Actionable Business Architecture: IBM’s Approach
**Executive Summary**

Actionable Business Architecture accelerates time-to-value through the confluence of three often disparate models in strategy, operations and IT. The first paper in this series presented why that is the case. This paper takes the next step and describes how IBM’s approach to realizing Actionable Business Architecture accelerates time-to-value by the holistic application of four keys: methods, metrics, models and tooling.

Methods seamlessly integrate business strategy formation, process improvements and IT realization; metrics provide visibility into the business and benchmark data to gauge and tune execution; models accelerate the execution by jumpstarting each stage with rich and proven content such as component business models, process models, and information and service models; and tooling automates the tasks of the knowledge worker who must navigate seamlessly through different models, content and methods to create a business outcome.

Time-to-value for businesses seeking competitive differentiation, new business models or simply revenue growth, is often pursued through initiatives in strategy, transformation, business process improvements and IT deployments. Organizations constantly seek approaches, as well as use of assets and tooling, to accelerate business outcomes. However, methods in isolation, applying assets to a subset of the problem space, and the fragmented usage of tooling sub-optimizes the time-to-value, delaying results. IBM’s project experiences demonstrate a holistic application of four keys, which are the basis of what we describe as an Actionable Business Architecture.

Business models change more rapidly today than ever before. Actionable Business Architecture becomes a key success factor for an organization’s vision, while implementing speed, flexibility and efficiency. This paper describes how IBM can help make these objectives a reality by using business and IT models in concert, supported by the holistic and synergistic use of methods, metrics, models and tooling.

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1. Introduction

In this evolving and rapidly changing marketplace, executives are actively rethinking their business strategies and searching for innovative ways to spur sustainable growth. Making the business strategy come to life and bring continuous value to an organization requires synergistic relationships among strategy, operations and IT. Much can be lost in translation as organizations implement their business goals and strategy. Actionable Business Architecture defines and manages the relationships and interactions among domains—strategy, operating and IT models (see figure 1)—to eliminate the gaps, avoid lost opportunities and accelerate time-to-value for desired business outcomes. Every organization faced with this challenge when implementing their strategy should make Actionable Business Architecture their focus.

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![Figure 1: Business Architecture](image-url)
A business transformation approach may identify a series of business improvements and IT initiatives as part of the strategy roadmap. Typically, these changes are part of a program that can span months or years. An IT transformation initiative identified by a business transformation approach could start several months after the strategy was developed. IT has to undertake validation of the strategic drivers and make necessary course corrections based on current business needs. It is critical that this effort be cohesively executed while taking into account the work performed as part of the business strategy. If the approaches used in strategy, operations and IT domains are disparate and not seamlessly integrated, the effort will be compromised in terms of success, cost effectiveness and quality.

Accelerating time-to-value requires a prescriptive approach guided by proven techniques allowing strategy, operations and IT to be managed separately but realized synergistically through Strategy and Transformation, Business Process Management (BPM) and Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA). However, the intersection of S&T, BPM, and SOA, known as Actionable Business Architecture, should be managed under a single program using a living Business Architecture.²,³

Actionable Business Architecture is IBM’s solution to drive tangible value from the alignment of business strategy, operations and IT.¹⁵ The next sections elaborate the prescriptive approach, techniques and reusable building blocks that are essential for the development of an Actionable Business Architecture.

2. IBM’s Approach to Actionable Business Architecture

The following four keys define IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture:

- **Models** are reusable assets, industry leading practices and industry standards or guidelines that capture knowledge about the industry and the enterprise. They can be leveraged successfully to accelerate the creation of Actionable Business Architecture. These models should be available and leveraged during Strategy and Transformation, BPM and SOA initiatives.

- **Methods** are techniques that weave through the various contexts using proven methods in the IBM® Component Business Model™, Business Process Management (BPM)⁴ and Service-Oriented Modeling and Architecture (SOMA). Methods should also describe the how-to of execution while enabling further integration into an Enterprise Architecture (EA) context method.

