

# #FreeTBM

**SERVICWARE** 

**Corporate Headquarters**

September 28, 2023

**Dr. Alexander Becker, COO**

Mr. Jack Bischof, General Manager TBM Council

Mr. Sunny Gupta, CEO APPTIO

Mr. Rob Thomas, Head of Software IBM

## **#FreeTBM – an open letter asking for unrestricted user benefits from the TBM framework**

Dear Jack, Dear Sunny, Dear Rob,

This is an open letter to you and the whole management of the TBM Council and the responsible management at IBM / APPTIO, which seems to be the current governing entity of the Council.

I have one simple request for the whole TBM ecosystem to you:

Use the momentum of the IBM / APPTIO acquisition to make TBM live up to its promise of being a truly open and independent standard to the benefit of all IT managers around the globe and do not monopolize it further.

In short: **#FreeTBM**

Everyone in the IT Financial Management space, including us here at ServiceWare SE, respect and honor the pioneering work that Sunny at APPTIO together with the TBM Council has done to define a potential standard framework for IT Finance.

Unfortunately, it has become more of a marketing vehicle for one solution vendor instead of unfolding its true power of being an open standard. Therefore, many relevant analysts, most prominently Gartner, have so far not picked up the TBM terminology as they – rightfully – say that they will not do so as long as it is a proprietary approach.

We had high hopes for IBM, moving into the space by the APPTIO acquisition, to make TBM a relevant independent standard: For us, IBM is a lighthouse example for driving open standards (like they did in W3C and the Linux community).

Therefore, soon after this news, I myself tried to join the TBM Conference in Austin this year – and was very glad to get accepted.

Eight weeks after having registered, Jack informed me in a call that I was not allowed to participate – but might be considered to join in future as a sponsor.

After our experiences in recent years and this reaction, I honestly do not believe that there will be any change, despite claims of the same being made over the last few years. Furthermore, I also heard about further cancelations, so this seems not a singular issue. I am disappointed that the TBM Council does not live up to its diversity and inclusion statement and does not allow other solution vendors or service providers to be part of the leading conference in the field.

I think it is about time IBM and the TBM Council tell the IT management community the truth about the real intent of the TBM Council. If the aim is truly to create a lasting standard – Why not use the current momentum and open the TBM ecosystem now?

Besides the new ownership of IBM, the current macroeconomic situation is also the right time to call for action: IT spending is rising everywhere whilst many industries are suffering high cost pressure in uncertain times. There is a chance now to give everyone the needed management tools to control this better.

History has shown that open standards and competition are the best fuel for growth and prosperity – nobody should be afraid of competition – all the analysts in the field agree that a broader range of offerings would benefit everyone. The FinOps foundation is a great example and its openness is key to the current momentum.

It is not a good idea to try to monopolize a framework as this will destroy its legacy rather than create it.

At Serviceware we are open to help contribute to successfully expanding the TBM ideas and framework.

It is not about us at Serviceware only. Please invite all the other vendors in the space such as Nicus, Proven Optics, MagicOrange, ITBMO... to the table.

I think a healthy co-opetition will benefit all customers and interested parties – and bring the IT industry a huge step forward.

Looking forward to your action to open TBM and its Council to the whole ecosystem.

**#FreeTBM**

Best regards



**Dr. Alexander Becker**

Chief Operating Officer