the Tetradian weblogs

Why whole-enterprise architecture?

Exploring the need for a broader scope

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This book is for sale at http://leanpub.com/tp-whywholeea

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Contents

WHY WHOLE-EA: SAMPLE

This is a sample of the content from the Tetradian ***Why Whole-Enterprise Architecture*** anthology.

This anthology from the Tetradian weblog highlights the 'why' behind the work that we did to break enterprise-architecture out of the IT-centric box, and restructure it to support the whole enterprise. Whole-enterprise architecture, or Whole-EA, provides a literal 'the architecture of the enterprise', connecting everything together as 'equal citizens', across every type of content or context, for every scope and scale.

This sample contains around one-tenth of the content from the full anthology. The complete bookincludes about 40 posts and 50 images from the weblog, and is split into two sections:

- *Why Whole-EA: A Broader Scope* - summarises the need and scope for a whole-enterprise architecture.
- *Why Whole-EA: Viewpoints* - assesses the changing perspectives on the role of whole-enterprise architectures.

For further information on enterprise-architectures and more, visit the **Tetradian weblog** at weblog.tetradian.com[1]. The weblog currently includes some 1400 posts and more than a thousand images, and is at present the world's primary source on *whole-enterprise architecture* - methods, principles and practices for architectures that extend beyond IT to the whole enterprise.

[1] http://weblog.tetradian.com

For more ebooks and anthologies on enterprise-architecture and more, visit the **Tetradian website on Leanpub** at leanpub.com/u/tetradian[2]. (Each anthology contains around 30-40 posts from the weblog.)

Some books are also available in print format, from all regular book-retailers. For more details, see the 'Books' section on the main **Tetradian website** at tetradian.com/books/[3].

[2]https://leanpub.com/u/tetradian
[3]http://tetradian.com/books/

Why whole-enterprise architecture matters

Why would ***whole-enterprise architecture*** matter to an organisation? And what's the difference between whole-enterprise architecture and other forms of enterprise-architecture? Well, here's **a first-hand case-study** that illustrates both those questions…

There are four main players in this overall scenario:

- myself, as customer or client
- an airline
- a hotel
- a bank, also acting as credit-card processor

(A bunch of other players, too, as we'll see from time to time, though they're less central to the story.)

So here's the ***background***

– On LinkedIn I spot an urgent request from some colleagues for a substitute presenter for a conference, as their scheduled presenter has fallen ill. I reply; we talk it through; we agree to go ahead. It's just six days before the conference starts: I'll have to move fast to get flights and hotel, especially as it's peak-season in that city.

*Step #1 - **Book the flight and hotel***

– I hunt around for flights. Most are insanely expensive, or would take too long with multiple stops. I finally discover a direct flight from a less-obvious airport that's from a well-known budget airline and that's within my very limited budget.

– I go to that airline's website, set up the flight details, and since time is of the essence here, search for a hotel there too, as part of the same booking. Between the cheap backpacker places (at my age I don't think I'm up to dormitory-style living any more…) and the 'luxury hotels' (way outside my price-range, especially as no-one's paying me for the gig), there's just one hotel that's feasible. I manage to set up for one of the few remaining rooms, then complete the overall booking. The website shows me a complete price for the whole booking; I enter my credit-card details, and a success-page that tells me the booking is complete. For safety, I keep the success-page open on my browser until I see the first confirmation-messages appear in my email-stream, and then delete it. The latter turns out to be a mistake…

– The two confirmation-emails both confirm the flight - but *only* the flight, with no mention of the hotel-booking. No problem, wait awhile, no doubt it'll turn up.

*Step #2 - **Re-enquire about the hotel-booking***

– Two hours after the flight-confirmations, there's still no confirmation-message about the hotel-booking, and I'm getting worried. After much searching on the airline's website, I find a live-chat option. I click on that, enter the booking-code, and wait. The dialog tells me I'm number 47 in the queue, but it's only a few minutes before someone comes online: pretty good.

– I explain the problem; they tell me there's nothing showing as yet for the hotel, but "you've got to allow at least 24 hours for the confirmation to come through". Fair enough: we end the chat.

– I sit back to wait for the seemingly-only-slow hotel-confirmation. A full day later, though, still no confirmation-message, and I'm *definitely* worried…

*Step #3 - **Urgent search to resolve missing confirmation of hotel-booking***

– I chase up the chat-line again. All they'll tell me is that they don't have a record of the hotel-booking, "it's booked through their own mini-site on our website, it's not our responsibility". In other words, I have no confirmation that the booking ever took place - even though the charge for it did show up on that now long lost initial success-page - and there's seemingly no way to find out whether or not it did, or whether a non-booking has been charged to my credit-card.

– I need to talk to a real person about this - real-time voice, not text. A much longer search of the airline's website eventually turns up a help-line phone-number - but it's just shut down for the night. I'm starting to panic about this…

Step #4 - ***Check with the hotel***

– First thing next morning, I call the help-line - which is no help at all. Again they tell me they have no record of the hotel-booking, they can't do anything about it, and that in essence it's my problem, not theirs. Call the hotel, they say. And, of course, they can't tell me *which* hotel to call, because there's no record of it…

– A frantic search of my emails shows that I did - very fortunately - tell the conference-organisers the name of the hotel. Armed with this, I eventually identify which of their three sites in the city the hotel would be, and call up their bookings line. No record of any booking from the airline, they tell me, and it's too late anyway, they're now full for the dates I need. So now I have no hotel-booking - I'm stranded. Great… And I *still* don't know whether the now non-existent booking had been charged to my credit-card.

Step #5 - ***Find alternate accommodation***

– I search the usual web-providers for any available hotels: nothing that I could use, other than a very few places in 'luxury hotels' that are several times more than my budget. *Definitely* stranded…

– In desperation, I turn to AirBnB[4], with whom I've had no success at all in any of my previous tries. The first attempt at a booking again fails - happy to help where he can, but he has family staying in part of that week. By this point, I'm down to barely three days

[4]https://www.airbnb.co.uk/

before my flight, with nowhere to stay, and it's not just panic any more: to use the Australian phrase, I'm full-on ropeable.

