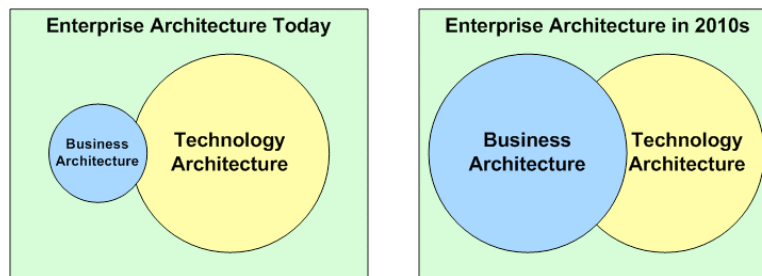# SOA Consortium Members present:

Business Architecture: The Missing Link between Business Strategy and Enterprise Architecture

Practitioner Perspective on Enterprise Architecture in the 2010s

Executive Summary

The SOA Consortium's EA2010 Working Group – a group of "street-smart" enterprise architecture practitioners – has been actively discussing the domains, services, practices and skills required for a thriving, business relevant enterprise architecture practice in the 2010s.

A critical finding of these discussions is the emphasis of technology concerns at the expense of business understanding, and ultimately, true business enablement, in most enterprise architecture practices today. Successful enterprise architecture practices in the 2010s must give equal emphasis to technology and business concerns. The means for this re-balancing is the elevation, and in some cases initial adoption, of business architecture practices.

We define *business architecture as the formal representation and active management of business design*. Expanding this definition, business architecture is a formalized collection of practices, information and tools for business professionals to assess and implement business design and business change.

Typically, the business architecture practices and artifacts in enterprise architecture frameworks focus on business processes and business uses cases. This is not surprising, since these artifacts and practices are a prerequisite to IT-based business solution delivery. However, this is not sufficient.

To reap the benefits of business architecture – business visibility and agility – the business architecture must reflect the entire business design, from the point of view of business designers and owners, rather than IT solution delivery. This point of view begins with business motivations, includes key business execution elements – such as operating model, capabilities, value chains, processes, and organizational models – and transcends information technology representations, such as business services, rules, events and information models.

While we strongly believe that business architecture is a business domain, the Chief Information Officer (CIO), given his/her unique position to view business plans, business processes, information flows, and technology portfolios across the organization, most often champions business architecture formalization.

For business architecture to succeed, the CIO and enterprise architecture group must take an honest look at the existing relationship between business and IT. The nature of the relationship – disenfranchised, customer-supplier, or collaborative – will dictate the level of effort required to find sponsorship, garner business participation, and deliver to objectives.

Once in place, the relationship between business architecture and information technology is two-fold. First, business architecture is a critical input to IT planning, technology architecture and business solution delivery. Second, technology trends and IT capabilities influence business design choices in the realms of capabilities, value chains, processes, and channels.

The interdependencies of business architecture and information technology call for collaborative practices and organizational models. This connection is best structured as a true enterprise architecture practice, one that gives equal emphasis to business and technology concerns. This balanced model is our view of enterprise architecture in the 2010s.