

# Roundtable 55 Transcript

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## ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

*At this 03.16.23 Roundtable 55, NOREX Members discussed Enterprise Architecture maturity; where the Enterprise Architecture team exists in the organization; governance roles and processes EA owns; executive sponsorship of the EA team; introducing EA with a slow approach; an agile approach to defining and implementing an EA; how smaller groups should handle EA; tools and software recommendations for Enterprise Architecture Management; and developing an MDM solution to incorporate in an existing EA design.*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When discussing where the enterprise architecture team exists in the organization, a Senior Director of Enterprise Architecture stated they are IT-based. He is with a school district and his mission is to connect people and processes to make sure that the district meets its business goals. They are somewhat mature, meaning they have a division that is strictly enterprise architecture that has functions such as project management, quality management, and change management as well as solutions architecture and administration of technical environments. Another Member shared their enterprise architecture group has been around for six years and is also IT-owned. Being IT-owned, the relationship challenge is how to establish those relationships with the different departments and business areas. At a very high level, they characterize their service offerings within four buckets: roadmap and strategy, software evals, compliance and governance, and application lifecycle planning. A Chief Technology Officer added that their EA story started as IT-centric. They have done a major shift from on-prem to doing everything in the Cloud. Through the CTO office, which he runs, they combined the horsepower of IT, data, science, software engineering, and data privacy under one ecosystem. This move has been a game changer because everything is interconnected. It is very tightly connected to their projects and tightly connected to their business. They needed that elevation to get more strategic thinking around it all because people were moving in different directions.

On the topic of governance roles and processes that Enterprise Architecture owns in the organization, a Manager, OT Networks shared they have an Enterprise Architect who reports to infrastructure and a network that is not part of the organization for enterprise architecture. This is a separate group in IT that does the enterprise architecture for apps, solutions, and business needs for IT solutions. They do not have an enterprise architecture group for infrastructure. They are actually starting to develop their roles and process so that it is clearly defined, whereas the overall IT enterprise architecture for software solutions is already defined and very mature. A Director, Digital Operations discussed how their journey with making EA a partner and leader for the organization was about finding places where there are hardware and software interfaces as well as vendor SaaS products where they need to have a business architecture point of view. As an example, they had people making hardware decisions in their facilities group with building automation systems or in public safety with security systems that had IT overlap. They were getting sold by vendors from all over. If they did not have that EA group looking at it from an organizational perspective, they would have ended up with an IT jumble. They have found that EA needs to be about hardware, software, and vendor management to understand who is providing the solution.

#### Additional headline topics:

- [How do smaller groups](#) handle EA?
- [Ideas to gain support for EA](#) from the Executive Team.

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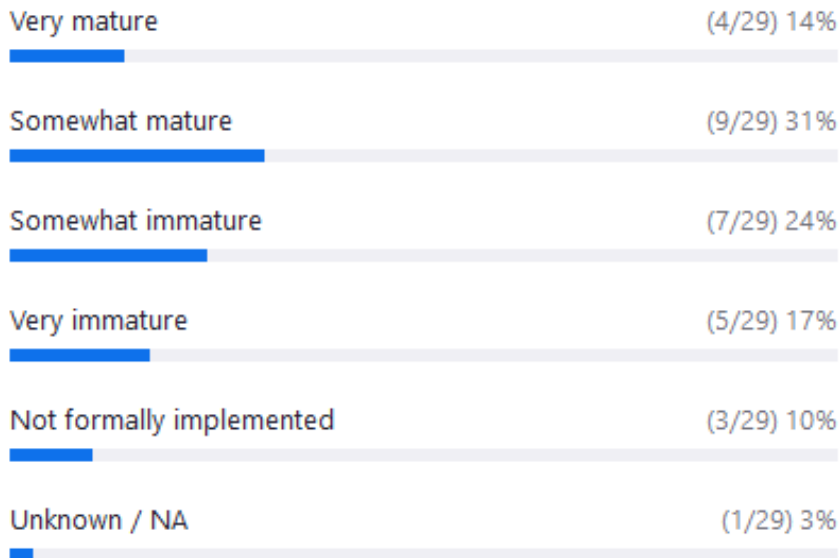
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**NOREX IT Roundtable 55 Transcript**  
**Enterprise Architecture**  
**March 16, 2023**

**TOPIC: EA maturity level**

**Moderator:** Let's get started. We're going to get moving on our discussion today around enterprise architecture. And I thought, because we have a variety of organizations, size and scope, and also a variety of maturity levels in EA, let's take a quick poll and find out who's sitting here on the call with us. In today's discussion we are going to start talking about EA in the organization, how are you structured, who you report to, what your responsibilities and goals are. Then we're going to talk about getting started for both large and small organizations and about tools. We have a topic at the end around master data management. I'm going to end the poll and share the results.

