It is better to travel hopefully than it is to arrive ...

A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Associate Professor David S Munro
Associate Director, IT Strategy and Architecture

IT Strategy and Architecture

- Dedicated team created in early 2009 to:
- "Lead the development of the IT Strategy for the University that enables the University to deliver on its strategic business objectives"
  - But.. what does "IT supporting and enabling the strategic objectives of the University" mean in practice?
- "Lead strategic planning processes across the Infrastructure Technology Groups and amongst key stakeholders"
  - Where to start?
  - But .....what falls into this and what doesn’t?
  - How does IT Strategy and Architecture fit along side Technology Services?
- The combined aim is still to deliver effective IT services
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

University Strategic Directions

- We pretty much know what these are...
  - Developing world class research and an outstanding research training environment
  - Providing a high quality learning environment
  - Ensuring the requisite enabling services and resource capabilities to support research and teaching

- Was the IT offering in 2008 well-placed to meet these challenges?
  - How do we get it there?
  - "More of the same" strategy will push IT to a position of being a significant limiting factor in the University's Strategic direction

The starting reality...

- Significant effort to achieve a level of operational quality
  - Strong foundation IT services
  - Reliable and scaleable IT infrastructure

- Technology Services however is saturated with operational activities
  - Limited capacity for innovative projects
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Principal Challenges

- IT is seen as inflexible
- IT is seen as a cost and not as an investment
- The scope of IT services available do not meet business needs
- Foundation IT services are not university wide
- Poor IT governance and business partner engagement processes exist
- Limited IT funding growth
- Lack of IT innovation and leadership

Essential Ingredients

- IT Governance
- Technology Transformation strategic planning
- Enterprise Architecture
- Partner Engagement
- Communications
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

We need principles

- What is our vision for IT?
- Enable the University’s core business – excellence in research and teaching
- Deliver a rich, engaged student and staff ICT experience
- Promote operational efficiency
- Ensure systems are robust and agile
- Ensure information and systems are secure
- Manage ICT as an investment

University IT Governance Model

University ICT Committee

University ICT Investment Committee

University ICT Architecture Committee

Subgroups

Subgroups
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Where to put the effort?

"User" Centric

- An operation that has the ability to quickly respond to almost any user's needs.
- An operation that provides reliable, secure, functional infrastructure and services
- An operation that provides products and services that push and enhance flexibility.

Feedback from all sources was clear
- Focus should be on services that are firstly operationally efficient and then "User"-centric

Operational Excellence

Innovation

Strategy Framework

- The key message from day one was one of consolidation
  - Concentrate on enhanced service delivery and infrastructure experience
  - Not to add a plethora of innovations
- Improve the efficiency of delivering effective services
  - Hence build capacity over time for leading-edge IT
- Three core enablers essential for this journey
  - Partner Engagement
  - Governance
  - Enterprise Architecture
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

The timeline shows phases of operational excellence (2009), core enablers to agile operations and services (2010-12), and technology becoming essential (2010-12) are key focus areas.

Operational Excellence
- Enhanced service delivery
- Enhanced infrastructure experience

Core Enablers to Agile Operations and Services
- Partner Engagement
- Governance
- Enterprise Architecture

Technology becomes a significant influence on:
- Research success
- Quality Learning and Teaching
- Student and staff experience
- University reputation

Engagement

“customers”
“TCO/ROI”
“CRMs”
“Prince2”

“Melbourne model”
“PGCW”
“AUQA”
Engagement

- "linux"
- "VOIP"
- "SLAs"
- "SOEs"
- "CEQs"
- "HDR completions"
- "ERA" "Bradley"

Engagement

- "Quotas"
- "Printing Policy"
- "Acceptable Use"
- "Charging"
- "FaceBook"
- "Tweets"
- "iTunes"
- "Free" "Beer"
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Engagement

- A take-away for Central Services
  - Productive Engagement cannot happen until you know **how** to engage
- Learn and talk the language of the "business"
  - Immersion into IT for research
  - Immersion into IT for L+T
  - Immersion into IT for students
  - Immersion into IT for University admin
- We have come a long way since 2009

Enterprise Architecture

- A discipline that considers and captures the University as a whole
  - structure, outputs, operations, technology, and the relationships tying these together.
  - Hard to see how you achieve alignment with business needs any other way
- Input to Governance
  - Growing reputation across Faculties and Divisions
- Increased focus on business drivers rather than on technology solutions
- University-wide consideration and decision making
- Change expressed in terms of business benefits understandable to the University community
- Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) adopted as our preferred Architectural direction
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Technology Transformation Strategic Plan 2010-12

- What is the plan for/about
  - Establish a framework within which proposed initiatives can be assessed
  - A partnership based approach to the identification and delivery of future services.
  - Initiatives and priorities determined as a product of the partnership engagement and Governance.

Starting Position

- Benefits and pitfalls of centralisation
  - Economies of scale
  - Robustness, core service provision, expertise etc
  - Removed IT specialists, empathy and expertise away from Schools
  - Goal seemed more important than the journey
  - Evolved into a functional, yet distanced utility service
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Partnership model

- Engagement with Faculties, Schools and Business Units
  - promotes and leverages innovation
  - enables staff in these Units to direct ICT investment towards the services most critical to their needs
- Utility service still needed!!
  - Don't rob one to pay the other!

Embrace it or perish!

- Technology becomes a significant influence, benefit and challenge on
  - Research success
  - Quality Learning and Teaching
  - Student and staff experience
  - University reputation
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

Technology Adoption

Research Impact
A journey in IT strategy at the University of Adelaide

So where are we now?

- Strategic plan is a not a static document
  - Service catalogue
  - three year enterprise-wide IT investment plan
  - a subsequent program of ICT investments and initiatives,
  - a program of service improvement initiatives within Technology Services,
  - a comprehensive review of ICT for research
- Functioning Governance
  - Quality academic and faculty administrative input
  - Safety net rather than mandatory
  - SOA adoption
  - Real cost savings
- Effective Enterprise Architecture
  - Growing understanding of the importance of "business architecture"
- Partner Engagement and Communication
  - Possibly our biggest area of improvement

In summary….

- What are the University’s IT principles?
  - What is it trying to achieve?
- What is the manifestation of the IT principles?
  - Architecture
- How is this going to be achieved?
  - Strategy
- Who makes these decisions and who has input to them?
  - Governance
- How can we deliver the “right” Architecture and Strategy?
  - Partner Engagement
- How do we align the IT service with these needs?
  - Enterprise Architecture

http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/