management)? Is it an IT-driven or IT-centric effort, meant to provide an underpinning to enterprise architecture? Or is it a joint effort to achieve better alignment between IT and the business?

The following activities may be part of the mission of business architecture:

- Illustrating how the business works, i.e. inventorying the business capabilities of the enterprise. This can lead the executive team to reorganize in order to clarify who is in charge of each capability.
- Identifying gaps in the organization, which could result in organization changes, but can also help determine what acquisition or merger strategies should be pursued, and who are the most appropriate M&A targets, in order to fill the gaps.
- Identifying the top end-to-end processes of the organization (e.g., "opportunity to cash," "hire to retire," "sourcing to delivery," etc.). This can lead to better assignments of responsibilities to parts of the organization (so that responsibility is less diluted or changes less often as these processes unfold), or it can be a prerequisite to business process management, or at least lead to a prioritization of business process improvement efforts. Often, the simple identification and documentation of these end-to-end process, and the awareness of which parts of the organization contribute to them at different stages, helps combat the silo effect by making different groups aware of the need to cooperate with each other.
- Helping management decide which capabilities must be provided internally (and nurtured appropriately), and which ones can be outsourced.
- Mapping the business capabilities to the business systems managed by IT, in order to identify and resolve inconsistencies, duplications or gaps.
- Establishing metrics to measure the performance of the organization. These metrics may in turn be used to influence the compensation of senior management, aligning a bonus structure with actual operational excellence.

Overcoming the Business Architecture Branding Problem

We have found that business architecture suffers from a positioning issue, or a "branding problem" if the reader prefers that image. The issue stems from the fact that describing the design of the business using the word "architecture" typically stems from the *enterprise architecture* mindset, which originated in IT organizations, as a way to formalize the connections between applications, and between those and the computer infrastructure of the organization. Seen in this light, *business architecture* appears to be an idea or approach that IT people would like to foist on unsuspecting business folks who were busy doing their work until the CIO came along and disrupted their game.

A variant of this issue is when the executive team is very consciously engaged in "designing the business": defining and owning the vision and the mission statement, determining and updating the key strategies, fine-tuning or redoing the organization, targeting acquisitions and divestitures, etc. Even if they like the phrase "business architecture," their reaction may be "well, that is what we've been doing, so who are you to come along and tell us how we're supposed to do our work?"

A situation that may unfortunately be both the worst possible and the most probable is this: the business does *not* explicitly take care of business architecture, but they don't want anyone else to come and tell them what it is (or that they should do it). In this all-too-common scenario, management reflection and actions about the

vision, mission, strategies and organization happen reactively, after something went wrong, and are conducted by one of the executives without formal training on this activity and without a formal blueprint.

How can one solve this "branding issue"? One way is to realize that results speak louder than concepts, and that case studies from other organizations can carry a lot of weight. This is a chicken-and-egg situation, since compelling case studies of successful business architecture efforts are still few and relatively unspecific. However, bringing available case studies to the attention of senior management should be a key piece of this puzzle.

Equally important is the perception of the person who brings up this concept to the executives. If a CIO who is seen as the "plumber-in-chief" of the company's infrastructure raises the need for business architecture, this will probably fail. But if the CIO is a peer who is trusted for her or his knowledge of methodologies and processes, then the suggestion is much more likely to be heard.

Business Architecture & Related Topics

Business Architecture & SOA

The connection point between service-oriented architecture (SOA) and business architecture was the starting point of the EA2010 journey. As experienced SOA practitioners, we recognized the importance of defining services that reflected business capabilities and enterprise information needs, as opposed to defining services that mimicked technology assets.

A point of discussion though, was on service analysis approaches that would result in well-defined, cohesive, relevant, business services. As we exchanged success and failure stories, we discovered that organizations performing true business architecture and analysis techniques, such as capability mapping, value chain analysis, and enterprise information modeling were far more successful than organizations performing solutions and systems analysis techniques.

Business Architecture & BPM

In the "starting points" mentioned earlier, we said that "inventorying the business capabilities" and "identifying the top end-to-end processes" were two key activities that are part of business architecture. This implies a strong connection between business architecture and business process management, or BPM. Yet, as the list above also implies, BPM is not the only thing a business architect does.

BPM is a method or a tool that contributes to business architecture. Enterprise architects may see BPM as a way to rationalize business systems, and CFOs may see BPM as a way to find opportunities for headcount reduction through process simplification. Business architecture views BPM as something that implements the well-known principle that "you can't improve what you can't measure," or perhaps Einstein's admonition to "spend 90% of the time defining the problem, and 10% of the time working on the solution." Documenting the "as-is" processes of the enterprise, using BPM techniques (and potentially BPM software) allows a business architect to identify and demonstrate:

- Areas where responsibilities are clear and key functions are performed efficiently
- Areas where processes and responsibilities are unclear
- Orphaned area – a repeatable process may exist, but no one owns it