



**Ardoq**

WHITEPAPER

# How to Unlock the Full Value of Enterprise Architecture

With Effective Governance and Engagement

# Contents

**p. 3 - 4**

---

**Introduction:  
Who knows the  
most about your  
organization?**

**p. 5 - 6**

---

**Balancing Control  
and Agility**

**p. 7 - 10**

---

**Approach 1:  
Centralized Command  
and Control  
(Traditional EA)**

**p. 11 - 13**

---

**Approach 2:  
The Wiki Approach**

**p. 14 - 18**

---

**Approach 3:  
Distributed  
Governance**

**p. 19 - 23**

---

**How Ardoq Supports  
Your Distributed  
Governance**

**p. 24**

---

**Conclusion**

# “Who knows the most about our organization?”

---

If you asked this question among everyone you worked with, you would probably be met with head scratching and a lot of (understandable but wild) guesses:  
The CIO? The CFO? The Enterprise Architects?  
*The consultants?*

Like many frustrating riddles, the answer is both obvious and rarely correctly guessed.  
Who knows the most about your organization?

**Everybody.**

Obvious when you think about it, right? Each part of your organization is staffed by domain experts. It's why they (and you!) are there in the first place. But if no one person can be the single, central, source of truth, how can ever-growing (often complex and international) organizations understand and utilize their full cross-org knowledge?

**This whitepaper is about enabling the value of including people and their roles in the enterprise architecture. We'll guide you through the three main approaches to harnessing effective governance by balancing control and agility.**



# Harnessing the Knowledge in Your Organization

---

**In the past couple of decades, organizations have progressively moved away from centralized command-and-control hierarchic structures that assume knowledge - and authority - needs to be centralized to be effective.**

**More and more, we see organizations embracing cross-functional and virtual teams, as well as Agile development,** moving from centralized strategy and planning to innovation and co-creation.

It's more than just the democratization of technology that has driven this shift. In fast-evolving digital markets, agility is becoming a decisive source of competitive advantage.

By adding people to the architecture you enable them to participate in the process of keeping information up-to-date and verifying design decisions in the ever-changing evolution of the business.

Organizational agility demands that communication lines are short, that local teams are empowered with the autonomy to respond to local conditions—the exact opposite of large, centralized governance forums and committees **that is a bottleneck to agility**



# Balancing Control and Agility

---

**Some will claim that agile development needs no governance and that order will spontaneously emerge.**

But for enterprise architects and decision-makers looking at a tangled mess of integrations or convoluted business processes, or multiple conflicting contracts with different vendors and unnecessarily high costs, **it's clear that Agility, while a decisive advantage, isn't a perfect, holy grail.**

In fact, remove all controls and, in the words of William Butler Yeats:

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world*

So, in truth, we need control. And for enterprise architects charged with facilitating a level of cross-functional and strategic alignment across multiple change initiatives, striking the right balance between leaden bureaucracy on the one hand and outright anarchy on the other is a difficult balance to strike.

Too much control and you kill competitiveness and innovation; too little, and over time the result is much the same as the organization becomes progressively more and more complex and harder and harder to change.

**We see that enterprise architecture's models are how businesses can adequately balance control and agility.**

# You Need a Map and That Map Needs Governance

**The first rule of governance is that you can't control what you can't describe. Those enterprise architecture models are more than just pesky documentation - they are the first step in establishing control.**

For example, how can you control duplication in your application estate if you don't know what applications you already have?

Or how can you control the risk of obsolete or vulnerable technologies without a list of the technologies you use?



Models are the foundation on which control is built. But building up those models itself presents a governance challenge.

Specifically, **how do you govern changes to models to ensure they're as useful as possible?**

Open your repository up to uncontrolled updates, and you risk poor data quality. Lock it down tight under a rigorous change control process, and people won't update it at all - or will find another way (generally Excel or Confluence!).

So in fact Enterprise Architects are faced with the governance challenge on two closely related fronts:

- **They need to govern data changes** and updates to their models which represent the shared understanding of the current state or As-Is.
- **They need to govern project changes** and updates to the organization's processes, systems and information which represent the future state or To-Be.