– By now, the AirBnB site is showing that less than 5% of of hosts are still available anywhere in the city, and dropping fast. But I at last hit some real success: a room that's actually within my budget, for which the booking *does* go through, and which, it turns out, is actually within walking-distance of the conference site. Relief indeed. Yet I still don't know what's happened about airline's charges to the credit-card…

*Step #6 - **enquire about the credit-card***

– Later that day I trek into town to talk with the bank that acts as my credit-card provider. I print out the most current transaction-record for that credit-card from their statements-machine, which doesn't show anything more recent than a couple of weeks ago - the airline's transaction doesn't show. The only way to resolve this one is going to be by talking with a real person rather than a machine.

– Here, I'm number 4 in a literal queue, but again, the queue clears fast, and we get talking. We go to a staff-only terminal, but even there he can't see any more than is already printed on the statement: yes, it's the same bank, but credit-cards are a different division, and he's not allowed to see it. (Yeah, we've been here before[5] with this bank…) I could find out via phone-banking, he says, but that means changing all of my access-codes because I've long since forgotten them, and right now it's too much of a hassle and stress to go through all of that palaver too. Which means that I still don't know whether the credit-card has been charged for the non-existent hotel-booking…

– What's worrying me still is that I won't be able to sort this mess before I go - which means that the airline or whoever could still claim for the hotel-booking, because I hadn't explicitly cancelled it before the due-date. The only way out of that, that either I or the bank-guy can see, is for him to write a formal note that the bank

[5]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2013/10/14/ea-which-way-forward/

had been notified about this prior to the flight. Yet it seems the bank doesn't even have a way to do that: we settle for a scrawled note on his own business-card with the bank - "seen on [date] could not help with transaction could not see credit-card transaction". He duly signs it, and we accept that that's probably the best we can do until I get back.

In other words, the situation with the hotel-booking is *still* not resolved - or, apparently, resolvable. But I've run right out of time on this, in every sense, so best leave it at that for now, I guess?

Implications for enterprise-architecture

Yeah, it's a mess. An all-too-typical mess these days, unfortunately. For all too many people[6].

In effect, what's happened here is that the airline, the bank and others have dumped all of the direct costs of failed whole-of-systems architecture - not just financial costs, but emotional and more - onto the would-be client. The costs are all too visible to the client, yet are all but invisible to the organisations themselves - and hence, to those organisations, seem not to exist. But the *indirect* costs to the organisations can be huge, in terms of lost sales, lost revenue, loss of overall[7] effectiveness[8] and more; and it also creates all manner of hidden[9] and/or[10] kurtosis-risks[11] that could damage or destroy[12] each or any[13] of the organisations[14], or even the entire

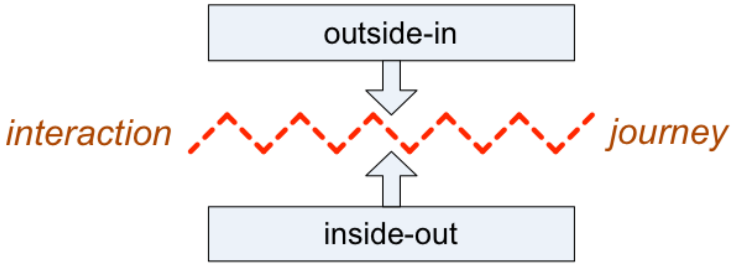
[6]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/09/08/the-whole-experience/
[7]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/05/26/enterprise-effectiveness/
[8]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/05/28/effective-about-effectiveness/
[9]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/06/15/hidden-risks-in-business-model-design/
[10]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/02/12/hidden-perils-of-co-branding/
[11]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2013/05/12/costs-acquisition-retention-deacquisition/
[12]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2014/04/07/playing-pass-the-grenade/
[13]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2012/11/29/the-cyclist-shoppers-tale/
[14]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/07/03/services-disservices-2-education/

shared-enterprise[15]. Not trivial, then…

To me, there are two key themes that drive this kind of mess:

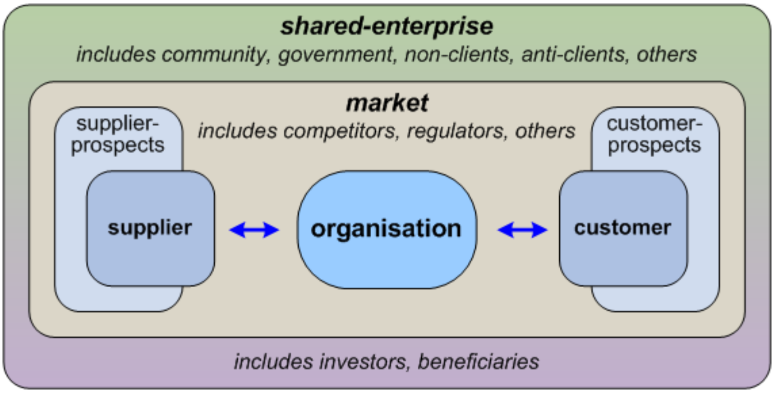
- *Organisation-centric architectures*, in turn underpinned by failure to grasp the fundamental differences between 'organisation' and 'enterprise'[16]
- *Inadequate closure of connection-loops*, in turn underpinned by failure to manage boundary-of-identity[17] versus boundary-of-control[18]

On **organisation versus enterprise**, the crucial distinction is between 'inside-out and 'outside-in'[19]:



Even when the organisation is capable of thinking of 'the enterprise' as anything broader than itself, it would usually place itself as the sole centre of the shared-enterprise:

