



Bits at a time

SERVICE-ORIENTED ARCHITECTURE (SOA) HAS THE POTENTIAL TO DO A GREAT DEAL OF GOOD – AS LONG AS IT'S CONSUMED IN BITE-SIZED CHUNKS.

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Could SOA finally be maturing? It seems so. Three years ago when the hype cycle was at its peak, SOA was being plugged by every enterprise vendor under the sun as a way of getting more flexibility and re-use for the customer's software spend. Even some traditional ERP vendors said they were moving away from the large monolithic projects to more agile delivery. Instead of the large integrated project, SOA says that applications are composed of individual services, loosely coupled, and linked together with tools that allow business processes to be automated on the fly.

That's the theory anyway. SOA's success has been mixed: it has proved an excellent way to wrap legacy applications but the re-usability has been harder than it looked in 2006.

Malcolm Rabson, MD of Dariel Solutions, says there has been success connecting islands of information. "Because SOA is such a misinterpreted term, we've