Paving the way for IT and business alignment to enable the future state and prepare for successful data governance

The Value of Enterprise Architecture for the Data-Driven Enterprise
Enterprise Architecture: Why It Matters

IT and business alignment within an organization rests upon the pillar of its enterprise architecture (EA).

EA provides the essential support for this critical requirement by mapping a company’s applications—complete with an understanding of their associated technologies and data—to the value-driving business functions they enable. Defining application capabilities and interdependencies within the context of their connection to enterprise strategy paves the way for IT leaders to prioritize technology investments so their budget spend aligns with business goals.

Rationalizing application portfolios, planning technology refreshes, and driving cloud migrations are all among the outcomes EA supports in its mission to bring IT and business together in transforming organizational operations to promote the company’s strategic direction.

For many businesses, EA efforts typically have been undertaken using basic visualization tools, spreadsheets or even word processors. However, there are limitations with using these generic solutions: they lack industry standards to capture and align business and IT elements and how they link together, and they hinder the collaboration required to continuously and methodically maintain models, frameworks and concepts as they evolve.

Without a solution for centrally documenting and visualizing this information, there can be no single source of truth of the architecture’s current state. Agility suffers when the organization can’t rely on coherent and consistent representative architecture concepts to smoothly and accurately analyze and plan for technology changes and transitions necessary to accommodate business priorities.

An equally compelling case for embracing a more structured EA approach is the impact it will have on data governance initiatives. Today’s enterprise embraces data governance to drive data opportunities, including growing revenue, and limit data risks, including regulatory and compliance gaffes. EA solutions that provide much-needed insight into the relationship between data assets and applications make it possible to appropriately direct data usage and flows, as well as focus greater attention, if warranted, on applications where data use delivers optimal business value.

ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE DEFINED

Enterprise architecture is the analysis and documentation of an enterprise in its current and future states from an integrated strategy, business and technology perspective.

ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE’S ROLE IN IT-BUSINESS ALIGNMENT SCENARIOS

- Maps a company’s applications to the value-driving business functions they enable.
- Enables prioritizing technology investments and rationalizing application portfolios to conform to business goals.
- Maintains a single source of truth of current architecture state to promote agility and digital transformation.
- Underpins data governance efforts that are essential to impact analysis, strategic business insight and risk minimization.

Source: International Enterprise Architecture Institute
erwin Enterprise Architecture (EA) and erwin EA Agile each provide the core EA capabilities for defining the structure and operation of an organization. Both blueprint the IT and data assets translating into current and future business states.

erwin EA is an on-premise, customer-managed offering that supports custom-defined frameworks, custom metamodels and customized user experiences; it is primarily targeted for long runway, large enterprise rollouts. erwin EA Agile is a true SaaS, vendor-managed offering that focuses on servicing users working in small teams or projects with seamless, pre-configured out-of-the-box web experiences.

Why Buy EA Tools?

1. **Manage Complexity**: A tool enables business and IT leaders to capture, understand and articulate the opportunities, challenges and risks as businesses shift to digital organizations.

2. **Support the creation of actionable, signature-ready EA deliverables**: EA tools enable business and IT leaders to make investment decisions that balance and prioritize current operational demands, disruptions and opportunities with the longer-term strategic vision of the organization.

3. **Speed Time to Value**: EA tools accelerate analysis and decision support for alternative investment, rationalization, and optimization opportunities and plans and for assessing risk, change and the impact on the organization.


erwin EA’s capabilities include:

1. **Multiple artifacts can be developed and captured to support IT-business alignment objectives**.
   
   To gain critical insights and deliver on strategic outcomes—such as reducing redundant applications to improve operating efficiency, appropriately processing sensitive data or seamlessly implementing new cloud systems as part of digital transformation efforts—erwin EA and erwin EA Agile develop and capture multiple artifacts to serve as documentation products. These include heatmap-style IT landscape views and business capability maps, application architecture views, technology dependency views, roadmaps and dashboards and charts.

2. **Standardization and centralization empower integrated planning and management**.
   
   Support for proven enterprise architecture methodologies, frameworks and modeling languages—including ArchiMate, DoDAF and/or TOGAF—are available as templates through erwin Consulting Services for erwin EA or built in for erwin EA Agile, as are customization capabilities for the former to fit customers’ existing enterprise architecture models. With a centralized repository of architecture assets, either on-premise, hosted or in the cloud, component reinvention is minimized and reuse is maximized for greater agility. Everything is in one place to design, maintain and respond to business and IT change while driving digital business transformation.
Any² (Any Data, Anywhere) support enables organizations to incorporate all their data assets into their strategy and governance plans.

As with all erwin solutions, erwin EA and EA Agile support Any² as a key foundational philosophy. The “any-squared” approach to data management means that both IT and business stakeholders can see “any data” from “anywhere” and use it to support a main goal of enterprise architecture: gaining critical insights into information to make key decisions in a timely manner. erwin’s EA solutions bring this capability to the fore with a friendly and easy-to-use web interface, along with diagram and object display customization options, to accommodate all stakeholders’ information needs. Subject-matter experts and information consumers alike can take part in cross-functional collaborations about EA strategy, self-discovery navigations and asset analysis.

Seamless integration with erwin Business Process (BP) and erwin Data Modeler (DM) solutions supports a data foundation platform.

