

Application Classification

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Abstract: An application is a living entity that changes frequently in a dynamic and changing IT environment. Therefore, the changing behaviour of the application leads to the application service interruption or failure, so the ability of the organization depends on how it understands and classifies their application inventory. Therefore, a proper classification of the application will make it easier for the organization to get the most out of its applications. This paper explains the approach to classifying applications and evaluating the outcome.

Keywords: Application Classification, Application Portfolio Management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information Technology in the last decades played a vital role to enable and support business growth in all aspects. That role required building complete and dynamic IT infrastructure that support the business need. It mandated the organization to protect and manage this infrastructure in an efficient way as any failure will lead into major impact in the company operations. Therefore, IT infrastructure is classified into different domains i.e. (End user domain, Network domain, communication domain, computing domain and application/software domain) to easy managing them based on the nature and speciality of the IT infrastructure components. The application domain is one of the most important components and it will be our focus in this paper where our methodology will detail the classification of the applications in two aspects of the applications management.

The application domain includes a mix of application types with different technology and different computing infrastructure need. Furthermore, the application technology drives the infrastructure strategy per application technical specification requirements. The application has many attributes that describe the application to enable IT asset management team to understand and manage the application. In this article will focus on the classification of the application and good practice to manage the applications.

Note: the classification is general practice to group and organize set of objects that has common characteristics in order to deal with them or manage them as groups. The classifications of the applications are probably differing from one organization to other as it is derived from the business needs and the types of applications used in business.

2. METHODOLOGY

Asset Management

The application class is maintained as application attribute of many attributes that application may have and it is one of the most important attributes that determine the entity and nature of the application. Therefore, some IT organization classify the application based on the customer interaction. This approach results in having two main application class (Business application [customer facing] and Technical Application [Non-customer facing]). The third application class is the hosting application of either business or technical application.

Business application is the application that is used directly by the customer thru interface. It is the direct investment by the company to get a return value out it. The business application is the focus application by many IT organizations such as the managing the authorization, business continuity plan and IT support. IT all drive the demand and building of computing infrastructure. They are assessed from business important and impact to prioritized IT support and respond plan.

Technical application is the application that support and enable the business applications. Their value derived from the important of the business application that rely on them. They are important as any impact on them will directly impact the business application. Active directory and email exchange are good example of technical application. Many organizations don't realize the important and dependency of technical application and unless classified in their inventory.

Hosting application is the third type of application class. This hosting applications act as host container for many business and technical applications. Many applications share the same infrastructure components. This enable IT organizations to host multiple applications in single environment such as web hosting environment that host many webpages of the business applications.

Connected or external application is the fourth type of applications class. This type of application is captured as part of IT asset register to enable IT see the application dependency between the IT managed and non-IT managed applications. This provide visibility to IT to be able to assess the impact as a whole due to change in IT manged applications.

Configuration Management

Configuration Management is considered as the heart of IT operation that focus on drawing the relationship between different IT assets. In this section, we will detail and explain the practice of configuration management from application aspect.

The application dependency varies from application to another.

3. CONCLUSION

The application classification is an aggregation methodology to simplify and help IT to manage the applications more efficiently where the support teams are able to assess the impact of change in any applications. The relationship between these applications provides more clarity toward any changes, such as application maintenance, application decommissioning, data flow between the applications and it improve the IT readiness in any disaster recovery scenario.