

Dubai Customs declares greater business agility with enterprise architecture solution from IBM

Overview

■ **Challenge**

To support rapid economic growth and social development in Dubai, Dubai Customs needed to implement a strategy to transform its organization, improve its ability to handle imports and exports, and enable greater agility through effective design and rationalization.

■ **Solution**

Dubai Customs adopted the IBM Rational System Architect enterprise architecture solution as a central collaboration platform, which enabled the organization to clearly plan and measure the results of activities based on an overall enterprise SOA.

■ **Key Benefits**

With a consistent information platform in place, Dubai Customs has:

- Achieved an 80 percent increase in the speed of client registrations.
- Increased the speed of processing declarations for goods clearance by 4,800 percent.
- Improved the governance of business deliverables and increased organizational agility, helping the organization turn strategy into execution and respond quickly to Dubai's dynamic economic environment.

As a partner in the Dubai government's development initiatives, Dubai Customs has assumed a leadership position in facilitating trade and the movement of people across Dubai's borders while protecting its integrity. Dubai Customs' Reform and Modernization Program, the first of its kind for any government department in the region, seeks to develop customs processes, procedures and technology. Dubai Customs is committed to integrating innovation and technology to ensure the best possible level of service and compliance with regulatory responsibilities.

As part of this commitment, the senior management launched an initiative to transform the organization and improve its responsiveness. At the heart of this initiative was the implementation of an enterprise architecture (EA) designed to improve quality control and enhance the specification of core business processes. Dubai Customs uses the

IBM Rational® System Architect® enterprise architecture solution as a central collaboration platform for planning and measuring service-oriented architecture (SOA) activities.

Developing an Enterprise Connected View

Initially, senior management was looking for a comprehensive way to capture and view business requirements, as well as a way to provide meaningful reports to all stakeholders. In the past, Dubai Customs used static documents for these tasks, which made it difficult to capture changes and relationships. "Previously, business requirements were created and tracked in word processing and spreadsheet software," says Fadi Hindi, head of Strategic IT Planning and Enterprise Architecture, Dubai Customs. "Relationships and governance were extremely difficult to manage. We had a well-defined methodology, but didn't have tools flexible enough to support it."

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Key Components

Software

- Rational System Architect

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— Juma Alghaith, executive director for Customs Development, Dubai Customs

Ultimately, senior management decided to construct a comprehensive Enterprise Connected View (ECV) of the organization to enable greater business agility through proper design and rationalization of SOA. The ECV helps Dubai Customs align its business architecture and technology with the organization’s goals and strategies.

Dubai Customs uses the ECV to make faster, better-informed strategic and tactical decisions and to assess the effects of proposed changes. The ECV is kept up-to-date via round-trip engineering with production systems. “We use System Architect as the basis for our ECV, which enables us to manage enterprise information, run impact analysis and make decisions more effectively,” explains Juma Alghaith, executive director for Customs Development, Dubai Customs.

Getting started

After evaluating several alternatives, Dubai Customs chose Rational System Architect software because it demonstrated the flexibility needed to support the organization’s business process methodology and its EA framework. The team was also looking for a solution that was easy to use and easy to customize. “[Rational] System Architect had a very good combination of product extensibility and out-of-the-box recognition of the EA approach,” says Hindi. “The solution has been customized to support our EA framework and provides the support for governance we require.”

Dubai Customs implemented the Rational System Architect platform at its central EA office. The organization’s business analysts use the platform to document detailed business processes and workflows, which they then link to corresponding business systems and assets. Analysts across the organization use Rational System Architect models to collaborate and improve decision making. “You can’t overstate the value of having a body of knowledge accessible in a central repository,” Hindi notes. Dubai Customs is now better prepared to act quickly to seize business opportunities. “In a split second, all stakeholders can find all the information they need in a consistent format, and they can view it in the way that enables them to do their job effectively. As a result, Dubai Customs has increased its agility and its ability to respond to new opportunities.”

“We are constantly finding new ways of using [Rational] System Architect,” Hindi adds. “We are looking to harness the full power of [Rational] System Architect to support a cultural change.”

Increasing the efficiency of core business processes

Recently, Dubai Customs designed, realized and deployed an SOA-based declaration platform using its ECV. This platform has reduced the level of effort required to process customs declarations by about 50 percent. It has also enabled Dubai Customs to register clients 80 percent faster and process declarations for goods clearance 4,800 percent faster.

Currently, 50 analysts and other stakeholders at Dubai Customs are using the Rational System Architect platform, and the organization plans to expand its use to approximately 1,600 employees across all customs facilities within the Emirate of Dubai.

Using Rational System Architect, Dubai Customs has created a repository of organizational knowledge, which Dubai Customs manages and leverages to continually improve efficiency. Working from the organization's core strategic objectives, business analysts can now quickly realize solutions that comprise detailed business processes, technology and data assets. Rational System Architect has helped improve communications across Dubai Customs by providing a consistent information platform to all stakeholders. It has also helped the Dubai Customs team easily customize its EA framework, while enabling it to manage risk as it effects an organizational transformation.

Most important, Dubai Customs is more agile, better able to manage and rapidly execute change, and positioned to make the most of business opportunities. "With [Rational] System Architect, we can specify and design a new solution in weeks instead of months. These solutions can then be elaborated technically and developed in a streamlined fashion," Hindi concludes. "Our business and technical users say that they 'can't live without [Rational] System Architect,' and never want to go back to the old methods."

For more information

To learn more about the IBM Rational System Architect enterprise architecture solution, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

ibm.com/software/rational

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