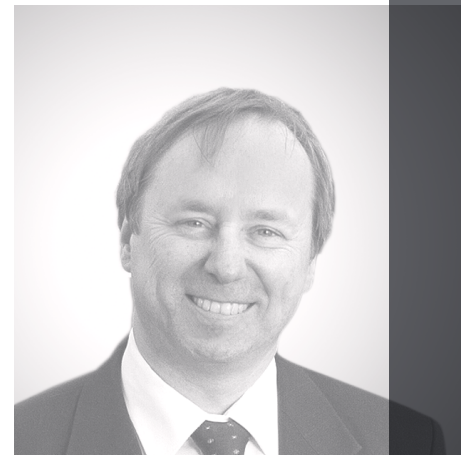


WHAT'S NEXT? INFORMATION SYSTEM MODELLING AND ARCHITECTURE



PHILIPPE
CHAUFFOUREAUX
*Chief Information
Architect*

Philippe Chauffoureaux compares his role of Chief Information Architect with the role of his equivalent in town planning: whereas in the medieval town some houses were randomly built and eventually formed a street and then a town, nowadays you need careful planning and a global overview in order to not create chaos. The same applies to IT services and their growing complexity. Philippe Chauffoureaux draws, so to say, a city map of IT systems with their technical as well as their operational dimensions in mind. This is particularly crucial in a period of transition when legacy systems and new items have to be integrated, new management methods like Agile have to be implemented, the Virtual Centre Tranche 2 (VCT2) developed and best practices in creating solutions established.

SKYGUIDE In which way are you participating in VCT2, and how many of your staff are directly involved in its development?

PHILIPPE CHAUFFOUREAUX Two of my people are involved, and our task is to provide basic landscape information to achieve a smooth transition. The system architecture efforts have been pursued in support of the infrastructure and technical issues encountered by the VCT2 programme. However, this bottom-up approach has shown its limits, and it will be time to address the architecture discipline with a more canonical top-down approach. This is essentially needed in order to ensure a proper and coherent assembly of the numerous piecemeal design decisions taken across the whole company and to align them with the VC target architecture.

How does this approach fit into the business architecture prevalent in skyguide?

PC To realize this classical top-down approach implies naturally to broaden the scope of the relevant technical services and to align this effort with the business architecture dimensions.

Thankfully, the new business architect has been efficiently supporting us with his team in this new challenge and is present to ensure a proper alignment of the modelling of the technical services on the business architecture.

Does this top-down approach not come very late or even too late in the process of designing skyguide's system architecture?

PC Of course, one could find this top-down approach an evidence and to come late in the process after having explored for a while a bottom-up path. This is true but not totally strange as it has been the way to gain maturity to start the modelling in the classical way since our business domain is scarce of strong best practices and references in this area. We were especially interested to stay pragmatic, adaptable and realistic in our modelling approach to ensure support and acceptance of the field actors when harvesting the fruits from such an initiative.

Could you please explain in which way Information Architecture is influencing the evolution of existing models and the development of new ones?

PC We have especially fought against the two extreme models: to copy what is existing today or to start from a blank sheet. The narrow path that we follow is to be inspired by the current set-up while openly questioning the coherence of the current model to create useful evolutions of it with the Virtual Centre, the System Wide Information Management (SWIM) concept and a Service-Oriented Architecture in mind. Concretely, the current efforts are focused on establishing complete maps of our business capabilities and of the IT application landscape, then to reconcile them in a unified top-down model in 2018. Through these efforts, in intense cooperation with our colleagues from the business architecture domain, we are building the foundations of the skyguide Enterprise Architecture framework. ■