Getting SOA right: SOA Healthchecks

Although the promised benefits are real, before you can realize them, you need to make sure your IT infrastructure is fit enough to meet the dynamic needs of SOA. Perhaps your SOA project has yielded positive results, but you would like to know if you are getting maximum value. Or perhaps you sense you have a problem that needs to be addressed.

SOA Healthchecks from IBM can help you determine your SOA health—so you don't end up having to perform costly remediation. Whether you're just getting started with SOA or are well under way, these services can answer those nagging questions: Are we really ready? Are we getting it right? Are we getting all the value we can? IBM can help provide the answers by examining the fitness of your key IT elements: applications, services and infrastructures.

Highlights

■ *Perform diagnosis and remediation on applications, services and infrastructures*

■ *Increase the service-oriented architecture (SOA) payoff*

■ *Expose potential bottlenecks*

■ *Help secure funding for future SOA initiatives*

Bringing order to complexity
Ready or not, here comes SOA. More and more organizations are turning to SOA to:

- *Speed application development*
- *Increase reusability across and beyond the enterprise*
- *Integrate historically separate systems resulting from acquisitions and mergers*
- *Drive costs down and service quality up.*

Diagnosis and remediation of applications, services and infrastructures

SOA Healthcheck services from IBM include specialized diagnostics to help you identify potentially unhealthy areas and recommend treatments to cure problem areas and get you on the right track.

For your SOA applications and services layer, IBM offers Healthcheck services that address:

- *Application reuse—verifies that the transformation of legacy applications has been made correctly for SOA and that it optimizes the use of existing functions; also verifies that new services have been created so they can be appropriately reused*
- *Service use—assesses the use of services and the ability to reuse services through a service repository; also validates that an SOA governance structure is in place to help facilitate knowledge transfer, enforce reuse of existing services and eliminate the propagation of rogue services*

- *Service security—checks whether proper security controls are in place for services and whether identities are managed across boundaries spanned by services.*

For the infrastructure supporting the SOA applications and services layer, IBM offers infrastructure Healthcheck services designed to provide:

- *Infrastructure flexibility—determines whether your IT infrastructure can meet the performance and capacity demands of dynamic services*
- *Middleware support—verifies that your environment is prepared for the scalability requirements of an SOA-enabled project*
- *Service management—assesses ongoing service management.*

SOA Healthcheck services from IBM have a two-tier structure. You can choose a quick assessment with a targeted one- to three-day triage workshop or more targeted assessments for specialized diagnostics, which can be combined or pursued exclusively. You can then follow either option with treatment plans to address and fix identified problem areas depending on your needs.

Following are three real-world examples of how the results obtained from these SOA Healthcheck services can help organizations make key SOA decisions.

Making SOA pay off

When a major Asian national bank wanted to extend its SOA solution for managing tax collections from local banks to banks in other provinces, it called on IBM for an SOA Healthcheck. Although the bank was concerned that the task might be too daunting, the Healthcheck indicated it could work. After completing this assessment, IBM successfully extended the SOA solution, using open standards–based technology to integrate with the technologies of hundreds of provincial banking systems.

Today, the bank is managing millions of transactions each day and estimates it has saved US$1 billion by extending its SOA environment.

Revealing how extending SOA can help eliminate bottlenecks

Although a major credit management firm was using an SOA solution to make thousands of credit limit decisions daily, along with providing related credit transaction insurance services for domestic and international trades, its small IT staff was struggling to manage the underlying infrastructure and governance. An SOA Healthcheck from IBM, followed by a full assessment, showed the firm where and how to expand its SOA to automate many of the ad hoc, manual decisions its staff was making.

By implementing IBM's recommendations, the company was able to provide governance controls, resolve decision-making issues and provide a forum for discussing how it can extend its for SOA added business agility.

Garnering support for extending SOA across the enterprise

A major car rental firm asked IBM to validate its SOA approach in order to help win executive support for extending its SOA vision and architecture across the enterprise. What's more, it wanted this assessment in just one week. The firm viewed SOA as a way to provide a flexible, Web services technology–based infrastructure and application integration platform that would allow systems across the enterprise to share common business functionality and technical capabilities. But first it wanted to make sure its architecture and approach were correct. As part of this assessment, IBM:

- *Performed an SOA Healthcheck of the reservation system*
- *Assessed the maturity of the SOA*
- *Reviewed and assessed the technology components of the overall SOA initiative*
- *Reviewed business goals and IT drivers for SOA, along with corresponding architectural decisions based on constraints.*

The Healthcheck showed a high degree of application maturity as compared with current SOA implementations in the industry. However, to build on that, IBM suggested that the firm also:

- *Validate service security capabilities with respect to penetration from non-trusted infrastructures*
- *Develop a component business model to align business services to strategic goals and objectives*
- *Define cross-functional service requirements to help drive the use of common business services across the enterprise.*

As a result of this assessment, the firm decided to fully support the extension of the SOA vision across the company. The assessment also identified several issues that the firm addressed before "go live" to provide a smooth rollout.

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Why IBM?

IBM's methodologies, best practices, intellectual property and asset-based services address virtually all aspects of IT and SOA management across the solution lifecycle. Our disciplined, project management–driven approach is designed to provide the necessary structure, consistency and repeatable quality for SOA success, while also enabling the innovations you need to meet your specific requirements.

For more information

For more information about SOA Healthchecks, please contact your IBM sales representative, or visit:

ibm.com/soa/healthcheck