Business Processes Modelling

MPB (6 cfu, 295AA)

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03 - Evolution
Object

Overview of the evolution of (Information Systems inside) Enterprise Systems Architectures

Ch.2 of Business Process Management: Concepts, Languages, Architectures
Guiding principles

**Modularity** and information hiding
(encapsulation, interfaces, reuse, maintainability, response to change)
Software Architecture

**Definition:** A software architecture defines a structure that organizes the software elements and the resources of a software system.
A **hype cycle** is a (branded) graphic representation of the maturity, adoption and social application of specific technologies.
Early (architectures)

- Application
  - Programming interfaces
    - OS
  - Physical data independence
    - DBMS
    - OS
- GUI
  - Advanced user interfaces
    - Application

1970
- Monolithic applications developed from scratch
- Porting required redevelopment
- Data dependency and consistency issues

1980
- Application code and (textual) user interfaces still entangled
- Data management as a primary concern

1990
- Human interaction made easier
Enterprise Applications

OS + DBMS + GUI + Networking capabilities =
more and more elaborate information systems
could be engineered

Typically hosting enterprise applications
(customers, personnel, products, resources)

From individual to multiple information systems
(needs integration)
Individual enterprise application

Lack of Integration!
Data redundancy!
Data dependencies!
Changes

Changes were hard to implement!

Hard to track data dependency and replication

Any modification of an application was a complex and error-prone activity, with domino effect (e.g. change of customer address format)
ERP

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems to deal with the increasing complexity of changes

Basic idea
integrated database that spans most applications, separated modules provide desired functionalities, accessed by client applications
Enterprise resource planning systems

Integrated and consistent (centralized) database
Two-tier client-service
remote data access
CRM and SCM

New types of sw entered the market around 2000

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems**

**Supply Chain Management (SCM) systems**

**Goal**

to support the planning, operation, and control of supply chains, including inventory management, warehouse management, management of suppliers and distributors, and demand planning

**Problem**: different vendors, separately developed
Siloed enterprise applications

Data Integration would provide valuable information

Customer Relationship Management System
- GUI
- Application Logic of CRM System
- DBMS
- OS

Supply Chain Management System
- GUI
- Application Logic of SCM System
- DBMS
- OS

Connected on local network, but not logically integrated

Lack of Integration!
Data redundancy!
Data dependencies!
(on a larger scale and complexity than before)
Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity of data and their attributes
(syntax and semantics difficulties)
calls for Data Integration

Examples

- corresponding data fields with different names
  (e.g., CustAddr vs CAstreeet),

- fields with the same name but different meaning
  (e.g. Price: with or without taxes? unitary?)
Integration

Manual integration is possible, but:

it consumes considerable resources

it is error-prone

cannot foreseen all applications in advance
(reimplementing functionalities in an integrated way would just postpone the problem)

Solution
Enterprise Application Integration systems as a new middleware
Enterprise Application Integration

Definition: **Enterprise Application Integration** (EAI) is defined as the use of software and computer systems architectural principles to integrate a set of enterprise computer applications.
Point-to-point integration (of silos)

N x N hard-wiring problem!

Too many interfaces to develop!

Does not respond well to changes!
(Reprogramming an interface requires considerable resources, typically)

\[ \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} i = \frac{N(N - 1)}{2} \]
Message-oriented middleware

Messages must be encoded and decoded

Point-to-point connection problem does not diminish that much

Cooperation realized in the integration application

Offers some guarantees (e.g. message delivery)
Response to Change

Message-oriented middleware reduces in part integration efforts and gives important run-time guarantees.

Still cooperation is hardwired in a particular application (the Integration Application).

No explicit process model that can be documented, communicated, and changed when necessary.

In the end, response to change is not improved.
The **Hub-and-Spoke** paradigm is based on a central hub and a number of spokes attached to it.

The Application Integration middleware represents the hub, and the applications to be integrated represent the spokes.

Interactions between any two applications must pass through the hub.
Hub-and-spoke integration

Configuration and management of adapters and message brokers can become cumbersome.

From N x N to N integrators
Message brokers
Publish/subscribe mechanism

Centralized Enterprise Application Integration Middleware (Hub)

ERP System
CRM System
SCM System
Data Warehouse
Human Resources Application
Inventory Management

EAI implementation pitfalls

70% of all EAI projects fail (2003). Most of these failures are not due to technical difficulties, but due to management issues:

- Constant change
- Shortage of EAI experts
- Competing standards
- Loss of detail: Information unimportant at an earlier stage may become crucial later
- Data protectionism
From (data-models and) data-integration

To (process-models and) process-integration
Value Chains and Process Orientation

Two major factors fuelled business process management

**Value chains**
as a means to functionally break down the activities a company performs

**Process orientation**
as the way to organize the activities of enterprises
Definition: a **single-application workflow** consists of activities and their causal and temporal ordering that are realized by one common application system.
Multiple-application workflow system

**Definition:** a *multiple-application workflow* contains activities that are realized by multiple application systems, providing an integration of these systems.

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  Workflow Management System
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System workflow

Definition: a system workflow consists of activities that are implemented by software systems without any user involvement.
Workflows fit well with hub-and-spokes EAI
Limitations in workflow management

Technical integration problems:

Scarcely documented applications

Different levels of granularity

Tight coupling of applications (direct invocation)
Enterprise service computing

Main idea:

Business functionalities exposed as services

Services are equipped with usage information

Customers can find services and use them
Services

Definition: Services are loosely-coupled computing tasks that can be dynamically discovered and invoked over the network.

Each service comes with a service description that can be published in service registries by the service provider.

Service registries can be queried by service requestors.

Service descriptions provide a level of detail that facilitates service requestors to bind and invoke them.
Service-oriented architectures

Definition: **Service-oriented architectures** (SOA) are software architectures that provide an environment for describing and finding software services, and for binding to services.
Service-oriented architectures

Service Requestor

Service Provider

Service Registry
Service enabled application system

standard interface

ERP Enterprise Services

service specification must be decoupled from implementation and legacy system

ERP System

DBMS

OS

ERP Database

Composite service based application

Intra-company well-expressed as business processes

Local registry
Manual search (absence of dynamic matchmaking)
Advantages of SOA

Reuse of functionality at coarse level of granularity

New applications can be built with less effort

Existing applications can be efficiently adapted to changing requirements

Reduced maintenance and development costs
Products as services

Corporations are increasingly perceived by the set of services they provide.

These services exposed to the market can be realized by enterprise services (provided by the back-end application system).

Also services provided by third parties can be integrated so that better end used services can be provided to the customer.