- **Metrics** are key performance, agility and risk indicators, service levels and industry measures that provide guidance on what to measure in an organization to ensure that business goals and objectives are being met during execution and operations of the business, or through periods of transition.

- **Tooling** helps automate the use of models, methods and metrics. Tooling supports the creation of models at the appropriate stages, brings the right metrics at various levels, and facilitates the use of relevant best-practices.
Figure 3 illustrates the four keys as the core of IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture.

The Actionable Business Architecture approach leverages IBM’s vast experience in business transformation to benefit an organization’s endeavors: industry expertise is codified in the component business models, process models and industry specific metrics; business experience and best-practices are codified in process, information and service models and architectures; and tooling reflects optimal leveraging of software capabilities to instrument all of the above, support the encapsulation of best-practices and incorporate breakthrough thinking in how business models are integrated and codified. In addition, relevant industry and technical standards are leveraged throughout the approach.
It is not sufficient if there are assets that reflect the relationships or if there are methods that help apply the relationships, or if there is tooling that enables their definition or navigation in isolation. It is imperative that the four keys synergistically interrelate and operate to maximize the prescriptive value and efficiency of an Actionable Business Architecture.

The next section describes the holistic use of models, methods, metrics and tooling.

2.1 IBM’s Approach to Actionable Business Architecture: Models

Business architecture models from IBM are codified industry leading practices, industry standards or guidelines, and prebuilt-solution building blocks that significantly accelerate the creation of an Actionable Business Architecture.

IBM Industry Business Architecture Models® leverage the extensive business domain knowledge, successful industry experiences, technical expertise and thought leadership that IBM possesses and applies it for value creation. IBAMs contain both representation as well as content and combine industry-specific knowledge with suitable structure. The architecture organizes the content according to the specific business dimensions and their interrelationships.

IBAMs are critical to IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture, providing the following characteristics and strengths:

- Embed industry variation and specialization
- Conform to prescriptive methods that are easily consumable by corresponding tooling
- Promote the adoption of industry and cross-industry standards whenever possible
- Capture and codify the experiences gained from numerous projects, which enable the creation of models beyond the common boundaries of an industry

IBAM typically contains artifacts representing Strategy and Transformation, Business Process Management and Service-Oriented Architecture. Specifically, the constituent elements are:

- Component Business Models
- Business process models
- Business and technical services
- Information/data models

These elements of an IBAM have some important interrelationships. For example, business processes relate to the business components by using the activities and resources that define components; information models describe data that is used and transformed by business processes; services instrument the capabilities necessary to implement the processes, and so on. Understanding and leveraging these relationships is critical for any solid business architecture.
Business components are at the heart of the CBM definition. They bundle goals, KPIs, business activities, capabilities and resources into business areas defined by different competencies and organized into accountability levels of the operations. Figure 4 shows a simplified visualization of a CBM. There are three accountability levels and a number of competences (columns in the map) whose number ultimately depends on the industry segment and the level of granularity being modeled.

The CBM map provides a view of the organization “on-a-single-page” (see Figure 4). Each CBM component is equipped with a rich description that includes the main dimensions of strategy, operations and IT. This single page perspective provides an unrestricted view of the business in order to make meaningful decisions around which components to improve or transform. Behind a CBM map, each business component is equipped with a detailed description that includes the main dimensions of strategy, operations and IT. IBM has gathered and improved CBM for more than 200 industry segments.
The IBAM also contains business process models, which include specifications for how most common business operations are carried out in an enterprise. Depending on the maturity of their business operations, enterprises base their business processes on established standards, such as APQC’s Process Classification Framework (PCF), industry PCF extensions, and SCORE for supply chain management. However, these processes will usually require customization to ensure relevance to the specific organization and the particular project.