By leveraging a cohesive combination of data management tools, including data modeling, enterprise architecture and business process, it is possible to ensure strong data foundations to support the data-driven enterprise. When DM, EA and BP tools complement each other in a comprehensive yet fluid relationship, an organization is empowered to understand what data it has (internal and external); gain an understanding about how the data should be used to drive business strategy and objectives; and determine how best to use that data to realize value.

Enterprise Architecture: Intersection with Data Governance

The capabilities of the erwin EA and EA Agile solutions and associated erwin components reveal a circle of technologies and tools underpinning what truly matters to an agile and adaptable enterprise: data governance.
Data governance is about understanding critical enterprise data within a business context, tracking its physical existence and lineage, and maximizing its security, quality and value. The content and relationships captured within and between erwin EA/EA Agile and data architecture tools bring significant benefits in the alignment of data, processes and technologies, which is key to effective data governance.

Consider the following outcomes of such alignments between erwin’s DM suite and erwin EA and EA Agile, which shows where elements reside within the infrastructure. When applications are mapped to the business terms they produce or depend upon, as defined in a conceptual data model, it is possible to identify key sources of information from a data perspective as well as redundancies based on data, and the capabilities that can be produced or derived from available business information. This understanding supports prioritization of the critical terms and capabilities upon which to focus data governance efforts. When business capabilities are mapped to business terms, as defined in a conceptual data model, it is possible to discover the key terms and data assets that enterprise strategies depend upon and what strategies can be derived from key business data. This insight can be critical to provisioning a strategic perspective on data governance initiatives.

And when technologies are mapped to business terms, as defined in a conceptual data model, it is possible to see which technologies—perhaps third-party or cloud-hosted systems—provide critical business information and to discover how they compare in terms of the data they provide. Such valuable insight can inform data governance decisions around when or if, for instance, it’s valid to sustain and maintain competing technologies or if it’s a better use of resources to integrate solutions and reduce governance overhead.

Additionally, developing logical data models in the context of EA for individual applications that represent the business details and rules pertaining to the data managed and provided by the system is foundational information useful to any data governance effort.

On their own, erwin’s EA offerings help companies bootstrap their data governance efforts to realize value quickly by assessing and documenting the current data architecture, creating a collaborative platform for sharing data standards, and operationalizing plans through data stewardship policies and procedures. Critically, erwin EA and EA Agile in conjunction with erwin DM, which discovers, designs, visualizes, standardizes and deploys high-quality data assets; erwin BP, which reveals all the workflows, business capabilities and applications that use a data element; and erwin Data Governance (DG), which provides data visibility and control across the enterprise to both IT and business stakeholders, enable the infrastructure behind the workforce and processes that support actively governing data assets and their alignment to the business.

The entire data governance lifecycle is covered across all data producer/consumer roles. This persona-based approach, with everyone—from executives on down—invested in and accountable for data use, creates an enterprise data governance experience (EDGE) as
Enterprise Architecture: Intersection with Data Governance (continued)

opposed to an isolated program managed by IT alone. As embodied in the erwin EDGE portfolio of products, IT and business functions are joined to ensure organizational objectives around managing risks and maximizing opportunities are met.

This includes data impact analysis. Delivering a visualization of the chain of objects, projects and roles that may be impacted by a change to a single object is a key aspect of data governance. It puts directly in front of the organization the potential risks, advantages and costs of a change as well as empowers it to appropriately plan for a change determined to be worth making. It’s the agile way to get things right the first time.

Take Enterprise Architecture to the Next Level

EA forms the basis for looking at an organization from the perspectives of its applications to its infrastructure to its capabilities to its goals and strategies, as well as acts as a key component in providing true top-to-bottom enterprise visibility that establishes a firm foundation for rigorous enterprise data governance. Increasingly organizations see the value in taking EA beyond a limited IT support role using generic, fragmented software to an agility-enabling function that demands purpose-built tools and has responsibility for operating with the business’ future state in mind.

erwin EA and EA Agile are designed to help your company realize a new world of alignment, innovation and governance benefits.

Related Products

erwin DG: A SaaS solution enabling all organizational stakeholders to discover, understand, govern and socialize data assets to mitigate risks and realize business goals

erwin Collector: Automatically harvests and aggregates operational data from a variety of enterprise systems, including ServiceNow and RSA Archer, into the erwin DG data dictionary

erwin BP: Business process modeling software for visualizing system interactions, business processes and organizational hierarchies

erwin DM Standard Edition: Conceptual, logical, physical and dimensional model creation and deployment

erwin DM Workgroup Edition: Repository-based data modeler collaboration and model lifecycle management

erwin DM Navigator Edition: Read-only access for data model discovery and analysis

erwin DM NoSQL: Rapid app deployment, cloud infrastructure migration and reverse-engineering in an enterprise-class data modeling solution for MongoDB

erwin Web Portal: Web-based collaboration platform to share models and metadata with stakeholders

erwin CloudCore: Cloud-based hosting services for erwin data modeling and enterprise architecture solutions
erwin, Inc. provides the only unified software platform combining data governance, enterprise architecture, business process and data modeling. Delivered as a SaaS solution, these technologies work together to unlock data as a strategic asset so all enterprise stakeholders can discover, understand, govern and socialize data to mitigate risk, improve organizational performance and accelerate growth. For more than 30 years, erwin has been the most trusted name in data modeling and its software foundational to mission-critical data programs in government agencies, leading financial institutions, retailers and healthcare companies around the world.

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