

Foundationally Governance

Whitepaper

Version 0.5

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# Introduction

Most companies document and publish their corporate vision and strategy via their investor relations website or in their annual report. This provides strategic direction and describes what the company aims to achieve in the future and guides its internal decision making. This vision and strategy are used by the company’s board of directors and senior leadership to focus the company’s resources on achieving the documented vision & strategy. Also, companies publish their corporate governance which documents the mechanisms and processes that are used to run the business that ensures they met all regulatory requirements.

No IT initiatives are approved without a very compelling business reason that helps deliver the corporate vision and strategy. There is an industry standard for IT governance, which is known as COBIT[[1]](#footnote-0), this standard discusses that all IT initiatives/Projects/project should have a cascading vision and strategy from the corporate vision and strategy. Also as with corporate governance, all IT initiatives should have a governance framework in place to manage the projects with a vision & strategy which is used in all decision making.

One of the biggest challenges our customers have with managing their Salesforce environments is the lack of governance. There are a number of common reasons why this is the case:

* The Business purchased Salesforce with little (if any) input or involvement from IT.
* The Business requires a highly agile platform for delivery of business requirements and they believe governance processes will add unacceptable delays.
* Due to the nature of aPaas (Application Platform as a Service), many believe changes should be simply made directly in production and that governance is not required.
* Cloud is new to many of our customers and they do not have a track record to follow.

This series of whitepaper outlines the foundational processes you need to consider implementing to create an effective governance framework and to minimize your overall initiative risk. When discussing governance with customers, the first question that normally ask “What are your challenges?”, by analyzing the answers to the question it was very clear that 90% of all customer challenges with developing and managing Salesforce can be addressed with the following foundational process:

* **Vision and Strategy – V2MOM**: This documents in business terms the reason why the project is occurring and the measure being used to achieve success. It is used in all decision making, especially in prioritization.
* **Business Backlog**: The business requirements are always greater than the capacity of the delivery teams to develop the solutions, this process prioritizes the requirements based on the business goals and value management to achieve the optimum business value.
* **Technical Change Control**: This is about applying the principles of software engineering to your projects that is all changes should go through a development, test, UAT, production, process which drives system quality and agility.
* **Communication Strategy**: This drives alignment between all stakeholders and aids the adoption of the new solution since the users understand why the way they work is changing.
* **Data Architecture and Management**: In many cases, customers do not spend sufficient time in designing their data architecture, due to this customers have 100’s of custom fields and the associated technical debt this creates. Also as the data volume grows they start getting performance issues.

However, having governance around your Salesforce deployment can help the program team focus on the business backlog and at the same time adhering to your company’s IT policies and best practices without loss of agility. Salesforce’s most successful customers have comprehensive governance frameworks in place with the business & IT working in partnership to build and manage mission critical Salesforce solutions.

Many people think putting governance around Salesforce will slow down agility, but the opposite is actually true. A lightweight governance framework based on the foundational processes due to the guide rails it offers and will improve agility by focusing on the business goals and at the same time adhering to IT best practices and processes.

# Vision & Strategy – V2MOM

As stated above all IT initiatives require a vision & strategy document, also known as a Charter. This document should include the business goals that the initiatives are trying to achieve and the agreed strategies. Also to measure if the initiatives are achieving these goals you need to include a number of measurements (KPI’s). Each project within the initiatives also needs a vision and strategy which maps to the overall initiatives vision and strategy document.

Note: the mistake many customers make in creating a vision and strategy for IT initiatives, it’s all about technology, when it should be all about the business.

Over the years Salesforce has been admired as a very innovative company, the main reason is Salesforce culture which is known as Ohana [[2]](#footnote-1) A fundamental part of this culture is total alignment from the board down to every employee, this is achieved via a lightweight management process known as V2MOM, an acronym that stands for vision, values, methods, obstacles, and measures. This process has help Salesforce achieve our business goals year after year and is a lightweight framework which is simple to digest and creates total alignment.

## *What is a Vision & Strategy – V2MOM*

A V2MOM is a lightweight management framework to cascade business goals & strategies from the board down to every initiative (business and IT) and to all employees which drives complete company wide alignment.

* V2MOM is part of Salesforce culture which drives company wide alignment.
* It offers a simple and easy to digest way of documenting the initiative’s vision and the goals it’s required to achieve.
* The V2MOM is a living document that is regularly reviewed, updated, and referenced in the course of making project decisions.