Figure 5 shows an example of an organization-wide business process and its relationship with the business components of the corresponding industry CBM.
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Figure 6: Business Component to Business Activity decomposition

The business process uses business activities from several different components. Specifically, in the example shown, there are three different components involved in the definition of the process. As suggested by the above example, the full alignment between a Component Business Model and business processes is centered on the CBM concept of business activity.

In Figure 6 a simple pattern is used to show how a drill down from a business process links to the business activities of CBM.
**Service Models**

Services are the contracts through which certain organization capabilities get realized, and define the execution behavior around the automation of business functions. Thus, they are in close relationship with the business processes and information models. Each IBAM set contains a number of services enumerated in the form of a catalogue: name, description, interface characteristics and dependencies. All of the services listed in the catalog have their respective interface defined. However, only some have a reference implementation or realization. With ongoing collection from engagements,
the content of the catalog and the number of services that are realized tend to increase. Figure 7 shows a service that encapsulates a selected set of CBM activities and tasks.

Services are identified by applying the Service Oriented Modeling and Architecture (SOMA) method\textsuperscript{10,11} and conform to the specifications outlined. Therefore, in the creation of an Actionable Business Architecture in the relevant industry domain, these services can be seamlessly leveraged through the appropriate modeling tooling.

**Information Models**

Information models represent the key business entities (see Figure 8) of the industry domain and associated business rules. This diagram provides a consistent view of the various entities and associated rules that are leveraged within the business operations as well as IT capabilities.

Information models that are part of an Industry Business Architecture Model typically contain a data dictionary (which defines the various entities, their type and a short description of what they are), data model, message catalog, message model, business rules and business glossary.

Figure 8: Business entities - Information model

Wherever appropriate, these information models are based on prevailing industry standards, such as the Association of Retail Technology Standards (ARTS) for the retail industry.

What makes Actionable Business Architecture prescriptive and pragmatic is the innovative approach of leveraging the four keys: models, methods, metrics and tooling. The Industry Business Architecture Models described above greatly expedite delivery of transformation and solution projects. This is because they complement and integrate with the method shown in 2.2, leverage the metrics outlined in section 2.3, and profit from the tooling introduced in 2.4.

IBM has a rich repository of Industry Business Architecture Models in several industry domains and these ensure speedy delivery of projects, increase the quality of such deliveries and result in reduced time-to-value.

**2.2 IBM’s Approach to Actionable Business Architecture: Methods**

The ultimate goal of any business transformation is to create value. To achieve this goal, it is essential to focus on value creation, measurement and sustainability through a holistic delivery approach of business solutions spanning business strategy formulation, execution and implementation. IBM's Actionable Business Architecture achieves this goal and creates value by closing the gaps between business strategy, operations and IT implementation.

Actionable Business Architecture is an overarching approach driving increased business value and accelerated time to market by establishing a means to efficiently and effectively accelerate solution delivery across the organization, leveraging reusable business and IT components. Using this method, enterprises can maximize their return on investment from business or IT transformations by tackling them holistically through an end-to-end approach, rather than concentrating on isolated initiatives or point solutions in strategy, operations or IT.
Such an approach creates a continuous improvement environment for measuring and validating anticipated business outcomes. More importantly, Actionable Business Architecture links these outcomes to business value by having the ability to trace them across strategy, operations and IT. Some of the tangible business outcomes of using IBM’s methodology (see Figure 9) can be summarized as follows:

- Shift business model to focus on revenue and innovation by quickly combining and evolving reusable components, creating new ways to capture business opportunities.

- Reduce risk with predictable results and higher quality.

- Decrease labor costs and enhance ability to reuse and transfer skills between projects, business units, or service lines across the organization.

- Drive sustainable, consistent, and effective reuse of assets and best practices by ensuring that methods are supported by tooling.

- Increase time to market and customer success by leveraging industry leading best practices.

