



SUCCESSFUL ARCHITECTURE IMPLEMENTATION

A practical guide on how to implement your EA/BPM program



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SAMPLE

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Foreword

It Depends.

The two magic little words, like “I Love You”, but for technology consulting. All at once, an answer, and a deflection, implying a depth of experience and a careful consideration of the inquirer’s needs. It’s the beginning of a conversation, demanding a further clarification of the business circumstances, testing the waters with proposals, before coming to a collective conclusion on a clear path forward.

I first witnessed the use of this phrase, expertly wielded like a scalpel, almost two decades ago, in my first Management Consulting gig. And since then, I’ve found myself repeating it, working to uncover challenges and propose solutions for some of the largest and most heavily regulated organizations in the world. I’ve found it immensely useful from the boardroom to the war room to the shop floor — it demonstrates humility, invites feedback, and gives you time to think.

It’s also a lie.

The core of “It Depends” implies that the speaker doesn’t know the right path forward. They need to uncover the specifics of your organization and its challenges, your architecture and technical debt, and your cultural reality, strategic direction and change management capabilities. It also tells you that your company is different from your peers, demanding a tailored solution to the problems you’re uniquely faced with.

Truth #1: We often already know how we’d do it if this was our decision to make.

Truth #2: Your company isn’t as unique as you think. Most of your problems can be addressed by similar solutions and structures already standard in your industry.

This is why “Successful Architecture Implementation” is such an important read for any business leader. I’ve been in countless meetings with Roland, and seen him in action, applying his deep expertise and repeatable approach to seemingly disparate organizational challenges. We’ve laid out the case over more than 100 hours of ‘What’s Your Baseline’ podcasts, numerous webinars and celebrated conference presentations. This is the distilled knowledge — a blueprint for success, with actual answers, that can be immediately applied in your organization, or that can become a part of your consulting practice.

Beyond the solution itself, this book presents the case for an organization’s awareness and focus on the discipline of architecture. Pay special attention to the ‘why’ of architecture — earning buy-in and sponsorship from stakeholders and executive leadership is *almost* as important as having the solution. As Roland loves to say, “It doesn’t matter how much ink you put on the page — if the person reading it doesn’t want it, it won’t get done.”

Go forth, good luck, stay strong, and we’ll see you in the next one.

J-M Erlendson

Co-host, What’s Your Baseline

Chief Evangelist, ARIS

General Manager, Countermeasure Music

Chairman of the Board, SING! Festivals

Preface

Imagine you just bought a hotel a year ago and spent all your time and effort on renovating it. Business starts to pick up and the first reviews from customers are stellar. You really pulled it off in transforming your hotel into a stylish destination, even though “the bones” of it are 50 years old and -luckily- you did not have to touch them to pass the code.

You are also having a small side wing with three conference rooms that have up-to-date audiovisual equipment, and you can host up to 80 people per conference room. Your “business wing” also has a small kitchen, and you can offer your guests refreshments and coffee. Life is good.

But now this happens — at 10:00 am on a Thursday, a potential client reaches out to you and asks if you can host a conference in your hotel three months from now. He expects about 600 to 800 participants, and the conference will take a full week. This is YOUR opportunity to get more revenue than planned for the first year in and also establish your hotel with the local business community.

But then ... you just have the three conference rooms and the small kitchen. What do you do?

- Can you just remove some interior walls and have some removable dividers instead of solid walls?
- Can you add wide opening glass doors on the exterior wall so that you have additional outdoor meeting space (assuming that the conference is in the warmer months of the year)?
- But what do you do in winter? Are you willing to lose business for half of the year when it is not warm enough for outdoor events?
- Will there be structural changes to be made — especially since you don't

have the original plans?

- How long will each option take?
- What will it cost?

