAM awareness is the prominent challenge organisations in the Nordics face during SIAM Strategy enablement.

Moreover, the analysis of the SIAM structures and roadmap stages of the interviewed companies and the interviewees' knowledge and expertise level allowed the author to identify two themes as successful ways of addressing SIAM enablement challenges. These are *trust and transparency* and *top management attention*. Therefore, the author concluded that the interviewees' suggested ways of addressing RQ2 are aligned with practical recommendations in SIAM Professional BoK. Hence, a trustworthy and transparent approach and top management attention may be vital in a successful SIAM enablement in the Nordics.

Lastly, as a recommendation for future research, the author recommends having an in-depth analysis of how to raise SIAM awareness across Nordic companies. Moreover, additional future research could be performed to gather successful SIAM Strategy implementation cases. The scholars could assemble the results of these future findings into a brochure or other accessible materials. The Nordic companies could use these materials as a know-how list to ease the SIAM enablement in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview structure

Appendix 1.	Interview structure	1(2)
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## Questions

1. What organisation do you represent?
2. In what country are you engaged the most?
3. What is your role/title within this organisation?
4. What do you know about SIAM?
5. As what SIAM party would you describe your organisation (customer, integrator, provider)?
  - a. Why?
6. What is the industry of the customer?
7. What is the turnover/employee count of the customer?
8. What parties (customer/integrator/providers) of your SIAM Ecosystem are in the Nordics?
  - a. Describe the relationships between them. Are there any patterns?
9. What SIAM model is applied (internal/external/hybrid integrator or lead supplier)?
10. In what stage of SIAM strategy enablement do you find your organisation?
 

Stages of SIAM:

  1. Discovery&Strategy
  2. Plan&Build
  3. Implement
  4. Run&Improve)
11. Where would you prefer to be?
12. Is there a plan for enabling the next steps?
13. What benefits of SIAM strategy use in your organisation do you see/notice?
14. What are the drivers for your organisation behind the SIAM strategy?
15. Have you used metrics to determine whether SIAM has been successful?
  - a. If yes, then what metrics?
  - b. If not, then why?
  - c. How else can we measure it?

Appendix 1. Interview structure 2(2)

16. What benefits would you like to see?
  - a. Why?
17. Why, in your opinion, do you not see them?
18. How would you see it happening?
19. What are the obstacles to be conquered to achieve those benefits?
20. Have you used an iterative or linear way of working during the SIAM journey?
  - a. How did the chosen way of working support the journey at different stages?
21. What observations about SIAM strategy enablement would you like to share with other companies?
  - a. Why?
22. Would you like to add something about SIAM or your experience regarding it?
23. Have you done multiple SIAM attempts, and what were the challenges and learnings?
24. What processes (e.g. configuration management, incident management) were in the scope of SIAM, and what was the tooling strategy to discover specific challenges in those areas?
25. Was the transition (phased or not), or have you faced any contract management challenges related to on-/off-boarding?
26. Would you like to join a SIAM (FI) community to share learnings at the implementation/usage of SIAM?