Architecture = Building Bridges

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1 Introduction

The core function of system architecture is to build bridges between the many different kinds of specialists and stakeholders. This intermezzo explains the metaphor.

2 Archipelago, the kingdom of islands

The world of product development consists of many disjunct isles of know how, purposes ideas, technologies etcetera. Most people are happy to stay on their own island, unaware of the existence of other islands.

Most engineers have never seen a customer, the operational project pressure of today takes all the available time and more, inhibiting thinking in more tactical



Figure 1: Archipelago, isolated islands connected by the bridges built by the architect

terms about the future. Specialists use thier jargon to communicate, unable to understand the vernicular of other disciplines.

The **Architecture Process** is **building bridges** between all these isles. Figure 1 shows part of the Archipelago and the bridges being build by the architect.

3 Process Maps

The business can be simplified to 4 processes, as shown in figure 2.

System Architecture bridges the Policy and Planning Process ("Financial Management") and the Product Creation Process ("Tomorrow's Cashflow Generation").

This is detailed one step further in figure 3 which clearly shows the System Architecture Process as bridge between Policy and Planning and Product Creation, while it bridges within the Product Creation Process many more subprocesses.

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Figure 2: Decomposition of the business in 4 main processes, characterized by their financial meaning

References

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Figure 3: More detailed map of the System Architecture Process and its neighbourhood