**POLL: How do you rank the maturity level of your EA practice:**



As you can see, we have a few on the line today that are very mature. I want to encourage you to be willing to share with others who may not be in that high maturity range. Those of you who are down on the lower end of that spectrum, I want to encourage you to ask your questions. This is a great place to get some great answers. We have a lot of people in that in that middle realm as well. Let's go on to our first discussion topic. I thought it was a great way to start the discussion.

**TOPIC: EA in the organization**

Where does your enterprise architecture team exist in the organization? Is IT-owned? Is IT-centric, or is it a peer function of the business and is it distributed among other parts of the business? Who can start us off?

**Walter W.:** Good morning, everyone. We are IT-based. We are a K-12 school district. While we are IT-based, our mission is to connect people and processes to make sure that the district meets its business goals. In the process of that, there's a large amount of collaboration, both in our department and within other departments in the district to try to achieve that goal. I indicated in our survey that we are somewhat mature, meaning we have a division that's strictly enterprise architecture. It has some

functions in it such as project management, quality management, change management, as well as solutions architecture and administration of technical environments. But we're trying to expand that and we're constantly defining and explaining what the role of EA is to our organization.

**Moderator:** Thank you, Walter. I saw another hand raised, but I don't see it any longer. Was that you, Matthew? Oh, you were just clapping.

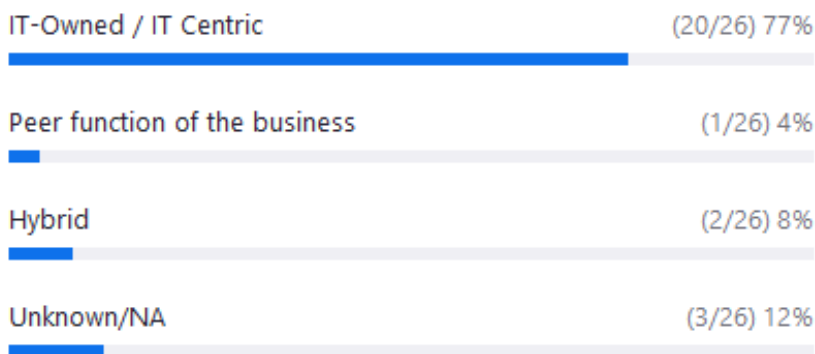
**Matthew W.:** I was just clapping, yes.

**Moderator:** Okay, good. I did some preparation for this event and read some articles from some folks who described their enterprise architecture as kind of an ivory tower at first. The challenge was to integrate into the other teams. I would love to hear some further perspectives on that. Or is everybody kind of feeling commonality with Walter?

**Johan N.:** I described our group as moderately mature. The enterprise architecture group has been around for close to six years now. We are IT-owned. We report up through our IT organization. Within our organization there's a lot of questions around what do EAs do? We actually came up with the concept of basically explaining that and explaining some of the services and offerings that we do. I think being IT-owned the relationship challenges are how do you go out and establish those relationships with the different departments and business areas? At a very high level, we kind of characterize our service offerings within four buckets. Roadmap and strategy, software evals, compliance and governance, and application lifecycle planning. I think that we're solidified. I think we are maturing. We're not where we want to be yet but we're making progress. But yeah, we are IT-owned, and depending upon where you fit somewhere organizationally becomes different challenges. I know some EA shops have been owned by a PMO, but when you're owned within your IT group there's relationship building across the aisle to members of the business. When you get into challenging discussions that challenge things on the IT side or the business side, that becomes kind of tough to broker.

**Moderator:** Thanks Johan. I put out a poll another poll about where your EA organization is in the business. I will end the poll and share the results.

**POLL: Where does your EA team exist in the organization:**



It's predominantly IT-owned, IT-centric. There are a few of you who appear function of business and are hybrid. Does anybody want to chime in on those? Looks like there's three of you on this session that indicated that. Does anybody want to chime in with a different kind of organization?

**Ron D.:** Like what Johan said, I think we have a strong PMO portion of our organization that's leading our EA right now. We just started a year ago, and that has helped us get onboarding with the other departments. But we're finding that we need to move more towards IT-owned. Especially when building the roadmap strategies, compliance, and governance. We're on that path to move it towards IT versus to move it out of the project management area.

**Moderator:** Thank you, Ron. Anybody else have commonality, those of you in the hybrid range of looking at moving more towards IT-owned or anybody going another direction?