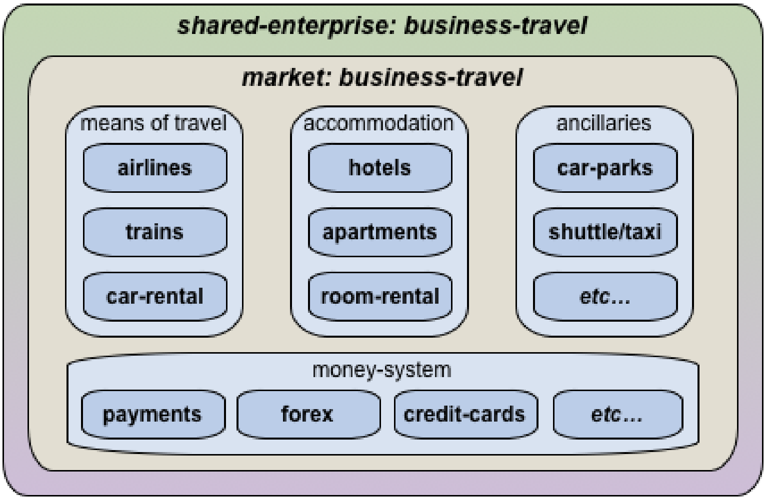
[15] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2012/12/11/what-happens-when-kurtosis-risk-eventuates/
[16] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2014/09/18/organisation-and-enterprise/
[17] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2012/08/10/boundary-of-identity-vs-control/
[18] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2012/08/11/more-on-identity-versus-control/
[19] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2012/06/06/inside-in-inside-out-outside-in-outside-out/



Yet the reality is that Chris Potts[20]' dictum always applies:

> Customers do not appear in our processes - we appear in their experiences.

And from the *customers'* perspective, the shared-enterprise looks more like this:



[20] http://www.dominicbarrow.com/

Which, since just about every darn provider in the shared-enterprise thinks that they alone are the centre of everything, usually leaves the customers to have to play enterprise-architect on their own behalf, and find *some* way to link everything together. Given that Conway's Law[21] usually applies - that *the information-systems of each organisation will tend to reflect the internal structure of that respective organisation* - then it's no surprise that finding our way through the maze of mismatched systems, to get anything *done* within the overall shared-enterprise, is often a navigation-nightmare…

In this particular airline's case, though, they've in principle made this much easier for customers by providing a 'one-stop shop', that *should* allow those customers to do, in one go, all of the search and booking that they need within the context-space of this shared-enterprise. That indicates that the airline *is* thinking broader than itself alone, in terms of enterprise. That's a huge advantage to the customer, a real experienced-value. And the business-advantage to the airline, of course, is that it not only encourages customer-prospects to come to the website *because* it's a 'one-stop shop', but it also collects referral-fees from every one of those other players whenever a linked booking is made - which means that the extra cost and complexity of the website *should* more than pay for itself. *If* it works - and that's the catch, as we've seen in the example above.

From one of the comments on the airline's chat-line, it seems that each of the 'add-on' elements in that 'one-stop shop' is actually a mini-site in its own right - *and there's nothing that actually links them together*, apart from messages that pass between the various providers. It *looks* like a unified site and service - as on the displayed success-message. But it actually isn't: and we can see that, because the nominal 'itinerary' from the airline is solely about the services *of* the airline - with no reference to any services from other supposedly-linked providers. Likewise each service-provider is expected

[21] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conway%27s_law

to send its own confirmation-emails and suchlike. Which is sort-of okay, even from the customers' perspective, despite the flurry of separate emails arriving from what are actually different providers.

But if and when any inter-provider message is lost - as in this example above - then there's no means to do a cross-check, or a database-like rollback, *because* the messages needed to do so have been lost, or perhaps never existed in the first place. Which might seem unimportant to each individual provider: as far as they're concerned, it's a booking that never happened. But that kind of gap-in-the-system 'glitch'[22] can sometimes turn out to be surprisingly expensive, even from the providers' perspective - and for those customers who've found themselves suddenly stranded by a supposedly-complete booking that actually isn't, it doesn't feel like 'just a minor glitch' at all…

In short, ***if we want to link between providers and systems, across the shared-enterprise, we have to do it properly*** - or not at all.

Which brings us to the second theme, about **failure to close connection-loops** between providers.

I have no access to the airline's systems, of course, but the way I read the failure in the example above is that inter-system messaging is run 'stateless', or 'open-loop[23]' - once a message is sent, it's deemed to have been received. That way, the airline can build a billing from *local* information about hotels (in this case), but leave the full confirmation until later. The result is that it *looks* like a complete transaction, and one that has been completed rapidly; but there's actually no guarantee that the full transaction *has* been completed, and no means to do a proper rollback if it hasn't, because the information to do that rollback no longer exists - or maybe never did.

From the airline's perspective, this might seem no real problem - at

[22]http://weblog.tetradian.com/2014/04/26/glitch/

[23]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-loop_controller

worst, it's merely an abandoned booking, with the only loss being a foregone referral-fee. But from the customer's perspective, this is extremely risky: if the *overall* booking is incomplete, it's safer not to do the booking at all, but restart the whole thing all over again - perhaps in separate pieces, or via some other website. Again, as enterprise-architects, we need to be able to see this from *both* sides…

In effect, it's actually a power-problem, offloading responsibility onto the Other - in this case, the hotel and/or the customer - without their engagement or consent. In terms of the SEMPER power-diagnostic[24], we would describe this as passive-dysfunction or '*power-under*' - which, in a human context, would otherwise be known as abuse. Not A Good Idea…?

Another way to describe this is as an attempt to make whole-of-context closure into Somebody Else's Problem[25]. But again, ***at a whole-of-enterprise level, there is no such thing as Somebody Else's Problem***: if the enterprise is to work, somehow or somewhere it has to be *someone's* problem - and as enterprise-architects, we need to know who that 'someone' is, and provide them with the support that they need[26].

