

ZAPTHINK ZAPNOTE™

MANAGED METHODS SOA MANAGEMENT FOR MIDSIZE ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

Much of today's attention on Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) focuses on larger enterprises, but an increasing number of midsize firms and smaller governmental agencies are also implementing SOA in order to support secure, managed, loosely coupled Services for both external and internal use. As a result, such organizations require a comprehensive, yet economical SOA management tool that can provide the diverse management and security capabilities they need to support robust Services in today's dynamic business environment. With their JaxView product, Managed Methods is addressing this overlooked market for SOA management products for midsize organizations.

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SOA Management for Smaller Organizations

Most discussions of Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) up to this point of time have centered on the needs of large organizations. After all, it's the largest companies and public sector organizations that have the largest IT departments, and thus the most intractable integration issues, due to broadly heterogeneous infrastructures, complex political and cultural environments, and convoluted regulatory and competitive pressures. Nevertheless, small and midsize businesses (SMBs), individual departments and divisions of enterprises, and midsize governmental agencies are also looking to SOA to solve their IT problems, which present both strategic and tactical issues as they grow and manage their organizations.

SMBs, are not simply smaller versions of their larger enterprise cousins when it comes to IT needs. Since smaller firms typically have simpler internal infrastructures, they are less likely to look to SOA to deal with internal integration issues. Instead, their integration issues are more likely to be external, as business-to-business (B2B) integration is an important part of such organizations' strategy for dealing with customers, suppliers, and other external parties. Many such organizations, in fact, have already been investing in standards-based interfaces for such third-party integration utilizing a wide range of approaches, including XML and Web Services—both SOAP-based and REST-based approaches to providing standards-based interfaces for third parties. Yet, despite those first steps towards integrating businesses, those companies that have been leveraging such technologies for some time, and others who are just now looking at exploring external Service interfaces, are now coming to realize that building secure, loosely coupled Services is critically important for supporting such B2B interactions in today's dynamic business environment. Furthermore, even many SMBs are looking beyond simplistic standards-based interfaces to reusable, loosely coupled, and composable Services that they can share with their business partners. For these reasons, they are looking to SOA to support their Services initiatives.

To understand the role of architecture when exposing Services to and interacting with third parties, it's important to see the big picture of the dynamic environment such Services participate in. On the Service provider side, companies will be implementing the following capabilities:

- Customizing Service contracts for individual customers or departments within external parties.
- Updating Services with new capabilities.
- Adding new Services.
- Adding new customers, suppliers, or partners who wish to access the Services.
- Maintain the functionality of Services as traffic loads change.

Correspondingly, companies that consume those Services will likely want to implement the following capabilities:

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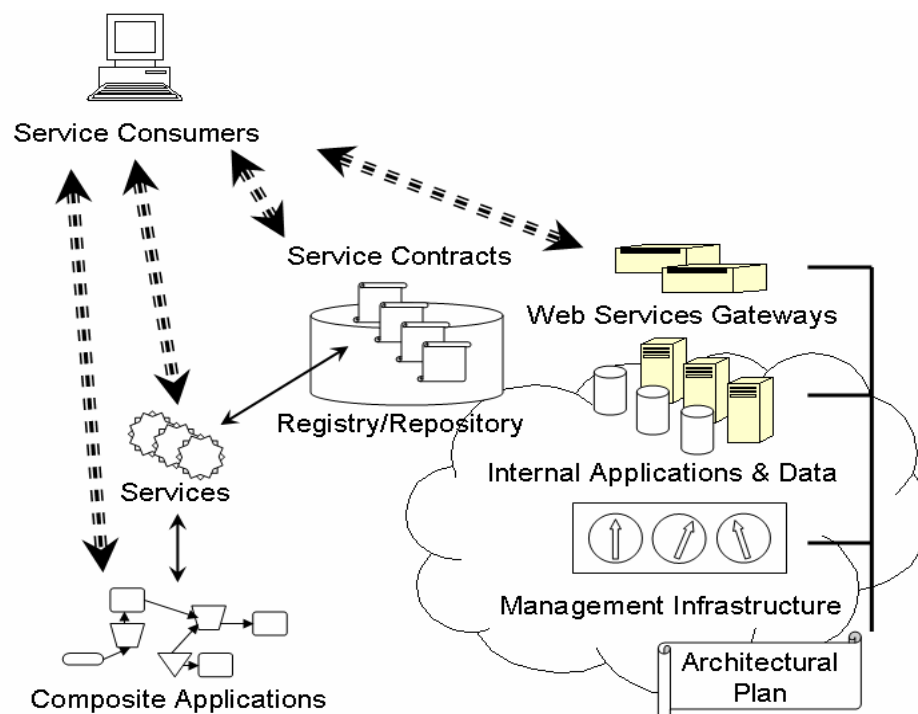


