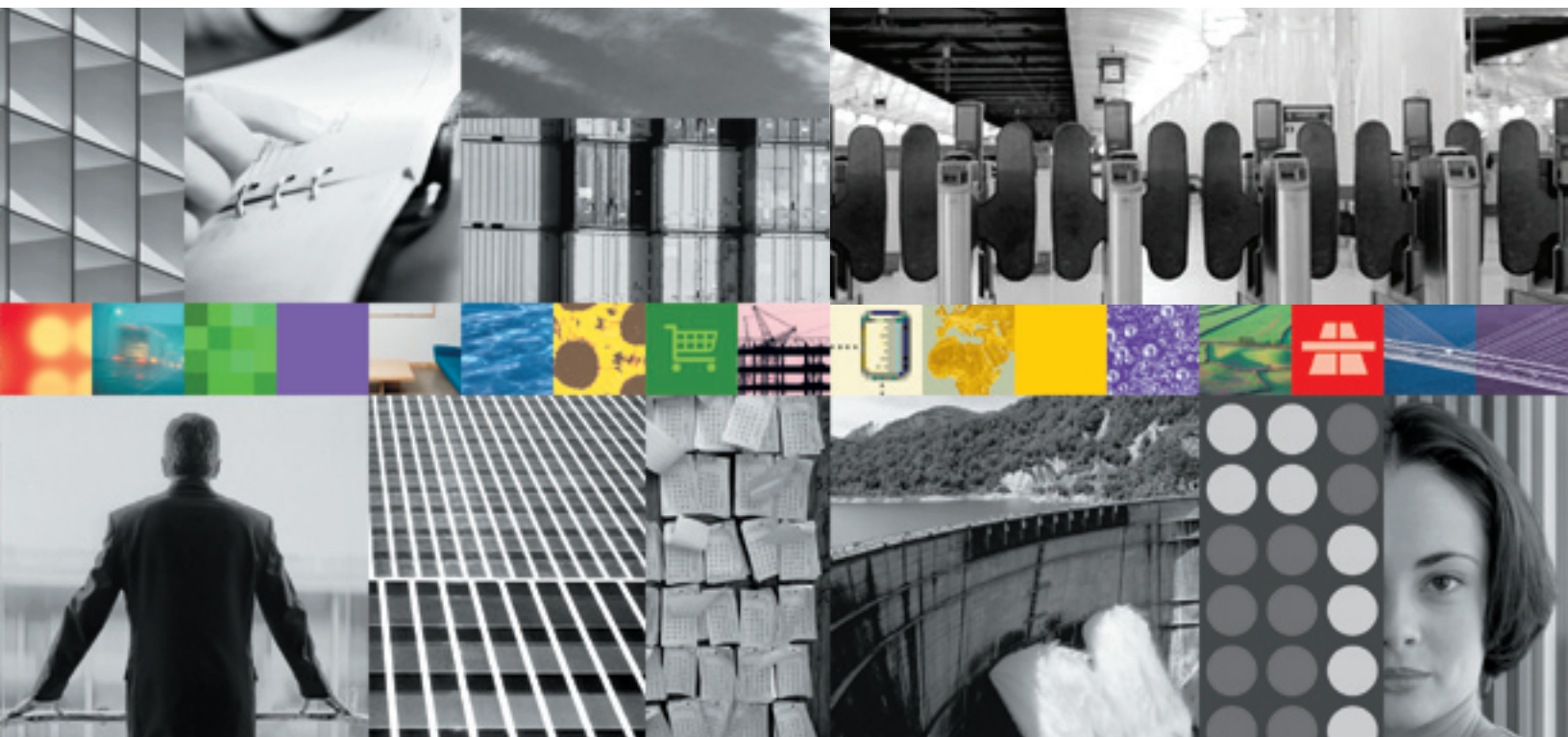



SOA solutions
To support your business objectives



Entry points into SOA.
Taking a business-centric approach



Innovation is all about the ability to change quickly, easily and economically. *Innovation that matters* is all about differentiating yourself in your market. Recognizing market needs and responding more quickly than your competitors with innovative business models, products and services are what make your business grow. But how can you achieve innovation that matters when your business is only as flexible as the IT environment that supports it? Service-oriented architecture (SOA) helps you innovate by ensuring that your IT systems can adapt quickly, easily and economically to support your rapidly changing business needs.



