

Foreword

Service-Oriented Computing (SOC) is the computing paradigm that utilizes software services as fundamental elements for developing and deploying distributed software applications. Services are self-describing, platform-agnostic computational elements that support rapid, low-cost composition of distributed applications. They perform functions, which can be anything from simple requests to complicated business processes. Services allow organizations to expose their core competencies programmatically via a self-describing interface based on open standards over the Internet (or intra-net) using standard (XML-based) languages and protocols. Because services provide a uniform and ubiquitous information distributor for wide range of computing devices (such as handheld computers, PDAs, cellular telephones, or appliances) and software platforms (e.g., UNIX or Windows), they constitute a major transition in distributed computing.

A Web service is a specific kind of service that is identified by a URI that exposes its features programmatically over the Internet using standard Internet languages and protocols, and can be implemented via a self-describing interface based on open Internet standards (e.g., XML interfaces which are published in network-based repositories).

Understanding the conceptual underpinnings and mastering the technical intricacies of Web services is anything but trivial and is absolutely necessary to construct a well-functioning service-based system or application. Web service technology is undergoing continuous, rapid evolution, thanks to both standardization efforts pushed forward by industry and the research efforts of the scientific community.

Web services standards are still evolving. However, they seem to converge today on a handful of standards: the Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) for service communication, Web Services Description Language (WSDL) for service description, Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration Infrastructure (UDDI) for registering and discovering services, and the Business Process Execution Language (BPEL) for service composition. A plethora of WS-* specifications also exists to describe the full spectrum of activities related to Web services in topics such as reliable messaging, security, privacy, policies, event processing, and coordination, to name but a few.

Leading international conferences, such as the International Conference on Service-Oriented Computing (ICSOC), the International Conference on Web Services (ICWS), the International Conference on Service Computing (SCC), and others, have spearheaded groundbreaking research efforts. This has led to the emergence of novel topics such as semantic Web services, automated Web service composition, Web service recommendations, quality of service, trust, and a range of other interesting themes. Related conference series such as Web Engineering, Cloud Computing, Business Process Management, HCI, and Database related conferences, have all been strongly influenced by the emergence of Web services and consistently feature Web service related topics in their calls for papers. These conferences contribute to the wealth of knowledge that is growing exponentially around Web services.

The content of this book and that of its companion book *Advanced Web Services* (Springer, 2013) reflect such activities. It is a testimonial of the leading role of its editors and their highly influential work in the area of Web services. Together, both books cover an enormous wealth of important topics and technologies that mirror the evolution of Web services. They provide an exhaustive overview of the challenges and solutions of all major achievements pertaining to Web services. Each chapter is an authoritative piece of work that synthesizes all pertinent literature and highlights important accomplishments and advances in its subject matter.

To my knowledge, this is the first attempt of its kind, providing complete coverage of the key subjects in Web services. I am not aware of any other book that is as thorough, comprehensive and ambitious in explaining the current state of the art of scientific research and in synthesizing the perspectives and know-how of so many experts in the field. Both books are a must-read for everyone interested in the field. They cater for the needs of both novices to the field as well as seasoned researchers and practitioners. They are a major step in this field's maturation and will serve to unify, advance, and challenge the scientific community in many important ways.

It is a real pleasure to have been asked to provide the foreword for this book collection. I am happy to commend the editors and authors on their accomplishment, and to inform the readers that they are looking at a landmark in the development of the Web services field. Anybody serious about Web services ought to have handy a copy of *Web Services Foundations* and *Advanced Web Services* in their private library!

Tilburg, The Netherlands

Michael P. Papazoglou
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