Although we can't know from outside how the systems are structured, there are several options to make it work better from a user's perspective. Whilst it depends[27] on the actual structures, of course, one example would be to be much more explicit about what has or hasn't been confirmed - such as the 'success-page' modified to show the current status for each partner-booking, and update that success-page as messages come back in, accessible via the 'Manage My Booking' or equivalent functionality on the airline's web-page. Another option would be to auto-trigger email-alerts after a time-out period, to warn the customer that expected

[24] http://tetradianbooks.com/2008/07/semper/
[25] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Somebody_else%27s_problem
[26] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2015/06/09/what-scope-of-bizmodel/
[27] http://weblog.tetradian.com/2014/04/18/an-ea-mantra/

confirmation-messages have not been received. Even with current technologies, none of this should be hard to architect, design and implement.

Yet ***to make any of this work, we need a whole-enterprise view of the architecture*** - an organisation-centric view alone will not be enough, as should be clear from everything described above. (Classic IT-centric 'enterprise'-architectures such as TOGAF would be even less useful - not least because of all the human elements in the overall picture.)

Perhaps the hardest challenges, though, are those that arise from Conway's Law - much as we saw with the bank, where the information-systems were carved up on divisional lines, making any form of single-view-of-customer all but impossible. So-called 'digital-transformation' can be enormously helpful in this, but only if we realise that ***digital-transformation can only succeed when we use it to run Conway's Law in reverse*** - when we use the desired changes in information-systems and suchlike to change the internal communication and structure of the organisation itself. Not as simple as it sounds - yet very necessary. But that's a topic for a separate post, perhaps?

Leave it at that for now, anyway: over to you for comments, if you wish?

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- *Date*: 2016/08/14
- *URL*: why-whole-enterprise-architecture-matters[28]
- *Comments*: 5
- *Categories*: Business, Complexity / Structure, Enterprise architecture

[28]http://weblog.tetradian.com/why-whole-enterprise-architecture-matters

- *Tags*: Business, business architecture, complexity, conway's law, enterprise, Enterprise architecture, paradigm

IT-centrism is killing enterprise-architecture

All right, I admit it: I allowed frustration to get the better of me in the previous post, 'How not to define business-architecture[29]'.

But the real point is this: *IT-centrism is killing enterprise-architecture*. Gartner made that clear some months back (apologies, can't find the link…) in their 'Hype Curve' on EA: the IT-centric view of EA is *increasing* the 'business-IT divide', not reducing it. And as IT necessarily becomes more and more interwoven into everyday business, that IT-centrism is triggering a serious pushback from everyone else. Sure, if we're in 'the trade', it demands our attention, but we've indulged it now for far too long: the blunt fact is that the obsessive IT-centrism of too many – especially amongst the 'big players' - *must* stop, and stop *now*, or else there will be nothing left. It really *is* as serious as that.

First, though, I ought to acknowledge some of the Twitter-stream that came up in response to that last post:

- *dougnewdick*: Good points w/o the invective RT @tetradian: [post] How not to define business-architecture… http://bit.ly/p0mITZ #entarch #bizarch #togaf
- *tetradian*: @dougnewdick point taken about 'invective' :-(– but how on earth else do we stop Open Group from trashing the industry yet again…?
- *dougnewdick*: @tetradian I think that you weaken your case and alienate some of your potential audience with the invective. // I think you stop them by publishing a compelling

[29] http://weblog.tetradian.com/how-not-to-define-bizarch/

counter-arg that respects all. I'm an enterprise IT arch & I'm listening 2 u
- *tetradian*: @dougnewdick yeah, I do know… – but after 5 solid years of repeatedly 'publishing a compelling counter-argument' it gets a bit wearing :-(
- *dougnewdick*: @tetradian fair call! ;-) - but I'm starting here
- *tetradian*: @dougnewdick other point is that that arrogant IT-centrism is *really* annoying to non-IT folks – it's causing a *lot* of damage to #entarch
- *dougnewdick*: @tetradian That's a good point too. My POV is that non-arrogant bus-centric EITA is a good place to start and try to get a seat at the table
- *tetradian*: @dougnewdick strong agree: 'non-arrogant bus-[oriented] EITA' is essential – and 'non-arrogant' creates space for seat at table

There's also a useful comment[30] from Stuart Boardman back on the previous post.

What do I mean by 'IT-centrism'? It's the assumption (usually implicit) that IT is not only the centre of our own world and work (which is fair enough if we work in IT), but also *necessarily* the centre of everyone else's as well (which is *not* 'fair enough'). It's the attitude that for every possible business problem, there is always an IT-solution; and that that solution will *always* be the 'best' solution, simply and solely *because* it's IT. It's the assumption that there are no limitations to IT, that it alone offers the golden dream of perfect control – and therefore has the 'right' to control all others. It's the assumption that the world can be meaningfully divided into 'IT' and 'the business' – and that IT, by definition, is the only one that's right. It's the attitude that only IT-people know how the world works, and therefore we have the 'right' to tell everyone else how they should work, so as to best fit in with the way that *we* work.

[30] http://weblog.tetradian.com/how-not-to-define-bizarch/#comment-63665

And it comes out in a myriad of other subtle, unacknowledged, amazingly destructive forms.

It is, in short, myopic, narcissistic, and arrogant: and it *really* annoys the heck out everyone else.

If you want to see how and where and why the 'business-IT divide' is created, and why it stubbornly persists as a wicked-problem[31] despite all the best intentions of so many people on every side, all you need to do is watch how IT-centrism keeps coming back, and back, and back, in just about everything that comes out of the IT-consultancy industry and elsewhere.

I ought to emphasise here that this kind of 'self-centrism' is not specific solely to IT. For example, 'business-centrism' is beginning to be another real problem in enterprise-architecture, where 'the business of the business' demands to be treated as the sole centre of the architecture. Finance people do it; HR people do it; shareholders do it a *lot*; Health & Safety folks do it far too often too. Just about every domain does, probably, at some time or other. But it does seem to be particularly endemic in the IT-consulting industry; and since they still dominate the enterprise-architecture discipline at present, that's where most of our current '-centrism' problems arise, and why IT-centrism is such a serious problem for us right now.

