TOGAF® Poster Series #15

The Architecture Continuum

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We looked at the Enterprise Continuum in an earlier poster. Here we look in more detail at the Architecture Continuum, which helps us to build Organization-Specific Architectures based on or reusing pre-defined elements from more generic architectures – saving us time and effort, and improving consistency and interoperability.

E.g. The Technical Reference Model (TRM) can be used as a base for more specific architectures

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E.g. Integrated Information Infrastructure Reference Model (III-RM), or the Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP)

E.g. a particular multinational banking a financial services company headquartered in London, UK

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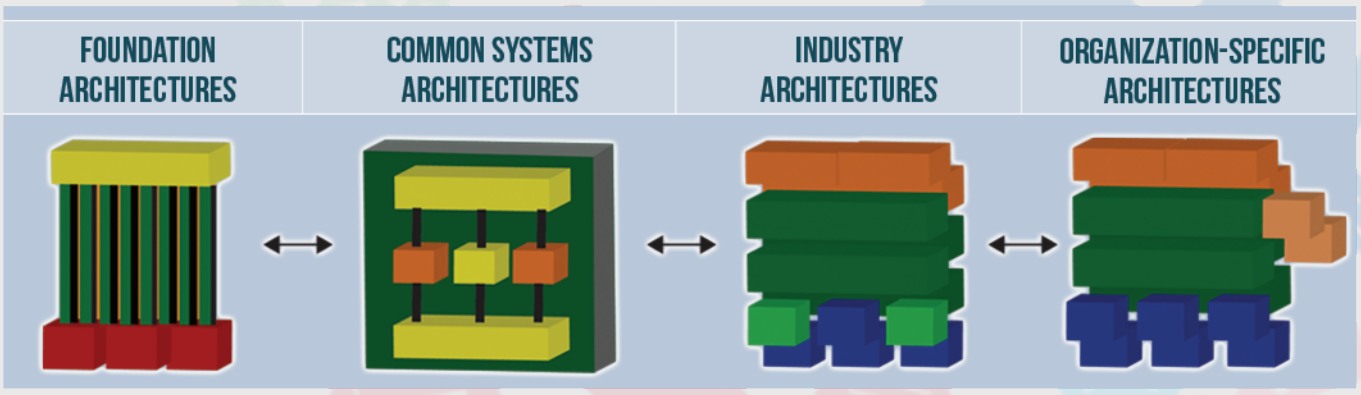
E.g. Microsoft Industry Reference Architecture for Banking (MIRA-B), Banking Industry Architecture Network (BIAN) or Information



These architecture types are 4 main classifications that you might find useful – but there could be other in-between types

Towards the left, architectures are more generic, & therefore fit many different situations. They have a wider range of reuse.

Start by looking for any reusable architectural building blocks from the left side of the continuum

For example, look for concepts, templates, principles or building blocks that are true for any common system, industry or organization-specific architecture. Use these to define the high-level architectural approach.

Then expand the foundation with guidelines for building highly re-usable solutions that can provide common services across industry and organization-specific contexts.

For example, common systems can include security & network architectures. It might also include building blocks for management & operations.

This is where you would define business, data, application or technology standards for implementing common building blocks.

Now populate your architecture continuum with industry-specific components that are widely applied in vertical industry sectors relevant to your enterprise.

A typical example is an industry-specific data model, such as the Retail industry's "Active Store! architecture

Industry standards encourage interoperability throughout an industry, & are often defined by standards bodies, vendors or consultancies. Search using terms such as "reference model", "reference architecture", or "industry standard" - plus your industry name.

Finally adapt generic components to your specific needs, & add anything that is unique to your organization.

By reusing foundation, common systems and industry building blocks, the organization-specific part should account for a maximum of 20% or 30%.

Here are organization-specific criteria to measure & select appropriate products, solutions and services

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