In both cases there are three main approaches to governing change:

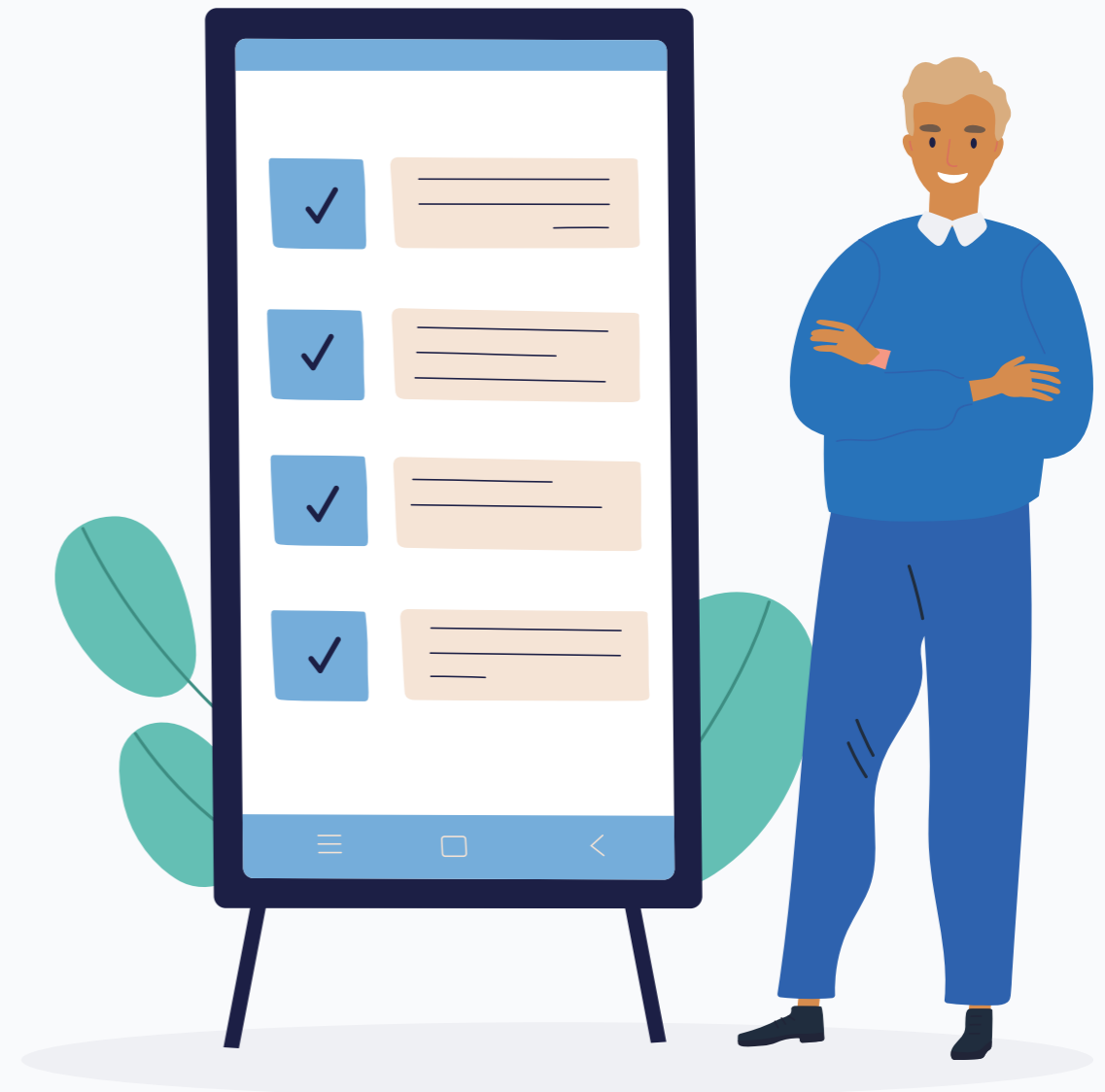
## APPROACH 1

# Centralized Command and Control (Traditional EA)

**Centralized command and control is the preferred method for traditional organizations with a mature EA practice. This approach to engagement and governance favors control and accuracy over speed and trust.**

Centralized command and control is the preferred method for traditional organizations with a mature EA practice. This approach to engagement and governance favors control and accuracy over speed and trust.

As the name suggests, this approach can be summarized as having a centralized control committee of architects or administrators which manage the collection, review and approval process.



**For change governance or project review** this usually manifests itself as an architecture or design review board which meets periodically to review change proposals and approve or reject them.