Even when effectively practicing strategy formulation, business process management or service-oriented architecture methodologies in isolation, organizations may still experience suboptimal business outcomes and inefficient delivery of business solutions. Common scenarios that are manifested when the three practices are used in isolation are:

- Business transformation is underway but it is unclear or uncertain as to whether the IT projects that have been launched are consistent with the business goals

- Business and IT transformation is underway where the business strategy is being defined or refined and there is a requirement to define a supporting IT direction, architecture or strategy

- Technology oriented or IT strategy project launched, but it becomes evident that the necessary business linkage or commitment is not sufficient

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**Figure 9:** IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture method
As depicted in Figure 10, IBM's approach to Actionable Business Architecture includes and connects a discrete set of methods spanning and integrating strategy, operations and IT. These methods address the preferred realizations defining Actionable Business Architecture, namely, Strategy and Transformation (CBM Method 7), Business Process Management (BPM Method 12) and Service-Oriented Architecture (SOMA Method 10). Moreover, the IBM Method introduced in this section specifically provides a deep integration across these individual methods and builds a traceable path from business performance priorities to IT implementation.

In general, Actionable Business Architecture should accomplish the following:

- Support the realization and relevant interlocking among key models
- Enable a more effective business focus around creation, usage and subsequent reuse of enterprise-wide assets
- Prescribe the correct variety of techniques, artifacts, information and analytics needed to achieve business and IT convergence
- Identify the active roles needed to invest in the life cycle processes
- Ensure the appropriate level of organizational participation and control necessary in a role-based fashion

As it will be shown next, the IBM Actionable Business Architecture Method accomplishes all the above key goals. This method can be used in different contexts, thus supporting a broad set of initiatives in Strategy, BPM, SOA and Enterprise Architecture.

**IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture Method**

Actionable Business Architecture is used as a means to ensure consistent preservation of the business intent into the operating and IT models. This is accomplished by leveraging and exploiting the elements of the underlying methods: CBM, BPM, and SOMA (See Figure 10). These methods provide effective and efficient approaches to strategy and transformation, BPM and SOA solution development respectively. While each has well-proven merits in accomplishing the intended targets, the opportunity and need to connect these methods across selected aspects of the models yields IBM's Actionable Business Architecture Method.
Figure 10: IBM's Actionable Business Architecture method and its relationship to CBM, BPM and SOMA methods
As depicted in Figure 11, IBM’s there are four phases each containing a set of activities and tasks yielding reusable artifacts that provide the foundation for developing an Actionable Business Architecture, such as the Component Business Model (CBM), business process model, service model, and information model, and prioritized transformation roadmap artifacts. The methodology also contains various types of techniques, best practices, and roles definition necessary to perform the various activities and tasks, and more importantly, it contains accumulated lessons learned and best practices from past projects.

As an example of how the confluence defining Actionable Business Architecture is used in the methodology, the following activities are summarized. Their value as key integration points for other activities is also highlighted (see Figure 11).

- Identification of strategic goals along with prioritized business components participating in their realization. This is a critical input for the alignment of strategic intent to operations.

- Identification of performance pain points that require enhancement of capabilities and/or business process optimization, and linking business level performance metrics to process-centric KPIs. These are invaluable outcomes for BPM and goal service modeling in SOA.

- Selection of new or existing business capabilities that need to be supported through IT services. This is a key integration point between Strategy and SOA.

- Mapping main business processes in the organization to business components. This is valuable input for activity prioritization within components. Critical business activities are identified as repeated operations across enterprise-wide processes. Optimization and analytics are focused on these business activities.

- Interaction among business components defined through value propositions (component business services). This activity delivers key inputs for domain decomposition used in SOA realization.

- Overlay between existing IT application portfolio and business components. This is a critical input for the alignment of existing software assets to business priorities and their rationalization and reuse for SOA implementation.
• Preliminary models and optimization of other selected business processes within business components. This is another valuable methodology input for domain decomposition in SOA.

• Identification of key information and rules relevant to the execution of activities and tasks, and are to be consumed/produced by specific business processes. Identification of flows and messages are necessary for automation.

• Identification of services, prioritization and rationalization of related portfolios across the organization.

