The Essential EA Toolkit Part 4 - An Enterprise Roadmap

Enterprise Roadmaps are fast becoming a major source of competitive advantage whe
successfully executed.

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After taking Q4-10 off, I'm energized and back to blogging. Several of you have inquired about completion timing of the EA Toolkit series, so here is part 4(.1). -

This is the fourth and final part of my "The Essential EA Toolkit" series covering some recommended tools for Enterprise Architecture Teams. By "tools" I mean a few well-executed deliverables or processes that contribute enormous value to the enterprise. These are not technologies; they can be developed using typical office productivity technology and perhaps a collaboration application such as SharePoint. Before I start, here are links to the first three:

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- Part 1 - Introduction and Business Capability Models
- Part 2 - A Reference Architecture and Standards Repository
- Part 3 - An Architecture Governance Process

In conclusion, the final tool is the Enterprise Roadmap...

An Enterprise Roadmap is the Linchpin for Transformation

The economic collapses of the 2000's left a profound effect on businesses that includes a revaluation of how resources are spent on technology. As a result, IT budgets are lean, there is renewed focus on realistic business cases for investment, and CIOs recognize old

legacy of these trying times.

Achieving a transformed 'future state' requires a tool to guide and govern day-to-day resource investment decisions - the Enterprise Roadmap. Roadmaps both compel us to towards the future and provide a basis for evaluating enterprise investment decisions required to get there. They are fast becoming necessary, and organizations without one will soon be left at a competitive disadvantage.

Good Roadmaps Have four Common elements

Besides a time-phased plan of action, good roadmaps have four other common elements:

- **Blueprints & Business Scenarios define a compelling future state**. In order to be successful Roadmaps must compel us to the future state - no organization will maintain the discipline required for success without these. 'Blueprints' form the basis of our vision, and are created a various levels, from business friendly 'sketches' to data, application and technology focused details. Business Scenarios complement Blueprints by describing the desired outcomes and identifying key people, process and technology changes required to achieve them. Blueprints and Business Scenarios cross reference each other, clearly telling the story: "If we do these things, we will get to where we want to be".

- **Complexity is simplified by defining 'Enterprise Programs'**. Large organizations are guaranteed to have many needs, competing agendas and a legacy of applications, technologies and desired projects. These challenge roadmap development by adding complexity. The best Roadmaps identify a few enterprise strategic themes, then rely on 'Enterprise Programs' to execute the appropriate steps. The old adage, 'if everything is important, then nothing is' rings true - good Roadmaps clearly identify important strategic goals and focus on attaining them.

- **Key Performance Indicators measure success and prevent failure**. Many external factors can influence business performance, therefore non-financial Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are necessary. The best roadmaps assign non-redundant KPI goals to each Enterprise Program. For example, a 'Common View of the Customer' program should set data quality measures to assess confidence that there is a single view of every customer. Other programs should not also target customer data quality as a primary benefit. Programs must take early action when desired outcomes will not be reached. History is littered with failed efforts that recognized a different approach was required too late. Close monitoring of outcomes is a must to prevent Roadmap's from derailing.

- **A high-level financial model provides insight and direction**. A high-level financial

see quantified financial impacts in order to make large-scale investment decisions that roadmaps often require. The best models define program and project benefits to KPIs, which themselves are linked to expected financial performance; results are recorded over time using accounting standards to generate cash flow and expense projections. Project and program classifications allow analysis of cost and benefit by strategy, capability, process and line of business. Classification of project cost and benefit yields insight, answering the question, "are we investing in the right things to achieve what we want?"