“Regarding the value of SOA. What most enterprises see is flexibility and agility to address change. They often live with systems that are hardwired, very difficult to maintain and very difficult to integrate. SOA provides a foundation and environment with the inherent flexibility to introduce new services, new processes, change those processes more readily because of the different layers of abstraction. So instead of worrying about what needs to be tightly linked, the enterprise can concentrate on the core element that needs to change and not having that impact so many other systems.”

— Sandra Rogers, IDC video segment for IBM, March 15, 2006

Today’s businesses understand SOA. But they don’t always understand how to get started. Approaching today’s critical needs with strategic business goals in mind is what SOA is all about—SOA with a business-centric view. IBM breaks down barriers to getting started by bringing our clients focused, approachable entry points into SOA.

SOA entry points help businesses pursue SOA the right way: by taking a project-based approach and demanding that each project deliver real business value. A recent study of over 500 companies, conducted by Mercer Management Consultants, showed that the surveyed companies are approaching SOA from entry points of integrating people, processes, information or a combination of all three. IBM helps its clients utilize these entry points with focused software, services and expertise. IBM also helps to lay the technical groundwork for integration of people, processes and information by offering entry points for connectivity and reuse.

People-centric collaboration

Companies that focus on collaboration among people are interested in improving their productivity by giving their employees and trading partners the ability to create a personalized, consolidated way to interact with other people and information—in the context of business processes. Their employees and trading partners need a role-based, intuitive and adaptive user experience.

To make use of this entry point, businesses can start by using IBM WebSphere® Portal software to build a view of a key business process by aggregating information in a way that makes sense for people—to help them make better decisions. As businesses become more comfortable, the next step is to use alert-driven SOA dashboards that are tied to a broader number of processes for tighter management of performance.

Business process management

These companies are interested in the ability to optimize their processes, deploy them on the fly and monitor the effectiveness of the altered processes. But in order to be truly innovative, the companies need to ensure that the process components are completely reusable—so that they can be reconfigured quickly and economically in response to rapidly changing opportunities and threats.

To make use of this entry point, businesses can start by using IBM WebSphere Business Modeler software to model a single underperforming process, remove the bottlenecks and simulate the process. Then they can use IBM WebSphere Integration Developer software to assemble the components into an SOA application and deploy the enhanced, optimized process with IBM WebSphere Process Server software. Later, they can take the next step by flexibly linking multiple processes across the enterprise and outside their firewalls to suppliers and partners.



“IBM is taking an even more comprehensive approach to service-oriented architecture. While deploying technology is certainly key to a successful SOA integration, it is the coalescence of the people, process and information elements that are truly core to the SOA process. This business-centric approach not only is the technology aspects of SOA but also adds critical elements of business insight and emerging best practices for overall organizational change through SOA.”

— Ron Schmelzer and Jason Bloomberg, ZapThink, April 2006



And finally, they can monitor the processes with IBM WebSphere Business Monitor software—to measure and track performance.

Information as a service

These companies are interested in the ability to improve their business insight and reduce risk by using trusted information services delivered in line and in context. Everything a company does draws upon information. But when duplicate or contradictory information is scattered throughout multiple locations, users cannot dependably treat this information as a service. Information integration solves this dilemma by giving users a single view of the truth.

To make use of this entry point, businesses can start by using IBM DB2® Viper software. They can discover and understand new information sources, relationships and business contexts, before enabling these high-value data

as a service using IBM WebSphere Information Server software. Later, users can take the next step and expand the volume and scope of information that is delivered as services across internal and external processes using IBM Master Data Management middleware.