• Alignment and management of different portfolios (resources and projects, including major IT activities and capabilities) to business priorities identified in BPM and related strategic goals.

IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture method shortens the path to business transformation by directly linking strategy and operating priorities to IT and SOA. This method yields superior outcomes than those obtained by individual application of the three domain-specific IBM methods.

2.3 IBM’s Approach to Actionable Business Architecture: Metrics

An enterprise must adequately measure performance to drive improved business results. Actionable Business Architecture enables a powerful use of metrics, intelligently integrated into models for ease of use and fact-based decision making. IBM’s best practice based metrics and benchmarks are embedded in prebuilt models and captured in integrated tooling that enable the repeatable monitoring of metrics.

The Anatomy of a Metric

Metrics are a set of measurements that quantify results. A metric can be decomposed into three major elements: measurement structure, placement and value. The measurement structure defines what is being measured. The placement defines where it is being measured. And, although “metric” by definition does not traditionally include the target value, in Actionable Business Architecture this value is critical to the anatomy of a metric.

For example, “average supplier lead time in days” is the structure, “for suppliers based in Europe” is the place and “three days” is the target value. And in practice the organization is experiencing lead times of six days. In this example, the organization must evaluate why it is taking more than twice as long as targeted to complete this process.

The best metrics focus on results and outcomes, not simply interim steps and processes. This also improves the alignment of metrics to the strategic intent of the business. Metrics should also be specific and actionable.

Organizations must determine which metrics are critical to managing the business—these priority metrics are called Key Performance Indicators. While every KPI is a metric, not all metrics are KPIs. The IBM® Benchmarking Program® has defined and captured benchmarking data for over 1,000 metrics. Clearly an organization cannot and should not actively manage hundreds of metrics. A smaller set of integrated metrics, like the ones defined in a given model from IBM, ensure that the organization works towards its strategic priorities.
IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture can help organizations with the following metrics challenges:

- Tracking and monitoring a non-actionable metric.
- Integrating metrics into the business architecture model to promote consistency and integration across the organization.
- Tracking what can be measured.

In particular, tooling provides the vehicle by which to create this consistency of metrics.

Managing the Lifecycle of Metrics
IBM’s six step approach for managing the life cycle of metrics is ongoing and focuses on outcomes as well as process. This approach is implicitly built into Actionable Business Architecture. This is what transforms metrics as a means to improve performance visibility.

- **Measure**: Continuously and consistently capture performance outcomes
- **Monitor**: Proactively observe ongoing performance information to identify potential “out of tolerance” situations as soon as they arise.
- **Alert**: Support near real-time exception management and rules-based problem solving.
- **Analyze**: Support decision-making through analytics to identify trends. Focus on analysis that will drive action and accountability.
- **Collaborate**: Collaborate across a variety of stakeholders to compress decision cycles and eliminate business silos.
- **Resolve**: Build knowledge base for future reference in repeat occurrences; reduce decision cycle time.

The measurement, by itself, does not reveal the action required to improve the business. Insight from assessment leads to actions that improve performance and efficiencies. The more the metrics approach is performed, the more it becomes an integral fabric of the organization and a core part of its culture.

Metrics as a Source of Traceability
Regardless of how an organization starts using business architecture, organizations can trace their performance, down to process and up to strategies, through IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture, which values and leverages metrics. In IBAM, metrics are embedded into models to address business performance according to the operating entity being modeled. Furthermore, IBM has a collection of tooling for Actionable Business Architecture, business intelligence and analytics that helps organization track and monitor metrics. Taking the extra steps to integrate metrics into the other three keys is what differentiates IBM’s approach from traditional business architecture.
During the IBM 2010 CFO Study, one CFO proclaimed, “If you can’t believe the data, how will you believe the analytics?” Indeed the quality of the data being measured is not to be underestimated. Metrics produce a sort of mind map that should be understood. Figures 13 is an illustration that highlights the multiple integration points metrics have on one another. This visual representation of these relationships can help some business leaders appreciate the importance of defining and managing the right set of measures for their organization.