**Bryan K.:** Our IT group is relatively small. We're 10 folks. We're in that hybrid space. I think that goes along with our somewhat immature approach towards the EA operation here and trying to essentially work with the rest of the business to realize that this EA function even needs to exist and should be owned within the IT space, because in many cases the business has gone out and created their own solutions over time. Trying to grow out of some of those shadow IT systems, build it into here and actually make it part of an organizational function that's recognized in IT is part of our struggle. That's going to take multiple years because you can't wave a magic wand and just say you want to change everything. So working on the change management of that is part of what I'm trying to learn about here today.

**Moderator:** Great, thank you. Tim, your hand is raised.

**Tim Y.:** Hello, everyone. It wasn't on the poll, but this may be an interesting story. We're a management consulting firm. We do some pretty unique and innovative projects all over the globe. I would say our EA story started with IT-centric. I was actually hired as the person to head up IT for the company. We also have a software component, so our portfolio has products and services. We started realizing that data privacy is a real thing. We do a lot with big data. It's a real thing. IT is very important in core. We've done a major shift from on-prem to doing everything in the Cloud. We also had to figure out a way to integrate our software components. IT was run as a corporate function, software and data science was down at our kind of our business leaders market levels. We started realizing that it was an impediment to our growth. We needed a more focused approach to technology. We build what we call like a technology ecosystem. We have a CTO office, which I run now. We've actually combined the horsepower of IT, data, science, software engineering, and data privacy under one ecosystem. We think it's a game changer because it's interconnected now, especially being Cloud-based. It's very tightly connected to our projects, very tightly connected to our business. We needed that elevation to get some more strategic thinking around that because people were moving in different directions, if that makes sense. I don't know if that's helpful. It's kind of a path we took, and so far, so good.

**Moderator:** Thank you, Tim. Sounds like a success. Walter?

**Walter W.:** I just wanted to say in our EA team we made a conscious decision to split projects between our EPMO, or Enterprise Project Management Office, and just enterprise architecture projects. The reason we do that is not every project will be assigned to a Project Manager. However, the standard project management techniques and best practices will be used for any EA project. We do that because I have a limited number of Project Managers, but I have incredible talent on my team to work through the projects and provide the assistance that's necessary. So to say that everything has to have a Project Manager in our case was restrictive. However, our challenge right now is we're trying to figure out how to get visibility into the Enterprise Project Management Office for all projects that are in flight, even if not managed by the Project Management Team. You might be like, well, why would that be the case? What we've identified is that the resources are constrained that do the work, the stakeholders, the people trying to implement what you're trying to move forward with. You could

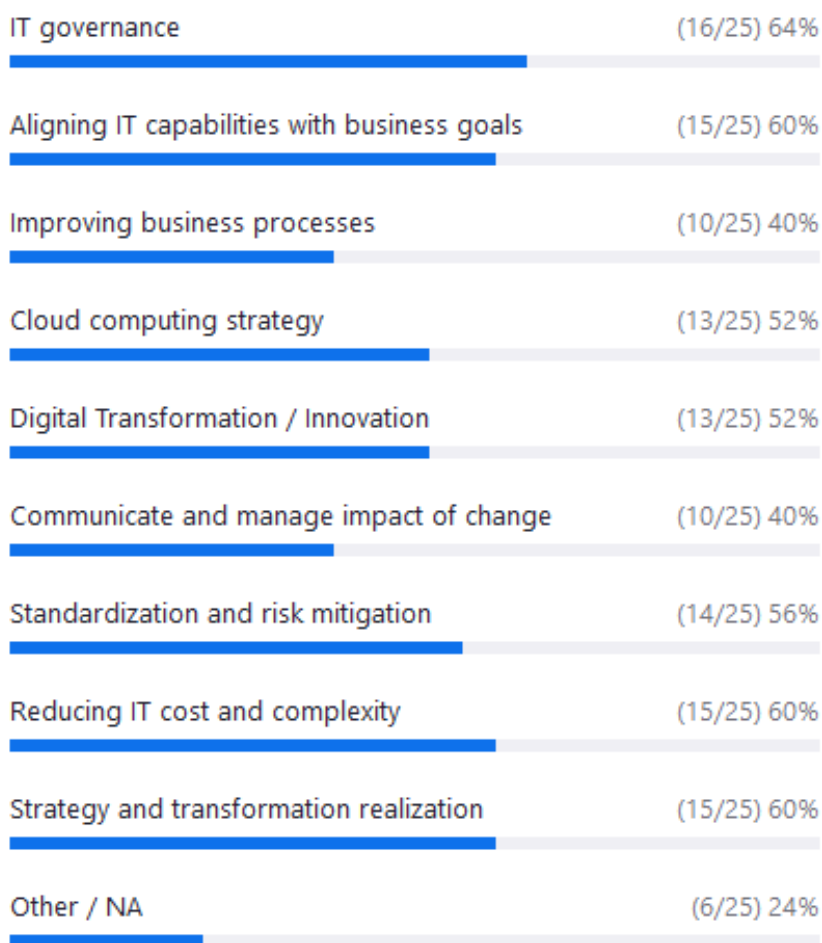
have 15 Project Managers but only 75 people to do the work. Those 75 people are 100% consumed, so they can't do their day-to-day operations. That's kind of why we looked at it through a different lens. I just wanted to share that perspective.

