IAF Is Here to Stay!

IAF is here to stay! Even though I am very much in favor of open standards such as TOGAF and ArchiMate, I still say IAF is here to stay! No; the authors didn’t pay me off to say this, although I wouldn’t say no to a nice bottle of wine. However, I make this statement out of my own conviction. I’ll explain why in a moment, but let’s first start with some history.

When I got involved in the field of architecture in 1997, Capgemini was already working toward the creation of the Integrated Architecture Framework (IAF). Since then, the IAF has been evolving continuously. Fueled by daily experiences, discussions among architects, ample feedback from client engagements, the original framework has evolved into its current version.

In the past, Capgemini has been rather shy in communicating about the IAF. Rather than showing this diamond in the making to the outside world, they kept it quiet and continued polishing it. In my own past as a full-time Professor at the University of Nijmegen, I was involved in several architecture related research activities, such as the ArchiMate project. When I became aware of IAF’s existence, I immediately challenged Capgemini to more widely publish their IAF. Meanwhile my curiosity was mounting. To me, IAF provided a welcome, practice based, complementary view to the results of the ArchiMate research project. So, when I joined Capgemini at the start of 2008, I was more than happy to attend a course on IAF. This strengthened my conviction that it was time for Capgemini to finally produce a book on IAF. There was more than enough reason to be proud about IAF as a tried and tested architecture framework, and make it available to a wider audience. Therefore, early 2008 I started a lobby to produce an IAF book, and late 2008 we were finally able to give the go ahead to the team of authors to do the really hard work and produce the book. I am really grateful to the author team for their commitment in finishing this book. It shall be no secret that 2009 has been a difficult year for our industry. Despite commercial pressures, the authors spent numerous hours in their spare-time to continue working on this great book on architecture.
So how about open standards? Large parts of TOGAF 9’s content framework have already been based on IAF. Currently, The Open Group has two complementary standards for architecture: TOGAF, the method for doing architecture, and ArchiMate, the language for representing architectures. So is there a future for IAF amidst all of these standards? Well, in my opinion there certainly is. Standards evolve based on consensus. As a result, standards can only (and must) evolve slowly. At the same time, consultancy firms such as Capgemini will continue to gather their own experiences. This is where company specific frameworks such as the IAF can play a crucial role. They will allow for faster innovations, leading the direction in which future versions of the standards can evolve.

Therefore, I expect IAF in its next evolution step to become fully compliant to the TOGAF/ArchiMate tandem, while at the same time going beyond these standards based on the fast amount of ever growing experience embodied in the IAF. In the first decennium of this century the ‘I’ in IAF stood for integrated to signify the need to integrate different views and aspects when developing an architecture. In the next decennium I expect this first ‘I’ to stand for innovating, to signify the fact that the Innovating Architecture Framework will lead the way for future versions of the open standards. Therefore, I can say with conviction: IAF is here to stay!

I sincerely hope you enjoy reading this book, as much as I have enjoyed seeing the authors write it!

Nijmegen, Netherlands

Prof. Dr. H.A. (Erik) Proper

Preface

This book captures and communicates the wealth of architecture experience Capgemini has gathered in developing, deploying, and using IAF since its documentation in 1993. It intends to guide the reader through the corners and crevasses of IAF. We aim to help the reader understand why we have done the things we did to develop IAF specifically, and the IT architecture profession in the IT industry more in general. We hope we have achieved our objectives and readers are welcome to provide us with feedback. This is because we are sure we are not there yet. The architecture profession in the IT industry still needs a significant amount of time to mature. Just imagine how long it took architects in the building industry to come to the point where they are now.

Utrecht, The Netherlands

Jack van ’t Wout
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Objectives of the Book

This book has two main objectives. The first is to explain the background and mindset behind IAF. As IAF usage becomes more widespread over the globe, more and more people need to understand its background and mindset to fully benefit from it. The second objective is to capture the body of knowledge we have been assembling since 1993. It is not uncommon to see the same question pop up on newsgroups and forums several times throughout the years. This book not only intends to provide answers to the most common ones, but should also provide answers to all those questions regarding IAF you have had through time, but never dared to ask.

Intended Readers

We have written this book with the following readers in mind:

(Potential) Architects who want to thoroughly understand IAF so they can use it in their environment. This does not mean that one can read this book and benefit fully from IAF without additional training. Architecture is a trade one has to learn together with colleagues, in real life.

Others who want to understand architects that use IAF. IAF architects have one thing in common. They apply IAF in their work. This means they use specific terminology, especially amongst themselves. People who want to know more about IAF’s terminology and mindset are also invited to read at least a few parts of this book (e.g. Chap. 2 or Chap. 4).

Engineers who work with IAF deliverables. Engineers are working together with architects to create effective solutions that meet certain business objectives. Thus they might be interested in getting a better understanding of the thinking behind these IAF deliverables. We recommend taking a look at the physical artifacts & views (covered in Chap. 3) and IAF’s interplay with solution development (covered in Chap. 4).

Participants of the Capgemini’s Architecture Learning Program. Together with the training experience and this book, architects should not only be able to get up to speed even quicker but also better prepared than in the past. They will have a document that they can fall back on when they enter an area of IAF they have not been in a while. Especially Chap. 3 helps to get a better understanding of IAF’s artifacts and views.

Experienced IAF architects. Of course experience IAF architects interested in learning more about the history of IAF or in specific IAF artifacts and their usage are invited to use the book as an extended glossary.
Structure of the Book

Throughout this book ‘we’ stands for ‘we, as IAF architects’ and thus might not be limited to just the authors – we hope we captured the thoughts and opinions of many people who use IAF in their daily work. That’s why the book was extensively reviewed with a focus on those ideas that make IAF what it is now.

Chapter 1: *IAF background, value and strategy* explains why IAF was initially developed, what it has delivered, its added value, and how Capgemini intends to go on with the framework.

Chapter 2: *IAF’s architecture* provides insight into the mindset and mechanisms that are part of IAF.

Chapter 3: IAF’s *aspect areas explained* gives an overview of the most common architecture artifacts and views of IAF and shows what the content of the main elements of the framework are.

Chapter 4: *IAF in perspective with other frameworks and methods* elaborates on the different ways IAF can be used in projects, in combination with other tools, methods and frameworks.

Chapter 5: *Applying IAF and using its outcomes* shows the best ways IAF can be used to professionalize the architecture function in an organization.

Chapter 6: *Real life case studies* exemplifies the use of IAF through the description of a number of real life case studies.

Chapter 7: *The making of IAF* explains the history of IAF.

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