

DELIVERING A GREAT BUSINESS EXPERIENCE STARTS WITH YOUR ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

Customer Experience has been a focus for many companies over the last several years. As more and more business interactions become digital, many companies are struggling to differentiate themselves and drive greater ROI for CX investments.

The trouble is that simply deploying an attractive, branded façade in front of company-centric processes is not enough. Companies must go beyond simply focusing on touchpoints and more towards organizing the entire business around delivering amazing experiences. This requires a shift towards Business Experience (BX).



Figure 1 - Components of Business Experience

But many businesses struggle to truly achieve such optimized experiences. In this white paper, we will look into how your Enterprise Architecture forms the foundation of delivering such Business Experience (BX) initiatives.

YOUR BX INITIATIVE ROADBLOCK

You've brought together the best minds in your organization to craft a strategy that reinvents and streamlines your interactions with your customers, partners, and employees. You've brought in the best outside expertise to develop a winning user experience with an engaging interface. Now it's time to put it all together and deliver a game-changing solution that organizes the entire organization around delivering an amazing business experience.

And then everything comes to a screeching halt.

Your team can't get the data to where it needs to go for the new solution. Your infrastructure can't scale easily to adapt to the new usage demands. Your teams don't have the expertise in terms of technology, process, and tooling to deliver these new solutions. And now your shiny new BX solutions are over budget, have stale/limited data and slow response time, with development cycles that always put your feature set behind that of your competition.

Welcome to the digital quicksand that is your enterprise architecture.

Your enterprise architecture that is built around monolithic applications that exchange data via batch processes. Where integrations are point to point and data is copied so many times that it's often hard to pinpoint the authoritative source. The architecture that delivers web pages that regularly take 5 or more seconds to load. And where most solutions have so many interdependencies that any changes require weeks of regression testing. Is it any surprise that you can't deliver on those BX strategies you're so excited about?

So how can we move the enterprise architecture to a place that can enable and sustain the BX solutions your organization desperately needs? What does a modern experience-oriented architecture look like and how do we get there?

PILLARS OF AN EXPERIENCE-ORIENTED ARCHITECTURE

Let's start by attempting to describe the kind of behaviors an experience-oriented architecture exhibits. Such an architecture is:



FAST

Users will no longer wait for applications. They expect instant response and if they don't get it they'll use something else. It's true of your customers and those attitudes are now true of your partners and employees as well. Therefore, your architecture has to support this expectation through massively scalable approaches that are asynchronous, distributed and cloud-enabled.



ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Downtime doesn't exist in the digital world. Now when service interruptions happen it's significant news. Users expect your services to be there day or night whenever their schedules need them. Your architecture needs to be built to run continuously using highly fault tolerant mechanisms that leverage the latest in edge services, containerization, and serverless computing.



INTEGRATED

In today's experience-driven solutions, the users need the right data in real-time to drive their experience. Therefore, your architecture needs to move your data through the enterprise at scale and with minimal latency. This requires an API-centric approach where business events are streamed and made available to all the systems that need them in near real-time.



HIGH QUALITY AND FEATURE-RICH

Today's business experiences are continually evolving, adding new capabilities frequently to increase their value to the end users. Features are expected to be released in weeks, not months or years and work the first time. As a result, your architecture must leverage standardization and rely on development processes that are automated, agile, and fully leverage the usage analytics available.



SECURE

It goes without saying that, in today's world, your user and business data must be protected. One breach and even the best business experience is undone. Therefore, your architecture needs to be designed to minimize risk through modern encryption, edge protection, and security event monitoring.

ASSESSING YOUR ARCHITECTURE'S BX READINESS

So how can we begin to evolve the architecture towards what we need for today's BX solutions? As with any journey, your first begin by getting a firm understanding of where you are.

At Verinext, we advocate you begin with a readiness assessment that looks at the following areas:

ENGINEERING CAPABILITY	Can we consistently develop solutions with high usability, functional capability, and technical quality?
APPLICATION HOSTING & MONITORING	Do we have the ability to deploy and manage solutions at the necessary scale, availability, and fault tolerance?
BUILD & RELEASE MANAGEMENT	Do we have the processes and tools for the creation and deployment of solution builds in an agile, consistent, and coordinated manner?
QUALITY MANAGEMENT	Can we ensure that released solutions meet all the functional and non-functional requirements for providing a high-quality experience for the user?
INTEGRATION	Do we have the ability to enable a seamless, real-time exchange of information across the enterprise architecture?
DATA MANAGEMENT	Do the tools and processes exist for structuring, storing, managing, and extracting value of information assets in the enterprise?
SECURITY & COMPLIANCE	Can we secure enterprise applications and information in an efficient manner while maintaining compliance with internal and external controls?
ARCHITECTURE MANAGEMENT	Can we demonstrate the existence and effectiveness of the deliverables and processes for planning, communicating, and governing the overall architecture?

BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING A MODERN EXPERIENCE-ORIENTED ARCHITECTURE

No enterprise architecture is transformed overnight, nor does any organization typically have the luxury of delaying its needed BX solutions until the architecture is ready. The path forward for each enterprise is as unique as each's BX strategy, but here are best practices that we've used for creating a modern experience-oriented architecture roadmap:

✓ **Start with setting a direction based on a full, 360-degree view of your requirements.**

Understand your business drivers, the needs of your customers/partners/employees, the other technology initiatives either planned or in progress, and combine that with a detailed understanding of your current state architecture to pinpoint the areas of weakness. Craft a very targeted view of the needs and opportunities for the architecture.

✓ **Establish the guiding principles for your architecture modernization early.**

There will be one or more transition states as you move towards the desired future architecture. Trade-offs will be required. You will need to make copies of data that you'd rather not make. You will need to layer technologies on top of your legacy systems in order to enable them to participate in the digital world. Each MVP (minimum viable product) you deploy will likely have compromises in order to deliver the value the business needs in the timeframe required. Use your principles to guide these decisions and make sure these tradeoffs and compromises are well understood and communicated. Otherwise they become accepted and ingrained, increasing your technical debt rather than chipping away at it.

✓ **Don't confuse the implementation of a new, trendy technology with true modernization of your enterprise architecture.**

No single cloud service, API gateway, container platform, data streaming product, or automation tool is going to enable an experience-driven architecture. Real modernization requires understanding and coordinating the holistic impact to your data, application, infrastructure, network, and other architectures as well as the tools and processes used to develop, maintain, and manage them.

Ready to modernize your organization's enterprise architecture to guarantee the great business experience your users expect?

[LEARN MORE](#)