**TOPIC: Roles and responsibilities of the EA Team**

**Moderator:** We're talking a little bit about the roles and responsibilities of the EA team. Your EA teams have a lot of different goals and responsibilities. Who can chime in with the main things that your roles are and the processes that your enterprise architecture owns?

**Walter W.:** Do you mean what we currently do, or what we think we should do?

**POLL: Our EA Team is responsible for the following:**



**Brandon J.:** What's interesting about enterprise architecture here is there's an enterprise architecture group, there's a PMO group. But in my organization we have an Enterprise Architect who reports to us and network that isn't part of the organization for enterprise architecture. It's a separate group in IT that does the enterprise architecture for apps, solutions, business needs for IT solutions is what we call them. Then for us in infrastructure, we don't necessarily have an enterprise architecture group for infrastructure. I have architect and Noel's on the call, so jump in any time Noel. But we're actually starting to develop our roles and our process so that it's clearly defined, whereas the overall IT enterprise architecture for software solutions is already defined and it's very mature. The

infrastructure side and how we architect the network infrastructure, that process isn't well-defined. Noel and I just talked this morning about it. What's interesting is when we join conversations like this, I'm very curious the distinction in enterprise architecture between software and the hardware that it runs on. I'm kind of new to the enterprise architecture space from a formal perspective. I didn't even think to ask this, but the distinction that people have in their organizations between infrastructure and software.

**Moderator:** You've seen the results of this poll. It's kind of like an "all of the above" response to this poll. I would love to hear some responses to Brandon. Insightful question. Noel, if you can add to that as well that'd be great.

**Noel M.:** I think Brandon covered it pretty well. We're new to NOREX, as Brandon said. We've gotten some valuable information from the SD-WAN event we attended. So when we were signing up for this one and I looked at some of the description, I was thinking to myself, well yeah, this seems more software-oriented in how you do enterprise architecture and rollouts for those kinds of things. We do have some processes and things in place for that. To Brandon's point earlier on the hardware side, on the infrastructure rollout particularly in utilities, when it comes to OT networks there isn't anything really like formally defined, or we haven't found something in our searches on how you do that. How do you roll out an enterprise architecture for the hardware infrastructure side of the house, like your wide area network communications, your field area network communications? How do you go through that process and lay it out in a well-defined way? You're tracking it all the way through, and you're making the right choices and you're documenting it then you're bringing it to fruition. Brandon and I have been working on how we do that in our organization. We're just getting started on it, because it really doesn't exist in our organization. That's our interest for attending this meeting. Does anyone have that on the infrastructure side?

**Moderator:** Let's see if we can get you some answers. I saw some heads nodding as Noel was describing their challenge. Does anybody have some perspective to share? Sterling, your hand is raised.

**Sterling C.:** I work with a housing authority, and I guess we don't have a department labeled as Enterprise Architecture. We pretty much have separation of software development and anything else at a VP level. We have a set of standards that I guess you could call our enterprise architecture, but I guess we're not either big enough to have an enterprise architecture person or label. You take our standards, I guess, for the smaller companies, and say these are our standards for enterprise architecture. At least as far as the infrastructure is concerned. Anything beyond that, I am on here to learn about also.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Sterling. I see two other hands raised.

**Bryan K.:** Thank you. I think part of our journey with making EA something for the organization that it, as a partner and leading on, is about trying to find those places where there are hardware and software interfaces and also vendor SaaS product things where we need to have that sort of a business architecture point of view. An example for us, people were making hardware decisions in our facilities group with building automation systems or in public safety with security systems that had IT overlap, we were getting sold by vendors in all different kinds of places. If you don't have that EA group kind of looking at it from an organizational perspective, you just end up with an IT jumble. That's been part of our journey, to try to almost use those test cases as an example of why EA does need to be about hardware, software, and vendor management to sort of understand who's providing you the solution. Obviously in a very different domain than you're dealing with. But that's been our work.

