

## Enterprise SOA Guide – Chapter 1 What is Enterprise SOA

### Applies to:

Business Experts

### Summary

The Guide is prepared looking upon the interest of SAP ESOA customers and partners to learn and leverage the ESOA concepts, methodology, implementation and projects from SAP perspective.

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Created on: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2007

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The big buzzword these days among the Web services is SAP Enterprise Service Oriented Architecture, most commonly known by its acronym Enterprise SOA. Enterprise SOA is kind of an IT manager's holy grail, in which software components can be exposed as services on the network, and so can be re-used time and time again for different applications and purposes. In Enterprise SOA, developing new applications can be a matter of mix-and-match: decide on the application that you need, find out the existing components that can help build that application, glue them all together and you're done.

In practice, things are never that neat. In this first part of a two-part column, we'll look at what ESOA is, examine their benefits, and detail key issues surrounding with the technology.

## What is Enterprise SOA and Enterprise SOA?

SOA is an increasingly popular concept. But it never really took off, because there has been no standard middleware or application programming interfaces that would allow it to take root. There were attempts to build them, then Web services came along and gave it a boost. The Web services underlying architecture dovetails perfectly with the concept of Enterprise SOA—so much so, in fact, that some analysts and software makers believe that the future of Web services rests with Enterprise SOA. SAP came up with the startergic decision on coverting the Webservice methodolgy to Enterprise Services Methodology "Which would have business semantics attached as capability".

## So how does EnterpriseEnterprise SOA differ from Web services?

Most Web services implementations are point-to-point, where you have an intimate knowledge of the platform to which you're connecting. The implementation is fairly solid and the interface doesn't really change,. That means that the Web service is not made available publicly on the network, and cannot be "discovered" — in a sense, it's hard-coded in the point-to-point connection. In an Enterprise SOA implementation, information about the Enterprise services and how to connect to it is published in a UDDI-built directory, and so that Enterprise service can be easily discovered and used in other applications and implementations.

## Why use Enterprise SOA?

A number of factors are driving the move toward Enterprise SOA. Cost savings is one. If you can reuse services you've already built, then you don't have to spend as much time and money developing new applications. Another factor is the increasing success of Web services. As companies build more Web services, unless they have an overarching architecture. For example, what happens when one of those Web services has been incorporated into other applications, but then the Web service is changed without telling developers of those applications? An overall architecture needs to be built to make sure that doesn't happen. Perhaps most importantlyis that an Enterprise SOA "increases a business's flexibility and lets it more quickly adapt to changing business needs." Most Web services are being used primarily "to solve point-to-point integration problems." But these solutions "can't solve the larger integration problems in converting hundreds of systems" to an overall, single enterprise architecture. For that, SAP Enterprise SOA is needed.

But while the basic Web services architecture fits neatly into the Enterprise concept, there are still roadblocks to setting them up. Notable among them, Is security, identity management issues, and management problems — having software that will be able to track and manage hundreds or dozens of Web services and their development and deployment. SAP Software is just becoming available to do that. On the security side, the issues still haven't been solved.

## What the Future Holds?

Despite these challenges, SAP Enterprise SOA will most likely become increasingly popular, especially because Enterprise services themselves are finally starting to catch on in enterprises.

**I will be covering the benefits and motivation of SAP Enterprise Oriented Architecture in Chapter 2 of Enterprise SOA Guide.**

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