

Conclusion: Finding the Right Course

*Success is defined by the beholder,
not the architect*

According to the current point total, the lively debate that took place in the year 2003 about the purpose and benefits of IT – a debate triggered by Nicholas Carr's article *IT Doesn't Matter* in the Harvard Business Manager – would seem to have been won by the proponents of the view that IT plays a crucial role in enterprise success.

Business orientation

However, this debate on paper does not suitably account for the actual requirements. The really successful organizations are those whose leaders have departed from the established canon at the right moment. The continual determination of ones position and a willingness make course corrections are essential. Here, business orientation and a capacity to respond to business changes is the key. What are necessary are not stricter standards, but the tools and skills required for survival in an ever-changing environment.

Agility

IT agility and flexibility are also essential. The importance of IT can be measured in terms of its operational, tactical and strategic benefits. The absence of these will invite provocative theories such as that of Nicholas Carr.

EA creates a foundation for planning

This makes it all the more important to make the benefits of IT transparent and to secure its efficiency and Effectiveness. Like the various planning levels presented by the building architect show us the utility of each crossbeam, each water line and each roofing tile, enterprise architecture (EA) highlights for us the utility of every program, every application, and every administrative tool for the business functions of the enterprise. And it is in this same manner that EA enables us to carry out analyses, for instance, with respect to coverage, degrees of capacity utilization and complexity, costs, and dependencies. These analyses represent a foundation for an optimization of the existing environment in order to optimally exploit the existing environment before something altogether new is produced. EA is likewise a foundation for agile maneuvering, flexibility and anticipation. It creates

**EA is a basis
for IT man-
agement.**

the basis for planning and enables us to develop and evaluate scenarios.

The documentation and maintenance of EA expands the basis for forward-looking planning, organization, and control of IT, i.e. for IT management. Analysis and planning on the basis of EA create transparency, which is the basis for consolidation, alignment and risk management.

The consolidation of infrastructure and applications environments presupposes a knowledge of the topography. Points of impact and dependencies must be detectable and gaps, redundancies, and cost drivers are to be identified. Securing these and bringing about consolidation on the basis of an analysis of the EA enables one to achieve a considerable reduction in costs.

**Transforming
strategy into
reality**

Moreover, EA provides a management information system for effective IT management and creates the transparency necessary to meet future challenges. IT units are required to prove that their work is a value-creating asset, required to make an active contribution to transformation processes, and required to enable the enterprise to seize new opportunities in 6 to 12 months and thus twice as fast as the current rate. Alignment presupposes a knowledge of the current relationship between IT and business so as to enable an evaluation of this knowledge.

**Risk manage-
ment**

The transformation into operational reality must take place largely in the absence of risks. Mistakes can be expensive when it is no longer a matter of technological risks alone, but of ones capacity to develop new business fields and new business models. The anticipation, detection and management of risks presuppose knowledge and transparency. This can be achieved via the analysis and planning enabled by enterprise architecture.

**Adept steer-
ing: the right
goal, the right
way, a safe
trip**

Pursuing the right goal, following the right path and taking all of the necessary precautions for a safe journey is a matter of good steering. EA offers us the necessary transparency to secure efficiency via consolidation, Effectiveness via alignment and security via risk management and is thereby a primary instrument of IT governance (see Figure 9-1).