

Job title: ENTERPRISE ARCHITECT(PL5)

Core information

Location: London head office ▾	Lines of business or shared capability area: Shared Capabilities ▾
Reports to: Head of Architecture & Engineering	
People Management: Yes ▾	
Assignment Management: Yes ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 5 ▾	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 4 ▾
Number of direct reports: 1 - 7	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: Partnership level 6 ▾ Partnership level 5 ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands - John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to **Happier People, Happier Business** and a **Happier World.**

Critical purpose of the role

As a Partner, your primary focus is collaborating to drive tangible value for both our customers and our business. Within the Technology & Change operating model, the Architecture function acts as our strategic compass - identifying the technical capabilities required for the Partnership to successfully operate, adapt, and transform.

In this role, working with the **Head of Architecture & Engineering** you shall :

- **Design for Impact:** Architect and guide the delivery of sustainable, highly effective technology solutions that make a measurable difference to our business.
- **Guide Strategic Investments:** Act as a trusted advisor on large, often disruptive technology programs, ensuring that the ROI is sound and strictly aligned with our broader enterprise strategy.
- **Enable Market Agility:** Empower our Partnership to adapt and grow in a highly competitive retail landscape, staying ahead of rapidly evolving technology trends to deliver on our strategic aims.
- **Lead with Influence:** Guide diverse, cross-functional teams to maximise enterprise design value, while pragmatically balancing technology and information risk.
- **Collaborate for Success:** Work seamlessly alongside internal engineering colleagues and third-party SMEs, along with Product, Business & other relevant Partners to co-create scalable solutions and bridge the gap between architectural vision and pragmatic delivery.

Ultimately, this role offers the platform to stretch your own professional potential while actively mentoring and developing the capabilities of your fellow Partners.

Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

- **Strategic Direction & Guardrails:** Define architectural intent and technical guardrails to deliver business outcomes strictly aligned with Partnership strategy.
- **Capability Roadmapping & Value Realisation:** Own and maintain the capability maturity roadmaps for products within the Technology Reference Model. Effectively balance short-term, in-year benefits (like MVPs and test-and-learns) against long-term strategic capabilities, using these roadmaps to accurately forecast vendor demand.
- **Domain-Driven Design & Continuous Modeling:** Champion Domain-Driven Design (DDD) principles by continuously refining and improving our enterprise domain models. Work in close conjunction with relevant stakeholders, business area Partners, and Product teams to ensure our technical boundaries and architecture accurately reflect the evolving business landscape.
- **System Design & Reusable Patterns:** Accelerate delivery pace and ensure consistency by designing reusable technology implementation patterns. Ensure all system interfaces and dependencies are thoroughly understood, documented for impact, and maintained in the Partnership's Technology Reference Model.
- **Team Empowerment & Agile Leadership:** Embrace Agile working principles to support mission success. Empower the Product and Platform teams you are accountable for, providing them with the autonomy and support needed to make rapid decisions and resolve challenges.
- **Market Insight & Innovation:** Actively leverage internal and external networks to stay ahead of customer requirements, market conditions, and emerging technological advancements, feeding these insights directly into the enterprise's strategic thinking.
- **Continuous Growth & Function Excellence:** Actively invest in your own personal and professional development while engaging deeply with the Architecture function to continuously improve its maturity, skills, and overall capabilities.

Measures of success

Success in this role is driven by the Partnership's Integrated Objectives and Strategic Priorities. As a leader, your performance will be evaluated on your ability to:

- **Deliver Strategic Outcomes:** Own and execute annual medium-term objectives that realise enterprise-level capabilities.
- **Establish Guardrails:** Set comprehensive technology guardrails encompassing vendor management, environmental impact, security, and data architecture.
- **Navigate Market Flux:** Maintain a proactive, technology-led response to product strategies within a constantly evolving technical and commercial landscape.
- **Empower Decision-Making:** Ensure technical decisions happen at the optimal level within the operating model by empowering your direct reports and driving alignment through targeted Objectives and Key Results (OKRs).

Sample of the OKRs one could expect to work towards :

- **Commercial Value & TCO Optimisation:** Achieving an optimal ratio between the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of the products in your scope and the tangible value generated by delivering on customer objectives.
- **Technical Debt Mitigation:** Driving a measurable, continuous reduction in technical debt to ensure the product estate remains sustainable, secure, and agile.
- **Operational Resilience:** Delivering quantifiable improvements in the operational stability, performance, and reliability of the product ecosystem.
- **Strategic Alignment & Vision:** Establishing a clear, demonstrable Product Strategy that maps seamlessly to both the Product Group's goals and the wider enterprise Technology Strategy.
- **Domain-Driven Architecture & Agility:** Demonstrable progress in embedding Domain-Driven Design (DDD) principles, evidenced by refined domain boundaries, a reduction in highly coupled cross-domain dependencies, and tighter alignment between business capabilities and the underlying technical architecture.
- **Corporate Memory & Leadership:** Ensuring the absolute accuracy and completeness of the Partnership's "Corporate Memory" (architectural documentation, system dependencies, and support artifacts), while demonstrating active co-ownership and development of your direct reports and fellow Partners.