A domain-architecture necessarily centres around a specific discipline: that's *why* it's a domain-architecture. A solution-architecture also usually focusses its attention on a single domain. But *every* domain and domain-architecture has to learn to 'play nice' with all of the other domains and their architectures – otherwise the whole will *always* break down into feuds and infighting, or fragment into fiercely-defended 'us-against-the-world' silos.

For architecture – the relationship between structure and purpose – there needs to be *something*, some form of discipline, that helps to hold everything together. And the only way that works is by accepting whilst everyone does need to be the centre of attention

[31] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicked_problem

at some point, *no-one* can claim to be '*the* centre' around which everything always revolves. It *does not work* – it really *is* as simple as that.

In a true enterprise-architecture, everywhere and nowhere is 'the centre' all at the same time.

Hence we *cannot* allow IT-centrism to exist, or any other 'centrism' to exist, because it kills the architecture, every time.

Hence we *must* challenge it, *every* time we see it – in others, and especially in ourselves.

If we want our enterprises to succeed, *there is no other choice*: that IT-centrism has to go.

Which is why I've ranted so often on this point over the past five years or so. I apologise if it's annoyed people a bit too much at times: but hiding from facts never helped anyone for long, and as a profession we *really* need to face this fact now.

That's it, really. End of rant? :-|

Source (Tetradian weblog)

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- *Tags*: Business, business architecture, business-IT divide, enterprise, Enterprise architecture, IT-centrism

[32]http://weblog.tetradian.com/it-centrism-is-killing-enterprise-architecture

The enterprise, the organisation and the 'big picture'

This one is a follow-up to a couple of comments by Pat Ferdinandi[33] to my earlier post on "Annoyed at 'Enterprise 2.0'"[34]. I had explained[35] in one of the comments that there's a danger of a high-risk 'term-hijack' if conflating the terms 'organisation' and 'enterprise', because they're not the same: 'organisation' is a legal entity – more accurately, an entity defined by an enforceable governance boundary – whilst 'enterprise' is a *social* entity, a collaboration towards shared aims and objectives that does not in itself imply or demand any explicit form of governance. In effect, an enterprise can be any subset *or superset* of the organisation:

> From a business perspective, there are at least three layers of enterprise that are supersets of the organisation:
>
> - partners/supply-chain;
> - customer-base (and, in an E2.0 context, reviewers/critics);
> - and broader community (e.g. reputation-management / CSR).

This latter point about supersets becomes extremely important in enterprise architecture and business architecture, because they're *outside* the scope of direct governance of the organisation. If we

[33] http://twitter.com/thoughttrans
[34] http://weblog.tetradian.com/e20-annoyance/
[35] http://weblog.tetradian.com/e20-annoyance/#comment-30527

make the mistake of assuming that the organisation *is* the enterprise, is a literally *self-centric*, self-referential 'business architecture' that has no connection with the real world – i.e. the ecosystem in which the organisation operates – which, in the mid- to longer term, usually leads to failure of the organisation. In other words, not a good idea… So we *need* to model that wider scope in our architecture.

Pat then remarked:

> I will admit that I'm very business focused (ok biased).
>
> Because B2B or any collaborative interaction between multiple companies (banks needing to share information/transactions or hospitals needing to share and transfer patient data) the EA needs to include both companies and may need to model the industry (including government mandated laws or reimbursement qualifications or negotiated rules).
>
> These examples would be larger than the subset of the organization. Would this be your whole-of-enterprise? It fits the IEEE1471/FEAF definition.

My answer would be that whilst this is important, it's still far too small a scope for a business-architecture or whole-of-enterprise architecture: in effect, just the first of those three layers above (*partner/supply-chain* context, including direct-impact legislation, regulation and standards). To identify the full depth of drivers that impact on the organisation from the broader enterprise, we need to model the other layers as well.

To model the *customer-base* context, it's imperative to explore the shared *vision* held by *all* participants in the enterprise – in other words, the *motivation* that underpins the entire enterprise. Standards such as the Business Motivation Model[36] can help here,

[36] http://www.businessrulesgroup.org/bmm.shtml

though the BMM itself has some limitations that can be resolved via explicit extension – see my presentation on Vision / Role / Mission / Goal[37] or the 'Architecture on purpose' chapter in *Real Enterprise Architecture*[38] for more details on that. Perhaps the most useful hint here comes from ITIL[39] Version 3: "customers do not want products or services – what they want is the satisfaction of a perceived need". Focus on identifying the *shared needs* that unify *all* participants in the enterprise – your own organisation, your partners and suppliers, your customer-base and their social 'quality-management' context (anything from reviewers to critics and complaints), and the legal, regulatory and standards framework that applies to the servicing of those needs within that context. This describes the principles and drivers that you can use ininnovation-support, in customer-relationship management, and much else besides.

To model the *social milieu* context, explore the social expectations for *any* organisation or business operating in this context: issues such as transparency, fairness, environment, corporate social responsibility and so on. *Do not forget to include these as drivers and themes within your architecture models*, via techniques such as Vision / Role / Mission / Goal: failure to do so can cost you very heavily indeed, especially in the longer term. Also, *be aware of cross-cultural differences*: different cultures have different expectations and different demands, which can cause significant impacts, especially for organisations with a multi-national reach.

One useful approach is to view architecture as part of risk-management and opportunity-management. From that perspective, it should be obvious that a risk-analysis and matching opportunity-analysis would be incomplete if it fails to include the 'bigger picture'; the same should hence also be true for architecture analysis, especially at the business-architecture orwhole-of-enterprise architecture scale.

[37] http://www.slideshare.net/tetradian/vision-role-mission-goal-a-framework-for-business-motivation

[38] http://tetradianbooks.com/real-ea/

[39] http://www.itil-officialsite.com

Hope this helps, anyway.

