



Highlights

- Aligned technology resources with business needs
- Improved access to essential IT information
- Boosted efficiency by standardising processes

Nissan Group Uses Enterprise Architecture to Weather Perfect Storm

Finding itself in the midst of multiple demands to align IT with business, document rapidly changing information, and standardise processes, the Nissan division serving Africa, Middle East, India and Europe (AMIE) decided to use enterprise architecture (EA) to create a comprehensive, instantly accessible view of its technology environment. The company selected MEGA's EA solutions to help it create closer links between IT and business, and continue the company's tradition of fostering innovation, creating growth, and improving efficiency.

Leading Car Manufacturer Continues Growth

Nissan and its luxury car brand Infiniti are popular choices among car buyers worldwide. With more than 180,000 employees, it is the sixth largest automotive manufacturer in the world, selling nearly five million cars each year. Currently ranked 42 on the Fortune 100, the company reported an operating profit of \$6.3 billion in 2012. Nissan's successful partnership with Renault, started in 1999, has resulted in both companies accounting for one in ten new cars sold worldwide last year.

Nissan Sets Goals to Meet Business Challenges

With complex operations spanning the globe, the car manufacturer continually seeks new ways to transform the business. The company was facing three major simultaneous challenges, its 'perfect storm':

- create a complete, always available view of the technology landscape as a way to meet potential business challenges and security incidents,
- transfer support operations to a third party safely and efficiently by documenting all IT systems and related information, and



“From the beginning, we were confident that this program would make Nissan a stronger company. We knew it would create value and help the company excel. Our approach gained executive support quickly, because everyone knew that this program could propel Nissan forward very quickly.”

John Ferguson,
Senior Enterprise Architect,
Nissan AMIE

- standardise business processes around the globe.

To meet these three primary demands, Nissan AMIE wanted to capture and document the business strategies that drive the business functions toward corporate goals, and make them visible to the IT teams. It wanted to focus on information capitalisation to support the company’s objectives and ensure that IT was doing the right things at the right time with the right tools.

The automotive manufacturer decided that its original enterprise architecture (EA) program, established eight years ago, could help meet new and broader corporate goals. The EA team knew that a larger initiative would have to be highly flexible, fit the company culture, and deliver tangible value across many divisions and departments.

The company also knew that meeting these goals required a comprehensive and sophisticated EA software solution.

MEGA Offers Important Business Improvement Capabilities

The company decided that the MEGA software solutions, in use by Nissan since 2005, would be the ideal platform to create a sustainable means to contend with evolving challenges and potential business disruptions.

The leadership position of the MEGA EA solution and its fit with the Nissan requirement made MEGA the natural choice. This decision was further ratified by the success that its partner, Renault, had achieved with MEGA in its own car manufacturing operations.

For over 20 years, MEGA has helped enterprises around the world reach corporate goals to improve business performance. The company has been widely recognised as a leader by industry analysts for many years.

Nissan AMIE Carries Out Program to Align IT with Business

The information capitalisation project was focused on capturing information across the entire technology stack in three major areas.



“One reason we’ve reached success so quickly with this program is that we have built a relationship with MEGA. Their team understands the tool and they’ve worked with so many different clients. They really bring a unique level of expertise to projects.”

John Ferguson,
Senior Enterprise Architect,
Nissan AMIE

- document business processes, business functions, corporate strategy and objectives
- describe and link 624 applications supported by Nissan Europe
- capture, describe and link 1000+ assets in Nissan Europe’s environment

Application portfolio management (APM) was also important at this time, to strengthen the value of the EA program.

Project Team Unites Across Country Borders

The program was carried out by a team of 19, located in the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK. The team was comprised of: enterprise and domain architects, application and technology analysts and administrators, as well as a project manager and MEGA consultant.


Every team member was trained on key standards to ensure consistency throughout and value beyond the project. Analysts were charged with finding the necessary information, reviewing documentation, interviewing subject matter experts, and beginning the modeling process. Administrators built relationships with the business and IT teams, helping share information among all stakeholders.

The project schedule was delivered in phases: technology modeling and technology check and repair were the first efforts. Applications supporting administration and finance, as well as sales and marketing, were completed within six months. The teams then moved on to the manufacturing and supply chain applications, and then to applications for local sales and dealers.

Quality Assurance is a Critical Factor for Success

The project team devised a stringent quality assurance process, a critical requirement because every application was modeled using a collaborative approach.

First the domain architect signed off on completeness of each diagram. Then, the enterprise architect approved the metamodel,



“We’ve already seen how much this program aids in decisions, in efficiency, and in quality. We have seen good value in what we have accomplished.”

John Ferguson,
Senior Enterprise Architect,
Nissan AMIE

governance, notations, and standards. Subject matter experts validated each model from a functional perspective. Nissan AMIE followed this careful process for each application.

The QA process mandated a minimum score of 95% for each diagram, and the team reported achieving 98% average score, surpassing their own requirements.

Nissan AMIE Reaches Success Quickly

Even before the program was complete, it was recognised for providing business value because it was meeting the primary goals and critical milestones.

As a result of this initiative, there is better visibility into the connections between business processes and technology, and more accessible information on how each application relates to technology resources. The documentation on applications is much more comprehensive, which eases knowledge transfer between groups, or with outside vendors.

The process charted by the program has standardised many other processes within Nissan AMIE, helping to forge stronger connections between the needs of business groups and the IT department’s actions and decisions.

Car Manufacturer Plans for the Future

As the company moves forward, the project team wants to incorporate the information capitalisation program into each department’s culture, and create a portal that will make information even more accessible to employees.

The program’s success has created demand to expand it into additional areas of Nissan, including subsidiaries. The team plans to look for even more ways to focus on quality and continue to build its relationships with subject matter experts.