Skills

- **Domain-Driven Design (DDD) & Systems Thinking:** Deep expertise in translating complex business strategies into technical capabilities. Ability to use DDD principles to draw clear boundaries, map business domains to system architectures, and design reusable integration patterns.
- **Commercial Acumen & FinOps:** Strong financial awareness to critically evaluate the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) against tangible customer value. Skill in validating the ROI on large tech investments and forecasting vendor demand accurately.
- **Agile Roadmapping & Capability Planning:** Proficiency in building and maintaining capability maturity roadmaps. The ability to expertly balance short-term MVP (test-and-learn) delivery with long-term, multi-year strategic enterprise goals.
- **Active Empathy & Relationship Building:** Deep empathy towards internal Partners as well as external SMEs. The ability to understand the human impact of architectural changes, fostering a culture of mutual respect and psychological safety when navigating complex integrations or shifting team workflows.
- **Influence & Collaborative Leadership:** High emotional intelligence and the ability to lead through influence rather than just authority. Skill in building consensus among diverse stakeholders, empowering engineering teams, and collaborating effectively with third-party SMEs.
- **Risk & Governance Management:** The ability to pragmatically define and enforce technology guardrails (spanning security, data, environments, and vendors) while actively managing technical debt and improving operational resilience.
- **Market Horizon Scanning:** A keen ability to leverage internal and external networks to stay ahead of rapid technology trends and market conditions, successfully feeding those insights back into the Partnership's strategic direction.
- **Team coaching & Recruitment:** Be known for coaching, developing, and supporting strong, capable, and empowered teams, including supporting recruitment when required.
- **Community Engagement:** Continuous promotion of Engineering and Architecture best practices through active community engagement.
- **Analytical & Adaptable:** Include the application of strong analytical and problem-solving skills to navigate fast-paced, ambiguous environments.
- **Resource Management:** Add the ability to maintain a comprehensive understanding of resource allocation and anticipate future needs.

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential

- **Proven Architectural Leadership:** Extensive experience operating as an Enterprise, Principal, or Lead Architect within a large, complex, and highly federated corporate environment.
- **Modern & Legacy Integration Expertise:** A strong track record of designing "Cloud-first" architectures and successfully integrating modern SaaS/COTS products with large-scale, legacy systems (such as mainframes).
- **Domain-Driven Design (DDD) in Practice:** Demonstrable experience applying DDD to map complex business capabilities to technical architecture, ensuring clear domain boundaries and scalable, decoupled systems.
- **Commercial & FinOps Acumen:** Proven experience in managing the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for enterprise platforms, forecasting vendor demand, and guiding executive decisions on 'Buy vs. Build' investments.
- **Stakeholder Influence & Empathy:** A history of successfully leading through influence rather than direct authority. Demonstrated ability to build deep, empathetic relationships with diverse stakeholders—ranging from executive leaders to hands-on engineering teams and third-party vendor SMEs.
- **Agile & Strategic Roadmapping:** Significant experience creating and maintaining technical roadmaps that successfully balance short-term MVP delivery with long-term strategic enterprise capabilities.

Desirable

- **Retail / Omnichannel Experience:** Previous experience working within the retail, e-commerce, or supply chain sectors, with a strong understanding of the specific customer journeys and market pressures in these domains.: Previous experience working within the retail, e-commerce, or supply chain sectors, with a strong understanding of the specific customer journeys and market pressures in these domains.
- **Specific Ecosystem Knowledge:** Deep familiarity with major enterprise SaaS platforms (such as Salesforce, Workday, Google’s Digital Worker Experience ecosystem etc.) and navigating their specific licensing, API, and integration constraints.
- **Modern Delivery Advocacy:** Experience supporting or leading teams through transitions to modern engineering practices (such as Trunk-Based Development, Continuous Delivery, or fast flow) while maintaining appropriate enterprise governance.
- **Industry Certifications:** Relevant architectural or cloud certifications (e.g., TOGAF, AWS/GCP Certified Solutions Architect), though practical, lived experience in modern enterprise environments is highly preferred over purely theoretical knowledge.
- **External Horizon Scanning:** Active participation in external technology networks, forums, or communities to bring fresh, outside-in thinking and market trends back into the business.
- **Vendor & Matrix Management:** Add desirable experience for managing relationships with large third-party vendors and leading teams in a cross-functional matrix environment.

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