A personal retrospective

A changing perspective from my time with the NCES architecture team in 2005 in support of its Milestone B decision.

- Subsequent engagements for several employers with different parts of DOD.
- Not to be construed as the opinion of Accenture Mission Services, of which my previous employer, Gestalt LLC, is now a part.
NCES
NetCentric Enterprise Services

Core Services
• Authentication
• Authorization
• Discovery
• Storage
• Collaboration

SOA Foundation SDK
• complex binary-only prototype
• hopefully since improved?

Service-oriented Architecture
is not just about services

Services are bricks. The bus is the mortar. The medium through which services interoperate.
The wrong way

- Legacy systems?
- Other Agencies?
- States?
- Allies?
- DHS?

Stovepipes!

The right way?

Use external standards when they exist
Define enterprise standards (KIPs) to fill any gaps that can’t wait
  - Consensus Process
Policy directives and standards are only necessary not sufficient
  - Reference implementations
  - Compliance tests

See the Paving the Bare Spots paper in the proceedings for substantive details; this only skims the surface.
Enterprise Space

A digital space in which a consensus process is owned, managed, developed and deployed independently of stovepipes’ local concerns.
Web site + collaboration tools (Subversion, Bugzilla, etc)
Governed by a foundation like Apache Software Foundation (ASF). Accepts long-term ownership responsibility. Decides membership criteria.
Staffed by volunteers from interested projects.
Standards based on working prototypes contributed by the members (no design by Powerpoint). Meritocracy.
Cost? Approximately $0.
A Pragmatic Way

I’ve since come to regard the right way as naive, given a deeply stovepiped acquisition process that seems unlikely to change.

But “industry” has stovepipes too. We call them Companies.

Yet they manage to cooperate to build other complex life-critical systems like houses or cars.

Component-based Approach
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off the shelf components?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I get mine at a store down the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where’s DOD’s? None?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ah, there’s your problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2COG: DOD’s source for pre-approved, ready to use components?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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