Changes in business models and faster-paced innovation and product lifecycles pose a big challenge to IT managers – who are already tasked with keeping operations running reliably. You have to anticipate the impact of changes taking shape ahead, and take decisions rapidly, backing your choices by solid fact. To do this, you need an overall perspective of how business and IT interact.

This is exactly where a toolkit for strategic management of the IT landscape can help, by building greater transparency into the current IT landscape and making explicit its contribution to the business success of the enterprise. The enterprise strategy and business requirements are cascaded into requirements for IT: an ongoing process that entails building a picture of the target architecture, designing implementation plans and managing the process for taking plans into action.

Right from the start, the toolkit must enable management of the enterprise from a helicopter viewpoint and accommodate every aspect of the enterprise architecture: business and IT structures, processes and organisation, as well as software support. Yet it also has to be introduced in achievable stages that deliver tangible success. Senior management, business departments and IT teams all have to be convinced by success. Only if its value is apparent will the concept be given the go-ahead for further investment.

So how do you arrive at a workable toolkit? How do you go about it, and what investment and effort can you expect to make? What is the payoff?

The relevant literature investigates a number of approaches. Yet information is patchy and lacking real-life application for many of the relevant aspects. Inadequate documentation and lack of standardisation both leave their mark, making it difficult for IT and business managers and their teams to navigate this challenging territory.

Motivated by the challenge of assembling a comprehensive, practicable toolkit for the strategic management of IT landscapes, I set to work on this book. It condenses the experience of many projects with customers, and insights from many hundreds of hours of discussion with experts from client companies, consultancies and academia. The book takes a holistic view of the IT landscape management process, above all giving specific guidelines on how to establish and how to roll out strategic IT landscape management in the enterprise and ensures it becomes established practice.
This book will help you embark successfully into strategic IT landscape management and evolve it effectively. The first step is what matters. There is rarely a second chance.

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