**Walter W.:** I just wanted to say that for those of you that are planning to start this, you can have EA practices even though you don't have an EA-centered department. A large part of this is collaborating and selling value. By that I mean working with different teams to understand how having some governance and centralization has value to your organization because it controls spending, bad decisions, and vulnerabilities. If you can do that in a non-threatening way, but show it in a collaborative way. Your path will be defined for you when people will want to you head in this direction. If you do a hard sell where people start to get where they feel like they're controlled and being put off, you'll get a lot of resistance. What we found with ours is, we're kind of a soft and fuzzy EA team. We collaborate. People want to work with us. However, we're slowly starting to define with better granularity what our team should do. For example, standards and things like that. Standards are important, but they need to be managed by a central location but through collaboration as they're constructed. If you feel like you're dictating to someone they tend to stand back and just not want to participate. Those are just some of the lessons that we learned standing up our EA practice.

**Moderator:** Thank you, Walter. Don has his hand raised, and I've gone to the next question just because of Walter's comments. I'd like to hear from Don about the subject at hand, but also leading into this whole idea of support and executive sponsorship for your EA team. You've just gone into some of those ways to gain support among the entire organization. But your trust and interaction between the EA and the business leadership. Don, let's hear your comments around infrastructure or the subject that we've been talking about.

**Don H.:** Thanks. I've had the opportunity to build architectural teams at a couple of different organizations, one of which I'm at now, which doesn't actually have any kind of formal architectural team. What I found works well for me is pulling in subject matter experts from different groups within the organization and giving them an opportunity to start defining where we are going to go as an organization while giving them some kind of guidelines, like what that previous questionnaire was. Because there's specific goals that we have. Working with them on the differences between solution architecture, enterprise architecture, and technical architecture and how that fits. The value statement that I try to sell to the executive team is that we are actually moving the organization to a more proactive behavior versus reactive, which quite often happens when you don't have that kind of planning beforehand. PMOs may just start acting on executing against a project without actually understanding what that bigger picture looks like. Really in the end, it's created a much more proactive approach to doing business than a reactive approach, and that starts selling itself. That's all I was going to say.

### **TOPIC: Executive support for the EA Team**

**Moderator:** This topic about gaining support among the executive team and the team, what are some other ideas? Do you have to show ROI? I read some articles stating that when an EA group starts showing some cost savings by streamlining things and aligning the technology with the business. What are other ideas? Is there a need to justify this? Do you report to the CIO? Let's have a little bit of discussion around that.

**Sterling C.:** Several years ago they started an Architecture Review Board, but it's a small group of people that if somebody else says we want to use this Cloud solution, if part of the business wants to do that, it's led by somebody that reports to the CIO. Getting that started sometimes is difficult for the business to buy into, because they want what they want when they want it. It may take some time to get everybody adapted to that. Oh, I have to go through IT and get this reviewed. I guess what helps that is the security aspect, because they may not be able to understand. Hey, we need this type of standard, that type of standard. But for security reasons, we need to review the Cloud solution, how



it's going to interact with our other systems, those type of things. That has helped a lot and getting everybody on board more than in the past.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Sterling. Other comments around creating a corporate advantage, a competitive advantage, reducing risk, promoting cost efficiency and scalability, maybe becoming a partner to the rest of the team. Any other comments around gaining support from the organization and the executive team? Tim, your hand is raised.

**Tim Y.:** I just want to make a quick note. I think folks are saying this and I noticed in the chat, Walter, the EA team reports to the CTO. I think that's kind of the approach we took too. Hopefully that CTO is an advocate at the C-Suite. If they're an advocate to C-Suite hopefully everything is kind of running along. I think where a lot of people get in trouble with this, and I'm sharing this because I've learned from my own mistakes over the year, is a lot of IT organizations lead with technology. Yeah, great technology is great, but I think IT teams are people trying to create an EA has to really demonstrate. ROI, of course, is in there. Things cost money. You have to show the cost benefit. But you have to demonstrate this connection to the broader vision and strategy of the organization. If you don't do that, it's going to be an uphill battle to get that trust and visibility with executive leadership. We've all heard this. I don't know, people, process, and technology. We've all heard that. But leading with people, leading with process, keeping technology out of it. You have to understand and speak the language of business and don't lead with technology. At the end of the day, and this may be a blunt statement, but a lot of executives don't care if you're putting your stuff in Azure AWS. They just want to see how it connects to the broader vision and strategy of the organization. How do we stand up against our competitors in the marketplace? And that's why they have IT. You guys figure all that stuff out. I don't know if that makes sense, or if that's resonating with folks.

