

How to Optimize Your Technology Infrastructure

Host: Jen Knecht, IBM

Speaker: K.C. Goodman, Distinguished Engineer, CTO, Strategy & Engineering

Jen:

Welcome to the IBM podcast series focused on how to optimize your technology infrastructure. I'm Jen Knecht from IBM. Through this series we'll cover topics that have lower IT complexity and improved operating efficiency along with tips and advice on using technology and services to help you and your company succeed.

Today, I'm joined by K.C. Goodman, Chief Technology Officer for IBM's IT Strategy Services. K.C. will speak with us today about IBM's framework for tuning and optimizing an organization's infrastructure to better align with business objectives.

K.C., what's the IT Operating Environment or ITOE?

K.C.:

The ITOE is IBM's reference model for describing a recommended set of technology capabilities and how they interact with each other through a set of open, standards-based interfaces in a services oriented architecture style. It's important to remember that this is not a product or a platform. It's basically a blueprint that can be used to guide the development of an enterprise IT architecture that simplifies and accelerates the implementation of IT-enabled business services that meet the needs of the business.

ITOE can provide a framework for integration, communication, and coordination of technical strategies and architectures within our clients' IT organizations, among their application and infrastructure development and operations teams. It's helpful to also remember that ITOE is actually an evolution of prior architecture and technology frameworks from IBM that many clients have used successfully over the years to guide their IT development. In fact, that's how we used it inside IBM, to promote effective communication and coordination across all of our products and services teams so that our infrastructure solutions can work together.

Jen:

So how does enterprise architecture help our client? Can you talk about a specific example of how ITOE has helped an IBM client?

K.C.:

Sure, as you may know, the challenges of achieving business success in a flattened global economy require a high level of innovation and agility, and this in turn places demands on our IT organizations to be very flexible and responsive in meeting the needs of the business while still reducing costs. Our experience at IBM suggests that implementation of a well architected modular or componentized IT environment that's comprised of

standardized, reusable building blocks with open standards-based interfaces can enable a faster implementation of IT solutions. The ITOE framework provides this blueprint for these types of solution building blocks and these, in turn, can be easily and quickly assembled or adapted to provide a flexible solution, so that IT can become an enabler rather than an inhibitor to business agility.

For example, we were helping a rapidly growing Healthcare Organization to transform their IT infrastructure to be more responsive and efficient while providing a higher quality of service to its customers. This project was struggling somewhat, until the Architecture Team developed an architecture framework and roadmap based on the ITOE. This architecture and roadmap enabled the team to break down a complex design and integration into modular capabilities and more manageable implementation phases. It also provided the clarity and simplicity for integrating process and organization changes with the technology so they could deliver an agreed upon portfolio of IT services. Finally, it simplified the integration of virtualization and automation technologies to significantly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the IT infrastructure and operations.

Jen:

Is this only suitable for large organizations with complex infrastructures?

K.C.;

Frankly, the need for an architected IT infrastructure may be greater with scale and complexity, but organizations of all sizes need to deploy fast and flexible IT capabilities. While a smaller IT organization may not have an architecture team or structured governance mechanisms, they can still benefit from the key principles by insisting that IT solutions, whether developed in-house or from an IT vendor, conform to open industry frameworks and standards.

Jen:

You talk about how this is services oriented. Is this suitable for clients who have not necessarily implemented SOA enabled applications?

K.C.;

Well, the ITOE describes a recommended set of technical capabilities and how they interact with each other using standardized services interfaces. We describe this as a services oriented architecture style. However, using a framework like ITOE to implement an architected set of reusable IT solution building blocks does not require that you replace any of your applications with SOA enabled applications, although that would help. You can still benefit from this approach at the infrastructure layer by building a more flexible and efficient foundation for deploying IT enabled business services.

Jen:

Thanks, K.C. So, where can our listeners go for more information?

K.C.;

As always, you can reach out to your IBM representative or you'll find some useful White Papers and links on our website at [ibm.com/ITSolutions/enterprise architecture](http://ibm.com/ITSolutions/enterprise%20architecture). Please note that there are no spaces between "IT" and "solutions" or "enterprise" and "architecture" when you're typing out the URL.

Thanks for your time and attention.

Jen:

K.C., thanks for your time and this concludes our Podcast.