Put it all together: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts

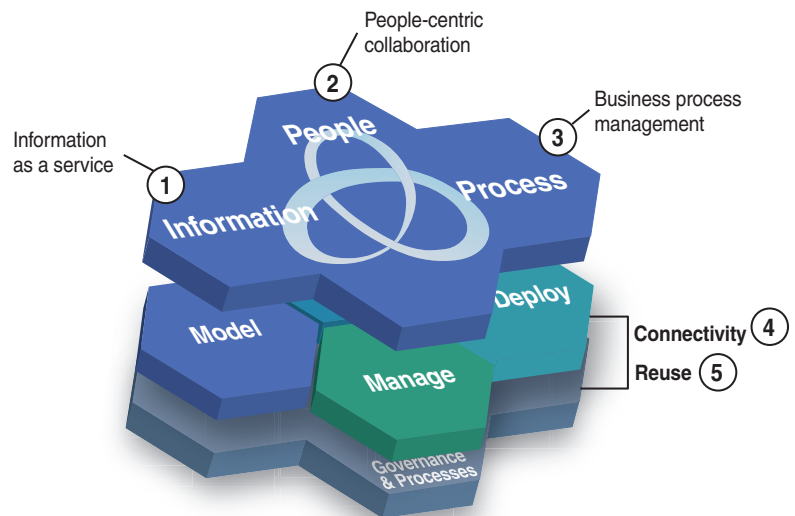
Although pursuing integration of people, processes and information as separate projects produces great benefits, there is a multiplier effect associated with applying SOA to these areas in combination. Businesses are continuously upgrading and changing processes, applications, databases and views. With SOA, all parts of the business can stay linked and supported through these continuous changes. The multiplier effect helps prepare the enterprise for groundbreaking innovation.

