

Application landscape

Question: My application landscape is very complex, how can I get grip on it, how can I model it? An overview of applications is often visualized in an application landscape. This is done to provide an overview of the relationships between applications. This will often produce a large number of connecting lines and actually no overview at all. This kind of overview often only shows how complex the application landscape is. It does not give any assistance in application portfolio maintenance.

Solution: It is important to keep overviews readable. Apply a rule of maximum 10 to 15 applications per overview. If there are more, it is recommended to use a general model containing only a major grouping and a detailed model per group. Choose a viewpoint that is important for the stakeholder you are addressing. The format will always be an Application structure viewpoint. A classification can be done via process, organization, data, type of functionality or infrastructure. Group applications per area of interest and only connect the areas. With an increasing number of applications it will give more of an overview if relationships are visualized in a matrix.

Below an example is shown of an application landscape organized along application type (control, input processing, processing, output processing and complete process support).

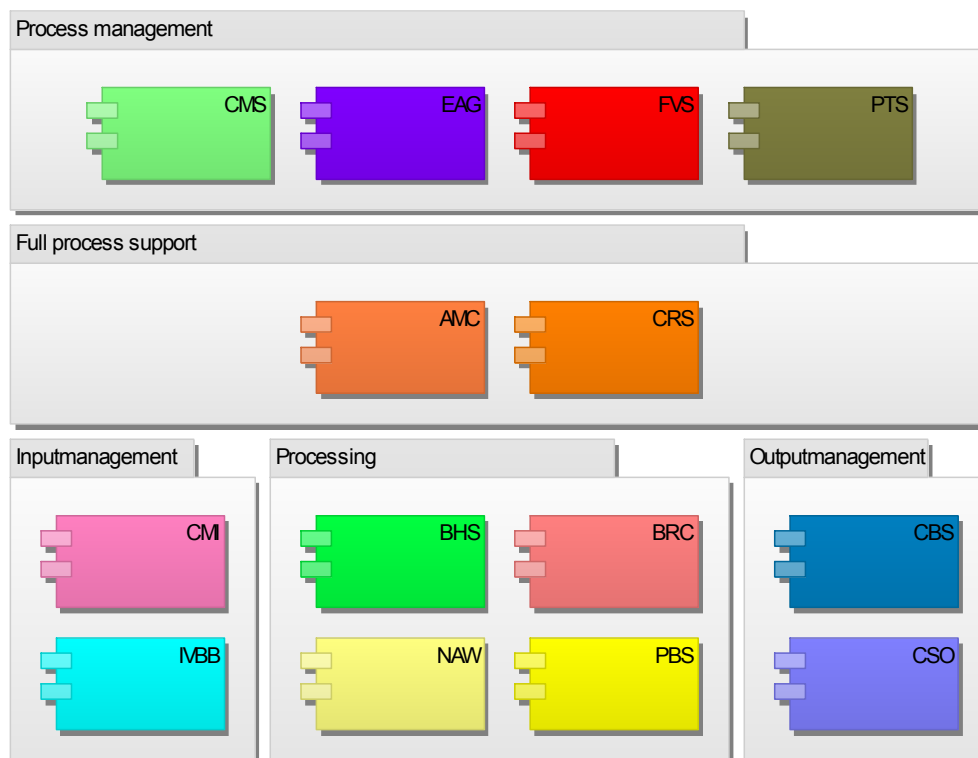


Figure: Example of an application landscape organized along type of functionality of applications

Below an example is shown of an application landscape according to usage pattern by front-office and back-office.

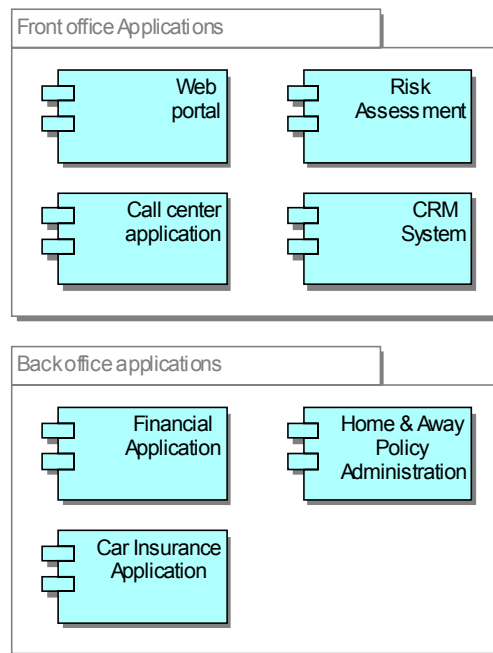


Figure: Example of an application landscape organized along usage of front-office and back-office

Consequences: For an overview of all relationships you need multiple views. Use a matrix for this purpose. A tool can be very valuable in this case to register information and produce a relationship matrix.

Alternatives: The alternative is the large 'view' with all applications and the many lines. This is only usable to express how complex the landscape is and does not give much additional added value.

Relationships with other good practices: There is an important relationship with 'Interfaces between applications'