

Executive Summary

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Enterprise Architecture Roadmapping

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Cutter Consortium
Enterprise Architecture
Executive Summary
Vol. 8, No. 9



“SO LONG, AND THANKS FOR ALL THE FISH”

The corporate IT community has battled a few years of a bad rap. First, 1 January 2000 didn't mark the end of the world, leaving those who spent tons of money on duly Y2K preparation wondering why everybody else is still in business. Second, the Internet didn't invalidate simple economic truths — such as the fact that throwing money on an unrealistic business model can only delay bankruptcy. And finally, the recession that invaded the global economy did to many IT investment plans what the bulldozers did to the house of Arthur Dent in Douglas Adams's *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

Just to make life more miserable for IT folks, notable business magazines gave no consolation to this situation, stating that IT has evolved from an exciting and transforming technology to a dull utility. IT organizations are now outsourced; IT jobs are migrating to India, China, and Poland; and young people are no longer interested in IT degrees. “So long, and thanks for all the fish” — anybody who has been building corporate IT for the past 20-30 years may hear this Adams song ringing in his ear.

But perhaps it is worth listening to someone who has been in the field of IT a little longer. Professor Warren F. McFarlan, with 50 years of IT experience, is among those who convey a different message. In a brilliant keynote at Cutter *Summit 2005*, McFarlan explained why he sees the current time as perhaps the most

exciting and most transforming period of the IT discipline. For those who understand and share this view, it is time to depart on a quest of transformation of corporate computing. As the rate of business change and the complexity of the technical environment increases, technology management is clearly being divided into two domains. The first is where technology becomes part of the business services, products, and management processes. In this domain, technology management must become integrated — not aligned — with business management, becoming one of the assets that is consciously used as a strategic resource. The second is that of solutions and technology, which are essential to business continuity but bear little strategic consequence. In this area, technology becomes an infrastructure, and technology management is exchanged with sourcing. The quick, systematic technology advancements cause every strategic component of EA to migrate to the commodity domain, leaving space for innovation and new technology-based business opportunities.

LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT TOWEL

The sad experience with many IT governance initiatives is that regardless of the effort being put into deploying processes aimed at aligning business with IT, the wall between business and IT remains strong. The typical, straightforward understanding of the need for alignment is for the CIO to develop a so-called IT

strategy based on the overall business strategy. However, through inevitable market pressure and business environment change, the business strategy gets modified — but the IT strategy rarely does (especially if it cost the CIO a large sum in consulting fees to have it developed in the first place). The reason for this is often the heaviness of the alignment process that has been put in place — the process that requires huge volumes of artifacts, which make any change a cumbersome effort. Facing the amount of change and keeping in mind the amount of effort necessary to “produce alignment,” it is often the case that both IT and business have lost faith in the viability of the process, and business and IT strategies are implemented quite independently of each other.

In Adams’s story, the space-bound hitchhikers need just a few simple things: a babel fish (a creature residing in an ear, specializing in translation), a towel, and an electronic thumb that would beam you up when a suitable ship arrives. After all, you cannot bear too much weight if you want to travel far in an uncertain universe. For the past two years, our consulting practice has tried to define and test a lightweight approach for business-IT alignment that could serve as the equivalent of the basic hitchhiker’s toolbox. We believe that such a toolbox must be built around enterprise architecture management (EAM).

Established EAM approaches, such as the Zachman Framework, make a difficult start for EAM adepts. They are either too general to define a good starting point or too complex to expect a quick, usable result. A good approach is technology roadmapping — an agile approach to strategic planning. The enterprise architecture roadmapping (EARM) method is essentially an application of the roadmapping concept to the EAM field.

WHAT IS IN THE GUIDE

Anyone who is worried that we are trying to present yet another silver

bullet need not be concerned. We are not providing one simple answer. We invite readers to look for inspiration of how to improve the agility of governance practices.

EARM is firmly rooted in EAM concepts. It assumes that business-IT communication should be based on a shared vision, a small set of artifacts, and a simple process that eases the structuring of communication.

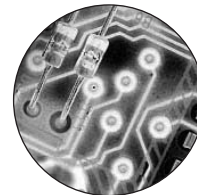
The shared vision comprises business and logical architectures. This vision can be viewed as a long-term business goal to be achieved through IT usage. The method presented in the accompanying *Executive Report* gives a framework for transforming such a vision into an evolution path — a roadmap — showing how to get from today’s environment to the desired place. Decisions being made during roadmap planning are based on business goals, constraints, and objectives so the roadmap itself is aligned with business strategy and goals.

The set of artifacts used and created within EARM is made small enough to convince managers and executives that it is possible to create an adaptable and aligned business-IT strategy, without huge volumes of documentation. The most important feature of the method lies in its ability to rapidly create valuable results allowing planning for both the near future and the long-term horizon. In today’s business environment, the timing of decision making has never been more crucial. So the fact that this method focuses on the most important issues and reduces the number and volume of artifacts to a necessary minimum makes it highly usable, effective, and efficient in the field of EA change management.

The method allows for and encourages continuous use in the organization. While the creation of the initial roadmap can be seen as the most valuable outcome of the process, it is its constant evolution and adaptation to changing business goals that

is critical to the success of the method’s deployment.

Finally, the report presents two case studies of successful deployment of EARM: one is a roadmap for the evolution of an enterprise integration architecture developed for a large telecom operator in Poland; the other is a roadmap of the eGovernment Gateway architecture — a Polish e-government initiative.



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