**Moderator:** I think Bryan's clapping. I think it does resonate. We're going to move on because we have some defined questions now about getting started. We have the first question from Ron, who says that you're starting and you're going very slowly. The next question is asking for an Agile approach to EA, then the next question is talking about EA in a small organization. Let's have some discussions around this. Ron, you introduced your EA to your organization about a year ago but you're taking a very slow approach to rolling it out. What are the tasks recommended to focus on first? Can you give us a little bit more background on that?

### **TOPIC: Different approaches to building an EA practice**

**Ron D.:** A lot of the collaboration is coming from the PMO team. They're introducing EA into those conversations. I think it was Don that said that we don't want to push them away. We want to start those conversations. We're starting really slow, going through some very basic ideation phases of projects with them, help them really define what the problem is. A lot of the departments will come to us because they saw a demo. They said oh, I love that demo. That does exactly what we need. In reality what they already have does what they need. You just don't know how to use it. We're really taking it back. But we're at that very beginning phase of starting that the collaboration of communication. I don't know if that's the right way to start getting everybody on board with EA or not.

**Moderator:** We want to get you some answers. Any good perspective from Ron before we go on to the next question around a more Agile approach. Is he doing it right?

**Walter W.:** You all know your organizations better than anyone. If you have an Agile organization where you can start to move very quickly, you're going to have successes. If you have a lot of change, like what's happening with us right now, our Superintendent is retiring. Our Chief Technology Officer is retiring, and one of our Senior Directors of Infrastructure all at the same time, almost on the

same day. That's a cry for help, meaning hold on to the standards, hold on to the things that you need to chart your course. If your organization wasn't having a lot of change you could probably move faster. We don't know what the landscape is going to look like with the changes in the new people coming in. All we can do is stay the course and navigate it as somewhat slow trolling speed and make sure that we still meet the needs of what we're trying to accomplish.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Walter. How about an Agile approach? I don't think Chris is on the session with us. If anybody would like to adopt that question, he's looking for an Agile approach to defining and implementing an enterprise architecture. With EA, the upfront investment is large, the time to implement is long, return on investment is hard to illustrate. Does this resonate with others?

**Tim Y.:** This is a little bit organization-specific, because each organization its own entity. The approach we used is almost a combination of Agile and Waterfall. I know Waterfall takes a little longer. If you're going to do Agile, and I think certain areas of building this out do require Agile. Again, I'm going to re-emphasize. You've got to connect with the broader vision strategy organization. You have to do that. But if you've got to do Agile, I would highly recommend that you show some quick wins just to get that buy-in.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Tim. Don, what do you have to say about this?

**Don H.:** I'm going to agree with Tim 100%.

### **TOPIC: EA in a smaller organization**

**Moderator:** Thank you. Bryan is wondering how smaller groups handle EA. We're only a team of 10, but still need to think strategically about how to architect our systems. Do smaller groups call this out in someone's role? Bryan, let's hear a little bit more from you, and would love to get you some answers.

**Bryan K.:** We are, as I said, a smaller group, We definitely sort of keep that in mind as we're trying to come up with solutions here. I was just curious if there are any other smaller teams who are thinking about this who could even document sort of a single project success of where they sort of cleaned up an architecture or something, even though they may not have it called out. And or are there places where you might not have an Enterprise Architect but you call it out as something in somebody's role?

**Moderator:** Is everybody doing enterprise architecture to some degree? Whether large or small, it's a good idea to take a bird's eye view of the organization and try to align things. Is that a true statement? I would love to hear from other smaller teams and how you're doing this.

**Sterling C.:** We do have someone that's over we'll call governance for the organization IT. They have a big role in creating that ARB team, Architecture Review Board. Ideally all of these type of IT decisions go through that to meet whatever kind of standard it is. Probably everybody on this call realizes if somebody high enough on the ladder wants something it's going to eventually get done and probably get rushed through. That's kind of how we do it with a governance created the ARB, now everything's supposed to go in that direction. I can always refer them. They have a big enough title. Makes it easier for people to abide by that. And the CIO supports that.

**Moderator:** Thank you, Sterling. Any other groups that would define yourself as a smaller organization or smaller group and how you are handling enterprise architecture? Johan? Thank you.