Taking the extra steps to integrate metrics into the other three keys is what differentiates IBM's approach from traditional business architecture.

**Figure 13**: The relationship among metrics across the domains of Actionable Business Architecture

### Applying Benchmarks

IBM brings significant experience and examples around where and how to measure execution and results. The IBM Benchmarking Program leverages APQC's Open Standards Benchmarking Collaborative (OSBC) that has data from over 18,000 organization entities worldwide and which recognizes the value of scale and consistency to drive quality, as shown in Figure 14 below. IBM also partners with organizations such as The Economist, Industry Week, CFO Magazine, Logistics Europe, Supply Chain Management Review, and Grocery Manufacturers Association.

IBM's deep industry and process experience coupled with this unmatched data set, not to mention a growing number of patents for business architecture, equip our consultants with differentiated tooling and benchmarks for Actionable Business Architecture in the organization.

**Figure 14**: The size of the Benchmark dataset drives better quality
2.4 IBM’s Approach to Actionable Business Architecture: Tooling

Tooling embeds the necessary best-practices, provides adequate guidance for the entire life cycle and supports collaboration across a wide variety of roles in the organization. These integrated capabilities support the successful deployment and management of Actionable Business Architecture.

Suitable tooling needs to address Strategy and Transformation, BPM and SOA individually. But more importantly, it needs to provide the necessary interlocks across strategy, operations and IT to enforce those conditions that make their integration viable. Tools that address Strategy and Transformation, BPM and SOA in isolation typically define and manage their own entities and relationships in a siloed approach. For example, business capabilities defined and managed by a Strategy and Transformation tool may not be easily kept in alignment with resources that are consumed or produced by business processes in a BPM tool. Similarly, goals involved in an SOA tool may not be readily integrated with the world of BPM or strategy. This means changes in such goals dictated by new operational or strategic conditions will not be interlocked holistically.

IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture includes a unified set of tools that realizes the above goals. IBM tooling also provides a significant level of differentiation, as some of the supported functionality is unique to IBM’s approach to Actionable Business Architecture.

Figure 15 shows the tooling used in Actionable Business Architecture coming from IBM Software Group (SWG), IBM Global Business Services (GBS) and IBM Research.

The Component Business Modeling Tool (CBM Tool) supports Strategy and Transformation. The CBM Tool is a differentiated asset that provides the capabilities necessary to model organizations by using CBM (see Section 2.1) and supports the deployment of the CBM Method (See Section 2.2). Furthermore, it provides a tight integration with the other tooling from the IBM set.

Another differentiated asset from SOMA-Modeling Environment (SOMA-ME) supports the SOMA Method (See Section 2.2) by providing a tight integration with strategy and operating models. For example, SOMA-ME works on the business goals and prioritized business processes defined by the CBM Tool. In addition, other IBM Software Group tools for Actionable Business Architecture includes integrated and field proven functionality for BPM, information modeling, Enterprise Architecture and business performance management.

![Figure 15: IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture tooling alignment](image-url)
While the above tooling addresses the individual domains in business architecture, the IBM unified suite also provides the linkages, extensions and other critical capabilities to deliver the core value of Actionable Business Architecture. Key functionality allows for integration across the tools by implementing the ‘hinges’ or valued relationships between two or more domains of Business Architecture. This integration is provided through extensions of the individual tools and included into a workbench that supports consulting and solution services.

Commercially available Business Architecture-type tooling provides broad functionality in order to compete cost-effectively. Vendors focus specifically on BPM, IT Strategy, SOA or EA. On the other hand, Actionable Business Architecture tooling calls simultaneously for a deep integration across the above disciplines and very detailed domain-specific capabilities. This combination of requirements makes a single-tool approach that is too complex for agile cross-organizational collaboration, providing a cohesive, integrated and flexible tooling strategy.

