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Built for innovation

Unlock the power of SOA

Business leaders face relentless pressure to innovate—from the products and services they make to the business models they deploy to make them.

Innovation requires changing and adapting with speed. But organizations are only as flexible and responsive as the IT systems which support them. According to [IBM's 2006 Global CEO Study](#), 78% of CEOs believe integrating business and technology is fundamental for innovation. Too often, businesses discover that their ability to innovate is hampered by inflexible IT systems that are difficult, expensive and time-consuming to change.

Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) is rapidly changing the way we think about how to build enterprise IT systems. SOA breaks IT into flexible "services"—repeatable business tasks such as "check customer credit" or "open new account." These services can be combined, configured and reused to address changing business priorities, creating a flexible IT infrastructure that enables the enterprise to adapt with speed and agility. According to IDC, the SOA market is expected to reach \$21 billion by 2007.

"The reality of the digital age is that your business is embodied in your technology, and your business can change only as fast as your technology can."

Digital Business Architecture: Harnessing IT for Business Flexibility

Forrester, November 7, 2005

Glossary

A **service** is a repeatable business task, such as “check customer credit” or “open new account.”

A **service oriented architecture (SOA)** is an IT architectural style that supports integrating the enterprise as a collection of linked services.

A **composite application** is a set of related and integrated services that supports a business process built on an SOA.

By presenting applications, information and other IT assets as loosely-coupled services or “building blocks” supporting specific business needs, SOA reconnects technology to business outcomes. SOA simplifies and accelerates the deployment of new business applications. It also lowers costs by meeting new needs with existing resources. According to the [Aberdeen Group](#), the world’s largest companies can save up to \$53 billion in IT spending over the next five years by adopting SOA.

Model, assemble, deploy, manage, govern

In IBM’s experience, companies think about SOA in terms of a life cycle. This life cycle starts with a **model** phase, in which business requirements are gathered and analyzed to simulate and improve business tasks. Next comes an **assemble** phase, in which businesses create services out of new and existing IT assets, and put them together to deliver the business process.

After creating reusable services, companies **deploy** the business process into a robust, scalable and secure services environment. Finally, they **manage** and monitor the performance of these business processes, both from an IT perspective and a business perspective, feeding intelligence gathered back into the SOA lifecycle to enable continuous process improvement. Underpinning the success of this life cycle is robust project **governance**.

Where to start

Because SOA embraces a new way of thinking about enterprise IT and a new set of methods for building IT systems, locating the right starting point can appear confusing. To help our clients with this task, IBM commissioned a study of over 1,900 businesses. This research illuminated three SOA business starting points, **people, processes** and **information**—and two SOA IT starting points, **reuse** and **connectivity**.

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SOA entry points

Ideas from IBM



Where should businesses start with SOA? In partnership with Mercer Management Consulting, IBM has studied emerging practices among its own 1,900 SOA clients. This research has illuminated three core business-centric SOA starting points, **people**, **processes** and **information**, and two IT-centric starting points, **connectivity** and **reuse**.

Through business-centric SOA, companies can tie IT projects to the business need, directly addressing the firm's immediate pain points.

People: productivity through people collaboration

Improve people productivity by aggregating views that deliver information and interaction in the context of a business process. This enables human and process interaction with consistent levels of service.

Start by building a view of a key business process by aggregating information to help people make better decisions. Next steps: tighter management of performance with alert-driven dashboards that link to more processes.

Process: business process management for continuous innovation

Deploy innovative business models quickly with re-usable and optimized processes, adapting the enterprise to changing opportunities and threats.

Start by modeling an underperforming process, remove bottlenecks, then simulate and deploy the optimized process. Next steps: create flexible linkages between multiple processes across the enterprise and outside the firewall to suppliers and partners. Then, monitor the process to measure and track performance.

Information: delivering information as a service

Improve business insight and reduce risk with trusted information services delivered in-line and in-context.