**Johan N.:** We're a small EA group as well with a fairly decent size IT organization. We encounter challenges where there were some questions going on earlier where we think about who's doing the solutioning? Well in larger architecture-based organizations you have Solution Architects who solution your software and application. You have technical architecture folks on the infrastructure side. You have Business Architects who help shape and determine what business processes need to be put in place. As a small group you kind of end up finding yourself popping on some of those hats here and there, which make it challenging. From our standpoint we really try and define enterprise architecture as strategy-based or strategy-focused. If there's a need to get involved and help with the solutioning effort we try and make sure that's not single-handedly done by the Enterprise Architecture Team. We may be there to collaborate and help specific folks with those challenges, but that becomes kind of the balance of being a small team. You've got to manage your level of involvement in those specific areas. I think when the opportunity is there, bring up conversations about those broadening roles and what they mean. Well, this is a great software application. Who's going to solution it for us? The tendency in our group is that some of that gets requested of our team, which is the balancing act of we want it to be good. We want this initiative to be successful, but we also don't want to be full-time Solution Architects when we have strategic things to think about and just trying to balance and manage that workload.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Johan. Is that resonating with you, Bryan? Any other questions? All right. We're going to move on and talk about tools. What tools or software recommended for enterprise architecture management? I did not do a poll on this because I see that when we do these polls we miss out on the ones that you're actually using. I thought we would just have a verbal discussion around tools that have been effective for you, the investment in this, maybe even about frameworks. What tools or software are recommended? For those of you who are more on the mature side of your enterprise architecture, are you using a tool? I see we use Bizzdesign coming out from Johan in the chat. Other tools that you're using that have been successful? For those just getting started, as Ron is, what would you recommend? Are tools essential? Are you utilizing tools? Software tools? Are there others out there that are utilized more than others?

**Johan N.:** I put in the chat that we use Bizzdesign, and prior to me being on our EA team we utilized ArchiMate, which are fairly common modeling tools to use within enterprise architecture. They have some specific capabilities, but they're kind of trying to translate these big strategic challenges into simplified diagrams that you can explain and talk through with business folks. I feel like those tools are very specific and strategically focused. If you go into a lower level of detail where you're solutioning, or you're getting down maybe in the business process level where you're getting down and those lower level weeds, you may want to look for some additional tools. If your team is a small team and does more solutioning, more infrastructure, more of those different types of things, then you may want to look at additional tools as well. I think for really EA strategically focused things, we've had pretty good success with Bizzdesign.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Johan. Are these tools based on certain frameworks, or are they kind of framework agnostic?

**Johan N.:** Well, Bizzdesign is license software, but you can utilize the browser-based version of it or utilize Amazon AppStream that comes up, and you can kind of collaborate and some basic like version control, kind of manage the portfolio. It's what we utilize a lot for getting that current state, future state. Like here's how things are, and here's where we want them to be. You can do some different things with time spans and plateaus to say okay, color code them and say here's where we need to go. I've been making pretty good success with utilizing those tools and distributing those diagrams within our organization, because I feel like they help simplify those topics as best you can.

Now you've got to make sure you're kind of flying at the right level. You don't want to be presenting something to a leadership group to where you're way down in the weeds. It's been a good tool for us.

**Moderator:** Thanks, Johan. I see others in the chat are mentioning Lucidchart, and Bryan saying heavily on Jira and Confluence. I've been reminded that if you go out to the NOREX website and you do a search for enterprise architecture, you'll see lots of transcripts of these sorts of discussions where other tools are discussed. If you're looking for feedback on a tool that you might be considering, just do a quick search on the website, and you'll see a lot of great information out there. Any further discussion on tools? I want to make sure that we get to a question that was submitted by Christine.

### **TOPIC: Master Data Management Solution in EA design**

Has anyone developed a master data management solution to incorporate in an existing EA design? Christine, can you give us a little further information on this?

**Christine R.:** I appreciate the conversation that we've been having. We have a smaller EA team. They're looking into an MDM solution, Master Data Management, and I just want to hear any advice that anybody has that's incorporated one. Thank you.

**Moderator:** Anybody else doing this? I heard talk about data. Bryan, are you able to help us? Thank you.

**Bryan K.:** Just a comment from a somewhat immature voter. I would look for composability on any of those kinds of things. That's an area that we are looking at in terms of any of our enterprise architecture approach here. I'm always a little nervous when I hear the word *master*, because that sounds like one solution to fit like a diverse set of needs, which rarely has been successful in my view of things. The only other thing I would say is really look for composable solutions that can address sort of the data needs that are often very diverse. You obviously you want to have things that fit together and work. But that's been what we've been doing around data warehouse solutions and being able to pull together a lot of disparate solutions

**Moderator:** For anyone who needs this, could you define composability? I looked it up as well, and it seems to indicate components that can be selected and assembled in various combinations, and easily modified or whatever. Can you give us your definition of that, Bryan?

