

technology level and then moving on to the business level (which provides greater value). Businesses can begin to partition business functions to eliminate redundancy. This comes to a certain degree of business buy-in as it evolves towards consolidation of business functions across lines of business.

At an enterprise level, standards and governance are adopted. Adoption will include protocols, tools, standards, and service models. These are extended across the organization.

Business Rules in SOA

It is at the higher stages (business rules, orchestration/manage, contract) where changes could ripple through other service consumers and producers. For example, a change in the business process could impact multiple components, such as the management of services that coordinates the interaction between multiple services, or the contract of services are impacted due to a change of the relationship mapped within the architecture. This begs the question regarding how we define “business rules” within SOA. Do we view them componentized in relational to the architecture? Or do we have a different perspective of the business process within the context of SOA?

Legacy Applications—Does SOA mean Save Our Assets?

All companies are under continual pressure to deliver up-to-the-minute business data to customers while keeping costs in line. Business users demand real time reports and metrics. Web based tools have been provided to show up-to-date information. These relentless imperatives have been placing new demands on legacy applications. But the term “legacy” itself has taken a negative connotation. And with the demands to adopt newer Web-based technologies, it is no surprise that organizations have been debating whether or not to “rip and replace” legacy applications in order to modernize IT infrastructure. However, “rip and replace” is not usually the right answer—especially when it comes to SOA strategy.

First of all, most legacy applications are mission-critical—they run the backbone of the business. The applications house data and business processes, and represent years of intellectual property. In addition, “rip and replace” projects are costly and prone to failure. However, legacy applications do have some limitations. They are often disconnected from the enterprise. They house silos of data that are difficult to integrate with other silos.

Let us consider the “preserve and extend” approach. It is less costly and less risky. By preserving and extending our legacy applications, we capitalized on longstanding strengths—reliability, security, and performance. “Preserve and extend” becomes the commitment to maintain the past and present, plus propels you into the future. However, we must never forget that legacy applications are often written in monolithic fashion, some of which have been around for decades. Can these applications be exposed easily using Web Services with a little point and click tooling? Or is it going to require significant reengineering of the applications before they can truly take part in the dynamic, federated, on demand future of SOA? The answer may both be “Yes.”

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