**V**ision:

* What do you want to accomplish with the project and should be in business terms?
* Should be no more than three sentences.

**V**alue:

* What values are important as you pursue your vision?
* Values guide everyday decisions, trade-offs, and priorities.
* These are the principles and beliefs that define the strategy to achieve your vision.

**M**ethods:

* What 4 – 8 things do you want to accomplish to get the job done (strategies)?
* In order of priority.

**O**bstacles:

* What is going to make accomplishing the vision difficult?
* What challenges need to be overcome.
* These should include business and IT obstacles.

**M**easures:

* How will you know you’ve been successful?
* Focus on measurable outcomes versus activities.

## *Why having a Vision and Strategy* – *V2MOM is important*

There are many reasons why to have a vision and strategy in place, the key ones are:

* Enable a clear decision making process which is based on an agreed and documented project vision and strategy. Which in turn enables the highest priority items to be delivered first.
* Drives alignment between all stakeholders and hence starts to create a more agile environment.
* Drives ownership of the project among all the stakeholders (business and IT).
* Enables the creation of a partnership between the business and IT.
* Allows quick reaction to challenges if your KPI’s are not being realized.
* Enables the achievement of your project business goals and strategies in a timely manner.
* Bring Salesforce Ohana (culture) to your projects.

## *The side effects of not having a Vision and Strategy* – *V2MOM in place*

* Spending effort and resources on capabilities that are not required or on low business value capabilities.
* Lack of alignment between the business and IT.
  + Businesses are not happy since the solution is not meeting their requirements.
  + IT is not happy since they are not meeting the business expectations.
  + Delivery schedules not being met.
* Budgets spiralling out of control.
* The adoption of the solution is suboptimal.
* Lack of project focus.

## *How to create a Vision & Strategy* – *V2MOM*

* Gather the project business goals from the business stakeholders and the strategies the business stakeholders have defined to achieve these business goals.
* Document any known project business and IT challenges.
* Gather the KPI’s that the business stakeholders are using to measure the achievement of their business goals and strategies.
* Since most projects will have multiple business stakeholders, so there will be a conflict:
  + Need to collaborate together to create a single project V2MOM using the customer preferred technique.
  + Secure agreement across all stakeholders, business and IT.

## *Associated processes*

In the creation and use of a vision and strategy there are additional items you may wish to consider:

* Communication Strategy.
* Identify Stakeholders.
* KPI’s.
* Principles of Agility.
* Ownership

For more details see whitepaper on creating a Vision and Strategy - V2MOM.

# Technical Change Control

Applying software engineering principles to all projects is paramount for success. Within this process there are 3 specific areas that will be discussed: software development lifecycle, technical governance, and release cadence.

## *What is Technical Change Control?*

Technical change management is applying the principles of software engineering and industry wide best practices and processes in the development and maintenance of software solutions. Specifically, there are 3 important areas of the principles of software engineering to consider:

* Software development lifecycle: This is the process of developing and testing the solution. You should follow the processes: development is carried out in the development system, testing is carried out in a test system, UAT is done as far as possible in a mirror copy of the production system with all changes migrated from system to system. The benefit of this approach is, it allows for system testing of the configuration & code and interdependencies with other applications/projects in the same org, also it is testing the migration process. Due to the nature of Salesforce technology, we do understand that changes need to be made into production, however, it is recommended that an impact analysis is carried out to understand their impact. However, it’s recommended that these changes are first applied to a sandbox.
* Technology governance: Salesforce has best practices and architectural standards for the use of Salesforce technology in building solutions. The starting point for any company is to use Salesforce’s best practices, but over a period of time, these are updated to meet each company's specific requirements and culture.
* Release cadence: To ensure high quality all solutions that run on the same Salesforce org should have a common release cadence for all releases, even break-fix releases.

## *Why having Technical Change Control is important*

* Drives quality since it follows industry best practices and Salesforce has guidelines and specific best practices for our technology.
* Drives agility since you have well defined processes which offer guide rails to allow you to develop solutions quickly by ensuring you are following best practices and all releases have comprehensive regression testing in place to ensure new solutions or enhancements do not break existing solutions.
* Allows flexibility if the business goals change.
* Prevents end user disturbance by having a regular release cadence.

## *The side effects of poor Technical Change Control*

* Poor quality since one release can impact another due to lack of overall org regression testing.
* Impact on users since multiple uncontrolled changes can occur.
* Lack of agility since release after release you will gather technical debt.
* The development team focuses on “bells and whistles” instead of core business capabilities.

