

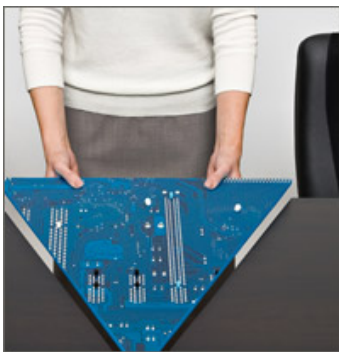
CA Advisor

IT MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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Embedding SOA into IT Solutions Brings Flexibility to IT Operations

By Maurice Donegan



Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) has been a conversation-mover for several years. Now CA is taking steps to move SOA from conversational to operational by embedding the architecture into the underlying technology of its IT solutions.

This initiative will benefit you in very tangible ways. The SOA approach lends more flexibility to IT operations, eases the process of systems and application integration and enables customers to take advantage of open standards that are gaining popularity in the marketplace.

CA is employing SOA to standardize integration at the service level. We're using SOA, rather than direct calls into our products or third-party products, because the architecture represents the next layer of maturation and flexibility. SOA provides a platform upon which we can create services, register services and then discover and utilize these services — all without the need to understand what's going on behind the scenes.

To fuse SOA technology into CA infrastructure, we're working to combine three elements that will enable you to easily aggregate and integrate data and services.

- First is SOA itself. SOA is an architectural strategy that enables organizations to make more effective use of IT resources and deliver simpler, more flexible systems at a lower cost of ownership. Simply put, it's a blueprint to build applications within the enterprise.

- The second component is Web services, which are a set of standard communication mechanisms that enable an organization to achieve SOA. Web services are implementations of business functionality that can be consumed by clients in different applications or business processes.
- Finally, to put it all together, CA is developing an application-integration platform that will be embedded into our line of solutions. This new technology, called CA Catalyst, is essentially the tactical implementation of SOA.

A hallmark of SOA is that it is built upon a loosely coupled platform. This type of environment requires a central "rally point" to manage and coordinate the various functions, components and standards. The Catalyst technology will serve as that rally point by providing SOA support for the notion of discovery, Web services and integration in general.

The Catalyst registry, which provides a map for locating and leveraging services, will be an important component of CA's SOA implementation. A comprehensive registry will render services readily discoverable, which will yield a vast improvement over the performance of the Universal Description, Discovery and Integration (UDDI) registry. Beyond locating services, the registry will also enable IT managers to define a particular Web service and identify its calling parameters, among other things.

The Catalyst registry will also give IT executives a better way to manage a range of technology components within the IT environment. For instance, the registry will enable IT managers to determine how Web services relate to each other and to existing IT services, including

information such as how Web services are invoked and what platforms they operate on.

This type of discoverability will enable IT departments to more easily integrate existing technologies without disrupting day-to-day operations. Many companies use SOA for traditional application integration, and once implemented, Catalyst will help aggregate and integrate data and services. For instance, its presence will immediately enable two or more CA solutions to integrate with one another, which will allow for more rapid deployment of applications and solutions.

Because Catalyst employs existing open standards, it also will provide a more transparent way to integrate with third-party products. Our experience shows that virtually no environment is homogenous, and Catalyst and SOA will allow for rapid implementation with solutions from other vendors.

Catalyst will also signal an end to the rip-and-replace era in IT management. Because it's an open-standard approach, Catalyst will enable organizations to add new solutions without the need to completely replace existing systems, which minimizes or completely eliminates the complexity of forward-migration issues. And that's important because even when useful new applications are launched, existing applications still retain a lot of value that could be utilized. Continued use of existing applications will deliver a direct cost benefit, and also bring an indirect benefit because IT departments will not need to retrain staff on the use of new applications.

One potential downside to SOA is that it could open your network to new threats. Solutions such as CA SOA Security Manager, however, can address that issue by analyzing and managing threats. CA SOA Security Manager essentially extends the defined security roles, access and permissions within the SOA and Web services environment. This gives you the freedom to composite applications and tweak operations in ways that were never envisioned in the original design of the network, without opening your network to new threats.

CA Catalyst ultimately will be a behind-the-scenes component of CA's IT infrastructure solutions. We plan to launch the beta program in December 2008, and will unveil a first-release version of the product in the second quarter of 2009.

Maurice (Moe) Donegan is a Senior Advisor for CA's Integration Strategy and an evangelist for Enterprise IT Management. In spite of his youthful demeanor, Moe has been in the IT industry for over 29 years and is a 19-year veteran of CA. While at CA, Moe has lead product management, product development and technical support teams, across a wide array of IT technologies. Prior to CA, Moe had a rich background in IT consulting specializing in business application development and implementation. Moe earned a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Bentley College.

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