

CIO Challenges:

EA Disconnected
from Business
Stakeholders



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What are the main concerns facing Chief Information Officers today? Orbus Software have identified 8 major issues that every enterprise is likely to struggle with when it comes to meeting the demands of the digital age.

Across the series of CIO Challenges Orbus have released thus far, a common thread has been the importance of Enterprise Architecture (EA) for the management and organization of IT. However, simply starting an EA team or expanding an existing one is not an instant panacea, as the contribution of EA can often be hampered by a lack of communication & cooperation between EA and other parts of the business.

In this eBook, we'll discuss how disconnected teams can harm transformation efforts, and how the right setup for EA can deliver successful business outcomes.

KEY STATS

Gartner Research found that 67% of EA groups are structured centrally

Gartner

- **However**, top-performing EA groups are more likely to restructure and find their objectives to be more achievable.
- Top-performing EA groups also spend less time on traditional governance activities, instead focusing on guiding business decisions.



Why Teams are Disconnected

Many teams and functions within a business can struggle to remain connected to the wider whole for various reasons. The whims of management or geographical distance are typical issues that prevent close cooperation. Yet enterprise architecture seems to particularly struggle to integrate, as the statistics demonstrate. A common criticism of EA is to describe it as 'Ivory Tower', issuing pronouncements but never really coming into contact with other parts of the firm. What unique factors cause EA to become disconnected?

Understanding

One of the biggest barriers to wider acceptance and implementation of EA is its complexity. For non-architects and other stakeholders unfamiliar with EA, it can be quite baffling, with its metamodels, frameworks, and various neologisms. If a key stakeholder cannot quickly comprehend a model or diagram presented by an EA team, it's much more likely they will reject or ignore the analysis. In this situation, the EA team may still be connected to other parts of the business, but it makes little difference if they are failing to have any impact.

Accessibility

A similar issue is the accessibility of EA and the associated data & models. Architects will often be forced to act as gatekeepers, needed for every change to core EA data and outputting analysis on an as-needed basis, instead of having democratized access. Enterprise Architecture tools do solve this to some extent, but many tools continue to have restricted access and difficult user interfaces that block casual users. For smaller EA teams, this naturally limits the extent to which they can work with the rest of the business.

Collaboration

All business collaboration is a struggle to some extent, due to the difficulties of uniting people with different ways of thinking spread across locations. EA is no different. Making good use of collaboration tools would go a long way towards improving connections with other parts of the business. However, as with the lack of accessibility, EA can struggle due to a lack of sharing options or requirements for specific software or hardware. Integrations with tools like Microsoft Teams often need to be created from the ground up.

Involvement

Enterprise Architecture can have a very wide range of deliverables for a business, ranging from assisting with cloud migration and application rationalization to providing business strategy modeling and decision-making support. However, many enterprises continue to have quite limited EA functions, with immature capabilities and a lack of involvement in many parts of the firm. This can naturally lead to EA failing to deliver important business outcomes for much of the business.

KEY STATS

- By 2022, Gartner predicts 80% of digital businesses will take a collaborative approach to EA.
- Forrester found a significant increase in collaboration between EA and business stakeholders from 2020 to 2021.
- Increased collaboration mainly focuses on business strategists (73%), Business Intelligence (BI) pros (71%), and line-of-business heads (63%).



How to Bring Teams Together

As mentioned above, there are a number of generic issues that trouble businesses when attempting to collaborate between parts of the firm. Before any EA-specific solutions are tried, there needs to be support for enterprise architecture amongst key stakeholders and a lack of physical or economic barriers to implementation. Without those very basics, EA will never get anywhere.



Centralized Storage

An important step towards greater collaboration is to allow everyone in the organization to access and edit EA data, which is typically achieved through a central repository. Central Repositories are great for establishing a single source of truth for assets, which enables architects to democratize EA data. Product owners can directly create and update information and view relationships without needing to rely on architects.



Collaboration Tools

There are a variety of widely used tools that facilitate and enhance collaboration within businesses. By integrating with these, EA can smooth processes and remove barriers to cooperation. For example, instead of having to export a Visio model and email it to a stakeholder, it would be far quicker if everything could take place in Visio, with the model saved to SharePoint and shared to the wider business. Or if architects could automatically import data from development tools like Jira, thus staying up to date with software development.

Presentation and Reporting

If you want stakeholders to engage with EA analysis, it needs to be presented in an easily consumable, user-friendly way. Powerful visuals which answer key business questions are far more effective in gaining stakeholder buy-in than complex and confusing visuals. And if these visuals are combined with more effective communication as outlined above, it can be easy to socialize findings across the organization, bringing in more decision-makers and stakeholders.

