

Conference Call Minutes, 2011-03-31

ITANA Meeting Minutes - March 31, 2011

----- Attending

Jim Phelps, University of Wisconsin-Madison (chair)
Marina Arsiniev, University of California, Irvine
Jim Behm, University of Michigan
Geoffrey Boushey, University of California, Berkeley
Dennis Chow, University of British Columbia
Jason Conley, University of Kentucky
Ceri Davies, Cardiff University
Scott Fullerton, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Paul Hobson, University of British Columbia
Chris Johansen, Pennsylvania State
Matt Kolb, Michigan State University
Piet Niederhausen, Georgetown University
Steve Olshansky, Internet2
Matt Smith, University of Connecticut

----- Announcements

- New CIC IT Architects group has been formed, consisting of architects from thirteen "big-ten" schools; Jim is the chair of the group. The group has not yet had its initial phone call. Scope, activity, and expectations will be discussed; Jim will keep the ITANA group apprised.
- There will be a full-day, pre-conference ITANA session at Educause, scheduled for October 17, 2011. Please let Jim know if you plan to travel to the Educause Annual Conference (October 18-21, 2011) and/or to the ITANA F2F pre-conference session (October 17).
- We will most likely add Acrobat Connect on all the calls for the foreseeable future.

----- Capability Maps Debrief

Please note: everyone is encouraged to share your work on any capability map work you might be developing. Please keep discussion to the list so everyone is able to participate.

----- Architecture and Organizational Arrangements

Open discussion about how EA groups are structured at different institutions.

Poll: Where does your architecture group report?

- about 1/3 on the call report to CIO/VP IT
- about 2/3 report to Director in IT
- University of Wisconsin-Madison reports to Director in IT, which limits their scope and visibility, but provides good "political cover." Drawback: EA voice is thought of as being a "DoIT" opinion and "DoIT" slanted, if EAs reported to the CIO, their opinions may be seen as more of a campus-wide voice.
- University of British Columbia reports to the CIO, which is a new reporting level. EA is close to financial influence, and the expectation of what the EA will deliver is higher. Level of influence upwards is improved. Influence with campus is still viewed as part of central IT.
- University of Michigan - EA is new, and reports to CIO. There are several IT streamlining efforts on campus, so there is incentive for campus to work with them.

Points to consider:

- Where the EA group reports is dependent upon the major trends on campus and the needs of campus. This is also related to the maturity model discussed on an earlier call. If the office where you might report from isn't really seen as the appropriate place for the voice of EA, then that can limit your effectiveness. Should an EA group on campus move to the business side?
- Has anyone managed to get EA out of IT and into the business side? This may not be referred to as "enterprise architecture," and may not be strictly IT-related; as EA rises up the IT stack, it becomes more business. The need is for technology to be aligned with the business side, but the trend is to remove that function from IT.
- What outcomes are you looking for first when trying to determine where the EA group fits into the organization?
- Where is the leverage point for effective strategic planning? Architecture should be close to the leverage point, and should be consistently redefining strategy and looking for opportunities to influence business strategy.
- Is access to data considered an IT service or a business service? Is it important for business units to realize that they are the stewards of the data, not IT?

----- Pattern and Anti-Pattern

(Scott Fullerton, UW-Madison)

Scott was involved in a project to define a direction for learning management systems (LMS), from enterprise level to departmental levels. One of the issues that came up was an anti-pattern that he began to call "Fitchburg Anti-Pattern" (refers to an "urban sprawl" metaphor/pattern, from an old Onion Magazine article). Defines it as a misalignment of strategies, service boundaries and funding. This leads to solutions that are counter productive. In tight economic times, like now, the tendency is to cut redundancy. The sense of broad spread redundancy makes people think about cutting the redundant services that are not necessarily viewed as "strategic." We will lose key functionality that several specialized disciplines need because these services weren't seen as being part of the core.

For more Patterns, Anti-patterns, and Mitigating Practices, see: <https://wiki.doit.wisc.edu/confluence/display/ARCH/Enterprise+Patterns+and+Anti+Patterns>

Open discussion/points to consider:

- Patterns/anti-patterns are a good starting point to begin discussions with others. It would be good to capture the downstream impacts of both the anti-patterns and the patterns.
- We will split the mitigation factors into enterprise-wide and EA practice.
- It's helpful for people to know that the anti-pattern exists, and to understand why the anti-pattern continues: is there a particular reason (e.g. cost, etc.) why we are continuing with the anti-pattern?
- Patterns tend to be driven by EA best practices, and help to mitigate them.
- Getting buy-in from the CIO would be beneficial to marshal resources, develop institutional maturity, and provides the CIO with the common language to be able to talk to stakeholders.

Scott welcomes feedback to the ITANA list, or directly to him.

As a reference, see: <http://wikipatterns.com/display/wikipatterns/Wikipatterns>

Next Call: Thursday, April 14, 2011

2:00 p.m. (EST) / 1:00 p.m. (CST) / noon (MST) / 11:00 a.m. (PST)