**Bryan K.:** Yeah, sure. Maybe a definition by example. You can go out and get an ERP solution that will do everything for you. But it only does everything for you the way that vendor tells you they want to do it. Whereas if you are able to sort of compose your solution from different vendors' products, in-house developed software things. It's more likely you're going to be able to fit together that architecture to your business need or your mission. I guess that's how I see it. It's not my term that I invented. I'm sure I'm getting it wrong. Then maybe there's some other experts on the call who'd share what they think about it.

**Moderator:** There was some discussion around composability on one of our previous enterprise architecture sessions. Again, if you look out at the website, you'll see more about that. Any other discussion around master data management and incorporating that into your existing EA design? We would love to hear any other perspectives on that. And thank you, Bryan, for yours. Anybody else doing that? Christine, what is the end goal for you there?

**Christine R.:** Well, we just want to get a better handle on all of the data that's moving from different systems to different projects and goals. It's part of the EA solution and design already, but they just want to get a better handle on it.

**Moderator:** Just a quick reminder that our team is available to connect you to other Members of the NOREX group that may not have been on today's call for further discussion. Also, you can do a quick search out there for enterprise architecture. You'll see a lot of great information that's available to you anytime you need it. Have a great day, everyone. Thank you.

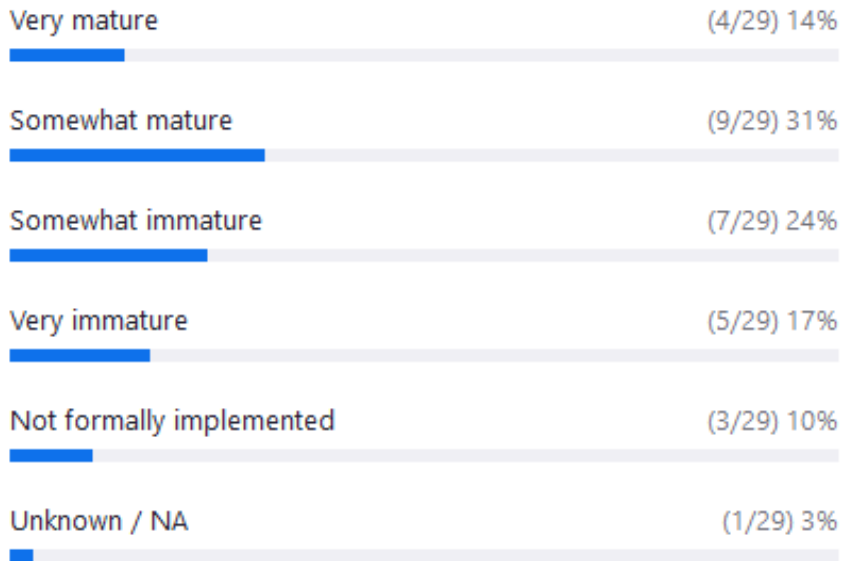
**End of discussion**

**Products / Vendors / Technologies shared in this Roundtable 55:**

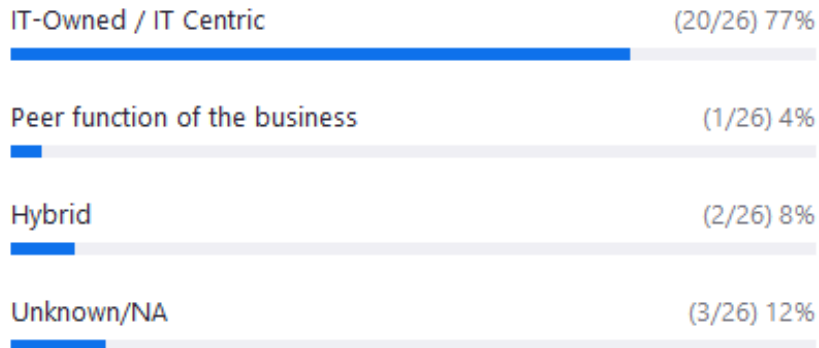
Agile  
Amazon AppStream  
Architecture Review Board  
Bizzdesign  
Business Goals  
Cloud  
Collaborate  
Confluence  
Executive Team  
IT Governance  
Jira  
Lifecycle  
Master Data Management  
Project Management  
Strategy

## Appendix A: All Poll Results

### How do you rank the maturity level of your EA practice:



### Where does your EA team exist in the organization:



**Our EA Team is responsible for the following:**