Reporting

Application Rationalization Pack

Applications Cost by Business



Application Scoring



Application Cost Summary



Application Landscape Matrix



Application Decision Catalog



Application Data Completeness



Technology Report Pack

Technology Catalog



Technology Gantt Chart



Technologies by Application



Standards Gantt Chart

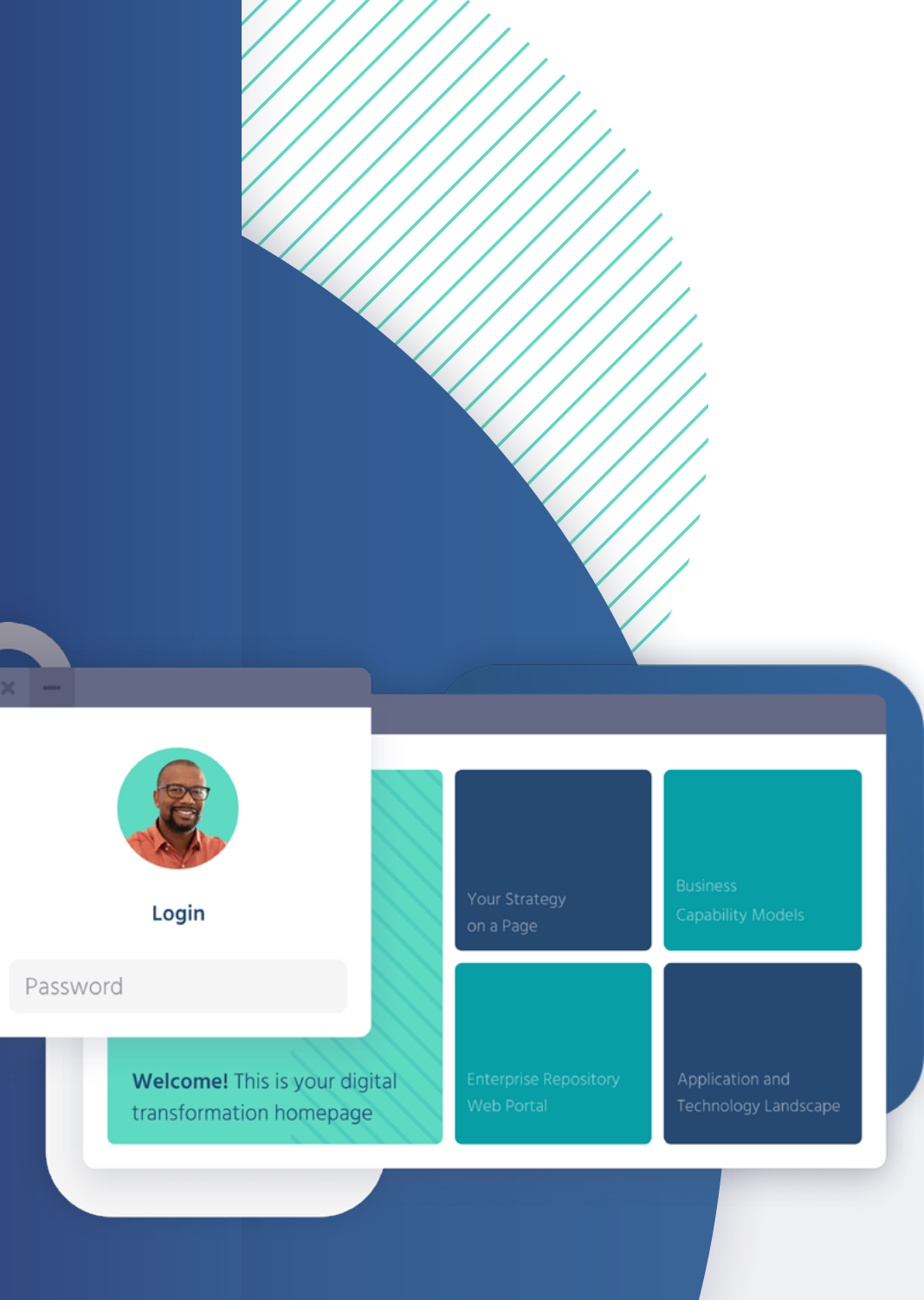


Vendor Lifecycle Gap



Technology Data Completeness





The iServer Suite for Enterprise Architecture:

Connected teams delivering measurable business outcomes

Enterprise Architecture tools can help to solve many of the problems that disconnect EA from the wider business. However, there are no tools that can offer everything needed to bring stakeholders on board, except one: iServer365.

The iServer Suite has won Gartner's Peer Insights Customers' Choice for EA Tools for 5 years running and was named a Leader in the EA Tool space by Forrester. Here's how the iServer Suite enables EA teams to connect with stakeholders and deliver outcomes:

1

Collaborate with Key Stakeholders

Collaborate with business stakeholders in the tools they know and trust, maximizing their contribution of information to your repository content. Enable Business users to add repository data via SharePoint and Teams, as well as run review and approval workflows via Power Automate.

2

A Central Managed Repository

Leverage native integration with SharePoint to store your data, where repository objects and relationships are reused across diagrams and libraries. Utilize SharePoint's familiar interfaces and intranet capabilities for effective collaboration and document management.

3

Present Relevant Findings Easily

Surface repository content with your stakeholders through a fully customizable SharePoint portal and document viewer. Set up navigation pathways aligned to different audiences enabling business users to view, navigate and drill down between catalogs and visualizations.

4

Seamless Integrations

Enrich your repository data via a REST API and pre-built connectors to a range of popular 3rd party systems. Engage business stakeholders in the Microsoft tools they use every day and set up data interchange with other core systems based on common integration requirements.



See for Yourself How to Connect Teams

Book a tailored demo today to find out how the iServer Suite helps connect EA teams with business stakeholders to deliver business outcomes:

[Book a Demo](#)





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