SUCCESS STORY

Enterprise architecture: a complete company description

RAI-ICT's transformation from a cost center to a profit center

RAI-ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is the department of RAI that provides the IT infrastructures needed by each of the group's business units, while optimizing resource consumption. Based in Turin and led by Dr. Giuseppe Biassoni, this department is responsible for the management of heterogeneous application and technology assets — ranging from a SAP software package to software developed in-house during the Sixties — all of which runs on an architecture that is made increasingly complex by decentralizing infrastructures in various offices located across the country.

According to Massimo Rosso, Planning, Policies & Integrations Manager for RAI-ICT – *"RAI-ICT had to realign its processes, applications, and technologies in order to understand the company's goals following some significant changes. Thus, the recent reorganization led to certain functions being centralized (like purchasing and human resources), the transition from analogic to digital, and the development of new and more advanced internal requirements."* Such modifications had an immediate impact on either the functional processes or the information systems that were revamped for greater consistency.

+ "Enterprise architecture has allowed RAI-ICT to gain a complete and consistent understanding of the company based on centralized, uniform, and interdependent data that is constantly accessible and reusable,"

Mr. Massimo Rosso, Planning, Policies & Integrations Manager at RAI-ICT.

The priority: realigning technologies with business activities

RAI's IT department had to start by drafting a comprehensive description of its technology assets, including the connections between processes and information systems, in order to assess the impact of the change and facilitate systems administration. Moreover, from the very beginning of the project, realigning technologies with RAI-ICT's business activities was tackled as a real opportunity to radically rethink the role of information technology, particularly by transforming its image within the corporation such that it would be perceived more as a profit center and less as a cost center.

+ "The Governance system should clearly offer the possibility to make a decision about IT solutions by aligning them with the company's strategy and requirements,"
Mr. Massimo Rosso.

"Above all, we asked ourselves several important questions," Mr. Rosso continues. *"How can our department align the technological investments with the company's priorities? How can the business units provide services that meet the company's standards? How can senior management assess the impact of new technologies and allocate investments in order to increase the value provided to the company?"*

"We immediately understood that, in order to answer these questions, we should set up an effective Governance system for our information system, based on helping the decision-making process. The Governance system should clearly offer the possibility to make a decision about IT solutions by aligning them with the company's strategy and requirements."

In concrete terms, RAI-ICT primarily had to develop new competencies for highlighting the company's critical (organizational and computing) processes, including the business aspect, so as to conform to management's way of speaking.

Once this step was finished, we needed to establish a method to identify framework models and adequately integrate them. MEGA consultants played a key role by providing a methodological framework and tools for describing processes and IT assets in a simple, graphical, and consistent manner. The result takes the shape of models and maps pointing out the connections between processes and IT assets. This is what we now call enterprise architecture.

Enterprise architecture: a simple, graphical, and consistent approach to describing processes

It quickly became necessary to have a modeling method in order to provide an IT project evaluation based on elements that were easily understandable for management and suited to the company strategy. From that point on, each upcoming project proposal shall be weighed in an informed manner based on these elements and in light of the external environment (laws, regulations, etc.) and internal requirements. This will allow priorities to be managed by first considering initiatives aligned with the business activities and those that generate value for the company.

So, enterprise architecture will allow RAI-ICT to better communicate with management and to maintain its autonomy over decisions made about the information system. The enterprise architecture model adopted consists of a "framework" connecting the business activity architecture with the system's architecture on four levels (business processes, operational processes, application services, and application segments or blocks) based on vertical areas (data, application, integration, access point) and transverse areas (technological infrastructure, systems administration, and security).