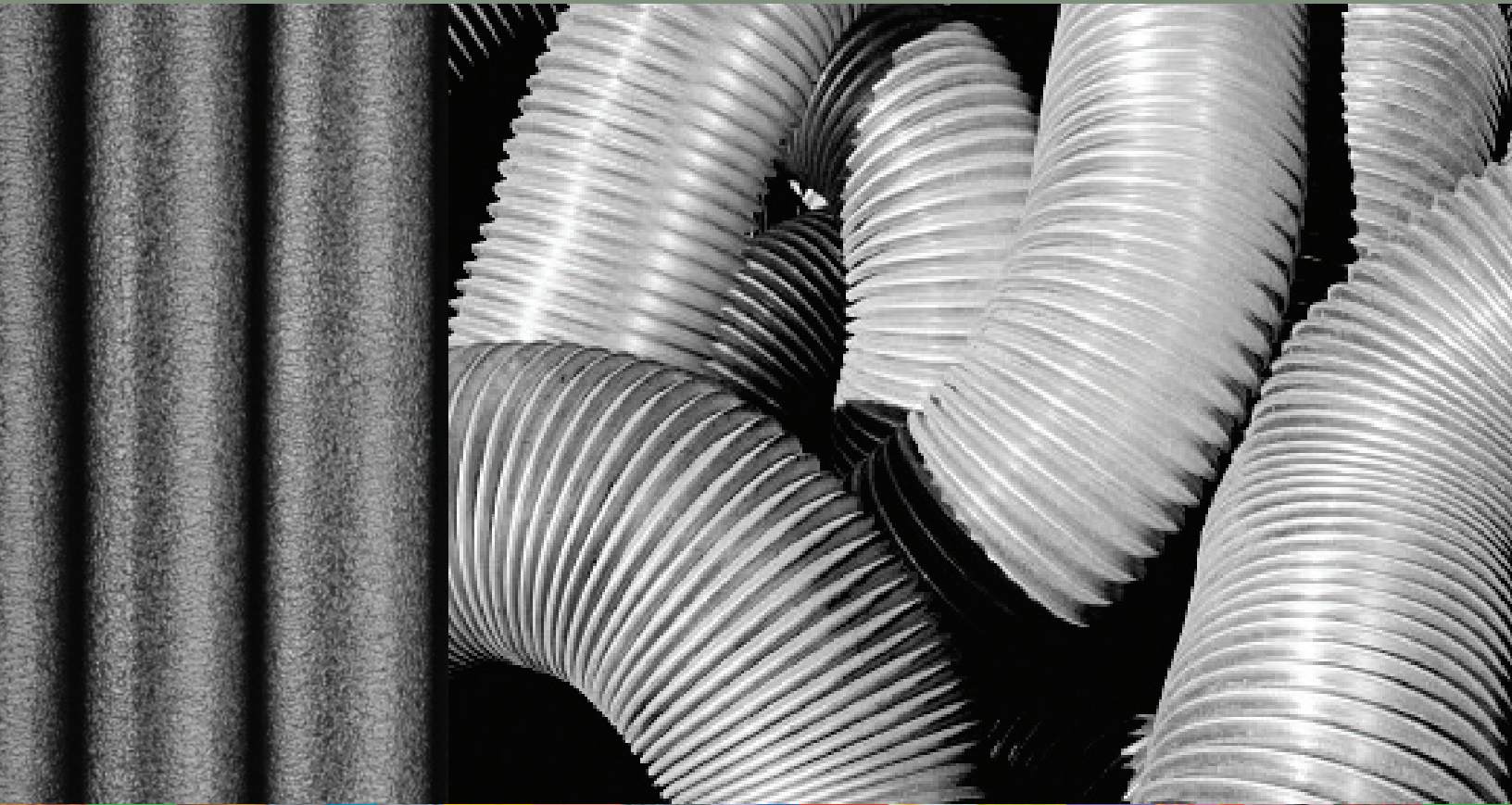
IT-focused entry points


In order to integrate the people, processes and information in your business, it is necessary to provide connectivity among the various services in your IT environment. And it is necessary to have effectively built and reused these services in the first place. Along the way, you should work to build security into every SOA project you undertake and adhere to established SOA governance best practices to ensure its oversight and control.

Connectivity to support business-centric SOA

Although, in the past, connectivity has been a requirement, SOA brings new levels of flexibility to these linkages. The connectivity provided by SOA has distinct value on its own and as a building block for additional SOA initiatives.







“Currently, the technology around SOA is getting most of the press and hype. But it will be these culture, process and organizational dynamics that ultimately determine the success of SOA in most organizations.”

— Dennis Gaughn, AMR, “SOA Changes the Nature of Innovation for IT,” March 2006

There are many ways to attain the level of connectivity you need for your business. You can deploy a messaging backbone, with IBM WebSphere MQ software as the foundation for SOA connectivity. Or you can implement IBM WebSphere Enterprise Service Bus or IBM WebSphere Message Broker software to enable services, existing applications and data to participate in SOA. Or you can choose a different form factor and utilize an SOA appliance like IBM WebSphere DataPower software to harden your infrastructure for scalable connectivity that can meet demanding requirements. Whatever the level of connectivity you need, IBM can provide it.

Create and reuse services for flexible, service-based business applications

Newly created and reusable services are the building blocks of SOA. Reuse gives users flexibility through reduced cycle time and elimination of duplicate processes. By service-enabling your core IT assets, you are expanding access to these systems to a much broader skill set and extracting greater value from these existing investments. In fact, a study by Software Productivity Research found that it is five times less expensive to reuse existing services and applications than to rewrite them.

To get started on this entry point, use portfolio management to consider what types of assets you need to run your company. Then, identify high-value, existing IT assets and enable them as reusable services. You probably aren't going to be able to satisfy 100 percent of your business needs through reuse,

so it's usually necessary to fill in the gaps by creating new services, which you can deploy with IBM WebSphere Application Server software. Finally, you can add IBM WebSphere Service Registry and Repository software to provide centralized access and control of these reusable services.

What 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 you are keeping your investment focused on areas that will mean the most to your bottom line.

Talk to your IBM representative about your business goals or contact IBM directly at soa@us.ibm.com. IBM can help you lay out an approach that's right for you and can help architect a project to help you reach that goal. Let's get started today!

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