CIO CHALLENGES

ARCHITECTS CONSTRAINED BY EXISTING TOOLS

OrbusSoftware

CIO Challenges:

What are the main concerns facing Chief Information Officers today? Orbus Software have identified 8 major issues that every enterprise is likely to struggle with when it comes to meeting the demands of the digital age.

The role of enterprise architecture is broad and has the potential to touch upon nearly every part of an organization. However, EA teams can fail to meet their potential due to being constrained by the tools they use, unable to access key information or deliver informative reports.

In this eBook, we'll look at how the tools available to architects can prevent enterprise architecture from fulfilling expectations, and how the right capabilities can unlock their full potential.

Research by Gartner found the key lesson for successful EA Tooling was to align EA tool needs with the value proposition of EA

How Architects are Constrained

Over the previous entries in the CIO Challenge series, we have seen a host of different EA-driven solutions to common issues. From the core work of Enterprise Architecture and the associated frameworks & standards to smaller transformation use cases such as Application Rationalization, Business Capability Mapping and Technology Roadmapping, there are simply dozens of ways that EA could deliver value to an organization. But with so much to do, everything has to be efficient. An architect could potentially build a core architecture just using the Microsoft 365 suite, storing information in Excel and modeling in Visio, but it would be horrendously slow and unwieldy. The tools that architects use have to be powerful and flexible to be able to handle the huge range of use cases that might be required.

Project Roadmap by Capability

16	3.4	2.7
Capability Count	Avg. Strategic Importance	Avg. Supported Goals

Strategic Importance

● Very Good ● Good ● Fair ● Below Average

Investment Banking

Research | Trading

Insurance

Annuity | Life

Distribution

ATM | Branch

Application rationalization provides an easy example of one of the challenges facing EA. As we have mentioned, the average enterprise will have more than 1500 applications in their portfolio. Even ifmany of these are under-utilized or forgotten, it is still likely that hundreds of applications will form part of the infrastructure at the average enterprise. For enterprise architects, this means hundreds of different sources of information to account for, aside from the direct role applications play in understanding processes and capabilities. Dealing with all of this is a huge job in and of itself, taking up valuable resources for an EA team, and is exacerbated by problems with integration between applications.
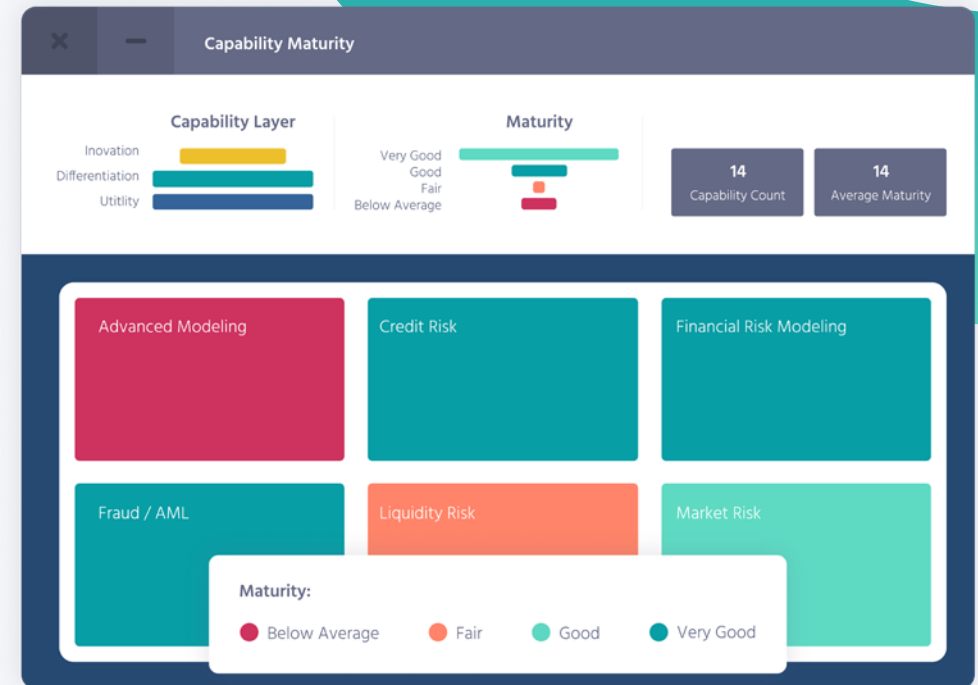
Architects aren't the only group with problems. Many issues will arise due to non-architects being unable to easily access or understand EA deliverables. Often, only a small number of stakeholders will actually have access to the repository of EA data, requiring them to perform any request for data or change needed. With such barriers in place, a lot of potential interest will never amount to anything, as stakeholders decide it is not worth the initial effort. If EA want to reach non-architects, it needs to be presented in forms they understand and that are familiar. Widely used enterprise software, such as the Microsoft365 suite, or Azure, or Jira, should be compatible and integrated with EA tools.