Such boards are typically large, made up of representatives from across IT and business teams each of whom need to assess each change to see if it impacts their domain. Such a committee structure can be thorough but this can come at the cost of being slow-moving or bureaucratic.

**The same approach is often replicated in data governance**, with a small core team of architects responsible for collecting, reviewing and approving all data updates to the shared models.

The fundamental assumption is that these knowledge workers have the understanding, responsibility, and mandate to ensure that only correct data makes it into the repository of information.

This process is often regarded as the most secure and accurate approach but is now showing to be a legacy assumption that has not kept pace with the modernization of all other processes within a modern organization.





When it comes to engagement, our research has shown that the more centralized the governance workflow is, the lower the level of engagement across the organization. Due to this approach's traditionally manual and bottleneck nature, data collection, validation, and maintenance are often left to a select group of individuals on a sporadic basis.

Also, this approach is often accompanied by overwhelming numbers of required inputs as architects are scrambling for all the information they can grasp when they finally engage an expert. The unfortunate outcome is that **with long lists of required inputs, lengthy surveys or spreadsheets, and manual interviews, contributions are low, and people build a general dislike for collaboration with the EA team.**

If an organization has the right culture around documentation, willingness to collaborate, and higher than normal regulatory requirements, centralized command and control approaches can work and may even be the most effective for that organization's needs.



This approach could work for:  
**Highly regulated and security-minded organizations.**

## Pros:

- + Clear accountability
- + Clear mandates
- + Ability to strictly enforce policies and principles
- + Full control of what data you manage to collect

## Cons:

- Slow
- The heavy reliance on manual contributions from few knowledge workers limits the scope and granularity of your architecture
- High likelihood of unknown unknowns
- Low accuracy in fast-changing environments
- Not fitting the needs of progressive or agile organizations
- Limits engagement, which in turn limits the value realization of EA
- Limits innovation as time and efforts for approval processes inhibits a culture of iterative trial and error

## APPROACH 2

# “Community” Governance

---

At the other end of the scale we see organizations trading off heavyweight governance structures (like the ones in Approach 1) in favour of something less rigid and more collaborative.

**For change governance**, project conflicts may be resolved by having forums where people can share project updates and get together to resolve issues as and when they arise.

While this sounds very appealing and fair, this model can be open to abuse from those who shout loudest (or who just turn up to the meeting!) often winning the day, regardless of whether it's the right strategic priority.

It also suffers from the problem that you need a lot of people to be engaged all of the time to intercept the changes that will impact them, and in the lack of a formal framework, this seldom happens effectively.



**In the data governance domain**, the wiki approach or “controlled chaos” is an approach to engagement and governance where the hypothesis is that the more contributors and reviewers you have, the more likely you are to have correct and up-to-date data. This approach seeks to replicate the success of sites like Wikipedia but on a much smaller scale.

But this “move fast and break things” approach needs a highly active and engaged organization. Without a lot of eyes on the data, you won’t benefit from group governance. Secondly, your organization’s culture needs to value ownership and accountability; otherwise, you will never benefit from informed contributors but instead have sporadic accuracy.

Finally, you need to have the tooling to engage and control. Your tooling needs the availability and ease of use that matches common cloud office solutions and a set of powerful features uncommon in these tools to provide you the ability to identify potential issues in data quality, accuracy, and stagnation.

We have seen this approach work well with **smaller organizations that have a strong culture for collaboration and a shared understanding of the need and importance of situational awareness in the as-is**. These organizations typically do not have well-established EA functions but instead have a culture of democratized architectural decisions with a distributed team of knowledgeable professionals acting as advisors on agile teams.



This approach could work for:

**Less mature and more progressive organizations prefer this approach as it favors engagement of governance, which in turn favors speed over accuracy.**

## Pros:

- + The quantity could, theoretically increase the quality
- + Low barriers to contribution
- + High speed
- + Matches well with distributed agile teams
- + Given appropriate tooling, manageable after the fact by admin teams

## Cons:

- Near 100% trust required
- Decisions could be made based on the loudest voice, not the best ideas
- Perceived chaos can actually lower engagement
- Intimidating to roll out if the company culture does not match

## Is There a Better Way?

**The answer might lie in re-framing how we think of governance: Not as a problem of authority - too much or too little - but of coordination.**

The purpose of those significant and unwieldy committees is exactly to centralize knowledge, to ensure that every aspect of a change or decision is analyzed and understood.

