

"EA Tool" is a kind of misleading word, in my view, since the scope of Enterprise Architecture is actually should starting from business itself then act as the bridging to describe from city-mapping to underlying layers, no single tool can perform all of those tasks, thus, I prefer to use "EA Toolbox" instead so you (and your EA team) should keep eyes open and put the proper 'tool' into your Toolbox with time to time refreshing.

Working dedicately as EA for past 7 years, plus other architect roles before that, in myself experience, the hands-on tooling have evolved always, simply view, from diagramming-oriented to artefacts-oriented, and now to story-telling-oriented, every phase you may find different tools are more adequated. Let me elaborate them in a little detail --

"Diagramming-Oriented": this should be the entry point for any type of architect, you're not be EA from day-one, so you must have chance to practice architecturing work in certain focused domain, e.g. business analysis, software engineering, data & information, infrastrucutre etc. in different project. However, the first thing for being a architect is like a minutes-taker, you must have a way to show what in your mind as one or more diagrams, with this pure purpose, I mainly use MS Visio because its strongly "ecosystem" on the stencil concept; besides of that, draw.io & lucidchart are alternative and I can see their features enhanced quite a lot in the past years, and really in the competing position; however, this stage focus on making diagram drawing, so tool itself is not too much serious to choose, I even see some of my colleagues from Japan used Excel to draw quite complicate network topology and it's looks beautiful ;-); while the more important is the inter-operatability, means you'd have to consider the diagram receiver, whether they have the compatible tool (or at least viewer) to open your diagram. Sometimes, sharing with broader group forces you converting your diagram into PDF or put into a PPT, thus Acrobat / Pointpoint are also your tools.

"Artefacts-Oriented": this stage comes once your EA team started adopting certain EA methodology and your organization respecting certain EA principles, the needs of "diagraming" should serve on the different artefacts' purpose. Quite possible, from this stage, the EAs are facing (e.g. from TOGAF perspective) different layering requirement - Business Architecture, Information / Data Architecture, Application Architecture, and Technology / Infrastructure Architecture, sometimes, you'll need to extend up to Strategic or down to implementation layer as well. The way of diagraming are driven by which layer you're working on. To my view, Visio (and Visio-like) as tools are more from technical perspective, if you want to show more abstractive concepts, it's not enough. And it is from this stage, you're facing the need of "EA Tool". We have touched base variable EA-field-tool, e.g. Sparx, Hopex, also looking at Ardoq etc., while, before those tools have implemented enough integration with other systems (e.g. master data, application portfolio, process master system, CMDB etc.), our team are working from Visio/draw.io to adopt the Archi tool, which is one opensource and fully ArchiMate-compliance tool. The big reason is it's supporting you starting quick, build your initial repository, and gain collaboration power through its plug-in, also give you freedom if you wish to do

scripting for automating something. Other "bigger" EA tool, just as comparison, are not "so-called" ArchiMate compatible so inter-operation through TOGAF "standard" would be in kinds of troubles. One more advantage of Archi is, after I learnt it for more than 1 year, I can do my modeling work with it also in unlimited potential, I'm now completely stop using Visio as its diagrams are no relationships each other, sometimes I'm still keep using draw.io as the complementary way for doing some draft drawing. Last but not least, using Archi is give you a way to think your Architecture not in linear manner, it is the "graph", you paint your EA through defining Element, Property and Relation, then you're making your thinking in graphical & logically way by nature.

"Story-telling-oriented": this is the stage when your EA repository has a good foundation built, so it's starting to deliver power to serve your communication and convey Enterprise Architectural message to variable stakeholders. This is the stage you need to jump outside of the architectural "tool" mindset, but sitting on the side of your stakeholders are sitting. If they're businessman, talk/paint in business words, same if they're end user, or IT. Principle of EA is more important than the format. So, talking about "tool", you need familiar of making presentation (normally Pointpoint-like), generate whitepaper (familiar word editing), and analyzing data (BI tool, e.g. PowerBI). The notation you are using in the EA Modeling Tool is not necessary shown as the same in the presented material. Also, more importantly, you need to think about "marketing" your Enterprise Architecture function, then doing the good documentation (e.g. Confluence site), share through collaboration (e.g. Sharepoint administration), and moderate community/forum (e.g. Yammer) are the new hands-on tools for your day-to-day work.

Just my tiny view, hope that give you some refernece, "toolbox", not only "tool"!