Update

Business Architecture:

Part V — Team Building Through Deployment

by William Ulrich, Senior Consultant, Cutter Consortium

In Parts I-IV of this *Executive Update* series, we discussed how business architecture provides the means for shaping and communicating business strategy, transformation roadmaps, and funding models; how to use value streams as a basis for planning and deploying business initiatives; and how capabilities form the foundation for articulating a shared business vocabulary.[1] Here in Part V, we outline how to establish and socialize the business architecture, including introducing a rapid roadmap deployment approach that business architecture teams can use as a template for getting started.

RAPID ROADMAP TO BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE

The first step in establishing your business architecture involves creating a roadmap and estimated timeline. Figure 1 depicts a roadmap for expedited business architecture deployment. This is an "expedited" roadmap because this timeline represents a best-case scenario for many midsized-to-large organizations. For larger or more geographically dispersed enterprises, the timeline will likely be longer. Organization size and geographical dispersion elongate the time it takes to (1) organize the mapping team, (2) map the business architecture, and (3) validate and socialize the results.

The roadmap in Figure 1 highlights several phases of business architecture deployment ordered in an ideal scenario. Deliverables, shown along the bottom, include increasingly detailed capability maps, value streams,
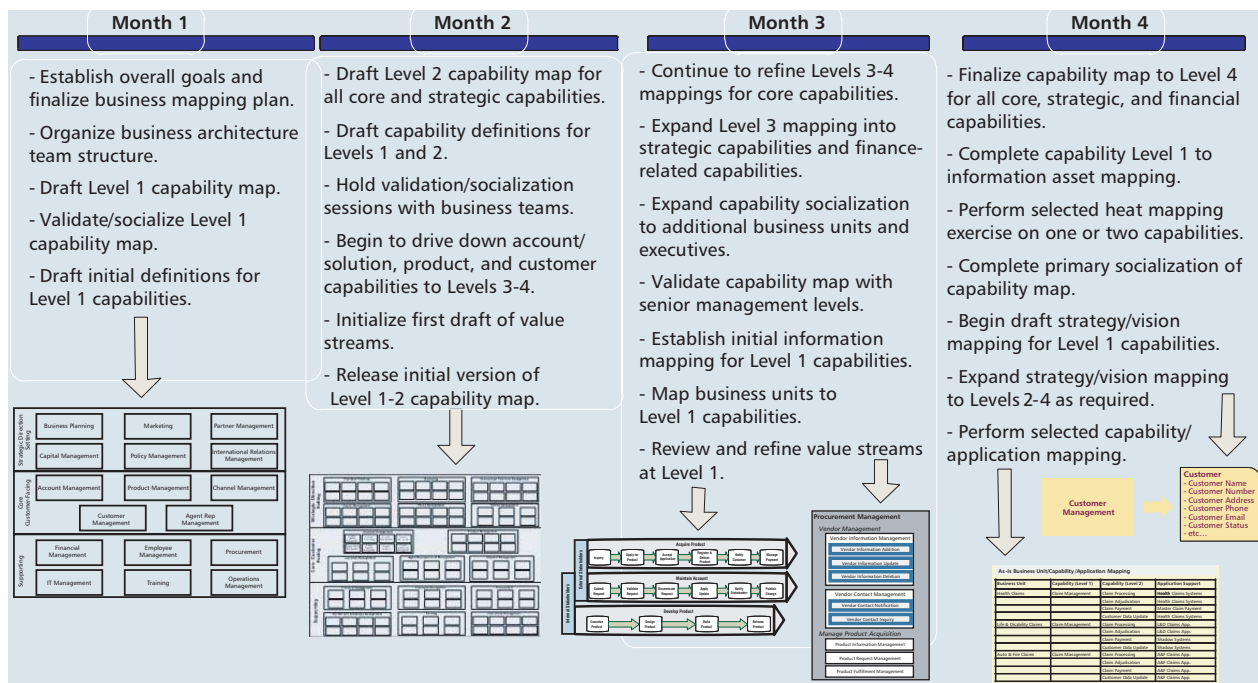
Figure 1 — Business architecture deployment roadmap.