Yet, for any decision, most people in that room do not have the expertise to contribute, while those that do often rely on the advice of people outside the room for their input.

**What if, for any decision, you could involve all interested stakeholders - but only those with a direct relationship with it?**

In that case, **those people don't need to sit in the same room, the same team, or even the same country.** Instead of centralized governance forums, we have an endless series of point-in-time virtual teams formed around any decision based on its unique profile.

So, we're talking about a set of point-in-time, cross-function communities based around the modeling of impacted elements in your architecture and created on a just-in-time basis? For the technically-minded readers among you, that may start to sound a little bit familiar.

In fact, it sounds quite like a graph.



## APPROACH 3

# Distributed Governance

---

**Distributed governance is about democratizing the process of building a trustworthy enterprise architecture. No, we don't mean that everybody gets a vote on whether a change should be made.**

**What if instead of having a centralized governance forum, your governance body was a network of dozens - perhaps hundreds - of experts, each with their own area of expertise and distributed throughout your entire organization?**

For example, instead of having a Security forum to approve all changes, you could have one person who specializes in encryption, another who is an expert in authentication, a third who majors on network protection.

This forum of experts doesn't have to be in the same meeting, department, or even country, as long as all changes touching those domains are routed to them.





This approach is different from the command and control model in that it recognises that **authority sits with expertise, not with a central authority**; but it's also different from the community model in that authority is explicitly conferred on individuals, not simply a polling of opinion from the community.

Distributed governance is an engagement methodology that integrates the EA function into the entire organization. It forces the traditionally isolated EA team to work with experts, identify their expertise, empower them to take ownership, and give them the tools to contribute and understand how they are part of a larger ecosystem.

Side effects to this approach are the growing awareness of the value of architecture in managing change as well as an improved understanding of the impact of change. We believe that you need to have the data of how they are connected to the architecture for you to properly distribute to the experts.

**If you do this with Ardoq and model these experts in the graph, you are providing the foundation for collaboration and enriching your architecture to include people.** This type of insight can improve everything from impact analysis, planning, execution to crisis response. Imagine if the same data you collected in order to distribute responsibility was also usable for routing instant notifications

to business owners of outages that impact them. Or notify compliance experts of new integrations handling personal data. With a data-driven approach to distributed engagement and governance, you have the tools to take your ea capabilities to the next level and truly meet a modern agile organization's needs.



This approach could work for:

**Mature and progressive teams who want to strengthen a culture of ownership and accountability through data-driven tooling.**

## Pros:

- + The real experts are charged with approvals
- + Distributed workflows remove bottles necks without losing control
- + It leads to higher and continuous engagement with the architecture process from data collection to solution design to execution
- + Transparency and distributed responsibility improves decisions made on the front lines
- + Matches well with agile teams

## Cons:

- You will need to build buy-in and support as your scope grows
- It depends on your culture and clear mandates
- Requires tooling that matches unique stakeholder requirements in UX and functionality

# It's a Journey and the Right Tools Will Take You Further

---

**We see that the future is in distributed governance but recognize that most organizations currently fit better into a hybrid of approaches as their EA function and capabilities mature.**

Typically we see teams falling into one of the first two options first. Then as they begin to see the potential in a data-driven and collaborative approach to change management, they slowly roll out option three with the teams that have the culture and willingness to take ownership.

With Ardoq's real-time collaboration, ease of use, and data-driven analysis, you will have the tools you need to accompany you on this journey, regardless of how you choose to engage your colleagues, not just today but as your organization grows and matures.



