



AXA UK. SOA Approach & roadmap.

Abstract

Glue Reply was engaged by AXA UK in April 2009 to support the definition of an SOA approach and roadmap. AXA UK wished to move to an SOA model in an incremental, iterative manner and therefore required from Glue Reply an incremental phased approach as they progressed towards SOA. As part of the deliverables of the whole project, AXA UK required the identification and definition of the ESB software, an architecture to support integration with the retained legacy, governance and monitoring of the quality of the implementation and methodology-support. Glue Reply were engaged in the early stage of the project to provide an assessment of SOA maturity and a roadmap for achieving the required maturity.

Key requirements

- Assess AXA UK SOA readiness and maturity
- Support the selection process for the relevant ESB technology
- Deliver an SOA Roadmap and Strategy based on the long term vision

The engagement

In order to meet AXA UK's requirement that the focus be on solving the problem for the business first, and delivering an architectural approach second, Glue Reply approached the engagement sequentially. The findings from the SOA Readiness Assessment were critical to the creation of the SOA Roadmap and therefore needed to be defined, agreed and documented early on within the engagement.

The stages for the engagement were as follows:

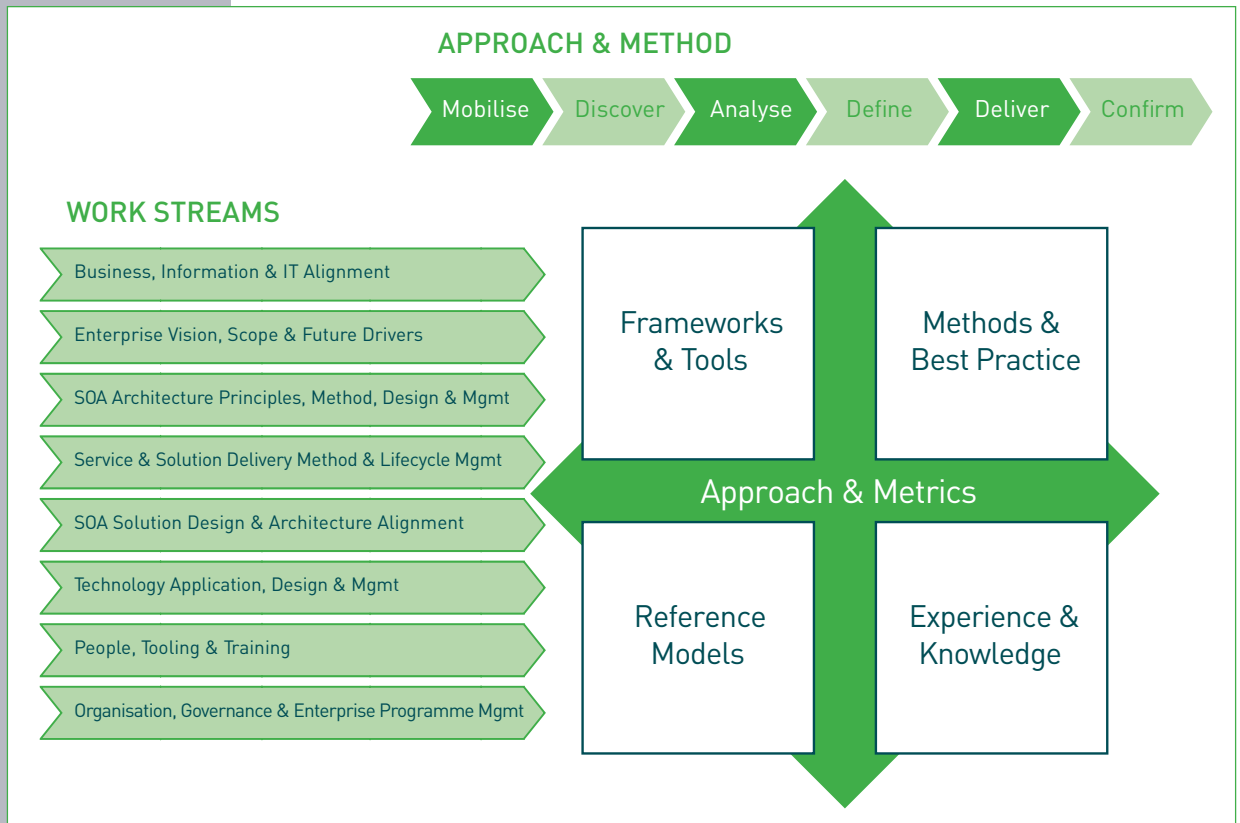
STAGE 1: SOA READINESS ASSESSMENT WORK STREAMS

