



Enterprise Architecture  
Symposium Community

# Trip Report

## Enterprise Architecture Symposium Community

Members: 375

### Key Takeaways

The conference occurred during a possible recession in the U.S., but attendees didn't exhibit lots of panic — such as “Management wants us to cut 10% across the board. What do I do?” Attendees wanted to know how to get started with innovation, whether they were in enterprise architecture (EA) or some other track, or whether they came from aggressive or conservative technology adopters. The short answer is you have to determine what business value you need to deliver. How you approach all other issues (social trends, regulations and so on) follows from delivering business value. Attendees also realized that they can't just cut costs, because the rest of the world is still growing. IT organizations need to help companies increase customer satisfaction, deliver new products and the like at the same time as cutting costs. After all, companies might be competing with rivals in places like South Korea which are still growing. Architects should play a key role in this environment because architecture is about planning for change, not a static description of current enterprise systems and applications.

### Conference Highlights

#### Impact of Emerging Enterprise Architecture Trends

For this workshop, attendees broke into four groups. Each group was asked to list the trends and technologies that are going to affect IT organizations in the next couple of years. Each group was then assigned a business strategy (customer intimacy, brand excellence, product excellence or cost optimization) and asked to describe how they could exploit those trends and technologies to support the business strategy. Each group came up with a different approach. For example, “product excellence” broke it down by functional area (requirements gathering, design, distribution and marketing) while “brand excellence” focused on three factors for building brand awareness: digital natives, communities and customer self-service. The point was that your approach to EA has to change depending on your business strategy.

#### Crafting Emergent Architecture to Increase Business Agility

EA has evolved to become hierarchical, increasingly prescriptive, one-size-fits-all, and constraining in terms of choice and innovation. By 2010, CIOs will terminate 50% of EA teams that focus only on comprehensive standards. Does your architecture team have these problems?

- The business thinks of EA as an impediment to implementation.
- Development thinks of EA as a bunch of guys in an ivory tower — totally removed from real-world concerns.
- There are lots of standards, but they are rarely enforced.
- The EA assurance process is honored more in the breach than in the execution.

Architects need to design architectures for the emergent realities of business. The trick is defining a small number of required interfaces, rather than a wide range of potential solutions.


#### Enterprise Architecture and Innovation: Oxymoron?

If the word “change” is not your definition of enterprise architecture then it's wrong. The key question is: How can you enable innovation yet maintain control? Recommendations:

- Architect the lines, not (just) the boxes.
- Generalize dependencies into fewer lines.
- Dependencies are best managed and innovation best enabled with identifiers, formats and protocols (IFaPs).

#### Justifying Emerging Technologies to Business Leaders

The speaker asked, “How many can tell me what your business strategy is in two to three sentences?” Only about 25% of attendees raised their hands. A business case for emerging technologies will lead to fragmented results. Build a business



case for the business strategy that is then supported by emerging technologies. To increase the success of justifications, focus on:

- Business view, objectives and goals
- Capabilities and implications
- Portfolio management
- Governance
- Architecture

## Context-Delivery Architecture: An Information Model

Enterprises that embrace context-aware computing will be able to deliver services that are better-targeted to their customers, and will increase workforce productivity substantially. It means applying new interaction patterns and new information to evolving business processes. It requires an end-to-end contextual viewpoint, encompassing business processes, information and services, application and communication infrastructure, network services, and endpoints. Context-aware architecture needs to tap new sources of information: 1) identity, 2) community, 3) environment and 4) process. Recommendations:

- Assess your ability to acquire context information
- Evaluate the opportunities for context-enriched services

## Keynotes

### Welcome Address

CEOs want cost reduction, more flexibility, and support for growth from the IT organization, regardless of the economy. That's why 80% of CIOs expect major changes in the next three years — 40% expect transformational change, according to Gartner's latest CIO Survey. Expect old metrics (such as IT spending as a percentage of revenue) to give way to new metrics (such as IT spending needed to gain new clients). Seventy percent of CIOs say their organizations don't have the right skills to create the needed change. Therefore:

- Focus on pivotal roles and competencies
- Capitalize on talent globally
- Make IT attractive to digital natives

### Technology-Enabled Business Acceleration

Be counter-intuitive — while cutting costs, have other staff prepare for the return to growth. If you wait until the recession ends, you'll lose months of opportunity. Schedule meetings with business executives to go over the project portfolio and decide what to keep and what to cut. Web 2.0 enables amazing productivity. Plenty of Fish, a dating site, has 2.5 million users per month, generates \$10 million a year in revenue, and is run by one full-time and one half-time worker. You need to figure out how to employ IT resources for competitive advantage. For example, a context-aware network would know where you are, what you're doing and what you need. You also need to provide mass-produced, repeatable services, not technology, to the business:

- Develop a usage measure like the kilowatt/hour
- Change the IT workforce from caretakers to service managers

CIOs and other leaders need superlative communication and an ability to influence throughout the enterprise.