## How Ardoq Supports Distributed Governance

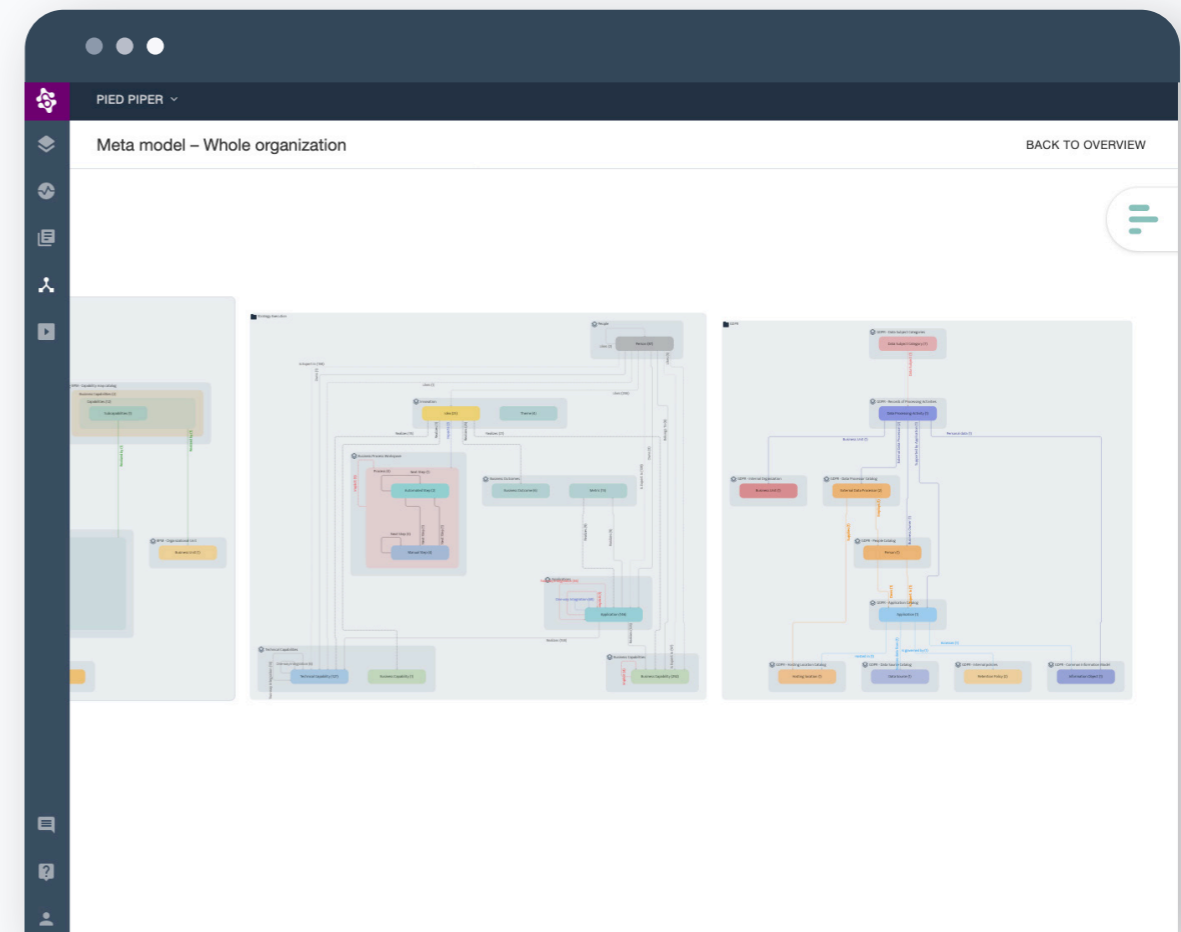
To make distributed governance work, you're going to need a few things:

## Model People with Ardoq's flexible metamodel

Firstly, you need a list of people and their domains of expertise, whether it's Machine Learning or Brand Management. **By including people in your architecture you will have the data necessary to leverage the most powerful insights.**

We understand that getting this data can be tricky, which is why Ardoq comes with out-of-the-box integrations like Azure Active Directory, an open REST-api, and templates for excel imports.

Once the data is in Ardoq, you can begin to collect the organization's expertise, areas of ownership, and cross-functional dependencies. This may be done stepwise in collaboration with change projects or continuously through the use of tailored surveys.



