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Web Services



Synopsis

Like many other incipient technologies, Web services are still surrounded by a substantial level of noise. This noise results from the always dangerous combination of wishful thinking on the part of research and industry and of a lack of clear understanding of how Web services came to be. On the one hand, multiple contradictory interpretations are created by the many attempts to realign existing technology and strategies with Web services. On the other hand, the emphasis on what could be done with Web services in the future often makes us lose track of what can be really done with Web services today and in the short term. These factors make it extremely difficult to get a coherent picture of what Web services are, what they contribute, and where they will be applied. Alonso and his co-authors deliberately take a step back. Based on their academic and industrial experience with middleware and enterprise application integration systems, they describe the fundamental concepts behind the notion of Web services and present them as the natural evolution of conventional middleware, necessary to meet the challenges of the Web and of B2B application integration. Rather than providing a reference guide or a "how to write your first Web service" kind of book, they discuss the main objectives of Web services, the challenges that must be faced to achieve them, and the opportunities that this novel technology provides. Established, as well as recently proposed, standards and techniques (e.g., WSDL, UDDI, SOAP, WS-Coordination, WS-Transactions, and BPEL), are then examined in the context of this discussion in order to emphasize their scope, benefits, and shortcomings. Thus, the book is ideally suited both for professionals considering the development of application integration solutions and for research and students interesting in understanding and contributing to the evolution of enterprise application technologies.

Book Information

Series: Data-Centric Systems and Applications

Hardcover: 354 pages

Publisher: Springer; 2004 edition (October 10, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 3540440089

ISBN-13: 978-3540440086

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 0.9 x 6.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #507,315 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #93 in Â Books > Computers &

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Customer Reviews

This book is a little more expensive than most of the flashy Web Services books these days but it is well worth the money. Set in small font and not wasting pages on chapters like "History of XML and SOAP" this book is dense in content on the architecture of distributed systems, including Web Services. We get to learn about the issues of distributed transactions and the differences between conversations, coordination and orchestration. The text is precise but nevertheless easy to follow. One of the best books I have seen on Web Services architecture. You can find a sample chapter on the author's site:[...]

I am using this book for a graduate level class about Web Services. I like the books approach on giving you enough background about middle-ware evolution that makes it easier to understand what Web Services are trying to accomplish. Given that the actual technology (implementation details) change so much in this area the books approach makes a lot of sense. I also found explanations to be concise and clear. Advice: if you are looking for a hands-on how-to book about XML this is not the book to pick up. Otherwise, if you are looking for a good fundamentals book that will help you paint a big picture of Web Services this book is great!

The quality of the Kindle version of this book is very poor. It looks as if one is reading a poor quality scan rather than rendered text. The type face is very light and jagged. Worse still, are the whitespace breaks between letters within words. It's like reading code rather than prose. Unfortunately, I didn't start reading the book until well after the seven day return policy and now I'm stuck with it but, don't you get stuck with it. If you want this book, get the hard copy and avoid the Kindle version at all cost.

First, it is a very conceptual book, which is not a problem in itself, but it's not a book for those who are looking to find code examples or how to architect your web service. Given that it was published in 2004, the value of this book currently is mostly for historical context. It does not make assumptions about the reader's knowledge and starts with the detailed explanation of concepts of information system. From there, it explains the need for middleware to enterprise application

integration to web technologies. The context that explains how web services came into existence is responsible for a big portion of the book. When it comes to the part on web services, the focus is mostly on B2B integration and does not account for the varied application we see nowadays. In particular, it's natural that it does not touch on web services being the foundation in a multi-device world where we have phones and richer clients (running Javascript, Ajax, JQuery, etc.), what one would expect for a more modern book on web services. Also, it's important to note that it focuses primarily on SOAP and spends some time talking about technologies that ended up failing in the end (like UDDI registry) or may not be of the interest of readers, like RosettaNet (at least wasn't of much interest to me). And more interesting technologies, like WS-Coordination or WS-Transaction, were not explained in the level of details that I would expect. WS-* standards like WS-Addressing, WS-Routing, WS-Security, and WS-Policy are barely talked about. These sections could have used the same attention paid to the first section (web service history). In that sense, the book is a little inconsistent on how detailed it is. I'd have rated it higher had I read it back in 2004. In 2012 it does have value for the historical context and is definitely good for those who want to know how we got where we are, but it doesn't help much if what you're looking for is how to write your API to expose your Web Service. For a more modern approach (and potentially more practical) I would try to find other options.

If you want comprehensive high level overview of today's enterprise software landscape, this is a must-read. One of the best books which answers the question, Why Web Services?? Unique perspective on middlewares in general. Do not expect any code examples or details of any particular middleware.

Too abstract. Lacks simple examples that would really help a student to digest overly dry theory. This is official textbook in my Web Services and Middleware grad class and it is nearly impossible to cover one paragraph without referring to outside resources for simpler explanations of things.

A very nice introductory book on Web services, much different from all the others on this topic. Excellent overview of the problematics of service oriented architectures on the Web and of their relationships with their EAI counterparts (corba, rpc, ..).

First part of the book while describing Distributed Systems, Middleware and EAI lays strong foundation for Web Services. Second part of the book provides an extensive reporting about Web

Services Architecture, related standards, service composition and BPEL. Though at the outset this book looks like serving academic purpose but it also provides the great insight of the subject to the programming community. This book is must have which draws detailed conceptual and architectural views on Distributed Systems, EAI and Web Services.

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