Meanwhile, the reports and projects that an EA team produce suffer the same problem as any other deliverable: they have to be interesting, clear and concise in order to capture the interest of stakeholders. A lengthy report filled with data can certainly be informative, but who will actually read it? Technology Roadmaps must be legible and attractive. Models should be comprehensive, but not confusing. A portfolio needs to be instantly accessible, with multiple visualizations and filters. If enterprise architects cannot convince decision makers or persuade key stakeholders, then nothing will get done.

Many features of EA are required by many organizations, but there are some requirements which are completely unique to individual organizations. No tool can cover every single need right out of the box, which means there must be some way for tools to be customized to meet unique needs. Some tools can be inflexible and difficult to modify, but even for those that can be customized, they can still require excessive amounts of work.

Establishing EA Tooling is regarded as one of the 6 key functions of EA by Gartner

How the iServer Suite Frees Architects

Every enterprise architecture tool can at least offer something to an organization. Even relying on Excel spreadsheets can get you to a basic level of architecture. But the problems described are not the basics; it is the many value drivers which firms rely on, and that many tools are simply not equipped for. Too many tools are narrowly focused and lack enough customization to truly cover every potential use for enterprise architecture.

What does an ideal EA tool look like? As we mentioned, it will need the basics, supporting a variety of EA standards and frameworks and have a flexible meta-model with good support for architecture modeling. It will have a governed central repository for storing all enterprise data and ensuring a single source of truth to work from. From this data, it will be able to manage and display enterprise portfolios. It will almost certainly need to be a SaaS offering or have some form of cloud support. This is the minimum, and most tools do manage to meet this.

But an ideal tool still needs a lot more. Ease of use is vital. The central repository should be accessible from anywhere, with a familiar interface so even non-architects can help manage enterprise data. Coordination between architects and with other teams needs to be seamless. The tool should integrate out-of-the-box with the most widely used applications and have an API for further customization.

It will need to cover a wide range of use cases. Not only core EA deliverables like application rationalization or technology roadmapping, but also niche uses like process analysis and modeling, compliance and governance tasks including GDPR and COBIT, and management of different portfolios such as the technology portfolio, data portfolio and project portfolio. Perhaps most importantly, it will enhance and support decision making. Visualizations and dashboards that are attractive and easy to understand should summarize key EA findings. Key business questions should be answerable at the click of a button. And again, this should all take place in familiar interfaces, without having to open 5 different applications or handle a dozen file types.

Only one tool on the market meets every one of these criteria: **iServer365.**

One Orbus customer directly tracked $8m of savings through iServer in 2021

Unlock the full potential of your Microsoft 365 investment.

The iServer Suite has won Gartner's Peer Insights Customers' Choice for EA Tools for 5 years running, and was named a Leader in the EA Tool space by Forrester. Here's how the iServer Suite enables EA teams to connect with stakeholders and deliver outcomes.

• Microsoft First

Engage business stakeholders in the Microsoft tools they use every day, including SharePoint, Teams and Power BI. Users can access the full potential of iServer365 without ever leaving the familiar Microsoft ecosystem, whether for repository access, collaboration or presentation

• Unlimited Customization

Enrich your repository data via a REST API and pre-built connectors to a range of popular 3rd party systems, including Cherwell, Jira, ServiceNow and Azure. Orbus support is on hand to further enhance your experience and find solutions to your requirements.

• Adapt to Every Use Case

No other tool supports as the breadth and depth of use cases compared to iServer365. Whether you're looking to manage capabilities, create a roadmap for the future, analyze processes, manage portfolios, or just build an architecture, iServer365 can handle it.

• Analysis that Stakeholders Need

Address multiple stakeholder concerns with a broad range of data visualizations and reporting options. Out of the box dashboards answer key business questions across your business, application, technology, data and project portfolios.

iServer365 **Gartner**
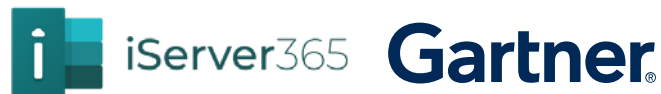
iServer reduced project lead times from a month to a few days at one major financial firm

Discover the true potential of EA

Book a tailored demo today to find out how the iServer Suite can free your architects to deliver effective transformation outcomes:

Discover today

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