## *How to achieve Technical Change Control*

* Document your current processes.
* Understand Salesforce best practices in software development lifecycle and technical governance.
* Carry out a gap analysis between your current processes and Salesforce best practices.
* Agree on your optimum future state.
* Develop a plan to migrate from your current state to your future state.
* Enhance your team's skills.
* Implement the plan.
* Monitor the effectiveness of the plan.
* Modify if appropriate.
* Remember it’s a journey, so take small steps.

## *Associated processes*

In the creation and use of a Technical Change Control there are additional items you may wish to consider:

* Roles & Responsibilities.
* Skill.
* Principles of Agility.
* Technology governance.
* Software Development Lifecycle.

For more details see the whitepaper on Technical Change Control.

# Business Backlog

Key for the success of any IT initiative and especially Salesforce based solutions is to have a comprehensive business roadmap of all the projects within the initiative mapping to the business goals and strategies. This roadmap is owned and managed by the business.

During the planning phase, all interdependencies and synergies between each project requirements have been taken into consideration in the creation of the roadmap. The roadmap is constantly reviewed to keep in line with changes to the business goals and strategies.

This roadmap is prioritized with help from IT to create a Business Backlog based on the business goals and to maximize the business return using the V2MOM and value management.

## *What is Business Backlog*

The key for the success of any IT project is to develop a backlog of the business requirements for the implementation teams to develop the solutions.

* A backlog is a set of prioritized and approved high level user stories known as EPIC’s.
* The backlog has been prioritized by the business using the V2MOM and value management.
* Consideration is taken into account of what is available out of the box by Salesforce.
* Due to the nature of Salesforce technology, in the planning, MVP (Minimum Viable Product) approach should also be considered.
* In the planning, the overall business roadmap should include all initiatives and projects within the same Salesforce org.
* The business backlog and roadmap should be reviewed regularly, however, should be reviewed and updated immediately after any new business strategy or business unit reorganization and also after each release.

## *Why having a Business Backlog is important*

* Drives synergies between business units.
* Drives standardization of business processes.
* Optimise your investment.
* Enables delivery of business outcomes based on your business goals and strategies.
* Drives alignment between all projects within the initiatives.
* Minimise risks by highlighting dependencies.
* Maximises the business return.
* Enable alignment between all stakeholders.
* Allows flexibility if the business goals change.

## *The side effects of a poor Business Backlog*

* Spending effort and resources on capabilities that are not required.
* Developing capabilities which are within Salesforce or about to be released since due diligence has not been applied.
* Capabilities cost more than planned, so budgets start spiralling out of control.
* Lack of synergies between business units, so work is developed twice.
* One business unit enhancement breaks another business unit's capabilities.
* Lack of synergies between business and IT.
* Lack of planning can cause significant dependency risks.
* Can cause an explosion of infrastructure, eg org explosion.

## *How to achieve a Business Backlog*

* Understand the Salesforce capability roadmap.
* Document all initiatives within the same Salesforce org.
* Ensure you have an agreed V2MOM in place.
* Document dependencies.
* Highlight any synergies, also consider initiatives in other Salesforce orgs.
* Develop a roadmap using V2MOM, value management, and the Salesforce roadmap with IT help in defining the size of the requirement.
* Secure buy-in on the roadmap from key business and executive stakeholders.
* Communicate your agreed business backlog to all stakeholders.

## *Associated processes*

In the creation and use of a Business Backlog there are additional items you may wish to consider:

* Release Roadmap & Cadence.
* Prioritization/Decision Criteria.
* Identify Stakeholders.
* Principles of Agility.
* Business & IT Partnership.

For more details see whitepaper on Business Backlog.

# *Communications Strategy*

A Communications Strategy is fundamental in driving alignment of all stakeholder and ensuring the new initiative is successful. It is also for the end users to understand why the way they work is changing and the benefits the system will bring them.

## *What is a Communications Strategy*

In the development of a communications strategy, there are a key number of questions that need to be answered for each communication:

* To whom: Executive sponsors, stakeholders, project teams, end users and in many cases different communications need to be sent to the different personas, that is know your audience.
* How often: daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly.
* What: V2MOM, meeting minutes (executive, management), project(s) roadmaps, training schedules etc.
* Via what channel: chatter, email, desk drops, and posters.
* By what media: Written, video, face to face.