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organization mappings, and an information map. An intensive capability mapping effort follows team organizing, which often runs well into month three. Teams can continue to add refinements and additional detail to a capability map for a number of months, but the baseline should be in place in month three or four. The depth and breadth of capability mapping is reliant on several factors, including strategic initiatives driving the analysis, executive demands, and concerns related to key capabilities such as customer management or account management.

For example, if product research needs to be improved in some way, then the business architecture team would pursue a more intensive and in-depth analysis of the capabilities enabling the Develop Product value stream. Similarly, if customer-facing challenges drive the analysis, then the team would focus on driving customer-facing capabilities such as account management and customer management to greater levels of detail. The four-month roadmap in Figure 1 assumes that certain capabilities will be driven down to a significant degree of detail, while other capabilities will only be decomposed to Levels 2 or 3. Subsequent activities, which have a natural overlap with capability analysis, include organization or business-unit mapping, value stream analysis, and information mapping. Figure 1 shows this overlap.

Consider the following scenario: a company has struggled to move products through the research pipeline and into the marketplace. The problem was systemic across numerous research teams, which were organizationally and geographically dispersed. The Develop Product value stream, along with the enabling research, procurement, and marketing capabilities, pushed the business architecture team to focus on these areas as a top priority. Consequently, the team created a heat map analysis of essential capabilities and came up with a set of recommendations on how to resolve roadblocks in the value stream. In this example, a very specific mandate from management drove business architecture analysis, resulting in an action plan that would deliver new products to market more quickly and more effectively.

In this research-related example, management had already attempted to streamline various business processes within each of the dozens of research units.

While this delivered some incremental benefits within each business unit, the company lacked a solution that enabled the organization as a whole to deliver research more quickly and effectively to market. The business architecture approach ensured that capabilities were improved across the value stream in a way that each research team could ultimately leverage.

BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE TEAM BUILDING

Business architecture team organization is a critical step in establishing the business architecture and one of the first steps shown in Figure 1. Team setup must be done with careful consideration because it influences the quality and usability of the resulting business architecture. One major issue to consider is that of staffing the team with mostly IT personnel or primarily business professionals. For example, if an enterprise architecture team that reports up through IT builds a capability map based on what these individuals "think" the business looks like, then the map will not only be of little use but the business will likely ignore it completely. Such a capability map will be viewed as just another IT artifact.

As such, the business architecture team should be comprised of businesspeople from diverse business areas who have the ability to clearly articulate what the business does and how it achieves stakeholder value using a shared business vocabulary. These individuals must have a direct line to business executives as well as access to the broader business community. Business professionals can serve as team leaders and as business architects, but often require packaging support from IT architects and mentoring from a business architecture expert. The comparative case study examples discussed in the next section demonstrate how a team comprised mostly of businesspeople can deliver a high-quality, deployable business architecture more effectively than a team comprised largely of IT architects.

Team building in a small-to-midsized enterprise can rely on a "direct representation" team structure. Direct representation requires each major business unit to assign a business architecture team representative. In addition, business co-leaders should be selected by the team or by executive sponsors. The entire team will need to craft the Level 1 capability map and first drafts

of the value streams. As work progresses into more detailed mappings, as shown in Figure 1, a subset of participants can work on selected capabilities and value streams. However, the entire team must still validate and help socialize the aggregate results.

In larger organizations, a "tiered team structure" is required to ensure that equitable representation is in place for various business areas, particularly as these teams may be large, aligned into different business units, or geographically dispersed. The tiered participation structure takes longer to establish because it requires defining tiered teams, typically aligned to capabilities shared across different business units. For example, claims workers from different insurance lines of business may comprise one team, while individuals responsible for administration would address capabilities related to billing and enrollment. Care and time should be taken to ensure that the degree of representation is functionally representative across major capabilities and value streams.