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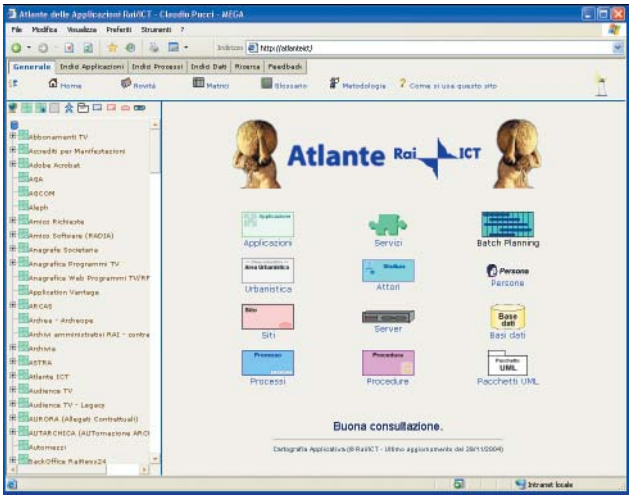
The model was integrated through a series of mapping projects carried out with MEGA's consultants and software. By starting with these process models and carrying it through to IT infrastructure modeling, these projects allowed business activities to be aligned with information technology by concentrating only on major processes serving the goals set for the company and the internal clients and to do this by making the best investments.

The mapping projects allow to rapidly and effectively address future changes within the company

Focusing on the points considered as fundamental, these various mapping projects formed the RAI-ICT enterprise architecture:

- → **Application mapping**
- → **Company structure mapping**
- → **Business process mapping**
- → **Data mapping**



MEGA OFFERING

RAI relied on MEGA's products and services in order to carry out its enterprise architecture project. MEGA consultants contribute a structured and modular formula rooted in solid industry experience, as well as a methodological framework involving modeling tools from the MEGA Suite:

→ MEGA Process for describing and analyzing the processes, RAI's editorial process; the RAI-ICT processes and RaiWay's business processes.

→ MEGA Architecture for mapping all of RAI-ICT — Web services' application assets; client-server; Web; application services and technological infrastructures — mainframe, server, networks, etc.

→ MEGA Designer for mapping data, application components, batches, and integration components that guarantee the structure of the data processed, their description, their analysis, and their optimization, as well as controlling batch applications.

+ Understanding IT assets allowed RAI-ICT to quickly establish the areas that needed improvement and speedy intervention.

The results generated by the enterprise architecture

"Enterprise architecture has enabled RAI-ICT to gain a complete and consistent understanding of the company based on centralized, uniform, and interdependent data that is constantly accessible and reusable" concludes Massimo Rosso. Each IT project is knowledgably assessed prior to starting it, thereby easily allowing one to make a decision about the investment and the amount thereof, as well as giving the business people and management the option to speak the same language.

"This approach allowed us to better face the RAI's recent reorganization. We were able to very quickly manage the impact on processes and applications by rapidly and effectively adapting them to the new organization's requirements. And this work will enable us to quickly and effectively react to future changes and new requirements" clarifies Massimo Rosso.

The improvement is also apparent in how it affects an external client, **RaiWay,** a RAI company, a transmission facilities owner. In this context, we took control of a system built by a third party that really needed to be updated. In a very short time, we were able to determine the difference between the process and the information system and to intervene appropriately.

Mapping processes made it necessary to improve the effectiveness of the application process when transitioning from a request for a service to its fulfillment. Thus, it is possible to estimate the direct benefits of the enterprise architecture. Understanding IT assets allowed RAI-ICT to quickly establish the areas that needed improvement and swift intervention.

RAI — THE COMPANY:

RAI — Radiotelevisione Italiana Spa, a public utility company for radio and television, transmits more than 60,000 hours of television and 58,000 hours of radio broadcasts across its cable and satellite networks and the Internet. 22,000 hours are aired regionally, while 28,000 hours are broadcasted to Italians living abroad.
RAI also owns GR Parlamento, a channel dedicated to parliamentary activity, and an Isoradio channel for motorists. Programming includes more than 12,000 hours of informational shows, cultural and educational transmissions, children's programs, entertainment, and sports. Its presence on satellite television consists of six free channels and five paid channels.