## *Why having a Communications Strategy is important*

* Is about defining a strategy to ensure all stakeholders that are from the executive down to the end users are totally aligned and understand the business value that the new solution will bring them which is documented in the project V2MOM.
* In the world of “go fast not perfect” it is extremely important to communicate to the users, there experience journey and why this approach is been done and to reinforce the feedback culture and for them to understand “what's in it for me” and how it maps to their personal KPI’s.
* In a diverse business for many reasons people may disagree about decisions and/or direction, it is paramount that everybody can openly discuss this disagreement and drive consciences and hence alignment.
* Finally, in today’s workplace, there is a lot of communication “noise”, the strategy is to ensure that the stakeholders read and understand the project communications.

## *The side effects of a poor Communications Strategy*

* Un-alignment of stakeholders.
* The business goals for the solution are not being achieved.
* End users do not understand the purpose of the new solution.
* Poor decision making process and hence wrong decisions have been made.
* Poor solution adoption since users does not understand why.

## *How to Create a Communications Strategy*

Decide:

* To whom (Persona’s).
* How often.
* What.
* Via what channel.
* By what media.

Remember in your strategy you need to communicate differently to all the personas.

## *Associated processes*

In the creation and use of a Communications Strategy there are additional items you may wish to consider:

* Identify Stakeholders.
* Roles & Responsibilities.
* Business & IT Partnership.
* Feedback.
* Ownership.

For more details see whitepaper on Communications strategy.

# *Data Architecture & Management*

Core to any IT system is how its data is architected and managed and it’s interaction with another system within your estate. It starts with the business data architecture, then how you map this architecture into a physical implementation within Salesforce.

## *What is a Data Architecture & Management*

The different areas that you need to consider in the end to end management of your data. These areas are:

* Business Data Architecture.
* Physical Data Implementation.
* Migration of your Data.
* Data Back-up and Archiving.
* Managing and changing your data architecture due to proposed enhancement – Data Governance.

## *Why having a Data Architecture & Management is important*

* Drive a consistent data model across Salesforce and backend systems, making integration simpler and consistent between all Salesforce applications.
* Prevents over complex record types and page layouts.
* Makes it easy to keep data clean due to clear understanding of what each data field is being used for.
* Allows the correct approach in dealing with large data volumes.
* Enhanced user experience since old data is archived.

## *The side effects of a poor Data Architecture & Management*

* Delay of go live, due to poor quality of data migrated from legacy system.
* Lots of duplicated data.
* The explosion of custom fields, causing a significant amount of technical debt.
* Complex integration due to poor data mapping between Salesforce and backend systems.
* Escalating costs due to expanding data volumes and growing technical debt.
* Performance issues due to the lack of architecture to deal with large data volumes.

## *How to Create a Data Architecture & Management*

* Understand your company’s business data architecture.
* Understand the complete documented business roadmap.
* Carry out a high level Salesforce business data architecture based on the corporate architecture and proposed initiatives.
* Design your physical data architecture.
* During each future release, re-factor the data model based on the new enhancements.

## *Associated processes*

In the creation and use of a Data Architecture & Management there are additional items you may wish to consider:

* Data Migration Strategy.
* Data Quality Strategy.
* Data Back-up & Archiving.
* Data Governance.

For more details see whitepaper on Data Architecture & Management.

# *Next Steps*

If resources are limited and you feel you can’t implement the 5 foundational processes then it is recommended to do the following as a minimal:

* Develop a V2MOM, to help with this Salesforce has released a Trailhead Trail on Organization Alignment[[3]](#footnote-2) (V2MOM).
* Secondly, ensure everybody associated with the project communicated regularly to share best practices and challenges.
* Finally, but the most important is to start developing a true business and IT partnership.

# *How can Salesforce help?*

Based on the Governance framework and a large number of customer deployments, Salesforce has developed a successful set of Governance assets as well as the Customer & Sales Growth (CSG) Governance Success Accelerator program. For more information, contact your Customer Success Management team.

# *About the Author*

James Burns is a Senior Director – Solution Architect at Salesforce and is the Global SME (Subject Matter Expert) on Salesforce Governance and works with customers on building their governance frameworks globally.

1. http://www.isaca.org/COBIT/Pages/default.aspx [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Part of Hawaiian culture, Ohana means family [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. https://trailhead.salesforce.com/module/manage\_the\_sfdc\_organizational\_alignment\_v2mom [↑](#footnote-ref-2)