Architecture to the rescue

Major changes are the situation that I see in many of my clients — they are starting a major transformation program, a system implementation, or a simple process or organizational change and “just do it”. And the consultants tell them that they shall “fail fast and pivot quickly”. Or IT implements some new technology without some form of user requirements/analysis and wonders why the new app is not used or accepted (the equivalent of “hopping into your pickup truck, driving to the home improvement store for some 2×4s, and nails, and then starting to hammer everything together” in our scenario above).

Is that the way you want to manage your enterprise? I don’t think so — and therefore this book is for you.

Architecture, which in my mind includes both: “Enterprise Architecture” (aka IT Architecture Management that is mostly done by IT) and “Business Architecture / Business Process Management” (the same exercise done by business folks). The main promise of any architecture work is fourfold:

- Capture the as-is situation (the plan of our hotel)
- Analyze the ideas and determine the impact on a future-state architecture (the options for change of the building)
- Planning and road mapping of the change to transform what you do to the next future state
- Monitoring and analysis if the changes have resulted in the desired business outcomes

While you are at it, you also bring in a new enterprise capability and tools. Which means you will have to interface with other programs and roll-out the “new stuff” to others in the organization, even though they might not be

willing to change — so you have to convince them. And you also have to define the “rules of engagement” and determine how the architectural activities fit into existing processes — your software development lifecycle, your program planning, your (project) portfolio management.

Who is this book for?

This book is for the brave people who understand that organizations are complex systems and that changes in one place will have an impact on many people (ask anyone who has ever implemented an ERP system). Typically, every stone will be upturned in a transformation program.

It is for those people who realized that they have to implement an architecture capability in their organizations. They have to be able to describe, analyze, plan, support the implementation of changes, and measure their impact to be able to manage the enterprise in a responsible and sustainable way.

It is also for the people who have tried that before and failed. Maybe because they only focused on the implementation of a tool (the “make it, and they come” approach), or they “forgot” that people typically do not want to change.

It is also for the curious people who are not 100% convinced that this architecture thing is not too big of a bite for your organization. They would like to learn what it takes before they make the decision if they are ready for it.

Whatever your situation is, this book has the answers for you. I will walk you through the major areas that you have to look at:

- An introduction into the relevant concepts of architecture — all the gobbledygook that you have heard before will start making sense.
- An approach to get your implementation off to a good start (the key idea of this book).
- Developing an architecture strategy that will allow you to not only identify the objectives and services that you will provide to your organization in the future, but also to communicate it to the various stakeholders and measure your successes.
- Define the “rules of engagement” (governance) for your processes, the

involved roles and org units, as well as the technology.

- The setup of architecture org units and the enablement of the various roles that are involved.
- We will also see how all of this will be applied to a slice of an architecture — the business architecture. You will see how you can set up this view, create/import content, and analyze it to be able to answer the questions from above.
- This book closes with an appendix that shows the foundations of the BPMN notation and data modeling to give you a head start on creating artifacts that we have discussed in the earlier chapters.

But why should you take the advice from me — aren't you just a software salesman who will promise me everything?

Well, you will find out :-)

But in all seriousness, I have been working in this field for almost 30 years and have stood up many architecture practices during this time. I also worked “in the trenches” for many years — as process designer/analyst, domain and solution architect, and as enterprise architect, advising my clients in the best way that met their needs.¹

This brought me to work for half of the time at major consulting organizations (Accenture and KPMG), and the other half at the main software vendors in this field (IDS Scheer/Software AG and iGrafx). Over time, my responsibilities rose, and I led global org units like the global Center of Excellence for Process Mining, or the Global Consulting organization for a vendor. However, in all these roles, I have worked in the lighthouse programs for the clients who wanted to make significant changes and bring their organizations forward.

In addition to this, I am running the “What’s Your Baseline?” podcast, in which my co-host and I are demystifying Enterprise Architecture and Business Process Management since 2021 and have interviewed dozens of experts who have freely shared their experiences and approaches. Give it a listen (watch) at whatsyourbaseline.com.