### Keynote: A Look Into the Labs

Gartner analysts interviewed four research leaders from major IT vendors:

- Rich Friedrich, HP Labs
- David Douglas, Sun Labs
- Guido Jouret, Cisco Emerging Technologies Group
- Steve Hoover, Xerox Labs

#### **What new technologies are you working on?**

Friedrich said HP is working on location-based and context-sensitive services. HP is working with nanotech sensors worldwide. Challenges include the sheer mass of data gathered this way and privacy issues. These technologies could result in things like lower-power GPS systems.

Jouret said that Cisco is working on something called a HealthPresence Pod, a kiosk with connectors for medical equipment such as a stethoscope or blood pressure cuff, allowing doctors to examine patients over distances. He said enterprises

need to ask themselves, “where do you collaborate” to make the most of this kind of technology.

### **What technologies outside your own labs impress you?**

Friedrich: Advances in personalization technology, making services that instantly adapt to the needs of the user.

Jouret: Advances in the automation of programming. Neural network models may help develop more sophisticated applications.

Hoover: Smart objects, such as cars that drive themselves.

### **What is most important to drive innovation?**

Strong enterprise leadership with vision, good communication and networking inside the enterprise.

Hoover: “Above all, know your customers.”

## **What People Asked About**

Attendees in the EA community commonly asked the following questions:

### **Management has the attitude, “If we don’t do anything, everything will be fine.” How do you convince them to adopt emerging technologies?**

You have to show them the business opportunities. Start small. Do a controlled experiment. Don’t harm the business, but demonstrate incremental gains.

### **What if an emerging technology is more costly and the business benefit is intangible initially?**

Here’s a radical idea — shut it down. If the business can’t realize, for example, a 10% increase in revenue or reduction in head count, maybe this technology isn’t the right one for you. So cancel the project and look for another technology that does provide business benefit.

### **How do you create IFaPs, given the semantic issue of each application having its own version of the truth?**

Standardize your master data (descriptions of customers, products, locations, employees and so on). Use XML to transfer data. Each industry has its own flavor for XML, such as Health Level 7 and Extensible Business Reporting Language.

### **How do you generalize IFaPs if you have only one consumer now?**

Let some project teams create applications or services on their own. After three or so cases, you can begin to generalize. Start with the smallest number of data elements that are useful to just about everybody across the enterprise. Other uses not covered by the IFaPs can have extra data elements if needed.

### **I am about to hire a chief architect, but from what you’re saying, I’m probably going to hire the wrong guy. He’s got 30 years of experience.**

Here’s how to identify people who are right for the architect role. Architects are generally people who will draw you the answer when you ask a question. They’re great communicators. They have enough contempt for authority to be able to talk to the CEO about business strategy. Your guy sounds like he may be an engineer at heart who only feels comfortable once everything has been documented and defined in detail. Architects are more comfortable with ambiguity.

## **Things to Watch For**

**Return to growth:** Gartner suggested that IT organizations haven’t felt the effects of the economic slowdown yet but also that any recession will likely be short. One big takeaway is that IT organizations have to start growth projects at the same time as they cut costs, and speakers gave examples of projects that achieved both objectives. IT leaders have to be careful to sell themselves as the solution to company problems and not be perceived as just a cost center.

**Emergent architecture:** The analysts emphasized that the conception of EA needs to include change. Rather than trying to standardize everything, architecture should focus on a narrow set of standards that are common across the enterprise, such as the definition of a customer. An EA team might need to define only 10 to 20 standards in total. These standards can be used and reused no matter where the business goes or what applications are developed. Speakers cited examples of companies that had 1,200 standards or that had an 80-page inventory of enterprise systems, which was called the “enterprise architecture.” Bloated “architectures” actually pose an obstacle to change. No wonder developers ignore the EA department so often.

**Context-delivery architecture:** Context-aware computing will happen on the consumer side first and then make its way into the enterprise. The idea is that the network would know who you are, where you are, what device you’re using, and what your role and history are. Then the network would automatically provide what you need in a format you can use. To support context-aware computing, companies need to build their infrastructure specifically to support it, and it needs architectural underpinnings. You can’t build systems and then fix them later.

## **Interactive Polling Results**

A number of sessions polled attendees about hot topics.

### **IT professionals should manage all the technology in the business.**

Agree — 32%  
Disagree — 64%  
Undecided — 4%

### **IT practitioners create innovative solutions to business needs almost all the time.**

Agree — 35%  
Disagree — 57%  
Undecided — 8%

### **I am confident that we have successfully designed our roles, workforce competencies and skills to support the future state.**

Strongly Disagree — 35%  
Somewhat Disagree — 35%  
Somewhat Agree — 29%  
Strongly Agree — 1%

### **My company is well-positioned to anticipate and manage the changes that business transformation introduces:**

Strongly Disagree — 23%  
Somewhat Disagree — 42%  
Somewhat Agree — 30%  
Strongly Agree — 5%

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