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- *Comments*: 1
- *Categories*: Business, Enterprise architecture, Society
- *Tags*: business architecture, corporate social responsibility, enterprise, Enterprise architecture, organisation, RBPEA, supply-chain

[40]http://weblog.tetradian.com/ea-big-picture

How do we make EA make sense?

Those notions of 'whole-enterprise architecture' that I've been describing in the 'no-plan Plan[41]' series of posts make solid sense to a fair few people – particularly those who've some experience of systems-thinking, design-thinking and the like. But it's painfully clear that it doesn't seem to make much sense to anyone else: and I must admit I'm struggling a bit with this…

How *do* we bring those different worlds together, so that we can put these ideas to practical use?

How *do* we make it make sense?

Okay, so part of the problem is the age-old clash between theory and practice. Practice needs theory; theory needs practice; that point seems fairly well accepted, I think? Yet there's that old joke (from Yogi Berra?) that "In theory, there's no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is." Which means that practitioners tend naturally to be somewhat wary of too much theory. And there's the 'time-compression' problem as wel: right out the rough edge of real-time, people simply don't have *time* to stop and think about theory. Yet the fact that they don't look enough to theory may itself be a key reason why they don't have the time…

Chicken and egg: which comes first – theory or practice? Yes… therefore no… sometimes…? How *do* we get out of that loop?

There's also the "in a perfect world" excuse, as my colleague Marcus [not his real name] was bewailing the other day:

[41]http://weblog.tetradian.com/the-no-plan-plan-for-whole-enterprise-architecture-a-summary/

> It’s just chaos out there, doing everything the hard way. But if I suggest anything to cut down on the chaos, even something really simple like using scripts in a spreadsheet, so that they *could* get a chance to get started, it’s always the same response: “yes, Marcus, in a perfect world, but…”, “that might work in a perfect world, but…”, “we could do that in a perfect world, Marcus, but in the real world…”.

What’s worrying was that this was the *architects* – the people who were *supposed* to understand IT-architecture. Worse, he said, they were hardly using any of their architecture tools to clean up the architecture: in fact, of the *thousand* licences for a high-end EA toolset that their corporation had paid for, they were actually using just *six*.

Sure, many people are running on extreme overload most of the time; but with these guys, and many others like them that I’ve dealt with in so many different disciplines over the years, I sometimes feel a bit like that line from the old Jethro Tull song, that “Your wise men don’t know / how it feels / to be thick / as a brick”. These guys are all really smart, and I’m acutely aware that in most ways *I’m* the one who’s “thick / as a brick”, the one who doesn’t fit in, who doesn’t think the same way as everyone else; yet what the heck *is* going on here? It just doesn’t make sense.

I remember a string of conversations here about value in business[42], and about why we couldn’t use money as the only measure of value within an enterprise-architecture[43]: but that went straight down like a lead-balloon too. Likewise just about all of those themes in the ‘no-plan Plan’; likewise many other what seem to me fairly straightforward points such as the one about ‘people are not assets’. It’s really clear that these notions just don’t make sense to most people in business and elsewhere. And as for some of the more

[42]http://weblog.tetradian.com/values-architecture-101/
[43]http://weblog.tetradian.com/more-on-values-architecture/

way-out themes – such as an end to most current management-models, an end to money, and end to 'rights' or, ultimately, an end to possession itself – that, in a futures-sense, I see as shifts that will and must be inevitable in the longer term… well, to most people that seems like all of that's just on another planet. Cloud-cuckoo land. Forget it.

Or, perhaps, is it just too scary? – too far out of comfort-zones for people who must be able to purport being 'in control' at all times? I just don't know. As Peter T pointed out in a recent comment[44] here, even simple factual implications from a decent SCM [software configuration-management system] were deemed all but too fear-laden to face: so how the heck are most business-folks gonna face a mythquake that is – for most people, it seems – literally of almost unimaginable proportions?

And even though what we're doing *is* 'enterprise architecture' in the most literal sense of those words, we can't even use that term any more, because it's been too 'poisoned' by Open Group and their ilk: their consistent misuse of the term has made things so bad for all of us – themselves included – that no one in business would trust us if we used the 'A'-word at all. Which leaves us in a bit of a quandary even as to what we can call what we do…

It doesn't make sense. And it needs to. Urgently. That part at least *does* make all too much sense…

Anyway, the quick summary of what we need to 'make sense' would seem to be much as per that initial post on 'the plan that is no-plan[45]':

- it's about the architecture of the enterprise as a whole – how everything works together towards some overall aim

[44]http://weblog.tetradian.com/the-no-plan-plan-architecture-dynamics/comment-page-1/#comment-68882

[45]http://weblog.tetradian.com/more-on-the-no-plan-plan/

- it's about the underlying 'why' of the overall enterprise, and how that links to the 'how' and 'with-what' and so on that make everything happen
- it's about both structure and story, in the broadest sense of each
- it's planning for and working *with* change, *with* inherent-uncertainty, rather than trying to fight against it
- it's about identifying and managing hidden costs and risks – and hidden opportunities too
- it includes a strong focus on where *people* fit within the overall enterprise
- it's about defining and using toolsets, visualisations, dashboards and other techniques to help people make sense of what's happening within the enterprise, and in making decisions about how to keep the enterprise on track
- it's about bringing all of these themes down into really practical, concrete, everyday expression, enhancing effectiveness through the enterprise

All straightforward and obvious – to me, at least. Also straightforward and obvious – to me at least – is that lack of awareness and integration of these themes is a large part of *why* there's so much stress at work and elsewhere. Yet it's also obvious that most of this just doesn't make sense to most people. And the really serious 'really big picture' problems *really* don't make sense to most people – so much so that even talking about them at all usually gets me labelled as crazy or worse. But if we don't do something about those themes, a lot sooner than just Real Soon Now, we're in deep trouble. (Okay, we're *in* deep trouble already, frankly, hence this would be even worse Deep Trouble from which there really *is* no way out…) Yet if it doesn't make sense, then no-one is going to do anything at all – until it's too late even if it *does* finally make sense.