- Select among a range of Services to access.
- Incorporate Services into their own business processes.
- Change their own service levels to obtain better performance, less expensive access, or other changes in service levels.
- Take advantage of changes in Services.
- Switch from one Service to another as business needs change.
- Consume Services via Service consumers with multiple form factors (for example, portal, desktop application, mobile phone, or shop floor handheld device).
- Look up prospective Services in a directory.

The common theme across all of these capabilities, both on the provider and consumer side, is that of change. If the needs of the provider and consumer changed infrequently, then a simple API might be sufficient—and in fact, APIs have been the primary interface for SMB B2B interactions in the past. Making changes like those listed above with an API interface, however, requires reprogramming or replacing both the server and the client, since those interactions are tightly coupled.

Simply replacing a tightly coupled API with a standards-based interface, such as Web Services, doesn't provide sufficient flexibility. In order to achieve the desired loose coupling, companies that wish to provide Services must implement a *management infrastructure* that can insure the availability and performance of Services as consumer loads change, as well as a registry/repository for managing Services metadata, and a Web Services gateway for security, all in the context of SOA. The figure below illustrates the SOA infrastructure a midsize firm would need to support B2B Web Services:

Elements of a SOA Infrastructure



Source: ZapThink

There are additional technical capabilities that SOA can provide that SMBs may wish to explore, including multichannel interfaces that support mobile handheld devices, midmarket integration for those firms with heterogeneous internal IT environments, or composite applications (“mashups”), which are Service-oriented business processes composed of Services. Such Service-oriented business applications provide increased flexibility for the business, and enables businesspeople to get better control and visibility over their processes.

While all of these capabilities become increasingly practical in the context of SOA, it's critical to remember that flexibility comes with a price: the management, security, metadata, and integration infrastructure that underlies the SOA implementation. Loose coupling, after all, isn't easy; it requires disciplined design and a sophisticated yet flexible infrastructure.

Managed Methods: Lightweight SOA Management

Even though Managed Methods' product *JaxView* is robust and scalable enough for large enterprise installations, Managed Methods focuses on the needs of IT operations as they support SOA implementations in SMB and departmental scenarios. *JaxView* is a fully-featured SOA management product that supports the rapid implementation requirements of midmarket operations environments. Every aspect of *JaxView*, including integration, alerting, data persistence, and aggregation, is customizable.

Managed Methods *JaxView* focuses on addressing the following challenges:

- Web Services availability and performance
- Management of the distributed IT infrastructure
- Security of the SOA infrastructure
- Monitoring of usage across applications, both internally as well as by third parties
- Providing visibility into Web Service-based business transactions.

JaxView is a management and monitoring tool for IT operations that is straightforward to install, provides meaningful data about service performance and consumer usage levels, and provides flexible event notification capabilities. *JaxView* offers multiple deployment options and can enable the autodiscovery of Web Services as well as the automation of message relay agents. It's also possible to deploy *JaxView* as a Services gateway for policy enforcement, including client authentication and message content modification.

In fact, *JaxView* provides a full range of capabilities that many enterprise-focused management products offer, at a price point that is more amenable to smaller firms. These capabilities include Web Service monitoring, transaction and SLA management, and runtime governance and security policy enforcement. *JaxView* also offers a flexible deployment architecture, integration with various Enterprise Service Buses (ESBs), an open API, and flexible, database-driven configuration. The combination of features and price make *JaxView* a high-value part of any midsize organization's Web Services and SOA plans.

The ZapThink Take

The Web Services Management market exploded onto the scene in 2002, but proved to be a transitional market, and by 2006 had largely consolidated out of existence, becoming part of the SOA management story for large enterprises. However, in the course of this turbulent market evolution, no vendors sought to meet the needs of midmarket firms as they moved from simple Web Services into architected SOA implementations that supported secure, managed, loosely coupled Services. Now, however, Managed Methods has filled this void with *JaxView*, offering the full spectrum of capabilities today's SMBs require as they move to SOA, at a price point that such organizations will appreciate.