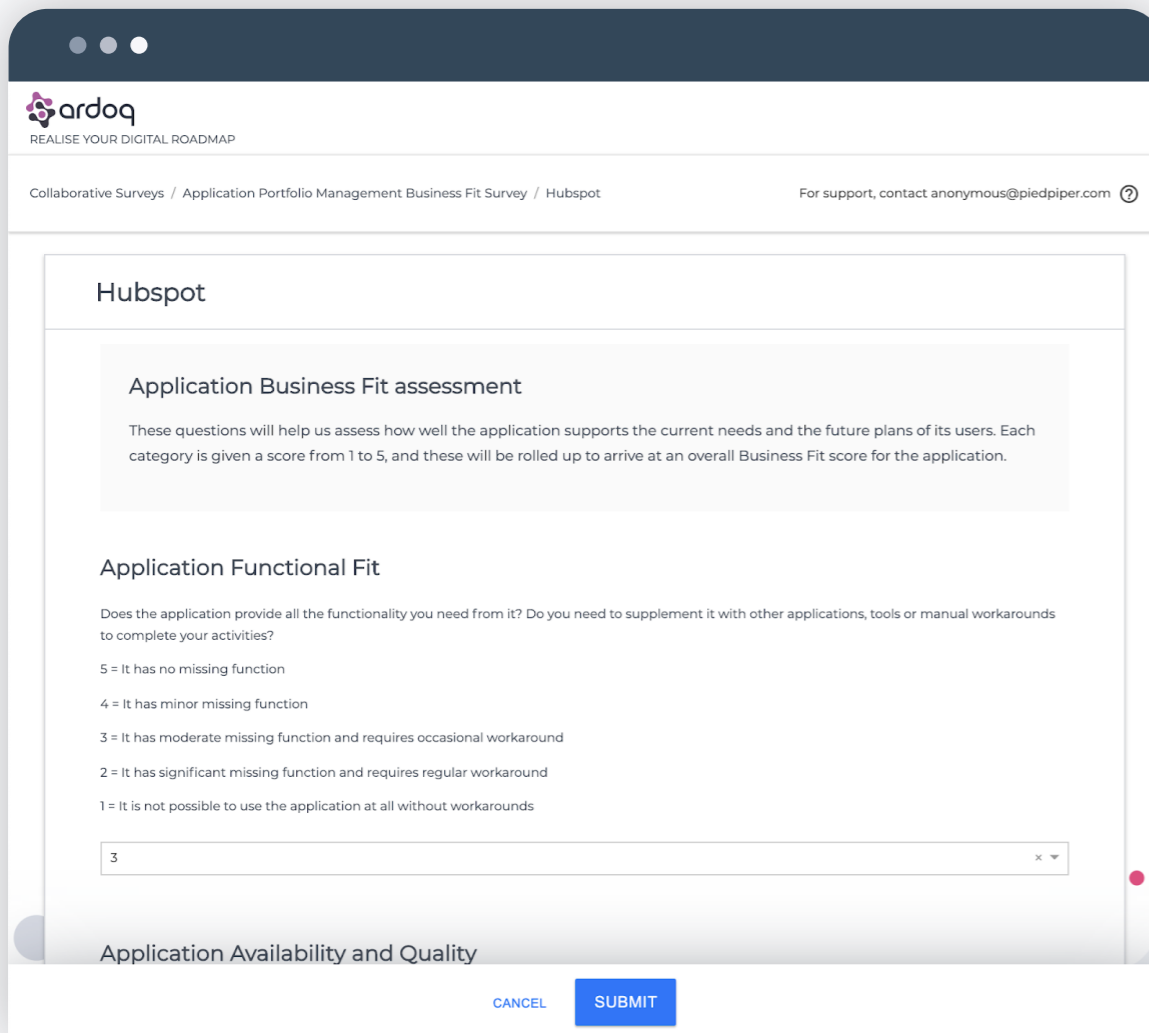
## Ardoq Surveys

Ardoq's Surveys are the scalable solution to collecting manual data. Replacing slow processes like interviews, tailored surveys can be sent to domain experts automatically on a scheduled or one-off basis.

**The simplified user experience improves the data quality and empowers experts far outside the IT organization to contribute with necessary data from cost information, areas of responsibility, and expertise, or even capture the dependencies between business and IT.**

Surveys enable you to map applications, business processes, vendor contracts, cloud services, and more to your capability models so you can create the business context for each set of changes.

Lastly, you can detect where changes are happening and notify those experts so they can review and approve (or reject) changes on a continuous basis, rather than waiting for the monthly governance forum.



Hubspot

Application Business Fit assessment

These questions will help us assess how well the application supports the current needs and the future plans of its users. Each category is given a score from 1 to 5, and these will be rolled up to arrive at an overall Business Fit score for the application.

Application Functional Fit

Does the application provide all the functionality you need from it? Do you need to supplement it with other applications, tools or manual workarounds to complete your activities?