Figure 2 shows how a tiered team structure may be established. The inner circle represents the core team. The core team is similar to the direct team structure previously discussed, with the exception that each direct team member represents a larger body of participants comprised of representatives from various business units. The arrows from the business units to the inner circle team illustrate how representatives from various business areas participate in the business architecture team. For example, if the first business unit on the bottom left-hand side of Figure 2 was a research division, multiple research teams may be engaged and represented as a research "core team." This core team would work on research-related capability and value stream definitions and in turn send a representative to work on the core team at the top of Figure 2. This team-organizing approach accommodates various diverse business units as well as geographic dispersion across very large enterprises.

The outer concentric circle in Figure 2 represents horizontal and strategic business stakeholders. For example, strategic planning, government relationship management, investment management, marketing, and public policy management represent business capabilities that require feedback from business executives. Team structure should be established up front, as shown in Figure 1, and accommodate the size and complexity anticipated in a business architecture initiative. Two case study scenarios in the next section demonstrate the criticality here.
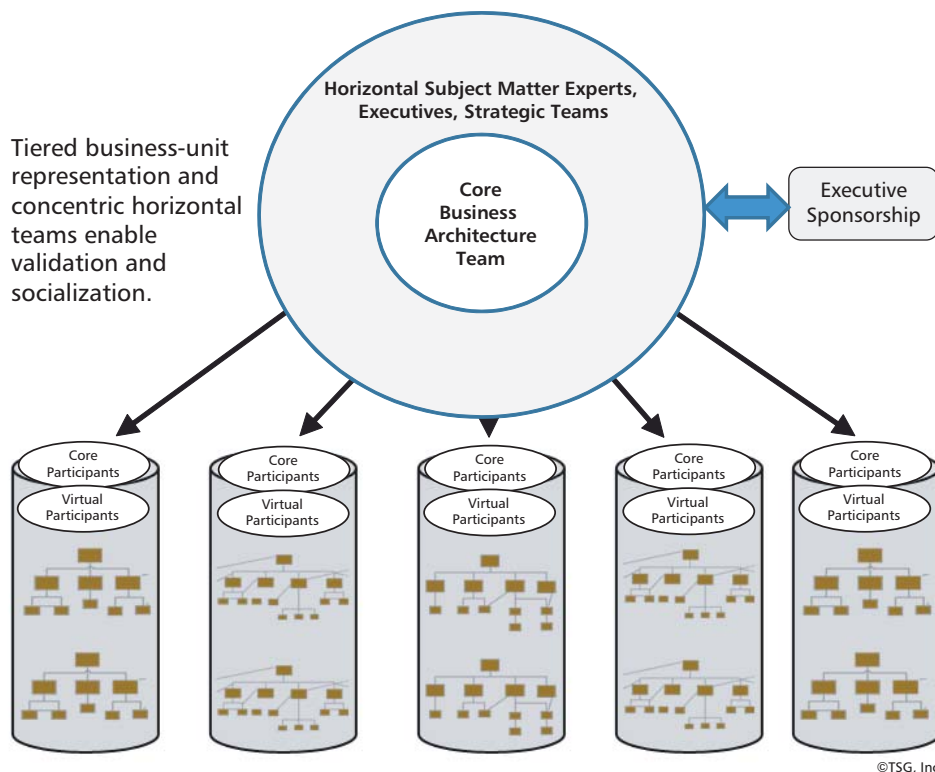

Figure 2 — Establishing a tiered team structure.

ITERATIVE EVOLUTION AND SOCIALIZATION OF BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE

Let's examine two scenarios that two different organizations pursued to create a capability map and value stream maps, as well as information and organization mappings. Both teams had strong executive sponsorship — a prerequisite for any business architecture effort — but the resulting outcomes were quite different.

In the first example, enterprise architects reporting up through the IT organization largely comprised the business architecture team. There were a couple of business team participants, but the business teams providing input and review often viewed the business architecture team as a team of IT architects with some business support. While the resulting maps offered a reasonably good representation of the business, there was little buy-in by business teams due to lack of business participation and because validation and socialization efforts did not extend across the business stakeholders.