Really struggling with this feeling of "thick as a brick", the lost toad-in-the-road, 'the crazy ones'. When something that makes obvious sense doesn't make sense to anyone else, how *do* we make it make sense? Or should we even try?

A real serious challenge here, in almost every different sense. Oh well.

Source (Tetradian weblog)

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- *URL*: how-do-we-make-ea-make-sense[46]
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- *Tags*: change, chaos, complexity, effectiveness, Enterprise architecture, Futures, motivation, narrative, organisational change, paradigm, RBPEA, requirements, social change, worldview

[46]http://weblog.tetradian.com/how-do-we-make-ea-make-sense

RBPEA: Where's the plan?

This one came through from a colleague on the Twitterstream a couple days back, presumably somewhat channeling John Lennon:

- Imagine no possessions, we'd all love to see the plan

And yeah, it's a concern (complaint?) I get a lot about where I've gotten to so far in RBPEA[47] (Really-Big-Picture Enterprise-Architecture): all this talk about 'no possessions' and suchlike, but where's the plan?

Short answer: **it's way too early yet for anything resembling a 'plan'**. I'll admit it gets a bit frustrating for me at times: people assume that because I'm talking about major social change, I must therefore have some kind of 'perfect plan' already to go. I don't - and, to be blunt, I wouldn't be so arrogant as to claim that I have (although, sadly, many seem to claim that they do…).

I see my role as that of an enterprise-architect. Nothing more than that. My job is that of decision-*advisor*, not decision-*maker*. I don't have any 'right' (there's that word again) to define plans: that's the responsibility of all of the stakeholders in an architecture, working together - which, in this case, is pretty much everyone, everywhere across the globe, which isn't happening much as yet. What I *do* have the authority to work an, as an enterprise-architect, is identifying concerns and constraints that would and must apply to any viable plan at this Really-Big-Picture scale. Hence that's all I've done so far.

It's a bit like the relationship between business-plan and business-model: it's premature to define a plan when there's not enough clarity around the business-model. That's exactly how many businesses

[47] http://weblog.tetradian.com/tag/rbpea/

fail: they leap off to execute a plan before they understand their own business-model. Or, in many cases, even *have* a business-model on which to base a viable plan.

In the same way, it's premature to define a business-model when there's not enough clarity on the factors that feed into the business-model, or the capabilities to support a business-model. That's why so many start-ups are forced to do a pivot on their business-model: Reality Department has a way of making it clear what factors they've missed in their previous assessments for their business-model.

Architecture alone is not the answer (and, even less, 'The Answer'). Whatever the scale, Big Design Up Front rarely works well: it tends to give us the worst of both worlds, a Grand Plan that may look great in theory, but in practice is riddled with untested or unacknowledged assumptions. At the RBPEA scale, history is way too littered with such Grand Plans that turned out to be Great Disasters. Not A Good Idea…

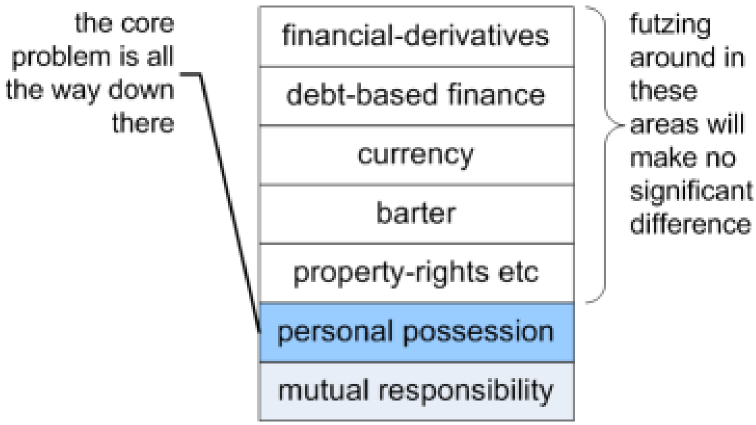
The alternative to Big Design Up Front is experimentation to identify real-world concerns and constraints that might have been missed - hence the value of and necessity for pivots on business-models. The catch here, at the RBPEA scale, is that it's kinda difficult to do a pivot across an entire globe. And we also don't have much time to set up a literally fundamental change to our business-model (aka 'politics and economics') at a literally global scale: current estimates would suggest that it needs to be fully complete, *world-wide*, within not much more than a century, if what we know as 'human civilisation' has much of a chance of survival at all.

(If a century sounds like a 'No Worries' kind of timescale, bear in mind that current possessionist economics developed slowly from a handful of localised mistakes to the current dominant 'globalisation'-economics over a period of around 10,000 years: in other words, *one hundred times slower* than the timescale we're looking at here. At global scales, this is about as Agile as it's possible to get… with literally life-or-death stakes in play if we don't get it done in time.)

In short, we whilst there will no doubt be many, many local variations, we simply don't have time or budget (in any sense of the term) for much in the way of pivots: we need to get the core constraints and concerns pretty much right first time. And it *is* possible to do that with a lot of careful (and fast!) thought-experiments, cross-disciplinary studies and cross-checks about what we know of the respective context - which, in this case, is human development and human interaction. Hence using architectural assessment to identify concerns and constraints is *not* 'Big Design Up Front': it's merely a necessary precursor to identifying categories or classes of human interaction that are know to be viable *and* sustainable over indefinite timescales at *any* scale, and thence for viable and sustainable 'business-models' at large scale. Other than for a localised experiment, specifically to test some hypothesis about a concern or constraint, 'Show Me The Plan' is a *long* way down the track from there…

What's come up from all of the RBPEA work so far is that **there is no way to make a possession-based economics sustainable**. It can't be done: to simulate sustainability, its structure *mandates* a 'pyramid-game' of infinite-growth - which, on a finite planet, is *by definition* neither sustainable nor, eventually, viable. To put it bluntly, if we try to keep much longer on what we have as our current global 'economics', we're dead.