5 = It has no missing function

4 = It has minor missing function

3 = It has moderate missing function and requires occasional workaround

2 = It has significant missing function and requires regular workaround

1 = It is not possible to use the application at all without workarounds

3

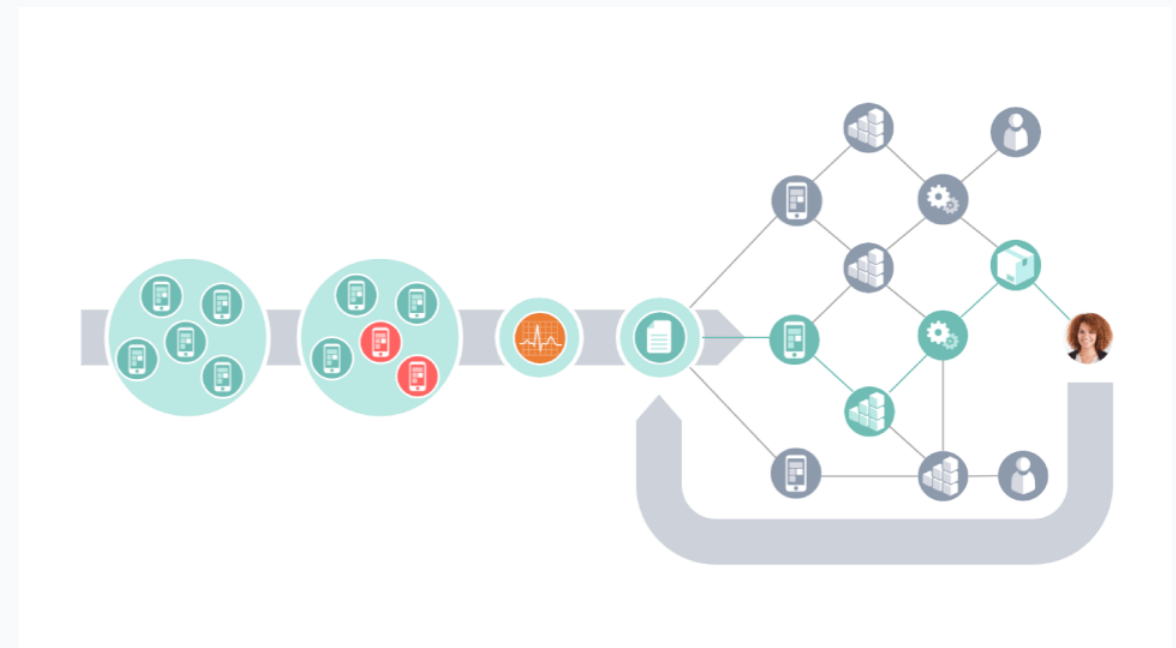
Application Availability and Quality

CANCEL SUBMIT

## Ardoq Broadcasts

Broadcasts will detect where your architecture has changed and then use the architecture itself to automatically route changes to the right person for review. **Hundreds of concurrent changes can be precisely routed to dozens of specialists across your organization for review on a continuous rolling basis.**

They allow you to automate the precise routing of change requests at scale to a large distributed network of experts that can give your organization a governance model that moves as fast as the fastest project in your organization.



# Conclusion

---

**How you choose to engage and govern your collaboration with your colleagues is not so much a binary decision of one or the other, but more of a journey of maturity and the development of the EA function.**

**Traditional command and control approaches** meet the needs of traditional organizations with traditional cultures to match. As these organizations embrace change and strive for more agility and innovation they will have to address their outlook on governance and move towards a more modern distributed governance process. The move to distributed governance will allow the organization to loosen the grasp of centralized control in a manner that is controlled and won't feel like anarchy.

**Young and growing organizations with a taste for speed and agility** find the wiki approach to fit them well, today. But as they develop, scale and need to meet the

requirements of a more robust organization they too will tend towards the distributed governance approach. The minor trade-offs of speed for control will be much more acceptable in a distributed and agile approach than attempting to force the autonomous and empowered culture into a traditional and centralized control process.

**We see the future of enterprise architecture depending more and more on the ability to engage and maintain speed with the organization's needs. Our commitment to leveraging data and collaborative tooling is central in addressing the need to engage the wider organization of experts and transforming enterprise architecture from an ivory tower to a distributed and empowered community.**







See how your organization can move in sync  
with a **shared understanding of how everything is connected**,  
from your strategic objectives to technology and people.

Contact us for a free demo.