Consequently, the business did not buy in to the new vocabulary to the degree required, meaning that strategic planning, issue analysis, requirements analysis, and various other business engagement activities would not use the vocabulary established within the business architecture. This was primarily due to limited business participation on the business architecture team; as such, it was not truly a business vocabulary. The team had to retrench, rebuild executive support, and resocialize the results across various business units, only this time with more business participation.

A second example involves a similarly sized enterprise that underwent careful business team selection, driven by the business executives sponsoring the analysis effort. The team had representation from all major business units as well as access to related business units through executive sponsorship and inherent knowledge of the overall environment. While the mapping time for this project was similar to that in our first example, the degree of socialization achieved by this team was far superior to the team that was primarily comprised of IT architects.

When it came to leveraging the business architecture in a strategic transformation initiative aimed at improving customer service and customer visibility, the results were striking. Business executives in this second example established a succinct business vision and corresponding set of priorities using value stream and capability-specific terms. By month three of the project, the business could utilize results, with data architects creating a strategic data architecture and solution architects quickly establishing an overall approach for simplifying how customer accounts moved through request and change cycles.

The successes achieved in this second example can be directly attributed to getting the business on board with a shared vocabulary based on its direct knowledge and involvement in the business architecture initiative. This in turn enabled management to articulate an unambiguous vision and related priorities in rapid fashion with a comfort level where everyone knew what was being requested and how it was to be prioritized. This all stemmed back to the structure and makeup of the business architecture team.

SUMMARY

In this *Update*, we saw how several important factors are required to establish the business architecture, and that success stems from having the proper business architecture team structure established at the outset. A business architecture team that is primarily comprised of business professionals who equitably represent a cross-section of the business will produce a higher-quality, more deployable business architecture than a similar team of IT architects. While IT architects can build what on the surface appears to be a valid business architecture, the business will struggle with and often reject the resulting business mappings and vocabulary. Time should be spent up front to ensure that the right team is in place before launching a project.

Part VI, the final installment in this series, will discuss how to use the business architecture to perform analysis, meet executive demands, and deliver strategic transformation initiatives.

ENDNOTE

[1]Ulrich, William. "Business Architecture: Part I — Why Business Architecture Matters to Business Executives." Cutter Consortium Business & Enterprise Architecture *Executive Update,* Vol. 14, No. 7, 2011; Ulrich, William. "Business Architecture: Part II — Business-Driven Transformation Strategies, Roadmaps, and Funding Models." Cutter Consortium Business & Enterprise Architecture *Executive Update*, Vol. 14, No. 8, 2011; Ulrich, William. "Business Architecture: Part III — Leveraging Value Streams in Business Transformation." Cutter Consortium Business & Enterprise Architecture *Executive Update*, Vol. 14, No. 9, 2011; Ulrich, William. "Business Architecture: Part IV — Building a Robust Foundation for the Future." Cutter Consortium Business & Enterprise Architecture *Executive Update,* Vol. 14, No. 10, 2011.

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Mr. Ulrich currently serves as VP of the Business Architecture Guild, Cochair of the OMG Business Architecture Special Interest Group, Editorial Director of the Business Architecture Institute, Director-at-Large of the Business Architecture Society, and is a member of the EA Advisory Board for Penn State. Previously, he was cofounder of Triaxsys Research and served as KPMG's Director of Reengineering Strategies prior to leaving and forming his own company in 1990. Mr. Ulrich has also served on the faculty of Northeastern Illinois University and facilitated numerous workshops, including sessions for SEI. He has lectured internationally to thousands of business and IT professionals and has testified as an expert witness on the use of IP within the computer field. Mr. Ulrich continues to serve as a software forensic and litigation support expert in technology-related cases. In 2005, he was awarded the Keeping America Strong Award by Rear Admiral Kevin F. Delaney (Ret.). Mr. Ulrich has authored hundreds of articles appearing in major publications, including *InformationWeek* and *Computerworld*. He is coauthor of *Business Architecture: The Art and Practice of Business Transformation*, *Information Systems Transformation: Architecture-Driven Modernization Case Studies*, and *Legacy Systems: Transformation Strategies*. He can be reached at wulrich@cutter.com.

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