Start by discovering and understanding information sources, relationships and the business context. Next steps: expand the volume and scope of the information delivered as a service across internal and external processes.

Individually, each approach has the potential to deliver strong returns on investment. In combination, the potential for SOA to transform business performance rises sharply. IBM calls this the multiplier effect.

Two IT-centric starting points help the enterprise integrate business-centric SOA and to build and reuse SOA services effectively.

Connectivity: underlying connectivity to support business-centric SOA

Connectivity has always been a requirement. But SOA brings new levels of flexibility. As well as acting as a building block for additional SOA initiatives, connectivity provided through SOA has distinct, standalone value.

Reuse: creating flexible, service-based business applications

Cut costs, reduce cycle times and expand access to core applications through reuse. Analysts estimate it is up to five times less expensive to re-use existing applications than to write new applications.

Use portfolio management to consider which assets you need to run your company. Identify high-value existing IT assets and service-enable them for reuse. Satisfy remaining business needs by creating new services. Finally, create a registry/repository to provide centralized access to and control of these reusable services.

Key to successful SOA is SOA Governance. SOA Governance is a business-driven approach to making better IT decisions. IBM's Business Centric SOA equips clients with the resources they need. IBM provides complete end-to-end solutions through leading methodologies, technologies and services to automate SOA governance.

Which entry point makes sense for you?

There is no single answer: it depends on your business priorities. Taking a business-centric approach to SOA ensures that IT investments remain focused on areas that will mean the most for the bottom line. Talk to your IBM representative about your business goals, take a self assessment, visit www.ibm.com/soa or contact IBM directly at soa@us.ibm.com. IBM can help you lay out an approach that's right for you and help architect a project to help you reach that goal. Let's get started today! ■



Learn more

Ideas from IBM

“SOA impacts every aspect of IT and business.”

David Cearley
Gartner, April, 2006.

To deepen SOA knowledge and understanding, IBM offers a series of events, webcasts and whitepapers tailored for each audience, from C-level executives to enterprise architects.

The C-suite

[IBM's SOA Executive Summit](#) offers C-level executives a unique opportunity to network with peers and meet industry analysts and top IBM executives while learning first hand how

companies are reaping immediate, tangible returns from investing in SOA. A selection of dates and venues are available.

Register now for:

[New York, USA](#) (1-3 May, 2006)

[Paris, France](#) (12-13 June, 2006)

[Jaipur, India](#) (6-8 April, 2006).

[Prague, Czech Republic](#) (14-15 June, 2006) and [Jeju, Korea](#) (28-29 April, 2006) coming soon.

The Enterprise Architect

IBM's SOA Architect Summit offers IT architects the opportunity to discover how IBM SOA technology and services can help solve enterprise architectural challenges. Suitable for all levels of SOA experience, these free-of-charge full-day technical conferences are tailored to make the SOA journey easier, more productive and more profitable.

Register now for:

[Dallas, TX](#) (4 April, 2006)

[Atlanta, GA](#) (5 April, 2006)

[San Francisco, CA](#) (18 April, 2006)

[Detroit, MI](#) (25 April, 2006)

[St Louis, MO](#) (27 April, 2006).

Summits in Europe and Asia Pacific coming soon.

Learn more now

IBM offers a wealth of instantly-available materials, from webcasts to whitepapers.

- Get started with IBM's guide to [SOA governance](#).
- Take IBM's self-assessment test and discover your company's state of SOA adoption—along with tailored recommendations for next steps—with the [online IBM SOA self assessment](#).
- Educate yourself with [IBM SOA papers](#) in the IBM Systems Journal.
- Tune in to [SOA Reality TV](#).
- Register for IBM's SOA Webcast, [Freedom to Innovate: Unlock the Power of SOA with WebSphere](#) (6 April, 2006).
- Listen to IBM's technical podcast series, [Making SOA Real](#).

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