

ARIS – Software, Method and Instrument

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What can and must a software and consultancy company do for its customers? How must the portfolio of services be designed, in order to smooth the way towards more agility and better utilization in the business of customers from a wide range of sectors? What are the unique selling points?

In the software sector, competitor differentiation is through concrete functionality. However, the consultancy sector is, if anything, a ‘me-too-market’, in which only a few companies have acquired themselves a unique position by having original approaches and innovative products. *IDS Scheer* has not only adopted another, until this day, unique way with its products – with ARIS the company has developed a methodical approach that proved to be a complete consultancy innovation at its launch in 1992. At the first press conference, Professor Scheer stated that it was unthinkable that consultants advise customers on the introduction of modern information systems whilst they themselves are drawing the organization models using paper and pencil. Rationalization and efficient work practices are not only a theme for the customer, but also for the consultancy itself.

What was then computer-aided modeling using ARIS Toolset, has, in the meantime, developed into a comprehensive consultancy package for Business Process Management: ARIS Value Engineering comprises a wide spectrum of expertise, methodology, tools and solutions.

Gradually over the years, the ARIS BPM software has become a method and instrument for consultancy. Robust models, structured processes, semantically clearly defined contents, and pre-configured solutions were developed for each type of project. 20 years experience in consultancy on Business Process Management has flowed into ARIS Value Engineering. As with many products that have

become a brand and developed into an industry standard, the basic idea is elementary: using a simple descriptive language for business content, a knowledge database and software programs, the consultant has at his disposal a construction kit with instructions, which guide him through the complex project. With ARIS, the principle that one requires standards and pre-defined components to enable experiences to be reusable has been carried over to consultancy. At first, the prime interest were the logistic processes in the manufacturing sector, where ARIS was used as a tool for analysis and improvement. However, over the years, an increasing variety of sectors became interested in the business process expertise of *IDS Scheer*. Last but not least, the term ‘factory’ for back office processes in service organizations made it clear that business process excellence is a primary driver for competitiveness.

ARIS Value Engineering contains over 40 components and modules, numerous sector-specific reference modules and five core tools filled with over 100 sector- and solution-specific standards. This number alone clearly indicates that today’s consultancy has outgrown the know-how of a single consultant. Information systems are there to store and distribute knowledge, independent of individuals: in short, to make it reusable. The vocabulary of concepts is totally conformal. In addition to this, there is the integrative methodological concept: the *IDS Scheer* consultant works according to an integrative method and documentation concept. As early as the presentation stage, the customer is shown how his results are documented; he receives a precise idea of what he will receive at the end. Consistency is assured – from the initial outline right through to implementation.

The methodology is important as it ensures that data and information are homogeneous and each finding is integrated easily or can also be modified. Global project teams not only have a common Web interface, but also a common understanding of the business contents that cuts across any differences in language and culture. They all work according to the same semantic principle and with the same tools, thus ensuring that the outcomes of sub-projects match, any time, any place. Transparency and integration are guaranteed throughout the complete consultancy process, which in the ARIS concept is also described as ‘lifecycle’.

Closed System for Customer-Individual Requirements

ARIS Value Engineering is a closed system with quality-checked modules and components. The concept is targeted to completely fulfill the customer-individual requirements, whilst simultaneously utilizing the advantages of a standard product. ARIS can be best compared to a modular furniture system, made up of standardized and quality-checked components, which can be assembled in different ways to produce different pieces of furniture. The fundamental principle always remains the same, meaning that one can add to and rebuild at any time.