- Business case
- Business information and IT alignment
- Vision, scope and future drivers
- Assessment of readiness
- Organisation, governance and enterprise programme management
- People, tooling and training
- Gap analysis

STAGE 2: SOA ROADMAP WORK STREAMS

- Review of 'as-is' and identification of target 'to-be' architecture
- Existing landscape and 'to-be' architecture
- Technology application, design and management
- Technology selection
- Preferred vendors, best of breed solutions
- Analysis of key risks, issues, constraints
- Required management focus, resource requirements
- Incremental transition plan

We adjusted the plan to meet a tight deadline for the selection process and executed a rapid but thorough process to support AXA UK in identifying a shortlist of technologies that met their strategic business requirements.



ASSESSMENT – APPROACH & FRAMEWORK. Glue Reply utilised its existing SOA Assessment and Roadmap frameworks to accelerate the delivery of the stages, engaging with all the required stakeholders in AXA UK to gather the information to formulate the level of maturity and readiness of AXA UK to engage in SOA. These frameworks ensure that you are tackling all the relevant work streams and targeting the right audiences for the required information. Glue Reply has developed these frameworks to cover SOA Readiness Assessment, Roadmap and Strategy and Technology Selection. These frameworks are also available for Enterprise Architecture assessments. The frameworks provide templates that are adapted to meet AXA’s specific needs. These templates accelerate the delivery from the work streams by removing the need to start from scratch on each deliverable.

The assessment processes involved interviewing AXA UK personnel across the company spectrum (company strategists, business, IT management, architecture, developers and operations) in order to gain a very comprehensive view of the organisation’s maturity in the relevant areas. Glue Reply maintained a very collaborative approach with AXA UK at all times in order to achieve their vision of pragmatism, durability and an incremental programme to achieve the required end result.

Deliverables

The outputs included an SOA Maturity Assessment Report covering the following dimensions:

DIMENSIONS COVERED FROM THE MATURITY ASSEMENT REPORT

STRATEGY	SOLUTION
1. Strategy & Policy	14. Enterprise Architecture
2. Strategy Alignment	15. Process Architecture
3. SOA Planning Horizon	16. Technical Architecture
4. Business Change Management	17. SOA Method & Approach
PROGRAMME	18. Ownership & Control
5. Programme Portfolio Management	19. Requirements
6. Asset Portfolio Management	20. Solution Architecture
7. Funding & Financial Management	21. Solution Design
8. Governance & Quality Assurance	22. Data Distribution Design
9. Business Involvement and Commitment	23. Development
10. Organisation & Programme Structure	24. Testing
11. Organisation Culture	25. Deployment
12. Sourcing Approach	26. Support
13. Programme & Project Control	27. Closure & Harvesting

Each dimension was then assessed and its maturity documented on a maturity chart, which were used as part of the management presentations at the conclusion of the exercise. An SOA Roadmap Report was also delivered, which took the results from the maturity dimensions analysis, grouped and plotted and prioritised them onto the planned delivery stages.

Customer benefits

The following benefits were achieved:

- The outputs from the engagement provided AXA UK with a succinct list of recommendations on each dimension, and the actions that needed to be taken in order to achieve those recommendations. These represented a summary of the more detailed analysis and findings, and therefore gave AXA UK the opportunity to assess their position and prioritise an action plan.
- The method of engagement, a process of interviews and meetings, as well as establishing the outputs, provided a forum for discussion, collaboration and sponsorship of the initiative by bringing together the disparate parties to focus on achieving the vision and strategy.
- AXA UK was able to quickly establish the gaps in their organisational infrastructure, such as an overarching architectural governance committee and put in place actions to address these.

Glue Reply is UK's leading consulting services organisation focused exclusively on optimising IT/Business alignment and minimising the cost of business and IT technology change. Our core proposition is to help organisations maximise the value from their change and technology investments by helping them define, design, implement and resource best practice:

- Enterprise architecture and business/technology change management processes, roadmaps and competencies;
- Business design and process management initiatives;
- SOA, integration and data management platforms.

For further information: www.gluereply.eu

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