



## LOQUTUS DRAWS UP STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR THE VMSW

The Vlaamse Maatschappij voor Sociaal Wonen (VMSW - Flemish Society for Social Housing) is an external autonomous agency of the Flemish government within the area 'Environment'. The VMSW makes social housing possible by financing and supporting local organizations such as housing companies and rental agencies. They assist in renting apartments and houses, building and financing housing infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewerage, landscaping) for social housing projects and providing the Vlaamse Woonlening (Flemish Housing Loan) to private persons (a mortgage at a moderate rate).

Over the years, a strong demand to evaluate and elaborate the IT architecture began to present itself. The VMSW aims to meet the current expectations and requirements of their customers even more. In addition, they want to be prepared to respond more quickly to future evolutions at the organizational level such as new services, channels and user groups.

To achieve this vision, the VMSW issued an assignment to define a strategic roadmap with a clear assessment of the impact on the current environment and to further develop the IT architecture on that basis. They were explicitly looking for a partner with a pragmatic enterprise architecture approach to be able to achieve tangible results through quick wins and iterative development. Sharing this vision, LoQutus started as a partner at the VMSW in 2015.

We met with Tom Vanden Eede, Head of budget & debt management - Order Holder Treasury, Budget Policy and who as a staff member follows up on the organization's ICT projects.

### A NEED FOR ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

In the classic evolution towards digital support for existing paper processes in the past years, the VMSW has been developing the required software per department. Unfortunately, over time, this caused problems and conflicts all too often when different departments went to query and manage information separately. "In a very natural way, the need for an overall vision of the organization began to grow along with the requirement to manage all its information more centrally to be shared mutually," says Tom. What should be managed where and how do we ensure that it's all coherently managed? How can all departments collaborate efficiently on one platform? It was then decided to include the mapping of the entire corporate structure in the IT strategy.

While the project to improve the entire software landscape was maturing, the in-house business analyst documented the questions, needs and problems of the employees in the various departments before brainstorming together about an action plan. At that stage, it soon became clear that primarily the software for project follow-up had to be revised. 'Project follow-up' in the VMSW implies the follow-up of social housing projects and is the most fundamental and broadest process within the organization. During this phase the need for further IT support and specifically for Enterprise Architecture grew systematically.

**“Enterprise Architecture is a very powerful approach towards an organization.”**

**Tom Vanden Eede  
Head of Budget & debt management  
VMSW**

#### PROBLEM STATEMENT

A need for an overall vision of the organization and for a solution to manage all the information more centrally and more efficiently.

#### SOLUTION

A future-proof strategic roadmap that documents all the questions, needs and problems of all the departments and identifies several projects and priorities to develop the to-be enterprise architecture step by step.



**Throughout the trajectory, several consultative bodies were set up with project leaders and stakeholders from the various departments. These organically grew when more and more people wanted and needed to be involved in the project.**

**A core team has emerged from these consultative bodies, for which Tom has become chairman. He ensures smooth communication and follow-up between all parties involved and has the responsibility to take final decisions during discussions or when disagreements occur.**

## ROADMAP TO A STRONGER ORGANIZATION

Continuing the work of the business analyst from the VMSW, a complete analysis was made by LoQutus' Enterprise Architect Evert Deweer. This analysis was then presented and quickly became the ground rule for the entire scope. Tom emphasizes that this analysis persuaded the organization to start this long-term trajectory with LoQutus. "It was a substantive sharp and convincing analysis. We strongly believed in this plan to further develop and execute it.

Out of the initial analysis, a program was composed in which several projects and priorities were identified to develop the to-be enterprise architecture step by step. Currently, the implementation of those first steps is in full swing. These were aligned with the high-level processes that Evert had written out and that were further elaborated by the inhouse analysts. The highest priority in the program is to improve the software for project follow-up. The purpose of the new software is to better support the core processes and to enable more flexible cooperation within the organization. The various departments will then gain more insight into the underlying information of pending files (e.g. through better data quality), and will be able to cooperate more efficiently, which will ensure better monitoring based on reports and dashboards. Thanks to an integrated environment with a unique e-office, communication with customers will improve making it easier to give them insight in the progress of their files. Furthermore, it will also be possible to respond more flexibly to regulatory and procedural changes.

Dismantling the main IT components, namely disconnecting the financial part in SAP from the various types of self-written software for project follow-up, was the start of the trajectory. The next step defined here, is to develop a case management system that can function complementary to the financial aspect of SAP. The VMSW looked at several organizations that use case management and was pleasantly surprised by the many interesting and well elaborated practical concepts. The confidence in the solution and the belief in the added value of case management for the VMSW increased and the organization decided to look for a reliable partner for this solution as well.

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When the project follow-up trajectory is completed in a year or two, the analysis will continue to serve as a guide to determine new priorities and processes. Next to the part of project follow-up, Evert has also documented other aspects of Enterprise Architecture within the organization. On one hand, it was mapped out which existing software applications are present, which business capabilities they support, and which gaps still need to be closed. On the other hand, an analysis was done to determine in which areas the various departments still need (further) support. The complete overview of the VMSW was largely documented in this way and is a crucial tool that must be kept up to date for better management of the organization. Evert continuously updates and adjusts the analysis under influence of new challenges and developments, according to the principle of progressive insight. For Tom, Enterprise Architecture was a new and unknown concept, which he has fully embraced in the meantime and values it as “a very powerful approach towards an organization.”



VLAAMSE  
MAATSCHAPPIJ  
VOOR SOCIAAL  
WONEN