

IT excellence

NEED A BIRD'S EYE VIEW?



A competency centre or centre of excellence is a highly effective way of implementing and sustaining specialist capabilities where a consistent, expert and value added service is required across enterprise boundaries.

What is it?

The establishment of a competency centre is an evolutionary activity. It may start with a dedicated, physical group, but once the tools and methods are in place and competence grows, this may evolve into a federated or decentralised team.

A competency centre is a small core team of highly skilled resource, which focuses on a particular domain of expertise, such as integration, service-oriented architecture (SOA), business intelligence or data management. It has the following characteristics:

It takes an *enterprise-wide view*, driving efficiencies through reuse, consistency and rationalisation.

It provides a *shared service* across the enterprise, employing a flexible engagement model to suit your needs and maturity level.

It incorporates *end-to-end life cycle* responsibility, from architecture, through delivery and operational support.

It provides *thought leadership*, awareness of the market, and helps you to apply best practice within the organisation, for a given domain.

It communicates its activities and *disseminates knowledge*.

To be successful, it must also have **authority for its domain of responsibility**, with:

- Clearly defined boundaries, roles and responsibilities
- Strong process, methods and governance
- Defined standards, guidelines and policies



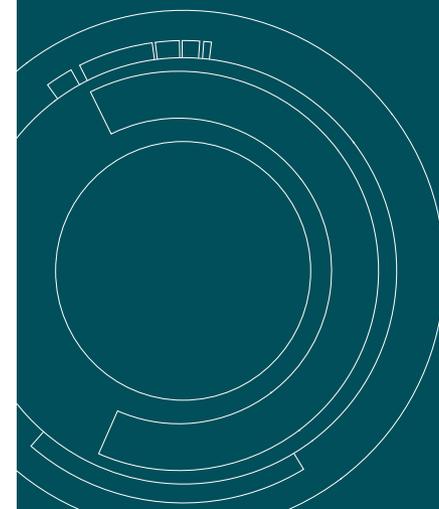
Who needs it?

The competency centre is particularly relevant to complex organisations, or those which operate with autonomous business units that are not working together.

In particular, companies which have made a big investment in enterprise architecture and SOA technology may look to a competency centre to ensure that they deliver the level of reuse and agility they are expecting.

Glue Reply has worked with organisations which want to introduce the concept as a means of helping them to manage the IT function more effectively, as well as with companies which have tried to 'go it alone' in setting up this capability, but have failed.

Our consultants deliver benefit in both scenarios.



Where does it help?

The establishment of a competency centre can be particularly effective in the following scenarios:

- The company is split into functional or IT silos and there is a need to co-ordinate, integrate or consolidate processes and resources across organisational units. An example of this is where a significant investment has been made in an enterprise service bus (ESB) in the belief that it would result in a service-oriented approach, yet, point-to-point interfaces are still being developed by individual organisational units.
- New capabilities need to be adopted by a number of organisational units and it would be difficult or expensive to implement these separately for each unit.
- Greater focus needs to be applied to a particular aspect of IT, for example, data or business integration.
- Where a capability needs to be established, which can be sustained by in-house staff, following the departure of a consultancy or delivery partner:

Why involve Glue Reply?

Some companies opt to 'go it alone' when implementing a competency centre, but this can be problematic:

- Lack of credibility: the competency centre team is learning on the job and so lacks the skills and tools to be 'excellent' from the outset. This results in poor service delivery in the initial stages;
- Lack of engagement: the necessary governance is not in place to 'enforce' the competency centre. This means that organisational units fail to engage through lack of awareness or as a result of a 'silo' mentality;
- Lack of planning: inadequate planning for the implementation and evolution of the competency centre.

We can overcome the above issues by:

- Providing experienced consultants, who are able to 'hit the ground running'.
- Establishing a strong governance regime to ensure timely and appropriate engagement.
- Promoting organisational 'buy-in' by articulating and demonstrating value and by raising awareness through regular communications to the appropriate audiences.
- Providing proprietary frameworks, tools and methodologies to ease the transition.

We pride ourselves on our ability to transition skills and knowledge to in-house staff at the end of a project.

How long will Glue Reply be involved?

We offer a flexible approach to project engagement and service delivery, depending on the stage the customer has reached and the varying levels of internal competence.

Our involvement is based around a method that has five clear stages:



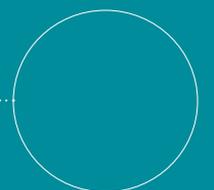
Not every customer is taken through all of the five stages: some simply want us to define a charter for a competency centre; others opt for greater involvement, with our consultants in place to support the team throughout the set up, implementation and ongoing operation.

Why the Glue Reply approach?

We help organisations to identify where competency centres could add value. We then accelerate their definition and implementation to ensure that they establish and build credibility from the outset.

We currently offer competency centre consultancy around the following specific domains:

- Business architecture and process modelling
- Enterprise architecture
- Integration
- SOA
- Data
- Business intelligence



Glue Reply provide:

- Competency centre frameworks, encompassing a set of generic capabilities, plus specific support for the competency domains listed overleaf.
- Competency centre methods, with a comprehensive step-by-step guide incorporating: initial assessment of need, evaluation of existing capabilities, definition of the charter, detailed definition, implementation and transition to 'business as usual' operation.
- Experienced consultants with real world experience of implementing and running competency centres across each domain.

Our predefined frameworks and methods, combined with real world implementation experience, domain specific expertise and the ability to provide expert resources right through implementation and transition, makes us the ideal partner to help you establish and develop your competency centre.



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