Right now, there are lots and lots and *lots* of people tweaking away at the detail-layers of current economics and politics, hoping that that alone will be enough. Blunt fact is that it won't, because it's not the details of the economics that need to change: the problem is that its deepest foundations don't work. Or, in visual form:



So let's go over it once again:

- the actual core of viable human interactions and interrelationships is mutual interlocking responsibilities
- key aspects and constraints, especially at a global scale, indicate that many of those mutual responsibilities will involve unknown strangers over indefinite periods of time, with many inherent non-linearities and non-point-to-point connections - in other words, inherently complex and 'chaotic'
- in terms of child-development, the awareness needed to understand these complexities does not typically begin to arise until at least three years old
- prior to that stage, in what's often called 'the terrible twos', the child adopts a possessionist approach to economics: everything is 'mine!', interactions are always linear, direct, point-to-point, and self-centric, without regard to others either in the present or elsewhen
- possessionism is highly addictive, since it delivers greater short-term, localised self-centred rewards ('What's In It For Me?') - *but only at the expense of the longer-term, the broader-scope, and all others than the Self*
- possessionism, as an economics, can be made to *seem* viable as long as there is an elsewhen, an elsewhere and/or an

Other from whom to steal - hence, for example present-centred 'resource-extraction' (aka 'stealing from the future'), colonialisation, and slavery

- in any context with finite limits - such as a finite planet with finite resources - possessionism is inherently unsustainable: once it runs out of elsewhen, elsewhere and/or Other to steal from, it will and must inevitably implode towards self-oblivion in a spiralling, ever-accelerating self-cannibalisation
- possessionism is the fundamental base for almost all current politics and economics, especially at larger scales
- to appear 'fair' (to *some* groups of parties, at least), possessionism requires rules to identify who has initial 'rights' to possess and exploit specific exchangeable resources (aka 'rights of possession')
- barter is built on top of 'possession-rights', to manage exchange of possessed resources and use of possessed service-capabilities
- currency is built on top of barter, to manage the point-to-point limitations of barter via an abstract means of exchange
- debt-based finance is built on top of currency, to provide a means for managing the financial aspects of opportunity
- financial-derivatives are built on top of debt-based finance, to provide a means for deriving possessionist advantage from manipulating the abstractions of currency etc alone

The common factor here is that all of those concerns that people most usually focus on - financial-derivatives, debt-based finance, currency, barter and 'rights of possession' - are built on top of possessionism.

Which is a two-year-old's view of the world.

Which is is non-sustainable and non-viable in the *real* world.

Which is why - we hope - we can help two-year-olds to grow out of it.

But which, unfortunately, is exactly what *doesn't* happen in a possessionist-economics: instead, we actively *reward* people for behaving like two-year-olds, and actively *penalise* people for behaving like adults. And then wonder why things don't seem to work so well, especially at a global scale…

So if we ask 'Where's the plan' in terms of RBPEA and the like, there are a few things we need to understand, that Reality Department makes clear are ***inherent, inevitable and non-negotiable***:

- if your plan consists of tweaking some aspect of financial-derivatives - for example, a 'Tobin tax[48]' - it may perhaps be useful in the shorter-term, but it is *inherently incapable* of making any significant difference to the real problems we face
- if your plan consists of tweaking some aspect of debt-based finance - for example, a 'People's Bank' - it may be useful in the shorter-term, but it is *inherently incapable* of making any significant difference
- if your plan consists of tweaking some aspect of currency - for example, a 'community-currency' - it may be useful locally in the short-term, but it is *inherently incapable* of making any significant difference
- if your plan consists of tweaking some aspect of possession-based exchange - for example, a call to 'go back to barter!' - it may be useful locally and/or in the short-term, but it is *inherently incapable* of making any significant difference
- if your plan consists of tweaking 'possession-rights' - for example, switching back and forth between state-capitalism and state-communism - it just possibly may be useful in some ways, but it is *inherently incapable* of making any difference
- a plan for RBPEA can *only* create significant difference, relative to the problems we face, if it *directly* addresses the fundamental dysfunctions of possessionism

[48] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tobin_tax

Or, to put it the other way round, at RBPEA scale **any plan that fails to address and resolve the dysfunctions of possessionism is merely futzing-around with deckchairs on the Titanic**.

Tackling possessionism, and reframing global economics and politics around non-possessionist mutual interlocking responsibilities, is going to be non-trivial. (Understatement of the year?)

But we don't have any choice, because anything that includes possessionist assumptions - such as financial-derivatives, debt-based finance, currency, barter or 'property-rights' in the sense that they're usually understand at present - will *inevitably* lead us back to posessionism, which is *inherently* non-sustainable, and hence *inevitably* non-viable over the longer-term.

And we don't have much time to address this.

Especially as it *must* be total, at a literally global scale, with no exceptions at all - otherwise, once again, possessionism is infective and addictive, hence allowing it in *any* form inevitably leads us back to possessionist-economics, which is inherently unsustainable and inherently non-viable.

Hence if your plan is to be viable and sustainable, it *cannot* include *any* possessionist assumptions. Period.

To make a plan viable, it must drop the possessionist assumptions. Period.

Which, given that possessionist assumptions pervade pretty much everything we know, is likely to be kinda hard…

The alternative is to go one step deeper, below possessionism, to the root-level interlocking mutual responsibilities. For a viable, sustainable RBPEA, we literally have no choice but to reframe every possessionist assumption in terms of the mutual interlocking responsibilities that actually make that interaction work, across an entire globe, and across all time. And make it all work, easily, smoothly, pretty much without any kind of pivot, because we don't have much time left for anything else.

Kinda non-trivial, then. And you tell me you're expecting just one person - me, on my own - to come up, right here right now, with a ready-made ready-to-go-for-everywhere plan for all of this?

Hmm…

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[49]http://weblog.tetradian.com/rbpea-wheres-the-plan