Oh, and regarding the software — you can do architecture without any

software, using just whiteboards and (butcher) paper. However, you should use a proper tool for this, as we will discuss below. I am using a software called ARIS² as the example in this book — it is a model-based tool (vs. the more list-based portfolio tools that you typically see as “EA tools”), but that doesn’t *really* matter for this book. It will make a difference in the configuration of the tool and the major audiences for the tool, but the concepts and approaches that you need to follow during your implementation and operation of your program stay the same.

So, now go and start reading. I promise it will be interesting and give you a new appreciation of the architecture discipline.

Acknowledgments

Countless people have already said that writing a book is a team sport. You need the feedback as an author to not only be held accountable for finishing the manuscript, but you also need others who will review it. These will not only “De-Germanize” your English and find typos, but also provide content suggestions, so that the final product is complete.³

But then you also require the people who have the experience of writing, publishing and marketing the book. And they also make you think about **WHY** you want to take on that effort in the first place.

I am happy that I have a team of people behind me who cover all of these aspects, and I like to thank them. So, without further ado (and in no specific order) here are the rock stars of this book:

- **J-M Erlendson**, who I have the pleasure of producing the What’s Your Baseline? podcast with. Over the course of 14 years, first as one of my consultants, later as one of my peers, and now as a friend, he gives the necessary “reality check” on the topics in this book. Given the fact that he is also working in the media industry, I could learn a ton of audio and video editing from him — and he is an overall funny guy to hang with.
- **Randolph Schütte**, who I worked with on a multi-year project back in the 2000s with IDS Scheer, was the first sparring partner for writing a book ... which just took 19 years to evolve into this. He also was the first content reviewer and provided excellent suggestions, while confirming the structure and flow of the book.
- **Michael Schank**, who I was introduced to as a guest on the podcast and was the first real author that I met. He gave me some insights not only about the process of traditional publishing, but also the financial and contractual

arrangements that he went through with his book. This convinced me to go down the self-publishing route (what a rip-off traditional publishing is when you are the average Joe writing a non-fiction book in the area of your expertise).

- The **beta readers** of this book: Bart Gypen, Breanne Casteel, Caspar Jans, Dana Malcova, David Ruting, Ellen Pelletier, Eric Seidel, Gemma Hughes, Guillermo Lopez Felipe, Hanneke Loefs-Mos, Javed Qureshi, Marc Mendelson, Martin Holling, Marcus Zschuckelt, Matúš Mala, Ralf Gaumnitz, Ron Cohen, Tony Phillips — thanks for your interest in reading the manuscript and giving valuable feedback.
- All the **guests of the What's Your Baseline? podcast**.⁴ Having over 100 recordings now out in the open showed me the vast variety of ideas and approaches to the topic of architecture — may it be business process management or IT architecture. They made this a better book by making me think if my ideas are really the best ones. I am proud to have adopted some concepts here, and I am sure that it is a better book than what I would have written just a few years ago.

And lastly: **YOU** — the reader of the book, the listener to the podcast, the follower on LinkedIn. I had so much fun and interesting conversations with strangers reaching out to me for a chat and then telling me that they feel that they know me (podcasting has the benefit that you are literally in the ears of your listeners while they drive to work, mow the lawn, do the dishes, or whatever else is the second thing they do while consuming the content).

Keep those requests coming. Reach out to others and grow your network. This will grow the discipline and its maturity immensely. And that is what we all should be aiming for.