Intimately connected to the tooling necessary for an effective Actionable Business Architecture approach, it lays the need for a federated set of meta-models. The strategic decision made allows each individual domain to introduce innovation and evolution, while simultaneously managing the valued relationships across the domains by integrating individual meta-models cohesively. This strategy allows for disentangling the complexity of Actionable Business Architecture while maintaining control points across different domains to prevent the formulation of silos.

IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture provides a deeply integrated portfolio of tools with the following value:

- **Protecting investments**: IBM tooling implements a flexible and extensible software architecture that can help integrate with existing platforms and develop customization for specific industries.

- **User tooling adoption**: Because many organizations do not have modeling skills within their company, IBM provides tooling with field adoption patterns that have been proven both acceptable and efficient for the impacted modeling and analysis user communities.

- **Analytics**: The ability to take initial, updated and interlocked models and use them with the tooling to perform “what if” innovation scenarios for processes and services.

- **Collaboration**: The ability to provide a facility to expose the models in a fashion that allows their publication and communication, as well as to foster collaboration with the broader organization.

- **Enterprise Architecture Supportive**: Organizations that actively support Enterprise Architecture activities are able to utilize the Actionable Business Architecture tool-suite seamlessly in the EA context.

- **Costing**: The ability to persist and augment models with cost factors, such as resource costs, and system/component service costs, so that the financial impact of identified transformation and innovation initiatives can be assessed.
Ultimately, tools required for model creation, governance and method deployment are an expense that is recouped in the consistency and accurate speed to market that the right tooling brings to an Actionable Business Architecture journey. But a critical point regarding this expense is that tooling is used to support both individual methods and models, and end-to-end context preservation. This is so that the models and methods grow in depth and richness around the business context. IBM has invested significantly in creating and improving its method based tool-suite so that it is consumable by a dedicated user community and can still leverage a wide variety of existing user skills and previous IT investments.

3. Conclusion
The first whitepaper discussed how embracing the tenets and prescription around adoption of an Actionable Business Architecture will drive continuous improvement. It will also help an organization maintain the higher valued relationships within an enterprise in a more usable context to fuel sustainable growth.

This whitepaper discussed how IBM believes its vision and attainment of business and IT convergence using an interlocked set of models, methods, metrics and tooling enables a delivery of an Actionable Business Architecture more rapidly, accurately and efficiently to focus their efforts towards a desired business context.

A review of each of the four keys, models, methods, metrics, and tooling, has shown that they individually have a unique and broader context. The dependency and relationship of each to one or more of the others drives the conclusion that when executed in isolation each key could still create value, but only in a smaller increment limited to their context. IBM only does that which is necessary from within each key, but always in concert with the others to ensure that maximum cumulative value is derived from every transformative effort.

Actionable Business Architecture generates a framework for the reliable and repeatable delivery of positive business results through definition and documentation of valued relationships with visibility of context, convergence of purpose, and traceability across strategic efforts, both immediately and over time. Starting with aligned models and metrics delivered with the controlled means and manner of methods and tooling, optimizes their collaborative usage to ensure convergence, cohesive focus and differentiated acceleration of change and transformation. This value accumulation guides how the Actionable Business Architecture can be greater than the sum of its parts and how business agility and flexibility can be more readily achieved and repeated to deliver more positive business outcomes.

IBM has shown it handles the details around the complexity of associating and defining higher valued relationships by containing them through utilization of four keys: to manage the four representative contexts, across eight core dimensions, within three organizationally significant models of strategy, operating and IT. The details for how to get started and drive towards life cycle management will be covered in the third paper in this series.

Ultimately, IBM’s Actionable Business Architecture will provide a systematic, right-sized and progressive approach to break down a complex enterprise to produce cost savings and business differentiation through convergence of purpose and consistent execution across the organization.

In a future whitepaper we will introduce the choices and patterns related to initiating an Actionable Business Architecture as a means towards a steady state of business agility and converged flexibility through a living business architecture.
4. References


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