

This presentation will cover the introduction of Service Component Architecture.



To introduce SCA, this section will address the need for flexibility and reuse and some of the barriers that sometimes prevent companies from getting to where they want to be. Business flexibility requires IT flexibility. IT flexibility is very difficult and expensive with today's systems that look like the diagram. Businesses can only be as flexible as the IT systems that support them. On the right, you'll see an actual application architecture for a consumer electronics company. Current approaches to IT architecture do not support these drivers.

The text on the left talks about IT infrastructure that has grown bit by bit, over the years to handle focused issues with no recognizable roadmap. Linkages between pieces of this infrastructure tend to be inflexible and very difficult, expensive, and time-consuming to change.



This slide addresses some of the reasons why businesses are taking steps to increase their flexibility and reuse through SOA.

If you look at the graphic at the right, what you'll see is what a sample business process (in this case, multichannel retail) looked like in a traditional business compared to today's world-class businesses. In the past, you saw companies with very linear business processes that were handled by an individual department within a company. As sophistication increased, you saw the same business processes being broken up and pieces of it being performed in different places. In this example, customers placed orders directly through the Web, shared services in different parts of the company like merchandising or supply chain took over steps of the process. Suppliers contributed vendor managed inventory; shipping was outsourced, and so on and so forth. This kind of desegregation takes a lot of flexibility to establish and even more to change once it's established. It's important to remember that the business process in this example and very nearly every other business process in today's companies are very dependent on the information technology (or IT) systems that support them. Flexible business requires flexible IT.

Economics is a force driving the need for this kind of flexibility. As the marketplace globalizes, new markets, new workforces, and new competitors are making companies look for ways to adapt more quickly. The cycle time has been observed to be shrinking between changes in business processes. While you might have seen companies make significant changes yearly in the past, you'll see the same level of change on a monthly or even weekly or daily basis. While business leaders were focused mostly on cost-containment in the past, we're seeing that growth is back at the top of the today's CEO's agenda and that growth demands the flexibility to be more nimble than competitors. This isn't to say that cost reduction has lost its importance. On the contrary, businesses are looking for ways to make better use of the investments that they already have. IBM's experience shows that companies are seeing savings of about 20% through re-use. Other sources put that figure even higher. Finally SOA and the flexibility it brings is crucial for becoming what IBM calls an on-demand business.



Now that you have seen some background material on the need for flexibility in business, the next couple of slides will introduce SCA.

SCA is an open (OSOA), emerging (OASIS) standard programming model. It's an assembly of flexible business solutions following SOA principles. It's an exploitation of diverse, reusable IT assets.

Service component Architecture (SCA) defines a 'simple' service-based model for construction, assembly and deployment of services (existing and new ones). Service component architecture is a set of specifications which describe a model for building applications and systems using a Service-Oriented architecture. SCA extends and complements prior approaches to implementing services, and SCA builds on open standards such as Web services. SCA is the central programming model of the SOA foundation and an open, leading industry standard for service composition.



SCA stands for Service Component Architecture as indicated earlier. SCA is a concrete manifestation of an SOA way of thinking. It's designed for building agile service oriented applications. SCA is a framework for implementing, assembling, composing and deploying services and supports loose coupling of coarse grained services. It extends, exploits and complements existing technologies and standards and it is language, application environment, framework and vendor neutral. SCA supports Java and Web services, and more.



SCA is also an extensible set of protocol bindings (for example: SCA, WS, RMI) and implementation languages such as Java. It's also an extensible set of interface definitions, pluggable data bindings and policies and intents. There are two types of SCA infrastructure; classic SCA and open SCA.

"Classic SCA" refers to Service Component Architecture as it is defined and built by IBM. Classic SCA was first introduced by IBM and other vendors in 2005 and it's what is known as SCA 0.5. It's supported in a variety of WebSphere family products starting with WebSphere Application Server V6.

"Open SCA" refers to Service Component Architecture as defined by the industry at both the OSOA collaboration which was released to OASIS for standardization in 2007. It's what is referred to as SCA 1.0. The current SCA feature pack is based on open SCA.

As an example, the SCA implementation in WebSphere Process Server and WebSphere Enterprise Service Bus V6 is based on SCA 0.5 (Classic SCA). Alternatively, WebSphere Application Server V7 Feature Pack for SCA is based on SCA 1.0 (open SCA).

So how do you integrate the two if one has WebSphere process server applications that they want to run on SCA feature pack? The solution to this is through Web services binding. Customers who want to create SCA 1.0 composites on WebSphere Application Server that wire to Classic SCA services on WebSphere Enterprise Service Bus or WebSphere Process Server can do so through the Web services binding.



Looking at a brief history of SCA, Service Component Architecture is not new – WebSphere Process Server pioneered SCA delivering a precursor to the open version in its V6.0 release of runtime and tools. This pioneering technology called "Classic SCA," was used by IBM to seed open specifications endorsed by several vendors at the Open Service Oriented Architecture organization. As you saw earlier, SCA represents the SOA programming model of the IBM SOA Foundation. It is a strategic technology of the IBM application server and BPM software portfolio. The Initial SCA code contribution and collaboration started back in December 2003 with contribution from BEA and IBM.

The real SCA Project was created in December 2005 in Apache incubator and this version was (SCA 0.9). Next came SCA version 0.95 OSOA which was a collaboration and an interim delivery implemented by Tuscany and WebSphere Application Server version 6.1 SOA Feature Pack Beta1. The next release SCA version 1.0 came in March 2007 which was an OSOA (Open Service Component Architecture) Collaboration and implemented by Tuscany. This is the version that SCA feature pack is implemented on mentioned earlier.



The benefits of SCA Feature pack include the ability to perform basic service composition in new POJO-based SCA applications. (Reuse). Another benefit is to develop and deploy services that use SCA natively to simplify access from different application types. (Reuse, Connectivity)

Business pressures from competition, marketplace, mergers and acquisitions, and so on requires applications to adapt to rapid change.

SCA applications are resilient to change and are insulated from technology and infrastructural changes. SCA is architected to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.



Other open SCA benefits include flexibility in the assembly model and separation of concerns in multiple dimensions

Open SCA also offers diverse, extensible implementations, bindings and data, inversion of control through dependency injection and reflection and asynchrony built into the programming model. It also provides declarative abstract intents and concrete policy

Simplification for developers, integrators and deployers.



Now that you have learned what SCA is, you will now learn what it is not. SCA does not choreograph services or model workflows, instead BPEL or other workflow languages can be used. SCA is not Web services. Web services are a binding technology to SCA.WSDL is an interface description language to SCA. SCA is not tied to a specific runtime environment. It can be applied to any kind of environment – Distributed, heterogeneous, large or small. SCA does not force specific languages and technologies. It's open to many languages, frameworks, technologies. It embraces, not replaces, assets and other frameworks and it engages new technology.



The next slide provides a summary of this presentation.



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SCA applications are resilient to change. They are also insulated from technology and infrastructural changes. SCA is also architected to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.



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