Praise For “Successful Architecture Tool Implementation”

- “This book has great value. I know I would have loved a book like this when I started my career.”
*Marc Mendelson, Business Strategy, Transformation & Customer Experience Executive; Big 4 Consulting Director*¹⁰⁸
- “This book offers a valuable in-depth exploration of Enterprise Architecture, addressing the Why, How, and Who.”
*Hanneke Loefs-Mos, owner OLCAMA Consultancy, EA/BPM Consultant*¹⁰⁹
- “‘Successful Architecture Implementation’ is skillfully written, combining knowledge and experience with a touch of humor, which takes this book from what could be a boring textbook to instead being an engaging read! Roland effectively highlights critical aspects of the implementation journey, ensuring adoption and traction, along with practical ‘how-to’ advice and some humorous lessons learned. Readers will find many valuable insights, regardless of their stage in the architecture implementation journey!”
*Breanne Casteel, Enterprise Business Architect*¹¹⁰
- “Roland’s book is easy to read and understand. It put me directly into implementation mode and gave my perfect arguments for my top management to convince them of the need to implement all the EA and BPM ideas I am fighting for years.”

PRAISE FOR "SUCCESSFUL ARCHITECTURE TOOL IMPLEMENTATION"

*Martin Holling, Head of Process Management*¹¹¹

- "Roland operationalizes the art of enterprise architecture and presents a hands-on guide to mastery of the domain. Anyone starting or running an architecture program in a modern business will gain valuable insights into proven methodology. He covers the entire architecture process from inception to establishing the architecture capability in the organization and draws from a wealth of experience. His hands-on tips for the effective employment of architecture tools are just the cherry on the cake."

*Marcus Zschuckelt, Consultant for Enterprise Architecture and Business Process Management*¹¹²

- "Most organizations underestimate the critical role architecture plays in their performance, and even those that recognize its value often struggle with execution. Roland's book is an essential guide for anyone looking to transform architecture from theory into a powerful driver of change."

*Michael Schank, Author of "Digital Transformation Success"*¹¹³

- "I've read so many books offering business practice advice, but they all lack something that 'Successful Architecture Implementation' has in spades: a specific path for success. Instead of waxing poetic, Roland takes a pragmatic approach, clearly laying out the case for an architecture as a strategic capability, the ingredients of a good practice, the approaches to maximize your chances of success, and tangible examples to follow. This book lowers the barrier to entry for passionate advocates, equipping them with key tools and techniques to explain the practice and get stuff done. Highly recommended!"

J-M Erlendson, Global BPM Evangelist

About 'Successful Architecture Implementation'

This book is meant for readers who want to implement an EA or BPM capability in their organization. It covers all aspects from strategy, through governance design and tool selection/configuration, to import and creation of content. In addition to this, it also shows how a "real-world application" of this approach could look like.

About Roland Woldt

Roland has worked in the architecture industry for almost 30 years – at vendors such as Software AG/ARIS and iGrafx, as well as at Accenture and KPMG, where he built global teams and was responsible for their EA/BPM service offerings. Besides that, he also runs the "What's Your Baseline?" podcast, where he and his co-host demystify EA and BPM since 2021.



Praise for Successful Architecture Implementation

This book is skillfully written, combining knowledge and experience with a touch of humor, which makes it an engaging read! Readers will find many valuable insights, regardless of their stage in the architecture implementation journey!

- Breanne Casteel, Enterprise Business Architect

Roland's book offers a valuable in-depth exploration of Enterprise Architecture, addressing the Why, How, and Who.

- Hanneke Loefs-Mos, owner OLCAMA Consultancy, EA/BPM Consultant

Most organizations underestimate the critical role architecture plays in their performance, Roland's book is an essential guide for anyone looking to transform architecture from theory into a powerful driver of change.

- Michael Schank, Author of "Digital Transformation Success"

This book has great value. I know I would have loved a book like this when I started my career.

- Marc Mendelson, Business Strategy, Transformation & Customer Experience; Big 4 Consulting Director

Roland's book is easy to read and understand. It put me directly into implementation mode and gave my perfect arguments for my top management to convince them of the need to implement all the EA and BPM ideas I am fighting for years.

- Martin Holling, Head of Process Management

Don't Panic. Roland's book is THE definitive guide to navigate the scary (but fruitful) journey to success in enterprise architecture.

- J-M Erlendson, Global BPM Evangelist



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