Managed Methods Features

Managed Methods JaxView

Overview:

Managed Methods JaxView is a Web Services and SOA Management tool with a combination of features and price that makes it quite appealing to midmarket firms and midsize government agencies who are leveraging SOA best practices to both address internal integration issues as well as to support B2B applications of Web Services, while also being scalable and robust enough for enterprise implementations.

Features:

- **Web Service Monitoring and Management** – JaxView records various Service performance and availability metrics, as well as copies of messages between Service providers and consumers.
- **Transaction Management** – JaxView monitors generic transactions with support for WS-Transaction and WS-Coordination, enabling the monitoring transactions that rely on multiple Web service requests.
- **SLA Management** – JaxView monitors Service request activities and produces reports on consumer activities.
- **Runtime Governance and Security Policy Enforcement** – JaxView enables centralized enforcement of security policies for the Web Service environment.
- **Web Services Gateway Functionality** – JaxView also provides content-based routing, request/response modification, load balancing and failover capabilities.
- **Multiple Deployment Architecture** – Each installation of JaxView allows for multiple deployment configurations, including gateway agent and network appliance configurations.
- **JMS integration with multiple ESBs and Message Brokers** – JaxView can get copies of messages by integrating to various ESBs using JMS.
- **Role-based Web portal user accounts** – JaxView provides a Web-based portal with its own application server, allowing Web-based access from any location. Role-based profiles control user's access rights and permissions.
- **Database-driven Configuration** – By default, JaxView will use the file system for data persistence, but it can also update configuration settings from an external database.
- **Open API** – JaxView has an open API for accessing and controlling many different aspects of the application, including its Web Service configuration capabilities, as well as monitoring, alerting, and logging APIs.
- **Third-Party Integration** – JaxView integrates with a range of existing ESM consoles and UDDI registries.



Value Proposition:

- **Non-intrusive** – Operations personnel need not modify any code at the Web Service level nor change request headers. JaxView also subscribes to ESBs using protocols such as JMS.
- **Small footprint** – JaxView installs and runs on a single server, and uses the local file system for all data storage and reporting by default.
- **Moderately priced** – Managed Methods has priced JaxView well within reach of most midmarket IT budgets.

Profile: Managed Methods

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Private

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- *SOA Software ZapNote (ZTZN-1201)*
- *SOA-Enabled Business Service Management White Paper (WP-0138)*
- *Web Services Management Report (ZTR-WS112)*



About ZapThink, LLC

ZapThink is an IT advisory and analysis firm that provides trusted advice and critical insight into the architectural and organizational changes brought about by the movement to XML, Web Services, and Service Orientation. We provide our three target audiences of IT vendors, service providers and end-users a clear roadmap for standards-based, loosely coupled distributed computing – a vision of IT meeting the needs of the agile business.

ZapThink helps its customers in three ways: by helping companies understand IT products and services in the context of Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) and the vision of Service Orientation, by providing guidance into emerging best practices for Web Services and SOA adoption, and by bringing together all our audiences into a network that provides business value and expertise to each member of the network.

ZapThink provides market intelligence to IT vendors and professional services firms that offer XML and Web Services-based products and services in order to help them understand their competitive landscape, plan their product roadmaps, and communicate their value proposition to their customers within the context of Service Orientation.

ZapThink provides guidance and expertise to professional services firms to help them grow and innovate their services as well as promote their capabilities to end-users and vendors looking to grow their businesses.

ZapThink also provides implementation intelligence to IT users who are seeking guidance and clarity into the best practices for planning and implementing SOA, including how to assemble the available products and services into a coherent plan.

ZapThink's senior analysts are widely regarded as the "go to analysts" for XML, Web Services, and SOA by vendors, end-users, and the press. Respected for their candid, insightful opinions, they are in great demand as speakers, and have presented at conferences and industry events around the world. They are among the most quoted industry analysts in the IT industry, and their recent book, *Service Orient or Be Doomed!*, is the leading book on the business concept of Service Orientation.

ZapThink was founded in October 2000 and is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland. Its customers include Global 1000 firms and government organizations, as well as many emerging businesses. Its analysts have worked at such firms as IDC, marchFIRST, and ChannelWave, and have sat on the working group committees for standards bodies such as RosettaNet, UDDI, and ebXML.

Call, email, or visit the ZapThink Web site to learn more about how ZapThink can help you to better understand how SOA will impact your business or organization.

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