IBM Service Oriented Architecture

Executive Overview

> **There are many business & technical benefits to an SOA, but none as important as the capability for a company to respond quickly and effectively to business change and to leverage that change to competitive advantage.**

What is it?

Business: *SOA is a set of business, process, organizational, governance and technical methods to reduce or eliminate frustrations with IT, quantifiably measure IT's business value and create an agile business environment for competitive advantage.*

Slightly Technical: *SOA is a way for different computers, from different vendors, with different programs, from different functional areas of the business (or externally to customers, suppliers or vendors) to intelligently talk and exchange data with each other.*

Why do I need it?

The combination of SOA & Web Services is close to being the "silver bullet" that companies have been looking for to:

- Realize IT's long-promised potential
- Justify IT expenses and capital outlays
- Provide non-technical people a clear understanding of what IT does, how they do it, and their intrinsic value.

Those "non-compatible" computers can now communicate without the previous technical complexity or high cost of maintenance. SOA has become today's premier method to attain business agility through the reuse of a company's current IT assets & integrated processes.

What benefits will I receive?

- Saves time, money & people
- Eliminates frustrations with IT
- Justifies IT investments
- Eliminates IT's 6-6 answer i.e., "the project will take 6 months & cost 6 figures"
- Provides a business & competitive differentiator

What will I give up if I don't have it?

It is very likely that business transactions will be orders of magnitude easier with an SOA. An SOA could be the difference between the success or failure of the next:

- Department, intra-company or inter-company merger
- Acquisition
- Divestiture
- Product or service rollout
- Business partner, customer or supplier addition
- Geographical expansion
- Competitive onslaught

Is this the next bright idea from the industry?

SOAs are not a new idea – they have been around for at least a decade. SOAs have previously been implemented in proprietary (translation: expensive) ways. That means it was very difficult if not impossible for disparate computers to intelligently communicate with each other. So what's different now?

- SOAs have a long history of successful implementations. Even with their previous high costs they still provided economic value and functional flexibility within the company. The reason the term SOA has become so visible now is because a new implementation technique has arisen to make SOAs much more cost efficient and productive.

- This new technique is called Web Services. It is important because it finally breaks the proprietary barrier between vendors and software programs. Major vendors like IBM and Microsoft have agreed to standards which allow their respective hardware and software to share information and data.

SOA Value Roadmap

Because:	Business happens via business processes
And Since:	Business processes tie to business measurements
And with an SOA:	1) Business process steps are delivered via IT applications 2) Business process steps align with business services optimally through an SOA
Therefore:	Business services in an SOA create a digital model of the business
Yielding Business Agility & Competitive Advantage:	A digital model of the business is powerful because: 1) Creating new business processes when business changes is now merely choosing from an inventory of stable services within the SOA 2) Provides a structure to collect, examine, and align business and IT metrics

More Information

SOA Business Value White paper
http://www.ibm.com/webservices/eis

EIS Internal Web Site:
http://w3.ibm.com/software/eis

Randy Langel
SOA Business Value Manager
714-438-5955 USA, rlangel@us.ibm.com