

An Artifact-Based Framework for Business-IT Misalignment Symptom Detection (Extended Abstract)

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Abstract: Enterprise architecture (EA)-based approaches give an in-depth analytic potential for alignment and misalignment assessment. The ability to incorporate these analytic potentials is an ongoing concern in the state-of-the-art strategic alignment literature. This paper proposes a framework for EA artifact-based misalignment symptom detection. The framework aims to perform a systematic, EA-based analysis of mismatches between the business and IT dimensions of the traditional Strategic Alignment Model (SAM). By operating the framework, containing EA-artifacts and suitable EA analysis types are connected to typical misalignment symptoms along the traditional alignment perspectives. The operation of the framework is illustrated with a case study about a fleet management project at a road management authority. The work summarized in this extended abstract has been published in Dóra Óri: *An Artifact-Based Framework for Business-IT Misalignment Symptom Detection*. The Practice of Enterprise Modeling. Lecture Notes in Business Information Processing, Vol 267. Springer, Cham, 2016.

Keywords: Strategic Alignment Perspectives, Misalignment Symptoms, EA Artifacts, Enterprise Architecture Analysis.

1 Introduction

There are several traditional alignment studies on evaluating alignment performance. On the contrary, misalignment issues are insufficiently emphasized in the alignment literature. Since organizations operate in the state of misalignment most of the times, considerable attention should be paid to the concept of misalignment. Misalignment assessment techniques help to understand the nature and the constraints of alignment. Furthermore, after assessing the state of misalignment, more precise re-alignment initiatives can be recommended. There have been many attempts to investigate reciprocal contributions between strategic (mis)alignment assessment and EA analysis [e.g. PS05]. Recently, there has been an increased interest in EA-based alignment assessment. The aim of the paper is to contribute to the above mentioned concerns by introducing a framework that addresses these issues. The proposed framework performs misalignment analysis by taking a symptom-based approach. It uses an EA-based technique to detect the typical symptoms of misalignment in an organization. The contribution of the paper is that it connects typical misalignment symptoms with relevant EA artifacts and suitable EA analysis types along the traditional alignment perspectives [HV93].

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2 An Artifact-Based Framework for Business-IT Misalignment Symptom Detection

This section provides a brief overview on the components and the construction of the proposed framework. It uses an alignment perspective-driven approach. Four traditional alignment perspectives (P. §§) are analysed according to the following steps: Firstly, alignment perspectives are decomposed into corresponding perspective components, a.k.a. alignment matches (C.§§). Secondly, the most typical misalignment symptoms are connected to the perspective components – using the misalignment symptom catalogue (S.§§) as reference. Thirdly, relevant containing artifacts are attached to the misalignment symptoms in question. The artifact catalogue (AF.§§) is used as reference. Finally, suitable EA analysis types are collected to the containing artifacts, using the EA analysis catalogue (A.§§) as reference. To demonstrate the applicability of the proposed framework, as well as to better understand how the proposed framework works in practice, a case study has been conducted. The case study clarified the operation of the framework by applying it in the context of a real EA model structure. The empirical investigation focused on a road management authority. The study was carried out in fragment of the road management authority’s EA model structure. It described a fleet management initiative, showing the relevant EA models and artifacts to be modified during the progression of the project.

3 Conclusion and Future Work

In this paper a new way of misalignment symptom detection have been presented, which is able to reveal typical symptoms along the four traditional alignment perspectives by assessing the underlying EA models. The proposed framework has the potential to extend our understanding on assessing the state of misalignment in a complex EA model structure. It also allowed us to identify and detect malfunctioning procedures along alignment perspectives. Topics reserved for further examinations include 1) the automatization of EA analysis types and 2) decoupling the framework from built-in EA tool features.

References

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